Problem-Framing Behaviours of an Instrumental Music Teacher
in Studio and Large Group Contexts

A Thesis Submitted to
The College of Graduate Studies and Research
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Master of Education
In the Department of Curriculum Studies
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon

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TITLE OF THESIS: Problem-framing Behaviours of an Instrumental Music Teacher in Studio and Large Group Contexts

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ABSTRACT

The focus of this case study was on the problem-framing activities of one teacher within two teaching contexts – large group and studio. This study was grounded in Schön’s research on reflective practice and sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the teacher’s problem-setting behaviours in the studio and large class context? As the teacher resets problems; (a) what “frame-experiments” are carried out by the teacher in each context? (b) Are these experiments similar or different? (c) How do these “frame-experiments” change with each iteration?

2. What type of teacher feedback is given to students in each of these contexts?

3. What tacit teacher understandings are at work in each context?

4. What are the similarities and differences in assessment techniques used in a studio and large group context?

Interpretation of the data revealed several differences in how one teacher framed problems in the studio and classroom contexts. Findings from the data suggest ways that teaching strategies commonly employed in studio teaching might be applied to classroom music teaching.
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This study would not have been possible without my teacher participant allowing me to enter the sacred space of her classroom and answering my interview questions with openness and honesty. Her generosity has enriched my professional life.

I would like to thank my colleagues in the Curriculum Studies program for their feedback and support. I couldn’t have been with a better cohort. Finally, I want to acknowledge the support of my wife, MJ, and my sons, Spencer and Fraser, who gave up dad on many evenings and weekends as he studied and completed his thesis.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

PERMISSION TO USE........................................................................................................... i
ABSTRACT........................................................................................................................ ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS............................................................................................... iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS................................................................................................... iv

CHAPTER ONE ................................................................................................................. 1
   An Exploration of the Problem ................................................................. 1
   Structure of the Thesis ............................................................... 5

CHAPTER TWO ................................................................................................................ 6
   Literature Review..................................................................................... 6
      Principles of Music Education............................................................. 6
      Benjamin Bloom – The 2 Sigma Problem ........................................ 9
      Teacher Perceptions of Talent .......................................................... 12
      Terminology Used in Schön’s Literature on Reflective Practice........ 14
      Reflective Practice .................................................................... 15
      Authentic Assessment ................................................................. 21

CHAPTER THREE .......................................................................................................... 24
   Methodology.............................................................................................. 24
      Design of the Study ........................................................................ 24
      Participant ..................................................................................... 26
      Data Collection ............................................................................. 26
      Data Interpretation ....................................................................... 27
      Data Storage .................................................................................. 28
      Ethics ............................................................................................. 28

CHAPTER FOUR............................................................................................................. 30
   Data Collection ..................................................................................... 30
      Baseline Interview – May 2, 2004.................................................... 31
      Band Class, May 4, 2004 ................................................................. 36
      Band Class, May 6, 2004 ................................................................. 40
      Band Class, May 10, 2004 ............................................................... 45
APPENDIX E ................................................................................................................. 104

Application Form for Permission to Conduct Research in Saskatoon Public Schools104
CHAPTER ONE

An Exploration of the Problem

During the course of my career, I have taught both music and English classes at the secondary school level. I have always wrestled with my concerns regarding student motivation, assessment and achievement. In my desire to enable all of my students to achieve to the best of their ability, I have constantly added to my repertoire of teaching, communication and assessment skills.

In my teaching practice as a music educator teaching band, I was on one occasion very frustrated with the progress of a Band 10 class. The students did not seem to be making the progress I had anticipated. Specifically, their foundational skills were not at grade level and I could tell. In some time following my rehearsal I reflected on the effectiveness of my private studio teaching as compared to my classroom teaching. It was then I identified a possible source of my frustration. I was working in a very different manner in the classroom than I was in the studio. I noticed that in my studio I taught to mastery, placed a great deal of emphasis on acquisition of fundamentals and had the opportunity to engage in a rich dialogue with my students; while in the classroom I taught for coverage of the concepts outlined in the curriculum. There never seemed to be time to ensure that each student in the class had mastered every concept. I also noticed that assessment seemed to be removed from instruction in the classroom, while in studio informal assessment (via quality feedback) was continuous, ongoing and ungraded. Therefore, it seemed to me that there was something about what was contained in quality feedback that seemed to make a difference for my students. When my students, of any ability level, were exposed to quality feedback contained in informal assessment of their playing they seemed to come to a richer understanding of their own music making and made satisfying progress.

As I began to apply studio techniques to my classroom, I began seeing positive changes in the success of my students and their personal motivation. The opportunity to use feedback contained in informal assessment to encourage students to reflect on their work allowed me to teach each of them more effectively as they located the areas in their practice where they needed improvement. This dialogue with my students was
significant for all of us. For example, in the class discussed earlier, only a handful of students were progressing quickly. I began thinking of ways that I might be able to engage my students in a structured dialogue regarding their playing. As a tool to foster critical reflection, I created the following matrix for each of my students:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Number &amp; date due:</th>
<th>Things I need to work on:</th>
<th>Mr. Krips’ initial when mastered:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While simple, the above matrix allowed me to engage my students in a dialogue in a low stress context that focussed them on their learning. We did have a goal (a band festival) that had a set date. By the third class I noticed that some students were slipping behind the deadlines I had set. I decided not to let this be an issue, and continued to encourage the students through the process. In the end, the deadlines proved not to be an issue at all. By festival time, the students were performing to the best of their ability and they performed very competently and musically. Normally, this isn’t how things are done in a concert band context. Everyone is forced to move at a homogenous pace due to time concerns.

The above scenario highlights the perpetual process versus product dilemma that faces all band teachers. Music philosopher Bennett Reimer (1989) eloquently encapsulated the dilemma in the following passage:

Among the ironies in this situation [of having a job that looks glamorous and easy] is that this perception does have a bit of truth in it: performance teachers, over and above all the unseen, little understood complexities of their work, do benefit personally from the public display of their skills required by their position. Few other teachers enjoy the admiration of both students and community won by successful directors, and few other teachers provide both students and community with the pleasures the performance directors offer regularly. It is [italics in original] a lucky position to be in, after all, not because it is easy, which it decidedly is not, but because bringing music to youngsters in a way that is shareable with audiences is among the most satisfying roles in all of education.
The problem, of course, is that the pleasantness of it all overshadows the fact that, underneath, serious education is going on. (p. 201)

David Elliott (1995) would concur:

…past music education philosophy consistently fails to provide critically reasoned explanations of the nature of music making in general (performing, improvising, composing, arranging, and conducting) and performing in particular. Its narrow concentration on musical works causes it to underthink and, therefore, to undervalue the process dimension of music: the actions of artistic and creative music making. (p. 30)

The place where “serious education” regarding “the actions of artistic and creative music making” occurs is in the shared dialogue between student and teacher. I was curious to see if there were different elements of that dialogue at work in the private studio and the band classroom. This led me to Schön’s writings on reflective practice.

In Schön’s (1983, 1987) work regarding reflective practice he discusses the concept of reciprocal reflection-in-action, which is very similar to the feedback found in informal assessment. It is in this conversation between teacher and student where I believe significant learning takes place. While no one would argue that this interaction is most powerful in a one-on-one context, I think that a measure of that powerful interchange can take place in the large group context. Regarding research into efficacy of private instruction, Kennell (2002) stated:

Many researchers were frustrated that this line of investigation failed to reveal conclusive evidence in support of either class or private instruction. Over time, however, we have come to a new conceptualization. Group instruction is not a teaching strategy; it is a teaching context. Likewise, private music teaching is a context and not a strategy. This conceptualization compels the researcher to seek new understanding about the component instructional strategies that teachers might employ in either private or group contexts. (p. 245)

The difficulty is to find an appropriate vehicle for that discussion to take place. Is it possible for rich reflective dialogue to occur in a large group context or does another type of communication take place? The focus of this study was how one teacher approached and solved problems within two teaching contexts – large group and studio.
This study is a qualitative case study of a teacher who teaches both in studio and large class contexts and explores how communication with students regarding his/her performance takes place. The aim of this study was to understand the applicability of studio teaching techniques to the large group context.

Previous research in this domain focussed on the effect of the teaching context on student learning. I wanted to explore whether or not a teacher works differently in each context and whether those differences were significant in relation to student learning. In order to do this I chose to engage in the case study of one teacher who worked in both the private and classroom contexts. Finding a participant who taught in this manner proved quite challenging. Other than myself, there were two other possible participants in my city and one was not appropriate due to ethics issues regarding our professional relationship. Because I was studying reflective practice, I chose to use only one teacher due to the sheer amount of data I planned to accumulate. My study design provided that I record everything the participant said as she taught a series of band classes and private lessons.

Research Questions:

1. What are the teacher’s problem-setting behaviours in the studio and large class context? As the teacher resets problems; (a) what “frame-experiments” are carried out by the teacher in each context? (b) Are these experiments similar or different? (c) How do these “frame-experiments” change with each iteration?
2. What type of teacher feedback is given to students in each of these contexts?
3. What tacit teacher understandings are at work in each context?
4. What are the similarities and differences in assessment techniques used in a studio and large group context?

This study aimed to develop some insights into the teaching practices employed in a large ensemble instrumental music context through the exploration of one teacher’s tacit understandings as he or she frames and solves problems and selects assessment tools. It is my hope that the findings of this study will help to better inform the practice of instrumental music teachers and lead to further research of ways to improve the effectiveness of instrumental music teaching and assessment.
Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is organized in the following manner:

Chapter Two contains the literature review detailing the current modes of teaching in music education, Schön’s writing on reflective practice, and authentic assessment.

In Chapter Three the methodology of this study is discussed with details regarding the design of the study, information about the participant, data collection and ethics.

Chapter Four presents the data collected in the study. This chapter is presented in a narrative genre and when possible material from the interviews is woven around the case study data. Chapter Four details the participant’s work over a three-week period.

Chapter Five presents the interpretation of the data and findings that arose from the interpretation. Schön’s constants of reflective practice were used to interpret the data.

Chapter Six presents recommendations for further research.
CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

The literature for this study was taken from a number of different fields including music education philosophy, mastery learning, reflective practice, tutoring, and authentic (or alternative) assessment.

Principles of Music Education

In the past twenty-five years much has been written regarding the principles of music education. Currently, there is a debate among Bennett Reimer, David Elliott, and Keith Swanwick regarding the principles of music education. Their positions follow.

Bennett Reimer could be regarded as the most influential music philosopher of the 20th Century. His writings have shaped what is taught in music colleges across North America and has had a direct impact on how music is taught in North American schools. Reimer (1989) stated, “The deepest value of music education is the same as the deepest value in all of the arts in education: the enrichment of the quality of people’s lives through enriching their experiences of human feeling” (p. 53). Reimer (1989) goes on to describe in detail how music education helps students have what he calls an aesthetic experience:

In the “study” part of music education – the part used in the service of deepening aesthetic experiences of music – attention should be focussed on that which, if perceived, can arouse aesthetic reaction. The conditions of sound which are expressive can be revealed to students of all ages. The responsibility of music education, at every level and in every part of the program, is to reveal more fully the musical conditions which should be perceived and felt. The qualities of sound which make sound expressive – melody, harmony, rhythm, tone color, texture, form – are the objective “data” with which music teachers systematically deal. Illuminating these “data” in musical settings is the task of musical teaching. . . . Language becomes a powerful tool for increasing aesthetic sensitivity when it is devoted to the refinement of aesthetic perception in contexts which present perception as an integral part of expressive music to be felt. The music program
is the means for arranging for aesthetic perception and aesthetic reaction – aesthetic experience – to take place systematically. (p. 117)

For Reimer, all efforts in music education culminate in students having an aesthetic experience.

Swanwick (1999) views the arts as discourse and has some difficulty with the term “aesthetic”:

. . . one weakness in the idea of the aesthetic seems to be that it separates out music and the other arts from other forms of discourse, isolating it from other achievements of the human mind. But rather than try to find a distinctive role for the arts in general or music in particular it seems to me far more profitable initially to ask the question: what does music share with other symbolic forms? Music is not some curious anomaly, split off from the rest of life, not just an emotional thrill by-passing any processes of thought, but it is an integral part of our cognitive processes. It is a way of knowing, a way of thinking, a way of feeling. (p.7)

Swanwick (1999) outlines three principles of music education:

(1) Care for music as discourse, in which the music educator “always looks for this extension of life’s possibilities, plans for the transformation from sound materials to expressive character and for the integration of gestures into form” (pp. 44-53).

(2) Care for the musical discourse of students, which he defines as follows: Discourse – musical conversation – by definition can never be a monologue. Each student brings a realm of musical understandings into our educational institutions. We do not introduce them to music, they are already well acquainted with it, though they may not have subjected it to the various forms of analysis that we may feel are important for their further development. (p. 53)

(3) Fluency first and last. Swanwick likens this to the fluency we gain when we understand a language very well.

David Elliott is perhaps the most controversial of the three, usually because he takes Reimer and Swanwick to task in his writings. Interestingly, Elliott intersperses his writings with quotations from Schön, the main literature for this thesis. Elliott (1995)
believes that music education is situational and performance is at the heart of all teaching and learning in music. He explains his praxial philosophy thus:

This praxial philosophy of music education holds that formal knowledge ought to be filtered into the teaching-learning situation parenthetically and contextually. Verbal concepts about music works and music making ought to emerge from and be discussed in relation to ongoing efforts to solve authentic musical problems through active music making. The contextualization of formal knowledge enables students to understand its value immediately and artistically. This, in turn, enables students to convert formal musical knowledge into musical knowing-in-action. As procedural knowledge develops in educational settings that approximate genuine musical practices, actions come to embody formal knowledge, including knowledge of musical notation. (p. 61)

Elliott (1995) goes on to outline the following four principles of music education (which I have altered so that they make a logical list):

1. Performing and improvising is central.
2. Listenership is rooted in musicianship.
3. Musicianship is social and situational.
4. Music must be studied in context. (Elliott, 1995, pp. 172-183)

The most important elements of the principles he outlines are the tenets that music is social and situational. This implies that an element of dialogue is central to the teaching and study of music.

It is evident in each of these differing views of music education that dialogue is a central feature in the teaching and learning process. Generally, that dialogue is situated around an authentic music-making experience which presents the material from which all teaching can emanate. The focus of this study is on the dialogue that exists in the private studio and the classroom. I wanted to see if there was a difference in that dialogue between the two contexts, and if so, could the dialogue from one context be applied to the other with some success. As will be detailed later in this thesis, previous research focussed exclusively on the effect of the teaching context on student learning. This study examines how a teacher worked and used dialogue differently in two contexts. In order to study this dialogue and the notion that it might be different in two contexts I used three
different frameworks in the course of this study. Benjamin Bloom’s work in mastery
learning helped bring a focus to the potential difference between private and group
instruction. Schön’s writing on reflective practice allowed me to enter more fully into the
dialogue that I recorded. Finally, material on authentic assessment and particularly the
feedback given during informal assessment allowed me to situate the dialogue in its most
common frame between teacher and student in both contexts. It is important to note that
formal assessments or evaluation periods were not observed during this study. The focus
here was on the informal feedback that naturally occurs during instruction.

Benjamin Bloom – The 2 Sigma Problem

Some of the most thorough research regarding one-on-one instruction versus
group instruction can be found in the work of Benjamin Bloom and his associates from
the early 1980s. In Bloom’s 1984 article, The 2 Sigma Problem: The Search for Methods
of Group Instruction as Effective as One-to-One Tutoring, he discussed a number of
studies designed to explore methods of group instruction that might exceed the two-
standard-deviation gain made by students who were offered tutoring as compared to a
group that did not receive this treatment. Bloom identified three teaching conditions that
would each form an independent group for the study: conventional (the control group),
mastery learning (treatment group #1), and tutoring (treatment group #2), as the foci of
the studies. After eleven periods of instruction over three weeks, Bloom stated:

It was typically found that the average student under tutoring was about two
standard deviations above the average of the control class. . . .The average student
under mastery learning was about one standard deviation above the average of the
control class. (p. 4)

Bloom went on to state that there were also positive changes in students’ time on task,
attitude, and interest in the two treatment (mastery learning and tutoring) groups. Based
on their initial research, Bloom issued the following challenge:

The tutoring process demonstrates that most [italics in original] of the students do
have the potential to reach this high level [2 sigma above control] of learning. I
believe an important task of research and instruction is to seek ways of
accomplishing this under more practical and realistic conditions than the one-to-
one tutoring, which is too costly for most societies to bear on a large scale. This is the “2 sigma” problem. Can researchers and teachers devise teaching-learning conditions that will enable the majority of students under group instruction [as opposed to tutoring or mastery learning] to attain levels of achievement that can at present be reached only under good tutoring conditions? (pp. 4-5)

The heart of Bloom’s challenge was the improvement of teaching. This was the intention of my study as well. Bloom went on to state:

Observations of teacher interaction with students in the classroom reveal that teachers frequently direct their teaching and explanations to some students and ignore others. They give much more positive reinforcement and encouragement to some students but not to others, and they encourage active participation in the classroom from some students and discourage it from others. (p. 11)

It was these dimensions of the large group instrumental music class that I explored. I wanted to discover in what ways we might improve our communication with our students so that all are challenged and encouraged at the same time. Bloom (1984) contrasted the above description to the “constant feedback and corrective process between the tutor and tutee” (p. 11) in a one-to-one tutoring situation. He asserted that as teachers were allowed to gain a more accurate picture of their teaching methods, they could work to provide better future instruction.

In related studies surrounding Bloom’s work in this area, it was discovered that improved instructional strategies did positively affect student learning. In their meta-analysis of the effect of enhanced instruction, Tenenbaum and Goldring (1989) noted that “teachers’ instructional behaviour can be altered with directed attention and feedback. By decomposing overall teaching methods into specific instructional components, such as use of cues and reinforcement, teachers can systematically enhance instruction” (p. 63). Of the teaching methods studied, Guskey and Pigott (1988) noted that:

Mastery learning is generally more easily adapted to classroom situations where a single teacher has charge of 25 or more students and both instructional time and the curriculum are relatively fixed. In a mastery learning class, the teacher determines the pace of the original instruction and directs the accompanying feedback and corrective procedures. (p. 197)
This mastery learning framework is one that is commonly used in instrumental music classes. The teacher determines the pace of the instruction, and is the sole person giving feedback and corrective procedures. For many years, this has been viewed as the most efficient method for conducting an instrumental music class. Reimer (1989) indicates the hazard within such an instructional arrangement:

The problem, of course, is the limited degree to which performers in groups can contribute their own creative decisions as opposed to the unifying decisions make by the conductor, whose job it is to mold [sic] a coherent performance that is true to the piece itself. So, by the very nature of musical performance in large groups, the conductor is in a position to make far more creative choices than the players or singers. Since the conductor is the teacher, and often a teacher working under severe pressure to produce the maximum possible level of performance in the minimum of time available, the result is usually that the performers do what they are told, with little if any personal, artistic involvement in either making musical decisions or being led to understand why those decisions are at a high level. (pp. 71-72)

Schön extends on this idea from another viewpoint as he discussed the difficulty of ensuring the quality of the feedback and corrective procedures be maintained or enhanced over time. Schön (1983) stated that:

As a practice becomes more repetitive and routine, and as knowing-in-practice becomes increasingly tacit and spontaneous, the practitioner may miss important opportunities to think about what he is doing. He may find that . . . he is drawn into patterns of error which he cannot correct. And if he learns, as often happens, to be selectively inattentive to phenomena that do not fit categories of his knowing-in-action, then he may suffer from boredom or “burn-out” and afflict his clients with the consequences of his narrowness and rigidity. When this happens, the practitioner has “overlearned” what he knows. (p. 61)

In my experience, we tend to fall into routine ways of responding which lessen the effectiveness of our teaching.
Teacher Perceptions of Talent

One of the documented benefits of mastery learning is the decrease in teacher perceptions of talent. Reimer (1989) highlighted the problem of educating only the talented because “the study of art as a ‘discipline,’ with primary attention given to the accumulation of information or the development of skills, is formalistic in flavour” (p. 25). He went on to say, “Perhaps the most widespread application of Formalism to music education is the policy of teaching the talented and entertaining the remaining majority” (p. 25). Elliott (1995) dismisses the notion of musical talent as something that should be included in discussions regarding music education:

No one is born musical. Instead, people are born with the capacities of attention, awareness, and memory that enable them to learn to think musically – to make music and listen for music competently, if not proficiently. Musicianship is achieved through music teaching and learning; it is neither a gift nor a talent. True, some people seem to have high levels of musical intelligence and high levels of interest in learning to make and listen for music well. These factors may enable such people to develop musicianship and musical creativity more deeply and broadly than others. Nevertheless, the vast majority of people have sufficient musical intelligence to achieve at least a competent level of musicianship through systematic programs of music education. (p. 236)

In a 1982 study Guskey discovered that teachers who employed mastery learning techniques in their classrooms formed different expectations concerning student achievement than other teachers. Guskey (1982) stated:

As teachers adopt more effective instructional practices and as a result, experience a change in their effectiveness with students, the relationship between their initial expectations for performance and student achievement outcomes does appear to be reduced. In addition, under these more effective instructional conditions, teachers appear to be less consistent in their ability to rate or classify students’ achievement potential. It is probable that as teachers become more successful in enhancing the learning of students, they have greater difficulty categorizing students by such characteristics as achievement potential. Under these conditions,
teachers are likely to view students according to more alterable characteristics, which they as teachers might be able to influence.

It is also possible that the differential behavioural patterns of teachers typically associated with their expectations for students are altered when they adopt more effective instructional practices. In other words, under more effective instructional conditions (such as those associated with mastery learning) teachers may interact similarly with high- and low-expectation students, provide similar types of praise for each, provide similar kinds of feedback to each, and make comparable demands for work and effort of each. (p. 348)

This is an interesting concept in the light of instrumental music classes. How different things might be if we used teaching techniques that stripped away the formalist notion of talent, which connects a student’s perceived level of talent to their achievement potential. Rather than spending the majority of our class time addressing the talented, perhaps engaging in a critically-reflective dialogue with our students, regardless of whether or not they are visibly talented, would help all students see that they have the same opportunity to succeed in a performance based class. This compels the teacher to look for the elements of each student’s technical and musical development that can be improved through effective teaching techniques.

Another key element in the effectiveness of mastery learning is the increased time students spend actively learning. Guskey and Pigott (1988) reported they:

Found evidence that mastery learning students attend class more regularly and spend a greater portion of their class time on task. We also found evidence that mastery teachers use class time more efficiently, providing students with greater amounts of direct instructional time in class and, therefore, lessening the need for additional time outside of class. (p. 214)

This was a contextual component of this study. A studio instruction scenario is very much a mastery learning environment. Time is used efficiently and the instructions given are personalized. The study of mastery learning techniques suggests that this is possible in the larger classroom. The success of mastery learning seems to lie in the quality of the direct instruction and feedback that students receive. Using the lens of reflective practice I examined the instruction and feedback that the participant used in her teaching.
What are the elements of studio teaching that foster significant growth in students? How can teachers frame their teaching of a large group in a manner similar to a studio lesson to encourage the same results in a large group context? The literature on reflective practice gives us a way to get inside the conversations that occur in a master apprentice relationship and can shed light on this critical component of teaching.

**Terminology Used in Schön’s Literature on Reflective Practice**

Schön (1983) examined the elements of professional practice. Before I begin a discussion of his writings, it is important that a number of terms be defined.

**Reflection-on-Action.** This is the process by which practitioners reflect on actions they have taken in the past (Schön, 1983).

**Knowing-in-Action.** Schön (1983) defined this term as the “characteristic mode of ordinary practical knowledge” (p. 54). He stated that “although we sometimes think before acting, it is also true that in much of the spontaneous behaviour of skilful practice we reveal a kind of knowing which does not stem from a prior intellectual operation” (p. 51). He gave the example of throwing a ball. We can all throw a ball, but few of us can describe how we do it, that is we cannot describe all the physical and neurological processes at work when throwing a ball.

**Reflection-in-Action.** Schön (1983) aptly defined his term as “phrases like ‘thinking on your feet,’ ‘keeping your wits about you,’ and ‘learning by doing’ suggest not only that we can think about what we are doing but that we can think about doing something while we are doing it” (p. 54). He contended that this process occurs within the context of any type of performance where practitioners must adjust spontaneously to elements that are changing around them. Schön identified four constants that practitioners bring to their reflection-in-action:

1. The media, languages, and repertoires that practitioners use to describe reality and conduct experiments.
2. The appreciative systems they bring to problem-setting, to the evaluation of inquiry, and to reflective conversation.
3. The overarching theories by which they make sense of phenomena.
The role frame within which they set their tasks and through which they bound their institutional settings (p. 270).

Reciprocal Reflection-in-Action. A dialogue of coach and student that is intended to help students become proficient in reflection-in-action. The student is usually involved in an activity where they are learning by doing with the help of an experienced coach.

Frame Experiment. Schön (1983) defines a frame experiment as a means of recasting a problematic situation by constructing a new frame to impose on a situation. The new frame may be a new way of setting the problem, changing the practitioner’s role in relation to the problem or integrating/choosing between the values within a situation.

Reflective Practice

In The Reflective Practitioner Schön (1983) stated, “We are in need of inquiry into the epistemology of practice. What is the kind of knowing in which competent practitioners engage” (p. viii)? Indeed, as we examine the differences between studio and large group instruction we must be examining the kind of knowing that teachers employ in each of these situations. In his book, Schön posited the assumption that “competent practitioners usually know more than they can say. They inhabit a knowing-in-practice, most of which is tacit” (p. viii). This is often the case for professionals in music education. Because of the nature of music educators’ training and their prior immersion in the discipline as performers, they bring a substantial amount of tacit knowing-in-practice to their teaching. Reimer (1989) details the elements within most North American music educators’ training as follows:

Four influential sources of education and experience contribute to the curriculum concept held by music educators in this specialization [band or choral directors]: (1) the school experience they underwent as students, (2) their overall college teacher education program, (3) the performance aspect of their college training and, (4) the activities of their performance community peers including professional in-service efforts. Each of these exerts significant influences on what
performance directors envision as a proper curriculum. And all, unfortunately, tend to reinforce a narrow sense of such a curriculum. (p. 197)

Elliott (1995) highlights the effect of a strong performance background in the development of the tacit understanding of musicians and music educators:

When we know how do to something competently, proficiently, or expertly, our knowledge is not manifested verbally but practically. During the continuous actions of singing or playing instruments our musical knowledge is in our actions; our musical thinking and knowing are in our musical doing and making [italics in original]. Thus, it is entirely appropriate to describe competent musical performers as thinking very hard and deeply (but tacitly) as they perform (or improvise) – as they construct and chain musical patterns together; as they vary, transform, and abstract musical patterns; as they judge the quality of their musical constructions in relation to specific criteria and traditions of musical practice; and as they interpret the emotional expressiveness of musical patterns. . . . For the most part, however, performers think nonverbally in [italics in original] action, reflect-in-action, and know-in-action. (p. 56)

This aim of this study is to uncover some of that tacit knowledge.

Kilbourn (1988) raised a question of Schön that must be addressed at the outset of this type of study:

Given the press of the classroom, if a teacher’s concepts (metaphors, images, understandings, constructs, etc.) for reflecting-in-action are narrow or inadequate, where is there a chance for their consideration? Under classroom conditions it is difficult to see how a teacher’s reflection-in-action can remain alive, how it can be open to adjustment or change, how it can avoid slipping into a habitual and stale pattern of reflecting-in-action and habitual and stale ways of responding? (p. 93)

The starting point for this type of reflection-on-action begins with a healthy dissatisfaction with one’s work. As teachers, we all believe that more can be done to improve the learning of our students. Schön (1983) called this dissatisfaction a “crisis of confidence” wherein professionals “focus on the mismatch of traditional patterns of practice and knowledge to features of the practice situation – complexity, uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and value conflict – of whose importance they are becoming
increasingly aware” (p.18). He went on to say that this disturbs us as professionals because we have “no satisfactory way of describing or accounting for the artful competence which practitioners sometimes reveal in what they do” (p. 19). In his 1987 book, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, Schön stated that:

> Our descriptions of knowing-in-action are always *constructions* [italics in original]. They are always attempts to put into explicit, symbolic form a kind of intelligence that begins by being tacit and spontaneous. Our descriptions are conjectures that need to be tested against observation of their originals – which, in at least one respect, they are bound to distort. For knowing-in-action is dynamic, and “facts,” “procedures,” “rules,” and “theories” are static. (p. 25)

A process of reflection-in-action would allow teachers to begin to analyze their own tacit understandings and begin to develop explanations for the things that they do in the studio and large group contexts. Kilbourn (1988) supported this point when he stated “among the various considerations that go into a teacher’s reflection-in-action are those which relate to the role of reasons in discussion” (p. 101). How teachers speak to their students, both honouring the reasons students give for their actions and knowing when to give reason to students, is the key element of this study. What are the elements of this dialogue that occurs between teacher and student in the studio and large group context? If that conversation is most powerful in a one-on-one context, how can we bring the power of that conversation to a large group?

Although students were not the direct focus of this study, how the teacher perceives and correspondingly treats them has much to do with the teacher’s reflection-in-action. Schön (1983) posited that all professionals deal with unique cases in their daily work. This is true in education as well. In *The Adaptive Dimension: In Core Curriculum* (1992) Saskatchewan Education differentiated levels of decision making within the Adaptive Dimension. Teachers begin with a broad set of decisions regarding their entire class of students and subsequently move the focus to smaller groups of students and ultimately the individual student. As teachers shift their attention between groups, they make decisions regarding curriculum, instruction, and assessment suitable for each. At the individual student focus, everything is tailored to the unique needs of that one student. Each of these groups can be regarded as a unique case requiring
different types of instructional strategies, feedback and corrective procedures. I was interested to observe if it were at the individual student level of focus where the greatest opportunity presented itself to have each student begin to reflect on his or her own actions as a learner, or if this happened more readily in the large group context.

Another element of this study was the role of the teacher. How teachers view their role will determine their curricular choices, their style of teaching, type of feedback and assessment tools. As reflective practitioners, teachers constantly adjust these decisions to meet the needs of each student. As teachers make these decisions, they choose language that will meet each student’s level of comprehension and then use language to move the student forward. It is in these conversations where much can be learned about our practice as teachers. Schön (1983) stated that:

Whatever the coach may choose to say, it is important that he say it, for the most part, in the context of the student’s doing [italics in original]. He must talk to the student while she is in the midst of a task (and perhaps stuck in it), or is about to begin a new task, or thinks back on a task she has just completed, or rehearses in imagination a task she may perform in the future. (p. 102)

While the teacher speaks to the student, both are deeply involved in a process of knowing-in-action, and reflection-in-action. Elliott (1995) gives a vivid example of the above regarding music making:

Musicers [those making music] act and react in relation to the musical feedback inherent in the quality of their own music making. They evaluate their musicing [sic] and musical works in relation to the context of their actions: the accomplishments and reflections of mentors and peers past and present. And because the relationships formed between and among these four musical dimensions [(1) a doer, (2) some kind of doing, (3) something done, and (4) the complete context in which doers do what they do (Elliott, 1995, p. 40)] require the intersections of contexts that are social (at least in part), we can expect these relationships to generate beliefs and controversies about who counts as a good musicer [sic], about what counts as good music making, and so on. (p. 41)

This is the case in an instrumental music program. We speak to our students while they are in the midst of playing. We stop, critically reflect and then try again. In this type of
interchange the teacher should be encouraging students to be involved in this process for themselves, rather than waiting for the teacher to do it for them. Elliott (1995) would concur:

\[
\ldots \text{with the guidance of educated teachers, students learn to reflect on the causes of their musical successes and failures in the course of their focussed actions. Students learn how to target their attention to different aspects of their musical thinking-in-action in relation to practical and formal concepts.} \quad \text{(p. 62)}
\]

Here is where I see a distinction between the studio and the larger classroom. In studio, teachers involve their students in critical reflection more often, while in a large class context only the teacher becomes the sole person involved in critical reflection. They then mete out directions asking the students to change their actions until the desired result is achieved. How teachers construct the context for learning has much to do with their tacit understandings and of the performance for which they believe their students capable.

The problem-setting behaviours of teachers was another aspect of this study. I used Schön’s construct of problem-setting. Schön defined problem-setting as “the process by which we define the decision to be made, the ends to be achieved, the means which may be chosen” (p. 40). Describing the process of problem-setting he stated:

\[
\text{When we set the problem, we select what we will treat as the “things” of the situation, we set the boundaries of our attention to it, and we impose upon it a coherence which allows us to say what is wrong and in what directions the situation needs to be changed. Problem-setting is a process in which, interactively, we name the things to which we will attend and frame the context in which we will attend to them.} \quad \text{(p. 40)}
\]

A teacher teaching instrumental music encounters these types of problems all the time. As we listen to and respond to what we are hearing, we must break apart what we are hearing, name the elements that need attention and then build a contextual frame to begin the process of attending to the problem at hand. The building of this contextual frame is of great interest to me. What informs our building of these frames? What things must we take into consideration when building these frames so that students can understand how the problem at hand is being solved? Schön (1983) stated that:
When someone reflects-in-action, he becomes a researcher in the practice context. He is not dependent on the categories of established theory and technique, but constructs a new theory of the unique case. His inquiry is not limited to a deliberation about means which depends on a prior agreement about ends. He does not keep means and ends separate, but defines them interactively as he frames the problematic situation. He does not separate thinking from doing, ratiocinating his way to a decision which he must later convert to action. Because his experimenting is a kind of action, implementation is built into his inquiry. (p. 68)

This is often the case in music instruction. Elliott (1995) referred to this as situated impressionistic musical knowledge. By impressionistic he meant that we have an intuition of what we might do. Referring to situated knowledge he stated:

> It cannot be taught or learned in abstraction from the actions and contexts of actual music making. Impressionistic musical knowledge develops through critical musical problem solving in relation to natural music making challenges (for example, compositions to interpret and perform, improvisations to make). (p. 65)

We continually experiment until we achieve the artistic ends for which we are searching. Schön called the events in the above quotation a frame experiment wherein the teacher imposes an analytical frame (which is informed by past experience) upon a problematic situation in order to solve it. I was interested to discover if my participant used similar or divergent frame experiments as she worked with an individual student versus the large group. Schön referred to the underlying structure of our work as a schema. For teachers, their schema is that of pedagogy. Within the schema of pedagogy a teacher works with the common figures of instruction, language, conversation, feedback and assessment among other things. I was wondering if there were schemata utilized in studio instruction that could be used in large group instruction with similar effects. What common figures existed within each schema?

This method of framing and solving problems indicates a different relationship between teacher and student than that found in traditional classrooms. Teacher and student work together in partnership in order to solve common problems. In this context
student and teacher share a common vocabulary which is used to “convey particular values of experience” (Schön, 1983, p. 97). This is done to bring the student into the language of the discipline being studied. Schön (1987) stated that “their dialogue has three essential features: it takes place in the context of the student’s attempts to design; it makes use of actions as well as words; and it depends on reciprocal reflection-in-action” (p. 101). This also enables the teacher to reframe problems in the vocabulary of the discipline in order to solve them. By applying discrete understandings of the discipline to problems, the teacher is able to build an analytical framework from which to work. Schön (1983) stated that competent professionals “will reflect-in-action on the situation’s back-talk, shifting stance as they do so from “what if?” to recognition of implications, from involvement in the unit to consideration of the total, and from exploration to commitment” (p. 103). It was these reflective moves that I hoped to observe in my case study.

**Authentic Assessment**

Assessment in music education has been a profoundly under-discussed topic mainly due to the nature of the how music is taught and learned. Elliott (1995) stated: 

The primary function of assessment in music education is not to determine grades but to provide accurate feedback to students about the quality of their growing musicianship. Learners need constructive feedback about why, when, and how they are meeting musical challenges (or not) in relation to standards and traditions. . . . Feedback is important to keep students in the “flow channel” of self-growth and enjoyment. (p. 264)

I have long argued that the use of proper assessment techniques can improve the quality of teaching and learning that goes on in our classrooms. *Authentic assessment* is an assessment technique that fits well in the performance based environment of a band classroom. Saskatchewan Learning (1999) defines *authentic assessment* as follows:

Authentic assessment, alternative assessment, and performance-based assessment are terms that are often used synonymously to describe alternatives to traditional or conventional testing. These terms refer to variants of performance assessments that require students to actively accomplish complex and significant tasks that
indicate student’s prior knowledge, recent learnings and problem-solving skills. These types of assessments require students to generate rather than select a response. . . . Teachers have always relied on informal observations and questioning to assess how a lesson is going, which students need more practice, or how well group members are working together. A reconsideration of these strategies within the framework of alternative assessment has led to making explicit and formal what was implicit and informal. (*Student Evaluation: A Staff Development Handbook*, p. 43)

Because of the facilitative nature of this teacher-student partnership, authentic assessment is the most logical vehicle for ascertaining what students have learned. If the dominant learnings take place within the context of reciprocal reflection-in-action then the tools of authentic assessment can facilitate that discussion within the larger group. Within authentic assessment we do not grade the formative attempts at learning something. We only grade the final product after sufficient formative attempts have been completed. Schön (1983) reiterates this idea:

> Within a process of inquiry, evaluations of methods and products may be objective in the sense that they are independent of mere opinion. Across processes of inquiry, differences of evaluation may not be objectively resolvable. Resolution of such differences depends on the little-understood ability of inquirers to enter into one another’s appreciative systems and to make reciprocal translations from one to the other. (p. 273)

Reflection-in-action requires a low-risk practice context. This low-risk context is easily provided in a one-on-one teaching situation. I hoped to see if this low-risk context could be created in a large group context through authentic assessment tasks and appropriate formative assessments.

At times Schön indicates that assessment within design (or performance) activities is difficult due to the fact that students often cannot discover what they must learn until they go about doing what they cannot do. It is in action that students begin to uncover the things they are to learn. The teacher cannot tell the student what to do because the student isn’t able to understand a technical description of the upcoming activity. It is only through the process of doing that the student gains the vocabulary and reasons
required to understand what they have just done. In terms of assessment, do we allow students to self-assess their performance to a mastery standard and not worry about the process of getting there, or do we attempt to guide the process through key learnings as the student works their way to mastery of the task at hand? This activity happens differently in the private studio and the large class context. In the private studio, formative assessment happens quite naturally in the interchange between student and teacher. Many frame experiments are carried out and their successes or failures can be immediately evaluated against the standard of the master teacher. In a large group context, this type of activity is more difficult to coordinate. It certainly cannot happen at the same speed in the studio context, but it can take place and make for significant gains in the pace of learning. I hoped to observe frame experiments within the large group context during the course of the research.

During the course of this study I was interested to discover what elements of teaching and assessment could improve student learning. Were there elements of studio teaching that could improve teaching and learning in a large group context? Did a teacher bring a different set of understandings and frame experiments to studio teaching and large group teaching and what was the effect on student learning of each? This study attempted to find answers to the above questions.
CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

Design of the Study

Erikson (1988) suggested that case study, accompanied by an analytic framework, is an appropriate way to gain insight into the thought and decision processes of teachers as they engage in their work with students. Allowing ourselves to critically reflect on our actions within the boundaries of an analytic framework can produce insights that increase our knowledge about teaching. Merriam (1988) stated that “case study is a basic design that can accommodate a variety of disciplinary perspectives, as well as philosophical perspectives on the nature of research itself” (p. 2). This study incorporated a variety of perspectives such as mastery learning, reflective practice, tutoring and authentic assessment.

I used a qualitative case study format as defined by Merriam (1988). “The qualitative case study can be defined as an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single entity, phenomenon, or social unit. Case studies are particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic and rely heavily on inductive reasoning and handling of multiple data sources” (p. 16). This study contains all four of these characteristics. This study is particularistic in that it focuses on the phenomenon of reflective practice within two teaching contexts. The study is bounded within the contexts of studio teaching and a full group instrumental music class. As a case study, it is inherently descriptive. The research method I used within this case study was qualitative inquiry (Eisner, 1998; Kincheloe, 2003, Merriam, 2002). Care was taken to gather a detailed description of the participant’s thoughts regarding teaching, teaching practice and reflection on practice. The heuristic element of this study will hopefully reveal some connections between the studio and full class contexts. As the study progressed, inductive reasoning was used as relationships between the two contexts were studied.

In this study I prepared one case study of one teacher who works in this manner. I chose to do a case study of a solitary teacher because the focus of this study was on the dialogue that the teacher used in each teaching context. A practical reason limiting my
study to one teacher was the fact that very few classroom teachers continue to teach private lessons as part of their practice. I used methods of qualitative inquiry as I observed the participant teacher at work in each environment and conducted follow up interviews to allow her to reflect on the vignettes I recorded of her teaching. What I hoped to develop were some insights regarding the application of studio principles to the large group that can help to inform what we do in our classrooms.

In case study research the issue of generalizability and transferability is a real one. Eisner (1998) encapsulates this issue as follows:

> . . .random sampling is the cornerstone on which statistical inferences are built. Such inferences, in general, become more reliable as the size of the random sample is increased and the parameters of the population from which it is drawn better understood. Given such assumptions about generalization, what are we to do with the case of \( N = 1 \)? If samples must be random and if the size of the sample makes a difference, how shall we regard studies whose subjects are neither randomly selected nor very large? The individual case study, after all, could not be any smaller. (p. 197)

Eisner goes on to discuss many different viewpoints on the issue of generalizability and transferability in qualitative research. His argument centers on the notion of the capacity of people to learn in a variety of ways from the knowledge that is accumulated through many different types of research. This is especially true in research in education. The ability to generalize from research conducted in the field of education is very difficult due to the fact that the context of each teaching situation is very different. Eisner (1998) states:

Research studies, even in related areas in the same field, create their own interpretive universe. Connections have to be built by readers, who must also make generalizations by analogy and extrapolation, not by a watertight logic applied to a common language. Problems in the social sciences are more complex than putting the pieces of a puzzle together to create a single, unified picture. Given the diversity of methods, concepts, and theories, it’s more a matter of seeing what works, what appears right for particular settings, and creating different perspectives from which the situation can be construed.
. . . Human beings have the spectacular capacity to go beyond the information given, to fill in gaps, to generate interpretations, to extrapolate, and to make inferences in order to construe meanings. Through this process knowledge is accumulated, perception refined, and meaning deepened. (p. 211)

Lincoln and Guba (1985) also suggest that transferability relies on the reader:

If there is to be transferability, the burden of proof lies less with the original investigator than with the person seeking to make an application elsewhere. The original inquirer cannot know the sites to which transferability might be sought, but the appliers can and do. (p.298)

The results of this study will not be generalizable in the quantitative sense, rather, they rely on the reader to interpret, extrapolate and make inferences as they construct their own meaning from this case study.

**Participant**

The participant for this study was purposefully selected (Patton, 1997) based on the following criteria:

1) The participant was a certified teacher teaching instrumental music.
2) The participant taught both private lessons and large ensemble instrumental classes.
3) The participant played either a wind or percussion instrument.

A pseudonym (Danielle) was used for the participant during the study. All identifying features of the school and the participant were removed from the final writing. Because this case study required observing the teacher while teaching, students were present but I was only recording what the teacher had said and done, as well as her reflections on the events of the classes taught. Due to the intimate nature of studio teaching, parental consent and student assent was obtained for the students who received private lessons.

**Data Collection**

Data were collected through interviews with the participant and observation of the participant teaching three private lessons and four sessions of a large ensemble instrumental class comprised of grade seven students. An extensive pre-observation
interview (1 ½ hours) was conducted with the participant to gather data regarding an understanding of how she taught in each context and the ideas brought to each context. Following the initial interview, I observed the participant in private studio lessons with two students and one band class only. There was a follow up interview of approximately 45 minutes in duration after each cycle of observation. Thus, there were approximately 45 minutes of interviewing per cycle. The data-gathering cycle was as follows:

- Baseline Interview – May 2, 2004
- Band Class Observation – May 4, 2004
- Band Class Observation – May 6, 2004
- Interview – May 7, 2004
- Band Class Observation – May 10, 2004
- Private Lesson Observations (student #1 and student #2) – May 11, 2004
- Interview – May 14, 2004
- Private Lesson Observation (student #1) – May 18, 2004
- Private Lesson Observation (student #2) – May 25, 2004
- Band Class Observation – May 27, 2004
- Final Interview – June 23, 2004

During the observation of studio lessons I documented the teacher’s framing and solving of problems and the language she used during instruction and the giving of feedback. Field notes were prepared during the observations of lessons and classes, and were not transcribed. The participant teacher was audio taped via a lapel microphone. This captured the participant teacher’s dialogue and not that of the students. The interview sessions were audio taped and transcribed. Interviewing took approximately 6 to 9 hours.

I planned to gather documents such as assignments, assessment tools, and written instructions given by the teacher but it soon became apparent that there would not be anything to gather. Danielle only wrote basic instructions in her private students’ books.

**Data Interpretation**

The collected data were transcribed and the resulting data file was used as the source for interpretation. Reviewing the initial research questions, it was apparent that
the question regarding assessment techniques would not be answered. I decided to recast the notion of formal assessment techniques to an examination of the feedback given to students. This allowed me to stay true to the notion of assessment and also led to some insights that would have otherwise been unavailable.

As I set out to interpret the data, I noticed that the research questions would be hard to address one by one, as they each constituted a portion of a dynamic set of relationships in the process of dialogue. As I pondered how I might apply a set of constructs to the data, I noticed that Schön’s (1983) constants of Reflection-In-Action would do an effective job of allowing me to work with the data I had collected. Their use is described in detail in Chapter Five.

Data Storage

All audio-recorded data and subsequent transcripts will be securely stored for a minimum of five years by the researcher’s supervisor, Dr. Alan Ryan in the Department of Curriculum Studies, College of Education, at the University of Saskatchewan.

The participant was not involved in the analysis of the data following the data collection phase. The emergent design of the study involved Danielle in a level of analysis as the study progressed.

Ethics

I received approval from the University Advisory Committee on Ethics in Behavioural Science Research (Appendix A) and permission for access from the school division (Appendix E). The participating teacher and the two private students and their parents were provided with ethics contracts (Appendices B & C), outlining the purposes of the study, the nature of participant involvement, and an indication of the time commitment. The contracts addressed understandings and agreements related to confidentiality, voluntary participation, ownership of the data, and the inclusion of the participant’s version in the event of disagreement over interpretation. During the study, the participant was given the opportunity to review the transcripts prior to analysis, and at the end of this review process she signed a data release form (Appendix D).
No problems arose in obtaining ethics clearance during the study. The students at the observation school did not have to sign ethics contracts because their anonymity was protected by having Danielle use a lapel microphone which only recorded her voice.
CHAPTER FOUR

Data Collection

I carried out my case study with Danielle (a pseudonym) during May and June of 2004. I had the opportunity to interview Danielle and watch her teach both a full band class and two private students. The schedule for data gathering was as follows:

- Baseline Interview – May 2, 2004
- Band Class Observation – May 4, 2004
- Band Class Observation – May 6, 2004
- Interview – May 7, 2004
- Band Class Observation – May 10, 2004
- Private Lesson Observations (student 1 and student 2) – May 11, 2004
- Interview – May 14, 2004
- Private Lesson Observation (student #1) – May 18, 2004
- Private Lesson Observation (student #2) – May 25, 2004
- Band Class Observation – May 27, 2004
- Final Interview – June 23, 2004

Danielle was audio taped during all of the band classes, private lessons and interviews. All taped material was transcribed. Interviews followed each iteration of her teaching cycle so that I could participate in reflection on her teaching and use her work to inform the interview questions. Because this study sought to discover tacit understandings, it was critical that interviews be tied to her work and that she be encouraged to explain how she framed problems during her teaching.

The data are presented in chronological order as per the data gathering schedule. When possible, interview data that explain Danielle’s actions while she was teaching are integrated into the description of her at work. Otherwise, the interviews or observations will be reported separately with summary comments to tie them together.

In this study I was primarily interested in how Danielle frames problems and what information informs her framing and solving of problems. Further, I was interested in the assessment techniques and feedback that Danielle used in her private and classroom
teaching. I was interested to discover if these processes were carried out differently in band classes and private lessons.

In our first interview I was interested in developing a picture of Danielle as a musician and a teacher. Because she was in the third year of her career she was in a good position to speak somewhat confidently about her development as a student and her work as a professional. In this interview I wanted to explore her beliefs about music, teaching, students, and her perception of her teaching. I was interested to know if the way that she was taught had any effect on her tacit understandings and the way that she framed problems as a teacher. Our interview took place in a coffee shop and was relaxed and collegial. Danielle and I had never formally met before this interview. We had each heard of the other but had never had an opportunity to meet.

Danielle is in her late 20s. She grew up in rural Saskatchewan and moved to the city where she currently resides. She completed a combined Music Education and Education program at a Western Canadian university. Danielle is an accomplished flute player. Danielle is currently a full-time elementary band teacher who itinerates between five schools. Her job is hectic and she works with over 240 students each week. Danielle is completing her third year of teaching and the honeymoon is definitely over. She is positive about her work but a definite realism comes through in her words. Danielle is a strong teacher who, like many teachers, is not aware of how good she is at her job. This uncertainty regarding her efficacy emerged a number of times in our interviews. Danielle also operates a private studio out of her home where she teaches private flute lessons. Her private lessons are given once a week for half an hour with each student.

Baseline Interview – May 2, 2004

Musical Training in Piano. We began our interview discussing her musical training. Danielle began her musical training by studying the piano when she was 10 years old, but became less serious in her study after she entered university to major on the flute. She started playing flute in Grade 10 in a band class. Danielle studied piano formally from ages 10-19 and the flute from age 15 through to the completion of her degree. Danielle had two piano teachers. She thought her first teacher was the stronger
while her second teacher was not very strong. Of that experience Danielle said, “I felt like I taught myself for quite . . . for most of it.” [May 2, 24-25] She said her teacher wasn’t a great teacher because “she couldn’t articulate what I needed to do. I’m not sure if she totally understood it [the music] herself.” [May 2, 35-36]

**Indicators of Personal Success in Piano.** Due to her teacher’s inability to articulate what Danielle had to do, Danielle had a difficult time knowing if she was performing well or not. She sought the opinion of her band teacher, and he was the only external source of validation she received. Danielle also spoke about just knowing when things were right.

Well, sometimes you just know – when you understand it and it works and you can tell this is the melody, this flows, I can feel this, this works for me. And then other times it’s like I don’t even understand what’s going on here, you know, and I think on some level you just, you know when you’re getting it and when you’re not, to a certain extent. [May 2, 41-45]

**Musical Training on Flute.** Danielle experienced the opposite sequence in her study of flute. Her first teacher was good, but essentially taught the basics. Danielle described her flute teacher in university as a “goddess”. Danielle especially appreciated the teaching style of her university flute teacher. Danielle stated that her teacher seemed to have this “grand overall plan that only she knew” [May 2, 79] for the four years she studied with her. She noted a number of specific qualities that made this teacher excellent. She commented that the teacher really knew and understood her as a person, that praise was always accompanied by a suggestion of something that could be done better and that her teacher had a seemingly innate ability to break problems down into their fundamental pieces so that they could be solved.

Danielle also had an excellent experience with her high school band teacher. She appreciated the fact that the class was approached seriously and that her teacher made learning fun while still challenging all of the students in his class. He particularly went out of his way to encourage Danielle to audition for honour groups and attend camps to enrich her experience. When asked, Danielle could not articulate any specific event that made her band teacher stand out in her memory. She simply remembers it as a quality experience.


**Indicators of Personal Success.** We discussed how she would have known if she were doing well in the band context and again she talked about this innate understanding when “you just sensed it sometimes too in the music, like, you know, when after, after the piece ended when the look on, you know the look that when one of the instructors go ‘ahh’. You knew that.” [May 2, 147-149] She also said that her instructor told her when they were doing well. The only other feedback they got as a group was the audience response at concerts. In her university band experience Danielle reported that her director was the primary source of feedback regarding the quality of their work. She stated that “through him [the band director] you learned to tell what sounds good and what sounds bad” [May 2, 190-191].

Danielle described herself as a Governor General’s award-type student who was very conscientious and had to work hard at being a good musician. She described herself as independent and self-motivated.

**Effect of Former Teachers on Teaching Style.** We then switched to discussing how her experiences as a student have influenced her as a studio teacher. Danielle stated:

I played the notes a lot and I find that my students do too. My students often play like I do because I don’t necessarily know how to express how to play musically. And I think that’s also one of my problems as a teacher is in a lot of areas things came naturally to me, understanding things and stuff like that, so if a kid doesn’t have . . . has a problem, sometimes I’m at a loss of “Well, don’t you just know?” kind of thing. [May 2, 238-243]

Danielle commented that she is still working on different ways to describe things to students. At this point in her career she is drawing on the explanations she received from her teachers in the past. As a band teacher, Danielle tends to follow in the footsteps of her previous directors. She focuses on students playing as much as possible and tries to be efficient in her speaking so that no time is wasted. As a band student, both at the high school and university level, Danielle was rarely involved in any problem solving. The director located problems and then issued instructions to the students in order to solve those problems. Rarely were students involved in this process.

**Student Instruction and Feedback.** At this point in the interview, we discussed how Danielle gives instructions to her students. Danielle works to maintain a balance
between her giving instructions to her students and inviting her students to problem-solve in class. In her experience, when she invites the opinion of her students it can get away on her because once some students get the opportunity to share their opinion in one area, they feel entitled to give their opinion on all matters. Danielle has tempered this in her class by limiting the opportunities where students can give their opinion to specific events in the music they are working on; for example, she may give them some choices in tempo change at the end of a piece. With issues of quality of performance, Danielle often asks her students to comment on the quality of their performance and finds that students often know when they aren’t performing to standard and what things need to be done to bring their performance to standard. Danielle is confident that her students understand what the performance standard is in her classroom because she has given them explicit feedback on their performance standard.

This led us to discussing how Danielle gives feedback when assessing her students’ playing. In studio teaching Danielle stated that she likes to give immediate feedback which is positive, followed by a suggestion of something to work on. Danielle demonstrates frequently in her studio teaching. When asked if she encourages her private students to self-analyze she said, “I don’t think I encourage enough self-analysis. I usually have an answer in mind.” [May 2, 355-356] Danielle thinks that she gives the same type of feedback in her band classes. She finds that student self-analysis in a band class often decays to students simply telling her what they did wrong, rather than looking for reasons why things might have gone wrong.

Reflective Practice. At this point in the interview, I began to shift into questions based on my reading of Schön’s literature on reflective practice. This type of questioning was somewhat new to Danielle in that she has not seen herself as a reflective practitioner, which is understandable given her hectic job and her status as a new teacher.

When I asked Danielle if she ever reflects on her teaching she said the she has, briefly, but she always finds that she gets sidetracked by something else. When asked if she reflects on the differences between her studio teaching and her classroom teaching she said she was more demanding in the classroom than in her lessons. She doesn’t see herself as being in a rut in terms of how she responds to students. However, she does
admit to having a default response of asking her students to use more air when she isn’t sure what the problem is.

*Perceptions of Talent.* The interview then turned to the topic of talent. Danielle believes that there is such a thing as talent to a certain degree but she believes that it can be wasted. Hard work is valued more than talent by Danielle. Danielle finds herself teaching to the middle of the road in band class. She believes that weaker students have just as much potential as her talented students. To highlight this point she shared that some of her regular students see the students in the academically gifted school as having more talent than they. She maintains that the only reason they seem to be doing better is that they work harder. Danielle also finds this to be true for the students in her studio.

*Indicators of Student Success.* Our conversation moved back to indicators of success. We had previously discussed how Danielle knew when she was successful as a performer; now we turned our attention to how she can tell when things are going well for her students. For her band students Danielle described an event referred to as an “aesthetic experience”. This is an event where following a performance a significant emotional impact was left on both performers and audience. The feeling is often difficult to articulate, but everyone recognizes that something has just happened. Danielle’s other definitions of success included things such as “kids loving making music”, students taking pride in something they do, or simply being responsible for bringing their instrument to each class. Danielle thinks that her students would define success as achieving small goals during the course of their music studies. She makes a point of celebrating each of these small achievements. Danielle is frustrated by how success is viewed by members of the school and community. For these groups success is winning first place at festivals. This is often the way that a music teacher’s competence is judged. Danielle does not believe that this is an accurate representation of success.

*Perception of Self.* Danielle is most proud of her relationships with her students. She sees this as a critical foundation of her teaching. She is keenly aware that band is one of the only places where some students find success. She finds it gratifying when the experiences she has provided for students makes a difference in their lives. Danielle values fun, discipline, hard work, key signatures, and right notes. Danielle strives to
ensure that her students can read music, not simply copy what they have been taught by rote.

**Healthy Dissatisfactions.** Danielle is confident in her abilities as a teacher, but like all professionals there are a number of areas of her practice where she has a healthy dissatisfaction. Danielle’s limited experience frustrates her most often. She said, “Sometimes when there’s a problem I can’t always fix it.” [May 2, 852] In her private teaching she expressed frustration at not knowing how to explain what she is thinking all the time.

**Assessment.** Danielle does not see the need for formal assessments with her private students. She believes that success is the reward for their efforts. In her band classes, Danielle predominantly uses verbal assessments as the students are working on the repertoire. Danielle said that she approaches student problems in a positive manner and breaks down what the student needs to do in manageable steps.

**Summary.** This interview provided many insights into Danielle as a musician and a teacher. It is clear that her experiences as a student have had a profound effect on her teaching style. She routinely uses explanations and problem frames that were used by her former teachers. It is evident that weaknesses in her former teachers’ capabilities have also carried over into Danielle’s musical and professional life. She still struggles with her ability to frame and solve problems. She has a difficult time articulating what success means both for herself and her students.

Italicized text within the case study data indicates incidences where Danielle was speaking while the students were playing their instruments. Regular text indicates that Danielle is speaking while the students are not playing and are listening to her.

**Band Class, May 4, 2004**

The band observations focus on a grade 7 band class at a K-8 school in a mid-sized western Canadian city. The band room is on the third floor of an old school and is, in many ways, an ideal space for the class. After the bell rings, the students begin entering the class a few at a time displaying all of the energy of typical 12 year olds.

Danielle is already in the room prior to the beginning of class. As students enter, she greets them and engages each of them in a brief conversation. She uses this time to
encourage individual students and to discipline others. Today’s class is 25 minutes long. On the board is the plan for the day – a warm-up, a rhythm pattern, a scale, a study, and a piece of repertoire.

Danielle begins the class with a warm-up exercise she introduced yesterday. As the students prepare to play, she verbally reinforces correct posture. The students play and the initial attempt is not up to standard. Danielle immediately begins questioning her class, “When I count you in, what kind of notes am I counting? Are these quarter notes, eighth notes, half notes? Quarter notes. So if these are quarter notes, brass what do you have at the beginning?” [May 4, 16-18] This is one of Danielle’s unconscious strategies that she has internalized. She does this because she believes you should, [Start them with [what they know] and the way they feel, “OK, OK, yeah, I know that one,” and then you take them to something they might not know. It’s less daunting I think and I think they feel better about themselves, because that’s kind of what it’s about for a lot of my kids is feeling OK about themselves. [May 7, 209-212]

The students play again and this time their attempt is successful. Danielle isolates a range problem for the brass and the entire class plays the exercise again. At the end of this playing, Danielle says, Good. Now everybody, I noticed that most of us were breathing at the end of every measure. What is it marked, what’s marked, when should you breathe? (Students answer) Yeah, so sit up straight, take in lots of air, you can last for two bars, even the flute players. [May 4, 41-44]

They begin the exercise again and Danielle says, “No breath, no breath!” while they are playing. The students are successful and they move on to a new exercise.

Danielle then directs the class’ attention to the concert Ab major scale at the back of their book. She reviews their key signature and the students play the scale. Danielle makes a couple of corrections and they move on to playing the scale in thirds. On this attempt Danielle says, “Your key signature – most of you remembered it until we got to the thirds, and then we seem to have forgotten.” [May 4, 56-57] The students make a couple of successive attempts at improving the scale in thirds. Just as Danielle is about to
change activities a student asks her why the exercise was called “thirds”. Danielle responds, saying,

Oh, you asked me a complicated question. Because if you look . . . it’s complicated music theory. But if you look at it the distance between each note is something called a third. It’s complicated music theory but that’s why it’s called thirds. [May 4, 69-71]

Danielle doesn’t want to answer her student’s question this way. Danielle knows that this student, and many others, doesn’t have the theory background to understand the concept. In order to do justice to explaining this concept Danielle feels like she would have to start the explanation right at the beginning and it would take too long given the time constraint she is under. Danielle doesn’t believe that it is important that her students fully understand this concept at this moment because,

Right now I think we have more pressing issues . . . I think topics like key signatures, which are still a huge issue for most of them. Key signatures . . . reading rhythms is more important to me right now. You just have to do what you can in the time you’re allotted. If I did get to see them five times a week instead of sometimes only twice and then now I’m not going to see them for two weeks . . . [May 7, 20-24]

If she had the luxury of time,

We would have talked about intervals, how that works, how the reason they’re called thirds is because they’re all a third apart. We would have got more into the theory aspect of it. Considering that we still don’t all know how to read the bass clef and just on Thursday, I think it was, key signatures are still a huge, huge issue. It wasn’t where we were. I definitely would have gone more into the theory aspect. [May 7, 12-16]

So, for the moment, Danielle lets this concept lie dormant. She intends to pick it up at a later date. She then moves on to have the students play an exercise titled Oh Suzanna, which is in the key of concert Ab.

The students make their initial attempt at the song. Danielle stops them and reminds them of their key signature. They try again, but it is apparent they are not applying the key signature from the scale they just played to this piece of music.
Danielle begins going through the band section by section, having the students review their key signatures out loud. She encounters a problem when she gets to the clarinet section:

Clarinets, [student] what’s yours – key signature? (The student says she doesn’t know.) You don’t know? What do you see immediately following your treble clef? Very beginning of the song. What do you see right here (the teacher points in the student’s book). Where are we, which one are we on? Here? So what are these little symbols right here? (The student responds, “The key signature?”) It is the key signature – you’re right. [May 4, 96-100]

Danielle stops immediately because this particular girl said, “I don’t understand it’ when usually she would . . . it was kind of like ‘Okay’ . . . she seems open to learning at this point in particular.” [May 7, 31-32] Danielle often wonders “if they really understand [key signatures] so I like to review that. It’s really, really important. If you can just remind them of even note names, or some things you’re doing to get them thinking . . .” [May 7, 34-36] She launches into a mini-lesson on key signatures, quickly directing questions around the room regarding sharps, flats, the function of key signatures, the names of lines and spaces, and the order of flats in a key signature. The lesson culminates in students naming the flats in the key signature of Db major. The students in the class have identified Bb, Eb, and Ab. Before she asks for the second last flat Danielle returns her focus to the student who had the initial question:

Now nobody blurt out the next one. [student] (this is the student who raised the initial question) – what was our saying. First of all is this guy right here on a line or on a space? [student], [student] only. (Student answers) It is on a line, you bet ya. There’s a line going all the way through it. What [student] is our saying for line notes in the treble clef? (Student answers correctly.) So knowing that [student with the initial question] Every Good Boy – Deserves – what would this one be? (Student answers correctly.) You betcha, this is a Db. [May 4, 118-124]

The class identifies the last flat, Danielle checks to see if what they have just done makes sense and they play through Oh Suzanna one final time before the class ends with Danielle speaking as they play, “One and two and . . . one and two . . . one . . . now key signatures . . . (exasperated sigh) . . . one and two . . . and . . .” [May 4, 130-131]
Reflecting on this lesson during our interview, we discuss how Danielle constantly tries to hook her students back to prior knowledge. Danielle does this because of the struggles she faced as a beginning player. She understands the importance of connecting abstract musical concepts to student practice. Regarding her decision to launch into a mini theory lesson Danielle says, “It just seemed like a great opportunity with that girl who was you know what, I don’t understand it, I couldn’t walk away from her when she just said that and say tough luck, [student], you should have paid attention.” [May 7, 44-46]

We then discuss Danielle’s directed questioning technique and I ask how she chooses who she will ask. Danielle responds, saying:

I try most of the time to pick kids who don’t take private music lessons. . . . The kids who I suspect might not know, I want to check and see how much they grasped of it. I try and include everybody but lots of time the kids who I know, they’ve been taking violin lessons for eight years, sometimes they do get excluded from answering the questions. I know that they know that that note is a C. It’s not an issue. I try and target the ones who . . . to see if they’re grasping it. If they’re not, then try and figure out what’s next for them. [May 7, 51-56]

Danielle makes a point of teaching so that her students can understand. She understands where each of her students is at, and this informs her next moves in the classroom.

Band Class, May 6, 2004

Today’s class will be 45 minutes long. The board is prepared with a rhythm for the day. The students arrive, set up and do some warming up/playing. As they arrive Danielle answers questions/gives encouragement, etc. There is a great deal of informal, individualized teaching going on.

As Danielle interacts with the students at the beginning of class she can be heard saying:

D and Eb are not the same note. [student] there’s something wrong with your clarinet – this one (a tone hole). (She adjusts the student’s clarinet.) Show me. (The student plays.) You’re not . . . let’s just double check here. (She corrects the student’s fingering.) You can use that fingering. I would use this fingering,
though; it’s a better one to use. See you have to push down that, and then top two (fingers), not that. (Student plays.) Now E. Use that one it sounds, it works better.

(To another student) Can you write the counting in on the board please.

(The oboe player plays part of O Canada for the teacher) That sounds way better.

[May 6, 3-12]
This is important time for Danielle because:
That’s the time the kids get to tell me something cool that happened to them or . . . it’s a little bit of down time before we really start into it. That’s the time you get to know them a little and establish a relationship with them. That’s the time you always find out about your kids with broken instruments and try and fix them. It’s different with that smaller class than it would be at, say, [school] where I have a class of 50 all the time and that time is different at [school]. It’s not so important there. The kids, I think, maybe . . . it’s different . . . they don’t talk to me as much because there’s just too many kids, it’s too busy, it’s insanity. At [observation school] that’s the important time for us there. [May 7, 219-226]

The class begins with the same warm-up exercise as May 4th. The students have hardly completed two measures when Danielle stops them, saying, “Think about why I stopped you. It’s the same reason I stopped you at the beginning of yesterday’s class. These are quarter notes brass (she is tapping the music stand).” [May 6, 19-21] The students play again and everything is correct.

Danielle then directs the class’ attention to the rhythm on the board with the counting already supplied by one of students. Danielle engages their thinking by saying, “Raise your hands if you think there are any mistakes today. Raise your hand. [student]? Raise your hand if you think it’s perfect. (students all raise their hands)” [May 6, 24-25] The students clap the rhythm on the board and then play it on concert Bb. As they work through the exercise, Danielle gives them a variety of types of feedback:
OK clap it. Watch where the eighth note rests are and make sure that you do not clap on those rests. Here we go. 1, 2. (they all clap) One more time. 1, 2. (they clap again). Ah, stop. You’re clapping on beat one, aren’t you? Let’s try it again. Here we go, ready, 1, 2. (they clap – she reinforces the rests by saying “rest” as they are clapping) OK, play it on a concert Bb, which is first note of your concert Bb major scale, which is also your tuning note. Here we go, ready, 1, 2. (the students play the rhythm). This is just . . . you’re kind of coming in right here, you’re coming in just a hair early. Do it again, ready, 1, 2. (She speaks the rhythm while they play.) Better. [May 6, 26-33]

The lesson then moves to a short lecture about enharmonics in preparation for the introduction of the chromatic scale. Danielle defines the concept, has students look at examples, has them identify enharmonic spellings and finally goes around the room having each student name some enharmonic note sets. By the end of this piece, students are naming some very insightful enharmonic sets. Danielle then directs their attention to exercise 41 (a chromatic scale) in their books where this concept is applied. Before they play, Danielle gives the following instructions:

Everybody take a look at, silently without playing, learn your first four bars. Look at your key signature, pay attention to whether you have naturals, sharps and flats, if you don’t know a fingering look it up in the back of your book. When you think you’ve got it figured out put your hand on top of your head and then I’ll know. [May 6, 53-57]

The students play and immediately Danielle does some remedial teaching:

Now I think we forgot a couple of the rules. First of all, some of us didn’t pay attention to what the key signature was. Second of all, remember that if you have a sharp sign or a flat sign or a natural sign, it remains in effect for the whole measure. For example, in measure three, trumpets, your second F would also be sharp. OK? [May 6, 64-67]

She has the students play through the first four bars note by note, so that students can hear if they are wrong (the exercise is in unison). They play the first four bars in rhythm. She then has students compare the last four bars of the exercise to the first four, noting
that the last four are simply the first four in reverse. She gives the students time to think and then they play the entire exercise with some success.

Danielle then moves on to study *Farandole*, one of the pieces the band is preparing for performance. Danielle plans to start teaching at measure 51, focussing on the trumpets and clarinets. The clarinets are weaker than the trumpets. Danielle begins with the clarinets using a whole, part, whole strategy. Danielle chooses this strategy because it was how she was taught in the past and because,

We had tried previously just to play it and play it and it hadn’t worked and it usually works because if you do it note by note they can hear when they’re doing the fingering wrong and then it’s very evident, you can’t deny that you’re playing it wrong any more. And then if you just slow it down, if you do the fingerings slowly a few times, because the transition from E to Eb is a little bit tricky for them, then if you do it slowly it’s easier to put back together. It’s too many things all at once if you do it up to tempo with new fingerings for them and me staring at them. So if you can break it down, slow things down, they can process the information and it usually works better. [May 7, 70-77]

She gently leads the clarinets through this process:

Can I hear, please, the clarinets at measure 51? . . . OK clarinets, here we go. Not too fast. (They play and make mistakes.) Play me your first note at 51 and hold it. Go. *Next note, next note, good, next note, next note.* Hey, well there you go, you just played it. Now let’s do it in rhythm. Here we go. (The students play and make more mistakes.) You could do it – so let’s just do that again. (The students play it again correctly.) Ooo, but you got a rest there, but the first two bars, that’s by far the best I’ve heard you play it. Good for you. Can you do it one more time for me and then go on? Don’t accidentally play in the rests, OK? (The students play, she speaks the counting while they play. She continues speaking while they are playing. ) *Now play with lots of air because you’re doing well. . . strong. . . strong.* (The students finish playing.) That’s it, that’s it, yup you guys got it. Now it’s going to go a little faster so be ready for that and then I need you to play out with lots of air because you’re really important there. Good, good, good! [May 6, 83-95]
She uses markedly different language when working with the trumpets on the same section of the music:

Trumpets I’m listening for your crescendo and your decrescendo when you have that [sings], I’m also looking for the right notes – as always. 51 until I tell you to stop. Ready. Remember your key signature guys. (The students play. She talks while they play and in their rests.) [May 6, 98-101]

Danielle knows that,

I can’t speak to the clarinets the same way as the trumpets. One of them will roll her eyeballs at me and the other two will start to cry. They’re different people and I think it’s just through experience, from paying attention to how they react to things. . . . you learn to praise for the little things, you know, the trumpets are capable of more I totally expect more of them. They don’t get praised for the really, really small steps. [May 7, 155-171]

Danielle is continually conscious of the language she uses with her students.

She has the whole group play Farandole from the beginning. About half way through she stops the band because the two trombone players are very out of tune with one another:

Stop. Can you both play me your D’s? Just play a D and hold it. Ready, play. Good, that’s not how it’s sounding when you’re playing. Somebody’s position is a little bit off, OK. Trombones at 9, here we go. (They play the first three notes again, it’s worse.) Stop. Do you hear how . . . yeah? Here we go. (They play again – it’s still not correct.) At least you made the same mistake together. Here we go. OK trombones. Big, big, big sound. . . . Here we go. Give me some sound. (They play and it’s much better. She encourages them to stay strong throughout. They fall apart on the last four notes.) Yeah, the last four notes were questionable but your sound right at the beginning of 9 was a hundred times better so keep that up. [May 6, 114-125]

As Danielle worked to solve the problem, she was
surprised when they played it again and the one kid said, “Oh it was me!” He heard that he was wrong. I was a little bit pleasantly surprised by that. Those boys will usually, I’m used to kids saying “oh yeah”, yeah I’m used to that. [May 7, 105-108]

Having addressed that, Danielle moves forward in the piece with the full group. As they approach measure 28, the melody instruments are drowned out by the trumpets. Danielle stops the band and has those students who play the melody raise their hands. She informs the trumpets that they do not have the melody at this point and that they should be listening for it when they try again. Danielle does this because she wants them to:

- take a little bit of ownership for . . . that’s my ultimate goal – I really just want kids to take ownership. Like to be able to identify, “OK, I have the melody here” or “I don’t.” Just think independently of me telling you what to do. So, I often do that. “Who has the melody?” [May 7, 138-141]

The group plays through the section at 28 a few more times and they play to the end of the song. Danielle is dissatisfied with their ending and has them replay the last four bars before they go to the final piece for the day.

During our interview the day following the lesson, we discuss a number of things that I observed during Danielle’s lesson. One item we discuss is how Danielle encourages students to work on things at home as they come up in class. I ask her if she has a formal mechanism in place to catalogue and track these homework assignments. Danielle agrees that having students write these assignments down would be beneficial, and intends to do so in the future.

**Band Class, May 10, 2004**

This class was 45 minutes in length, which was longer than most classes.

As students arrive, Danielle helps them with their instruments, documents practice time, and praises those who have practiced. She makes announcements and tells the students what order to put their material in for the day. Today’s class is going to be run like a dress rehearsal because the students have a concert coming up, but will be gone for the next two weeks on a trip to Quebec. Danielle wants them to run through the program prior to their departure.
Once again, Danielle has the band warm-up on exercise #40. The students play the exercise with many wrong notes. Danielle stops them and only reminds them where to breathe – she does not address the wrong notes – and they play the exercise again.

Danielle begins by reviewing a piece titled *Contra Dance* which they haven’t played since the festival in March. She gives the students a few reminders of things to watch out for and they begin playing through the piece. As the students play, Danielle gives them many verbal reminders regarding dynamics and breathing. She stops the band a few times to give direct instruction regarding dynamics:

Now, I didn’t hear much of a dynamic difference between the piano at 33 and the forte at 37. 33 people can’t get too much quieter so at 37 you have to play a little bit stronger, OK. 33! [the students play again] *Ooo, flutes. Now hold on though. STOP.* [they stop] What do we do when we’re already forte and they stick another crescendo in there. Yes, start the crescendo quietly. [May 10, 23-27]

Danielle continues to involve her students in the reflection and decision making while they play. Danielle then addresses some wrong notes in the flute section and they play to the end of the piece paying special attention to dynamics. She praises the students and they move on to *The Tempest*.

As they prepare to play *The Tempest* Danielle has the trumpets prepare, saying, “Remember, trumpets, hear the beginning in your head before we play it so we all go the right tempo. I also have to hear the melody in my head.” [May 10, 35-36] They begin the piece but soon stop. Danielle says, “Sounds like we haven’t played it in about a month and a half. Do it again. Here we go.” [May 10, 37-38] They begin the piece again and Danielle stops at measure 45. Danielle says, At 45 I’m going to ask you to do something goofy. Can you all sing your part please? When you sing your part, remember I don’t care about pitches, I care about rhythm. [the students sing their parts] *Be together. Focus. Stop.* [they stop] If you can sing it together you will be able to play it together. If you can’t sing it, you can’t play it. [they sing again] *She beats time on the music stand listen to what’s going on around you. Keep going. Stop.* [they stop] You should have been around 59. Here we go, play it. Be together, here we go. [they play]
Danielle uses this strategy to work on rhythm because:

Right away as soon as they start just singing they can hear, “Oh goodness, we’re not together at all.” And then after they sing it another time they are listening more to each other and they come together rhythmically and generally there’s a decided improvement once you put it together. Just because it takes away, they’re not having to worry about the right fingerings, about the right notes coming out they can just listen. And they all know their parts well enough that they can hum them without great stress. It takes out a couple of the stressors and makes it so they can concentrate on being rhythmically precise. [May 14, 93-99]

She chooses this strategy over a more traditional clapping and counting strategy to engage the students’ thinking in a different way. Danielle then continues the lesson at measure 77, where she encounters another problem in the trombone section.

May I hear please then trombones measure 77 from you. One, two and you are in. [the trombones play – there are obviously wrong notes] Do that again. Your slide positions weren’t entirely accurate. Do it again. [they play again – it’s worse] Play me your first note please and hold it. Listen to make sure you’re playing the same note. Ready, go. [they play – the notes aren’t the same] So which one of you is right? Do it again. [they play again – it’s closer] Your slide positions aren’t the same. Your 4th needs to come out. Play that note together. [they play again] Next note. Next note. Play me that F#. [they play - it doesn’t match] Do you hear how you’re not exactly . . . there’s a little bit of out of tuneness happening there. Do that F# again. [they play – it’s improved] That’s better. And what’s our last note? [they play – it doesn’t match] Listen. Get your slide position like that one. [they correct their intonation] Now play it in rhythm. [they play – it is improved but not perfect]. [May 10, 53-64]

The class only has time to play from this point to the end before the bell rings. Danielle has the students freeze, she makes some brief announcements and they leave. Danielle will not see this class again for two weeks.
**Private Lessons**

Besides teaching classroom music, Danielle also maintains a private teaching studio in her home where she teaches private flute lessons. In this context, Danielle is teaching in a one-on-one situation. Each lesson is 30 minutes in length. Student #1 is in grade 10 and is quite accomplished. Student #2 is in grade 11 and struggles to play at a competent level. Student #2 works very hard and has improved considerably since she began taking lessons. Both students are female and do not have the participant as their classroom teacher.

**Private Lessons, May 11, 2004 – Student #1**

Today’s lesson is the first lesson following the student’s participation in the music festival. Danielle and her student take time at the beginning of the lesson to review the adjudicator’s comments from the festival. Danielle takes this opportunity to interpret and explain some of the adjudicator’s comments.

Following their look at the festival material, Student #1 shows Danielle a difficult piece of band music from her school band. Danielle notices that the piece contains a high C and the following exchange occurs:

> You’re playing a high C! This is something we play in university band. Wow. Do you know the fingering for high C? We’ve done high C haven’t we? [student says she hasn’t] But you know . . . you don’t? Play it for me. [she shows the student the fingering and the student plays] So its very similar to Ab, I guess, with no thumb, put down the first, pinky will make it not work. [May 11, 20-24]

Once again, Danielle connects this new information with old knowledge that her student possesses. They then move on to tone development exercises. In the next exchange, Danielle asks her student a number of questions and her student answers them by demonstrating the answer rather than speaking.

> Back to your tone exercises. We were working on your low register. #3 and the Aquarium (from the Trevor Whye book) [the student plays] *Give a nice big healthy A. Pull the sound of the A right down into the lower note. Don’t lose any of your big sound.* [student loses her sound] Now hold on, that A is sounding a little bit, not as good as some of your other ones, it was sounding a little bit weak.
[student tries again] *Lots of air. Lots of air. Lots of... Lots of air on the A.* *Open up the sound. It sounds closed. Space between your back teeth.* [the student stops] OK, the aquarium. [student plays] OK, good. Let’s talk about intonation. I liked the sound better on this A when compared to the third one. You sounded less clenched, but look at the measure with the Db in it. Just play that measure once. [student plays] Do you hear, first of all Db is like the worst note on the flute, it’s always sharp and it’s really hard to play with good tone, so you might want to think about adding down your fingers [shows which holes to cover] bring down the pitch quite a bit. [student tries again] Not bad, so watch that every time you have a Db be really conscious knowing that the pitch likes to go 50 cents sharp. Good. [May 11, 32-44]

Following this discussion, they discuss a middle register exercise, review some ideas regarding articulation and verbally review a study the student began prior to the festival. They move to a duet and the student is asked to play her part:

> We were working on #3, page 13, the gigue. This one is good for you too because its quick and you’re going to have to tongue. 6/8 time. Try a little bit of this one. [the student plays] Now hold on, do that for me again. In 6/8 time where do we want our strong pulses to be? [students answers one and three] One and... [student answers one and four] Yeah, and I think the second you do that this song’s going to make more sense instead of being [sings choppy]. Let’s just try that right now. [student plays again] 1 2 3 4 5 6 [student stops] This is the speed we want to go. [teacher demonstrates] It makes more sense for the dance. [May 10, 67-73]

Once again, the student speaks very little during Danielle’s instruction. Rather, she responds quickly to the directions Danielle gives her and immediately demonstrates her understanding of those instructions in her playing.

The remainder of the lesson is spent assigning new music for study. Danielle often gives examples of what she says by playing her flute for her student. Most of the descriptions Danielle uses are in language that her student can understand. Danielle avoids the more technical language used in advanced studio instruction. Throughout the lesson, Danielle has been writing each assignment for the student in a book that the
student brings to each lesson. This book guides the student’s practice for the upcoming week.

Private Lessons, May 11, 2004 – Student #2

Student #2 arrives and they quickly get down to work. This student has not participated in the festival. The student tells Danielle that she needs a solo for an upcoming test in her band class at school. They immediately begin looking for a solo. Danielle suggests *To a Wild Rose* and *Adieu to the Piano*. She supplies a description of each and takes some time to play a bit of each for her student. The student indicates that she wants to try *Adieu to the Piano* so Danielle places the music on her stand. Before Danielle can do anything else, the student begins playing the piece, but in the wrong key. Danielle quickly stops her and reminds her of the key signature asking the student what notes she will be most likely to forget. The remainder of the lesson is spent with the student sight-reading the piece and Danielle coaching her – a wonderful demonstration of reciprocal reflection-in-action:

[the student tries to play again]  *Watch your slurs and go on. Watch the counting.*
[Teacher counts out loud at times.]  *Don’t start rushing. E naturals, E naturals!*  *Watch your slurs.*  [student stops]  Except those aren’t two C’s, that’s a B then a C, right?  [student plays the spot again]  We’re not done yet with it.  [the student says “we’re not” in a surprised tone]  Absolutely not.  There’s still three quarters of a page to go.  Write yourself a note, and here’s a pencil if you need one, about the E naturals in the first three lines.  Write yourself a big, big note.  And then in the fourth line the key signature changes.  What does it change to?  [the student lists the flats in the key signature]  OK, they do throw in some natural signs there overhead.  When you’re ready try the trio.  [student plays]  *Ab! Ab! But now it’s Eb’s, now you have Eb’s. Mmm, mmm, mmm, think about that note.*  [student names it and continues playing]  *Eb’s! Now I’ve created a machine! Now play some Eb’s.*  [student stops]  Let’s keep on going.  [student plays again]  Now I’m going to stop and ask you to think about your counting there.  [the student talks through the counting]  Yes, it’s one and a half beats to the dotted quarter note, so if you were to count in your head what would you think?  [the student writes the
counting in incorrectly] Not quite. The way that you’ve written it here . . . do you have an eraser? So now if we have the one and signifies one beat. If you just had the one it would be half a beat, if you just had the and it would be half a beat. So you told me that this note gets how many beats right here? [student responds one and a half] One and a half. So right here you have one, one beat. [the student says “why don’t I have a half, I have an and”?] The one and equals one whole beat. I totally understand where your train of thought is coming from on this one. It’s not like a one plus, OK? If you just had one by itself, that would be like a single eighth note. If you just had the and by itself it would also be like a single eighth note. If you add two single eighth notes together what do you get? [the student says a quarter] A quarter, and that’s what you have right there. You’ve shown that’s one complete beat. [the student understands] Yeah, because then this signifies half the beat and then you have to finish it. Makes sense? [the student plays again] Eb’s! Eb’s! Here’s your pencil. [student plays again] and two and three and . . . yes . . . Ab’s, Ab’s! Stop right now and I need you to write yourself a note about the key change here. The Ab’s and the Eb’s are problematic for you. [student writes on her music] Second last, play that one again for me. [student plays] But count! But count! Two . . three. No, no. One and two AND. [student plays again] one and two AND three and one And then you rest, rest, rest. And now just to make your life truly brutal for the last line they change the key signature back to how it was in the beginning. This one’s going to give you a brain workout but I think that’s good for you. Last line. [student plays and the teacher counts along] This part I haven’t picked on your counting very much but this you can play with a steady pulse and you look like you’re bending over a little bit. I want you to work on keeping a steady beat in that last line. And remember the key. [student plays again] Slow it down just a little bit. How about this tempo? [teacher claps the beat and the student plays again] Don’t rush! Don’t rush! You were doing so beautifully. Do the pickup to those three quarter notes there. Yeah! That was a nice steady beat that you maintained in that last line. Good. So this one, I think the main challenge here is going to be key signature. Open your ears, if it doesn’t sound right double, triple check it.
Also, don’t push the tempo. We want this one to be slow, thoughtful. They’ve got all types of dynamic markings written in here and in fact we should maybe run over some of these terms. At the beginning you’ve got the word . . . well first off let’s look at the style marking right at the top. Let’s break it down into little things. Moderato – moderate. Con molto espression – with much expression. So at a moderate speed with much expression. Dolce – sweetly. Let’s keep on looking here, you’ve got all kinds of dynamic markings. [the student asks what animado means] Animado means animated. You can speed up just a little bit there or just have more energy. Then jump down one line. You can figure out what con espression – with expression. And then dolce to end with again. So this one’s all about mood. Counting is not going to be a huge issue, but you need to not take for granted you are going to play with a steady beat. Concentrate on keeping your beat steady here because it’s slower. That’s actually just a little bit harder sometimes. [the student asks whether she should use the marked metronome speed] That metronome speed would put you at . . . I’m not sure, let’s check it out. Actually, they’ve got it clipping right along here. [the teacher plays it at tempo] Yeah, that’s a nice metronome speed. I guess I was wrong when I was saying it was slow. It is a little bit more animated. 104, that’s good. You’re going to play it with the metronome for me? [student reluctantly agrees] I strongly suggest putting on your metronome right from the beginning. It makes a huge difference. Just run it through with the metronome, but don’t practice for the most part and maybe end off by playing it without the metronome. You don’t want to be totally reliant on the metronome. [May 11, 131-190]

Everything that Danielle teaches her student during the lesson is an immediate response to the difficulties the student encounters. Danielle makes a conscious choice to join her student on the journey of exploring this new piece of music.

*Interview, May 14, 2004*

This interview focussed on all of the observations to date, with an emphasis on the May 10th and 11th observations.
Our interview takes place on a sunny Friday afternoon in May in the living room of the participant’s home. She is relaxed and is now comfortable speaking with me about her teaching.

I begin the interview by asking Danielle why she has chosen the same warm-up for the beginning of every band class. Danielle responds by saying:

“It’s definitely a weakness in my teaching – the warm-up area. I think that I’m not the only one who has that problem. At the beginning of the year we all start with all these different fancy warm-ups and then as exhaustion sets in I tend to go with the easier ones. [May 14, 4-6]

When I ask if she thinks that her students understand the purpose of what they are doing, she replies, “Not necessarily, no.” [May 14, 17] Danielle goes on to explain that she believes the value of warm-ups was revealed to students in grade six when they were introduced. I extend my inquiry in the warm-up portion of her teaching by asking her why her students make the same mistake each time they play the warm-up, just as some of my students have done. Her response is thoughtful:

“Well I think it’s because that’s the first . . . because the way the Standard of Excellence is set up its kind of . . . starting at number 123 in the red book they start doing the lip slurs and its always in quarter notes up until a certain point, and in different variations on that in quarter notes. And then the one you just heard is the very first one that’s in eight notes, so they just learned it a class before you came. So now they’re still for the last year they’ve been doing quarter notes and now we’re asking them to do eighth notes and its just force of habit to do quarters. [May 14, 48-54]

When I ask Danielle about her solution to the problem she states:

“Well, you’ve seen us do this. You point out that they’re eighth notes and most of them go oh yeah and that’s why I shouldn’t be doing the same warm-up every day, because it’s just force of habit. I should probably point it out before they start instead of just waiting until after they do it. But what have I done? Just remind them if these are your quarter notes, what should you sound like? [May 14, 58-62]
Danielle clearly sees the source of her problem, but seems to have slipped into a habitual way of responding to this particular problem. This is interesting to me because in the same lesson I witnessed Danielle use a creative solution to counting rhythms - another perennial problem in band class. When I ask her why she chose this method, she replies, “Oh we clap and count all the time! It’s just a little different. It can get monotonous when we clap very long, talk very long.” [May 14, 104-105] Danielle goes on to tell me how she is always looking for new ideas and different ways of explaining things. It is interesting that even in the midst of our quest for innovative ways of saying things that stale patterns of response creep in over time.

I switch the focus of our interview to Danielle’s private studio teaching. I explain to Danielle the concept of frame experiments from my literature and we begin to discuss some of the experiments she carries out in her private lessons. We begin by talking about her interaction with her more advanced student. I note that it seems Danielle knows in advance what she will do wrong. Often, Danielle will let Student #1 play just to see what happens, keeping in mind where she imagines the pitfalls will be from her own experience. I ask Danielle what kind of information she is trying to get out of the experiment by simply letting her student play to see what happens. Danielle replies:

How much they actually understand, like how far back to I have to go, how far back is this problem rooted? Is it she just wasn’t focussing or is it she that just doesn’t understand the relationship between sixteenth notes or quarter notes or whatever the case may be. [May 14, 195-197]

This information is vital to Danielle so that she can clearly direct the focus of her teaching. We then talk about whether Danielle conducts these type of experiments in band. She says,

I do experimentations in band of that sort too, where just I’m not going to point this out and just see, I’m not going to go over this rhythm first and really see if they retained what we did from the last exercise. [May 14, 210-213]

I wonder aloud if, within the context of a band class, we might be able to have students run these types of frame experiments on their own. Danielle believes we do and responds:
Don’t you think we kind of do, like when we sight-read or something aren’t you trying to . . . you know, you’re not sure if you don’t point things out before hand, you’re not sure if they’re going to watch the key signature change or anything like that. [May 14, 221-223]

I ask Danielle if she’s ever given her students time to have a mini-practice session in class. She replies:

Yeah. I’ll sometimes do the, “OK you’ve got 10 seconds.” And sometimes they can make noise and sometimes they can’t make noise depending on the state of my headache that day. I often do that. We’ll get to the end and they’ll all go, “Argh” and I’ll just say, “Yeah, you’ve got 10 seconds to figure it out, you can play.” And nine times out of ten that’s all it takes. [May 14, 228-231]

This demonstrates the use of multiple frame experiments within a context of reciprocal reflection-in-action within a large group context.

Our conversation moves to a discussion of Danielle’s second private student. Student #2 works at a very low level for her age. Danielle and I recognize that this student is working at a lower level than her peers. When I ask Danielle how she perceives the difference between Student #2 and the much more capable Student #1, she responds:

It’s a struggle. Not a personality, I really like [Student #2] I think she’s a really great kid. The level we work at is really low. It’s really, really, really, basic. And I feel a lot like a drill sergeant. I’m really at a loss . . . I mean she has improved from not knowing the difference between a C and an F to most of the time being able to play the right notes. I think we talk at a lower level; we don’t get into any really great detail. It’s more just constant repetition trying to get her to understand what is a key signature. What is it and I’ll try and remember it for four bars. [May 14, 260-265]

I then ask if Danielle conducts frame experiments with Student #2 and Danielle responds, “I don’t do frame experiments as much with her, but I do from time to time.” [May 14, 280] I point out that the lesson I observed was a frame experiment from beginning to end as Student #2 attempted to sight-read a new piece and that this surprised me because
Danielle had already informed me of Student #2’s deficits. Danielle reflects on the frame experiment:

I’m a little torn about this now. I’m not sure if I’m spoon-feeding her too much information and she’s just learning to rely on me to remind her of key signatures or if there’s just something there and she’s not understanding it. So every once in a while, well we do, probably once a lesson I make her sight-read something and I try really hard to not say anything. Her knowledge base is definitely improving and I’m really fighting the urge to constantly correct her key signature which I can never keep my mouth shut about. I’m just not sure how much it is reliance on me or actually a problem. She did a really good job. For her, that was really outstanding. [May 14, 292-298]

We begin to explore Danielle’s reasons for conducting the experiment as she had. I think there was an unconscious belief on Danielle’s part that Student #2 could play through the piece. I suggest that she might have been attempting to validate what Student #2 was retaining. Danielle agrees and notes that she was surprised at how far Student #2 was able to go with the piece. We recognize that we have witnessed a significant event in the life of Student #2 and take a moment to discuss her progress. For Student #2 this has been a year of breakthrough in terms of her metacognitive abilities. She has begun taking ownership for writing reminders on her music and is beginning to integrate the technical foundation that Danielle has been building in her for the past two years. Danielle relates that Student #2’s journey began with her personal acceptance of her level of ability. “She’s like ‘you’re right. I’m not ready for that stuff yet. I’m not ready for this yet. I don’t even know the note names.’” [May 14, 352-353] Danielle thinks that once Student #2 began coming for lessons she started to listen to herself more critically as Danielle pointed out things that needed to be addressed. This has resulted in Student #2 having increased self-confidence and better marks on her playing tests in band class.

Our conversation moves to some of the mechanisms of reflection-in-action, specifically, critical listening and writing things down. Danielle relates a telling anecdote:

One thing that I found really interesting was my grade sixes at [school]. They started out playing relatively strong and now they’ve gotten lazy in the last few
months and I’ve been bugging them, like there’s wrong notes here, there’s wrong notes. They just looked at me and they kept on doing their thing. But then we went to the beginner band festival and they made a CD recording of it, in specific, this chorale. And we played it, stopped it and then had a big discussion. The kids were like, “there were lots of wrong notes”. Yeah, do you see how one wrong note affects the whole performance? They were shocked. [May 14, 414-420]

The CD recording of the group provided a new lens through which they could view their practice and gave Danielle a new starting point for engaging them in a process of reciprocal reflection-in-action.

Concerning writing things down, we both agree that our private students have more written instructions and write more often on their music than do our band students. We relate our frustrations regarding having students write on their music to one another, with Danielle saying, “Finally you have to freak out and say, ‘if I have to tell you to play an F# one more time, you might die!’ And then they go, ‘Oh, should I write it down?’” [May 14, 464-465] We come to the conclusion that in order for this to be effective a consistent, systematic approach should be used.

As we end our interview, we discuss how Danielle listens differently in each teaching context. I ask if she frames problems in a different way in each context because she listens differently. Danielle responds:

I think so, because I know more what [Student #1] is thinking on a private one-on-one lesson than I do what the whole clarinet section was thinking or even what level exactly they’re playing . . . [May 14, 524-526]

The variety of levels in a band class cause Danielle to structure her frame experiments much differently because she is never quite sure what might happen given the large number of people present. In a studio context, Danielle feels more confident predicting what might happen due to the deep understanding of her student that she is able to develop over time. Danielle also notes that the time pressures of a band class do not allow for the extensive use of frame experiments, while there is much more flexibility regarding time in a private studio context.
Private Lessons, May 18, 2004

Today’s lesson is with Student #1. The lesson will be a half hour long. Student #1 will be playing the material she was assigned at last week’s lesson. As such, Danielle has an expectation that the student has prepared more thoroughly over the past week. Danielle begins the lesson with a tone-development exercise for the middle register.

Danielle engages her student in reciprocal reflection-in-action as they work on the exercise:

OK, let’s just start with some tone, we were doing middle register. Can you just show me what you were supposed to play.

[the student plays]  Lots of air. That sounds really nice.

Did you go down . . . you got to F#. It wasn’t very clear. What you can do is start on B natural and then get down to the notes that are difficult in the middle register which are like here, this one starts on B. Do the last line until it ends up at D#. Maybe start on the G and continue on. [student plays] See how the tone starts to go right on the D#? What we strive to do and achieve is to maintain the E to the D# and then when you flip the page you might go into D. Eventually what this will do is lead you down to D and D# which are hard and then it will take you down to C#. So what you can do is this line and then this line where it takes you from good to weak and then back to good. And you always try to maintain the same tone quality between these. [May 18, 3-15]

Danielle locates the difficult areas of the study and gives Student #1 an opportunity to play some of it. Danielle expects Student #1 to work on this exercise and integrate what she has just been told.

Following this, Danielle and Student #1 work on a scale and discuss some strategies for improving Student #1’s double tonguing.

They move on to a study. The student initially has difficulty with the tempo and is playing many wrong notes. Danielle engages her student in a more active process of reciprocal reflection-in-action:
OK, so now what’s the best way to practice that when you’re at home? Just barrel on through it and pray to God that next time it’s better? How would you do it? What would you do? [student says to slow it down] That would be a good start. [student plays it slow – still makes many mistakes] OK, once you feel OK with that . . . but it’s still not good. What else could you do? [student suggests trying different articulations] Yup, different articulations, so maybe two slurred, two slurred to start with. [student plays again with the new pattern] Get out of the habit of pausing between bars. [student tries again] And don’t be satisfied until you do it right. [student plays it again] How about now? [student suggests two slurred, two tongued and begins playing again] Do that again, two slurred, two tongued ignoring the articulations you’ve already written. [student plays again] How about three slurred, three slurred. [student plays again] All staccato. [student plays again] Normal. [student plays again] But, on the whole, a whole lot better than last time, right? [May 18, 42-53]

During this process of reciprocal reflection-in-action Danielle has her student identify some ways she might solve the problem at hand. It is evident that the solutions Student #1 is offering are techniques Danielle has used in lessons before. Nevertheless, this opportunity for Student #1 to engage in reflection with Danielle enables her to generate some strategies that lead to an improved performance.

The student decides to play a march for Danielle. The march is in 6/8 and the student is playing it using the wrong stress pattern as she had done during her last lesson. Danielle hasn’t had this problem in her own playing and finds it difficult to verbalize a suggestion for her student. Instead, she demonstrates, drawing on her tacit knowledge of how to play this type of music:

Do that section one more time, slow it down if you need to just to make sure. [student plays slower] That was better that time, but this is where we want to end up in tempo. [teacher demonstrates] And I think there’s something I’m doing, I’m not playing it much faster than you, by accenting the first and the fourth beats, giving them a little bit of kick just moves it along a little bit. Try the beginning and try and accent the first and fourth a little more. [student plays] That’s a little bit too much! [laughs] but you get the idea. In 6/8 time the first
and the fourth beats are the most important and it will have to go a little bit faster.

[May 18, 73-80]

As Danielle draws on her tacit knowledge by playing, she begins to verbalize a solution for Student #1. By the end of the exchange, Danielle has developed a solution that her student will understand.

Private Lessons, May 25, 2004

Today’s lesson is with Student #2. The lesson will be a half hour long. Student #2 enters and excitedly relates some of the highlight of her recent band tour. Today she will be playing *Adieu to the Piano*, the piece she sight-read at her last lesson.

This lesson is strikingly similar to the day the student sight-read the piece. Danielle talks and Student #2 plays in quick succession throughout the lesson. Because Student #2 struggles, much of what Danielle does by engaging her in reciprocal-reflection-in-action is to supply metacognitive cues out loud:

*Start again make sure your eighth notes are in time.* [student plays again – briefly] You’re going bah, bah, it’s got to be da, da. [student plays again] *Yes.*


They move on to the trio section of the piece. Danielle frames this attempt in the phrasing of the musical line, rather than simply telling the student what to do:

So start at the trio. [student plays with many wrong notes] There’s a natural sign there. Now that’s such a beautiful line, give it some direction. [the teacher demonstrates] It’s hard to make that in one breath. [the student tries again and plays the same wrong note] Ooo, stop. Now what note should be the most exciting part of that four bar phrase? [the student indicates a note] It’s four bars and the breath mark marks the end of that phrase. What note is the most exciting? [the student chooses B natural] Well the B natural is kind of exciting, but we want to think about growing towards the D, OK, so try that again. Take a huge
Rather than simply tell the student to take a big breath so she can play the phrase, Danielle directs her attention to the need for a big breath and then gives her points within the phrase to aim at as she plays. The frame of the beauty of the line enables the student to create a map of the phrase as a whole and the most exciting note within the line map enables Student #2 to dynamically shape the phrase. This keeps the student cognitively engaged as she plays the passage.

They forge through the remainder of the piece in a similar manner. When they reach the end, Danielle offers to play the piano accompaniment as the student plays. This is a new experience for the student. As they begin, it quickly becomes apparent that this will be an arduous task. On their first attempt, the student is behind by the end of the first three beats. They attempt five more starts but fail each time. Eventually, Danielle has the student play alone without the piano. Danielle’s motive for using this strategy is to force the student to play with a steady tempo:

Here we go, ready again. [The student plays alone again with little rhythmic sense. The student expresses her frustration.] You’re getting excited and a little bit anxious, because the piano does this to people. [the student is surprised by this] Oh absolutely it does. But this will definitely make you focus on your counting. Here we go. [they both play the tune on their flutes] OK, do you think you can do that now with something totally different going on? Ready, one, two. [They play together, the teacher sings the flute part as she accompanies on the piano. They get farther than they did before.] [May 25, 95-102]

This unique problem frame allows Danielle to get her student to be more aware of her need to count accurately without simply turning on the metronome. Playing with the piano creates a more authentic reason for the student to make accurate rhythm a priority.

They continue on in the same manner up to the trio. With each try, Student #2 experiences more success. By the end of the lesson they are able to play small sections of the piece together. Danielle celebrates this achievement and informs her student that they will continue with this at their next lesson.
The grade 7s have just returned from a two-week trip to Quebec. Many of them have a drama performance tonight and a band concert tomorrow. Danielle feels this pressure as she uses her 45 minute class as a dress rehearsal for the upcoming concert.

Danielle quickly warms up the group and they immediately move into repertoire. They have three pieces to cover today. Danielle spends the majority of the class verbally coaching the students as they play. The bulk of what she says are reminders regarding balance, rhythm and dynamics. She spends as much time praising them for their good playing.

Stay together. Sit up trombones. And crescendo, now strong! Don’t drown out the clarinets, trombones. And grow. Now listen for the flutes. Too much trombones. Good trombones. Stop. [they stop] Oh I loved the piano staccato part there at 33 clarinets and flutes, very nice. Now though, at 37 there’s a big change in dynamics, isn’t there? We pretty much go from piano to forte, so trumpets when you come in, make sure you’re nice and strong there. Also, remember at measure 38 to get quiet at the beginning of your crescendo. You haven’t got there yet but I was predicting the future. 33, here we go. [they play again and the teacher occasionally counts out loud] Now strong. And get quiet and grow. Shh. Good, good, good. OK, now listen for the low guys. Come on trombones! OK, get quiet and crescendo and grow! Shhh. Now, shh, grow, grow! [they finish] Awesome! That song sound great, you guys are going to be awesome on that one tomorrow. [May 27, 32-42]

In *The Tempest* Danielle encounters a problem with the trombones. They have worked on this before and she knows that the trombones have good listening skills. She begins to address them:

Trombones, can I hear the last . . . trombones here we go. One, two, and you start playing. You know where I’m talking about, right. I was concerned because your slides were in different positions. Here we go ready. [the trombones play] Better, can I hear the note, the F#, play the F# together, ready, go. [they play F#] That’s a little bit better, now do the whole thing. [they play the whole passage]
Just watch the F#, I’m not sure if one of you is going out too far or if one of you is just in a little bit. That wasn’t exactly in tune but that was better. [May 27, 56-62]

Rather than have the trombones identify the problem as she has done in the past, Danielle identifies it for them and they quickly move to a solution.

The last piece they work on is Farandole. The pattern of instruction and playing continues. The clarinet section presents a problem this time and Danielle takes a much more pedantic approach to solving it than she did with the trombones:

You’d didn’t forget that part clarinets, we just had it. [repeating what the clarinets said] I didn’t forget it, I just can’t remember. Clarinets, 51 please. [the clarinets play] That wasn’t right. [a student says she can’t play a certain fingering] OK, they give you three fingerings to choose from for Eb, don’t they? [the clarinets are busy looking up the fingerings] OK clarinets, do you remember me freaking out about this a lot? And they you got it, and you had it and now . . . OK, clarinets, here we go. [they play again] Play me your first note. Ready, go. [they play] Next note. Next note. [they stop] Yeah, you guys had it. What are you doing for a fingering for that one? [the student shows her] It’s one, two and then the side. [a student says its like D with an added finger] Yeah, there’s your mistake. Now play me the first note of measure 51 again. [they play] Next note. Next note. Do it again. Next note. Next note. Now do it in rhythm and make sure you slur when you’re supposed to. [they play again – it’s still wrong] You had it. You had it before you guys left. Play it one more time. [they play again] That’s getting better. That’s your homework assignment, guys.

This weaker group required a much different strategy than she used with the trombones. Danielle ends the piece and encourages the class to make some time to practice before tomorrow’s concert. She wishes them good luck with their drama performance and sends them on their way.

Final Interview, June 23, 2004

It has been nearly a month since my last observation with Danielle. I’ve been busy transcribing tapes which has delayed my preparation for this interview. Danielle and I meet in the staff room following a student assembly on the last day of classes. It is
a beautiful June day. Danielle informs me that one of her grade eight students has committed suicide the previous week and she says she’ll do the best she can. Despite the timing and Danielle’s grief, she is very present and extremely thoughtful during the interview.

As we begin our interview, I ask Danielle if she’s been thinking differently about her practice since I’ve been observing and interviewing her. Danielle responds:

Definitely. I became reflective about why I was doing things in areas that I’ve become a little bit lazy in, and some other possible ways to do some things, like, for example, maybe bringing their agenda books up and writing their homework assignments in it. And the eternal warm-up problem, stuff like that. [June 23, 4-7]

Danielle indicates that as she begins the upcoming teaching year she intends to implement a means of giving specific homework assignments and will be thinking of ways to share the purpose of the warm-ups with her students.

We talk about the musical things that matter to Danielle when she is performing. Danielle says that tone, intonation and musicality are most important to her. I ask if technique comes before musicality in her priorities and she responds:

I think it does because I think that is a fault that [flute teacher] has criticized me for. Just wanting to get it right first, I think. Although I am getting better. I did perform a couple of weeks ago and I wasn’t anxious about that stuff. It wasn’t perfect. It wasn’t technically perfect but I think the mood was portrayed and I was happy with that. That hasn’t really happened for me before. So I’m growing up – maybe. [June 23, 43-47]

Danielle says she is like this because she is a perfectionist in everything.

I then turn the focus of the interview to exploring Danielle’s tacit knowledge of her practice. Many times in our interviews Danielle talked about things that “just worked” and everyone knew. I ask Danielle what informs that feeling and she replies:

Well I think through training you’ve been taught what sounds . . . I mean you get taught what are the components of a good performance and then somehow that becomes internalized, I think, and then . . . but I don’t just know. If I came off the street I might not know – or I might. . . . I think you know . . . I had this discussion actually with some non-music people about good music versus bad
music and my boyfriend said I don’t understand jazz but I can still recognize when a piece is good because it will affect me on some level. And I think that’s true if it strikes some emotion within you or you’re left going “wow” afterwards; but on the same token, then the girl next to me said, “Yeah, like Justin Timberlake!” And I said (rolls her eyes as I laughed). So some people have that feeling and it’s still not . . . because they haven’t learned what the components are to make, I think if you know about intonation, technical facility, if you can appreciate what’s a good composition versus a bad composition, that will also heighten that feeling of when you know something is good. So I think it’s partially learned and partly just an emotional response and also, that’s how I know within me, but with the students you can always just tell on their face. They’re like “Oh!” They know on the same level probably because I’ve told them. [June 23, 78-92]

Danielle believes that through exposure to a variety of experiences we respond on an emotional level when things come together. We may not understand why it works, but our emotional reaction tells us that something significant has just occurred.

We talk about the limitations of language when discussing musical expression and musical intuition. I ask Danielle how we might tap a student’s musical intuition and whether we should honour the language they use to describe musical events or impose our language over theirs. Danielle responds:

I think I would combine their language and my language. You don’t want to take away . . . that’s how they know to express it. Even if you can introduce some of it slowly, don’t “what you said is incorrect, it’s actually . . .” you don’t stop them from expressing that or make them think they’re incorrect or anything. Just gradually and steadily introduce the terminology, I guess until it becomes their own. [June 23, 135-139]

Danielle predominantly uses analogies and metaphors to describe abstract musical concepts to students. They then transfer this knowledge to practice as they work with the abstract concept.
Our conversation turns to the topic of growth. I ask Danielle what things she’s done in her teaching that have caused significant growth in her students. Danielle responds:

If you can record them and listen to them and they hear themselves. That makes a huge difference immediately almost. One thing is hearing recordings of their music done by professionals . . . it’s kind of weird how that one affects and helps them to understand their tone and what dynamics should actually sound like and I find that listening to that, and critically, in comparison to their playing, not just listening for the sake of listening, but comparing too, that makes for short term growth. [June 23, 215-220]

Danielle also indicates that focusing on rhythm, use of practice charts, participation in honour groups, and use of method books all contribute to growth.

As we near the end of our interview, we talk about some of the things that can help our dialogue with students as we engage them in reciprocal reflection-in-action. Danielle indicates that bringing in master players, using recordings, her own playing and hearing other groups fosters the dialogue of reciprocal reflection-in-action. Danielle says that an external judgement, like that received at a festival, can also encourage reciprocal reflection-in-action. The goal of reciprocal reflection-in-action is to foster a higher level of metacognition in students. Danielle gives a classic example:

It goes back to they can’t recognize they have a problem if you haven’t taught them anything. If they understand rhythm they’ll recognize “Oh that was a rhythmic problem,” if they’re listening and understand key signatures and stuff, I think they have to have a base knowledge and you have to teach them to be critical thinkers of their own performance. And we do that in playing tests sometimes. I’ll go, “What did you think, what did you, what am I going to say to you? Take a wild guess.” (student voice) “Aww, I missed the key signature.” (participant’s voice) “OK, what are you going to do so that you never, ever do that again?” You know? Little things, it feels like a lot of repetition at this age group. [June 23, 676-683]

Danielle has given the best example of all. Successful reciprocal reflection-in-action and the metacognition it develops must be based on sound teaching of concepts and skills.
We discuss the importance of trying to have those one-on-one conversations in the band context. Danielle endeavours to have a short conversation with each of her students at least 5-10 times per year at evaluation times. She recognizes the critical importance of having these discussions with students.
CHAPTER FIVE

Data Interpretation and Findings

The purpose of this study was to explore through a qualitative case study of a teacher who teaches both in studio and large class contexts how communication with students regarding their performance takes place. This case study was a step in that direction and sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the teacher’s problem-setting behaviours in the studio and large class context? As the teacher resets problems; (a) what “frame-experiments” are carried out by the teacher in each context? (b) Are these experiments similar or different? (c) How do these “frame-experiments” change with each iteration?
2. What type of teacher feedback is given to students in each of these contexts?
3. What tacit teacher understandings are at work in each context?
4. What are the similarities and differences in assessment techniques used in a studio and large group context?

Method of Data Interpretation

These research questions guided the design and questioning strategy used in the preparation of this case study. Due to the heuristic nature of the study, the research questions played an integral role in the development of interview questions as the study progressed. It was evident early on that question #4 would not be answered in this study. Due to the limited time of the observation and the time of year, I had no opportunity to observe the participating teacher engage in any formal assessment activities. I will discuss this further on in the chapter.

The data were interpreted using gap analysis, i.e., looking for gaps in what the participating teacher believed and what she actually did. This revealed a few interesting items. The second (and predominant) way I interpreted the data was by applying the four constants of reflection-in-action set out by Schön (1983) [I have changed their order to facilitate the interpretation of the data]:

1. The appreciative systems they [practitioners] bring to problem-setting.
2. The role frames within which they set their tasks and through which they bound their institutional settings.

3. The media, languages, and repertoires that practitioners use to describe reality and conduct experiments.

4. The overarching theories by which they make sense of phenomena. (p. 270)

As the study progressed and I began to interpret the data it also became evident that questions 1, 2, and 3 could not be discussed in isolation as they are integral parts of virtually every exchange between student and teacher. This left me with the conundrum of how to discuss these topics while honouring the research questions. Because of the nature of teaching music, we rely on responding to the back-talk (Schön, 1988, p. 103) of the situations we encounter. In teaching music this means that as we listen to what the students are playing we automatically begin to hear things that we would identify as problems to solve. This back-talk then informs what we do next. We can never fully predict what will happen when our students begin to play. It is at this point that we begin a process of reflection-in-action on the situation’s back-talk. Schön (1988) described the process of reflecting-in-action to a situation’s back-talk as moving from “‘what if?’ to recognition of implications, from involvement in the unit to consideration of the total, and from exploration to commitment” (p. 103). This cycle is evident in every exchange I have documented. Introducing these constants Schön wrote:

In calling these things constants, I do not mean to suggest that they are absolutely unchanging. They do change, sometimes in response to reflection, but at a slower rate than theories of particular phenomena or frames for particular problematic situations. Hence they give the practitioner the relatively solid references from which, in reflection-in-action, he can allow his theories and frames to come apart. Indeed, depending on the robustness of these constants, practitioners are more or less able to recognize and engage that which is shifting and turbulent in their practice. And depending on differences in these constants, taken individually and as whole patterns, we can account for significant differences in reflection-in-action within and across the professions. (p. 270)

Schön presents his constants of reflection-in-action as usable across a variety of professions. For the purposes of this study, I have applied the language of teaching to
each constant that Schön details. Appreciative systems in the context of this study refer to how the teacher can come to an appreciation of the difficulty a student is having based on a combination of their relationship with the student, teacher perception of the student’s talent or ability, prior knowledge of the student, and the student’s personal learning style. Role frames in the context of this study refer to the role the teacher takes such as teacher, mediator of thinking, coach, colleague, etc., as he or she works with students. The media, languages, and repertoires that Schön refers to are the stuff of everyday teaching. Media refers to the teacher’s use of written, visual, or aural materials. Repertoires refer to the repertoire of teaching strategies from which the teacher consciously chooses. Overarching theories refer to the teacher’s philosophy of teaching and learning and is the door to exploring their tacit understandings. The constants of reflection-in-action each serve as an entry point into the framing of problems. As the encountered problem is more fully framed, the entry constant dictates how the elements of the other constants are implemented. The findings of my interpretation will be reported through the lens of each constant.

_Schön Constant: Appreciative Systems_

Each teaching context required Danielle to impose an appreciative system on it so that she could frame problems with the correct language. A pattern emerged in the development of her appreciative systems as she worked in each teaching context. The elements of these appreciative systems were a combination of her students’ prior knowledge, her relationship with her students(s), her perceptions of their talent or ability, and their personal learning style.

In her band class Danielle often framed problems in students’ prior learning. This was the logical entry point for problem solving in this context because it would be impossible to work from the appreciative system of a personal relationship with each student. Danielle said that in her band class it was beneficial to “start them with [what they know]”. As the number of students decreased, Danielle tended to use the appreciative system of the relationship she had with her student. Danielle said, “I know more what [Student #1] is thinking on a private one-on-one lesson than I do what the whole clarinet section was thinking or even what level exactly they’re playing . . .” [May
This different appreciative system influenced the language she used and helped her to choose a role frame as she worked with her students.

**Schön Constant: Role Frames**

Different role frames were available to Danielle based on the context in which she was teaching. When she was teaching in a classroom context Danielle functioned more often as a coach, teacher, and mediator of thinking. The role frame of colleague was limited or unavailable to her due to the number of people in the room and the nature of the student-teacher relationship within a classroom context. This influenced the type of problem frame she was able to create. While in the roles of coach, teacher, and mediator of thinking, Danielle often linked new learning to prior learning and attempted to involve as many students as possible in the process. Danielle’s role shifted in the private studio based on the ability level of her student. With her stronger student Danielle typically occupied an essentially collegial role, and asked her student to suggest ways she might solve her own problems. While Danielle had some suggestions of her own, she was confident, based on her prior relationship with her student and her perception of her ability level, that the student could solve her own problems from the repertoire of skills Danielle had taught her in the past. She explained the benefits of warm-up procedures in a collegial manner and spoke to her as a competent peer. With her less talented student, Danielle occupied many roles. She predominantly took the role of mediator of thinking as the student worked through a variety of issues. Danielle rarely took a collegial role and at one point even commented that she often felt like a drill sergeant. With this student, Danielle seemed to be limited to the role frames available to her in the band class. More role frames were available to Danielle in a studio context with an accomplished student. It is important to note that each role frame did not dictate the quality of teaching, rather it determined the way in which the material was presented to the student. Therefore, while the role frame alone doesn’t determine the quality of instruction, occupying the correct role frame ensures that the student is receiving instruction in a manner most amenable to the context and their learning style.
The strongest findings of this study reside in the domain of media, languages, and repertoire that Danielle brought to problem-solving activities while teaching. As Danielle responded to the back-talk of the situations she faced, she used a variety of media to demonstrate concepts, changed the language she used with different groups of students, and used different teaching skills from her repertoire based on the context in which she was teaching.

**Media.** In her private studio Danielle was diligent about writing in an exercise book for each of her students. The instructions in the book summarized the items the student was to practice each week and gave some general feedback regarding their progress. The list of the exercises in the book sequenced the order in which students were to practice their material. In a sense, it guided the discipline of their practice to ensure proper development. Danielle did not do this with her band students. When I inquired about this Danielle replied that she was not as organized in this area as she would like to be. Danielle thought this was a valid idea and thought she might pursue it further in the future.

The opportunity to use recordings of student performances was another powerful way that Danielle used media in the process of reciprocal reflection-in-action with her band students. Danielle related the story of one of her more accomplished groups who had become lazy and overconfident in their perceptions of the quality of their performance. An opportunity to listen to a recording of their performance initiated a valuable opportunity for reciprocal reflection-in-action between Danielle and her students. The use of the recording allowed Danielle to involve her students in framing the problem regarding wrong notes she was hearing in their performance. Danielle said her students were shocked when they heard the recording of their performance. The recording allowed the students to stand back from their role as performers and enter Danielle’s point of view. I did not think to ask Danielle if she had ever thought of using this strategy with her private students. I would argue that this strategy would be equally compelling in both teaching contexts.

**Language.** Danielle’s work with weaker students, in contrast with her stronger students, revealed a language pattern I believe is significant. Whether in band class or
studio Danielle would engage in a spoken metacognition with her weaker students. This was clearly evidenced in Danielle’s work with her weaker students as they read through passages of music with Danielle supplying the information regarding key signatures, rhythm, and other things to think about while they were playing. It was as if she were supplying the appropriate thinking to their actions as they played. I noted that she often used twice as many words to teach a similar concept to her weaker students as she did with her more advanced students.

With her more advanced students Danielle often used more figurative language. The ideas she wanted to get across were often contained in personification of the music or the sound and metaphor to help the student play more musically. For example, Danielle encouraged her more advanced private student to think of the style of the music in order to have her play the correct tempo and rhythm, while with her weaker private student, Danielle resorted to clapping and counting the rhythm.

*Repertoire.* Danielle framed some of the problems she encountered in various teaching strategies that she had learned or experienced as a student. Danielle’s dominant strategy was to break passages down to their component parts, often moving through passages note by note. This strategy was more commonly used in her band class than in studio. Interestingly, at times Danielle used some creative strategies to engage her students’ thinking in a different way. Having her students sing their parts and having her private student play with the piano were two creative strategies she used to develop rhythmic independence in her students. Clapping and counting rhythms and “doing the math” are strategies that seem to come out of her tacit understandings of how to learn rhythm. The more creative strategies were ones that she found powerful in her own experience as both a performer and teacher.

*Reframing and Changes in Language.*

Following up on Schön’s work, in *The Reflective Turn* Russell and Munby (1991) stated:

> When an initial theory-in-action encounters puzzles or surprises, back-talk stimulates reframing, suggesting new actions that imply a revised theory-in-action. Second, we have come to see that reframing and the appearance of a
revised theory in action are accompanied by changes in teachers’ descriptive language. (p. 184)

This pattern was observed in Danielle’s studio teaching in two instances. With her advanced private student Danielle reframed problems in the artistry of the music, i.e., playing musically, rather than note or rhythmic accuracy for their own sake. Framing problems in this manner indicated that Danielle recognized her student’s command of prior instruction and was confident that the student would align her technical development for musical rather than technical reasons.

With her weaker private student Danielle changed her language as she moved between discussing rhythm, key signatures, and expressive markings. When trying to have her student remember key signatures Danielle used spoken metacognition speaking what she wanted her student to remember or think about as she was playing. When working with rhythm, Danielle used questioning language at length and then had the student play. When they moved to looking at dynamics Danielle used simplified language to break it down into little things and she defined each term for her student. Danielle’s understanding of her student helped her to decide whether or not to speak, stop and teach or give information while the student was playing. Danielle’s conscious choice of language was influenced by the concept she was attempting to teach her student.

Schön Constant: Overarching Theories

Danielle’s theories about teaching and learning influenced the scope and sequence of what Danielle believed she could teach her students. Danielle demonstrated a strong belief that the fundamentals must be in place before new knowledge is introduced. This is why Danielle faced a difficult decision when the student in her band class indicated she did not understand what “thirds” meant. Danielle did not believe that her student could understand an advanced concept without first having all of the fundamental theoretical knowledge. This demonstrated the value that Danielle placed on linking abstract concepts to performance practice in order to make the concepts more real for her students.

Throughout the study I was puzzled at Danielle’s warm-up routine for her band students as compared to the warm-up routines she used in studio. The band class played
the same warm-up drill every day and Danielle rarely gave the drill a focus. They simply
played it (often poorly) and then carried on with the rest of the class. In studio, Danielle
was very pedantic as she guided her students through their warm-ups and supplied a
constant stream of reasons why the exercise was important. When I questioned her about
how important she thought it was that her band students understand why they were using
these tools and techniques she responded:

I don’t think it’s of the utmost importance. Sometimes I explain why we’re doing
stuff and sometimes I don’t. I usually explain it if the exercise is extremely
painful and they’re like, “Why do we have to do this?” Then I explain it. As far
as lip slurs go, I think the result will come whether you’ve explained to them why
they’re doing it or not in a lot of cases. I think we talked about this before in
regards to lip slurs. They see the benefit if they do it. [June 23, 268-272]

Danielle was more explicit about explaining things to her private students and related
why:

They just need to understand the process. In band class whether they’re
practicing, say, the lip slurs at home or not, I’m going to make them do it three
times a week so they’re still going to get some benefit out of it. But I don’t have
time to run through absolutely everything that the flute student should be doing at
home. If we do double tonguing, single tonguing, long tones, vibrato every week
we don’t have time to get through everything so I like to make sure the private
students understand why I’m doing this. It’s not just to kill time and what they
will gain out of it. Don’t come complain to me that you can’t tongue fast enough,
I’ve given you the exercises on how to do it. [June 23, 304-311]

Danielle’s overarching theory of how students assimilate information in each context
influenced what she believed it was necessary that students understand about what they
were doing.

Her dominant overarching theory seemed to be her desire to ensure that her
students had the requisite background knowledge so that they could assimilate new
knowledge as it was given to them. Interestingly, she seemed to value this more often in
the realm of theoretical knowledge, rather than performance practice stating the value of
exercises in performance should be apparent, regardless of whether their purpose was
explained or even reinforced. While Danielle wanted her students to take ownership of their problem identification, problem-solving and decision-making while playing, her somewhat conflicted overarching theories led to the development of stale patterns of work in some aspects of her performance such as warm-up routines, while other aspects of her practice demonstrated a high degree of reciprocal reflection-in-action between Danielle and her students. Danielle’s different overarching theories regarding the performance and theoretical aspects of music determined whether or not she fostered student ownership in certain areas of their musical development.

The above constants of reflection-in-action have provided a good framework for analyzing how Danielle framed and solved problems. The remainder of this chapter will examine Danielle’s tacit understandings, assessment techniques and her behaviour in the studio versus the classroom.

Tacit Understandings

Danielle’s training as a performer and a teacher shaped her tacit understandings. Her tacit understandings informed each constant of reflection-in-action as she chose an entry point to the problems she solved in her work. The tacit understandings that seemed to dominate her work were understandings she internalized due to the manner in which she was taught. Her default ways of framing problems came from the ways she was taught as a student. She was at a transition point in her teaching where she was moving from the methods by which she was taught to methods that she was discovering and creating.

The tacit understandings that Danielle drew on in her work at times made it difficult for her to express the things she found easy in her own practice. Danielle said:

And I think that’s also one of my problems as a teacher is in a lot of areas things came naturally to me, understanding things and stuff like that, so if a kid doesn’t have . . . has a problem, sometimes I’m at a loss of “Well, don’t you just know?”, kind of thing. [May 2, 238-243]

In one of Danielle’s private lessons she was having difficulty explaining a concept to one of her students and had to perform to unearth her own tacit understandings of how she approached the passage at hand:
That was better that time, but this is where we want to end up in tempo. [teacher demonstrates] And I think there’s something I’m doing, I’m not playing it much faster than you, by accenting the first and the fourth beats, giving them a little bit of kick just moves it along a little bit. [May 18, 77-80]

Much of what Danielle did as a performer was locked in tacit understandings. As she progresses further in her career she may find that more of these understandings become verbalized as she has an opportunity to share them with her students.

Assessment Techniques

During the course of this study it was apparent that I was not going to see any formal assessment activities. Given the time of the year and an upcoming concert, formal assessment was not on the agenda for Danielle’s classes. I did get to view a great deal of informal assessment and feedback that was given to students. In a sense, the instant verbal feedback Danielle offered during her teaching was a type of informal assessment to let students know if they had attained the immediate goals set before them.

Strickland and Strickland (1998) define assessment as follows:

Assessment refers to a collection of data, information that enlightens the teacher and the learner, information that drives instruction. Good teachers assess constantly, performing the first stage of a recursive process. They observe what is happening in their classrooms – “kid-watching” as Yetta Goodman (1978) would say – and then talk to students and ask them questions about their learning (conferencing as writing teachers do or interviewing their subjects as naturalistic researchers do). They devise ways to record their observations. Good teachers assess and adjust their teaching based on their assessments. . . . They are assessing when they say at the end of class, “that went well today” or “Whew, they just don’t seem to get this. What should I do next to clear this up?” In the same way that good teachers assess their own performance, they constantly look for indications of student understanding or progress, either as individuals or as a group. Although this type of assessment takes many forms and is managed in a variety of ways . . . , two features are important: Assessment is ongoing and is a collection of information. (p. 19)
Grant Wiggins, in his book *Educative Assessment*, states that “assessment should provide rich and useful feedback to all students” (p. 12). During this study, I did have the opportunity to witness Danielle give a significant amount of feedback to her students. In our initial interview Danielle discussed her frustrations with some of her earlier music teachers because they were unable to clearly articulate what she needed to do. This caused Danielle to have a difficult time developing a clear perception of her own progress. This deficit in her own training affected Danielle’s tacit understandings, making it difficult for Danielle to articulate what personal success looked and sounded like. When Danielle attempted to define success in music her responses included things such as, “you just sensed it sometimes”, feedback from her band director, audience feedback, having an aesthetic experience, students loving making music, and a variety of non-achievement factors. Elliott (1995) calls this impressionistic educational knowledge and describes it as follows:

In addition to possessing formal and informal educational knowledge, expert music teachers often “feel” what is best to do or to avoid. I call this impressionistic educational knowledge. This kind of knowing is essentially a matter of cognitive emotions. The emotions that underpin impressionistic educational knowledge are cognitive in so far as they rest on a teacher’s past and present beliefs about characteristic aspects of teaching and learning that he or she has experienced. Accordingly, impressionistic educational knowledge is also situated. It is a nonverbal, affective form of knowing that develops through reflecting-in-action in genuine teaching situations. Impressionistic knowledge makes an essential contribution to a teacher’s thinking-in-action because it facilitates the ability to assess, categorize, “time”, and “place” one’s teaching actions. It plays a crucial role in expediting strategic judgements in action.

(p. 263)

In our final interview Danielle indicated that her students’ ability to perceive when they had done well was partly perceived at an emotional level and partly by what they had learned to appreciate about the intricacies of music based on their education.

During the case study I observed that Danielle rarely signalled to her band classes that they had been successful – they simply moved on to the next exercise. In her private
studio, however, Danielle gave much more praise to her students when they had done well. This finding was consistent with Danielle’s perceptions of her own teaching.

Regarding her use of feedback in studio teaching Danielle said:

They [the private students] play and then I usually give them something right away, “That was fabulous!” or, “Well, heard you do better,” then we figure out what the problem was, if there was one. I always try to give them something positive, generally followed by a negative. [May 2, 331-333]

Danielle said the following regarding her use of feedback when teaching band:

We play and I stop them, or what not. I give out encouragement when it’s deserved. I don’t give out encouragement every time I stop them in band – or a positive. Sometimes it’s just, “No. You breathed there and you shouldn’t have.” I don’t need to affirm them every single time. [May 2, 365-368]

Danielle noted that she often doesn’t engage in lengthy verbal feedback during a band class because the time pressure is so intense due to the fact that some of her classes are only 25 minutes long. Danielle did make a conscious effort to give more verbal praise to her weaker band students. The appreciative system she developed for band included a number of levels so that she could relate to each section and ultimately each individual in her group. Her appreciative system brought to studio lessons, informed by her close working relationship with her students, influenced the type of feedback she gave to her students.

Realizing I was not going to witness any formal assessments, I took another look at Danielle’s practice and noticed something regarding the way the success of her students was measured in the frame experiments she created. As Danielle taught in a band and studio context, it seemed that frame experiments were evaluated against different standards. In studio, frame experiments were evaluated against the performance standard set by the master teacher (Danielle), while in the band context frame experiments were evaluated against the past performance of the group. I asked Danielle what she thought of this idea, with respect to the band context she replied:

My kids know specifically what’s instructed of them. They know that if they don’t reach, if I say, “In this song, in Montego Bay, we need to be able to do these five things, and if you can’t do them you’re not performing it, nor are we going to
festival. I kind of thought about that. You set a standard with the first piece of; I think, right in the beginning of, this is acceptable for performance. A lot of it is based on performance. . . . And you do things like they get to hear high school groups which for them isn’t the be all end all of what they want to accomplish, but it’s a step higher than where we are in grade five, right. And any time you bring in a clinician they get to hear, “Oh, saxophone sounds like that.” [June 23, 599-640]

Danielle agreed that the evaluative standard in studio is the master teacher.

In our conversations regarding assessment and evaluation, Danielle clearly outlined the types of informal assessments that she used in her band classes. These formative assessments placed value on the technical and musical development of her students. The information she used for her final evaluations was quite different, drawing on performance factors such as attitude, attendance, and having the right equipment in class. The things that she valued in her formative assessments seemed to receive the least weight in terms of her summative evaluations.

**Teacher Behaviour in Studio vs. Classroom Contexts**

A general goal of this study was to discover if there were elements of studio teaching that can improve teaching and learning in a large group context. As stated earlier, previous research concentrated on the effect of the teaching context on teaching and learning. This study has focussed on the actions of one teacher in two different teaching formats.

This case study did reveal some differences in teacher behaviour as she worked in studio and the classroom. Danielle’s problem-framing approach changed depending on the teaching context. Her appreciative system, role-frame, and language were affected by the teaching context. This, in turn, influenced how she framed problems, the nature of feedback she gave, and the level to which she involved her students in reciprocal reflection-in-action. More role-frames were available to Danielle when she taught in studio because of the relationship she was able to develop with her students. This influenced the level of language that Danielle used with her students and the number of opportunities when students were encouraged to attempt to solve their own problems.
The removal of time pressure and her concern to cover a curriculum seemed to give Danielle the freedom to teach in this way.

Another difference this study revealed was how written instructions were used in each context. In studio, Danielle consistently used written forms of media with her private students. The notebook kept for each student detailed the week’s instructions and provided a sequence for the exercises given to students. Danielle did not do this in band class. Even though she often told her students that certain things would make good homework assignments, she never had them write them down. Given the time limitations and varying levels of students’ abilities, having them write out practice assignments would seem to be a beneficial thing to do.

Regarding feedback, students in the private studio received more positive feedback than the students in the band classes. It would seem that more positive feedback would be required in the band context due to the fact that students are in band class for a variety of reasons, while those who take private lessons are more intrinsically motivated and would not require constant external motivation.

A final area where this study revealed differences between studio and classroom teaching was in the area of explaining the value of what students were being asked to do. In studio, Danielle was very explicit about explaining the value of each exercise that her students were asked to perform. Danielle did not do this in band because she believed that the repetition of the exercise would make its value obvious to the students.

This study revealed that the perceived ability level of the student(s) caused Danielle to behave similarly in both teaching formats. The perceived ability levels of the student(s) often caused Danielle to use similar appreciative systems, role-frames, and language. Specifically, Danielle used much more pedantic language and spoken metacognition with her weaker students in both contexts while she used more figurative language with her more advanced students in both contexts.

Implications for Teaching

It does seem that there are some studio teaching activities that would be beneficial if applied to the classroom context. They are as follows:
1. A lower student-teacher ratio or the opportunity for band teachers to meet with smaller sections of students on a regular basis would enable music educators to develop deeper relationships with students allowing them access to more role-frames, which in turn would allow them to discuss more sophisticated aspects of the music.

2. Develop a mechanism by which students can be given regular practice assignments in band and a mechanism to follow up those assignments. This would be a good first step in having students take ownership for their own progress.

3. Classroom music teachers should consciously strive to explain the value of each exercise that students are asked to perform in language that the students understand. This is a foundational element in good assessment and evaluation practice.

There are a number of beneficial teaching strategies that competent teachers use in private studio and classroom teaching. The appreciative systems, role-frames, language, and overarching theories that we bring to our problem-framing often influence our success or failure in either context. Most important, the language that we use with students must be language that is accessible to them and which encourages self-reflection and growth.
CHAPTER SIX

Recommendations for Future Research

In light of the research questions, this study developed a number of interesting findings. The teaching context influenced Danielle’s problem-framing approach. Her appreciative system, role-frame, and language were affected by the teaching context. Another difference this study revealed was how written instructions were used in each context. In studio more written instructions were used while in the classroom the majority of instructions were verbal.

This study did not yield any insights regarding the use of formal assessment techniques. Rather, this study revealed some interesting findings regarding the feedback given from informal assessments. Regarding feedback, students in the private studio received more positive feedback than the students in the band classes. Students in the private studio tended to receive more explicit feedback and subsequent instructions than students in the band classes.

This study revealed the perceived ability level of the student(s) caused Danielle to behave similarly in both teaching contexts causing her to use similar appreciative systems, role frames and language.

Much energy has been devoted to developing teaching strategies in band that stem from conducting effective rehearsals. Much of the teaching that is done in a band class is often teacher directed and transmissive. If we are to continue to see band as a curricular subject we must begin to closely examine the pedagogy that is employed in this teaching context. The interpretation of the data in this study led to the following recommendations for further research:

1. Research the problem-framing practices of exemplary teachers of large ensemble and studio music to catalogue best practices in each teaching context.
2. Research the assessment and evaluation practices of band teachers. How and why do band teachers assess and evaluate student performance and other non-achievement factors? What effect do these practices have on student learning?
3. Prepare case studies of music teachers who are exemplary at using figurative language and metaphor in their teaching. These case studies would study the effects of figurative language and metaphor on the development of musicality in ensembles.

4. Quantitatively research the effects of recording and replaying student performance in the context of classroom music.

5. Research musicians’ explanations of musical phenomena. How do exemplary musicians and teachers explain abstract musical phenomena in language?

6. A replication of this case study using choral and/or classroom music teachers.

7. Research the transition point where a teacher moves from teaching as they were taught to developing creative, personalized methods of instruction. This research would examine the reasons why the transition point is reached. What causes a teacher to begin to develop their own methods?
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

Ethics Application and Approval
1. Researcher:  Ian Krips, Department of Curriculum Studies, College of Education.  
Supervisor:  Dr. Alan Ryan, Department of Curriculum Studies, College of Education.

1a. Student:  Ian Krips, to fulfill M. Ed requirements.

1b. The anticipated start date of the study will be April 1, 2004.  The expected completion date of the study is August 2005.

2. Title of Study:  A Qualitative Inquiry Examining the Tacit Understandings, Problem-setting Behaviours and Assessment Decisions of an Instrumental Music Teacher in Studio and Large Group Contexts

3. Abstract

In this study I plan to conduct a qualitative case study of one teacher who teaches both privately and in a large group context.  Specifically, I’ll observe the participant at work in each environment and conduct follow up interviews to allow them to reflect on the vignettes I’ve recorded of their teaching.  What I hope to develop are some insights regarding the application of studio principles to the large group that can help to inform what we do in our classrooms.  I am interested in exploring through a qualitative case study of a teacher who teaches both in studio and large class contexts how that teacher communicates with students regarding their performance and how students make meaning and application with that information.  In this way, I hope to begin an understanding of the possible applicability of studio teaching techniques to the large group context.

Research Questions:
1. What are the differences is assessment techniques used in a studio and large group context?
2. What tacit understandings of the teacher are at work in each context?
3. What are the problem-setting behaviours of a teacher in the studio and large class context?  As the teacher resets problems, what “frame-experiments” are carried out by the teacher in each context?  Are these experiments similar or different?  How do these experiments change with each iteration?
4. What type of feedback is given to students in each of these contexts?
4. **Funding:** No funding has been granted to this study.

5. **Participants:** A participant for this case study will be purposefully selected. The participant will be an active teacher, who holds a Saskatchewan Professional A certification, currently teaching instrumental music in both the large class and private studio contexts and will play either a wind or percussion instrument. With the permission of the Deputy Director of Saskatoon Public Schools and the teacher’s principal, I will contact the participant directly by phone to elicit their participation in this study. Participation is voluntary. I have chosen to use an elementary band director as my previous work was in secondary band. The researcher does not expect to be in a position of power over the participant in the future. The participant’s identity will be protected by the use of pseudonyms for them, their school and school division.

As this is a case study, students will be present while the researcher is observing the participant. The researcher will not be asking the students any questions and will not be reporting any of their actions or conversations. He will be focussing his attention and data collection on the actions of the teacher only. The researcher will not be any power relationship with any of the students. Due to the intimate setting of a private music lesson and the fact that the other students are members of a class, the researcher will gain parental consent and student assent for all students in this study. Pseudonyms will be used to protect the identity of the students involved in the private lessons. Post lesson interviews will involve the teacher only and any comments that might identify the private students will be removed from the thesis or any future publications.

5a. **No recruitment material was used for this study.**

6. **Consent:**

   i. Participants will indicate their consent to participate in the research project by signing the supplied consent form (Appendix B). Participants will be informed of their rights and will they signify their understanding of those rights and consent to participate by signing the consent form. A copy of the consent form is attached to the application.

   ii. The participants will be informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time with not adverse effects or penalties. For the teacher participant these rights will be reviewed prior to each teaching observation and interview.

   a) Consent will be obtained via signed consent (Appendix B) and assent forms (Appendix C).

   b) Copies of the correspondence that will be sent to Saskatoon Public Schools is attached (Appendix E).
c) Children under the age of 18 are to be enrolled in the study, therefore the written consent of the parent(s) or guardian(s) or caregiver(s) will be obtained as well as the written assent of the child. A copy of the parental consent form (Appendix B) and student assent form (Appendix C) is attached to the application.

d) The population to be tested is NOT in a dependent relationship to the researcher as the researcher is currently on leave.

e) Not applicable to this study.

f) The researcher is conducting naturalistic-observation research and will obtain consent from those who are in the observation setting.

i. Those under observation have a reasonable expectation of privacy. The researcher is observing the teacher only and not the students. Any identifying features of the students will be removed from the transcripts.

ii. Those under observation form part of a preformed, captive group of band students or a private student of the teacher participant.

iii. General attributions about students’ behaviour may be made. The behaviours observed will only be those in response to the teacher participant’s instruction. The researcher will not be interviewing students or focussing the observation on them.

g) Members of the group will be under no coercion to participate. Withdrawal of a single member will not jeopardize the entire project. The researcher will minimize this perception by including the right to opt out of the classes being observed at any time with no negative consequences. Students who opt out will return to class with the non-band students. This will be included in the parental consent (Appendix B) and student assent (Appendix C) forms.

7. Methods/Procedures:

Data will be collected through interviews with the participant and observation of the participant teaching private lessons and large ensemble instrumental classes. An extensive pre-observation interview will be conducted with the participant to gather data regarding their thoughts about how they teach in each context and the ideas they bring to each context. Following the initial interview, I will observe the participant in two private lesson contexts and one full ensemble instrumental music context with a follow up interview after each lesson. This cycle will be repeated 3-5 times for each context. This part of the study will take approximately 12 hours. During the observation of those lessons I will be documenting the teacher’s framing and solving of problems and the language they use in instruction and the giving of feedback. Field notes will be prepared during the observations of lessons and classes. Field notes will be transcribed. The teacher participant will be recorded via a lapel microphone while teaching. The
The lapel microphone will not be able to pick up the student’s voices. During the follow-up interview I will be guiding the teacher through a process of critical reflection to explore their decision making and their tacit understandings. The interview sessions will be taped and transcribed. Interviewing will take approximately 18 hours. When possible, I will be gathering documents such as assignments, assessment tools, and written instructions given by the teacher. Another print-based form of data will include a journal to be kept by the teacher during the study.

The teacher participant will receive a copy of his/her transcribed responses and may choose to add, delete, or change any of his/her data. The participant teacher will be required to acknowledge their agreement with the accuracy of the transcriptions by completing the Release form for Individual Interviews (Appendix D). Participants will be informed of their right of withdrawal from the study at any time.

8. Storage of Data:

All audio-recorded data and subsequent transcripts will be securely stored for a minimum of five years by the researcher’s supervisor, Dr. Alan Ryan in the Department of Curriculum Studies, College of Education, at the University of Saskatchewan.

9. Dissemination of Results:

The results of this research study are for the primary use of completing the researcher’s thesis in completing the requirements for a M. Ed. degree. Other uses of the data analysis in the thesis may be for the future publishing of articles in academic or professional journals or for future presentations at conferences. All identifying information of the site or the participants will be protected by the researcher and will not be used in the thesis or other articles.

10. Risk or Deception:

There is minimal risk to the teacher participant and the students in the observation contexts. No deception will be used in this study. All participants will have given written consent.

a) The participants are not members of a vulnerable population.
b) A class of band students and two students involved in a private music instruction will be part of the observation settings. The researcher is not observing the students directly, but is observing the strategies of the participant teacher.
c) There is no institutional/ power relationship between researcher and participant.

d) The researcher will ensure that specific information in the data file will not be associated in any way to the specific participants.

e) Third parties will not be exposed to a loss of confidentiality or anonymity.

f) The private interviews with the participant teacher will be audio taped. During observation of private lessons and band classes the participant teacher will be taped with a lapel microphone. The microphone will not be able to pick up the voices of the students in the observation setting.

g) Participants will not be actively deceived or misled.

h) The observations will take place within the routine schedule of the teacher participant and his or her students. The researcher will attempt to accommodate the needs of the teacher participant in the physical surroundings of the interviews.

i) The participant teacher will be asked to reflect on his or her practice. It is not anticipated that the questions will be perceived as personal, sensitive or upsetting.

j) The procedures will not induce embarrassment, humiliation, lowered self-esteem, guilt, conflict, anger, distress, or any other negative emotional state.

k) There is no social risk for the participants.

l) The research will not infringe on the rights of participants.

m) Participants will not receive compensation of any type.

n) The researcher can think of no other possible harm that might come to the participants by participating in this study.

11. Confidentiality:

The teacher participant, the students in the observation settings and their respective schools will be given pseudonyms to protect confidentiality. All individual data will be held in strict confidence. All responses with identifying information will be protected by the researcher and will not be used in the thesis nor shared with the other participants. Data will be reported as a narrative with all identifying features removed. Direct quotations will have all identifying features removed.

12. Data/Transcript Release:

The participant teacher will receive a copy of his/her transcribed responses and may choose to add, delete or change any of his/her data. The participant teacher will be required to acknowledge their agreement with the accuracy of the transcriptions by completing the Release Form for Individual Interviews (Appendix D).
13. Debriefing and feedback:

The researcher will contact the participant teacher individually after the study has been completed to present a thank-you card and an executive summary of the research findings from the researcher. The participant teacher will be informed of the publication of the thesis and the ways of accessing the thesis.

14. Required Signatures:

____________________________________   ____________________________
Student Researcher                     Supervisor

____________________________________   ________________
Department Head                        Date

15. Contact Names and Information:

Ian Krips                                  Dr. Alan Ryan
306-966-7670 (office)                  306-966-7579
306-931-1616 (home)                   Department of Curriculum Studies
210 Frobisher Crescent                College of Education
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan            University of Saskatchewan
S7K 4Y7                                28 Campus Drive
306-220-1665 (cellular)              S7N 0X1
krips@sasktel.net                      alan.ryan@usask.ca
UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN
BEHAVIOURAL RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD
http://www.usask.ca/research/ethics.shtml

NAME: Alan Ryan (Ian Krips)  Bch 04-57
Curriculum Studies

DATE: April 12, 2004

The University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Research Ethics Board has reviewed the revisions to the Application for Ethics Approval for your study "A Qualitative Inquiry Examining the Tacit Understandings, Problem Setting Behaviours and Assessment Decisions of an Instrumental Music Teacher in Private and Large Group Settings" (Bch 04-57).

1. Your study has been APPROVED.

2. Any significant changes to your proposed method, or your consent and recruitment procedures should be reported to the Chair for Committee consideration in advance of its implementation.

3. The term of this approval is for 5 years.

4. This approval is valid for one year. A status report form must be submitted annually to the Chair of the Committee in order to extend approval. This certificate will automatically be invalidated if a status report form is not received within one month of the anniversary date. Please refer to the website for further instructions http://www.usask.ca/research/behavse.shtml

I wish you a successful and informative study.

Dr. David Hay, Acting Chair
University of Saskatchewan
Behavioural Research Ethics Board

D11/ck

Office of Research Services, University of Saskatchewan
Room 1607, 110 Gymnasium Place, Box 5000 RPO University, Saskatoon SK S7N 4J8 CANADA
Telephone: (306) 966-8576  Facsimile: (306) 966-8587
http://www.usask.ca/research
APPENDIX B

Consent Forms
You are invited to participate in a study entitled *A Qualitative Inquiry Examining the Tacit Understandings, Problem Setting Behaviours and Assessment Decisions of an Instrumental Music Teacher in Private and Large Group Settings*. Please read this form carefully, and feel free to ask questions you might have.

**Researcher:** Ian Krips, Department of Curriculum Studies, College of Education, 931-1616  
**Supervisor:** Dr. Alan Ryan, Department of Curriculum Studies, College of Education, 966-7579

**Purpose and Procedure:** With the approval of the Deputy Director of Saskatoon Public Schools and your principal, I plan to conduct a qualitative case study of one teacher who teaches both privately and in a large group setting. Specifically, I’ll observe you at work in each environment and conduct follow up interviews to allow you to reflect on the vignettes of your teaching that I have noted. What I hope to develop are some insights regarding the application of studio principles to the large group that can help to inform what we do in our classrooms. I am interested in exploring through a qualitative case study of a teacher who teaches both in studio and large class settings how that teacher communicates with students regarding their performance. In this way, I hope to begin an understanding of the possible applicability of studio teaching techniques to the large group setting.

**Research Questions:**

1. What are the similarities and differences in assessment techniques used in a studio and large group setting?
2. What tacit understandings of the teacher are at work in each setting?
3. What are the problem setting behaviours of a teacher in the studio and large class setting? As the teacher resets problems, what “frame-experiments” are carried out by the teacher in each setting? Are these experiments similar or different? How do these experiments change with each iteration?
4. What type of feedback is given to students in each of these settings?

The data collection phase of the study will take approximately 3-5 weeks. The observation time commitment will be part of your regular teaching schedule. I will be observing 3-5 full band classes and 3-5 private lessons of two of your students. The teacher participant interviews will take approximately 6-9 hours over 5 weeks. You will be audio recorded via a lapel microphone during lessons and our private follow up interviews will be audio recorded. You are free to shut the tape recorder off at any time. All audio taped material will be transcribed.

**Potential Risks:** There are no known risks associated with the procedures described above. Due care will be taken to remove any identifying features of the observation setting from the thesis preparation. Because the Deputy Director and your principal have given permission for you to participate in this study, they are the only people to whom your identity will be readily known. Due to the specialized nature of your position, there is a chance you may be identifiable by those reading the report. You may opt out of any portion of the study at any time with no negative consequences.

**Potential Benefits:** As a teacher you may benefit from having the opportunity to reflect on your practice. Benefits to the wider community may include the identification of teaching strategies to improve the teaching of band. While this is possible, these benefits are not necessarily guaranteed.
Storage of Data: All audio-recorded data and subsequent transcripts will be securely stored for a minimum of five years by the researcher’s supervisor, Dr. Alan Ryan in the Department of Curriculum Studies, College of Education, at the University of Saskatchewan.

Confidentiality: The results of this research study are for the primary use of completing the researcher’s thesis for the requirements of a M. Ed. degree. Other uses of the data analysis in the thesis may be for the future publishing of articles in academic or professional journals or for future presentations at conferences. All identifying information of the site or the participant will be protected by the researcher and will not be used in the thesis or other articles.

You and your school will be given pseudonyms to protect anonymity. All individual data will be held in strict confidence. All responses with identifying information will be protected by the researcher and will not be used in the thesis nor shared. Data will be reported as a narrative with all identifying features removed. Direct quotations will have all identifying features removed. After the participant teacher’s interview and prior to the data being included in the final report, you will be given the opportunity to review the transcript of the interview, and to add, alter, or delete information from the transcripts as you see fit. After the preliminary analysis of the data, you will be invited to reflect on my findings.

Right to Withdraw: You may withdraw from the study for any reason, at any time, without penalty of any sort (and without loss of relevant entitlements, without affecting academic or employment status, without losing access to relevant services etc). If you withdraw from the study at any time, any data that you have contributed will be destroyed. You have the right to refuse to answer any questions.

Questions: If you have any questions concerning the study, please feel free to ask at any point; you are also free to contact me or my supervisor, Dr. Alan Ryan, at the numbers provided below if you have questions at a later time. This study has been approved on ethical grounds by the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Sciences Research Ethics Board on _______________. Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to that committee through the Office of Research Services (966-2084). Results of the study will be made available to the participant teacher. A copy of the completed thesis will be available in the Education Library, University of Saskatchewan, following its completion.

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Dr. Alan Ryan
306-966-7579
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University of Saskatchewan
28 Campus Drive
S7N 0X1
alan.ryan@usask.ca

Consent to Participate: I have read and understood the description provided above; I have been provided with an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered satisfactorily. I consent to participate in the study described above, understanding that I may withdraw this consent at any time. A copy of this consent form has been given to me for my records.

__________________________________________  __________________________________________
(Signature of Participant)                      (Date)

__________________________________________
(Signature of Researcher)
Your child is invited to participate in a study entitled *A Qualitative Inquiry Examining the Tacit Understandings, Problem Setting Behaviours and Assessment Decisions of an Instrumental Music Teacher in Private and Large Group Settings*. Please read this form carefully, and feel free to ask questions you might have.

**Researcher:** Ian Krips, Department of Curriculum Studies, College of Education, 931-1616  
**Supervisor:** Dr. Alan Ryan, Department of Curriculum Studies, College of Education, 966-7579

**Purpose and Procedure:** In this study I plan to conduct a qualitative case study of one teacher who teaches both privately and in a large group setting. Specifically, I’ll observe your child’s teacher at work in each environment and conduct follow up interviews to allow him or her to reflect on the vignettes of his or her teaching that I have noted. What I hope to develop are some insights regarding the application of studio principles to the large group that can help to inform what we do in our classrooms. I am interested in exploring through a qualitative case study of a teacher who teaches both in studio and large class settings how that teacher communicates with students regarding their performance. In this way, I hope to begin an understanding of the possible applicability of studio teaching techniques to the large group setting.

Research Questions:
1. What are the similarities and differences is assessment techniques used in a studio and large group setting?
2. What tacit understandings of the teacher are at work in each setting?
3. What are the problem setting behaviours of a teacher in the studio and large class setting? As the teacher resets problems, what “frame-experiments” are carried out by the teacher in each setting? Are these experiments similar or different? How do these experiments change with each iteration?
4. What type of feedback is given to students in each of these settings?

The data collection phase of the study will take approximately 3-5 weeks. The observation time commitment will be part of your regular private lesson schedule. I will be observing 3-5 private lessons during your child’s regular lesson time. There are no other time commitments involved for your child.

The researcher will not be asking the students any questions and will not be reporting any of their actions or conversations. He will be focusing his attention and data collection on the actions of the teacher only.

**Potential Risks:** There are no known risks associated with the procedures described above. Due care will be taken to remove any identifying features of your child from the thesis preparation. Your child may opt out of any portion of the study at any time with no negative consequences.

**Storage of Data:** All audio-recorded data and subsequent transcripts will be securely stored for a minimum of five years by the researcher’s supervisor, Dr. Alan Ryan in the Department of Curriculum Studies, College of Education, at the University of Saskatchewan.
**Confidentiality:** The results of this research study are for the primary use of completing the researcher’s thesis in completing the requirements for a M. Ed. degree. Other uses of the data analysis in the thesis may be for the future publishing of articles in academic or professional journals or for future presentations at conferences. All identifying information of the site and your child will be protected by the researcher and will not be used in the thesis or other articles.

All individual data will be held in strict confidence. No information from your child will be used in the thesis. Data will be reported as a narrative with all identifying features removed.

**Right to Withdraw:** Your child may withdraw from the study for any reason, at any time, without penalty of any sort.

**Questions:** If you have any questions concerning the study, please feel free to ask at any point; you are also free to contact me or my supervisor, Dr. Alan Ryan, at the numbers provided below if you have questions at a later time. This study has been approved on ethical grounds by the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Sciences Research Ethics Board on _______________. Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to that committee through the Office of Research Services (966-2084). Out of town participants may call collect. Results of the study will be made available to the participant teacher. A copy of the completed thesis will be available in the Education Library, University of Saskatchewan, following its completion.

Ian Krips          Dr. Alan Ryan
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krips@sasktel.net      alan.ryan@usask.ca

**Consent to Participate:** I have read and understood the description provided above; I have been provided with an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered satisfactorily. I give consent for my child to participate in the study described above, understanding that I may withdraw this consent at any time. A copy of this consent form has been given to me for my records.

___________________________________  __________________________________
(Signature of Parent or Guardian)     (Name of child – please print)

___________________________________  _______________
(Signature of Researcher)     (Date)
APPENDIX C

Assent Forms
Research Ethics Boards (Behavioural and Biomedical)

PRIVATE STUDENT ASSENT FORM

Researcher: Ian Krips, Department of Curriculum Studies, College of Education.
Supervisor: Dr. Alan Ryan, Department of Curriculum Studies, College of Education.

Title of Study: A Qualitative Inquiry Examining the Tacit Understandings, Problem Setting Behaviours and Assessment Decisions of an Instrumental Music Teacher in Private and Large Group Settings

1. You are invited to participate in a research project by Mr. Ian Krips, who is a student at the University of Saskatchewan. Mr. Krips will be observing your teacher as he or she teaches. All you have to do is be yourself!
2. Your participation is optional. You may choose to not participate if you feel uncomfortable.
3. You simply need to do what you do every week in your lesson. Mr. Krips will be observing your teacher. You will not be required to participate outside of your regularly scheduled lesson time and you will not be interviewed, asked to do anything or take any tests.
4. You may quit at any time, for any reason. This will not cause anyone to be upset or angry, and will not result in any type of penalty.
5. Your participation will be kept private and not shared with other children or your parents.
6. There are no risks and no benefits in participating in this study.
7. If you withdraw, the portion of the observation data involving your lessons will be removed.
8. No one reading the report will be able to identify you. All responses with identifying information will be protected by the researcher and will not be used in the report nor shared. Data will be reported as a story with all identifying features removed. Data will be used in the preparation of a report and possibly in other academic writing.
9. The research has been approved by the University of Saskatchewan Research Ethics Board on _____________________.
10. If you have any questions concerning the study, please feel free to ask at any point; you are also free to contact me or my supervisor, Dr. Alan Ryan, at the numbers provided below if you have questions at a later time. This study has been approved on ethical grounds by the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Sciences Research Ethics Board on _____________________. Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to that committee through the Office of Research Services (966-2084). Out of town participants may call collect.

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krips@sasktel.net

Dr. Alan Ryan
306-966-7579
Department of Curriculum Studies
College of Education
University of Saskatchewan
28 Campus Drive
S7N 0X1
alan.ryan@usask.ca

11. Mr. Krips has explained his study and what I am to do. He has explained what it means for me to agree to participate. I have understood what Mr. Krips has told me and I agree to participate in his study. I have been given my own copy of this assent form.

________________________________________________________________________
(Signature of Student)    (Signature of Researcher)
APPENDIX D

Transcript Release Form
1. Researcher: Ian Krips, Department of Curriculum Studies, College of Education. 
   Supervisor: Dr. Alan Ryan, Department of Curriculum Studies, College of Education.

2. Title of Study: A Qualitative Inquiry Examining the Tacit Understandings, Problem Setting Behaviours and Assessment Decisions of an Instrumental Music Teacher in Private and Large Group Settings

3. Contact Names and Information:

   Ian Krips
   306-966-7670 (office)
   306-931-1616 (home)
   210 Frobisher Crescent
   Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
   S7K 2M3
   306-220-1665 (cellular)
   krips@sasktel.net

   Dr. Alan Ryan
   306-966-7579
   Department of Curriculum Studies
   College of Education
   University of Saskatchewan
   28 Campus Drive
   S7N 0X1
   alan.ryan@usask.ca

I, ______________________, have reviewed the complete transcript of all audio recorded data in this study, and have been provided with the opportunity to add, alter, and delete information from the transcript as appropriate. I acknowledge that the transcript accurately reflects what I said in my teaching and in my personal interviews with Ian Krips. I hereby authorize the release of this transcript to Ian Krips to be used in the manner described in the consent form. I have received a copy of this Data/Transcript Release Form for my own records.

_________________________ _________________________
Participant Date

_________________________ _________________________
Researcher Date
APPENDIX E

Application Form for Permission to Conduct Research in Saskatoon Public Schools
APPLICATION FORM
FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT
RESEARCH IN SASKATOON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

APPLICANT

Name: Ian Krips                 Telephone: (h) 931-1616

Address: 210 Frobisher Crescent, Saskatoon, SK, S7K 4Y

Present Position: Graduate Student, University of Saskatchewan

If the study is a requirement for a degree, please specify which degree: M. Ed.

Will applicant actually conduct study: Yes _X__    No ____

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED STUDY

Title of Study: A Qualitative Inquiry Examining the Tacit Understandings, Problem Setting Behaviours and Assessment Decisions of an Instrumental Music Teacher in Private and Large Group Settings

Statement of Problem/Research Question: In this study I plan to conduct a qualitative case study of one teacher who teaches both privately and in a large group setting. Specifically, I’ll observe him or her at work in each environment and conduct follow up interviews to allow him or her to reflect on the vignettes I’ve recorded of his or her teaching. What I hope to develop are some insights regarding the application of studio principles to the large group that can help to inform what we do in our classrooms. I am interested in exploring through a qualitative case study of a teacher who teaches both in studio and large class settings how that teacher communicates with students regarding their performance. In this way, I hope to begin an understanding of the possible applicability of studio teaching techniques to the large group setting.

Research Questions:

1. What are the differences is assessment techniques used in a studio and large group setting?
2. What tacit understandings of the teacher are at work in each setting?
3. What are the problem setting behaviours of a teacher in the studio and large class setting? As the teacher resets problems, what “frame-experiments” are carried out by the teacher in each setting? Are these experiments similar or different? How do these experiments change with each iteration?
4. What type of feedback is given to students in each of these settings?
Research Methodology: (please check the appropriate boxes)

- [ ] questionnaire
- [ ] participant observation
- [ ] individual interview(s)
- [ ] data analysis
- [ ] focus group(s)
- [x] qualitative case study

Intended Use of Results: (please check the appropriate boxes)

- [x] published as a Masters’ thesis/project
- [ ] not published
- [ ] published as a Doctorate dissertation
- [x] presentations
- [ ] published in a scholarly journal

PARTICIPANTS

Number of participants desired who are: (please check the appropriate boxes)

- [x] Pupils: Number: TBA  Grade: TBA  Time: 3-5 Class Periods
- [x] Teachers: Number: 1  Time: 3-5 Class Periods & 3-5 Interviews (2.5 hours)
- [ ] Principals: Number  Time ___________________________

Proposed school sites (indicate name if possible): TBA

Will the researcher work with the participants: (please check the appropriate boxes)

- [x] Individually – with the participant teacher
- [ ] small groups
- [ ] entire class(s)

TIMEFRAME

Proposed Dates for: Commencing: April, 2004  Completing: May 2004
**REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS**
The following attachments are required prior to processing the application: (please check if the attachment is enclosed)

- [ ] Copies of consent forms, including the parent permission letter
- [ ] Copies of all tests, questionnaires or interview questions that will be given to the subjects
- [ ] A signed letter or certificate of approval from the appropriate ethics review committee
- [ ] Information package provided to the ethics committee

**UNIVERSITY AUTHORIZATION**
This application, the research design and instruments mentioned herein have been approved by:

Faculty Advisor’s Name: Dr. Alan Ryan  University: University of Saskatchewan

Faculty Advisor’s Signature: ____________________________  Date: __________

**COMMITMENT OF RESEARCHER(S)**

- [x] I am willing to provide a final report of my study to the Saskatoon Public School Division.
- [x] I am willing to provide a presentation of my research findings to schools and/or the school division.
- [x] I agree to adhere to the ethical standards and procedures as outlined in my application package.
- [x] I agree to seek permission to make any changes in the methodology outlined in this application.

DATE: ____________________________  SIGNATURE: ____________________________
Dear Mr. ______________,

I have invited _______________________  to participate in a study entitled A Qualitative Inquiry Examining the Tacit Understandings, Problem Setting Behaviours and Assessment Decisions of an Instrumental Music Teacher in Private and Large Group Settings. I am seeking your permission to observe ______________________ as she teaches 3-5 Grade 7 band classes during late April and the month of May. This study has been approved on ethical grounds by the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Sciences Research Ethics Board and I have obtained the approval of ________________.

Observations will take place during her regularly scheduled class times and will not interfere with her current work schedule. All observations will be completed before the end of May. The details of my study and methodology follow.

Researcher: Ian Krips, Department of Curriculum Studies, College of Education, 931-1616
Supervisor: Dr. Alan Ryan, Department of Curriculum Studies, College of Education, 966-7579

Purpose and Procedure: I plan to conduct a qualitative case study of one teacher who teaches both privately and in a large group setting. Specifically, I’ll observe ______________________ at work in each environment and conduct follow up interviews to allow her to reflect on the vignettes of her teaching that I have noted. What I hope to develop are some insights regarding the application of studio principles to the large group that can help to inform what we do in our classrooms. I am interested in exploring through a qualitative case study of a teacher who teaches both in studio and large class settings how that teacher communicates with students regarding their performance. In this way, I hope to begin an understanding of the possible applicability of studio teaching techniques to the large group setting.

Research Questions:

1. What are the similarities and differences is assessment techniques used in a studio and large group setting?
2. What tacit understandings of the teacher are at work in each setting?
3. What are the problem setting behaviours of a teacher in the studio and large class setting? As the teacher resets problems, what “frame-experiments” are carried out by the teacher in each setting? Are these experiments similar or different? How do these experiments change with each iteration?
4. What type of feedback is given to students in each of these settings?

The data collection phase of the study will take approximately 3-5 weeks. The observation time commitment will be part of ______________________ regular teaching schedule. I will be observing 3-5 full band classes. The teacher participant interviews will take approximately 1-3 hours over 5 weeks. _______________________ will be audio recorded via a lapel microphone during lessons and our private follow up interviews will be audio recorded. She is free to shut the tape recorder off at any time. All audio taped material will be transcribed.

Potential Risks: There are no known risks associated with the procedures described above. Due care will be taken to remove any identifying features of the observation setting from the thesis preparation. Because you and the Deputy Director will have given permission for _______________________ to participate in this study, you are the only people to whom her identity will be readily known. Due to the specialized nature of
her position, there is a chance she may be identifiable by those reading the report. She may opt out of any portion of the study at any time with no negative consequences.

**Potential Benefits:** __________________________ may benefit from having the opportunity to reflect on her practice. Benefits to the wider community may include the identification of teaching strategies to improve the teaching of band. While this is possible, these benefits are not necessarily guaranteed.

**Storage of Data:** All audio-recorded data and subsequent transcripts will be securely stored for a minimum of five years by the researcher’s supervisor, Dr. Alan Ryan in the Department of Curriculum Studies, College of Education, at the University of Saskatchewan.

**Confidentiality:** The results of this research study are for the primary use of completing the researcher’s thesis for the requirements of a M. Ed. degree. Other uses of the data analysis in the thesis may be for the future publishing of articles in academic or professional journals or for future presentations at conferences. All identifying information of the site or the participant will be protected by the researcher and will not be used in the thesis or other articles. ________________ and your school will be given pseudonyms to protect anonymity. All individual data will be held in strict confidence. All responses with identifying information will be protected by the researcher and will not be used in the thesis nor shared. Data will be reported as a narrative with all identifying features removed. Direct quotations will have all identifying features removed. After the participant teacher’s interview and prior to the data being included in the final report, she will be given the opportunity to review the transcript of the interview, and to add, alter, or delete information from the transcripts as she sees fit. After the preliminary analysis of the data, she will be invited to reflect on my findings.

**Right to Withdraw:** __________________________ may withdraw from the study for any reason, at any time, without penalty of any sort (and without loss of relevant entitlements, without affecting academic or employment status, without losing access to relevant services etc). If she withdraws from the study at any time, any data that she has contributed will be destroyed. She has the right to refuse to answer any questions.

**Questions:** If you have any questions concerning the study, please feel free to ask at any point; you are also free to contact me or my supervisor, Dr. Alan Ryan, at the numbers provided below if you have questions at a later time. This study has been approved on ethical grounds by the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Sciences Research Ethics Board on April 12, 2004. Any questions regarding ________ rights as a participant may be addressed to that committee through the Office of Research Services (966-2084). Results of the study will be made available to the participant teacher. A copy of the completed thesis will be available in the Education Library, University of Saskatchewan, following its completion.

Ian Krips  
306-966-7670 (office)  
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210 Frobisher Crescent  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan  
S7K 4Y7  
306-220-1665 (cellular)  
krips@sasktel.net

Dr. Alan Ryan  
306-966-7579  
Department of Curriculum Studies  
College of Education  
University of Saskatchewan  
28 Campus Drive  
S7N 0X1  
alan.ryan@usask.ca

Thank-you for your consideration of this request. I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Ian Krips
April 21, 2004

Mr. Ian Krips
210 Frobisher Crescent
Saskatoon SK S7K 4Y

Dear Mr. Krips:

I have received and approved your request to conduct research in Saskatoon Public Schools for the aspect of your study that involves the teacher’s work in our schools. Your study entitled, "A Qualitative Inquiry Examining the Tacit Understandings, Problem Setting Behaviours and Assessment Decisions of an Instrumental Music Teacher in Private and Large Group Settings" promises to provide interesting and relevant information.

Please contact [REDACT] directly and provide him with the written details of your study and a copy of this letter when seeking permission to conduct your research.

Our staff voluntarily participate in research and are free to withdraw at any time.

Upon completion of your research, we request that you submit a bound copy of your study to our office. Best wishes for success with your study.

Yours truly,

[Signature]

Karen Anderson, Deputy Director
DEPARTMENT OF DIVISION SERVICES