

**A STUDY OF PIANO TEACHERS' PERCEPTION ON THE ECLECTIC  
APPROACH IN ELEMENTARY PIANO TEACHING**

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**FACULTY OF CREATIVE ARTS  
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA  
KUALA LUMPUR**

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**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL  
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**FACULTY OF CREATIVE ARTS  
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KUALA LUMPUR**

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to my respective parents, Mr and Mrs Khoo Gee Keong for their unfailing love, encouragement, spiritual and financial support.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr Cheong Ku Wing for her continuous support, guidance and patience.

Universiti Malaya

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**ORIGINAL LITERARY WORK DECLARATION**

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in elementary piano teaching

Field of Study: Music Education

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## ABSTRACT

Elementary piano teaching considers as a daunting task for piano teachers as the piano teacher needs to advocate a more holistic and student-centred approach to maximize the students' music learning with numerous teaching techniques, strategies, and activities in a one-to-one teaching setting. The purpose of this study was to examine the piano teacher's teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials, and their teaching activities in one-to-one elementary piano teaching. The participants of this study were nine piano teachers with different teaching experiences from West Malaysia. This study employed virtual interview which utilizing ICT (Information and Communications Technology) medium or Internet-based communication tools like WhatsApp, Messenger, and e-mail. The findings of this study indicated that teachers were selecting and combining different teaching approaches, teaching materials, and teaching activities with their perspectives and teaching experiences to enhance piano learning and satisfy the needs of elementary piano students. They have applied an eclectic approach inadvertently in their elementary piano teaching as they choose and applied suitable teaching approaches, teaching materials, and teaching activities based on students' needs. The implications of this study suggest that an eclectic approach applicable in piano education. The eclectic approach was based on the choice of piano teacher's teaching approach with their evaluation on the readiness of student and the selection of suitable teaching materials to enhance the piano learning and performing of the student to the professional level. The eclectic approach can be an effective piano teaching approach to facilitate student's piano learning and the acquiring of piano performance skills and techniques.

*Keywords:* eclectic approach, one-to-one piano learning, teaching approach for piano lesson, selection of teaching material, teaching activities

## ABSTRACT

Pengajaran piano tahap asas merupakan satu tugas yang mencabarkan bagi guru piano kerana guru piano perlu menggunakan pendekatan pengajaran yang holistik dan membuat pembelajaran berpusatkan murid untuk memudahkan pelajar memahami isi pembelajaran muzik. Guru piano perlu menyediakan pelbagai jenis pendekatan pengajaran, membuat pemilihan bahan pengajaran, dan menyediakan pelbagai aktiviti pengajaran. Kajian ini merupakan kajian kes kualitatif dengan wawancara. Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji pendekatan pengajaran guru piano, pemilihan bahan pengajaran dan aktiviti pengajaran guru piano dalam pengajaran piano satu lawan satu. Peserta kajian ini adalah sembilan orang guru piano dengan pengalaman mengajar yang berbeza dari Semenanjung Malaysia. Kajian ini menggunakan temu ramah secara maya yang menggunakan media komunikasi berasaskan Internet atau ICT (Teknologi Maklumat dan Komunikasi) seperti WhatsApp, Messenger dan e-mel. Hasil kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa guru piano memilih dan menggabungkan pendekatan pengajaran, bahan pengajaran dan aktiviti pengajaran yang berbeza dengan perspektif dan pengalaman mengajar mereka. Guru piano yang menyertai kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan eklektik secara tidak sengaja dalam pengajaran piano mereka. Mereka memilih dan menggunakan pelbagai pendekatan pengajaran, bahan pengajaran dan aktiviti pengajaran yang sesuai berdasarkan keperluan pelajar. Implikasi dari kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa pendekatan eklektik sesuai digunakan dalam pendidikan piano. Pendekatan eklektik adalah berdasarkan pada pilihan pendekatan pengajaran guru piano dengan penilaian mereka terhadap kesediaan pelajar. Pemilihan bahan pengajaran dan aktiviti pengajaran yang sesuai untuk meningkatkan pembelajaran dan prestasi pelajar piano ke tahap profesional.

*Kata kunci:* pendekatan eklektik, pembelajaran piano satu lawan satu, pendekatan pengajaran dalam pelajaran piano, pemilihan bahan pengajaran, aktiviti pengajaran

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE PAGE.....	i
DEDICATION.....	ii
DECLARATION UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ABSTRACK.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES.....	xi
LIST OF APPENDICES.....	xii

### CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	5
1.3 Purpose of the Study.....	8
1.4 Research Questions.....	8
1.5 Significance of Study.....	9
1.6 Delimitation of Study.....	9
1.7 Definition of Terms.....	10
1.7.1 Eclecticism.....	10
1.7.2 Elementary piano teaching.....	11
1.7.3 Piano teacher.....	12
1.8 Conclusion.....	13



## **CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

2.1 Overview.....	14
2.2 Eclecticism.....	14
2.2.1 Eclecticism in arts (theatre and music composition) .....	17
2.2.2 Eclecticism in education.....	19
2.2.2.1 Language teaching.....	21
2.2.2.2 Eclecticism in Music education.....	23
2.3 Elementary Piano Teaching.....	25
2.3.1 One-to-one piano studio teaching.....	29
2.3.1.1 Private piano studio learning environment.....	30
2.3.2 Elementary students.....	31
2.3.3 Elementary piano teachers.....	32
2.3.4 Piano lesson components.....	34
2.3.5 Teaching approaches in piano lesson.....	35
2.3.6 Teaching styles in piano lesson.....	38
2.3.7 Selection of teaching materials for piano lesson.....	39
2.3.8 Teaching activities for piano lesson.....	40
2.4 Conclusion.....	42

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

3.1 Overview.....	43
3.2 Research Method.....	44
3.2.1 Research design.....	45
3.2.2 Case study.....	47
3.2.3 Interview.....	49
3.2.4 Participants.....	51

3.2.4.1 Participants sampling.....	52
3.2.4.2 Participants Demographic.....	52
3.2.5 Data collection procedure.....	54
3.2.6 Data analysis procedure.....	56
3.3 Conclusion.....	57

## **CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS OF DATA AND FINDINGS**

4.1 Overview.....	58
4.2 Findings of the Study.....	58
4.3 Teachers' Perception on their Teaching Approaches.....	59
4.4 Teachers' Selection of Teaching Materials.....	68
4.5 Teaching Activities for a Piano Lesson.....	72
4.6 Implementation of Eclectic Approach.....	78
4.7 Conclusion.....	83

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATION**

5.1 Overview.....	84
5.2 Summary of the Findings.....	84
5.3 Discussion of Findings of the Study.....	85
5.3.1 Teaching approaches for elementary piano teaching.....	85
5.3.2 Selection of teaching materials.....	86
5.3.3 Teaching activities in piano lesson.....	88
5.3.4 Implementation of eclectic approach in piano teaching.....	89
5.4 Conclusion.....	90
5.5 Implication of the Study.....	90

5.6 Recommendations for Future Study.....	91
5.7 Closure Remarks.....	92
 <b>REFERENCES.....</b>	 93
 <b>APPENDICES.....</b>	 103
Interview Guideline.....	103

Universiti Malaysia

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
3.2 Participants Demographic	53

Universiti Malaya

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

Appendix A Interview guideline for semi-structured interview.....	103
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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background

In the context of Malaysia piano learning, teaching framework and teaching approach are much grounded with music examinations in mind, especially the British music examination like Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) and Trinity College London (TCL). Lesson contents are very much geared toward preparation of these examinations and according to the requirement of the examination syllabi. These examinations are popular in Malaysia as they are used as the reference guidelines and requirement for the entrants of music diploma or degree program in local music colleges and universities.

Davidson and Scutt (1999) indicated that the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) offered the most well-known instrumental examination evaluated framework utilized worldwide. The examinations presented with a specific benchmark of accomplishment and furthermore a straight strategy for assessment. The examination framework may be viewed as a manner for impacting the lesson content. The examination syllabus had provided the teaching framework for most music teachers as the exam system were established with diverse repertoire and explicit technical assignments. These technical assignments like scales, sight-reading and technical exercises were used to acquaint the student's music development. However, these are much criticism for this limited teaching approach and piano teachers began to seek for more holistic approaches rather than emphasize on one specific approach, focusing on preparing and fulfilling the examination requirements.

According to Cheng and Southcott (2016), the goal of mature and experienced piano teachers was not only an aspiration for students to succeed in music examination

but to develop the students' musicality and musical skills. Further, Cheng and Southcott (2016) also indicated that music examinations often as extra motivation for parents rather than the students and to certain target groups of students (p. 53). One of the participants of the Cheng and Southcott (2016) study expressed that music examinations can offer a learning goal for certain students (p. 54). Yet if the students are just learning music for the goals of music examinations, these are daunting tasks for both teacher and students as loss of enjoyment in music learning. Davidson and Scutt (1999) indicated that essential element for longitudinal commitment in music learning was the intrinsic motivation. The examination just as an external motivation to stimulate intrinsic motive for music learning, however it did not succour for long term music learning. Students' enthusiasm is fostered to influence their intrinsic motivation. Thus, the piano teachers need to understand the student's needs with their personal learning styles and preferences. Piano teachers need to individualise and to modify their teaching according to students' preferences.

In the recent years, many educationists had advocated more holistic approaches using various teaching techniques, strategies and activities to enhance music teaching-learning. In the recent year, piano education emphasized on student-centred learning rather than teacher-centred, where teachers choose, select and decide which approach is most effective and appropriate for each individual piano student. Hwang (2017) indicated that the teacher-centred approach has a tendency to restrict the learner's self-development in the musical intelligence and emotional responses to music. Biasutti and Concina (2018) had stated that an efficacious piano teacher generally implemented with learner-centred approach. Learner-centred approach engrossed on students' ability and their relevant learning experience. Piano teacher just offering help and prepare students' attainable inspiring assignment. Piano teacher adjusts their piano instruction strategies according to the need of piano students. Elementary piano teacher keen to explore for a more holistic approach that is suitable for elementary student from the plethora of approaches.

Eclecticism is an ancient concept used in Greek in architecture and art, martial arts, philology, philosophy and psychology. In the recent decade, eclectic approach has been general used in other teaching discipline like language teaching (Mwanza, 2017a, 2017b), general education (Paramboor, 2018), and theatre study (Alizadeh & Hashim, 2014). In music industry, eclectic approach has been used in music composition (Duarte, 2002), education (Bridges, 1984; Brittin, 1995) and improvisation (Promsukkul & Trakarnrung, 2014). However, the scarcity of studies on eclectic approach in one-to-one piano lesson is observed.

In music education, various eclectic approaches of music pedagogy were used. Incorporating various approaches, piano teachers begin to draw the benefit and strength of the well-known approaches like Kodály, Orff, Dalcroze, Suzuki, and Yamaha Music Education System into their one-to-one piano studio teaching. Adams (2018) expressed that it was advantageous to take strengths from each approach, combined and coordinated them into a teaching method rather than following exactly to any one of them. Dachs (1990) stated that eclecticism characterized as a potential mixed methodology which offered as an option adapting any of the current approaches. The eclectic approach is expected to give instructors with structures on which an assortment of exercises and activities can be used in teaching junior and senior students. Its conceptual application in education or music education is emerging in the recent decade.

According to Nicholeris (1997), eclecticism was defined as a combination of different philosophical viewpoints practically indicated by correspondence topics. It did not take into consideration the convention of philosophical decision as an issue of individual inclination. The eclectic practitioner adopted ideas selectively from various sources and combined them into a new theory. Eclecticism identified as selecting the best from various sources, it was appropriate when considered the component of choice in certain conditions for music instruction. Eclectic approach is considered as a more



advantageous approach for piano education because piano educators and piano students are able to address different and conflicting issues.

Adams (2018) stated that the efficacious method as an eclectic practitioner was to learn and implement the methods of every approach with attach with new ones, utilized any and all methods and techniques until the teaching purpose is accomplished. The eclectic piano practitioner needed to study and select the suitable teaching approach. Subsequently, developing any methods or techniques to accomplish the elementary piano students' need, included all the piano lesson components and achieve piano teaching goal.

The piano education was intended to discover applicable piano teaching pedagogy suitable for each individual student, inspiring piano learning, retaining piano student to learn music, application and further music development. The development of an eclectic approach in piano education for instructive practises required comprehension of the nature of music and the instructive procedures for educating and learning. Alternatively, the inclusive teaching approaches were combined with proper selection process as initiate by eclectic thought to produce an effective piano teaching approach.

Eclecticism work as fusion of various inclusive approach and develop into a new suitable approach. The eclecticism in piano education can be compelled through a piano music curriculum intended to fit with its scholarly, experiential learning activities, music technical and practical characteristic. Subsequently, the eclectic component of choice in piano teaching design can be utilized when recognizing applicable philosophies. The compatibility of selected piano musical studies was insured when associated methodologies comprised of eclectic thought. Dillon (2009) indicated that numerous music teachers were implied eclectic approach in their teaching inadvertently. The complication of eclectic approach has no customized framework or fixed teaching materials. Eclectic approach is differed with the traditional piano teaching approach and it is harder than teaching from existing piano text book.

Mwanza (2017b) commented that many education scholars had proposed various eclectic methods based on their own perspectives, interpretative and considerations, but there is none of a consolidation of eclecticism concept. Therefore, eclectic method for teaching is proposed to base on individual teachers' belief and value. Generally, it is perceived that eclectic model is based on the insight of combined theories, styles, and ideas; and the eclectic method in piano teaching generally refers to the piano teacher's own perspectives, teaching experiences, and personal considerations on the music theories, musical styles and musical ideas in their piano teaching episode. However, there are no empirical studies that have dwell in depth of the notions mentioned above.

Biasutti and Concina (2018) expressed that successful music instructor must be well informed with subject matter and to have a profound comprehension about the music characteristics, music construction, music interpretation, music performance and music creation. Therefore, in the notion of eclectic approach, it was advocated that as a piano teacher, he or she must be able to apprehend about the music characteristics and music interpretation of a piano repertoire. Further, it was suggested that it is vital for music teacher to recognize the lesson organisation and the ability to distribute knowledge.

Many students in Malaysia are taking regular weekly private piano lesson in elementary level before they forward to advance level. How does the elementary piano teacher teaching in one-to-one setting incorporate an eclectic approach to broaden student's musical experience through various approaches and activities instead of just limited to fulfil examination requirements?

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

This study aims to explore perspectives of piano teacher in their teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials, and teaching activities in a piano lesson. Ancillary, this study aims to recognize the piano teachers' teaching approaches, choice of various

teaching materials for various age groups of elementary piano students, teaching activities and how they combine teaching approaches, various teaching materials and teaching activities into an eclectic approach in a piano lesson. As observed, piano teachers often face challenges on the know-how of teaching the elementary piano students and the preparation of teaching framework; thus, the purpose of this study aims to provide more holistic piano pedagogies approaches for novice teachers.

Elementary piano teaching can be a daunting task for teachers. The curriculum for elementary piano teaching is important. The students' age, background, and the available instructional time were the criteria for teacher to design the curriculum (Przygocki, 2004, p. 44). Elementary level is the vital foundation for the further intermediate and advanced piano study. Elementary piano teacher needs to build up the musicality of students and to provide diverse repertoire, proper technical technique. There is no specific standard music curriculum for teacher to follow in elementary piano teaching.

The learning attitude of every student in piano learning is different, so the piano teachers do not necessary use one specific teaching approach, teaching material and teaching activity for each student. Piano teachers aim to combine the suitable teaching approaches, various teaching materials and teaching activities to suit the needs of each individual student.

Cheng and Southcott (2016) indicated that numerous students do not continue study until the expert level even though they learn piano since young age. This is because the absence of intrinsic motivation in music learning. Piano teachers always seek strategic and effective strategies to increase the interest of learning music among the elementary piano students. Teacher model performance is one of the motivational strategies to fabricate students' enthusiasm of music learning. In general, novice piano teachers are lacking in professional knowledge, skills and experiences in piano teaching. Novice

teachers are aspired to have constructive and precise ideas on the selective of teaching materials and techniques that are appropriate for the elementary piano lessons.

From the previous studies, it is indicated that a holistic music or piano lessons, the primary purpose is to develop musicianship, aesthetic, music literacy skills, creativity (Coulson & Burke, 2013), cognitive development (Costa-Giomi, 1999), and self-esteem (Costa-Giomi, 2004). Referring to the limitation of learning piano within the examination requirement and syllabus, it is important to address this issue discussed above to provide a more musical and comprehensive music learning program.

From the perspective of music creativity, there is a growing trend in the application of musical eclecticism in the 21st century where genre and composition technique are combined for a new, coherence creative output. The definition of eclecticism is very diverse. In music education, Kassner (2009) also proposed an eclectic approach to music learning and advocated its benefit for both music learners and music teachers.

In one-to-one piano teaching, piano teacher always faces challenges with different learning interest and challenges of the student. Thus, what are the methodological and curriculum eclecticism can be implemented to enhance the student's individuality. How does this eclectic approach can be accomplished in one-to-one elementary piano teaching?

There were few studies had conducted in eclecticism in drama (Alizadeh & Hashim, 2014); music composition (Hess, 2005; Park, 2012); language teaching (Kumar, 2013; Mwanza, 2017a, 2017b; Shahadat, 2019). Although Kassner (2009), Benedict (2010) and Bugos (2011) had conducted studies of eclecticism in general music education; nevertheless, the research in this area is very limited. By far, there is no study on eclecticism in piano education. Hence, it is need to address this knowledge gap.

In the one-to-one individual piano learning, where the individuality of the learners was the main focus of the piano lesson. All children are different, they have different

individual character, different personality and different learning style, it is vital to conduct a study to have a deeper understanding on various teaching approaches, teaching materials and teaching activities by the teacher in one-to-one piano learning setting that contribute to the eclectic approach which enhance individuality among the elementary piano students.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purposes of this study were as follow: (1) to identify the teaching approaches of piano teachers in one-to-one elementary piano teaching; (2) to determine the selection of teaching materials for elementary piano student; (3) to recognize teaching activities in a one-to-one elementary piano lesson; and (4) to discover the eclectic approach in piano teaching.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

The following are the specific research questions that guide the study:

1. What are the teaching approaches used by the piano teacher in one-to-one elementary piano teaching?
2. What are the teaching materials selected for elementary piano student?
3. What are the teaching activities in one-to-one elementary piano lesson?
4. How do the piano teachers' teaching approaches, their selection of teaching materials and teaching activities contribute to the eclectic approach?

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study aims to contribute new knowledge to the teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials, teaching activities and how the teacher implements eclectic approach in one-to-one elementary piano teaching. Ancillary, this study also aims to contribute to the knowledge of the eclectic pedagogic and approaches to capture the effective elementary piano teaching. Elementary piano teaching can be challenging tasks for teachers to inspire and motivate younger students to sustain their interest in learning. The curriculum and teaching-learning activities in elementary piano teaching are most effective to design and plan according to the students' ability to increase their interest and confidence in music learning.

This study aims to provide perceptions of teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials and strategic planning in teaching activities for one-to-one elementary piano teaching. The perceptions from experienced teachers can be helpful and valuable reference for novice piano teacher. Therefore, the present study focused on nine piano teachers of one-to-one elementary piano teaching on their teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials and teaching activities. This study also examine how the piano teacher use and integrate various teaching approaches, their pedagogic choice and selection of various teaching materials and teaching activities into an eclectic approach to enhance the piano learning of elementary piano student.

### **1.6 Delimitation of Study**

According to Kornuta and Germaine (2019), delimitations contended with the limitation in scope in a study by researcher. Researcher structured boundaries so the study progressively engaged with the research objective and research scopes. This study is delimited to the interviews of nine piano teachers from West Malaysia with diverse teaching experiences within one to forty-five years. The nine piano teachers were trained

locally and familiar with the foreign piano examination boards like Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) and Trinity College London (TCL) offered in Malaysia.

The nine piano teachers are categorised into three groups, according to their teaching experiences: expert, experienced, and novice. The expert teacher group were delimited to the piano teachers with 10 to 45 years of piano teaching experiences; the experienced teacher group were delimited to the piano teachers with 5 to 10 years of piano teaching experiences; and novice teacher group were delimited to piano teacher with one to five years of piano teaching experiences. This study only aims to examine nine piano teachers' perspective on their teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials and teaching activities in one-to-one elementary piano lesson; other related teaching matters and issues are not within the scope of this study.

## **1.7 Definition of Terms**

The following presents the theoretical and operational definition of terms for this study.

### **1.7.1 Eclecticism**

Mwanza (2017b) stated that teacher must recognize their student, content of subject, teaching methods and the teaching idea when apply eclecticism theory. Eclecticism included the utilization of diversity of learning activities; every one might contain extremely difficult features and objectives. Teachers were requisite to comprehend what designate to eclecticism and capable to explain the reasons behind any decision when combining certain technique or methods.

Kumar (2013) defined eclectic method is a "combination of different method of teaching and learning approaches" (p. 1). Eclectic approach in music education abstains from stressing certain music pedagogies, yet select and combine the most appropriate

pedagogy. Ang (2014) stated that an eclectic approach presented as varied ideas and approaches exemplify as springboard to investigate the piano teaching topic.

Eclectic approach for this study refers to the combination of various teaching approaches, different teaching materials, and various teaching activities in one-to-one piano lesson for elementary piano student. Numerous teaching approaches, teaching materials and teaching activities are comprised into a more holistic piano teaching program to provide optimal learning experiences for students and to enrich learning outcome.

### **1.7.2 Elementary piano teaching**

Bernal (2018) stated that one of the features of piano teaching was characterised in “one-on-one teaching environment” (p. 181). Giving a piano lesson to just a single student in a moment enabled teacher emphasized on various piano technical details, particular repertoire’s information and the improvement of musical and individual skills. Hwang (2017) expressed that teacher encounter students with diverse learning style and various cultural backgrounds in one-on-one piano lesson. Therefore, it is vital for teachers to identify the students’ intellectual development before access into subsequent stage of learning.

Coulson and Burke (2013) stated that the students in elementary music classroom were generally aged from five to eleven years. Lesson design for elementary teaching was a task to some inexperienced and experienced music instructors. Elementary piano student learning was influenced by how the piano teacher plan and present lessons during the piano class. Indicating diverse teaching approaches can help piano teachers select and compiled the most suitable approach for student. Hwang (2017) stated that the efficacy of piano lesson was: (1) to encourage students to investigate and explore about music, its



musical technical skills and music practices; and (2) train students' proficiency in music performance.

According to ABRSM examination board, elementary level is classified as Grade 1 to 3. The Trinity examination board stipulated Initial to Grade 3 as foundation. Hence, the elementary piano teaching for this study is defined as one-to-one piano teaching for student aged from five to eleven years and contemporise in the level of Grade 1 to Grade 3.

### **1.7.3 Piano teacher**

Carter et al.'s (1988) described that experts possibly received professional proficiency through vast and diverse teaching experience. Experts have wealth of knowledge about the students and they were able utilize the knowledge to comprehend and clarify classroom circumstance (p. 31). Pike (2014) described that experts are more assertive with their teaching methods, classroom management, rich in teaching topic information and are progressively acquainted with the lesson sequencing. Standley and Madsen (1991) defined expert music instructor as the one with the requisite degree and over 10 years of competent experience (p. 7).

Barrett et al.'s (2002) defined novice teacher as the "one with less than 3 years of teaching experience" (p. 15). According to Kim and Roth (2011), novice teacher was defined as "teacher with 5 years or less of teaching experience" (p. 4). Novice teacher was the teacher who faced issues of difficulty in managing their task. In Curry, Webb and Latham (2016) study, novice teachers are teacher in their first year of teaching.

Piano teachers of this study are categorized into three groups: expert, experienced and novice levels. According to Yeh (2014), the perspectives of piano teaching of a piano teacher is influenced by their previous learning experience as student, their personal teaching experiences and their reflections on teaching practice. The expert piano teacher

in this study is operationally defined as piano teacher having more than ten years of professional teaching experience. Experienced piano teacher is operationally defined as the one with five to ten years of professional teaching experience. Novice teacher is operationally defined as teacher who has teaching experience within one to five years.

The sample for this study comprised of three experts, three experienced and three novices' piano teacher from West Malaysia. These three teacher categories have varied teaching experiences, piano teaching practice and professional development.

## **1.8 Conclusion**

Chapter 1 discussed the background, statement of problem, research objectives, and research questions; followed by the presentation of the significance of study and delimitation of the study. The chapter concluded with the clarification of the theoretical and operational definition of terms in this study.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Overview**

This chapter presents a discourse of the several relevant constructs associated to the purpose of this study. The purpose of this study aims to provide a more holistic piano pedagogy approaches for piano teachers who always face challenges on the know-how of teaching the elementary piano students and the preparation of teaching framework. Few studies have been conducted in this area (Albergo, 1990; Bridges, 1984; Brittin, 1995; Bugos, 2011). However, the studies on the implementation of eclectic approach for elementary piano teaching and the explanation of the scope of eclectic approach for piano teaching were scarce. Elementary music education remains a daunting task for both students and teachers. This study aims to collect the views and perspective from three categories of teachers: experts, experienced and novice, to understand their teaching approaches, teaching materials selection and teaching activities in their one-to-one elementary piano teaching. This study aims to provide some piano teaching strategies and piano teaching frameworks for inexperienced piano teacher to enhance the music development and learning interest of elementary piano students. The purpose of the review of literature is to provide the relevant knowledge related to the research objective made of the following headings: (1) eclecticism; and (2) elementary piano teaching.

#### **2.2 Eclecticism**

Lazarus and Beutler (1993) emphasised the definition of eclectic from dictionary as “selecting what appears to be best in various doctrines, methods, or styles” (p. 381). Eclecticism was not likely as a disorganized or uncritical combination of various and perhaps unsuited elements, however it considered as practical application of principal.

Gilliland, James and Bowman (1994) stated that the eclectic system was depended on an organized and combined approach that aims to distribute suitable theories, techniques and systems. Weidemann (2001) argued that eclecticism is the combination and adaptation of various techniques and methods accomplished by competent course designer on lesson planning (p. 9). Kumar (2013) stated that the eclectic approach is a fusion of various distinct teaching methods and learning approaches which had commended in the beginning of 1990's and developed elegantly mainstream nowadays. Eclectic approach was a vital in the practice of total learning experience. Learning was ought to be conceivable because the sole of learning process was pleasurable and inventive. Conveying things into right way and attention to suitable learning style should be broadened.

Mwanza (2017a) claimed that eclectic approach acknowledged to the variety classroom conditions and contexts of learning. Mwanza (2017b) stated that the eclectic approach was conceived out of the consciousness that every one of the specific single methods had strengths and weaknesses and that no single method was approachable to the circumstance of dynamic classroom (p. 56). Mwanza (2017b) identified three characteristics of eclectic approach which were: (1) subjective; (2) situational or context specific; and (3) mistake was viewed as a usual part in the process of learning (p. 58). Eclectic approach is subjective, thus teachers had the opportunity to select and determine how and what able to combine in a specific instance depended on the classroom influence elements. Eclectic approach could be contextualized as situational or context specific to teaching and learning context as each teaching and learning condition naturally was distinctive, and hence needs an alternate methodology to fulfil the current learning conditions. Mistakes are contemplated as part of the learning process, thus, the correction of mistake was vital for assisting learners to altering their wrong prior knowledge. Mistake correction should be done at the end of lesson, cannot be instantaneously.

Furthermore, eclectic approach showed several advantages which were eclectic approach is holistic, learner centred, participatory, context sensitive, motivating, live, multiplicity of activities and tasks. It was adaptable and complaisant to the needs of the classroom during the lesson. Eclectic approaches are objective complement and to yield lesson's outcome instantly as it addressed the various learners' need.

Besides that, Weidemann (2001) justified that the eclectic approach is a collaboration and adaption of various distinct method that conveyed the discernment of each other. The proficient course designer practised the eclecticism in the classroom. The validation for the practice of eclecticism as a language teaching approach was due to its vogue which is reinforced by the dispute of critical pedagogy. Brown (2002) suggested that "principled eclecticism" where educators determined their teaching episode in their personal dynamic contexts. He declared that principled eclecticism involved "diagnosis, treatment, and assessment" in teaching process (p. 13). Teachers were challenged by principled eclecticism in decision-making. The decision-making should be founded on an intensive and holistic comprehension of every learning theories and correlated pedagogies in term of learning purpose, learners' needs, learning and teaching process. Gao (2011) also emphasized that principled eclecticism should be a total apprehension of entirely learning theories and interrelated pedagogies in term of the motive and learning setting, the needs of learners, learning materials and how language is learnt and what instruction is all about.

Bugos (2011) defined eclectic pedagogical approach as a type of teaching approach which is "composed of elements drawn from various sources" (p. 32) where the teacher selected "what appears to be best in various doctrines, methods, or styles" (p. 32). He emphasized that an eclectic pedagogical approach comprised of *what* material is instructed along with *how* material is instructed (p. 32). Shahadat (2019) stated that eclecticism was a combination of different teaching methods which were more

efficacious for learners in elementary level (p. 2). At present, instructors aim to execute new instructing system to make lively learning circumstance to increase learning interest and attention among students. He argued that eclectic method can foster the learners' learning.

The idea of eclecticism is applicable in numerous subject areas by combining various methods, techniques, strategies, procedures, materials and contents. How the eclecticism concept reinforces the elementary piano learning? This study aims to investigate the teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials and teaching activities of elementary piano teacher. This study focuses on how the elementary piano teacher selects and combine the basic piano teaching approaches and teaching activities, matching suitable pedagogies and the choice of teaching materials to the needs of specific cases and making lesson plan for the one-to-one elementary piano teaching.

### **2.2.1 Eclecticism in arts (theatre and music composition)**

Eclecticism concept had been accomplishment in various traditional branches of art. Eclecticism had diverse meaning in different discipline. Several researches had addressed this eclectic concept in theatre and music compositions. Eclecticism had been advocated as a part of dramatic literature in the new viewpoint of Critical Theories in Eclectic Theatre. Eclectic theatre has been established from fusion of conventional features with the component of Western theatre. Alizadeh and Hashim (2014) stated that eclectic theatre is a moderately recent structure for theatre director around the world. The America and Europe theatre directors elevated an innovative style by nominating forms. They consolidated their discoveries with their opinions and formed a new movement called eclectic theatre.

Eclectic theatre was considered as a new supposition in postmodernism. This idea emerged during 60th-70th century in certain theatres, for example, "Conference of the

Birds” (Alizadeh & Hashim, 2014). In Alizadeh and Hashim (2014) study, eclectic ism was studied in Iranian theatre “*Kaboudan and Sfandiar*” depend on the premise of extraordinary aesthetic theory. They attempted to examine the formal and generous component in “*Kaboudan and Sfandiar*” that was instituted by its theatre director. “*Kaboudan and Sfandiar*” has been made based on a theatrical style called dramatic storytelling. Yet, it was not deliberated as ritual play. The action of the story resembled the stories of *Shahnameh* (The King Story of Iran). “*Kaboudan and Sfandiar*” involved the theatrical taxonomy and impacted by western theatre style regarding traditional plays designs. It considered as eclectic theatre.

The idea of eclectic theatre which had involved Western elements in traditional plays was applied to the music education. This is because the eclectic ism enables different teaching approaches work together with the traditional teaching approaches and become an ideal approach for students.

In addition, eclectic ism was the core of the 20th century which established the individualism and pluralism by selecting various components from numerous different sources (Magnuson, 2008). The composition work was not in the usual manner of composers and combined several styles from other styles. Music composers had broadly used an extraordinary assorted variety of new composition strategies and new styles in their works. Eclectic music deliberated from pre-existing music (quotation), non-Western music, or popular music, or be a noteworthy revolution of traditional materials.

Duarte (2002) attempted to establish that despite of the stylistic eclectic ism in Ronaldo Miranda’s piano solo works and four-hand work. Miranda’s eclectic ism was obvious in his works with a lot of mixture on musical experiments and language. Ronaldo Miranda was the main leading Brazilian composer in contemporary music with his distinct musical style. Miranda emphasized the significant changes in the twentieth century music happened regularly in language rather than forms. He kept utilized

traditional forms in his compositions. Numerous Brazilian composers favoured eclectic approach in musical composition and evolved musically into a progressively complex style. The music displayed with complicated harmonic structures by changing the tonal designs to the degree of losing absolutely the tonality and the musical scene transformed into difference styles and aesthetics. Latin America's composers evicted the merely nationalistic vogue and enhanced the utilization of eclectic in structure and language to achieve higher music quality and earned the international acceptance.

Hess (2005) examined the eclecticism established in the Ottorino Respighi's four noteworthy solo piano works which were: (1) Sonata in F minor (1897-1898); (2) Six Pieces (1903-1905); (3) the piano transcriptions of *Ancient Airs and Dances* (1917, 1932); and (4) *Three Preludes on Gregorian Melodies* (1921). The works of Respighi showed influences from Middle Ages, Renaissance, Baroque, and Classical. Respighi considered as a multifaceted composer as he had created impulsive and own voice in his composition with the utilization of various compositional techniques, styles, and forms.

Park (2012) identified that eclecticism and universalism were conveyed Shostakovich's humanity in his composition (p. 5). Shostakovich presented eclecticism in his Twenty-four Preludes and Fugues, Op. 87 which subjected to the oppression. The Twenty-four Preludes and Fugues, Op. 87 were considered as eclectic piano composition of that time. Shostakovich included numerous subjects, presented the musical language in universalism and the melodies were composed in traditional and contemporary structures (p. 19).

### **2.2.2 Eclecticism in education**

Sooraj (2013) stated that education is accretion of knowledge, so the disciplinary practice and learning were vital for student in long time education. The present education focused with child-centered education where priority to child's interest. Interest has been



recognized as the basic principal for evoking the child in learning. The education concepts were wide and is entirely influenced not by one particular philosophical idea but affected by the cumulative past experiences in education field.

The education goals and practices might draw up from the combination of suitable principles and practices from various sources. There was no particular philosophy that engendered to all features of education and completely established to offer every things. Feldhusen (1983) stated that eclectic approach was new concept derived from several current approaches to education and it was in faster pace, higher level, greater depth, cognitive complexity, challenge, higher cognitive processes, and more information (p. 192).

Sooraj (2013) indicated that eclecticism was obtained from the verb root "elect" which intended to select and pick up. The upstanding thoughts, theories, and concepts were selected and picked up from numerous philosophy, then incorporated into proper theories. Eclecticism is considered as the concept of choice. Eclecticism does not enclosed to one ideal or belief, but acquiring knowledge of particular subject from numerous thoughts, ideas and theories. Eclecticism is combination of knowledge from all sources or implementation different theories in certain circumstance.

The eclectic approach is universal and comprised of all types of skills for invigorating creative learning condition and offering learning confidence to learners. Learners are consistently attracted to new and fascinating things, so that they are capable of ascertaining and inducing good learning ways through eclectic approach. Teacher must had the knowledge various teaching methods or teaching techniques and then to combine into eclectic approach with the consideration of learning progress of children in changing age and social progress.

Hence, it was necessary to implement an eclectic approach by coordinating the conflicting ideologies and merge them together. Instructors aim to form and plan their

teaching methods corresponding to the learner's learning conditions and accessible materials of teaching aids. Thus far, the concept of eclecticism had implemented in language teaching and some areas in music education.

#### **2.2.2.1 Language teaching**

Eclecticism for language teaching was advocated at the beginning of 1900s and it was favoured because of its effectiveness. It was provided good outcomes deprived of abundant pressure on learner. Kumar (2013) introduced the well-known strategy for learning English language using eclectic method. The eclectic approach in language teaching was suggested the approach was naturally alluring, reasonable and pluralistic. Eclecticism was included the utilization of an assortment of language learning exercises which have divergent features and purposes. The eclectic method is considered as an effective method for language learning with the inclusion of multiple tasks in various assignments, characterised by high collaboration, lively learning, and objective correlative. The intention of recommending eclectic approach is to associate lifetime incidents encounters to the thoughts exhibited in learning of the language. Learners were varied and multitalented in the classroom, hence eclectic method is suitable approach as it has rich combination of numerous learning activities.

The significant highlight of eclectic approach is the combination of participatory approach, communicative approach and situational approach for language teaching (Kumar, 2013, p. 3). Kumar (2013) instilled eclectic method of learning as eclectic method is to promote various methods and can be utilized depending on the choice of certain specific method which relied upon the students' level. Mwanza (2017a) stated that eclectic method was comprehended as the utilization of different methods in a single lesson for language teaching. He expressed that diverse technique to language instructing is comprehended to be the utilization of a few strategies in a single exercise. He argued

that every single language teaching method had strengths and weakness respectively. He emphasized that the dynamic classroom context was not effective if only relied on one particular method.

Mwanza (2017b) indicated the conceptions and misconceptions about the eclectic approach. This was a qualitative study which complicated with primary and secondary data. Primary data was gathered through discussion of focus group while the secondary data was gathered through literature construing of eclectic approach. The participants of focus group were 90 secondary school English teachers who were intentionally selected from 9 secondary schools at the central province of Zambia. Some portion of the discoveries indicated that the eclectic approach is a combination which ought to be one method involving the trademark of various strategies. One of the misunderstandings by certain instructors was that the eclectic approach alludes to the utilization of more than one teaching technique in a tutorial consistently.

Shahadat (2019) discussed the preferences of teachers using eclecticism in English teaching in Bangladesh. The study employed mixed mode research design. The study focused on the preferences of teacher in executing different teaching methods, their attitude and understanding towards eclecticism. This study involved survey and face to face interview with elementary level teachers. The survey comprised of 14 statements with five selections of "Likert scale" to discover the response on practising eclectic method on English teaching in Bangladeshi context and their preference of utilizing various teaching methods in EFL (English as Foreign Language) classroom. The interview was around 15-20 minutes for each teacher. The interview questionnaire comprised of two sections which were 10 open-ended questions and 14 close-ended questions to examine the teachers' preference on the teaching method and their viewpoint about eclecticism. The study sampling was 20 English teachers from two different schools. The results of this study showed that eclectic method can ease and expand the learning

English opportunities of Bangladeshi and it was useful for both learners and teachers. Eclectic method was incrementally efficacious in teaching and learning compared to the traditional learning approach.

#### **2.2.2.2 Eclecticism in music education**

Churchley (1980) observed that the music education had been covered with various new teaching programs such as the Kodály, Orff, and Suzuki during the previous two decades. The music educators were not insufficiency with the teaching materials or methods but confusing with the selection of the adaptive or eclectic teaching ideas. He argued that majority of these programs had adopted an eclectic approach, which merging ideas and materials from numerous sources. He stated that the “pure” approaches were set up extensively by educator through the focused study on program’s source. Advocated single teaching systems entirely to secure a unity of purpose, concentrated obviously in one direction to reach learning goal. The deficiency of variation in “one method only” approach was lead students lose their learning’s interest. One particular method was not easily directly transplanted to other different culture people as it teaching materials was created in its own cultural setting. He indicated that adaptation of methods were presumed as the teaching approaches should be progressively suitable for various settings. Adaptation of method had been criticized as it lacked of quality and taste. In addition, he indicated that numerous teachers had picked eclecticism for their teaching episode. Eclecticism was on the incorporation of numerous source’s ideas and procedures to develop as a very individualistic and ever-varying approach. The principal problem of eclecticism was the superficiality as it insufficient with rational philosophical position.

Bridges (1984) stated that numerous music educators were looking for teaching materials and ideas which able to seize on one or other methods like Dalcroze, Orff, Kodály, and Suzuki. Each method had its own keen enthusiasts and expected students to

grasp music conceptual and its elements, fulfilled music aesthetic response through the music experiences which had included aural awareness with movement and voice exercises. Music educators had enriched their awareness on learner's mental, physical and emotional growth for enhancing their music learning interest and expanding their music understanding and music response. The implementation of particular method frequently assumed as a narrow, rigid, and exclusive approach which did not achieve the original teaching purpose. He determined that eclecticism was the ideal teachings of the past which retained the integrity of music education and expanded its spirit and influences.

Brittin (1995) examined the scope of teaching method and selection methods of elementary teachers from two geographic divergent states. Besides that, this study also investigated the probable connections among teacher tenure in the utilization of basal teaching series and preferred teaching methods. This study carried out survey on 123 elementary music specialists from New York and Texas. The survey used to indicate the following: (1) the percentage of teachers' teaching contemplate by the Dalcroze, Orff, Kodály, Comprehensive Musicianship, Manhattanville Music Curriculum Program, and "Other" approaches; (2) the amount of time in lesson planning and in the classroom using basal series; (3) the selection of curricular choices with song-selected task; and (4) the reason selected particular ability level for each song. The findings of this study determined that the percentage of elementary music specialists' teaching was affected by the Dalcroze, Orff, Kodály, Comprehensive Musicianship, Manhattanville Music Curriculum Program and "Other" approaches. Any of these approaches was irrelevant to extensive experience or the utilization of basal series texts. There was no noteworthy contrast in the measure of time New Yorkers and Texans conveyed utilizing the basal series. Educators in New York revealed higher rates of recognition with every single method than Texas instructors. Texas instructors inclined more toward Kodály, while those in New York revealed more enthusiasm for Orff, and to a lesser degree,

Comprehensive Musicianship, Jacques-Dalcroze, and the Manhattanville Music Curriculum Program. Furthermore, this study discussed that most of the elementary music specialists were eclectic in their utilization of particular teaching techniques.

Kassner (2009) defined that eclecticism was the “selecting and using what is considered the best elements of all systems” (p. 62). Numerous elementary music pedagogies could be modified to strengthen students’ learning success. The present and future students necessitated for having more eclectic thinking to suffice and success in present global community. Eclectic skills allowed teachers to select teaching situations which corresponded to their preferences in conducting lesson with different students’ behaviours and learning attitudes. Teacher should construct lesson based on student’s need for nurturing and sustaining music programs. Eclectic strategies facilitated students beyond what they can do to the boundaries of what they can think. Eclecticism privileged student to cultivate a wider scope of musical skills and their attitudes in music education.

Bugos (2011) indicated that eclecticism in music education enabled the teacher to “pick and choose” music pieces from different approaches dependent on what they are attempting to teach (p. 30). The eclectic teaching design might be considerate and personalized instruction plan to “default” option. Benedict (2010) stated that numerous music instructors have proposed that an eclectic approach for music teaching may be the solution to adapt all of these various methods where any method could be selected and served the curriculum content (p. 213).

From the review of previous studies, it was observed that there is no study that addresses the eclectic approach in one-to-one individual piano study.

### **2.3 Elementary Piano Teaching**

Griffin (2007) indicated that there were five areas for the objective of elementary music program which included: (1) to cultivate competency in critical thinking, problem solving

and decision-making through experiences with music; (2) to create proficiency in music comprising listening, singing as well as playing instruments, note reading and composing music; (3) to build up an inspirational perspective towards music; (4) to establish music appreciation and the significance of music in own cultures and others through participation and reflection; and (5) to impart student's general development (p. 4). The core of music curriculum was based on the (1) musical participation; (2) musical awareness and appreciation; (3) musical understanding; and (4) musical technology which designed for sustaining and cultivating student's musical thinking. Elementary piano learning as one of the elementary music program. So, the objective of the elementary piano teaching also based on the objective of elementary music program to build up students' proficiency in piano playing and piano composition.

Bugos (2011) identified that elementary general music teachers are prospected to impact the desires of students, their capability in music participate and appreciate music during the advanced levels and throughout the lives. The children's music aptitude and the talent to learn music were developed until the age of nine, so the elementary music education was significant pivoted on the content selection and teaching technique. The student's music experience at this level was the fundamental for long-lasting attitudes towards music. The elementary piano teacher also has the same goal as elementary general music teachers. Elementary piano teachers aim to inspire their students to participate and enjoy piano playing until the advanced levels and even for the entire life. The importance of the elementary piano teaching is in the piano lesson content selection and piano technique as the students' talent is developed until the age of nine.

Albergo (1990) indicated two of the most significant in piano pedagogy was "what to teach and how to teach" (p. 74). The piano program content at every level and the ability of piano students at the end of each level were consideration for teacher in choosing piano pedagogy. Piano pedagogy had enhanced the future piano teachers

training and the forming of present expert teacher in piano teaching and learning. Piano pedagogues had explored effective piano teaching strategies and methods to conduct a progressively organized piano education. In the study of Albergo (1990), he identified that numerous teachers frequently taught without pedagogical work's structure or plan, they taught student as the way they were taught. This was because they were isolated with their own private studio, less communicated with colleagues and seldom went for pedagogy class.

In addition, Albergo (1990) indicated there four behavioural objectives for the elementary level of piano study which were: (1) playing; (2) listening; (3) creating; and (4) knowing/ understanding (p. 75). Albergo (1990) was examined beginning piano study's present objectives from eight American piano methods and conducted a survey with chief piano pedagogy teachers to investigate the behavioural objectives for elementary level piano instruction. He conducted a content analysis on each method incorporating each method's objectives and analysed the review of each method in Piano Quarterly. The survey was administered to 319 experienced piano teachers who attended the National Conference on Piano Pedagogy in October 1986 but only 240 surveys were submitted back. This study attempted to succour teachers in indicating teaching objectives, choose instructional materials, design and standardize elementary piano curriculum either in private or class, and assess student progress. The findings attained 57 behaviour objectives for elementary piano instruction based on the teachers' response. This had supported the utilization of behavioural objectives as a measure to establish maximum teaching success. He concluded that piano "methods" and well-designed curriculum of behavioural objectives were the essential teaching criteria for accomplishing musical objectives. The quantities of objectives, level of difficulty, time length to achieve objectives were varied by the student's age, student's particular goals, and their strength and weakness.



The pedagogical approach was defined by Bugos (2011) as far-reaching approach which incorporated a general framework of curricular content and the teaching techniques. He indicated that decision of pedagogical approach was by all accounts on intricate choice included the interaction of teacher's major personal and their professional influences. Elementary piano teachers were confronted with various choices about the curricular content and teaching technique for covered all the required elementary piano music knowledge. The instructional and decision on curricular design had extensive inferences.

There were various approaches in piano music education such as Dalcroze, Kodály, Music Learning Theory, and Orff-Schulwerk. In Bugos (2011) study, he overviewed on the Dalcroze, Kodály, Music Learning Theory, and Orff approaches. He observed that the Dalcroze approach was engrossed on eurhythmics, solfege, and improvisation. The musical ideas were assigned ear training and the rhythmic movement was preceded the instrumental study. He stated that Kodály method is a combination of existing instructive ideas and tools of child-centred methods of Pestalozzi, moveable-do tonic sol-fa system of Guido d' Arezzo, hand signs of John Curwen, movement idea of Dalcroze, and rhythm syllables of Emile Cheve. Kodály approach focused on the music reading development and the writing skills through the acquisition of melodic and rhythmic pattern. The particular Kodály teaching techniques were echoes, hand signs, body signs, rhythm solmization, flash card, picture symbols, stick notation and music ladders. He verified that Gordon's Music Learning Theory (MLT) provided framework for any level or type of music program. Teacher created own educational plan and individual method while sequencing the musical experiences and music learning from the preparatory audiation via audiation. The main objective of the Orff-Schulwerk approach was the buildout of creativity, especially the improvisation ability. The Orff approach started with the imitation and exploration ahead of the music literacy. The learning process developed from simple to complex and included improvisation from the known

to unknown. The insistence of Orff approach was song and speech instead of rhythm and comprised of the improvisatory and locomotor movement.

### **2.3.1 One-to-one piano studio teaching**

Gaunt et al. (2012) established that one-to-one instruction precisely as beneficial tutoring condition, its capable govern the students in interfacing their private piano learning to certifiable settings and expert musician route. Carey and Grant (2015) expressed that one-to-one teaching model advocated as purposely recognized professional teaching standard. The most significant characteristic of the one-to-one teaching was the improvement of techniques particular to the person. The principal of one-to-one teaching model was capable to accommodate the student's individual needs. The one-to-one teaching situation enabled teacher to design their own teaching approach and apply their pedagogical instruments for enhancing music learning for particular student. The one-to-one teaching model focused on the particular student's needs and enabled the learning targeted at the specific level of student's ability, so it considered as an efficient and focused approach.

The student-participants in Carey and Grant (2015) expressed that they respected their one-to-one teachers as a musical, expert as well as role model, advisor and allocated precious tutoring relationship (p. 13). The teacher-participants revealed that the one-to-one instruction in combination with different teaching models or formats brought advantages for student learning. They also realized that one-to-one had potential benefits in a more extensive and progressively various field of pedagogical practice (p. 14). Overall, the findings of Carey and Grant (2015) viewed that the one-to-one was essential for the learning and music development of students.

Carey et al. (2013) stated that the one-to-one environment with transformative teaching nature served as mentoring function, the teachers assisted the students to recognize their ambitions and accomplished to professional musician (p. 364). Gaunt

(2008) revealed that individual lessons were crucial, intense and complicated for music learning either instrumental or vocal learning. The teacher and student existed in one-on-one environment enclosed in a domestic setting considered as private teaching and private learning (Davidson & Jordan, 2007).

Davidson and Jordan (2007) defined “private teaching and private learning” as ubiquitous great “institution” in intriguing teaching and learning form that alongside with regular living life. This kind of teaching and learning at junior level was generally in the private home-based setting with a certain sort of curriculum (p. 729). The characteristic “private teaching, private learning” was established in one-to-one setting and generally in a small room, either in teacher’s house, rented studio or learner’s house. Davidson and Jordan (2007) further indicated that students generally having half an hour to one hour per week for private piano lesson in teacher’s home or studio (p. 731).

The foci of “private teaching, private learning” model was different. Some students went for this kind of private lesson aimed for professional accomplishment while some just learn for fun or as social etiquette (Davidson & Jordan, 2007, p. 731). The teacher might have to vary in teaching approaches according to students, between those keen on fun and those motivated for profession. The “private teaching” setting assigned for an ideal learning situation and secured for good learning quality. Teacher can convey good stylistic piano performing and piano technical tradition from one generation to next generation in private piano teaching.

#### **2.3.1.1 Private piano studio learning environment**

Individual piano class was the most extreme significance for one-to-one learning environment. This type of learning environment was useful for both teacher and students. Most importantly, the music room must provide a suitable music learning environment for student. Musical vocabularies and pictures can be place on walls to motivate the

student's music development. The musical visuals will inspire and pursuit student to learn music as new language. Prince Edward Island Department of Education (2002) stated that teacher needs to provide a comfortable learning area which will motivate the student's participation, correspondence and collaboration among student and teacher. The learning environment must enable the student to take part in various music activities. The learning area setups can be altered as indicated by the lesson purpose and music exercises.

Davidson and Jordan (2007) indicated that private studio for one-to-one piano lesson commonly in the teacher's house or in a rented studio (p. 739). The teaching support materials in the private studio as an asset for music learning environment must full with musical activity such as posters with music notation and colourful pictures of particular images or wording. The private studio also need furnished with mirror, adjustable piano stood, adequate cooling, good lighting and technological aids.

The one-to-one piano learning environment in Malaysia mostly known as private teaching in piano teacher's own house or studio teaching in a music studio (Cheah, 2012, p. 2). Ang (2014) stated that the curriculum for piano lesson in Malaysia mostly focused on Western classical music and the music assessment generally based on foreign music examination boards such as the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM), Trinity College of Music (TCM) and the London College of Music (LCM) (p. 2). The main teaching focus was on the requirement of the graded examinations which are three examination pieced in a grade; scales and arpeggios or technical works; sight-reading and aural training (Ang, 2014, p. 4).

### **2.3.2 Elementary students**

Prince Edward Island Department of Education (2002) stated that the elementary students generally of ages from five to eleven years. The students within this age range had some significant characteristics. These elementary students can acquire the knowledge however

their learning altered and differed in developmental abilities. They were adapted knowledge at most when associated with concrete, physical exercises before moving towards progressively theoretical concept. They generally curious when they opposed to people and circumstances differ from experiences. Elementary students were enthusiastic knowing new things and they had spacious imaginations. Girls will be mature faster than boys at the age around nine. Music learning considered as a dynamic process which continuously changes and progresses. Students need to participate actively in the music lessons. The role of learner was viewed as the child as: (1) having rights; (2) an active constructor of knowledge; (3) a researcher; and (4) a social being (Hewett, 2001, p. 96).

### **2.3.3 Elementary piano teachers**

The role of teacher was viewed as: (1) a collaborator and co-learner; (2) guide and facilitator; (3) researcher; and (4) reflective practitioner (Hewett, 2001, p. 97). Elementary piano teacher had to prepare various types of music activities to fit in the students' multiple learning styles and different developmental abilities. Elementary piano teacher should be given the students participate physically through the movement, singing, music games, dramatization and playing with piano regularly. Elementary piano teacher should take advantage of students' interests and liberality for contrasts in people and circumstances. Elementary piano teacher has to assign time for music activities and discussion to develop students' attitudes in piano learning.

Elementary piano teacher should be considered the elementary piano students' music development when choosing music activities and designing content of a piano lesson. Students' music development will be varied because of the distinction in age and maturation rate. Facing challenges and making mistakes are nature of learning, elementary piano teacher must assist the elementary piano student to face them. Firstly, the vital duty of elementary piano teacher was acquainted to the piano music educational

program, results, target, and music assets for elementary piano teaching. Elementary piano teacher should have a clear overview of the elementary piano music curriculum and comprehension of various methodologies as these components will be used in teaching design.

The key to the successful piano music program application is the piano teacher planning the teaching design carefully and the organization of piano class. Nowadays, piano education emphasized on student-centred rather than teacher-centred, so the piano teacher role will change in some ways. Piano teacher remains as the music model and supply great piano learning environment with various music activities to cultivate students' music development. Student's piano learning proficient and pleasure which acquired from their music learning environment are relying on the piano teacher. The critical role of piano teacher was building an inspiration and positive attitudes in student's piano learning. Teacher as encourager and motivators should helping students having secure and develop their self-confidence in exploring music (Prince Edward Island Department of Education, 2002).

The music culture outside the classroom was changing instantaneously. Thus, Kassner (2009) proposed that teacher should keep away from narrow teaching strategies and teaching assets. Teacher should become risk taker and keep changing, away from comfort zone. Churchley (1980) recommended that great instruction was concentrated on music itself as opposed to its instruction method. The instruction must prepare adequately and include the inspiration (p. 293). Piano teacher should provide lively piano learning situation and chances for student to explore and experience music rather giving instruction directly. Other than that, piano teacher ought to fortify new learning in various settings and prepare piano practice plan in the recently learned concept or technical skill.

### 2.3.4 Piano lesson components

Bellelo (2013) stated that the musicianship, instrument technique, music theory and repertoire were the features of music learning (p. 2). The traditional approach in learning an instrument were established with apprenticeship learning, the educator viewed as the expert for all parts of music learning especially in one-to-one learning setting. The piano pedagogue, Frances Clark affirmed that the elementary piano student must embraced with the performance skills, sight reading abilities, aural skills, and memory skills (Bellelo, 2013, p. 29).

Besides that, the study curriculum of famous piano method series *Piano Adventure* by Faber & Faber engrossed on ideas and piano skills, for example, note reading, technique, sight reading, piano performance, ear training and fundamental music theory. Hence, the lesson content of a 30-45 minutes' piano lesson was concentrated on piano performing skills, piano technique, sight reading, ear training and music theory.

A piano lesson comprised of several sections which were greeting session at the beginning of a piano lesson, conversation and record on the student's note book, discussion about the student' practice log, evaluate and perform the previous lesson assignment, review the student's progress then introduce new pieces or new musical concepts, organise a practice assignment and discuss what and how the student should practice before the next lesson and the final with the explanation of music theory.

The piano teacher normally assessed the student's learning progress weekly through their performance in class and the verbal conversation during the piano lesson, in order to decide the following learning programme. When the student had mastered certain skill then carry on with new musical skills and concepts (Bellelo, 2013, p. 41). Therefore, the lesson plan for piano lesson will be altered according to the student's learning pace.

### **2.3.5 Teaching approaches in piano lesson**

Hultberg (2002) stated that the music teaching mainly pinpointed on music visual notation and instrumental-technical mastery. There were two types of music teaching approaches in instrumental training which were practical-empirical method and instrumental-technical (p. 187). The practical-empirical method allowed the beginner students to imitate teacher's playing, learning by ear and developed musical expression by themselves. Students were invigorated to understand the music and make music interpretation by their own; the supervision from teacher when required supported the student's musical development. Instrumental-technical approach was the music teaching approach engrossed on technical skills to work on instrumental-technical problems. The teacher introduced the musical information, technical skills, and particular music interpretation that appropriate to the repertoire and the student followed the teacher's instruction.

The piano teaching generally emphasized on the students' development of music literacy and technical skills in piano playing. The piano teaching was prominence on technical mastery as the custom of conservatoire was furnished the music education with specific accentuation on high quality performance (Yeh, 2014, p. 75). The student will have better understanding of the music notation when they had acknowledgement and technical security on piano. The piano teaching for music literacy and technical skills development were related to the instrumental-technical approach. Piano teacher normally applied instrumental-technical approach in their piano teaching.

The instrumental-technical approach in piano teaching developed students' technical mastery. This technical mastery gained via students' learning attitude instinctively and the time spent in practising. Good piano technical skills provided the performer to have high quality piano performance. In addition, the piano teacher should



strengthen the piano students' motor skills. This is because motor skills were essential in piano learning for support the piano music performance.

Furthermore, the music learning that generally based on the source of aural information which called aural learning. The ear-learning approaches had used in piano teaching. The ear-learning approaches should adapt in piano education as this kind aural learning practices able to develop students' music literacy, musical memorization, performance skills and other musical developments (Baker & Green, 2013, p. 141). The well-known ear-learning approaches were Suzuki method and Ear Playing Project (EPP) in Baker and Green (2013) study.

The Suzuki method and EPP were focused on teaching the student playing the instrument "by ear". The Suzuki method also known as "mother tongue" approach which immersed the music as foreign language, let the student listen to the music, and then reproduce the music through imitation (Lefler, 2012). The EPP was designed as an informal learning practices for student, trained the student playing "by ear" from recording. The EPP developed the students' general listening skills and trained the student's music appreciation through music analysis of a recording (Baker & Green, 2013, p. 143).

Since the Suzuki method and EPP trained the students to learn music through listening, teacher can train the student with singing exercise to develop their aural ability (Lefler, 2012). The aural improvement of piano student enabled them performed perceptually as they had the aural awareness to produce the music notes into sounds on piano. The development in aural ability over the years will be improved the students' sight-reading ability (McPherson & Gabriellson, 2002, p. 105).

The teaching approaches for visual notation on printed music score were reproductive and exploratory approach (Hultberg, 2002, p. 185). The reproductive approach was playing music as exactly as possible that had shown in the music score;

while the exploratory approach considered the written notation on music score as process. Hultberg (2002) examined the interpretation of given musical score of 11 pianists and their reflections on sight-reading experiences. This study showed that most of the participants were capable shifted between reproductive and exploratory approaches.

In addition, Hultberg (2002) established that the teachers who implement reproductive approach emphasized the music markings and strictly on music notation, while the teachers who adopt the exploratory approach intensified the development of personal voice on printed music score. This study indicated that the attitude of teachers influenced their piano teaching. Hultberg (2002) suggested that exploratory approach is more suitable for students in lifelong music development.

Harris (2020) introduced an activity-based approach as an exciting new types of approach to music practice. The activity-based approach was driven by simple, fun, understandable and imaginative activities. The activities were challenges and attracted the students' attention in order to achieve some teaching goals. Jerney (2019) expressed that simultaneous learning was a teaching approach that benefit for both students and teachers. Simultaneous learning approach was engaged with various activities and lesson ideas to support the development of posture, phonology, pulse and personality pillars. The arrangement of activities was well-prepared to make the leaning process as smooth and engaging as possible.

The piano teaching was not considering only the investment of time and energy in developing piano technical skills and sight-reading skills, yet need to comprise music performance with feeling and musical thinking. Yeh (2014) stated the negative effect of over emphasising musical notation in piano lesson was the students turned up deaf to their playing; they only focused on the music notation and failed to listen to what they play. Therefore, piano teachers should intend students' cognitive and psychological levels in the development of certain piano technical skills.

### **2.3.6 Teaching styles in piano lesson**

Yeh (2014) stated that the instrumental teaching that mostly emphasized in technique-mastery was based on one-way-communication teaching style (p. 18). This type of teaching styles considered as conservatoire teaching style. The predominance of music literacy and technical development were generally taught in “teacher-dominated” teaching style (p. 84). The “teacher-led” teaching style was considered as passive learning style.

The “teacher-led” teaching style is a “replication” of the teachers’ past learning experience, totally duplicates their past piano instructors’ teaching styles, or compelled by isolated working culture (Yeh, 2014, p. 87). The teacher may intrude their own learning style on their student unintentionally. Besides that, this kind of teaching style commonly cause passive learning attitude as teacher did not provide the opportunities for student to convey their own thoughts (Yeh, 2014, p. 84). The students were waiting for the correction and feedback from teacher on their playing, rather than being enjoyed with the learning process and self-assessment.

Yeh (2014) stated that there were three teaching styles based on teachers’ beliefs and teaching attitudes which were: (1) mastery of technique; (2) educational teaching; and (3) creative teaching (p. 22). These teaching styles were able to combine and alter flexibly. Teacher who had incorporated these three teaching styles in teaching was classified as creative teacher. The creative teaching was aimed to develop learners’ musical abilities, for enjoyment, and to impart a specific teaching point. Students of any age should be taught creativity, developed their critical thinking, and encourage their creative thinking along with the musical achievement.

The teaching style of piano lesson should place emphasis on the students’ needs, provided happiness to the student regarding music enjoyment and developed students’ piano learning abilities. Piano teacher need to observe the learning reflection of student

on taught concepts in piano lesson and adjust the teaching styles if the student did not cope with the teaching. Ang (2014) viewed that piano teachers had to improve their own teaching skills and practices consistently to adapt the students' need and confront the teaching challenges.

### **2.3.7 Selection of teaching materials for piano lesson**

Tye (2004) indicated that the selection of suitable materials was pivotal causal factor of learners' achievement in learning episode (p. 48). There were numerous teaching materials obtainable from the music store. Yang (2015) indicated that teaching materials comprised the music history elements, technique and the music theory. The method books available for piano teaching were *John Thompson*, *Alfred Basic Piano Library*, *Piano Lesson Made Easy* by Lina Ng, *Piano Time* by Oxford publisher, *Bastien Piano Basics* and others. These published method books had their own series of arrangement and approaches. Particular publisher had organized the lesson book, performance book, theory book and technique book in series with different learning levels. These method books were age appropriate and sufficient with reinforced concept for a period of time (Pike, 2014, p. 219).

There were some criteria concerned by piano teachers when a method book was first selected for a student. Tye (2004) identified that the selection criteria utilized designated the teacher consideration in the selection of method book for students (p. 48). The selection criteria for method book were the method book was strongly advocated by other piano teacher or colleagues, certain method book was introduced in teaching workshop and the method book included adequate materials to drill student for music practical examination.

Cheah (2012) study indicated that the reason choosing a suitable method books were instructions were well explained and easy to understand and follow (57.6%); books

had attractive and colourful pictures with simple theory work (8.5%); teaching material flow logically (30.5%) and others (3.4%). These features in the teaching materials were conceivable for teacher to make decision using in piano lesson. There were also had teaching material that emphasized on the examination syllabus.

Furthermore, there was supplementary materials used in teaching piano technique such as *Hanon*, *Czerny*, *A Dozen a Day*, *ABRSM Graded Studies*, *Heller studies* and others. *Hanon* and *A Dozen a Day* were the purely technical-based supplement material for piano technique training while the *Czerny* and *Heller* studies were applied technique type.

Yang (2015) revealed that piano teaching materials were crucial element in piano teaching (p. 1). Yang recognised that *John Thompson* is suitable as the elementary piano teaching materials as it had the introduction of core keyboard techniques and training approaches. The method books of *John Thompson* enclosed with pictures and simple description enabled the student to understand by their own or assisted by parents. The series of *John Thompson* were designed with different difficulty levels; the teacher can select the suitable series based on students' ability.

In conclusion, the reasons that teachers selected particular teaching materials were the materials are interesting to learner, the material series are comprehensive, comprised of basic music information, technical skills, sight-reading exercise, music theory, and music musicianship materials. The introduction of theory concept in some teaching materials encouraged the students' critical thinking.

### **2.3.8 Teaching activities for a piano lesson**

Cantan (2017) provided the teaching activities for piano lesson which were improvisation, music games, making an old piece more interesting by adding embellishments and ornaments or inserted improvisation, provided smart teaching practice strategies to the

student, sight-reading exercise, learning pieces by ear, involved body movement like dancing in piano class and compose piece with student.

McPherson and Gabrielsson (2002) stated that singing, chanting, clapping rhythmic pattern, pointing the melodic phrase that performed by teacher, fingering the music phrases and finding music phrases by fast scanning on score were the teaching activities for developing the students' aural awareness and music literacy (p. 110).

Stevanovic and Kuusisto (2019) indicated that the teaching activities in instrumental instruction commonly were verbal instruction, modelling, demonstration of teacher and imitation of student, initiation-response-evaluation (IRE) and practice of correction. Verbal instruction generally used in the piano lesson and commonly occupied 65% in the piano lesson. Modelling that incorporated with physical activity was a crucial component of effective music instruction. Teacher was conveyed the music elements through gesturing, singing, or playing.

Demonstration of teacher followed by the student's imitation was showed improvement in student's coordination abilities in learning melodic pattern. One of the most fundamental interactional structures in piano lesson was initiation-response-evaluation (IRE) sequence. This interactional structure utilized with regards to different instructional exercises. Piano teacher initiated a musical question and the student responded to the question, and then the teacher evaluated the answer given by the student. This was used to assess the understanding of the student on the teaching contents in piano lesson.

Kooistra (2015) designed the piano lesson in an informal educational setting and investigated the engagement and learning behaviours of children in musically educational settings. The piano room was intended to be musical environment with some percussion instruments (chimes, mallets and maracas) and non-musical toys (tennis balls and stuffed animals). The piano lessons involved various activities like singing, chanting, playing the

piano, moving and playing handhold instruments like egg shaker, chimes and drum. The musical materials are familiar rhyme or improvised songs, sung in tonal and metrical for the sake of providing diverse musical experience for the children.

The piano teaching involved the piano playing and yet it comprised of several interesting teaching activities to foster the students' piano learning. The variation of teaching activities for piano lesson inspired the learning interest of student. Students are able to enjoy the lesson and further develop their music proficiency.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

This chapter intends to demonstrate various key variables for this study which comprise the eclecticism, elementary piano education and the eclectic approach for piano teaching, provide the historical context and the definition of each key variable.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Overview

This study focused on accomplishing the empirical data in examining the perception of piano teachers on their teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials, teaching activities and how they select and combine the teaching approaches, teaching materials and teaching activities into an eclectic approach for one-to-one elementary piano teaching. The purposes of this study aims to gain insights of the piano teachers' teaching approaches, teaching materials selection, teaching activities and implementation of eclectic approach in one-to-one elementary piano teaching.

This chapter intends to allocate a concise explanation of the research methodology. The outline of this chapter is organised as follows: (1) research design; (2) case study; (3) interview; (4) participants sampling; (5) data collection procedures; and (6) data analysis procedures. This chapter discusses the research method used to examine and address the following research questions:

1. What are the teaching approaches used by the piano teacher in one-to-one elementary piano teaching?
2. What are the teaching materials selected for elementary piano student?
3. What are the teaching activities in one-to-one elementary piano lesson?
4. How do the piano teachers' teaching approaches, their selection of teaching materials and teaching activities contribute to the eclectic approach?



### **3.2 Research Method**

The following presents the research methods for the study. The sections are organized as follows: (1) research design; (2) case study; (3) interview; (4) participants sampling; (5) data collection procedures; and (6) data analysis procedures.

Research methods are strategies and the course of action for question which comprise the procedure from wide presumptions to specific strategies for data collection, data analysis, and data interpretation. The choice of research approach depends on the idea of the research objectives or research questions, the personal experiences of researcher, and the investigation's audiences. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), there are three research approaches, that is, qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods (p. 43).

Creswell and Creswell (2018) demonstrated that qualitative research is a research approach used for investigating and understanding the significance of particular people or groups that assign to social issue or trouble for human. The procedure of qualitative research contains rising inquiries and strategies, data commonly gathered in the participants' manner, analysis of data inductively working from points of certain interest to general topics, and the analyst making interpretation on the context of collected data. Qualitative approach is in inductive style, an emphasis on individual meaning, and the significance of reporting the intricacy of a condition.

Qualitative method included intentional sampling, assortment of open-ended data, context or visual analysis, portrayal of data in tables and figures, and individual interpretation of the discoveries. Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2011) indicated that the qualitative research methodologies involve observation, interviewing, and content analysis. Mixed-methods research implies the utilization of both quantitative and qualitative methods in a study.

This study employed qualitative approach on interviewing to identify the teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials, teaching activities of piano teacher and how they implement eclectic approach in one-to-one elementary piano teaching. Qualitative research method emphasis on individual meaning which enables to discover the piano teachers' personal perception on their application of teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials and teaching activities for one-to-one elementary piano teaching in details. The qualitative research on interviewing method can be used to reveal the main thoughts, personal opinions and the challenges faced by elementary piano teachers in their teaching episodes.

Therefore, this study investigates the elementary piano teachers' personal experiences about their application of teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials and teaching activities for one-to-one elementary piano teaching and how they combine their own teaching approaches with various teaching materials and teaching activities into an eclectic approach. This study examines which practiced piano pedagogies are more useful for elementary music students, how the selection of teaching materials and what the creative teaching activities enhances the students' piano learning experiences.

### **3.2.1 Research design**

Kumar (2019) stated that research design is a "procedural plan" that is implemented by the researcher to respond research questions reliably, objectively, precisely and financially (p. 94). A research design is an arrangement, structure and methodology of study to draw up responses for research problem or research questions. The research design accomplished with appropriate research program schedule and scheme. A research design is settlement of data collection circumstances and analysis process for collected data in a way that intends the research purpose financially in process.

Research design determined the type of study design, the way of data collection from respondents, the selection of respondents, the technique use for data analysis and the measure to correspond to the result of findings. Qualitative research design concentrated on five types as: (1) narrative research; (2) phenomenology; (3) grounded theory; (4) ethnographies; and (5) case study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 54). The research studies which explored the nature of correlation, activities, circumstances or materials commonly alluded as qualitative research (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2011, p. 426). This study conducted with the qualitative research on case study design.

The three major techniques used in data collection and data analysis of qualitative research were: (1) observation; (2) in-depth interview; and (3) document analysis. Kumar (2019) concluded that there were two fundamental features of in-depth interview: (1) it engrossed face-to-face, intercourse between the researcher and informants constantly; and (2) it aims to comprehend the respondents' perspective (p. 160).

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), qualitative research is a methodology for discovering and comprehension the significance people or groups assign to particular social or human issue. The researcher utilized literature in order reliable with the participants' expectations, not recommending the inquiries that should be replied from the standpoint of researcher. The main purpose for carry out a qualitative research was that the investigation is exploratory, where the researcher desired to listen to and developed a comprehension on what had heard. There were five types of qualitative research which were: (1) narrative research; (2) phenomenology; and (3) grounded theory; (4) ethnographies; and (5) case study.

Qualitative method is an emerging method that enclosed with open-ended questions. Kumar (2019) suggested that it was crucial to prepare an interview guide for secure expected inclusion of the zones of enquiry and comparison between respondents'

information. The interview guide was as a research tool to gather data. For this study, case study with in-depth interview would be employed.

Case study refers as the study of objects as “cases” which incorporate only one individual, classroom, education academy or program (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2011, p. 434). A case might refer to an occasion, an activity or a continuous process, not just an individual or condition that can be simply being recognized. The “case” of this study refers to the application of teaching approaches, teaching materials selection and teaching activities for one-to-one elementary piano teaching of nine piano teachers.

In this study, in-depth interview was carried out among nine piano teachers to discover their perspective on the application of teaching approaches, their selection of teaching materials, and teaching activities in one-to-one elementary piano lesson. This study desire to identify the piano teachers’ perception on the implementation of eclectic approach with the combination of various teaching approaches, teaching materials, and teaching activities for effective piano teaching.

### **3.2.2 Case study**

As stated by Creswell and Creswell (2018), case studies were a type of research design particularly for evaluation. The researcher carried out an in-depth analysis on particular case, usually an action, process, program, event or at least a person. Cases were limited by activity and time; the researcher accumulated detailed data utilizing difference procedures of data collection for a long time. Kumar (2019) indicated that case study notably as qualitative study design to study the “case” which referred to an individual, a category, a community, an occasion, an incident, an event, a population’s subgroup, a town or a city. It was vital to manage the entire study population as only entity in case study.

The case study design was depended on the presumption that the studied case was irregular instances of a specific sort; hence a solitary case issued understanding into certain occasions and situations pervasive in a group where the case has been drawn. It was useful design to explore unrecognized area when aggregated to study certain situation, episode, community, phenomenon and group. Case study contributed a review and in-depth comprehension of a case, process and interrelation elements in that study. The major feature of a case study was the utilization of numerous methods, for example in-depth interviewing, data acquirement from secondary records, data collection through observations, focus group or group interviews.

As stated by Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2011), case study consists of three types: (1) intrinsic case study; (2) instrumental case study; and (3) multiple- (or collective) case study (p. 435). Intrinsic case study was frequently utilized in exploratory research when researcher attempted to explore unfamiliar phenomenon by studying it intensively. The goal of the researcher was to comprehend the case in the entirety of its parts, comprising its internal activities.

Piano teaching need to be more eclectic thinking, rather than employing with traditional piano pedagogy in the 21st century. Hence, this study employs case study to examine the teaching approaches used by 21st century piano teacher in one-to-one elementary piano teaching and comprehend entirely about what are the teacher's teaching approaches, how the teacher selects the teaching materials for their elementary piano teaching and what are their teaching activities. The case study involves in-depth interviewing to examine the teacher's personal perception toward their application of teaching approaches, teaching materials and teaching activities in their elementary piano teaching episode.

### 3.2.3 Interview

Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2011) stated that in-depth interviews with people is conducted for discovering their thoughts, opinions, and episode. Interviews perhaps to deliver certain details about respondents' perspectives, attitudes, value and thinking on a particular issue. As stated by Creswell and Creswell (2018), an interview carried out for the participant to discuss a topic explicitly, predominantly without the utilization of explicit questions. Participant was interviewed for a period of time to identify their individual experienced. The researcher can conduct the interviews in either face-to-face, through telephone or employed focus group interview. These interview included unorganised and commonly some open-ended questions to inspire participants' view and opinions.

Kumar (2019) defined interview as any interaction between individual-to-individual, either interact with face-to-face or through the telephone, interaction between at least two individuals upon a particular reason. Researcher had the opportunity to select the interview questions format and substance of inquiries, decide the wording of your inquiries, the way to ask question and the asking sequence. Kumar (2019) stated that in-depth interview included contraction with informants repeatedly and thus the compatibility among researcher and informant will be strengthen as the time spent with informant extended. The interview able to provide in-depth and precise data when arise parallel understanding and determination among researcher and informants. There were four styles of interviews: structured interview, semi-structured interview, informal interview, and retrospective interview.

Structured interview and semi-structured interview were the verbal surveys form that comprised of a sequence of questions intended to stimulate particular answers from respondents (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2011, p. 451). Structured interview and semi-structured interview were often used in qualitative research to figure responses to the

perceptions of researcher at the end of a study. It was efficacious for gaining data to evaluate particular hypothesis that priority in researcher's mind. Informal interviews regularly seem like casual conversations, tracing the researchers' and respondents' attentiveness, thus were in less formal form. Informal interview did not include a particular kind or a series of questions. Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2011) indicated that there were six types of interview questions which were: (1) background (or demographic) questions; (2) knowledge questions; (3) experience (or behaviour) questions; (4) opinion (or values) questions; (5) feelings questions; (6) and sensory questions (p. 453).

Mann (2016) stated that interviews are not generally conducted by face-to-face. There was a new mode of communication for interview interaction that utilizes ICT (Information and Communications Technology) medium or Internet-based communication tools such as Skype, Google Hangouts, e-mail, or interconnection through personal webcast (p. 87). This type of interview was called virtual interview. This kind of online interviewing widens the chance to approach interviewees beyond the distance and time barriers. Virtual interviewing also useful in collecting the perspective on personal thought, beliefs and experiences of interviewee in any place at any time. Virtual interviewing was convenient for both researcher and interviewee as nowadays people was commonly using ICT in daily communication.

This study employs semi-structured interview with nine piano teachers in West Malaysia. The semi-structured format offers space for interviewees to respond through negotiation, discussion and expansion of ideas (Mann, 2016, p. 91). The semi-structured interviews are efficacious for collecting the teachers' perceptions on the application of teaching approaches, their selection of teaching materials, teaching activities and how the teacher combine their own teaching approaches with various teaching materials and teaching activities into an eclectic approach in their one-to-one elementary piano teaching. The semi-structured can be carried out as virtual interviewing through Facebook

messenger and WhatsApp with nine piano teachers. Jamshed (2014) stated the suggested duration for semi-structured interview was about 30 minutes to over 60 minutes. The nine piano teachers were each interviewed within 30 to 60 minutes to identify their individual experiences on their piano teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials, teaching activities and how they combine teaching approaches, teaching materials and teaching activities into an eclectic approach in elementary one-to-one piano teaching.

The semi-structured interviews were guided by some open-ended question to discover the teachers' teaching approaches, what their selection of teaching materials and teaching activities are and how they combine various teaching approaches, teaching materials and teaching activities into an eclectic approach in their one-to-one elementary piano teaching. The open-ended questions will not preordain responses of the interviewee (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Semi-structures interview allowed the piano teachers free to express their opinion in their individual expressions. It enables a more flexible discourse as its results are obtained from the text and narrative of respondents. The open-ended question was designed based on the study of Ang (2014).

### **3.2.4 Participants**

The participants of this study were nine piano teachers from West Malaysia who were actively one-to-one private piano teaching in their home or music centre. The justification of the participant selection in Ang (2014) was based on: (1) piano teachers who been provide private piano teaching in their homes or as full time or part time in music centre; (2) these piano teachers had been trained locally and acquainted with the piano examination boards offered in Malaysia; (3) comprised few year of piano teaching experience and (4) mainly taught Malaysian kids who have been instructed with local education practice and faced the typical desires from the parents (p. 6).



Therefore, the participants selected for this study were piano teacher who offered one-to-one piano teaching and incorporate several years of piano teaching experiences.

#### **3.2.4.1 Participants sampling**

The purposive sampling of this case study used snowball sample. The informants for semi-structured interview comprised of nine music teachers which had categorised into three groups: (1) experts; (2) experienced; and (3) novice. The nine piano teachers were selected and categorised based on their teaching experiences. The piano teacher who had within ten to forty-five years of professional teaching experience was allocated as “expert”. Piano teachers with five to ten years of professional teaching experience was assigned as “experienced” while the teaching experience within one to five years was issued as “novice”. These three teacher categories were varied in teaching experiences, piano teaching practices and professional developments. In subsequent case study, the terms, “expert”, “experienced” and “novice” was keep on being utilized to represent the participated piano teachers. The nine piano teachers chose from the music centre or private teaching and having the one-to-one teaching experience for a period of time with elementary piano students. This case study will be about the identification on the piano teachers’ application of teaching approaches, selections of teaching materials and teaching activities.

#### **3.2.4.2 Participants demographic**

Table 3.2 presented the demographic information of the participants in this study who were nine piano teachers with different teaching experiences.

**Table 3.2**

*Participants Demographics: gender, state, pedagogical qualification, teaching experience, self-rating*

Participant	Gender	State	Pedagogical qualification	Teaching Experience	Self-rating
1	Female	Melaka	Bachelor degree	45	9/10
2	Male	Kuala Lumpur	Bachelor degree	22	-
3	Female	Johor	Bachelor degree	11	6/10
4	Female	Kuala Lumpur	Bachelor degree	8	6/10
5	Female	Selangor	Bachelor degree	7	8/10
6	Male	Johor	Bachelor degree	5	6/10
7	Female	Kuala Lumpur	Bachelor degree	4	7/10
8	Female	Selangor	Bachelor degree	4	8/10
9	Female	Johor	Bachelor degree	1.5	6/10

The teacher's expertise in music knowledge and performance with the teaching ability based on their previous learning and teaching experiences established effective piano teaching. Teacher 1 was operated a piano studio in Melaka, she had 45 years of teaching experience from beginner level until advanced level. She rated 9/10 on her ability to teach elementary level. Teacher 2 was a piano and vocal tutor in Kuala Lumpur. He had 22 years of teaching experience. He did not rate himself on the ability to teach elementary level as he stated that music education keeps changing and he needs to upgrade and improve himself to become a better teacher. He was rich in piano teaching experience from beginner level to advanced level. Teacher 3 was a piano tutor at Fine Music & Art Academy, Muar, Johor. She had 11 years of teaching experience. She had the teaching experiences from beginner level to advanced level and had sent her students for ABRSM and Trinity music examination. She rated herself 6/10 on her ability to teach

elementary level as she discovered that the elementary student will have their own ideas and keep changing, it was challenging to teach the elementary piano students.

The expert teacher group showed that these teachers had sufficient music knowledge, more confident in their teaching skills and aware with the changes of students' learning patterns. They also revealed that it was essential for improvement in their teaching skills with the development of technology and social changes. The teaching challenges were emerged in the teaching episodes any time, so the teachers need to keep passionate and overcome the challenges smartly.

Teacher 4 was a piano teacher at the music centre in Kuala Lumpur with 8 years of teaching experience. She had the teaching experiences of piano group class and one-to-one teaching. Teacher 5 was a piano and violin teacher from Selangor with 7 years of teaching experience. Teacher 6 was a full-time piano tutor at Solid Sound Academy of Music, Kluang, Johor with 5 years of teaching experience. The rating of ability to teach elementary of Teacher 4 and Teacher 6 was 6/10; and Teacher 5 was 8/10.

Teacher 7 was a vocal and piano tutor at Kuala Lumpur with 4 years teaching experience; Teacher 8 was a private one-to-one piano tutor at Selangor with 4 years teaching experience; and Teacher 9 was a part-time piano teacher at music centre at Muar, Johor. She had only one and a half years of teaching experience. Teacher 7 rated 7/10; Teacher 8 rated herself 8/10; Teacher 9 rated 6/10 on the ability to teach elementary level.

### **3.2.5 Data collection procedures**

The data of qualitative research was collected by interview, field notes and memos and triangulated information (Given, 2008, p. 190). The data collection of qualitative research generally through the observation and the interview and the findings was in empirical evidence. This study will carry out semi-structured interview from July to October 2020 to collect the perceptions of nine piano teachers on their teaching approaches, selection

of teaching materials, teaching activities and how they combine teaching approaches, teaching materials and teaching activities.

The semi-structured interviews were carried out around 30 to 60 minutes for a music teacher. According to Jamshed (2014), the suggested duration for semi-structured interview was about 30 minutes to over 60 minutes. There was a list of interview guideline. The interview guide was divided to five sections: (1) information about the piano teacher; (2) the application of teaching approaches in one-to-one elementary piano teaching; (3) the selection of teaching materials in one-to-one elementary piano teaching; (4) teaching activities for piano lesson and (5) implementation of eclectic approach.

The first section identified the piano teachers': (a) teaching position; (b) the year of teaching experience at their present teaching position; and (c) self-ratings of their ability to teach elementary piano teaching. The second section identified: (a) the area cover in piano lesson; (b) their teaching approaches in piano lesson; and (c) various teaching approaches for each element in piano learning. The third section of the interview determined the selection of teaching materials for elementary piano teaching and how the selection of teaching materials enhance the piano learning of students. The fourth section determined teaching activities designed by the piano teacher for elementary piano teaching. The last section determined how the piano teacher implement eclectic approach according their own teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials and teaching activities.

The semi-structured interview was based on the researcher's semi-structured interview guide. The questions in the semi-structured interview guide involve the central question about the application of teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials and teaching activities in one-to-one elementary piano teaching. The interviews were audio recorded for later verbatim transcript. The specific views and voices of the participants on the research topic were recorded and reported in numeral or text information for data

analysis. The perspective was driven from the participant's own responses and attained emergent themes.

### **3.2.6 Data analysis procedure**

As stated by Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2011), data analysis in qualitative research was a repetitious and persistently comparative process that included the diminishing and repossessing numerous written or descriptive data which commonly attained from interviews, observations, and focus groups (p. 436). Coding is the technique used to analyse the collected data in qualitative research. The codes generally were the marks or identification for designating significance to chunks of collected data. The coder was attempted to apprehend briefly the major significant idea when coding a sentence or certain paragraph. The code in qualitative research can be definitive or declarative and normally produced from the former coding or turned up inductively from data (open coding). Codes and sub-codes were usually refined iteratively to infer data through grouping, confined theme analysis, and leading theory building in several cases. Ang (2014) stated that the coding of data was intended to dictate main themes and interrelated themes (p. 7).

The interview data was transcribed, analysed, categorised, organised into emerging themes for better understanding of the perceptions on the teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials and teaching activities in elementary one-to-one piano teaching. The data analysis procedure follows the Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase of thematic analysis processes which were: (1) data familiarisation; (2) coding; (3) develop themes; (4) revise, define and establish themes; (5) draw meaningful data; and (6) present the analytic narrative discourse.

In this study, codes were based on the personal concepts of nine piano teachers of their choice of teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials and teaching activities.

The common emerging themes were categorized for further analysis and comparison. The keywords were summarized instantly during the interview. Coding enabled the data from each interview grouped into emerging themes, identified the feature of each theme and attained better understanding about piano teachers' teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials and teaching activities.

### **3.3 Conclusion**

This chapter has presented the methodology of this study. It included research design, case study, interview, participants sampling, data collection procedure, and data analysis procedure for the study.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 Overview**

This chapter proceeds with the data analysis from the interviews and discussion on the findings. The interview was conducted with the researcher's semi-structured interview guide. The interview questions (see Appendix A) investigate the teachers' personal teaching experiences regarding their teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials, teaching activities and how they combine teaching approaches, teaching materials and teaching activities as an eclectic approach for elementary piano teaching. These questions in the semi-structured interview guide corresponded to the following research questions:

1. What are the teaching approaches used by the piano teacher in one-to-one elementary piano teaching?
2. What are the teaching materials selected for elementary piano student?
3. What are the teaching activities in one-to-one elementary piano lesson?
4. How do the piano teachers' teaching approaches, their selection of teaching materials and teaching activities contribute to the eclectic approach?

Nine interviews were conducted through the virtual interviewing method by telephone via e-mail, WhatsApp, and Facebook messenger by written responses. The time span for the verbal interviews ranged between 40 minutes to 60 minutes. The responses from the nine interviews were attended in the following section of this chapter.

#### **4.2 Finding of the Study**

The data analysis from the interviews and discussion on the findings were presented in this session and organized into emerging themes as the following: (1) teaching

approaches; (2) selection of teaching materials; (3) teaching activities in piano lesson; and (4) implementation of eclectic approach.

### **4.3 Teachers' Perception on their Teaching Approaches**

Most of the teachers were covered pieces, piano techniques, musicianship ear training, sight-reading, music theory, and music history in a piano lesson. Teacher 4 stated that the component she covered in a piano lesson was mainly based on the piano syllabus of the ABRSM examination board. She established that the examination syllabus had covered all the essential criteria of piano learning in developing student's musical abilities. Teacher 1, Teacher 8, and Teacher 9 had particularly highlighted the need for rhythmic exercise in the piano lesson. Teacher 1 expressed that:

I will ask my student use their body, tapping and swaging along with the rhythm as well as recognising the pulse.

There were several components to be included in a piano lesson within 45 minutes. Hence, this study will only discover teachers' perception on their teaching approaches in pieces, piano technique, sight-reading, ear-training, and music theory.

It was evidenced that every teacher had their teaching approaches in teaching pieces for the elementary students. Teacher 1 and Teacher 4 adapted a creative teaching approach to teaching piano repertoire. They involved creative ways with imaginary ideas in piano teaching; let the student felt about the piano pieces. Teacher 1 emphasized the importance of singing in piano lessons. She adapted the solfege singing approach and taught her students to sing solfege before music notation.

Teacher 2 employed combination of instrumental-technical approach and practical-empirical approach as described in Hultberg (2002) in the piano repertoire teaching. He explained the background of the piano piece and introduced the composer first, then analysed the piece with his student. He required his student to try to sight-read



the piece by themselves and corrected their mistake after they finished sight-read through the pieces. Teacher 2 divided the pieces into phrases and taught his student phrase by phrase with correct musical elements. Once his student was able to play the phrase with correct fingering, notes, rhythm, and articulations, he taught them the shaping and phrasing direction.

Teacher 3 and Teacher 5 adapted imaginative approach in her piano pieces teaching as they wanted her students to play music instead of playing notes. Teacher 3 encourages her student to have the imagination of piano pieces through listening to the recording. Teacher 3 stated that:

I will play video or audio of the pieces for the student to have musical idea before playing... I will let them have some imagination of the pieces then only introduce the key signature, time signature and rhythm of the pieces to them.

Teacher 5 enhanced her student piano learning by story-telling and discussing with students on the music style. Teacher 6 applied an instrumental-technical approach as he demonstrated the pieces to the student first and explained the details of the pieces to the student. Teacher 8 applied a combination of instrumental-technical approach and practical-empirical approach which had been studied in Hultberg (2002). Teacher 8 shared her predicament:

Firstly, I'll ask student to analyse the piece, the structure of music and the keys as well. Then, I'll ask student to play the notes in separate hands. In some technical parts, I will explain and demonstrate to students.

She applied a practical-empirical approach when she let the student analyse the key and structure of the new piece and try to play out by themselves. For the difficult technical part, she applied the instrumental-technical approach which she explained and demonstrated to the student.

Teacher 7 and Teacher 9 applied the Kodály approach in teaching pieces where they preferred the student to sing the melody in solfege before playing and sang out the rhythm. Teacher 7 commented that:

I applied Kodály method into my lesson and the student can understand easily. For example, I will let the student focus on melody line first, sing out the melody in solfege then only play out the melody. When the student plays wrong rhythm, I will ask he/she to say out the rhythm as *ta ti ti* and they able to play the rhythm correctly after they recognise the rhythmic pattern.

Subsequently, Teacher 9 expressed that:

I noticed majority of students are able to catch and play the song faster and easier after doing the solfege singing exercise.

Teacher 7 and Teacher 9 had noticed that this approach was applicable as the student was able to learn and play the pieces in a short time. Students were able to recognize the rhythmic and melodic patterns of a new music piece instantly.

In short, the teaching approaches used in teaching piano repertoire mostly were a direct and demonstrating approach, instrumental-technical and practical-empirical approach, creative approach, imaginative approach, and Kodály approach.

For the teaching approaches for piano techniques, Teacher 1 applied creative approach; she preferred to make the piano techniques like scale and arpeggio playing interesting rather than worked as technical exercises for students. This enabled the student to have fun with finger exercise and at the same time developed the key sense of student.

Teacher 1 shared her experience:

When come to teaching scale and arpeggios playing, I would like to let the familiar with the solfege and chord singing, this was to make the scale and arpeggio playing more interesting, apart from using them to serve as technical exercise. At the same time, this can enhance their key sense.

Teacher 2 and Teacher 8 were enhanced the student's piano technique through activity-based approach. He created various finger exercises and rhythm exercises on his own through the student's currently learned piece. He viewed the technical exercise was to overcome the student's playing problem. He also taught scale and arpeggio in musical ways. Teacher 8 selected some phrases that related to piano technique from the piano piece and assigned the student practice separately in different time values. This was to stabilize the student's rhythmic pulse and stay steady for fluency.

Teacher 3, Teacher 4, and Teacher 5 implemented direct and demonstrating approach in teaching piano technique. Teacher 3 followed the examination syllabus of scale and arpeggio for slow learners. For the fast learner, she stated that she gave extra technical exercises like Hanon and Czerny exercises. These exercises were to increase the strength of fingers and enabled the student to have more stability in piano playing. Teacher 4 opined that students must have correct hand gestures and learn different techniques according to finger flexibility. She demonstrated particular piano technique and required the student imitated her. She corrected the hand gestures of student and gave specific technique exercises for those who were weak before proceeding to the next level. Teacher 5 demonstrated the piano technique to her student first and wanted her student to feel their muscle when doing the piano technique exercise. She explained how the muscle worked alternately tense and loose to her student. She also focused on the sound projected out as she viewed that good technique able to create the sound that showed the character of the music. She viewed that the technique exercises are vital in improving the students' stability, flexibility, and agility in piano playing.

Teacher 6 stated that independence of the fingers is utmost important in piano elementary level. He used a metaphor approach to describe the legato playing like "walking" with fingers whiles the staccato playing like a "jumping" movement. He assigned his student to have technical exercises like Schmitt and Hanon as a regular

practice. Teacher 7 and Teacher 9 applied Kodály method combined with demonstrating approach in piano technique teaching. Teacher 7 and Teacher 9 taught the piano techniques like scale and arpeggios by singing the scale in solfège and demonstrated to the student how to change fingers position. Teacher 9 emphasized that piano technique was vital and should be conveyed from the elementary level as the good piano technique enabled students to produce good solid tone quality and good piano performance.

Overall, the teaching approaches used in teaching piano technique were creative approach, direct and demonstrating approach, metaphor approach and Kodály approach. Some of the teacher had combined different approaches in teaching piano technique to develop students' learning abilities and make the technique learning interesting.

The teaching approaches in training sight-reading, Teacher 1 employed an indirect and guided approach for sight-reading teaching. She utilized some series of sight playing books like *Sight-Reading Made Easy* by Dorothy Bradley & J. Raymond Tobin and *Making Progress* by Thomas A. Johnson. She allowed the student to sight-read the short phrase within 30 seconds preparation and after the student finished the sight-reading, she pointed out the main theme and cadence of the sight-read piece and then let the student tried again by themselves.

Teacher 2 trained his student's sight-reading ability through practical-empirical approach. He taught the student to sight-read the new piece in a short phrase. He forced the student to sight-read with both hands straightway when getting a new piano piece, if the piece was too difficult for the student, he allows the student to practice with separate hand. For the student who are weak in sight-reading, he encouraged them by assigning the pop piano pieces in which the students are interested in.

Teacher 3 and Teacher 7 applied a direct teaching approach to sight-reading teaching. She provided the sequence for her student, for example, the student needed to recognize the key of the sight-reading given, then finding the phrasing, highest, and

lowest note, finger position, rhythm, and tempo. For the weak sight-reader, she gave them some simple and famous pop melody to build up the student's confidence. Teacher 7 taught the students to recognize the key signature and time signature then quickly scan through the rhythmic and melodic patterns.

Teacher 4 applied activity-based approach in training students' sight-reading. She enhanced student's sight-reading ability by introducing several note searching games and clapping games. The student recognized the high and low notes and played with clapping games as the rhythmic practice. She composed and rearranged some simple and interesting popular melody for students as sight-reading assignments to expand the willingness of students and build their confidence in sight-reading.

Teacher 5 and Teacher 6 used the "note-naming" approach in teaching sight-reading. Teacher 5 wanted her student to name out the note when she simply pointed out the notes all over the page. After this, she taught the student some techniques to sight-read in a specific schedule and practiced sight-reading every lesson to let students get the norm for sight-reading. She viewed that note reading is the vital element in sight-reading, only when students familiar with notes reading them only proceed to pulse and rhythm. Teacher 6 wanted his student to recognize the note first and able to read fast. He trained the student to recognize the interval in between the note so that they able to find the note immediately with high accuracy.

Teacher 8 applied an individualistic approach to teaching sight-reading. She let the students sight-read by themselves and later taught them how to recognize notes by interval and differentiated rhythmic patterns. She wanted her student to work by themselves and found the problem they faced. They had a discussion after the student finished sight-read a short musical phrase. Teacher 9 used the Kodály approach in training student's sight-reading ability. She trained her student to sing in solfege, recognize the

rhythmic pattern by clapping the rhythm, sight-read the notes, and they play out the sight-reading.

The development of students' sight-reading ability was generally the main focus of teachers. Teachers were always seeking various teaching approaches to improve the students' sight-read ability. In short, the teaching approaches that used for teaching sight-reading were indirect and guided approach, practical-empirical approach, direct teaching approach, activity-based approach, "note-naming" approach, individualistic approach and Kodály approach.

The teaching approach for ear training used by Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 was an activity-based approach to train student's critical listening. Teacher 1 introduced some simple nursery rhyme and chord singing and practiced once every lesson and some melodic and harmonic dictation exercise. Teacher 2 created some echo singing and solfège singing to develop student's aural skills. The exercises used by Teacher 2 in ear training were interval dictation, recognize major and minor chords, and differentiate cadences in various key and solfège singing.

Teacher 3 viewed that ear training was a necessary part of piano lessons. She would use 5 to 10 minutes for ear training before starting the piano lesson. She asked the student to sing before playing piano pieces as aural training. She employed the Kodály approach in developing student's aural skills. She viewed ear training was vital as the student able to listen to their own playing and able to perform expressively.

The response from the experience teacher group was Teacher 4 employed an activity-based approach in ear training. She trained students' critical listening simultaneously with the piano playing through some musical games like clapping games, freeze games and echo games. Teacher 4 suggested that:

I will create some musical game like clapping game, freeze game, echo game and so on to develop student's listening skills. Students were happy when playing game and developed their aural skill unconsciously.

Teacher 5 combined ear training with the piano playing session. She trained her students singing solfege, listening to cadences and harmony. She linked the musical knowledge together to let the student felt these music components combined together then become music. Teacher 6 developed his student ear-training by singing scale in different keys and the triad. He employed an echo approach where the student singing back the melody that he played on the piano.

The response from the novice teacher group, Teacher 7 and Teacher 8 applied activity-based approach in ear training. Teacher 7 created some musical games and listening tests for her students. She did dictation exercises with simple rhythm and pitch in every piano lesson. Teacher 8 developed some music games such as sing and count the melody and rhythm, played with ribbon to show the music direction and feel the beats. Teacher 9 preferred the Kodály approach, let the student familiar with solfege and sing some nursery melodies.

In brief, the teaching approaches for ear-training were activity-based approach, singing approach and Kodály approach. Most of the teachers were finding and creating some musical games to enhance the dictation skill of students. The ear training for the aural skill development was vital for the student to recognize various music elements by ear. The student able to listens to their playing and adjust the intonation while playing through the aural development.

Most of the teachers applied a direct teaching approach in music theory teaching in the piano lesson. The teacher directs given the musical concepts and knowledge to the student. Most of the teachers used published theory workbook to explain the theory. Some of the existed published theory books were colourful and contained stickers. Hence, the teacher preferred to use the theory book with stickers to gain the interest of students in learning theory. Some of the teachers had explained the theory through the piano pieces. Teacher 2 mentioned that:

I teach music theory by asking them theory question when I introduce a new piece.

Teacher 3 responded that:

Sometimes, I will explain the music theory using the pieces.

Further, Teacher 5 found that some of the students cannot link what they learn in theory with the piano playing. Hence, she linked and restated the same musical concept that had to learn in theory when piano playing to ensure her student understanding the musical concept learn in theory was corresponding to the piano playing. Teacher 6 mentioned that he also applied the music theory in practical time.

Teacher 8 and Teacher 9 applied activity-based approach in teaching music theory. They used flashcards as teaching aids to teach students to recognize the music notes and demonstrated the intervals on the piano. Besides that, they enhanced the student's rhythmic by asking the student to clapping the rhythmic pattern. Teacher 9 had used technology device like online music games to make fun of students' theory learning. She kept exploring different teaching materials for theory teaching. Teacher 9 shared that:

I'm exploring different teaching materials currently and found out some of the theory series had clear explanation and I am planning to let the student try it although it was not same with the examination syllabus in ABRSM and Trinity examination board.

In short, direct approach and activity-based approach were implemented in teaching music theory with the help of theory book and various teaching materials. The examination board like ABRSM and Trinity had published their theory syllabus according different grades. Most of the teachers had used the graded theory syllabus as their teaching guide.



#### 4.4 Teachers' Selection of Teaching Materials

Teacher 1 recommended *Piano Pieces for Children* by Bela Bartok, *Twenty-four Little Pieces*, Op. 39 by Kabalevsky, *Album for the young* by Schumann, *Notebook for Anna* by Leopold Mozart, *Swinging Rhymes* by Terence Greaves and *Up-Grade* by Pamela Wedgwood. Teacher 2 used piano repertoire from Baroque, Classical, Romantic, 20th century, and pop piano music in elementary piano teaching. Teacher 3, Teacher 4, and Teacher 5 mostly taught classical piano repertoire for the elementary piano students. Besides that, Teacher 3 also had taught some pop songs or the piano collections of Miyazaki Hayao to increase the interest of students as some students lost interest in learning classical music. Teacher 5 had introduced some Baroque and Romantic period repertoire for students when the student had mastered the Classical period repertoire. She also had taught some piano accompaniment methods so that the student able to involve in choir or church service.

For the elementary level, Teacher 6 chose the piano pieces from *John Thompson* publication, Burgmüller and Sonatina series. Teacher 7 taught the pieces in *Faber Piano Adventures*, *Piano Time* by Pauline Hall, *Piano Lesson Made Easy* by Lina Ng. Teacher 8 expressed that she taught the pieces from *Album for the Young* by Schumann, some simple Jazz composition, and piano duet for children. Teacher 9 preferred taught the piano pieces in *Alfred's Premier Piano Course*.

The reason choosing particular teaching materials: (1) the instructions are well explained and easy to understand and follow; (2) the teaching material flows logically; (3) it is quite conceivable; (4) the books have attractive and colourful pictures with simple theory work; (5) the books that particular for fulfil the examination syllabus; and (6) covered most areas of piano learning which were playing, listening, sight-singing, sight-reading and theory (Cheah, 2012, p. 57). The teaching materials of this study were based

on the piano lesson components which were in pieces, piano technique, sight-reading, ear-training, and music theory.

The teaching materials chosen by Teacher 1 for elementary piano repertoires were the composition from Bela Bartok, Kabalesky, Schumann, Leopold Mozart, Terence Greaves and Pamela Wedgwood. Teacher 2 used all kinds of published books available in the music book shop; sometimes he played some music performance video for the students. Teacher 2 expressed that:

I will play some music performance video for student to introduce the performing gesture.

Teacher 3 and Teacher 5 chose *Alfred's Premier Piano* series, *Piano Made Easy* by Lina Ng and ABRSM published exam pieces. Besides that, Teacher 5 also used *Denes Agay's Learning to Play Piano* series. Teacher 4 stated there were many piece choices and she always gets from online or referred to her previous teacher. Teacher 4 shared that:

I like to find music pieces or popular songs from internet as there were numerous interesting music work and these music pieces were interesting. Students were more excited to play this kind of pieces.

Teacher 6 stated that he normally used traditional books and chosen repertoire suitable for his student through the online music library. Teacher 7 chose *Faber Piano Adventure* series, *Piano Made Easy* by Lina Ng and *Piano Time* by Pauline Hall as her teaching materials. Teacher 8 selected *A Dozen a Day* by Edna Mae Burnam as her teaching material. Teacher 9 chose *Alfred's Premier Piano* series as her teaching material.

Succinctly, most of the teachers used piano method book for repertoire teaching. Some of them employed music composition taken from online and involved music video playing to differ from the traditional repertoire learning style.

The teaching materials for piano technique training, Teacher 1, Teacher 6 and Teacher 9 had utilized scales and arpeggios. Teacher 2 used Czerny op. 299 and op. 599,

Burgmüller's 25 Easy and Progressive Studies, op. 100 and some simple five finger exercise for training piano technique of his elementary piano students. Teacher 3, Teacher 4, Teacher 6 and Teacher 8 used Hanon and Czerny series to develop student's finger technique.

Besides that, *A Dozen a Day* by Edna Mae Burnam was used by Teacher 3 and Teacher 5 for training student's piano technique. Teacher 5 selected *Junior Hanon* by Charles-Louis Hanon and Allan Small as her teaching material. Teacher 6 also recommended *Preparatory Exercise for the piano* by Schmitt for finger training. Teacher 7 emphasized the Graded exam scales and arpeggios for finger training. Teacher 8 also used *25 Etudes, Op. 100* by Friedrich Burgmüller to train student's piano technique ability. Teacher 9 selected *Alfred's Basic Piano Library: Technic Book* series for technique training.

Briefly, the teaching materials for piano technique teaching were the ABRSM published scale and arpeggios, Hanon, Czerny series and Burgmüller Etudes. Some teachers encouraged their student doing the finger strengthening exercises by pinching a soft foam ball.

For the teaching materials for sight-reading, Teacher 1 recommended the sight playing books such as *Sight Reading Made Easy* by Dorothy Bradley & J. Raymond Tobin and *Making Progress* by Thomas A. Johnson. Teacher 2, Teacher 3, Teacher 4, Teacher 6, Teacher 7 and Teacher 9 used ABRSM published sight-reading book. Teacher 5 selected *Improve Your Sight Reading* by Paul Harris as her teaching material for sight reading. Teacher 7 and Teacher 8 preferred selected some short simple piece from any piano book as sight reading material for her student. Teacher 2 and Teacher 9 revealed that they had selected and utilized some sight-reading exercises and presented through iPad in slide form for students.

The selection of teaching materials for ear-training, Teacher 1 preferred trained her student by singing some simple nursery rhymes and technical singing like arpeggios and chord. She played simple chord (tonic chord, dominant chord, and subdominant chord) in different keys and taught her student recognize these chords in every lesson. This ear training exercise was used to enhance the key sense of the student. Teacher 3 had chosen ABRSM aural training books and some ear training materials from Hong Kong, China, and Taiwan. Teacher 2, Teacher 4, Teacher 5, Teacher 6, and Teacher 7 also used ABRSM aural training books. Teacher 6 opined that he had also used the Solfege booklet. Teacher 8 and Teacher 9 designed their ear training exercises and some music games.

For the teaching material for music theory, Teacher 1 and Teacher 9 stated that they did not specify using a particular theory book. They did the explanation of the theory concept to the student with their own teaching design or the online music theory presentation slide. Most of the teachers were used *Poco* published theory book, *Music Theory for Young Musicians*. Teacher 2 used *Music Theory in Practice* by Eric Taylor as his theory teaching material. Teacher 5 also used *Alfred's Essentials of Music Theory* as one of her teaching material. Teacher 6 had chosen the music theory series by Lina Ng. Teacher 8 designed her theory teaching by playing with flashcards and manuscript books.

Most of the teaching materials used were published method books and available from the music store. Some of the teachers found the teaching material through internet or suggestion from the previous teacher. The reason selected particular teaching materials were: (1) well organised; (2) differentiate with different level; (3) colourful music images to gain student's interest; and (4) convenience and easy to follow.

Teacher 1 reviewed that there were numerous teaching materials; the main purpose of selecting particular teaching material was to enhance the students' piano learning. She chose teaching materials based on the teaching goals and matched the needs of the student. Teacher 2 affirmed that all the published books had provided a logical

learning sequence and supported teaching goal. Teacher 3 stated that the existing lesson books were proper arrangement, suitable for different level and the presentation of musical concept was flow smoothly which suit the student's learning pace.

Teacher 4 realized that the teaching material she selected was showed a good learning result from the student. Teacher 5 viewed that different lesson books had different learning goals and she selected and combined two different lesson books together to foster the piano learning and enhance the student's needs, let her student enjoy the piano learning but with progress. Teacher 6 opined that the published teaching material was convenient and he able to follow the given teaching instruction.

Teacher 7 stated that most of the teaching materials were well organized and easy to let students understand. Teacher 8 expressed those colourful teaching materials able to get student's attention and continue the student's passion for learning music. Teacher 9 determined that the published lesson book had different levels for different students. The teaching material was full of colourful pictures and interesting images that make the learning interesting.

In sum, the selection of teaching material was an integral part of piano curriculum planning. The teacher should consider the student's learning level and acceptability when choosing certain teaching material to support their piano learning. The teacher had the obligation to choose suitable teaching material that appropriates to the student's piano learning and yield good learning outcomes.

#### **4.5 Teaching Activities for a Piano Lesson**

Pike (2014) stated the teacher delivery was an important component of perceived effectiveness (p. 215). Teacher preparation for effective piano teaching should include the activities that can develop students' requisite skills. The teaching activities like musicianship activities, Off-bench games, ear training exercises and musical activities to

enhance the piano learning. Students were able to discover the basic musical concepts through engaging activities. The well-sequenced and diverse learning activities included technique, transposition, theory, sight reading, harmonization, games, and ear training; these supported the musical performance of piano literature (Pike, 2014, p. 224).

All the participated teachers in this study stated that they had combined different teaching activities subsequently enforce on students' progress with different teaching materials and teaching strategies were varied. Teacher 1 expressed that she involved singing training, dictation exercise, and composition teaching in her elementary piano teaching. She would like to make her piano lesson interesting by asking her student adding some ornaments or embellishments onto the pieces that had been learned or changing the rhythmic pattern. Teacher 1 suggested that:

I would like my student to add additional embellishments or ornaments on the pieces that had been learned or changing the rhythmic pattern of the melody. This is to make change of the melody and provide the chance for student to compose their music. These teaching activities enable the student to experience the power of ornaments and musical embellishment.

Teacher 2 indicated that he involved music games, singing exercises, improvisation and body movement in his piano lesson. He would like to teach his student to find the music phrases and the main theme of the piece. Some short music phrases or main theme of the pieces were used in improvisation. Students were encouraged to insert their musical thought in the improvisation. Teacher 2 remarked that:

I like to teach my student improvise short music phrases during the lesson. Improvisation is an exciting teaching activity for student to combine their performance with musical thought. This required the spontaneous response of student and creative thinking. My students like to improvise as they are excited in making music.

The teaching activities that Teacher 3 preferred were singing exercises, chanting, clapping games and dancing. Teacher 3 emphasized the important of body movement in piano learning as the music gestures can be directly or indirectly affected the intonation.

She involved dancing in her piano lesson for the students' understanding of classical music dance form. Teacher 3 expressed that:

I would like my student to dance in piano lesson when I introduce classical music dance form like Minuet, Waltz, Tango and so on. This is to let my student feel the distinctive rhythmic pattern of classical music dance form.

Teacher 4 involved various creative activities like music games like “note-naming” game, clapping game, freeze game, playing simple and interesting Disney songs for solo piano and finger strengthening exercises. The finger strengthening exercise was to ensure the student keep their hands gesture in correct position for piano technique training and performance. Teacher 4 shared that:

I will teach the student in a creative way with imaginary idea to feel the music. I rearrange the Disney song into simple and interesting version to rebuild the students' confident and willingness to learn.

Teacher 5 involved story-telling in her piano teaching. She was making the repertoire learning become interesting by telling about the background of the piano composition and giving musical images of the piano works. She also played the music video for her student to introduce the music characteristic and music genre. Teacher 5 responded that:

I interspersed some music history with story-telling to let the student have the imagination on the piano works. The student was able to feel the musical atmosphere and musical images about the piano work.

She also involved sight-reading exercise with “note-naming” games. Teacher 5 continued to share:

I will ask the notes by notes jumping all over the page and required my student giving me the letter name of the note.

Teacher 6 also involved the singing activities, aural training, and music games. One of his special teaching activity was he used metaphor description in articulation

explanation. He described the legato playing as the finger walking on the key while the staccato playing as the finger jumping on the key. He emphasized the independence of fingers was vital for piano technique training. Teacher 6 briefly remarked that:

I will ask my student thinking their fingers “walking” on the key, playing two notes alternately to enhance their legato playing. For the staccato playing, I will ask my student imagine their fingers “jumping” on the keys.

The teaching activities favoured by Teacher 7 were singing exercises, music games, music quiz and echo games. She motivated the student’s aural ability by training the student sing the upper melody line and the bottom accompaniment played by left hand. She also involved echo exercises before starting piano playing. Sometimes, she sang or played the melody and acquired her student to sing back the melody that had been heard. This exercise able to improve the students’ musical memory. Teacher 7 stated that:

I required my student to recreate singing or clapping the rhythm that I played on piano.

Teacher 8 more focused on the specific imitation and modelling in her piano teaching. She placed emphasis on technique training and she demonstrated the particular piano technique and required the students to imitate her gestures. She also applied music knowledge with the application of technology. She played the music performance video for students to have a better insight of what a music performance is. Teacher 8 said that:

I will play some performance video from YouTube to let the student understanding what music performance is.

Teacher 9 prefers to involve various music games and singing exercises in her piano lesson. She chose some suitable online music games like rhythmic training and dictation game for students. Nowadays, the students were surrounded with technology, so she applied the used of modern technology in her piano teaching. She also used the



CD recording from the method book as the supplement teaching materials. She played the recording and required her student played the music along with the recording.

In short, the teaching activities used in piano teaching were singing, chanting, music games like “note-naming” and clapping games, music quiz, dictation exercise, composition, improvisation, imitation, modelling, demonstration, story-telling, listening to recording and watching music performance video. Teachers utilized different teaching activities to enhance different piano skills and make the piano lesson interesting.

Most of the teachers reflected that they use different teaching activities for the next lesson, which varied from the previous lesson. This is because the teaching goals for every piano lesson are different. Hence, the teaching activities are designed according to the lesson learning targets. All the participated teachers viewed that it is necessary to use different teaching activities for each individual student. The reason using different teaching activities is that individual student have different ways of learning, diverse interest, every student has their own learning problems and different purpose of piano learning.

Teacher 5 affirmed that the purpose of students come to the piano lesson was different. So, her teaching activities were designed based on the student’s needs. Teacher 5 expressed that:

The teaching activities were designed based on student’s piano learning purpose and target. Some of the students come for piano lesson just for entertainment, some aims for learning extra skills, some target on examination and so on. So, my teaching activities were different according to student piano learning purpose and try my best to build their interest on piano playing.

Teacher 7 affirmed that student progression was different, so she needed to select and combine the teaching activities. Teacher 7 stated that:

I had combined different teaching activities in a piano lesson as different student showed different response on their piano learning progression.

Teacher 6 and Teacher 8 expressed that every student was different in their character and learning style. So, they designed the teaching activities based on students' character and learning style. Teacher 6 commented that:

Every student was different. So, I need change my teaching activities according to student's character.

Teacher 8 concurred that:

Every child has different character. So, I will prepare different activities based on the student's ability. As a teacher, I need to be flexible to enable myself cope with different kinds of student.

In sum, teachers were designed the teaching activities according to students' interests, needs, piano learning purposes, and learning styles. The teaching activities were purposely modified according to each particular student. All the participated teachers stated that their teaching activities were appropriate for the learning outcome. This is because the teaching activities were designed according to student's needs. Teacher 3 reflected that:

... every teaching activity has its own teaching target and learning outcomes. I would like to select teaching activities which acceptable by student to improve their different piano skills.

Teacher 4 also concurred that:

The different teaching activities for each component in piano lesson had enhanced student's piano learning. The teaching activities were designed based on the progression of the student. Using different teaching activities under teacher's guidance would widen the student's abilities and skills and showed progression in their piano learning.

Further, Teacher 7 agreed that:

The teaching activities support the learning outcome. The teaching activities were used to help the student to understand the basic music elements and criteria in interesting way.

In sum, the teaching activities in various creative and innovative ways will be shown the learning outcome as these activities were designed based on the teaching goals and students' needs, so the teaching activities will be suitable and fitting the teaching goals. All the participated piano teachers viewed that the utilization of different teaching activities for each component of the piano lesson had enhanced students' piano learning. Teacher 2 commented that:

The use of different teaching activities in each lesson contents can develop the students' music literacy. It also depends on how the teacher use and combine all these teaching activities in a creative way to enhance the students' piano learning.

Teachers had prepared several teaching activities in the development of musicianship and music literacy which included the music reading, music writing and music playing.

#### **4.6 Implementation of Eclectic Approach**

The one-to-one piano learning focused on the early music development and strengthens the piano foundation with correct techniques and cultivates the practise from young of each individual student. The main focus of the piano lesson was individuality of the elementary piano student. Therefore, the lesson should be interesting and involve student engagement with a variety of teaching approaches, teaching materials and teaching activities. Teacher should manage the piano lesson varied and interesting based on the students' interest and learning styles with certain lesson goals.

Teacher 1 indicated that children learned music through visual, auditory, tactile, and kinaesthetic. Every child has different learning sensory-motor, some learn by tactile, some learn by sight, some learn with aural perception and some learn through movement. Teacher 1 trained her student according to the student's learning ability. If the student learned by ear, she practiced them aurally but deliberately their learning involved some note reading exercises, technical exercises, and rhythmic exercises to develop overall

learning sensory. For the student learning by sight, she trained them music notation partially and practiced more on their critical listening. Teacher 1 had employed the eclectic approach which adjusted her teaching instruction according to the student learning motor. Teacher 1 had the awareness on the student's learning motor and developed the piano learning according to their strengths.

Teacher 2 had implemented different teaching approaches according to the students' learning attitudes. He had combined instrumental-technical approach or the practical-empirical approach with the activity-based approach or the creative approach to enhance the student's piano learning. He stated that every student is different; he is unable to use the same teaching approach with each of them. He adjusted his teaching approaches according to his lesson plan with the help of different teaching materials and teaching activities. Teacher 2 stated that:

I will be changing my teaching approaches according my lesson plan on each individual student. I have different lesson plan for each of them as they are different in each one. I can't use the same teaching approach to all my students.

Teacher 2 had implemented eclectic approach inadvertently as he noticed that different student's learning style require different teaching approaches and designed his lesson plan according to the student's learning ability.

Teacher 3 determined that teacher should use different method books for each student. She expressed that teacher need to consider the content design and arrangement of the method book suitable for the student's learning character and age. This is because the existing method books in the market were designed with various methodologies and target groups. Teacher should examine which method book suitable for particular student. Teacher 3 indicated that she combines different method books in the lesson as each method book had different learning targets. Teacher 3 suggested that:

I will choose more than one method books for my student as he or she can learn different things from each method books. The student will not maintain his/her attention and get bored if only use one method book. The different method book

had their own content arrangement and some attractive picture to hold the students' attention.

Teacher 3 did not rely on only one method book but choose the most suitable method book and combined different method books for her student. This shows the characteristics of the eclectic approach, using various teaching materials from different existing method books to increase the interest of students in piano learning.

Teacher 4 recognized that she needs to use different teaching activities to hold the student's attention in piano lesson. She preferred to use creative approach and activity-based approach in her lesson as the piano lesson will become fun and the student learn with joy. Teacher 4 prepared various music games such as "note-naming" games, clapping games and echo games to enhance the student note-reading and rhythm learning. She combined these music games with the method books and this had showed the ideas of eclectic approach, which different learning contexts required different approaches to increase the chances of learning.

Teacher 5 expressed that creating music was the ultimate purpose in piano learning. She stated that many students are merely playing music notes instead of music making. So, she involved the music imagination, listening and body movement in her piano teaching. She had explained the music background and history of the piano pieces and discussed the playing style with student. She required her student listen to what they were playing instead of play by sight only. Besides that, she also emphasized that feeling the music with body was important as the muscle tense and loose worked alternately when playing piano. She improved the students' finger flexibility and stability with various finger exercises like scales, arpeggios and Hanon exercises. Teacher 5 expressed that:

Students always think they are playing music notes instead of music. As an educator, I must let them be interested to the repertoire playing. So, I would have interspersed some stories or history to let them feel the atmosphere on why the composer write music like this.

She emphasised on aural skills and facilities:

Listening is the most important in piano playing. So, I always ask my students to listen, listen and listen! I will demonstrate to my student and required them listen to the sound created and not imitated by sight only. Other than hearing, feel the body also helpful in projecting the correct sound.

Teacher 5 involved various piano learning sensory to develop the students' music expression. Teacher 6 involved various activities in piano lesson such as aural training, singing and finger exercises. He stated that piano learning was not only playing on key but need finger independency, listening, sight-reading ability and others. Hence, he had considered the importance of piano technique in elementary level. He combined the direct teaching approach with the metaphor approach to explain the articulation. Teacher 6 explained that:

I always describe the legato playing like "walking" with fingers and staccato playing like "jumping". I will choose two notes and required my student practised "walking" movement to develop their finger independency.

Teacher 6 had introduced Schmitt and Hanon exercises for student as their weekly regular finger exercise practise. Piano teachers were promptly addressed different issues in piano learning; hence it was a need to have holistic approach like the eclectic approach in piano education. Eclectic approach enabled the teacher addressed with different issues with different teaching approaches, teaching materials and teaching activities.

Teacher 7 expressed that she will change other teaching approaches when the student does not understand her teaching instruction. Teacher 7 stated that:

I will apply another teaching approach when student didn't understand what I taught. For example, when the student kept playing wrong rhythm, I will ask him to say out the rhythm as ta ti ti (example of Kodály teaching approach).

Teacher 7 implemented eclectic approach in her piano teaching as she adjusted her teaching approaches when she noticed that the student unable to understand what she planned to teach. She mostly employed direct teaching approach, but she had combined

direct teaching approach with Kodály approach, singing approach and activity-based approach to enhance the students' piano learning. When the students can't understand with direct teaching approach, she will change to the activity-based approach. Student will be easier understanding through music activity games.

Teacher 8 noticed that most of the students learning piano with just play the notes without any emotion. She viewed that music is a form of self-expression; student comes for a piano lesson had the opportunity to exteriorize their emotion with playing the piano. So, it was vital for the student learn the music expression through the learning piano piece. She used instrumental-technical teaching approach combined with the activity-based approach. She had designed various music activities in developing music expression of the student such as watching performance video, drawing performance direction and involved body movement to feel the music. She elaborated that:

I will let my student have musical image through drawing, body movement and watching music video. This is to increase their interest in feeling the music.

Teacher 9 mentioned that every student is different in learning pace and the teacher should have various teaching approaches to suit the need of students. She explained that:

...every student is different. They have their own ways of learning. So, as a teacher should have different approaches or ways in teaching so that it may suit to that particular student.

So, she had involved different teaching activities like singing and some online musical games in her piano lesson. She had combined various teaching approaches like Kodály approach, activity-based approach and singing approach according to the needs of student. She also had used various teaching materials in her piano lesson. She involved online teaching materials and the method books to enhance piano learning of student.

In sum, the findings had recognized that piano teachers need to observe the students' learning capability as it was crucial to adjust and adapt suitable teaching

approaches, teaching materials, and teaching activities for their needs. The selection of teaching approaches, teaching materials, and teaching activities were varied to match the various learning styles for each of every student. One of the participants in Yang (2015) stated that the music selected for the student was matched the student's personality and interests (p. 25).

#### **4.7 Conclusion**

In conclusion, the findings from the interview of nine piano teachers indicated that there were various teaching approaches, teaching materials and teaching activities used in piano teaching. Every teacher had their own teaching approaches and teaching plan in teaching different age groups of students. The teachers had chosen and combined different teaching approaches and teaching activities into suitable teaching approach for each individual student with the selection of suitable teaching materials.

The selecting and combining various teaching approaches, teaching materials and teaching activities were generally implemented in eclectic approach in piano teaching. The selection of these approaches and activities was based on the teacher's personal opinion with the consideration of the student's learning ability. The findings draw convincing conclusion that that the eclectic approach is applicable in piano teaching.

There are noteworthy observations in the findings that the expert and experienced teachers are more flexible, adaptive, and receptive to the eclectic approaches as compared to the novice teachers. Further, the expert and experienced teachers have more innovative ways in the selection and combination of teaching materials and approaches. As stated by Carter et al.'s (1988), Pike (2014) and Yeh (2014), the experiences and professional knowledge are vital criteria for piano teachers to be flexible and innovative.



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION, IMPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATION**

#### **5.1 Overview**

This chapter enclose with the discussion of the findings and summary of the findings attained from this study. This chapter will deliberate on the (1) summary of the findings; (2) discussion of the findings of the study; (3) implication of the study and (4) recommendation for future study directions; and (5) closing remarks. The discussions were established on the research questions of this study as below:

1. What are the teaching approaches used by the piano teacher in one-to-one elementary piano teaching?
2. What are the teaching materials selected for elementary piano student?
3. What are the teaching activities in one-to-one elementary piano lesson?
4. How do the piano teachers' teaching approaches, their selection of teaching materials and teaching activities contribute to the eclectic approach?

#### **5.2 Summary of the Findings**

The finding of this study indicated that elementary piano teachers implement different teaching approaches with the support of various teaching materials and teaching activities in maintaining the students' piano learning enjoyment with high musical achievement.

The teaching approaches for elementary piano teaching were flexible and adjustable to facilitate the musical development of students. The selection of teaching materials was age appropriate, accessible and interesting to inspire the piano learning. The teaching activities were varied with teaching goals and make the piano lesson interesting.

In sum, the selection and combination of different teaching approaches were based on teacher's own personal experience and teaching beliefs to satisfy each student's needs.

The combination of teaching approaches, selection of different teaching materials, and various teaching activities were cooperated as an eclectic approach. The findings of this study evinced that the eclectic approach was suitable for piano education as the choice of teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials and teaching activities will be based on the student's need in order to maximize the elementary piano learning and reach higher musical achievement. This was fostered the satisfaction for both teacher and student.

### **5.3 Discussion of the Findings of the Study**

The following are the discussion of the findings established on the research objectives of this study.

#### **5.3.1 Teaching approaches for elementary piano teaching**

The elementary piano teaching consists of teaching of music repertoire, piano technique, sight-reading, ear-training and music theory. There were several teaching approaches in enhancing each musical content in piano teaching. The widely used teaching approaches were direct and demonstrating approach, instrumental-technical approach and practical-empirical approach (Hultberg, 2002), creative teaching approach, imaginative approach, metaphor approach, indirect and guided approach, activity-based approach (Harris, 2020) and Kodály approach.

Each teaching approach had its teaching target and teaching methods with various teaching materials and teaching activities. Some of the teaching approaches suitable applied to certain types of students and lead the student forward to secure piano learning. Different teaching approaches were able to work together in order to suit the needs of the student. Elementary piano teacher was selecting and combining a few suitable teaching approaches together to maximize the piano learning of elementary piano students. Piano

teacher should be able to adjust the teaching approaches according to students' learning pace, interest and learning styles.

The effective elementary piano teaching was to ensure that the elementary piano students are able to understand musical elements via the sequence of teaching activities with appropriate teaching approaches in order to perform musically and achieve higher musical achievement. The flexibility in combining several teaching approaches making piano learning more interesting and enriching the learning outcomes. Every elementary piano student was accomplished with different teaching approaches as the learning style of each student was different.

### **5.3.2 Selection of teaching materials**

Teaching materials were the materials used by piano teacher in piano lesson to enhance the music learning of student. The music learning of students was different, some learning through visual sensory and some with aural learning. The basic teaching materials were the method books for pieces, piano technique, sight-reading, aural and music theory. The particular criteria for teacher to select the method book were the instruction must be presented in simple, clear, attractive and comprised all the basic music elements.

There were numerous kinds of piano method books and lesson books. These piano lesson books were obtainable in music store. The method book was organised in several levels and series for different age group and students' skill levels. This had provided the learning progression through various abilities and stimulated the student's engagement. Pike (2014) also supported that these method books were age appropriate and strengthened the music concept for some learning duration. Some series of piano lesson book was presented in simple and comprehensive explanation that allowed the student to work on themselves or with the help of parents. Some of the method book was designed according to music examination syllabus.

Music examination board also had presented their own series of examination pieces, sight-reading, scales and arpeggios, theory books and specimen aural tests or aural training in practices. Teacher can easily prepare the student for music examination with the teaching instruction from the exam series. The method books from examination series had presented in different grades and clearly provided the learning objectives and the music assessment criteria.

In sum, different piano lesson books worked better for different students reliant on students' age, learning attitudes, skill level and motivation. Piano teacher can mix and match two piano method books from different series together to maintain seamless learning progression. Working two lesson books at the same time from different method was increased the students' learning experience of student and beneficial to particular students.

As discussed by Kooistra (2015), the additional teaching materials to make the lesson run smoothly were divided into technical materials and non-technical materials. The technical teaching materials were categorized into visual materials, audio materials and audio-visual materials. The visual teaching materials were the teaching presentation slides from online sources, while the audio teaching materials were the recordings, CD player and song from YouTube. The audio-visual teaching materials were some short music performance video, music film and music online games. The non-technical materials were the music flashcards, non-musical toys like tennis balls and stuffed animals, wall-chart and famous composer pictures.

Great teaching materials will significantly support the students' initial desire to piano learning and to endure their enthusiasm throughout the piano course. The teacher with the help of teaching materials able to provide effective teaching and the involve student engagement in piano learning. Teachers were changing and using different

teaching materials simultaneously indicated by the ideal learning situation for facilitating student in a better way.

### **5.3.3 Teaching activities in piano lesson**

There were numerous teaching activities to support the piano lesson run smoothly and make the piano lesson interesting. These teaching activities were to make the piano lesson wonderful different with the previous lesson to inspire the students' interest and music improvement. The general teaching activities were incorporate singing with playing, teaching using flash cards, music games, composition and improvisation. Harris (2020) also support that various activities able to make lesson fun and accomplish teaching objectives.

Nowadays, piano teachers able to enhance the piano lesson with the use of technology. Teachers can share the music video with student on laptop or iPad and have the discussion with the student about the performance. In addition, piano teachers are able to encourage the students to exhibit their creativity in composition and improvisation through the digital media. Piano teacher can select some popular melody and require the student to rearrange and to present it different rhythmic and melodic patterns. Student can have fun in rearranging the melody by adding ornaments and embellishments, play with the dynamics and music expressions, change the left-hand accompaniment pattern and insert own musical ideas to create new versions as their composition.

In short, the variation of teaching activities aims to increase the students' interest in piano learning. These teaching activities were not only for the enjoyment but also to increase students' attention and engagement in the piano lesson and making progress.

### **5.3.4 Implementation of eclectic approach in piano teaching**

Ang (2014) defined the eclectic approach as “presented in a wide variety of ideas and approaches serving as a springboard in piano teaching” (p. 6). The participants in Cheah (2012) stated that “What we learn is eclectic”, picked the good ones, and incorporated into the piano lessons, then emerged the good ones into an effective approach (p. 73). Many piano teachers had employed an eclectic approach inadvertently in their piano teaching (Dillon, 2009).

The findings showed that piano teachers select suitable teaching approach from different teaching approaches to suit the student’s needs. The piano teachers are to change the present teaching approach when the student did not show improvement as the teaching approach may not be suitable for the student. Piano teacher should adjust their teaching approaches according to the student’s learning styles and to further inspire their musical expression rather than only emphasized on technical skills.

It was clear that every piano teacher viewed their piano teaching in different ways and their focal point in piano teaching was different. It was evidenced that the piano education was broad and need to be flexible. Piano teachers need to apply a holistic and adjustable teaching approach, creating variety in the piano lesson with various interesting learning activities according to the needs of students. This was considered as an eclectic approach in one-to-one piano teaching as the teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials and teaching activities were designed according to the individuality of the learner. The result of the study support to the findings of Bugos’s (2011) study in teachers’ selection and use of pedagogical approaches in elementary general music teaching. As discussed in Benedict (2010) study, the eclectic approach aims to adapt all the various teaching methods and to serve as a suitable curriculum for each individual student.

## **5.4 Conclusion**

The elementary piano teaching is a challenging task. Hence, the elementary piano teachers are always seeking for holistic teaching approach with various teaching materials and teaching activities to maximize the learning outcome. The eclectic approach as the combination of various teaching approaches with the numerous teaching materials and teaching activities was suitable implement in piano education. The findings from this study indicated some noteworthy conclusion:

1. The choice of teaching approaches was based on the student's readiness and the selection of teaching materials and various teaching activities inspiring the piano learning of students.
2. The eclectic approach can allocate satisfaction for both teacher and student as it showed the learning reflection on the student's music achievement.
3. The eclectic approach capable to suit the student's learning pace as it was a combination of teaching approaches and teaching activities decided by the observation of piano with appropriate selection of teaching materials.

## **5.5 Implication of the Study**

The findings of this study revealed that piano teachers implemented an eclectic approach inadvertently in their piano teaching. The piano teachers selected and combined different teaching approaches with different teaching materials and teaching activities according to each student's needs. The findings of this study suggested that the eclectic approach is suitable to implement in elementary one-to-one piano education.

Firstly, the study show that the piano teachers were using different teaching approaches, selecting different teaching materials and preparing numerous teaching activities to enhance student's piano learning based on student's learning ability. This is an important finding as it indicates that eclectic approach which had selected the best

teaching approaches, teaching materials and teaching activities from various sources and combined into personal teaching approach applicable to each individual piano student. Eclectic approach involves various music learning activities, making the piano lesson interesting, and the student was excited to come for the piano lesson. Second, the piano education nowadays was more student-centred, thus the implementation of eclectic approach had provided the chance for a piano teacher to select their own teaching approaches, teaching materials and teaching activities according to the student's learning condition.

Thirdly, the music educators need to prepare with various teaching approaches, teaching materials and teaching activities to satisfy student's music learning and development. The eclectic approach enables the teacher to exploit better teaching approaches, select suitable teaching materials according to students' level and combine various teaching activities. This approach enables the teacher to handle unexpected situations and satisfy the need of students. Hence, it was suggested to implement an eclectic approach in piano education and music education.

## **5.6 Recommendation for Future Study Directions**

This study has attempted to seek the perspective of piano teachers on their teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials and teaching activities. Therefore, it is suggested that to carry out a longitudinal study in future studies. Piano learning is a process, so the researcher can employ a longitudinal study to compare traditional teaching and eclectic piano teaching.

Besides that, this study only focused on nine piano teachers in West Malaysia who conduct one-to-one piano teaching. Further research can increase the sample size; carry out more in-depth interviews to collect more perceptions from a large sample from all states of Malaysia.



This study emphasized on one-to-one piano teaching. For further study, it is suggested to include an investigation of the implementation of an eclectic approach in group piano teaching or other group music lessons. Lastly, future studies are recommended to investigate the various perspectives from other countries as the ICT nowadays enable the connection, communication, and collaboration with each other easily no matter where and when. The development of technology makes the data collection efficacious as the participants are easy to be accessed.

### **5.7 Closing Remarks**

Overall, this study contributes to the body of knowledge in the understanding of the eclectic approach in piano education. This study investigated the perspectives of nine piano teachers about their own teaching approaches, selection of teaching materials, and teaching activities for one-to-one elementary piano teaching. The findings provide evidences for valuable piano teaching approaches from nine piano teachers with different teaching experiences.

The findings of this study aim to motivate future studies for the implementation of the eclectic approach in music education for enhancing the music learners' musical achievement into the professional level. The eclectic approach in piano teaching was indicated as personal teaching approach with teachers' individual consideration, perspectives and teaching experiences to inspire students' piano learning and satisfy the students' needs.

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