

**INCORPORATING SINGING AS A TOOL FOR
TEACHING PHRASING AMONG PIANO TEACHERS IN
KLANG VALLEY MALAYSIA**

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CULTURAL CENTRE
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KUALA LUMPUR**

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IN KLANG VALLEY MALAYSIA**

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**DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
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Field of Study : Music Education

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**[INCORPORATING SINGING AS A TOOL FOR TEACHING PHRASING
AMONG PIANO TEACHERS IN KLANG VALLEY MALAYSIA]**

ABSTRACT

One of the main difficulties that a piano student may encounter is to shape a phrase musically. In general, these phrases may lack direction, shape and expression, thus affecting the student's interpretation in performance. Most researchers agree that the voice is the most natural instrument and that listening to good singers will help to develop musicality and good phrasing in piano playing. The purpose of this research was to find an effective approach to incorporating singing as an aid to piano playing. This study investigated how piano teachers in the Klang Valley of West Malaysia have incorporated singing as a teaching tool in piano lessons in order to teach phrasing in music. A qualitative research approach was employed. Ten semi-structured interviews were conducted to discover the teachers' perspectives on the use of singing as one of the tools to improve phrasing in their students' piano playing. This was followed by 15 observations of the lessons given by five piano teachers to see how the inclusion of singing affected the students' phrasing of the music. The results indicated that the use of singing as an aid in teaching phrasing had positive effects in terms of having a better understanding of the phrase structure, breath points, shaping, dynamic contrasts, tone colour and direction of the phrases. The results also showed that the physical gesture of breathing in singing helped to promote better phrasing and shaping in musical performance. Furthermore, the results found that listening and appreciating the elements in good singing helped the students to improve their musical interpretation and heighten their understanding of good sound. There were three novel findings, namely, listening to good classical singing would build musicianship and musicality from the early stages of music learning, singing was used to teach voicing and to improve the awareness of

fingering in piano playing. This study argues that such an approach will promote better phrasing in musical performance.

Keywords: singing, piano lessons, phrasing, teaching tool

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**[MENGGABUNGKAN NYANYIAN SEBAGAI ALAT UNTUK MENGAJAR
FRASA DI ANTARA GURU PIANO DI KLANG VALLEY MALAYSIA]**

ABSTRAK

Salah satu kesukaran utama yang mungkin dihadapi oleh pelajar piano adalah membentuk frasa secara muzik. Secara umum, frasa-frasa ini mungkin kurang arah, bentuk dan ekspresi, sehingga mempengaruhi penafsiran pelajar dalam prestasi. Sebilangan besar penyelidik bersetuju bahawa suara adalah alat yang paling semula jadi dan bahawa mendengar penyanyi yang baik akan membantu mengembangkan muzik dan frasa yang baik dalam bermain piano. Tujuan penyelidikan ini adalah untuk mencari pendekatan yang berkesan untuk menggunakan nyanyian sebagai alat bantu bermain piano. Kajian ini menyelidiki bagaimana guru piano di Lembah Klang di Malaysia Barat telah memasukkan nyanyian sebagai alat pengajaran dalam pelajaran piano untuk mengajar frasa dalam muzik. Pendekatan penyelidikan kualitatif digunakan. Sepuluh wawancara separa berstruktur dilakukan untuk mengetahui perspektif guru mengenai penggunaan nyanyian sebagai salah satu alat untuk meningkatkan frasa dalam permainan piano pelajar mereka. Ini diikuti oleh 15 pemerhatian pelajaran yang diberikan oleh lima orang guru piano untuk melihat bagaimana penyertaan nyanyian mempengaruhi frasa muzik pelajar. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa penggunaan nyanyian sebagai alat bantu mengajar frasa memberi kesan positif dari segi pemahaman yang lebih baik mengenai struktur frasa, titik nafas, pembentukan, kontras dinamik, warna nada dan arah frasa. Hasilnya juga menunjukkan bahawa gerakan fizikal bernafas dalam nyanyian membantu mempromosikan frasa dan pembentukan persembahan muzik yang lebih baik. Selanjutnya, hasil kajian mendapati bahawa mendengar dan menghayati unsur-unsur dalam nyanyian yang baik membantu para pelajar untuk meningkatkan interpretasi muzik mereka dan meningkatkan pemahaman mereka tentang bunyi yang baik. Terdapat tiga penemuan novel, iaitu, mendengarkan nyanyian klasik yang baik akan membangun

musikal dari peringkat awal pembelajaran muzik, menyanyi itu digunakan untuk mengajar bersuara, dan untuk meningkatkan kesadaran bermain jari dalam permainan piano. Kajian ini berpendapat bahawa pendekatan seperti itu akan mempromosikan frasa yang lebih baik dalam persembahan muzik.

Kata kunci: nyanyian, pelajaran piano, frasa, alat pengajaran

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

This study investigated how piano teachers in the Klang Valley of West Malaysia have incorporated singing as a teaching tool in piano lessons in order to teach phrasing in music. One of the main difficulties that a piano student may encounter is to shape a phrase musically. In general, the piano student's phrasing may lack direction, shape and expression, thus affecting her interpretation in performance. Not many research studies have been conducted on incorporating singing as a tool for teaching phrasing in piano lessons. Previous research has largely focused on incorporating singing in piano lessons include various piano pedagogical methods for young beginners, for example, Yamaha (Miranda, 2000), Kodály (Howard, 1996), and Dalcroze (Caldwell, 1993). Most of these methods are designed for teaching music to children in group basis, and focus more on ear training. Hsu (2000) opined that "instrumental music relates to the voice" (p.30). Therefore, she suggested that one of the best teaching tools to teach children how to create lovely and pleasing musical sound is through singing. Moreover, researchers have conducted studies on teaching audiation in instrumental classes (Dalby, 1999), and studied the effect of singing the melody while practising the piano (Ohsawa, 2009; Priesing, 1965). Additionally, Bernhard (2002) explained that researchers and music educators investigated the effect of using vocalization as an instructional tool in instrumental music education through college instrumentalists on "performance achievement, aural-visual discrimination, aural recognition, and error detection" (p.28).

After extensive searches, the researcher has not been able to identify any research on incorporating singing as a tool for teaching phrasing in piano lessons for

students. Therefore, this study differs from the above-mentioned studies. Investigations into this area of incorporating singing in piano lessons would help practitioners such as piano teachers in developing a better understanding of teaching phrasing and interpretation to their students. It is hoped that it will also benefit researchers in gaining a fuller appreciation of the use of singing as a tool for teaching phrasing in piano lessons.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There is a gap in literature on the area of using singing as a tool in teaching phrasing in piano lessons. One of the main difficulties that a piano student may encounter is to shape a phrase musically. In general, the piano student may find difficulty in phrasing as the phrasing in her performance may lack direction, shape and expression, thus affecting her interpretation. Therefore, the researcher would advocate the use of singing as being beneficial to music teaching as it can be an effective teaching tool.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This research aims:

1. To discover the different teaching methods in the incorporation of singing as an aid to teaching phrasing in music during the piano lessons in the Klang Valley of West Malaysia.
2. To examine the impact of using breathing as an aid to teaching phrasing during the piano lessons in the Klang Valley of West Malaysia.
3. To explore how using singing as an aid to teaching phrasing affects expressivity during the piano lessons in the Klang Valley of West Malaysia.

1.4 Research Questions

The study will be guided by the following research question:

How is singing used as an aid in teaching phrasing during piano lessons?

The following sub-questions in this study will also be addressed:

1. How does breathing in singing affect the phrasing and shaping in the musical performance of students on the piano?
2. How does singing affect expressivity in the musical performance of students on the piano?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study's significance lies in encouraging piano teachers in seeing the possibilities of enhancing their teaching by using singing as a teaching tool in developing better phrasing, breathing and expressivity in piano lessons. Furthermore, this study gives many piano pedagogical methods on the incorporation of singing as an aid to teaching phrasing in music. In addition, this study aims to create an awareness of the effectiveness of using breathing in teaching phrasing and shaping in a musical performance. This study also suggests the use of singing to enhance the expressivity and musicality of the students' phrasing during piano lessons.

1.6 Delimitations of Study

There were several limitations in conducting this study. This study is not representative of the whole country of West Malaysia as it was only focused on selected teachers in the Klang Valley. Therefore, there is a need to conduct similar studies in other parts of the country for a fuller understanding of the effect of incorporating singing as a teaching tool in piano lessons. Furthermore, the choice of participants is

focused on piano teachers who teach Western classical piano music, thus limiting the scope of this research.

1.7 Definition of Terms

There were four main keywords which frequently occurred throughout this research. The following are the definitions of the keywords:

1.7.1 Singing

In this study, singing is used by piano teachers as a tool for teaching students phrasing, breathing, and expression in piano playing. Singing can be executed in different ways when teaching students during piano lessons, for example, singing in “solfege” and vowels.

1.7.2 Phrasing

Phrasing in this research refers to the musical sentences in the classical piano pieces learned and played by the students during their piano lessons. Rachmaninoff stated that “an artistic interpretation is not possible if the student does not know the laws underlying the very important subject of phrasing” (Cooke, 1913, p.212).

1.7.3 Piano Lessons

Piano lessons can be understood as teaching sessions during which a student is given instructions on how to play the piano in order to develop the technical skills and the musical understanding of piano music. The focus of this study is on one-on-one piano lessons in Western classical music, which are taught by the piano teachers in their private studios in Klang Valley of West Malaysia.

1.7.4 Teaching Tool

A teaching tool is a method or approach to develop a specific skill in teaching students. Dalby (1999) described that singing can be used as a teaching tool to improve the students' melodic and harmonic intonation. This research investigates how singing is used as a teaching tool to improve the students' understanding of phrasing in music.

1.8 Chapter overview

This dissertation consists of five chapters. The first chapter introduces the study, and presents the statement of the problem, research objectives, significance and delimitations of the study. A definition of terms and chapter overview are also included. Chapter two presents a literature review that covers three main areas: perspectives of singing and breathing as an aid to teaching phrasing in instrumental teaching, singing as an aid to teaching expressivity and “cantabile” in instrumental teaching, and benefits of singing in developing musicianship in instrumental playing.

Chapter three explains the methodology for this research. It outlines the research design, participants sampling, data collection procedure, and data analysis procedure for the study. Chapter four contains the analysis of data and findings of the study. It presents the qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews and observations. Chapter five discusses the findings of the study and answers the research questions. It also presents the implications and recommendations for the study.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This literature review addresses singing as an aid to teaching phrasing in instrumental teaching, for example, (Burwell, 2006; Casas-mas, 2018; Hongsermeier, 1995; Hsu, 2000; Ohsawa, 2009; Priesing, 1965; Sindelar, 1989; Wolbers, 2002). In addition, researchers have studied the breathing as an aid to teaching phrasing in instrumental teaching (Barrier, 2009; Hsu, 2000; Schenker, 2000; Tan, 2011; Vanoni, 2017). Furthermore, the literature has also investigated singing as an aid to teaching expressivity in instrumental teaching (Bach, 1949; Brenner & Strand, 2013; Czerny, 1839; Do antan-Dack, 2011; Hsu, 2000; King, 2000; Swanson, 1969; Vanoni, 2017). Moreover, this review also addresses the literature that has studied singing as an aid to teaching “cantabile” style in piano playing (Anderson, 2011; Bellman, 2000; Eigeldinger, 1988; Rosar, 2011; Rosenblum, 1988; Skousen, 2011). Finally, this review has examined the benefits of singing in developing musicianship in instrumental playing (Bernhard, 2002; Caldwell, 1993; Choi, 2001; Davis, 1981; Feucht, 1998; Frewen, 2010; Hongsermeier, 1995; Maerker Garner, 2009; Medford, 2003; Miranda, 2000; Robinson, 1996; Scott, 2010; Sheridan, 2015; Sundell, 2012; Thomas-Lee, 2005; Wolbers, 2002; Yeom, 2015).

2.2 Singing as an aid to Teaching Phrasing in Instrumental Teaching

The literature has described singing as an aid to teaching phrasing in instrumental teaching in the areas of using singing to internalise the melody (Casas-mas, 2018; Ohsawa, 2009; Priesing, 1965), as a natural means to teach technique and interpretation (Burwell, 2006; Hsu, 2000), as well as to achieve a better understanding of phrasing in music (Hongsermeier, 1995; Sindelar, 1989; Wolbers, 2002).

2.2.1 Using Singing to Internalise the Melody

Priesing (1965) opined that “music is a thought-process” (p.42) and teachers should teach their students to perceive musical structure as a kind of expressive language before performing at the piano. Priesing (1965) encouraged students to practise singing the melody before playing it, and also to keep on singing the melody silently while playing on the piano. Internalising the melody through singing help us understand phrasing better because it “forces us to hear where phrases begin and end, where climaxes are” (Priesing, 1965, p.42). Similarly, Ohsawa (2009) examined the effect of internalising the melody through singing in the practice of the piano. The participants were seven beginner female piano students of different ages ranging from 4 to 21 years old. Each participant was given pieces to learn, with and without singing the melodies under the same duration of practice sessions. Their performances were recorded and evaluated by the participants themselves (Self-Judgment), and also by 13 experienced piano teachers (Third Party’s Evaluation). The performance evaluation was based on “preciseness of performance with the given score, naturalness of the melody, and appropriateness of expression of the music” (Ohsawa, 2009, p.387). From the results, Ohsawa (2009) concluded that learners who employed simultaneous singing while practising found that it facilitated their learning of piano playing. Similarly, Casas-mas’s (2018) article investigated various vocalisations and sounds that were used by stringed instrument learners in order to self-regulate in learning to play their instruments. It was found that for traditional classical learners, singing fulfilled “several functions, to search for notes or sounds on the fretboard, to understand musical material, as materialisation of a mental representation, and to emphasise expressive elements and as a generator of emotion or motivation” (p.11).

2.2.2 Using Singing as a Natural Means to Teach Technique and Interpretation

Burwell (2006) investigated the different approaches taken by 67 vocal and instrumental teachers in higher education in a UK university using recorded interviews. This study examines the different teaching approach used by singing teachers and instrumental teachers on the areas of technique and interpretation. Interestingly, it was found that singing teachers emphasised more on technique rather than interpretation as compared with instrumental teachers. In addition, singing teachers used more “affective language and metaphor, appealing to the student’s imagination” (Burwell, 2006, p.331). Burwell (2006) concluded that “If the voice is the most natural of musical instruments, perhaps instrumentalists could usefully explore the approaches taken by singing teachers to musical instruction” (p.345). In an article which addresses the effectiveness of developing musicality in young piano students by singing, Hsu (2000) mentioned that singing can help memorisation and technique. She explained that children have sharp memory on what they hear and “the more we hum a piece of music, the more it is secured into our memories” (p.32). As for technique, she believed that singing is helpful in teaching student the “legato” touch in piano playing.

2.2.3 Using Singing to Achieve a Better Understanding of Phrasing in Music

Furthermore, Sindelar (1989) examined the application of Kodály approach in piano teaching using folk songs. Sample lesson plans and teaching suggestions were included in her thesis in order to demonstrate the teaching of the folk songs while training the students to play the piano. Sindelar (1989) also described an approach by Jeanne Bleser who conducted a piano method programme at the Alverno College in which she believed that it was important to have the child “sing the phrase in order to understand it” (p.51).

In addition, Hongsermeier (1995) added that students will learn the concept of musical phrasing through reading the rhythm, and through breathing in between phrases while singing the text. Moreover, Wolbers (2002) stated that “it is often amazing how the voice will make the phrase shapes sound natural. In addition, the breathing points will manifest themselves, and the line will take on human, not mechanical, characteristics” (p.39). Wolbers (2002) further explained that with sensitive listening to our manner of singing, the voice will naturally guide us concerning the musical direction, shape, phrasing, and emotions inherent in the music.

In summary, most of the researchers agreed that internalising the melody through singing may help us to understand phrasing better (Casas-mas, 2018; Ohsawa, 2009; Priesing, 1965). Burwell (2006) and Hsu (2000) believed that singing is an effective tool for developing musicality in young piano students. The literature also concurred that by asking the students to sing the phrase they would naturally be able to understand the musical direction, shape and emotions of the music (Hongsermeier, 1995; Sindelar, 1989; Wolbers, 2002).

2.3 Breathing as an aid to Teaching Phrasing in Instrumental Teaching

Researchers have also explored the positive effects of using breathing as an aid to teaching phrasing in instrumental teaching. Tan (2011) explored the importance of breathing in piano training and teaching. In his paper, Tan (2011) discussed the function and awareness of breathing in piano playing, the use of breathing in playing different articulations, timbre, speed, ornaments, emotion and expression in piano playing. Tan (2011) opined that piano playing is similar to singing in that it also involves breathing, phrasing, tone colour and intonation. He also added that, in fact, breathing in piano playing is similar to breathing in singing. Correspondingly, Barrier (2009) examined the significance of breathing in music, explained the mechanics of breathing, good posture,

tools to improve and measure breathing, and introduced breathing techniques and exercises. Barrier (2009) stated that breathing is essential in creating or making sound. He added that “musicians must have a good understanding of how breathing works and how to control their breathing in order to properly and efficiently create sound” (Barrier, 2009, p.1). Hsu (2000) also stressed the importance of breathing in piano playing as breathing will help student to realise the points of relaxation in music and help pianists to calm down in terms of their physical playing mechanism.

Furthermore, in his treatise on the art of performance, Schenker (2000) mentioned the importance of breathing in music performance especially for singers, wind and string players. He strongly advises the pianist to breathe – “to bring to his eyes and ears the model of the human voice for "singing" playing and "speaking" articulation” (Schenker, 2000, p.xiii). In terms of technique, Schenker explained his method of execution in detail on how the principles of the voice can be applied to piano playing by creating “piano singing” (Schenker, 2000, p.8). In addition, Vanoni (2017) conducted a critical study on Czerny’s piano-forte school, Opus 500 in order to demonstrate the relationship between teaching mechanically and expressively in piano performance. Vanoni (2017) stated that “in Türk’s opinion, the means to obtain a coherent and understandable musical discourse are: accentuation, lingering on specific notes, and good subdivision of phrasing through breathing at the right places” (p.77). Therefore, she emphasised the importance of breathing as an aid to teaching phrasing in piano performance.

To surmise, most of the researchers stated that it is very important for musicians to be aware of breathing when they are playing a musical instrument because breathing helps to improve performance (Barrier, 2009; Tan, 2011). Hsu (2000) found that breathing can help pianists to relax in performance by calming down physically. The literature also concurred that by encouraging piano students to sing the musical phrases

that they are playing, and to breathe at the right places in between the phrases, this would naturally improve the students' phrasing in piano performance (Schenker, 2000; Vanoni, 2017).

2.4 Singing as an Aid to Teaching Expressivity and “Cantabile” in Instrumental Teaching

The literature has also illustrated the use of singing as an aid to teaching expressivity in instrumental teaching (Bach, 1949; Brenner & Strand, 2013; Czerny, 1839; Do antan-Dack, 2011; Hsu, 2000; King, 2000; Swanson, 1969; Vanoni, 2017) and listening to good singing as an aid to teaching “cantabile” style in piano playing (Anderson, 2011; Bellman, 2000; Eigeldinger, 1988; Rosar, 2011; Rosenblum, 1988; Skousen, 2011).

2.4.1 Teaching Expressivity through Singing

Swanson (1969) opined that singing can be perceived as having creative and aesthetic value as well as a means of self-expression in the music education of children during their elementary grades. Brenner & Strand (2013) investigated the teaching of musical expression to young performers employing a collective case study approach. The participants were five experienced teachers teaching musical performance to children and three children from each of the teacher's studios. The study focussed on expressivity in musical performance. It examined the teaching strategies used with children through the three elements, namely, technique, interpretation, and creativity. Singing was believed by all the five teachers as the easiest way to teach students musical expression and emotions as it is the most natural instrument. Furthermore, Vanoni (2017) stated that “Turk underlines the importance for a good keyboard player to be acquainted with good singers and to follow the natural inflection and accentuation of a singing line, in order to play with expression” (p.28-29). Additionally, in an article

exploring gesture in terms of the piano touch and the phenomenology of the performing body, Do antan-Dack (2011) explained that the best model for expressive performance is the “singing voice” (p.256). Singing is also vital for a pianist’s musicianship in order to be able to “make the piano ‘sing’” (Do antan-Dack, 2011, p.256).

Moreover, Hsu (2000) elaborated that piano teachers can use singing to help students in developing a beautiful tone production, expressive phrasing, and melodic shaping. According to Hsu (2000), these teaching strategies help students to achieve rhythmic accuracy and also help students to understand the musical character of the piece that they were playing better. King (2000) recorded the piano teaching of Katinka Scipiades Daniel who used the Kodály method in her thesis. King (2000) observed that as Daniel included “solfege” and singing during her piano lessons, this helped the students to play musically rather than just to play the notes. In addition, King (2000) concluded that “the necessity of singing for the development of musicality, hearing the sound produced, and as an aid in expression and the understanding of form, for example question and answer phrasing, is demonstrated” (p.115-116).

2.4.2 Developing Proficiency in Listening to Good Singing

Vanoni (2017) explained that there are three stages in developing proficiency in listening, which are: “listening to others, learning to sing, and listening to oneself” (p.44). She stressed the importance of training the ear through listening to expert instrumentalists and singers during the first stage, which will help to develop good musical taste in choosing the right means of expression in piano performance.

According to Czerny:

The whole approach to performance will be greatly aided and simplified by the supplementary study of voice wherever possible and by listening closely to good singers (cited in Vanoni, 2017).

According to Bach:

As a mean of learning the essentials of good performance it is advisable to listen to accomplished musicians, [...] Above all, lose no opportunity to hear artistic singing. In so doing, the keyboardist will learn to think in terms of song. Indeed, it is a good practice to sing instrumental melodies in order to reach an understanding of their correct performance. This way of learning is of far greater value than the reading of voluminous tomes or listening to learned discourses. In these one meets such terms as Nature, Taste, Song, and Melody, although their alms and endowments with a completely unhappy arbitrariness (Bach, 1949, p.152).

Vanoni (2017) further explained that the second stage of the training of the ear, “requires the learning of singing in order to understand the aim of a piece, to correctly play the dynamics, phrasing, articulation and to shape the tempo of the piece” (p.45). Furthermore, Bach (1949) opined that a good performance comprises the following:

The ability through singing and playing to make the ear conscious of the true content and affect of the composition (p.148). In order to arrive at an understanding of the true content and affect of a piece, and, in the absence of indications, to decide on the correct manner of performance, be it slurred, detached or what not, and further, to learn the precautions that must be heeded in introducing ornaments, it is advisable that every opportunity be seized to listen to soloists and ensembles; the more so because these details of beauty often depend on extraneous factors (p.150).

2.4.3 Listening to Good Singing as an Aid to Teaching “Cantabile” Style in Piano Playing

Researchers have also explored the use of listening to good singing as an aid to teaching “cantabile” style in piano playing. Eigeldinger (1988) investigated and revealed Chopin’s pianistic style and performance practice through the writings of Chopin’s students, friends, colleagues, critics, and Chopin’s own writing. For Chopin, singing could be viewed as the “alpha and omega of music” (Eigeldinger, 1988, p.14). Eigeldinger (1988) further explains that it was Chopin’s strong belief that singing was the foundation of all instrumental teaching, and that piano playing became more persuasive if it were inspired by vocal music. Bellman (2000) explored the performance practices of Frédéric Chopin in order to discover the true style of performance of Chopin’s piano music. According to Kleczyński, who was a student of Chopin’s students, Chopin regularly encouraged his pupils to listen to good singers as he based his “cantabile” aesthetic on the Italian “bel canto”. In addition, Kleczyński describes that Chopin drew an analogy between music and language, “on the necessity for separating the various phrases, on the necessity for pointing and for modifying the power of the voice and its rapidity of articulation” (Bellman, 2000, p.152). Furthermore, an understanding of the interpretation of Chopin’s music can be gained from listening to recordings of another student who was trained by Chopin’s student, namely, Koczalski. In particular, his playing exemplifies “the subdued, intimate aesthetic, an interest in coherent phrasing, vocalistic rubato, and the use of ornamental variants” (Bellman, 2000, p.151). Anderson (2011) edited a collection of 19 essays studying the performance, teaching strategies, and preparation of the masterpieces of some of the great composers such as Scarlatti, Mozart, Schumann, and Chopin. In Skousen’s (2011) article on teaching tone, technique, and phrasing in the piano works of Chopin, she described that Chopin always discussed and wrote about singers. He elaborated that

“When playing Chopin, students must fall in love within the sound, especially the sound of a deep singing tone” (Skousen, 2011, p.95-96). Moreover, in Rosar’s (2011) article on performing the keyboard works of J. S. Bach on the modern piano, she describes that C.P.E. Bach recommends that good musicians must

listen to gifted singers and how they phrase the music, with the intent to learn how to think in a singing fashion. It is helpful to sing the music in one’s thoughts, in order to arrive at the correct way to perform the music (Rosar, 2011, p.17-18).

Similarly, Clementi determined to take on a “cantabile and refined style of performance by listening attentively to singers celebrated at the time, ...” (Rosenblum, 1988, p.25). This may be because of Clementi’s reaction to the Mozart’s graceful and spirited playing of his Adagios, which influenced him to develop a touch in keeping with the music’s style and character (Vanoni, 2017).

In summary, most of the researchers opined that singing is the most natural instrument, therefore, singing can be used as a tool to teach students expressive phrasing, melodic shaping, musical expression and emotion (Brenner & Strand, 2013; Do antan-Dack, 2011; Hsu, 2000; King, 2000; Swanson, 1969; Vanoni, 2017). Moreover, the importance of developing proficiency in stages by listening to good singing and choosing the right means of expression in piano performance was also stressed (Bach, 1949; Czerny, 1839; Vanoni, 2017). Researchers further emphasised that listening to good singing could be an aid to teaching “cantabile” style in piano playing (Anderson, 2011; Bellman, 2000; Eigeldinger, 1988; Rosar, 2011; Rosenblum, 1988; Skousen, 2011). Furthermore, the literature also concurred that pianists should pay attention to how singers phrase the music in their singing in order to think in a singing manner. (Rosar, 2011; Skousen, 2011).

2.5 Benefits of Singing in Developing Musicianship in Instrumental Playing

The literature also describes the benefits of singing in developing musicianship in instrumental playing in terms of audiation (Choi, 2001; Dalby, 1999; Maerker Garner, 2009), skills acquired in preparatory classes for young children (Caldwell, 1993; Feucht, 1998; Frewen, 2010; Hongsermeier, 1995; Howard, 1996; Medford, 2003; Miranda, 2000; Scott, 2010; Sheridan, 2015; Sundell, 2012; Thomas-Lee, 2005; Yeom, 2015), singing activities in the school band (Davis, 1981; Robinson, 1996; Wolbers, 2002) and further uses of singing in instrumental music education (Bernhard, 2002; Hsu, 2000).

2.5.1 Development of Audiation through Singing

Maerker Garner (2009), a Suzuki instructor, incorporated music listening, singing, and moving into music teaching to children by drawing materials from the writings of theorist Edwin Gordon and of psychologist Howard Gardner. Maerker Garner (2009) examined audiation through the body (movement) and audiation through the voice (singing). Likewise, Choi (2001) demonstrated her private piano instruction based on Gordon's music learning theory by writing sample piano lesson plans for young children in her thesis. In these lesson plans, Choi (2001) stressed on the growth of audiation skills, which encompass "rote learning, singing, movement, and improvisation" (p.ii). One of the characteristics of her lesson plan is:

The performing sequence in lesson plans is that children should play what they audiate vocally at first by singing and chanting, and then playing it on the piano. By singing and chanting before playing [an] instrument, children can develop the audiation skill on the instrument effectively. After children can audiate patterns and be proficient at singing and chanting them, they can transfer patterns to the keyboard (p.46).

Correspondingly, Dalby (1999) introduced an approach of instrumental teaching using Gordon's music learning theory based on audiation. In explaining the ways of teaching audiation skills, he emphasised particularly the importance and benefits of singing. According to Dalby (1999), singing is part of musicianship; therefore, he encouraged instrumentalists to learn singing in order to be able to play their instruments musically. He also added that "the goal is to play the instrument as an extension of the mind's inner audiation instrument" (Dalby, 1999, p.22).

2.5.2 Acquiring Musicianship Skills in Preparatory Classes for Young Children

Various researchers stated that for Kodály, it is instinctive for young children to sing and therefore it forms the basis of music education (Feucht, 1998; Thomas-Lee, 2005). Hongsermeier (1995) found that Kodály's music education generally emphasised hearing and singing rather than playing an instrument. Various musical activities such as listening, singing games, speaking rhymes and rhythmic patterns were implemented in the music lesson. Howard (1996) also stated that Kodály's strategies involve developing the inner ear by introducing folk music to children. It teaches children musical expression and a sense of phrasing through body motion and the singing voice. Moreover, Sheridan (2015) examined how teachers utilise singing in the Kodály-based music lessons by employing a qualitative approach based on a collective case study. The participants were music teachers who are using Kodály philosophy in their teaching. Results showed that all the participants made significant use of singing as an aid in teaching musical skills in their music classes and "they believed that understanding is achieved through music literacy, and music literacy is achieved through singing" (Sheridan, 2015, p. iii).

Miranda (2000) investigated pedagogical practices in a Yamaha Music School employing an ethnographic approach. The participants were children between 4-6 years

of age and the teachers and parents involved in the Yamaha Junior Music Course.

Although the study was focused on the “Developmentally Appropriate Practice” (DAP) in a Yamaha Music School, there were several references to the incorporation of singing in the music lessons. For instance, singing is listed as one of the components in the curriculum together with hearing (listening), playing, and creating. Singing is also included in the DAP guidelines on musicianship categories with piano and aural skills. Yeom (2015) examined the Suzuki piano pedagogical method in teaching melody, rhythm and note reading. According to Yeom (2015), singing can help students in memorizing the rhythm correctly. He explained that rhythm is interrelated with physical pulse. Therefore, it is encouraged to learn rhythm through physical movements and singing.

Furthermore, Medford (2003) explored the influence of the approaches of Orff, Kodály, and Suzuki on teaching music to young children. She stated that “both Kodály and Orff believed young children should respond naturally to singing and rhythmic movement and both approaches use singing games so children learn to walk and clap in rhythm with the beat” (p.90). Moreover, in a qualitative study, Scott (2010) examined the Orff Schulwerk music teachers' viewpoints on the subject of singing in the areas of including singing in the curriculum, beliefs of its efficacy, personal beliefs and wider belief systems about singing. The participants were eight Orff Schulwerk’s music teachers (five females and three males) majoring in different instruments. The research showed that singing is one of the important teaching tools for Orff Schulwerk’s method apart from speech, movement, and instrumental playing. Nevertheless, the incorporation of singing in Orff Schulwerk varies in accordance with the aptitude of the students. All the participants believed and agreed that everybody should take part in singing activities despite not having a good singing voice (Scott, 2010).

Sundell's thesis (2012) investigated the comprehensive musicianship and the beginner piano method books by employing the content analysis approach. In the review of literature, Sundell (2012) stated that Dalcroze emphasised the use of physical movement and singing as the most important part of the learning process in order to create a link between music and emotion. Sundell (2012) also stated that both singing and listening to music develops the ear significantly such that the students can see what they hear merely through listening to the music. Furthermore, Caldwell (1993) explored the Dalcroze perspective on skills for learning, which emphasises the use of movement in teaching music. The approach focused on the teachers' task of creating awareness as a means of improving the students' attention span. Furthermore, there is an emphasis on the use of voices and bodies in making music. In addition, Frewen (2010) investigated the effects of becoming familiar with a melody before teaching the children to perform the melody accurately. Two groups of kindergarten children (39 female and 58 male) ages between 5 to 10 years old were taught to play a simple melody on the keyboard. Frewen (2010) concluded that children who had internalised the melody could perform the notes more accurately on the keyboard.

2.5.3 Acquiring Musicianship Skills through Singing Activities in the School Band

Davis (1981) examined the effects of structured singing activities and self-evaluation practice on performance skills of elementary band students. According to Davis (1981), singing is commonly known to be a useful teaching tool to enhance students' understanding and knowledge of musical elements such as melody, rhythm, harmony, and form, as well as musical expressivity. He also added that "one of the advantages of singing in instrumental classes is possibly that students can attend to other musical factors without being encumbered by the instrument" (Davis, 1981, p.1). Robinson (1996) stated that singing is an important tool to help develop students' musicianship skills, develop musical understanding and enhance aesthetic sensitivity.

He explores the reasons for instrumental ensemble directors for not including singing in their rehearsals. Robinson (1996) also suggested activities for ensemble directors to incorporate vocalization activities in the rehearsal of school band and orchestra as this would help to improve sight-reading, intonation, instrumental skills, and result in more efficient and enjoyable rehearsals. In a similar article, Wolbers (2002) discussed the instructional methods for incorporating singing in the band rehearsal as a tool to learn aural skills, intonation, pitch, balance, musical phrasing, and understanding. According to Wolbers (2002), students should learn to think and hear the music that they are going to play. Therefore, it is preferable for beginner band students to sing the exercises from their band music score first before playing them as singing can enhance their aural perception of the music (Wolbers, 2002).

In summary, the literature addresses the benefits of singing in developing musicianship skills in instrumental playing. Several researchers discovered that Edwin Gordon's music learning theory based on audiation through singing can help children to develop musicianship skills in instrumental playing (Choi, 2001; Dalby, 1999; Maerker Garner, 2009). Various pedagogical methods designed for young children in the group music lessons are also examined in the literature. Researchers found that these pedagogical methods emphasised singing, ear training, rhythm training and body movement to develop musicianship skills in instrumental playing. Examples of these pedagogical methods include Kodály (Feucht, 1998; Hongsermeier, 1995; Howard, 1996; Medford, 2003; Sheridan, 2015; Thomas-Lee, 2005), Yamaha (Miranda, 2000), Suzuki (Medford, 2003; Yeom, 2015), Orff (Medford, 2003; Scott, 2010), and Dalcroze (Caldwell, 1993; Sundell, 2012). Moreover, in a study for ensemble directors to incorporate vocalization activities in the rehearsal of school band and orchestra, Robinson (1996) stated that singing is an important tool to help develop students'

musicianship skills. He strongly believed that this would help to improve sight-reading, intonation and instrumental skills.

2.6 Conclusion

Overall, in this literature review the researcher has considered the music education literature that have examined the incorporation of singing as a teaching tool in piano lessons from the perspectives of singing and breathing as an aid to teaching phrasing in instrumental teaching, singing as an aid to teaching expressivity and “cantabile” in instrumental teaching, and benefits of singing in developing musicianship in instrumental playing.

In exploring the incorporation of singing as an aid to teaching phrasing in instrumental teaching, there is evidently an emphasis on internalising the melody through singing to help students understand phrasing better (Casas-mas, 2018; Ohsawa, 2009; Priesing, 1965), singing as an effective tool for developing musicality (Burwell 2006; Hsu 2000) and singing as a natural way to understand the musical direction, shape and emotions of the music (Hongsermeier, 1995; Sindelar, 1989; Wolbers, 2002). In addition, breathing is viewed as an aid to teaching phrasing in instrumental teaching. There is clearly an emphasis on the understanding and awareness of breathing when playing a musical instrument because breathing helps to improve performance (Barrier, 2009; Tan, 2011), to promote relaxation (Hsu, 2000), and to breathe at the right places between phrases (Schenker, 2000; Vanoni, 2017).

Furthermore singing is an aid to teaching expressivity and “cantabile” in instrumental teaching where there is evidently an emphasis on using the voice to develop the students’ expressivity in phrasing (Brenner & Strand, 2013; Do antan-Dack, 2011; Hsu, 2000; King, 2000; Swanson, 1969; Vanoni, 2017), proficiency by listening to good singing (Bach, 1949; Czerny, 1839; Vanoni, 2017), “cantabile” style

of piano playing by listening to how the good singers phrase their music (Anderson, 2011; Bellman, 2000; Eigeldinger, 1988; Rosar, 2011; Rosenblum, 1988; Skousen, 2011).

Finally, in exploring the benefits of singing in developing musicianship in instrumental playing, there is evidently an emphasis on the teaching of audiation skills to children through singing (Choi, 2001; Dalby, 1999; Maerker Garner, 2009), various pedagogical methods which help children to acquire musicianship skills in preparatory class through singing, ear training, rhythm, and body movement (Caldwell, 1993; Feucht, 1998; Frewen, 2010; Hongsermeier, 1995; Howard, 1996; Medford, 2003; Miranda, 2000; Scott, 2010; Sheridan, 2015; Sundell, 2012; Thomas-Lee, 2005; Yeom, 2015) and emphasis on the teaching of musicianship to school bands through singing activities (Davis, 1981; Robinson, 1996; Wolbers, 2002).

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

3.1 Overview

The purpose of this chapter was to present a short explanation of the research methodology employed in this study. The outline of this chapter will be in this order: research design, participants sampling, data collection procedure and data analysis procedure. The study discusses the methods used to address the following research questions:

1. How is singing used as an aid in teaching phrasing during piano lessons?
2. How does breathing in singing affect the phrasing and shaping in the musical performance of students on the piano?
3. How does singing affect expressivity in the musical performance of students on the piano?

3.2 Research Design

Research design is defined by Creswell (2018) as a “[type] of inquiry within qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches that [provides] specific direction for procedures in a research study” (p.53). Chua (2012) further ascertained the importance of choosing a research design and method that best suits the aim of the research because it may affect the validity of the research’s final results.

This research followed a qualitative research design employing a collective case study approach. Qualitative research methodology is viewed as appropriate when the researcher either explores new fields of study or expects to learn and to discover a theory or theories behind significant issues (Creswell, 2007; Strauss, 2008). There are

numerous qualitative methods which are created to have a deeper understanding of the issues and the most widely recognised methods are interviews and observations (Creswell, 2007).

In this study, the researcher used semi-structured interviews followed by observations. The researcher has chosen this approach because the semi-structured interviews will help to broaden the understanding of the perspectives of the music teachers on the use of singing in teaching phrasing during their piano lessons. Moreover, from the observations the researcher was able to verify the effectiveness of the use of singing in teaching phrasing during piano lessons.

Jamshed (2014) opined that interviewing is the most frequently used method of collecting data in qualitative research. According to Mason (1994), the majority of the qualitative research interviews are either “semi-structured, lightly structured or in-depth” (p.87). Creswell (2018) further explained that in qualitative interviews, the researcher meets the participants in person or over a phone call. The researcher may also organise “focus group interviews” (Creswell, 2018, p.305) involving six to eight interviewees in each gathering. The researcher employed semi-structured interviews (Kvale, 1996; Rubin & Rubin, 2012) in this study. Rubin & Rubin (2012) explained that semi-structured interviews are usually scheduled and extended conversations take place between the researcher and the interviewee. This was to gather more detailed information from the interviewee. Furthermore, Kvale (1996) stated that the semi-structured interview is guided by a sequence of themes and questions. However, the researcher is open to changes in both the sequence and questions according to the responses of the interviewee.

When conducting interviews, Leedy & Ormrod (2005) advised researchers to be aware that the interviewee is reliant on her memories, which may not be entirely accurate

as memories can be distorted. Schacter (1999) and Schwarz (1999) believed that people may recall what they think could have or should have happened according to their beliefs or attitudes instead of what actually happened. In terms of qualitative observation, Creswell's (2018) description is as follows:

A qualitative observation is when the researcher takes field notes on the behavior and activities of individuals at the research site. In these field notes, the researcher records, in an unstructured or semi-structured way (using some prior questions that the inquirer wants to know), activities at the research site.

Qualitative observers may also engage in roles varying from a nonparticipant to a complete participant. Typically, these observations are open-ended in that the researchers ask general questions of the participants allowing the participants to freely provide their views (p.305).

In addition, Gray (2009) stated that observational research design involved several study sites and observational information can be "integrated as auxiliary or confirmatory research" (p.88).

However, it should be noted that the observation method has several drawbacks. Leedy & Ormrod (2005) described that a novice researcher may waste unnecessary time on recording the irrelevant issues instead of focusing on the research question. A further obstacle may be that the researcher may vary the accuracy of the events that unfold in her written notes. In addition, the use of audio video equipment may be discomforting to the participants.

3.2.1 Participants Sampling

Ten piano teachers with more than five years of teaching experience were selected by ‘purposive sampling’ (Maree & Pietersen, 2007, p.178) for semi-structured interviews (see Appendix A). Maree & Pietersen (2007) explained that purposive sampling is a method of sampling “used in special situation where the sampling is done with a specific purpose in mind” (p.178). The semi-structured interviews were followed by 15 class observations of five teachers teaching three of their students during piano lessons. The observations were recorded as fieldnotes (Leedy, 2005, p.146) with initial interpretations (see Appendix L). These five teachers were selected based on their willingness to have their lessons video-recorded. They also had a positive response during the interviews on the use of singing in the teaching of phrasing in piano lessons. Furthermore, they were able and willing to select three of their piano students whom they thought were most suitable for observation.

These participants were piano teachers at various music centres and also teach privately, both in their students’ homes and their own studios in the Klang Valley of West Malaysia. Among the music teachers there were choral conductors, vocal coaches as well as piano teachers. Moreover, the piano teachers are music graduates and diploma holders from foreign and local universities. In addition, they have either taken vocal lessons or have had experience singing in choir. In some cases, they had both. As for the 15 students, they had indicated to their teachers that they were willing to participate in the observation. The researcher requested permission from the parents of the children who were 12 years of age and below using a consent letter (see Appendix M). The parents signed the permission forms (see Appendix N) to allow their children to participate in this research, which would involve the video-recording of their piano lessons.

3.2.2 Data Collection Procedure

In the first stage, the researcher employed a qualitative research design using semi-structured interviews (see Appendix A) as an instrument to find out the teachers' perspectives on the use of singing as one of the tools to improve phrasing in their students' piano playing. The semi-structured interviews inquired about their personal musical background, teaching experience, incorporation of singing in piano lessons and perspectives of the use of singing in teaching phrasing in piano playing. The duration of the interviews ranged from approximately 20 to 45 minutes, depending on the teachers' willingness to respond to questions.

In the second stage, the researcher adopted a qualitative approach by using observation (see Appendix L) as a means of collecting data. The researcher conducted 15 sessions of observation as a passive observer during the lessons given by five teachers to three of their piano students. They were beginners to advanced students in piano playing. The duration of each lesson ranged from approximately 30 minutes to one hour. The researcher observed how the teachers included singing during the piano lessons. The researcher also considered the proportion of time spent in singing and how the inclusion of singing affected the students' phrasing of the music in terms of musicality.

The semi-structured interviews were audio recorded and the data were transcribed "ad verbatim". Furthermore, the class observations were video-recorded. The researcher has chosen this data collection procedure in order to have a more in-depth insight into the piano teachers' reasons for using singing as a teaching tool to develop phrasing in their students' piano playing.

3.2.3 Data Analysis Procedure

The qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews (see Appendix A) were transcribed “ad verbatim” (see Appendix B), analysed and coded in order to discover emergent themes. The qualitative data from observations (see Appendix L) were also analysed by coding and categorisation into different subdivisions. These qualitative findings were compared and contrasted in order to discover the extent to which the piano teachers use singing to develop phrasing in their students’ piano lessons and the influence on their students’ learning outcomes.

3.3 Summary

This chapter has outlined the methodology for this research where it followed a qualitative research design employing a collective case study approach. It provided details of the participants sampling where ten piano teachers were selected by ‘purposive sampling’ for semi-structured interviews (see Appendix A) and followed by 15 class observations of five teachers teaching three of their students during piano lessons (see Appendix L). It also explained the data collection procedure. In the first stage, semi-structured interviews (see Appendix A) were used as an instrument to find out the teachers’ perspectives on the use of singing as one of the tools to improve phrasing in their students’ piano playing. As for the second stage, the use of observations (see Appendix L) was adopted as a means of collecting data to find out how the teachers included singing during the piano lessons, the proportion of time spent in singing and how the inclusion of singing affected the students’ phrasing of the music. Moreover, it presented the data analysis procedure for the study where the data from the semi-structured interviews were transcribed “ad verbatim” (see Appendices B to K), analysed and coded in order to discover emergent themes. The qualitative data from the

observations (see Appendix L) were also analysed by coding and categorisation into different subdivisions.

Universiti Malaya

CHAPTER 4

Analysis of Data and Findings

4.1 Overview

This chapter presents the qualitative data analysis and findings that have been done over two stages in the data collection procedure. In the first stage, ten semi-structured interviews were conducted with piano teachers who had more than five years of teaching experience in the Klang Valley of West Malaysia. In the second stage, observations were conducted with five piano teachers teaching three of their students each in the Klang Valley of West Malaysia. The research questions are now restated: How is singing used as an aid in teaching phrasing during piano lessons?

The following sub-questions in this study will also be addressed:

1. How does breathing in singing affect the phrasing and shaping in the musical performance of students on the piano?
2. How does singing affect the range of expressivity in the musical performance of students on the piano?

4.2 Interview Findings

Ten piano teachers were chosen for the interview using purposive sampling with the following criteria:

- they have more than five years of teaching experience,
- they have either taken vocal lessons or have experience singing in choir or both,
or

- they are vocal teachers, choral conductors and vocal coaches as well as piano teachers.

Six of the interviews were conducted face to face at the teachers' music centres, three interviews were conducted at their homes and one was at a café. The interviews were audio recorded and the data transcribed "ad verbatim". The length of the interviews ranged from 20 to 45 minutes. The interview questions were designed to find out the participants' personal musical background, teaching experience, their approaches of incorporating singing in piano lessons and their perspectives of the use of singing in teaching phrasing in piano playing (see Appendix A).

The questions regarding the background of the piano teachers included finding out about their teaching experience, the type of training they had received as piano teachers, the person who had the greatest impact on them, their earliest memories of singing, their experience of performance in singing, their second instruments and also their personal experience on their vocal lessons if they had taken them. Subsequently, questions regarding the incorporation of singing in piano lessons aimed to find out the perspectives of the piano teachers on incorporating singing in piano teaching, the duration of time they allocate to singing during their piano lessons, the method or approach used to incorporate singing in their piano lessons, the types of music their students sing in their piano lessons, their students' willingness to sing in their piano lessons, and their approach of teaching students to play in a "cantabile" style. Finally, questions regarding the perspectives of the use of singing in teaching phrasing in piano playing relate to the teachers' opinions on encouraging students to listen to good classical singers, their approach of teaching phrasing in piano playing in terms of direction, shaping and expression, their use of singing in teaching phrasing and the elements from singing that they include in teaching phrasing in piano playing.

4.2.1 Background of the Piano Teachers

In response to the question ‘*Could you describe your teaching experience as a piano teacher?*’ the participants largely responded in terms of the years of experience, the levels of teaching and the type of teaching they had experienced. With reference to Table 4.1 below, it was noted that majority of the teachers (participants 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9 and 10) said that they have between ten to 20 years of teaching experience. Furthermore, participant 5 has more than 30 years of experience whereas participants 3 and 8 stated that they have less than ten years of teaching experience.

Table 4.1

Background of the Ten Piano Teachers

Participant	Gender	Experience (number of years)	Highest educational level
1	Female	14 years	Bachelor degree
2	Female	11 years	Master degree
3	Female	8 years	ATCL diploma
4	Male	20 years	Bachelor degree
5	Female	More than 30 years	Bachelor degree
6	Female	10 years	Grade 8 certificate
7	Female	20 years	Master degree
8	Female	6 years	Grade 8 certificate
9	Male	10 years	Master degree
10	Female	14 years	Bachelor degree

Participants 1, 4, and 5 said that they already started teaching while they were pursuing their music studies at the university. Moreover, participants 3 and 8 first started their teaching career as a teacher assistant in the children music group class. In terms of the levels of piano teaching, most of the teachers said that they teach from beginner to advanced levels. Five of the teachers (participant 4, 5, 7, 9 and 10) also give vocal instruction on an individual basis. In addition, participants 1, 4, 5 and 10 conduct choirs. Participants 3, 6 and 8 teach group music classes for children. Two of the teachers (participants 4 and 7) also teach the violin.

Could you describe the type of training you have had as a piano teacher?

It was clear that most of the teachers are music graduates and diploma holders from foreign and local universities or colleges. Many of the participants took piano lessons with their piano teachers locally in Malaysia, took piano examinations from external boards such as the Trinity College London (TCL), Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) and Guildhall School of Music (GSM). Five of the teachers (participants 2, 4, 5, 7 and 9) had furthered their musical studies in foreign universities whereas the remaining five (participants 1, 3, 6, 8 and 10) had studied at local universities and colleges. With reference to Table 4.1 above, two of the teachers (participants 2, 7 and 9) hold master degrees, four teachers (participants 1, 4, 5 and 10) have bachelor degrees, one (participants 3) has a diploma and two (participants 6 and 8) have grade eight certificate in piano.

As for additional training programmes, participants 1, 4, 6 and 8 mentioned that they had received training from the Kodály music teaching courses. Participant 3 stated that she had attended many musicianship courses and piano master classes with professors from oversea. In addition, participant 4 said that he had attended workshops on Dalcroze. Moreover, participant 5 attended courses on piano pedagogy at the

university she had attended in the United States of America. Some of the teachers added that they had also attended seminars and workshops organised by the Trinity College and ABRSM as part of the professional development programmes for piano teachers.

Who had the greatest impact on your teaching?

The majority of the participants said that their teaching had been impacted by either their piano or vocal teachers. Only one participant opined that she was teaching on her own, “in a private situation” (participant 5). Participants 1, 4, 8, 9 and 10 said that their piano teachers had given them good piano teaching approaches and trained them to teach. Moreover, participant 3 said that her vocal teacher taught her how to inspire and influence a student to become a good student and also a good teacher. Another participant said that she liked her vocal teacher’s “creative, scientific teaching method”, and her teacher also encouraged a “natural or healthy way of singing” (participant 7). Furthermore, participants 4 and 10 also learned a lot from their vocal teachers who gave them new ideas in their teaching process. In addition, participant 4 said that he also learned a lot from his colleagues whereas participants 6 and 8 stated that they had gained many teaching ideas from the Kodály instructors. In contrast, participant 2 did not answer the question on the impact on her teaching but mentioned that one of her teachers in college taught her how to compose music and play in ensembles.

Could you describe your earliest memories of singing?

In describing their earliest memories of singing, half of the participants (Participants 2, 4, 6, 9 and 10) recalled that they started singing during their childhood. Participant 4 said that he “naturally sang at home” and participant 6 said that she was asked to sing for her relatives at home at an early age. Participants 2 and 9 started singing in kindergarten. The remaining participants started singing in their teenage

years. For participant 3, she started singing in her college's choir whereas participant 5 stated that she formed a singing trio with two of her friends in her high school. Furthermore, participant 1 said that she was influenced by her mother who loved singing very much and the radio was always turned on at her house. Participant 8 stated that she started learning singing when she attended the children group class's training. Participant 7 did not make an appropriate response to this question.

Could you also describe your experience of singing if you were involved in a choir or musical presentation either in school or in the community?

It was found that four participants (participants 4, 5, 7 and 9) had many experiences singing, both locally in Malaysia and also overseas. Participant 4 was actively involved as a choral conductor and vocalist in choir performances, competitions, opera productions, and also solo vocal recitals. Participant 9 was involved in choirs of a few Malaysian associations. He then became the choral conductor and accompanist of some of these choirs. As a student at a music conservatory in France, he was involved in choral and opera performances. Participant 5 said that she had performed in a vocal ensemble at a Kuala Lumpur Music Festival. She added that as a choral member, she sang some of the great classical choral repertoires at the Westminster Choir College in the United States. As for participant 7, she had represented Malaysia by joining the Asian Youth Choir (AYC) as a choral member in Niigata, Japan in 2004.

The remaining participants (participants 1, 2, 3, 6 and 8) were involved mainly in their choir performances, singing competitions, and concerts in the local primary schools or colleges. One participant (participant 10) did not make an appropriate response to this question.

If you have taken vocal lessons could you describe your experience of these lessons?

The participants described their experiences of taking vocal lessons in three main ways: understanding the body as an instrument, enhancing other aspects of performance, teaching, accompanying and musicianship, as well as developing a better understanding of vocal technique. Participants 5 and 10 shared the same view when describing the experience of their vocal lessons. They emphasised the importance of understanding that the body is the instrument when it comes to singing. They felt that the understanding of this concept is crucial for singers to be able to sing correctly.

The other two participants (participants 3 and 9) elaborated on the benefits they gained from taking vocal lessons. Participant 3 experienced the improvement in her musicianship skills such as listening and recognising intervals and chords. Her sight-singing ability was also enhanced after taking vocal lessons. Participant 9 took vocal lessons because he believed that singing would help in his piano playing, music teaching and also in his collaborative playing when accompanying a singer or instrumentalist.

Furthermore, participants 6 and 7 felt that their vocal technique was greatly improved by their teacher during the vocal lessons. Participant 6 said that individual vocal lesson is very different compared with singing in a choir as she learned more classical repertoire and singing technique during the individual vocal lessons. Four participants (participants 1, 2, 4 and 8) did not make an appropriate response to this question.

4.2.2 Incorporation of Singing in Piano Lessons

How important is it to you to incorporate singing in piano teaching? Could you give your reasons why?

It is evident that three of the participants (participants 1, 5 and 9) stated that it is very important to incorporate singing in piano teaching. In addition, four of the participants (participants 3, 6, 7 and 10) felt that it was important and two (participants 2 and 4) opined that singing comes naturally. One participant (participant 8) did not make an appropriate response to this question. The key reasons for incorporating singing in piano teaching included shaping the musical phrase, releasing the internal sense and essence of music from within, increases sensitivity to voicing, helps in understanding “rubato” and that breathing through singing, can enhance phrasing and helps to develop the student’s aural skills.

Participant 1, 3 and 6 stated that singing was very important to help in shaping the musical phrase.

Participant 1:

I think singing in part of the piano lesson is very important. We have to show the students that singing comes naturally and also singing is actually helps them to shape the musical sense of it.

Participants 2, 5, 6, 9, and 10 held similar points of view in stating that singing is a way in which we can release the internal sense and essence of music from within.

Participant 6:

Singing is from within. Yes, so you feel it in your body. If you just play on the piano, you only feel it in your fingers. But if you sing it from within you feel the music more and then when you play you can feel that you are playing from within yourself.

Furthermore, participant 9 added that breathing through singing can enhance phrasing, singing increases sensitivity to voicing and helps in understanding “rubato”. In addition, participant 1 also stated that singing helps to develop the student’s aural skills.

How much time would you allocate to singing during your piano lessons?

Three participants (participants 3, 9 and 10) said that they allocate ten to 15 minutes to singing in every lesson. Participants 3 and 9 would use the time for aural training. Moreover, participants 3 and 10 also stated that they would use singing when necessary to work on the phrasing in the pieces.

Participant 3:

... basically I spend 15 minutes to do the aural. Okay, at first, my lesson for the start beginning 15 minutes, I will teach them do some err... aural like sight singing, with using the hand signs, sing the “solfege”.

Four participants (participants 1, 4, 6 and 8) did not specify the duration of time they allocated for singing in their lessons. However, participants 1 and 8 said that they tried to incorporate singing in every lesson. Moreover, participant 1 added that she would include singing in alternate lessons if it were not possible to do so at every lesson.

Three participants (participants 2, 5 and 7) did not respond to this question.

Could you describe how you would incorporate singing during piano lessons?

It was evident that the methods of incorporating singing during piano lessons by the participants included encouraging singing through imitation, singing the melody before playing it on the piano, singing to improve accuracy of the melody and the rhythm. Six participants (participants 1, 2, 3, 5, 8 and 9) described how they incorporate

singing through imitation. Most of the participants will start singing first, either singing in “solfege” or just using vowels, and then their students will listen and try to sing by imitation. Furthermore, participant 1 suggests that her students of the beginner level sing the lyrics of the pieces in the primer books that they are learning to play.

In describing how they would incorporate singing during piano lessons, three participants (participants 4, 7 and 10) stressed the importance of singing the melody first before actually playing on the piano. Participant 4 elaborated in detail how he teaches his students to sing first in order to identify sequences and patterns before playing on the piano. Moreover, participant 10 said that she uses the melodies of the pieces that her students are learning to play as sight-singing exercises before playing the melodies on the piano.

Two participants (participants 3 and 6) found that singing can be used as a teaching tool to teach the accuracy of the melody. Participant 3 uses singing to help students improve the accuracy of melody notes in some of the phrases in the pieces. In addition, participant 6 uses singing to help students in learning and becoming familiar with different types of scales. She encouraged her students to sing both major and minor scales before playing on the piano in order to internalise the sound before playing it on the piano. Correspondingly, three participants (participants 4, 8 and 9) opined that singing is one of the best teaching tools to teach accuracy of the rhythm. Participant 9 combines singing with body movements in helping her students to feel the pulse and also the rhythm of the piece.

Participant 9:

I ask them to sing and to walk with the rhythm like in three beats, I ask them to walk in three steps and maybe squat on the first count and come up on the

second and the third [beats]. So they will feel oh... there is a bounce on the first beat.

What types of music do your students sing in your piano lessons?

The types of music students sing in piano lessons included the melody from the piano repertoire they were playing, singing exercises composed by the teachers, pop songs, and nursery rhymes. For beginner students, participant 4 uses piano repertoire that are based on songs, folk songs and dances. Furthermore, participant 4 also employed different types of self-composed singing exercises during the piano lesson. He created his own short and simple singing exercises to teach his students the concept of note values, rhythm, and pulse, good tone, and different articulations.

For more advanced students, participants 5 and 10 regularly ask their students to sing the melodies of certain phrases from the pieces that the students are learning to play in order to improve the shaping and accuracy of notes. As for participants 7 and 9, they used singing exercises from aural training books to improve their students' musicianship skills in the areas of "solfege" singing, interval singing, echo singing, triads singing (chords) and melodic singing (participant 7).

Furthermore, two participants (participants 1 and 3) mentioned that their students sing pop songs. Participant 1 explained that she uses more pop songs or Disney songs because "kids listen to pop songs nowadays" and in her opinion, classical songs are too difficult for children to sing in terms of "solfege" and interval. Another participant (participant 6) uses nursery rhymes and traditional folk songs for young kids. She also described that for "older kids sometimes they will request songs that they like". In addition, two participants (participants 2 and 8) said that they encouraged their students to sing all kinds of music, ranging from classical to pop songs.

Do your students enjoy singing during your piano lessons? Could you describe your experiences with students who are willing to sing and with those who refuse to sing?

Participants responded to this question in three ways: students enjoy singing, students enjoy singing only when they are young, and students do not really enjoy singing. Participants 1, 2 and 10 said that their students enjoy singing during piano lessons. However, participant 1 mentioned that usually girls are fine with singing but some boys refuse to sing especially during the time of their voices changing. Participant 2 found that some of her students enjoy singing because as “they are [involved] in [the] music curriculum in the school. It won’t be a problem for them to sing in the piano lessons”. Two participants (participants 3 and 6) stated that students enjoy singing only when they are young. Participant 6 added that children who had participated in group music classes tended to like singing more.

Four participants (participants 5, 7, 8, 9) felt that their students do not really enjoy singing during piano lessons. Participant 7 said that her students only try their best in singing when doing aural tests in their piano practical examination. Participant 9 opined that usually students don’t like singing initially and it depends on how the teacher introduces singing to students. One participant (participant 4) found that it depends on the personal character of the students.

How do you incorporate singing when teaching your students to play in a “cantabile” style?

It was evident that almost all the participants (participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9) incorporated singing when teaching their students to play in a “cantabile” style. They explained how they incorporated singing when teaching their students to play in a “cantabile” style mainly in terms of “legato” technique and singing musically. Only one participant (participant 7) did not incorporate singing when teaching their students to

play in a “cantabile” style whereas participant 10 did not make an appropriate response to this question.

Three participants (participant 2, 3 and 4) shared the same opinion that “cantabile” style is actually associated with “legato” playing technique. Participant 4 elaborated on his approach in teaching the concept of “legato” playing as below:

Participant 4:

If they already hear the sound if I sing “du du...” (sing in “non legato” way) I ask them is that sounds nice? I show them. They won’t have an idea about what is nice but you show them the alternative both ...

Participant 2 said that she does not always need to explain the meaning of “cantabile” but demonstrates it through her singing. In her experience she found that the students will observe and therefore understand how to play smoothly in a “cantabile” style.

Participant 3 added that singing with movement will help even more in “legato” playing, which will enhance “cantabile” playing.

Participant 3:

I will ask them to, as they sing at the same time, I ask them to do the movement like sliding. Sliding and singing ... If they sing and move at the same time, it will help.

Furthermore, two participants (participants 5 and 6) stressed the importance of showing students the proper or musical way of singing in order to teach “cantabile” style effectively. According to them, the students should be taught in the way that they can differentiate what is musical singing and unmusical singing. Additionally, participants 8 and 9 mentioned the benefits of incorporating singing when teaching

students to play in a “cantabile” style. Participants 8 said that using singing to teach “cantabile” style is “very useful for higher grade students” whereas participant 9 stated that it will “help later on in the memory work” of the piece the student is playing. In contrast, participant 7 does not incorporate singing when teaching their students to play in a “cantabile” style. She explained the reason of not incorporating singing when teaching students to play in a “cantabile” style was because not all the students would like to sing and there are also students who are tone deaf.

4.2.3 Perspectives of the Use of Singing in Teaching Phrasing in Piano Playing

Some of the research that I have read suggests that it is important to listen to good classical singers in order to play the piano more expressively. Would you encourage your students to do so?

All the participants agreed that it is important to listen to good classical singers in order to play the piano more expressively. To qualify this further, some felt that listening to good classical singers would suit all students while others felt that it would suit more advanced students. Participants 2, 5 and 8 shared a similar view that listening to classical singing will suit all students. Participants 3, 4 and 7 were of the opinion that listening to classical singing will suit more advanced students only. Participant 9 mentioned the benefits of listening to good singing would help in interpretation, building musicianship, and musicality.

Participant 9:

So in order to listen to good singers it’s actually give you a better insight on how to interpret the piano later on because these are all melody. So a good singer will incorporate expression in the singing and as well as emotion like the tone colour of the voice which is more direct comparing to any instruments.

In addition, participant 10 elaborated on the benefits of listening to good singing includes heightening the sense of hearing and the understanding of good sound. However, one participant (participant 1) felt that listening to a wider variety of singing will help in expressive playing classical. She stated that the students should be given a choice of the type of music they would like to listen to.

In cases where the initial question was not fully answered by the interviewees, the researcher asked an additional question to probe more information: “*What are the benefits of listening to good singers in improving students’ phrasing?*” Participant 1 felt that the students would benefit from listening to how the good singers breathed and phrased the music. However, participant 2 felt that the student would be able to improve the dynamics, tone, and expression of the music.

What is your approach to teaching phrasing in piano playing?

In response to the question regarding their approach to teaching phrasing in piano playing, nine participants described their approaches in two main ways:

- using singing and breathing (Participants 1, 4, 5, 6, 9 and 10), and
- using singing in combination with other methods (Participants 2, 3, 7).

One participant (participant 8) did not make an appropriate response to this question.

Six participants (Participants 1, 4, 5, 6, 9 and 10) used singing to teach shaping in phrasing and they also used breathing to indicate better phrase ends and entrances in piano playing. Participant 4 demonstrated how he uses singing, the ascending and descending of the first five notes of a major scale to explain the concept of phrasing in piano playing when teaching his students. Participant 5, 6, 9 and 10 stressed the importance of breathing and singing in teaching phrasing in piano playing. Both participants 5 and 10 stated that breathing can indicate phrase ends and entrances.

Correspondingly, participant 6 thinks of singing as an extension of speech. She likened singing to speaking as we need to breathe in between sentences. Participant 9 gives practical tips to his students on how to decide on the breath points, especially in longer phrases. He encourages them to rely on their musicality. Other aspects of the participants' approaches to teaching phrasing in piano playing included the understanding of voicing within the phrases in contrapuntal pieces (participant 5) and how phrasing is related to the individual's feelings and emotions (participant 9).

In addition, three participants (2, 3 and 7) recommended different approaches to teaching phrasing in piano playing. Both participants 2 and 3 shared the same view by saying that besides singing, the playing of stringed instruments is another way to enable their students to understand phrasing in piano playing. Furthermore, participant 7 said that when teaching phrasing in piano playing to her intermediate level students, she would ask them to use their best "imaginative art idea like a painting, drawing, picture, an arts piece, sculpture, or even a film marking - own creation story, for their phrasing of piano playing".

If a piano student's phrasing lacks direction, shape and expression, how would you approach this problem?

It was found that the participants approached the problems of phrasing in the following ways:

- demonstrating through singing or playing first for students to imitate,
- training the students to be able to hear the melody clearly through good balancing of voices,
- training the students to be independent in order to discover and understand the elements of music for good phrasing,

- analysing the structure of the melody together with students,
- teaching the students direction and shaping in phrasing by using singing,
- reminding the students to be aware of what they are thinking when playing and,
- encouraging students to listen to music of a variety of different musical instruments in order to have a better idea of how to phrase.

Five participants (participants 1, 2, 6, 8 and 9) shared the same approaches in solving the problem of the student's phrasing lacks direction, shape and expression. First, the students learn through imitation whereby the teachers either sing or play the phrases musically and the students listen in order to imitate. Second, they train their students to be able to hear the melody clearly through good balancing of voices. Third, participant 6 opined that it is important to train the students to be independent by helping students to discover and understand the elements of music. This was to encourage the students to be able to work out good phrasing by themselves in future.

Moreover, three participants (participants 4, 5 and 10) felt that it is important to analyse the structure of the melody with the student if a piano student's phrasing lacks direction, shape and expression. Besides analysing, participant 10 elaborated how she teaches her students direction and shaping in phrasing by using singing. Furthermore, participant 7 said that the reason for a piano student's phrasing lacking direction, shape and expression could be because the student plays without awareness of what and how she should think about her playing. Lastly, participant 3 said that she encouraged her students to "listen to a lot of piano playing. Not only piano pieces or string pieces, also different instruments' pieces" because she believes that this would help improve the student's phrasing.

What are the elements from singing that you would include in teaching phrasing during piano playing? Why do you feel they are important?

The elements from singing that the participants included in teaching phrasing were breathing, tone colour, “tempo”, “rubato”, use of dynamics and ornamentation. Participants 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10 opined that breathing is the element from singing that they would include in teaching phrasing during piano playing whereas participant 2 mentioned the elements she would include were the use of dynamics and ornamentation from singing. Two participants (participant 3 and 8) did not make an appropriate response to this question.

According to participant 4, breathing is important in learning to sing and also to play musical instruments because breathing helps in understanding the concept of tone and making good sound. Similarly, participant 5 explained the correlation between singing and breathing, and the importance of breathing in making music. She stated that “singing whole heartedly definitely is the product of your breathing and of your thinking, of your mentality, of your mind, of your value, of your will power”.

Correspondingly, participant 7 suggested that the elements of breathing, tone colour, “tempo” and “rubato” from singing should be included in teaching phrasing during piano playing in order to promote musicality in performance. Furthermore, participant 10 explained that the resonance could be felt internally in her body as a singer and she encouraged students to find the same resonant that could also be produced on the piano. She further expounded that it is important to learn breathing, and to find the resonance in order to have good projection and direction in the music when playing on the piano. In addition, participant 2 proposed two elements from singing, namely, the use of dynamics and ornamentations, which could be used in teaching phrasing during piano playing.

4.3 Summary of Interview Findings

Here is a summary of the interview findings. In response to the questions regarding the incorporation of singing in piano lessons, majority of the participants opined that the incorporation of singing in piano teaching is important. The key reasons for incorporating singing in piano teaching were that singing helps in:

- shaping the musical phrase,
- releasing the internal sense and essence of music from within,
- increasing sensitivity to voicing,
- feeling the “rubato”, and
- developing the student’s aural skills.

It was also opined that breathing in singing can enhance phrasing. Furthermore, the participants shared their methods of incorporating singing during piano lessons, which included encouraging singing through imitation, singing the melody before playing it on the piano, singing to improve accuracy of the melody and the rhythm. Additionally, almost all the participants stated that they incorporated singing when teaching their students to play in a “cantabile” style and to show the difference between phrasing musically and unmusically.

In response to the question regarding their approach to teaching phrasing in piano playing, majority of the participants described that they used singing to teach shaping in phrasing and they also used breathing to indicate better phrase ends and entrances in piano playing. Moreover, the participants shared their approaches in solving the problem when their student’s phrasing lacks direction, shape and expression. It was found that the participants approached the problems of phrasing in the following ways:

- demonstrating through singing or playing to show the direction and shaping in the phrase,
- training the students to be able to hear the melody clearly through good balancing of voices,
- training the students to be independent in order to discover and understand the elements of music for good phrasing,
- analysing the structure of the melody together with students,
- reminding the students to be aware of what they are thinking when playing, and
- encouraging the students to listen to music of a variety of different musical instruments in order to have a better idea of how to phrase.

4.4 Observation Findings

Five piano teachers were chosen for the observation during their teaching of three students each in piano lessons, thus making up to a total of 15 observations. The five piano teachers were selected based on the following criteria:

- the five teachers were willing to have their piano lessons video-recorded,
- the five teachers responded positively during the interviews on the use of singing in the teaching of phrasing in piano lessons, and
- the five teachers were able and willing to select three of their piano students whom they thought were most suitable for observation.

As for the 15 students, the criteria were as follows:

- the 15 students had indicated to their teachers that they were willing to participate in the observation.
- the parents of the 15 students were willing to sign the permission forms in order to allow their children to participate in this research.
- the 15 students and their parents were willing to have their piano lessons video-recorded.

Four of the observations were conducted at the teachers' music centres and one observation was at a private studio in the Klang Valley of West Malaysia. The class observations were video-recorded and the data analysed. The duration of the lessons ranged from approximately 30 minutes to one hour. The observation aimed to find out the proportion of time spent in singing, how the teachers included singing during piano lessons, and how the inclusion of singing affected the students' phrasing of the music.

4.4.1 Proportion of Time Spent in Singing During Lessons

With reference to Table 4.2 on the following page, five teachers were observed (participants 1, 3, 5, 7 and 8) who were each teaching three of their students. The ages of the students ranged from five to 23 years old. Among the 15 students, there are 11 elementary level students (students 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 12, 13, 14 and 15), two intermediate level students (students 8 and 9) and two advanced level students (students 7 and 11). In all the lessons conducted by the participants with the exception of participant 5, the lesson included a 10 to 15 minutes' theory session.

Table 4.2***Proportion of Time Spent in Singing during Lessons***

Teacher (Participant 1)	Teacher (Participant 3)	Teacher (Participant 5)	Teacher (Participant 7)	Teacher (Participant 8)
Student 1 Grade 1 10 years old 7 minutes out of 45-minute lesson (16%)	Student 4 Beginner 15 years old 16 minutes out of 45-minute lesson (36%)	Student 7 Diploma 23 years old 35 minutes out of 1- hour lesson (58%)	Student 10 Beginner 7 years old 10 minutes out of 30-minute lesson (33%)	Student 13 Grade 3 13 years old 15 minutes out of 45-minute lesson (33%)
Student 2 Beginner 8 years old 7 minutes out of 45-minute lesson (16%)	Student 5 Beginner 5 years old 9 minutes out of 30-minute lesson (30%)	Student 8 Grade 5 13 years old 9 minutes out of 45-minute lesson (20%)	Student 11 Grade 8 14 years old 27 minutes out of 1- hour lesson (45%)	Student 14 Grade 3 12 years old 20 minutes out of 45-minute lesson (44%)
Student 3 Grade 1 11 years old 8 minutes out of 45-minute lesson (18%)	Student 6 Grade 2 8 years old 25 minutes out of 1-hour lesson (42%)	Student 9 Grade 6 14 years old 11 minutes out of 1-hour lesson (18%)	Student 12 Grade 3 13 years old 14 minutes out of 1- hour lesson (23%)	Student 15 Beginner 6 years old 13 minutes out of 30-minute lesson (43%)

Among the five participants, it was obvious that participant 1 spent the least proportion of time singing during lessons with her students. For her three elementary level students, she spent approximately seven minutes for student 1 (grade 1) and student 2 (beginner) as well as eight minutes for student 3 (grade 1) out of 45-minute lesson. In contrast, participant 5 spent the most proportion of time singing during lessons, approximately 35 minutes out of one-hour lesson with her advanced level student (student 7, diploma). However, for her intermediate level student (student 8, grade 5) she spent approximately nine minutes out of 45-minute lesson. In addition, she spent about 11 minutes out of one-hour lesson for her other intermediate level student (student 9, grade 6). It can be seen that participant 7 was quite similar with participant 5 where she spent as much as 27 minutes out of one-hour lesson with her advanced level student (student 11, grade 8). But for her two elementary level students, she spent approximately ten minutes for student 10 (beginner) out of 30-minute lesson time and 14 minutes for student 12 (grade 3) out of one-hour lesson time.

As for participant 3, she spent the most time, approximately 25 minutes out of one hour of the lesson time singing during the lesson for one of her elementary students (student 6, grade 2). For the other two of her elementary students, she spent approximately 16 minutes out of 45-minute lesson (student 4, beginner) and about nine minutes out of 30-minute lesson for a younger student (student 5, beginner). The last participant (participant 8) spent a fairly equal proportion of time in singing during the lessons for her three elementary students. For both of her grade 3 students (students 13 and 14) she spent approximately 15 and 20 minutes out of 45-minute lesson respectively. As for her beginner student (student 15), she spent about 13 minutes out of 30-minute lesson time singing during the lesson.

4.4.2 How the Teachers Included Singing during Piano Lessons

From the 15 class observations, it was found that the five participants (participants 1, 3, 5, 7 and 8) used singing as a teaching tool during piano lessons in the following ways:

- to improve accuracy of the melody,
- to improve accuracy of the rhythm,
- to hear the melody before playing on the piano,
- to sing the finger numbers for better awareness of fingering,
- to show articulations, dynamic contrasts and good tone,
- to promote better fluency in performance,
- to develop aural, sight-singing and musicianship, and
- to encourage audiation while playing.

Further details of how the teachers included singing during piano lessons are presented below from 4.4.2.1 to 4.4.2.8.

4.4.2.1 To Improve Accuracy of the Melody.

It was observed that for ten of the students (students 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15), the teachers (participants 1, 3, 7 and 8) used singing to improve the accuracy of the melody. This was usually after the students played inaccurately in their pieces, exercises and scales. However, in some cases the student was asked to sing the melody before playing it on the piano in order to play more accurately. In the attempt to improve the accuracy of the melody through singing, some students showed significant

improvement, some students showed slight improvement and some students did not show any improvement. In what follows the researcher will provide a description of the observations of how the teachers used singing to improve the accuracy of the melody and how the students responded to them.

It was observed that five students (students 2, 6, 11, 13 and 15) showed a significant improvement in the areas of technical exercises and the correction of errors in pieces. After student 2 played the first exercise from “A Dozen A Day”, participant 1 corrected her by singing the melody to “solfege” using the fixed ‘do’ approach. Student 2 was able to play more accurately after the correction. In teaching a new exercise on major and minor scales, participant 1 asked student 2 to sing the melody to “solfege” before she played it. She then sang while the student played. It was noticed that student 2 had a better understanding of the difference between major and minor scales in terms of pitch after that. Similarly, participant 3 sang along as her student (student 6) played scales that he had difficulties with. Participant 8 also sang the scales to “solfege” and asked the student to play with her while she sang. She repeated this in other keys as well. Student 13 showed much improvement in her playing. A different approach was observed with participant 7 who used a more analytical method of correction of singing. When student 11 made some errors in the whole-tone scales, dominant seventh and diminished seventh arpeggios, participant 7 asked him to analyse the scales and arpeggios by singing the intervals of a major second (do-re) for the whole-tone scale and the intervals of major and minor thirds for the dominant seventh and diminished seventh arpeggios. It was observed that student 11 showed a better understanding of the structure of the scales and arpeggios and was therefore able to play more fluently. In a Czerny study, the teacher (participant 7) asked the student (student 12) to play the piece and then corrected the accuracy of the scalic melody notes by singing them. Student 12 showed slight improvement in her playing. Not all the students showed improvement

after the teachers tried to correct their playing of technical exercises through singing. For instance, student 14 had difficulties in playing a chromatic scale. Then the teacher asked the student to sing the chromatic scale to “la”. However, it was observed that there was no improvement after that exercise.

As for using singing to correct errors in pieces, participant 3 sang along and played in order to correct the notes in the duet, which she played with student 6. Student 6 responded well to this approach and showed significant improvement in his playing. Correspondingly, participant 8 sang the pitches of the end of the last phrase in order to correct the pitches for student 13 who had played through the piece with some inaccuracies. For student 15, the teacher (participant 8) sang the melody of a piece to “solfege” in order to correct the wrong notes that the student had played. After a few attempts the student 15 was then able to play it. Moreover, it was observed that student 4 only showed slight improvement in the accuracy of melody when the teacher (participant 3) sang along to help the student with the notes he was unable to play. Student 4 then tried to play the piece with both hands and showed slight improvement in his playing. However, it was observed that two students (students 1 and 3) did not show much or any improvement. In teaching student 1 to play the piece “Fur Elise”, participant 1 corrected the melody in terms of pitch by singing the correct notes. There was not much improvement after that. In a sight-reading piece, student 1 first performed it and then participant 1 corrected the melody by singing it while playing to fixed ‘do’. It was noticed that student 1 did not show any improvement in the sight-reading piece. For the piece from Upgrade, “Make way for the king”, participant 1 sang to correct the accuracy of notes at points during the student’s (student 3) playing. It was observed that there was not much improvement after that.

4.4.2.2 To Improve Accuracy of the Rhythm.

It was observed that the teachers (participants 1, 3 and 8) used singing to improve the accuracy of the rhythm when five of the students (students 3, 6, 13, 14 and 15) had difficulty in playing the rhythm correctly in their pieces and exercises. Furthermore, for five of the students (students 1, 7, 8, 13 and 14), the teachers used singing to help them play in a more rhythmical manner. This was usually when the students were playing in a boring, inexpressive way and did not give life to the rhythm.

In trying to improve the accuracy of the rhythm through singing time names, it was noted that students 3 and 6 showed a better understanding in the rhythm and played better after that. From an exercise in “A Dozen A Day”, the teacher (participant 1) sang ‘tika-tika’ to correct the rhythm. The student (student 3) was asked to clap and sing the rhythm to ‘tika-tika’ while the teacher played. Subsequently, both the teacher and student played and sang ‘tika-tika’ to the semiquavers. There was some improvement in student 3’s playing as he was able to play the semiquavers more evenly after singing the rhythm. For student 6, the teacher (participant 3) occasionally sang along during the technical exercises as she corrected the rhythm and pulse. Student 6 was able to play better after that.

Similarly, the teacher (participant 8) sang along using “ti-ti” and “tata” for the notes when her student (student 13) encountered rhythmic problems in playing a piece. Occasionally she sang the notes to “solfege”. This approach did not prove to be very effective for student 13 who seemed to be fairly distant and disconnected during the course of the lesson. It was observed that the effort to sing the rhythms was mostly on the part of the teacher. Furthermore, it appeared that students 14 and 15 did not show any improvement after the teacher (participant 8) sang the rhythm of the melody to correct the inaccuracies. Participant 8 sang the rhythm of a Christmas piece together

with the student (student 14) before he played it again in the second attempt but he was still unable to correct the rhythm. The teacher then moved on to a sight-reading exercise. When he also had rhythmical errors in the exercise, she sang the rhythm to “ta” and “titi” while playing the rhythm on a desk bell. She then asked the student to tap the rhythm on the desk bell while she sang the rhythm of the piece. Then she asked the student to play the piece again but he did not show any improvement in the rhythm. Participant 8’s third student (student 15) had difficulty in playing the bass line rhythmically in a piece. Participant 8 tried to correct the rhythm by singing the bass line in pitch using the rhythm time-names. Unfortunately, there was no improvement in the student’s playing.

For the five students (students 1, 7, 8, 13 and 14) who were playing in a boring, inexpressive way and did not give life to the rhythm, the teachers used singing to help them play in a more rhythmical manner. For student 1, when she played a grade 1 exam piece with an unnecessarily heavy accent on the lowest note, the teacher (participant 1) sang the note in an exaggerated manner to show the student that she should not place a heavy accent on it. This made student 1 realise her mistake and she was able to play more rhythmically after that. In an exercise from “A Dozen A Day” participant 1 also sang the rhythm using “tika-tika” (semiquavers) to help student 1 to play the semiquavers more evenly and rhythmically. It was observed that the student 1 was able to play more rhythmically after the exercise. For student 7, her teacher (participant 5) used singing to teach the rhythm and showed the contrast between playing in a dull, expressionless manner as compared to giving life to the rhythm. The teacher then sang the melody while she asked the student to play the accompaniment in her left hand and sing the melody. This had to be repeated several times until student 7 was more confident to sing on her own. It was observed that student 7 showed a slight improvement in her rhythmical playing. In addition, student 8 had played a “minuet” to

her teacher (participant 5) but it lacked the lilt of a dance style. Her teacher explained to student 8 that the “minuet” is a dance and therefore the student has to give it a dance lilt. She sang the opening motif and she showed how the phrase should have a main accent on the first beat and how the third beat leads to the first beat in order to have a forward momentum. It was observed that student 7 was able to play more rhythmically after that.

It was interesting to note that participant 8 employed a combination of singing and the use of other methods to encourage the student to play more rhythmically. Participant 8 asked the student (student 13) to use body percussion (clapping both hands and also onto the thighs) and also to sing the rhythm as she did the movements. Moreover, for another student, (student 14), participant 8 sang the rhythm of the piece while playing a desk bell. After that she played the left hand part while the student tried to play the desk bell rhythmically. However, it was observed that students 13 and 14 did not show any improvement in their rhythmical playing.

4.4.2.3 To Hear the Melody before Playing on the Piano.

It was observed that for two of the students (students 2 and 5), the teachers (participants 1 and 3) encouraged them to sing the melody before playing on the piano. For student 2, her teacher (participant 1) taught her to sing the melody to “solfege” first before playing. She was also encouraged by her teacher to sing as she played. At first, student 2 hummed along. In a second attempt, she was able to sing in “solfege” while her teacher played and sang along. Similarly, for student 5, her teacher (participant 3) sang the melody in “solfege”. The teacher sang and the student imitated what the teacher sang. Then student 5 was asked to play on the piano and sing at the same time. However, student 5 sang very softly and had difficulty singing the “solfege” correctly when asked to play and sing at the same time. Furthermore, when her other student

(student 6) could not sing correctly in an aural exercise, participant 3 asked him to imitate her after she sang to him.

4.4.2.4 To Sing the Finger Numbers for Better Awareness of Fingering.

It was observed that the teacher (participant 3) used singing as a teaching tool to teach fingering. This was usually when her students (students 4, 5, and 6) had difficulty in using the correct finger in playing their pieces, exercise or scales. In attempting to improve the accuracy of the fingering, participant 3 sang the broken chords in the left hand using the finger numbers to correct her student's (student 4) fingering. Likewise, she also sang the finger numbers whenever student 6 played with the wrong fingers. For student 5, participant 3 sang the finger numbers while playing the ascending and descending scale exercises within 5 notes. She helped the student physically to play the exercises with each hand separately while singing the finger numbers. She then demonstrated a finger exercise away from the piano to work each finger individually. It was observed that the student was able to do the exercises and sing the finger numbers together with her teacher. This exercise enhanced her awareness of using the correct fingers.

4.4.2.5 To Show Articulations, Dynamic Contrasts and Good Tone.

It was observed that for seven of the students (students 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 12 and 13), all the teachers (participants 1, 3, 5, 7 and 8) used singing to improve the articulation in their students' playing. This was particularly when the students had difficulty in playing "legato" passages. In attempting to improve her student's (student 1) articulation in the piece "Für Elise", the teacher (participant 1) taught her how to play in a more "legato" fashion by singing the broken chord in the left hand. Similarly, participant 1 sang the melody using "legato" in order to demonstrate the articulation when teaching student 3 to play the piece from Upgrade "Make Way for the King". Both the students (students 1

and 3) of participant 1 showed improvement in the articulation in the pieces they were playing.

Furthermore, teachers also used singing to improve students' slurs and "staccatos" in their pieces. Participant 3 sang along to help her student (student 6) with the correct articulations involving slurs and "staccatos". This resulted in student 6 showing improvement in articulation. Similarly, participant 5 corrected her student (student 7) on her articulation of the phrase where the "staccatos" were too clipped. She sang the "staccato" melody in a less clipped manner with better shaping. It was observed that student 7 was then able to play the same phrase better. In addition, participant 7 worked with her student (student 12) on the articulation in a sight-reading piece, by singing the detached notes in a more musical manner. However, student 12 did not show any improvement in articulation because she was unsure of the notes in the sight-reading piece. In teaching different ways of playing a scalar passage in a piece, participant 8 demonstrated the scalar passage by singing it using different articulations to her student (student 13). An improvement was seen in the student's ability to articulate the scalar passage in different ways after that.

In the area of dynamic contrast, it was observed that three teachers (participants 3, 5, 7 and 8) used singing for four of their students (students 6, 7, 8, 11 and 13) in attempting to improve their students' playing. Both participants 3 and 5 sang along with their students as they played in order to show dynamic contrast. Participant 3 instructed student 6 to listen to the melody of the tango that he was playing, which she sang showing clear emphasis on the dynamic contrasts. This was in order to encourage the student to audiate or internalise the music by listening before he played. In another piece, as student 6 played, participant 3 sang along emphasising the dynamics and shaping. There was a significant improvement in the playing of the pieces by student 6 after that. In order to show dynamic contrast in a Baroque piece, participant 8 sang the

first appearance of the motif louder and then she sang its repetition softer as if it were an echo. Therefore, she used singing to help her student (student 13) to have a better awareness of dynamic contrasts. This approach helped student 13 to show better contrast in her playing of the Baroque work. Another teacher (participant 7), asked her student (student 11) to sing the dynamics in the piece to a single pitch using 'ah'. He mainly sang the "crescendo" and "decrescendo" markings. It was noticed that student 11 took some time in order to sing it correctly.

Moreover, to develop the concept of good tone the teacher (participant 5) used singing to demonstrate the quality of the tone for two of her students (students 7 and 9). In correcting the student's (student 7) performance, she sang the opening phrase showing that she wanted a more relaxed and fuller sound. She also explained the differences in the timbre within motifs by singing them using different colours. For her other student (student 9), she sang in order to show the difference between a full tone and a small tone. This was to demonstrate the kind of tone colour she was looking for in the melody. Both her students (student 7 and 9) were able to produce a better tone in their playing after that.

4.4.2.6 To Promote Better Fluency in Performance.

It was observed that three teachers (participants 1, 7 and 8) used singing to promote better fluency in performance for their students (student 1, 2, 3, 12 and 15). The teacher (participant 1) sang along occasionally for better continuity when her student (student 1) was hesitant. When her other student (student 2) hesitated, participant 1 guided her by singing the notes to "solfege". When student 2 attempted to play the lower part while the teacher played the upper part, the teacher sang the lower part with the student's playing. When student 2 tried to play with both hands, the teacher sang notes that she was unable to play in order to encourage her to continue

playing. For student 3, participant 1 sang and played for the student to demonstrate better fluency. It was seen that there was some improvement for student 1 and 2. However, student 3 did not show much improvement in terms of the fluency in his playing as he was still unfamiliar with the notes of the piece.

Correspondingly, participant 7 also played the right-hand melody while singing along with her student (student 12) as the student was playing the right-hand melody of a piece. She also encouraged her student to sing while playing and the student did so but very softly. She then asked her student to play the piece with both hands while she continued to play the melody in the right hand and sang along at points when the student showed hesitation. However, there was little evidence of any significant improvement as the student still played a few errors in the piece.

4.4.2.7 To Develop Aural, Sight-Singing and Musicianship.

It was observed that for four of the students (students 4, 6, 10 and 11), the teachers (participants 3 and 7) started the lessons with aural and sight-singing. In teaching sight-singing for student 6, the teacher (participant 3) used hand signs for better accuracy of pitching using exercises from “Concone”. These exercises were sung with student 6 standing while the teacher played at the piano. It was noticed that student 6 was able to sing in the correct pitch but with some hesitation when using the hand signs. For her next student (student 4), participant 3 also began the lesson with a sight-singing exercise. It was observed that student 4 was not able to pitch but could only say the “solfege”. Another teacher (participant 7) began the lesson with a few finger drills and singing exercises in “solfege” using ‘do-re-mi’ from a primer book for a young beginner (student 10). She demonstrated by playing and singing several times before her student was able to do the same. She then asked the student to say the pitch names to “solfege” without any rhythm followed by singing the melody to “solfege”.

Furthermore, it was observed that for three of the students (students 2, 5 and 6), the teachers (participants 1 and 3) used singing to teach musicianship. For student 2, the teacher (participant 1) asked her to transpose the exercise by singing the melody to “solfege” in order to help her in the transposition. It was noticed that student 2 played slowly and made some mistakes in her playing. For student 6, participant 3 asked to sit at the piano and to close his eyes while she asked him to identify individual pitches played randomly between ‘do’ to ‘soh’. Student 6 was mostly correct except for the pitch ‘soh’. Participant 3 then played a series of notes and asked him to sing them in “solfege”. Student 6 managed to sing them correctly except for ‘soh’.

It was also observed that participant 8 used singing in conjunction with hand signs and body percussion to enhance her student’s (student 15) coordination skills. Participant 8 sang the rhythm with body percussion. The student imitated her. She then asked the student to play the accompaniment while she sang the rhythm. Participant 8 also taught her student to sing with hand signs by singing and playing on the piano.

4.4.2.8 To Encourage Audiation while Playing.

It was observed that for four of the students (students 6, 9, 10 and 11), the teachers (participants 3, 5 and 7) used internalised singing to encourage audiation while their students were playing. Participant 3 demonstrated for student 6 by singing the “crescendos” as she played the rising scales and asked him to listen in order to internalise the music. This was an attempt to encourage the student to audiate or internalise the music by listening before he played and the student showed improvement in his playing after that. Similarly, after her student (student 9) had played a Chopin nocturne, participant 5 commented that in the descending scale towards the end of the fourth phrase he should not stop the inner singing as she felt that he had stopped thinking of the singing line from within. This was a method of encouraging audiation

while playing and student 9 was able to phrase the melody better after this instruction. In teaching her student (student 11) to play the whole-tone scale, participant 7 also encouraged her student to sing internally while playing the scale. There was some improvement seen in terms of notes when student 11 played the scale at a slightly slower “tempo” with internalised singing. In addition, participant 7 asked another student (student 10) to play the piece while singing the melody internally after she had played the piece with several errors and hesitation. It was noticed that student 10 showed slight improvement in playing her piece after internalising the melody while playing. She made several attempts in order to do this.

4.4.3 How the Inclusion of Singing Affected the Students’ Phrasing of the Music

From the 15 class observations, it was noticed that singing was used as a teaching tool to teach students phrasing. The inclusion of singing had affected the students’ phrasing of the music in the following ways:

- understanding the phrasing and how to shape the phrases better,
- understanding the phraseology,
- feeling the direction of the phrase,
- realising the breath points between phrases,
- evoking feeling and emotion,
- developing expressivity and musicality, and
- increasing sensitivity to voicing.

4.4.3.1 Understanding the Phrasing and How to Shape the Phrases Better.

It was observed that for nine of the students (students 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 13), all the teachers (participants 1, 3, 5, 7 and 8) used singing to improve their students' phrasing and to help students in understanding the phrasing and how to shape them better in their music. Participant 1 sang the melody of a new piece to her student (student 2) to "solfege". She pointed out the phrase ends. Then the teacher sang part of a phrase and asked the student to carry on singing the rest of the phrase. The teacher also sang while playing the phrase for the student and encouraged the student to sing along with her. Student 2 was able to play the piece fairly well after she had understood the phrasing. In teaching the same student another piece, participant 1 sang the notes leading to the phrase ends for the student to show her how to shape the ends of the phrases. As such, student 2 was able to end the phrases in a musical way. In another lesson, a student (student 8) played a "Minuet" without much understanding of the phrase structure. His teacher (participant 5) explained the structure of the piece by singing the phrases with dynamic contrast for repetitions and also stressing the cadential points. This was to help with her student's understanding of the piece and interpretation. Student 8 was then able to play the "Minuet" more musically.

In order to indicate the phrase ends in a piece, participant 7 regularly asked her students to lift their hands off the key while singing. This was also to show the structure of the phrasing within the piece. For student 10, her teacher (participant 7) demonstrated and explained that the hand should be lifted off the keys at the end of each phrase. Subsequently she played and sang while showing the phrase ends by lifting her hand off the keys. Student 10 was encouraged to do the same by imitation. It was observed that student 10 had some difficulty in the coordination and generally played slower than the teacher. However, the student was able to sing as she played the piece. Likewise, when her other student (student 11) began playing the right-hand melody he was asked to sing

along and the phrase ends were indicated through the lifting of the hand. The teacher played and sang along as he played and sang. Participant 7 also asked him to sing the passage work section in a Beethoven's sonata comprising of broken chords and scales. Once again, she suggested that the student indicated the phrasing in this section of passage work by lifting his hand at the end of the phrase while singing. It was noticed that student 11 tried to do what his teacher wanted him to do but his singing and his lifting of the hand movement at the phrase end was not so natural yet. Therefore, there was not much improvement seen in student 11's playing in terms of phrasing.

Furthermore, in the area of shaping the phrase better, another teacher (participant 3) sang along with her student (student 6) while he was playing a piece, which was the bridal march. In correcting the playing, she sang the phrase in the same way as he played and asked him why he accented the weaker beats. For better contrast, she then sang the phrase with good shaping and dynamics. It was observed that student 6 showed significant improvement in his playing after realising that he had emphasised the wrong accents in the phrases. When participant 5's student (student 7) was unable to play the phrase with any shaping, the teacher (participant 5) demonstrated by playing and singing a "crescendo" followed by a "diminuendo" to her student. It was evident that student 7's shaping in the phrasing had improved a lot after she understood how to shape the phrase and was able to imitate her teacher. For another student (student 9), participant 5 sang parts of the melody in order to enhance the shaping of the phrase of the Chopin's nocturne. She further encouraged the student to think of sustaining the long notes by singing the notes with a "crescendo" rather than a "diminuendo" while playing. It was observed that student 9 attempted to sing while he played but he was still fairly inhibited in his singing. She commended him for his effort and encouraged him to sing louder and more convincingly. Participant 5 then focused on tension and resolution within a phrase by singing the melody showing exaggeration in the tensed note before

resolving it. Student 9 then tried to play according to her suggestion showing some improvement in resolution of the tensed note. She commented that he had played better.

Additionally, one of the participants (participant 8) used singing and Kodály's hand signs to teach shaping of the phrase to her student (student 13). She sang the melody using Kodály hand signs which indicate the shaping of the phrase as the signs go up and down according to their position in the scale. However, there was not much improvement seen in student 13's phrasing in her playing.

4.4.3.2 Understanding the Phraseology.

It was observed that for three of the students (students 2, 3 and 8), the teachers (participants 1 and 5) used singing to help students to analyse the phrase structure of the music they were playing. When student 3 played two phrases continuously without showing any understanding of the phrasing, his teacher (participant 1) sang the phrases to show the difference between the endings, although they had begun similarly. After that she asked her student (student 3) to play the two phrases again. It was noticed that student 3 showed a better understanding of the phraseology. In teaching a new piece to another student (student 2), participant 1 asked the student to compare the two phrases she had just sung and played from the piece. Student 2 was able to identify the differences between the two phrases sung and played by the teacher. Similarly, the teacher (participant 5) taught phrasing by singing the different sections of the phrase in order to show that the phrase was divided into two main groups. The first group led to the climax of the phrase while the second group tailed off the phrase. Her student (student 8) was able to feel the climax of the phrase in his playing after listening to his teacher's singing it.

4.4.3.3 Feeling the Direction of the Phrase.

It was observed that for four of the students (students 1, 6, 9 and 11), the teachers (participants 1, 5 and 7) used singing to help students feel the direction of the phrases. For student 1, her teacher (participant 1) sang the melody with a “crescendo” to show better direction towards the top of the broken chord in the phrase. It was obvious that student 1 was able to show a clearer “crescendo” in her playing of the ascending melody line after that. For her other student (student 6), participant 1 sang the phrase with good shaping, dynamics and direction in order to improve her student’s playing. Student 6 was able to shape the phrase better and had a clearer sense of direction in his phrasing after that.

It was also observed that the teacher (participant 5) encouraged her student (student 9) to show better direction and shaping by singing in an exaggerated manner while he was playing. Student 9 showed some improvement in his phrasing after a few attempts. Furthermore, as student 11 was playing his piece in a very fragmented manner, his teacher (participant 7) sang along to help him to have greater continuity. She sang through the rests using the rhythmical counts to show that it led to the next note in attempting to give better direction to the phrase. However, not much improvement was seen in student 11’s phrasing as it appeared that he was unable to understand how to do it.

4.4.3.4 Realising the Breath Points between Phrases.

It was observed that two teachers (participants 5 and 7) used singing to help their students (students 7, 9, 10, 11 and 12) to realise the breath points between phrases in music they were playing. Participant 5 hummed along at critical places in the music while her student (student 7) was playing the accompaniment of a choral piece. She also breathed audibly to indicate the breath points in the piece while using body language

and gestures. After the student played the opening phrase, participant 5 gave a positive comment but still mentioned that she needed her to think about the breath. She explained the importance of singing and deep breathing and asked the student to breathe at the appropriate points while playing. It was also noticed that participant 5 also sang along and showed the breath points while conducting the music as her student played. Gradually, student 7 showed significant improvements in her phrasing when she was able to feel her teacher's breathing when singing the music. For student 9, (participant 5) also showed breath points by breathing audibly at the start of the new phrase while he played the melody and she played the bass line. It was observed that student 9 showed slight improvement in phrasing after that.

Another teacher (participant 7) discussed the phrasing in terms of breath points and also sang the phrases while playing together with her students (students 10, 11 and 12). She indicated the breath points by lifting her hand off the keys at the end of each phrase. There were some improvements in the phrasing as both students 10 and 11 lifted their hands off at the phrase ends. It was also observed that student 12 tried to imitate her teacher's hand movements by lifting off the hand at the end of each phrase. However, she lacked the coordination to sing and feel the breathing in a natural way. In spite of this, the teacher (participant 7) continued to indicate the ends of the sub-phrases by lifting her hands off the keys and breathing. In teaching a young beginner (student 10) to play a piece, participant 7 asked the student to sing the melody to 'la' instead of "solfege". The teacher then introduced the idea of a breath at the ends of the phrases a number of times. Student 10 tried many times but only a slight improvement was noted.

4.4.3.5 Evoking Feeling and Emotion.

It was observed that for two of the students (students 6 and 9), the teachers (participants 3 and 5) used singing to evoke feeling and emotion in their student's piano playing. In order to encourage the student (student 6) to play more expressively and with a louder dynamic level, the teacher (participant 3) sang along at the climax of the music while he was playing. Student 6 was influenced by his teacher's singing while he was playing and showed some improvement in terms of feeling and emotion at the climactic point of the phrase.

Correspondingly, to correct student 9's unmusical playing, participant 5 described that the melody needed to be played expressively by singing the melody expressively on a monotone. This was to show the emotion through her own feeling and breathing. She also showed a contrast by singing the melody on a monotone in an inexpressive and unmusical way. After several attempts, her student (student 9) showed slight improvement in his phrasing.

4.4.3.6 Developing Expressivity and Musicality.

It was observed that two teachers (participants 3 and 5) used singing to enhance their students' (students 6, 7 and 9) performance in terms of expressivity and musicality. Participant 3 sang along from time to time as her student (student 6) played to enhance the character and expression of the music. In addition, participant 3 used singing to improve her student's (student 6) "rubato" playing in a lyrical piece. While her student was playing, the teacher sang along as she encouraged the student to keep the music moving with better direction and also to end the phrases musically with some "rubato". The student showed some improvement in the way that he was able to play in a more natural and flexible manner. He was also able to feel his teacher's singing and showed contrasting moods and feeling in his interpretation of the piece he was playing.

In showing student 7 the differences between sections of the phrases in terms of mood and character, the teacher (participant 5) sang the phrases differently. This was to encourage the student to play using different colours and moods. She demonstrated by singing the opening 'Kyrie' with the right mood of pleading with God rather than demanding one's requests of him. At this juncture the student played the section of music again after which the teacher commented that the student was too tensed at the phrase ends and did not portray the correct idea behind it. She asked her to play the phrase several times while she sang along expressively to show her how to play the phrases musically.

For her other student (student 9), participant 5 commented on the lack of energy after he had played the highest note or climax of the phrase preceded by a leap of a major tenth in a Chopin nocturne. The teacher then sang the phrase with energy and without energy in order to show the contrast between the two moods. At the student's next playing, participant 5 sang along and it was noticeable that the student played better in terms of expressivity. Moreover, to demonstrate the appropriate characters and moods of the pieces to two of her students (students 8 and 9), participant 5 contrasted the singing of the melody in an inexpressive and unmusical way with a more expressive and musical version. For instance, when teaching student 8 a baroque dance piece "minuet", she sang the phrases in two different ways to show the contrast between shaping a phrase and playing it monotonously. She also sang the rhythm both in a dance-like manner and in an overly heavy accentuated manner to show the difference in how the piece could be performed. Hence, student 8 understood the character of the dance piece better and showed improvement in his phrasing and musicality.

4.4.3.7 Increasing Sensitivity to Voicing.

It was observed that three teachers (participants 1, 3 and 7) used singing to teach voicing to their students (students 2, 6 and 12). When teaching her student (student 2) a piece which involved two-part melodies, participant 1 sang the soprano line while asking her student to sing the lower melody when it entered as a counter-melody. At first the student entered at the wrong point but after several attempts she was able to sing the entry correctly. The student then tried playing the piece in both hands after she was more aware of the entry of the counter melody in the left hand. Therefore, she showed a better understanding of voicing in her playing and was able to show the phrasing more clearly. Similarly, in teaching a “Bach prelude”, participant 7 sang the imitation of the opening theme when it appeared in the bass to show to her student (student 12) that it needed to be emphasised. Student 12 showed gradual improvement in her voicing and phrasing as she became more aware of the bass line melody.

In order to help her student to show better voicing of the melody and bass line in a piece, participant 3 taught her student (student 6) to play the melody in right hand before playing with hands together. Then, she sang the bass line to help her student to listen to the lower part better when playing with both hands. As a result, it was noticed that student 6 was able to play the right-hand melody and play the bass line clearly after a few attempts. In emphasising the importance of the bass line, another teacher (participant 7) asked her student (student 12) to sing the bass notes while playing a Czerny study which has an Alberti bass accompaniment in the left hand. It was observed that the student was able to do so at her first attempt.

4.5 Summary of Observation Findings

Here is a summary of the observation findings. From the 15 class observations, it was found that the five teachers (participants 1, 3, 5, 7 and 8) using singing as a teaching tool during piano lessons in different ways:

- to improve the accuracy of the melody and rhythm,
- to encourage audiation by hearing the melody before playing and while playing,
- to encourage imitation of the teacher's singing,
- to have better awareness of fingering,
- to show articulations, dynamic contrasts and good tone,
- to promote better fluency in performance, and
- to improve aural, sight-singing and musicianship.

Furthermore, the researcher also took into consideration the influence on their students' ability to phrase as a result of including singing in the lessons. The students' phrasing of the music was improved in the following ways:

- understanding the phrases and how to shape them better,
- realising the breath points between phrases,
- feeling the direction of the phrase,
- evoking feeling and emotion,
- developing expressivity and musicality, and
- increasing sensitivity to voicing.

The findings and results will be further discussed in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion, Implications and Recommendations

5.1 Overview

This chapter displays a restatement of the aims of the study, a discussion of the findings, answers to the research questions, implications of this study, limitations of the current study and recommendations for future study.

5.2 Restatement of Aims of Research

This research aims:

1. To discover the different teaching methods in the incorporation of singing as an aid to teaching phrasing in music during the piano lessons in the Klang Valley of West Malaysia.
2. To examine the impact of using breathing as an aid to teaching phrasing during the piano lessons in the Klang Valley of West Malaysia.
3. To explore how using singing as an aid to teaching phrasing affects expressivity during the piano lessons in the Klang Valley of West Malaysia.

5.3 Discussion of The Findings

In combining the data from the interviews and observations, the following three broad areas were covered (see Table 5.1) on the following page:

- importance of singing,
- using singing in teaching phrasing in piano playing, and
- other approaches and benefits of using singing in piano lessons.

Table 5.1

Three Broad Areas Covered in the Discussion of the Findings

Importance of singing	Using singing in teaching phrasing in piano playing	Other approaches and benefits of using singing in piano lessons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• perspectives on singing• perspectives on listening to good classical singing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the effect of using singing on teaching phrasing• the effect of using singing on teaching expressivity and musicality• the effect of using singing on teaching “rubato”• the effect of using singing on teaching voicing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the approaches of using singing in piano lessons• the benefits of using singing in piano lessons

5.3.1 Importance of Singing

In exploring the importance of singing, two emergent themes were the perspectives on singing and the perspectives on listening to good classical singing (see Table 5.2).

Table 5.2

Importance of Singing

Perspectives on singing	Perspectives on listening to good classical singing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• all instrumentalists must sing• singing is an extension of speech• singing represents music making within an individual• singing is the essence of music	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• will help in musical interpretation and expressive playing• will heighten the sense of hearing and understanding of good sound• will build musicianship and musicality• is not encourage by some parents

For the first perspective on singing, which is that all instrumentalists must sing, the results showed that majority of the participants (participants 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10) were of the opinion that it was important to incorporate singing in piano teaching. Participant 9 in particular, emphasised that all instrumentalists must sing in order to build their musicianship skills. He described his experience in France where he was exposed to the study of “solfege”, which was directly related to singing. He also stressed that “whether you are flautist, you are cellist or you are pianist, you must be able to sing”.

The results of this study support the findings of the literature on acquiring musicianship skills through singing activities in the school band. Participant 9 also stated that not only pianists but all instrumentalists must sing because it would build

their musicianship skills. According to Davis 's (1981) and Wolbers (2002), singing is important for elementary band students in order to understand the knowledge of musical elements such as melody, rhythm, harmony, and form, as well as musical expressivity. Wolbers (2002) also believed that singing can enhance the band students' aural perception of the music. Davis (1981) added that "one of the advantages of singing in instrumental classes is possibly that students can attend to other musical factors without being encumbered by the instrument" (p.1). Furthermore, Robinson (1996) supports that singing is an important tool to help develop students' musicianship skills, develop musical understanding and enhance aesthetic sensitivity. He also suggested activities for ensemble directors to incorporate vocalization activities in the rehearsal of school band and orchestra as this would help to improve sight-reading, intonation, instrumental skills, and result in more efficient and enjoyable rehearsals.

As for the second perspective on singing being an extension of speech, two participants (participants 4 and 6) shared the same view on singing. Participant 4 likened singing to speaking as he felt that singing is an extension of speech. The results of this study support the findings of Schenker's (2000) treatise on the art of performance. He advises the pianist to breathe – "to bring to his eyes and ears the model of the human voice for "singing" playing and "speaking" articulation" (Schenker, 2000, p.xiii). Moreover, Kleczyński who was a student of Chopin, described that Chopin drew an analogy between music and language, "on the necessity for separating the various phrases, ..." (Bellman, 2000, p.152). In addition, participant 6 emphasised the need to breathe in between musical sentences as being similar to speech. She drew a parallel to the use of punctuations in speech such as commas and full stops.

The third perspective on singing was on how singing represents music making within an individual. Participants 2, 5, 6, 9, and 10 held similar points of view in stating that singing is a way in which we can release the sense of music from within.

As for the final perspective on singing, participant 9 opined that singing is the essence of music. The results of this study support the findings of Eigeldinger's (1988) study on Chopin's pianistic style and performance practice. Eigeldinger (1988) stated that for Chopin, singing could be viewed as the "alpha and omega of music" (p.14). He added that it was Chopin's strong belief that singing was the foundation of all instrumental teaching.

For the second emergent theme, which is the perspectives on listening to good classical singing (see Table 5.2), the results from the interview findings showed that all the ten participants agreed that it is important to listen to good classical singers in order to play the piano more expressively. The results of this study support Vanoni's (2017) findings from her study on developing proficiency in listening to good singing. Vanoni (2017) stressed the importance of training the ear through listening to expert instrumentalists and singers in order to develop good musical taste in choosing the right means of expression in piano performance. Likewise, Rosar (2011) and Skousen (2011) shared the same view that pianists should listen and pay attention to how singers phrase the music in their singing in order to think in a singing manner.

Furthermore, one participant (participant 10) felt that listening to good classical singing heightens the sense of hearing and understanding of good sound. Researchers also concurred that listening to good singing could be an aid to understanding good sound such as "cantabile" in piano playing (Anderson, 2011; Bellman, 2000; Eigeldinger, 1988; Rosar, 2011; Rosenblum, 1988; Skousen, 2011).

Another participant (participant 9) had the opinion that listening to good classical singing would build musicianship and musicality from the early stages of music learning. This was a novel finding as there is no literature on listening to good

classical singing would build musicianship and musicality from the early stages of music learning.

An interesting finding was that some parents did not encourage their children to listen to good classical singing. Participant 6 stated that some parents found that listening to good classical singing was an unusual teaching tool to be used in their children's piano lessons and they did not see it to be of practical use.

5.3.2 Using Singing in Teaching Phrasing in Piano Playing

In exploring the use of singing in teaching phrasing in piano playing, the results of this study indicate that singing had affected the students' phrasing of music in several ways. The four emergent themes were the effect of using singing on teaching phrasing, expressivity and musicality, "rubato" and voicing.

For the first emergent theme, which is the effect of using singing on teaching phrasing, the sub-themes are as follows:

- singing helps in understanding the phraseology,
- singing helps in realising the breath points between phrases,
- breathing can indicate phrase ends and entrances,
- singing helps in understanding the shape of the phrase better, and
- singing helps in feeling the direction of the phrase.

The results of this study support the findings of the literature on using singing to achieve a better understanding of phrasing in music. From the interviews of this study, six participants (Participants 1, 4, 5, 6, 9 and 10) said that they used singing to teach shaping in phrasing. It was noticed that all the five teachers (participants 1, 3, 5, 7 and 8) from the observations of this study used singing to help students in understanding the phrasing, shaping, phraseology, direction, breath points between phrases, feeling and

emotion in the pieces. Similarly, research in other studies also indicated that asking the students to sing the phrase would naturally help them to understand the musical direction, shape and emotions of the music (Hongsermeier, 1995; Sindelar, 1989; Wolbers, 2002). As discussed by Wolbers (2002), with sensitive listening to our manner of singing, the voice will naturally guide us concerning the musical direction, shape, phrasing and emotions inherent in the music. Additionally, some researchers agreed that internalising the melody through singing would help the students to understand the phrasing within the music better (Casas-mas, 2018; Ohsawa, 2009; Priesing, 1965).

Moreover, this study's findings support the results of other studies on breathing as an aid to teaching phrasing in instrumental teaching. From the interviews of this study, four participants (participant 5, 6, 9 and 10) stressed the importance of breathing and singing in teaching phrasing in piano playing. Both participants 5 and 10 stated that breathing can indicate better phrase ends and entrances in piano playing. From the observations of this study, one of the teachers (participant 5) demonstrated the effectiveness of the use of singing and breathing while she was teaching her students (students 7, 8 and 9) how to phrase in their pieces. From the literature, Tan (2011) opined that breathing in piano playing is similar to breathing in singing in that it also involves breathing, phrasing, tone colour and intonation. Furthermore, Barrier (2009), Schenker (2000) and Vanoni (2017) shared the view that piano students should be encouraged to breathe at the right places in between phrases as it would naturally improve the students' phrasing in piano performance.

For the second emergent theme, which is the effect of using singing on teaching expressivity and musicality, the sub-themes are as follows:

- singing helps in expressivity and musicality, and
- singing helps in teaching "cantabile".

The results of this study support the findings of the literature on teaching expressivity through singing. From the interviews of this study, three participants (participant 1, 4, 6, 7 and 9) mentioned that singing can help students to feel the music and to develop greater sensitivity and awareness of musical playing. Participant 6 stated that singing the phrases would help the student to feel the dynamics, expression, shape, contour and the climax.

From the observations of this study, it was observed that two of the teachers (participants 3 and 5) used singing to evoke feeling and emotion in their students' (students 6 and 9) piano playing. It was also noticed that participants 3 and 5 used singing to enhance their students' (students 6, 7 and 9) performance in terms of expressivity and musicality during the lessons. This finding was in keeping with the literature as many researchers (Brenner & Strand, 2013; Do antan-Dack, 2011; Hsu, 2000; King, 2000; Swanson, 1969; Vanoni, 2017) opined that singing is the most natural instrument. Therefore, singing can be used as a tool to teach students expressive singing, shaping, musical expressions and emotion. Hsu's (2000) findings also support that singing helps students to understand the musical character of the piece that they were playing better. In addition, King (2000) concluded from the findings of his study that it is necessary to sing "for the development of musicality, hearing the sound produced, and as an aid in expression ..." (p.115-116).

Furthermore, the results of this study support the findings of the literature on listening to good singing as an aid to teaching "cantabile" style in piano playing. From the interviews of this study, it was found that eight of the participants (participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9) stated that they incorporated singing when teaching their students to play in a "cantabile" style. Participants 5 and 6 stressed the importance of showing the students the proper or musical way of singing in order to teach "cantabile" style effectively. According to them, the students should be taught in the way that they can

differentiate between musical and unmusical singing. However, from the observations of this study, it was surprising to note that none of the participants used singing to teach “cantabile”. As stated earlier in the perspectives of listening to good classical singing, researchers also concurred that listening to good singing is an aid to teaching “cantabile” style in piano playing (Anderson, 2011; Bellman, 2000; Eigeldinger, 1988; Rosar, 2011; Rosenblum, 1988; Skousen, 2011).

For the third emergent theme, which is the effect of using singing on teaching “rubato”, it was found that singing helps in teaching “rubato” and “rubato” is derived from singing. The results of this study indicate the positive effect of using singing on teaching “rubato”. From the interviews of this study, participant 7 said that teachers could use singing to improve their students’ phrasing of piano playing in “the speed, especially the “ritard”, “rit” or “rubato” style”. Participant 9 explained his concept of “rubato” as playing around with the “tempo” as singers do not really sing in “tempo”. In his opinion, “rubato” is actually derived from the singing.

From the observation of this study, participant 3 used singing to improve her student’s (student 6) “rubato” playing in a lyrical piece. The results of this study support the findings of Eigeldinger (1988) on the investigation of Chopin’s pianistic style and performance. practice. Eigeldinger (1988) explained that it was Chopin’s strong belief that singing was the foundation of all instrumental teaching, and that “rubato” in piano playing became more persuasive if it were inspired by vocal music.

The last emergent theme is the effect of using singing on teaching voicing. The results of this study indicate that approaches to teaching phrasing in piano playing included the understanding of voicing within the phrases in contrapuntal pieces and singing helps in increasing sensitivity to voicing. From the interviews of this study, participant 5 and 9 encouraged their students to sing the melody with greater emphasis

whenever it appeared at different voices within contrapuntal pieces. It was noticed from the observations of this study that three teachers (participants 1, 3 and 7) used singing to teach voicing to their students (students 2, 6 and 12). This is a novel finding as there was no literature in using singing on teaching voicing.

5.3.3 Other Purposes and Benefits of Using Singing in Piano Lessons

In exploring the other purposes and benefits of using singing in piano lessons, the findings from this study indicates several significant results. The two emergent themes were the purposes and the benefits of using singing in piano lessons (See Table 5.3).

Table 5.3

Other Purposes and Benefits of Using Singing in Piano Lessons

The purposes of using singing in piano lessons	The benefits of using singing in piano lessons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to improve the accuracy of the melody and the rhythm • to hear the melody before playing on the piano and to encourage imitation • to encourage audiation while playing • to improve the awareness of fingering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • singing helps in better awareness of articulations, dynamic contrasts and good tone • singing helps in aural, sight-singing and musicianship • singing helps in promoting better fluency in performance

For the first sub-theme from the first emergent theme: the purposes of using singing in piano lessons, two participants (participants 3 and 6) from the interviews found that singing can be used as a teaching tool to teach the accuracy of the melody. Correspondingly, three participants (participants 4, 8 and 9) opined that singing is one of the best teaching tools to teach accuracy of the rhythm. From the observations of this

study, the results showed that four teachers (participants 1, 3, 7 and 8) included singing as a tool during piano lessons to teach accuracy of the melody for ten of the students (students 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15). The results also showed that three teachers (participants 1, 3 and 8) used singing to improve the accuracy of the rhythm when five of the students (students 3, 6, 13, 14 and 15) had difficulty in playing the rhythm correctly in their pieces and exercises. It was observed that singing can help students to improve the accuracy of the melody and rhythm of the pieces they were playing. Subsequently, it was also noted that singing helped in the memorisation of the pieces. Frewen (2010) and Priesing (1965) shared the view that children who sang the melody while learning their pieces could perform the notes more accurately on the piano. Further, Hsu (2000) and Yeom (2015) also supported the concept that singing can help students in memorising the rhythm correctly.

For the second and third sub-themes (See Table 5.3), it was observed that for two of the students (students 2 and 5), the teachers (participants 1 and 3) encouraged them to sing the melody before playing on the piano. Both teachers also sang and encouraged the student to imitate them. Similarly, five participants (participants 1, 2, 6, 8 and 9) from the interviews said that they sang or played the phrases musically in order for their students to listen and to imitate. They found this approach helpful in solving the problem when the student's phrasing lacked direction, shape and expression.

As for the third sub-theme, it was also observed that for four of the students (students 6, 9, 10 and 11), the teachers (participants 3, 5 and 7) used internalised singing to encourage audiation while their students were playing. The results of this study support Choi's (2001) lesson plan of her study. One of the characteristics of her lesson plan was to encourage the children to audiate vocally by singing and chanting before they played on the piano. She believed that this would help the children to develop

audiation skills on their instruments as their ability to audiate and proficiency in singing would cause them to be able to transfer the patterns to the piano. Moreover, Priesing (1965) encouraged students to practise singing the melody before playing it, and also to keep on singing the melody silently while playing on the piano.

Finally, for the last sub-theme (See Table 5.3), which is to improve the awareness of fingering through singing, participant 4 from the interview, explained how he used singing to teach his students “legato” fingering in piano playing. His approach to teaching the awareness of fingering was to ask his students to sing the finger numbers in a “legato” manner.

From the observations of this study, it was observed that participant 3 used singing as a teaching tool to teach fingering. This was usually when her students (students 4, 5, and 6) had difficulty in using the correct fingering in playing their pieces, exercise or scales. This is a novel finding as there was no literature on using the singing of the finger numbers for better awareness of fingering.

As for the second emergent theme: the benefits of using singing in piano lessons (See Table 5.3), the first sub-theme was that singing helps in better awareness of articulations, dynamic contrasts and good tone. Participant 4 from the interviews of this study said that he created his own short and simple singing exercises during the piano lesson to teach his students the concept of different articulations and good tone. In teaching dynamic contrasts during piano playing, another participant from the interviews (participant 2) mentioned that she would use singing. From the observations of this study, it was observed that all the five teachers used singing to teach their students (students 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 12 and 13) different articulations in piano playing, especially in playing the “legato” passages in the pieces. In the area of dynamic contrast, it was observed that four teachers (participants 3, 5, 7 and 8) used singing for

five of their students (students 6, 7, 8, 11 and 13) in attempting to improve their students' playing. To develop the concept of good tone, participant 5 used singing to demonstrate the quality of the tone for two of her students (students 7 and 9). Hsu's (2000) study mentioned that singing is helpful in teaching students the "legato" touch and to help students in developing beautiful tone production in piano playing. In Vanoni's (2017) study, she explained that the second stage of the training of the ear, "requires the learning of singing in order to understand the aim of a piece, to correctly play the dynamics, phrasing, articulation and to shape the tempo of the piece" (p.45).

For the second sub-theme, which is that singing helps in aural, sight-singing and musicianship, participants 7 and 9 from the interviews said that they used singing exercises from aural training books to improve their students' musicianship skills. From the observations of this study, it was observed that two teachers (participants 3 and 7) started the lessons with aural and sight-singing for their students (students 4, 6, 10 and 11). It was also observed that for two of the students (students 5 and 6), the teacher (participants 3) used singing to teach transposition, which is one of the aspects of musicianship. Furthermore, it was observed that participant 8 used singing in conjunction with hand signs and body percussion to enhance her student's (student 15) aural ability in pitch and rhythm. The results of this study support the literature on the benefits of singing in developing musicianship in instrumental playing. Robinson (1996) shared the view that singing is an important tool to help develop students' musicianship skills. He opined that this would help to improve sight-reading, intonation and instrumental skills. In addition, Wolbers (2002) included singing in the band rehearsals as a tool to learn aural skills, intonation and musical phrasing. Similarly, Sheridan's (2015) research showed that all the participants in her study made significant use of singing as an aid in teaching musical skills in their Kodály-based music lessons.

The final sub-theme is that singing helps in promoting better fluency in performance. From the interviews, participant 5 described how her teacher sang along while she was playing during piano lessons. According to participant 5, her teacher did not have a good voice and his pitching was not so accurate, but she could feel that her teacher was singing from his heart and his voice influenced her playing tremendously. From the observations of this study, it was observed that four teachers (participants 1, 5, 7 and 8) used singing to promote better fluency in performance for their students (student 1, 2, 3, 9, 12 and 15). The teachers usually sang along occasionally for better continuity when their students were hesitant in their playing. The reasons for singing along when their students were playing was to help the students to keep thinking of the main melody. For instance, participant 5 sang at points and conducted her student (student 9) when her student played the first four phrases of the nocturne in both hands. Participant 5 commented that in the descending scale towards the end of the fourth phrase the student should not stop the inner singing as she felt that he had stopped thinking of the singing line from within. Priesing (1965) opined that “music is a thought-process” (p.42) and she encouraged students to practise singing the melody before playing it, and also to keep on singing the melody silently while playing on the piano. She also emphasised that internalising the melody through singing would help the performer to understand the phrasing better. Frewen (2010) concurred that children who had internalised the melody could play the notes more accurately on the keyboard, which would result in a more fluent performance.

5.4 Answering the Research Questions

How is singing used as an aid in teaching phrasing during piano lessons?

Singing is used as an aid in teaching phrasing during piano lessons in several ways:

- to understand the phrase structure,
- to have a better awareness of the breath points,
- to shape the phrases better,
- to have a better awareness of dynamic contrasts and tone,
- and a better understanding of the direction of the phrases.

First, piano teachers could sing or ask the students to sing through the melody lines of the piece. Teachers and students could either sing the melody in “solfege” for elementary and easier pieces or they can just sing the melody using vowels for the more difficult and advanced pieces. Through singing, teachers will be able to explain the phrase structure of the piece, which will help students to understand the phraseology of the piece better. By using singing instead of just playing through the melody lines of the piece, teachers would be able to show their students the breath points in between phrases in a natural way. This can be reinforced by asking the students to sing the melody as well.

In order to show the correct shaping of the phrases, piano teachers would have to demonstrate the dynamic contrasts and gradation of tone such as “crescendo” and “diminuendo” in the phrases through their singing. Teachers can ask the students to listen to their singing and then encourage the students to imitate their singing. Through listening to their teachers’ singing and learning to sing the phrases by themselves, students would have a better awareness of dynamic contrasts and tone colour when playing on the piano.

As for the direction of the phrases, Wolbers (2002) opined that sensitive listening to our manner of singing will naturally guide us concerning the musical direction, shape, phrasing and emotions inherent in the music. Therefore, teachers could sing in a musical manner in order for their students to have clearer direction of the phrases in their piano playing.

Two sub-questions which correspond to the main research question are now answered:

- How does breathing in singing affect the phrasing and shaping in the musical performance of students on the piano?

Learning to breathe in singing will help piano students in realising that they will need to breathe before playing a phrase in their music. When students can understand the concept of breathing in singing, they will be able to apply the same feeling of breathing in singing into their piano playing. From the interview findings, one of the participants explained that piano teachers could teach their students how to phrase off or to end each phrase musically and pianistically by lifting up their hands at the wrist when they inhale. This gesture of lifting up the hands and wrists in piano playing is similar to the physical gesture of breathing in singing and will help to promote better phrasing and shaping in the musical performance of students on the piano. Tan (2011) opined that piano playing is similar to singing in that it also involves breathing, phrasing, tone colour and intonation. He also added that, in fact, breathing in piano playing is similar to breathing in singing. Moreover, Barrier (2009) stated that in order to create sound, musicians need to understand the concept of breathing and to regulate their breathing efficiently. Furthermore, in terms of shaping a phrase more effectively, it was observed that one of the participants employed breathing in such a way that she was able to demonstrate how to shape a phrase for her student. Therefore, learning to breathe in

singing brings positive effects to the phrasing and shaping in the musical performance of students on the piano.

- How does singing affect expressivity in the musical performance of students on the piano?

In a study conducted by Brenner and Strand (2013) on investigating the teaching of musical expression to young performers, singing was believed by all the five teachers as the easiest way to teach students musical expression and emotions as it is the most natural instrument. From the observations, I discovered that piano teachers used singing to enhance the expressivity and musicality in the performance of their students on the piano. They demonstrated the feelings and emotions, which were appropriate for the pieces by their singing. The teachers sang in an exaggerated manner in order to portray emotions that were more suited to the various moods within the piece. The students tried to play in the same way that their teachers sang. In addition, teachers stated that one of the approaches they would use in teaching expressivity was to intentionally sing the same phrase in a musical and unmusical way. This was to encourage their students to distinguish the difference between playing musically and unmusically. In this way, they hoped that their students would develop greater sensitivity and awareness of musical playing. Moreover, Vanoni (2017) stressed the importance of training the ear through listening to expert instrumentalists and singers to develop good musical taste in choosing the right means of expression in piano performance. A further teacher's perspective on using singing for increasing the range of expressivity was to encourage the students to listen to good classical singing. By teaching and training students to listen and appreciate the elements in good singing, teachers will be able to help students to improve their musical interpretation and heighten the students' understanding of good sound.

5.5 Implications of the Study

The implications of this study are to encourage piano teachers to see that singing can be used as one of the teaching tools to enhance their students' phrasing during lessons. This study provides many suggestions and piano pedagogical methods on the incorporation of singing as an aid to teaching phrasing in music during piano lessons. Moreover, it is hoped that this study creates an awareness of the effectiveness of using breathing as an aid in teaching phrasing and shaping in a musical performance. Lastly, this study also suggests the use of singing as an aid to teaching phrasing which may enhance the expressivity and musicality of the students' playing during piano lessons.

5.6 Limitations of the Current Study

There were two limitations in conducting this research. First, the sample size used in this research was relatively small as only ten piano teachers were interviewed. Second, the number of observations was limited as only one observation was made for each student and therefore it was not possible to chart the progress of the effectiveness of using singing in teaching phrasing during piano lessons.

5.7 Recommendations for Future Research

This research is confined to discovering the music teachers' opinions on incorporating singing in piano lessons as a tool for teaching phrasing in music during piano lessons. It is recommended that more research can be conducted to investigate the benefits of incorporating singing as a tool for teaching phrasing in music for other instruments such as strings, woodwind and brass instruments. As such, investigation into this area of incorporating singing in the other instrumental lessons may help more music teachers in developing a better understanding of teaching phrasing and interpretation to their students. Furthermore, in this research, the age of the 15 piano

students ranged from five to 23 years old. It is recommended that more focussed research be conducted on students according to their age groups, for instance, young beginners, teenage or adult students. In this way the effectiveness of using singing to teach phrasing in music during piano lessons could be assessed according to the specific age group of students. Lastly, this research could be expanded to include the teaching of other genres of piano music such as jazz and popular styles in order to widen the understanding of pedagogical approaches which could include the incorporation of singing as a tool for teaching phrasing in music during piano lessons.

5.8 Conclusions

To surmise, this study contributes to the knowledge in piano pedagogical methods of how incorporating singing can be used as a tool in teaching phrasing in piano lessons. The findings from this study covered three broad areas, namely, the importance of singing, using singing in teaching phrasing in piano playing and, other approaches and benefits of using singing in piano lessons. For the importance of singing, some significant results on the perspectives on singing were that all instrumentalists must sing, singing is an extension of speech and singing is the essence of music. There was a novel finding where one of the participants expressed that listening to good classical singing would build musicianship and musicality from the early stages of music learning.

As for using singing in teaching phrasing in piano playing, several significant results were that singing helps in understanding the phraseology, realising the breath points between phrases, understanding the shape of the phrase better, feeling the direction of the phrase and, enhancing both expressivity and musicality. A novel finding was that singing was also used to teach voicing in piano playing. As for the other approaches of using singing in piano lessons, the results included using singing to

improve the accuracy of the melody and the rhythm, memorisation of the pieces, hearing the melody before playing it on the piano and imitating and, audiating while playing. A novel finding was to use the singing of finger numbers to improve the awareness of fingering in piano playing. Lastly, for the benefits of using singing in piano lessons, the results indicated that singing helps in better awareness of articulations, dynamic contrasts, good tone, aural, sight-singing, musicianship, and better fluency in performance.

It is evident that the use of singing has positive effects in teaching phrasing in terms of having a better understanding of the phrase structure, breath points, shaping, dynamic contrasts, tone colour and direction. It was also found that singing can be an aid in teaching breathing and it is one of the best ways in teaching expressivity in piano playing.

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