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Self-Efficacy of Piano Teachers' of Specialized Music School

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ABSTRACT

The piano teachers from specialized music schools have been often criticized for a lack of psychological and pedagogical competences, i.e. emotional instability, proneness for engendering fear, inability to motivate pupils etc. This paper deals with the following questions: How do piano teachers self evaluate their professional competences? Will their self-assessment be the same as this of their supervisors? The theoretical framework is provided by the theory of self-efficacy and teacher self-efficacy. The main findings indicate that 130 surveyed piano teachers have a very high level of self-efficacy. At the same time the results reveal contradiction between the piano teachers' self-efficacy level and the evaluation of their supervisors, who assessed their teachers much lower. The findings confirm the piano teachers' shortage of motivational skills. However, the psychological competences in which the surveyed teachers feel most confident correspond with the weakest aspects, as identified by previous research and the opinions of musical experts.

I. INTRODUCTION

The presented research has been conducted in specialized music schools (governed and financed by the State) in Poland. This intensive music education (existing in some countries of the former Eastern Block in Europe) is aimed at musically gifted pupils. A very well-developed network of these schools has been established in order to educate professional musicians (especially 6-year secondary music schools), to create well-educated and competent audience for the future (especially 6-year primary music schools). The academies of music (in Warsaw – University of Music) are the highest level of this music educational system. The pupils from the age of 7 intensively learn playing instruments during individual lessons and different music subjects (music theory, aural training, history of music, eurhythmics, harmony etc.) during group classes (twice a week each).

There is considerable evidence that instrumental teachers (among whom piano teachers are the most numerous group) play a crucial role in the music and general development of their pupils. Their position is stronger and more powerful than that of group class teachers from music schools or of ordinary teachers in general schools. First of all, instrumental teaching takes place during individual lessons, which creates intimacy between the teacher and the pupil; moreover it causes the pupil to become dependent on his/her teacher to considerable extent. In relation to the pupil, which is asymmetrical in itself, it is the teacher who will always be the stronger party (Hanken, 2000). Secondly, the subject matter (that is: music) makes the relationship between the teacher and the pupil very emotional.

Many other studies have shown that the instrumental teacher is one of the most important people in the life of pupils, students and professional musicians (Ilari, 2000; Manturzewska, 1990; Miklaszewski, 2000; Sosniak, 1985, 1990,). He/she influences general and musical development of their pupils and has impact on their development of musical achievements, performance skills and their attitudes towards music and a musical profession. The instrumental teachers are responsible for shaping the intrinsic motivation, the first musical experience, the musical interests and preferences, as well as for developing personality and building up self-confidence of the pupil (Gliniecka-Rekawik, 2007).

Researchers have also found that the relationship between instrumental teachers and pupils might be a source of pupils' frustration, negative feelings towards music and disappointment with music education. For this reason pupils often give up instrumental learning at the early stages. Sloboda and Howe (1995) suggest that instrumental teachers, their way of behavior, cordiality and warmth are extremely important especially in the early years of instruction. While older pupils are able to appreciate professional qualifications of their teachers and "turn a blind eye" to negative personality traits, for the younger ones the character of their teacher has the fundamental meaning, and in fact it determines whether the pupils will continue instrumental learning, or no (Davidson, Howe & Sloboda, 1995). Klinedinst (1992) concludes that about 25% of the pupils resign from instrumental learning after the first year of their classes, additionally Sloboda and Howe (1995) claim that only a small percentage of learners are understanding towards their teachers to continue instrumental learning until reaching the satisfactory level of their performing competence.

Sandede (1997, after: Ilari, 2000) indicates that pupils are often discouraged by their teachers' improper approach, who concentrate too much on achievements and are more oriented to fulfilling their own ambitions. The lesson is not a gratifying experience, and it does not contribute to pleasure from instrument playing, on the contrary - the teachers often create the atmosphere of fright. Sloboda (1993) states that if initially the teachers exert too a big pressure on success then intrinsic motivation of the pupils may be hampered and the latter will experience stress and fear while playing an instrument rather than satisfaction. That's why many gifted pupils do not fully utilize their capacities (Manturzewska, 1990).

The opinions of Polish musical experts, music teachers, psychologists working in the specialized music schools and students of music academies are in accordance with these research results. So far these views have not been supported by empirical research. They are known from meetings and discussions organized by institutions responsible for music education (Manturzewska & Chmurzynska, 1999). The experts claim that the instrumental teachers are not prepared well enough in terms of psychological and pedagogical competence contrary to strict musical competence. In their opinions it is the instrumental teachers' training that is to blame for that. E. g. during the music studies in music academies the future instrumental teachers (especially piano teachers) are prepared to be soloists. Above all they acquire a very high level of music competence. Also, former music

schools pupils (now students of music academies) very often evaluate their instrumental teachers from music schools in a negative way (Konaszkiewicz, 2001). The most common critical comments of both of these groups refer to psychological and pedagogical incompetence, e. g.: emotional instability (the teachers are changeable in moods and attitudes to pupils); arousing fear instead of pleasure during lessons; inability to motivate pupils towards regular practice and systematic work; tendency to attribute pupils' success to their (teachers') work and to reject the responsibility for the negative results of instrumental playing; discouragement by choosing too difficult programs and extensive demands; putting heavy emphasis on musical professionalism from the beginning and on musical achievements; critical comments that undermine the pupils' self-esteem, which causes that pupils feel a sense of failure; lack of clear feedback about their headway. As far as the pianist competence is concerned, it is claimed that the instrumental teachers (especially piano teachers) do not play the piano during the lessons.

The present study aims to examine piano teachers self-efficacy with regard to more detailed, various and specific professional competence required in piano teaching in order to identify the strongest and weakest points in their work. Therefore the key questions will be asked as follows: How do piano teachers evaluate their own musical, pedagogical and psychological competence? Will their self-assessment be the same as this of experts (known from the literature), as well as of their present supervisors?

II. BACKGROUND

The theoretical framework is provided by the theory of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1994, 1997, 200), general self-efficacy (Schwarzer, 1998) and teacher self-efficacy (Tschannen-Morgan, Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy, 1998; Woolfolk Hoy, 2000).

A. Bandura defined this construct as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Goddard, Hoy & Woolfolk Hoy, 2004, p. 3). According to his theory, self-efficacy is an assessment of one's competence and abilities in a particular field. Therefore it must be considered in relation to specification and requirements of given situations and tasks. Over the last 30 years a number of researchers around the world have been conducting studies concerning various aspects of self-efficacy, e.g. factors and determinants influencing self-efficacy. The results reveal that self-assessment concerning one's own competence, skills and abilities have fundamental importance for an individual's functioning, thinking and behaviors, because he/she tends to engage in a task in which they feel competent and believe they will cope with (Pajares & Schunk, 2001).

Some researchers have also conceptualized a generalized sense of self-efficacy that refers to a global confidence in oneself. General self-efficacy is evident in a broad and stable sense of personal competence to deal effectively with a variety of stressful situations (Schwarzer, 1998).

Teachers' self-efficacy is identified as a type of self-efficacy which has been defined as "the extent to which the teacher believes that he/she has the capacity to affect students' performance" (Tschannen-Moran et all, 1998, p. 203). It is teachers' confidence in their ability and competence to promote students' learning, to foster engagement to study even among those students who are difficult or unmotivated. This construct has been examined in reference to specific competence and tasks connected with practice teaching, requirements towards teachers. According to teacher self-efficacy literature, teachers can feel efficacious in one context and quite inefficacious in another (Tschannen-Moran et all, 2001). The results of the teachers' self-efficacy research have indicated that it is an important factor determining the effectiveness of the teaching process (Allinder, 1994; Ashton, 1984; Ashton & Webb, 1986; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Guskey, 1984; Pajares, 2002; Pajares & Schunk, 2001; Shaughnessy, 2004; Woolfolk Hoy, 2000; Woolfolk Hoy & Davis, 2006).

III. AIMS

The main aims of the present study are the following:

1. recognition of general self efficacy level (comparative study) and piano teachers' self efficacy level;
2. identification of the strongest and weakest points in their teaching with reference to musical, pedagogical and psychological competence;
3. comparison of the self-assessment of professional competence of piano teachers' with the assessment of their supervisors.

IV. METHODES

130 piano teachers (from primary specialized music schools) have completed two questionnaires to assess self-efficacy level. The first one is *The General Self-Efficacy Scale GSES* - brief scale, consisting of 10 items, designed to measure this construct at the level of general personality disposition (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995). The participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with 10 statements. The responses were made on a 4-point scale (from 1 – not at all true, to 4 – exactly true). The examples of the items are presented below:

I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.

I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.

The second is a questionnaire constructed especially to measure the piano teacher self-efficacy (PTSE – *Piano Teacher Self-Efficacy* questionnaire). It consists of three areas of competence (musical, pedagogical, psychological), distinguished on the basis of teachers' competence literature. Each of them comprises 10 statements reflecting specific competence which were recognized by the musical experts and pedagogues as crucial in the effective piano teaching (Chmurzynska, 2009). All of the competences comprised in PTSE are presented below with the symbols, used in other analyses:

PTSE 1– musical competences

PTSE 1.1: *being able to establish the pupil's musical technique*

PTSE 1.2: *being able to introduce the pupil into historical and stylistic problem corresponding with the pieces played by him/her*

PTSE 1.3: *being able to play a vista during lesson without difficulty*

PTSE 1.4: *being able to make the pupil create beautiful sounds*

PTSE 1.5: *being able to assess in the right and objective way a musical performance during exams and auditions*

PTSE 1.6: *being able to play a piece for the pupil on which he/she works, on the suitable technical level at any moment*

PTSE 1.7: *being able to interpret the artistic meaning of a musical piece of work*

PTSE 1.8: *being able to sing in tune and with appropriate expression the musical phrase from the pupil's piece*

PTSE 1.9: *being able to keep balance in teaching between musical training and technical training*

PTSE 1.10: *being able to introduce the pupil into the formal, harmonic problems appearing in the pieces played by him/her in a competent way*

PTSE 2 – pedagogical competences

PTSE 2.1: *being able to motivate the pupil towards regular practice*

PTSE 2.2: *being able to adjust teaching methods and style to the pupil's possibilities and personality*

PTSE 2.3: *being able to foster an interest in music, even if the pupil is unwilling or reluctant*

PTSE 2.4: *being able to plan well the successive stages of pupil's work and set him/her realistic goals to achieve*

PTSE 2.5: *being able to express oneself clearly and in the way understood by the pupil*

PTSE 2.6: *being able to enforce consequently one's requirements*

PTSE 2.7: *being able to convey to the pupil (and in the case of younger children - their parents) honest and clear information about their progress*

PTSE 2.8: *being able to adjust the demands to the pupil's possibilities*

PTSE 2.9: *being able to make the pupil aware what and how they should practice at home*

PTSE 2.10: *being able to teach in the creative and non schematic way*

PTSE 3 – psychological competences

PTSE 3.1: *being able to create safe and friendly atmosphere for the pupil during a lesson*

PTSE 3.2: *being able to establish the positive relationship based on mutual respect and understanding*

PTSE 3.3: *being able to help the pupil to overcome the symptoms of stage anxiety*

PTSE 3.4: *being able to fully understand the pupil*

PTSE 3.5: *being able to base in professional work on one's own standards*

PTSE 3.6: *being able to control oneself even if the teaching situation is very difficult*

PTSE 3.7: *being able to make the pupil feel joy from contact with music*

PTSE 3.8: *being able to show the pupil how much one believes in him/her, his/her possibilities and the headway, even if he/she experiences failure*

PTSE 3.9: *being able to evaluate one's pedagogical activity honestly and appropriately, and on this base improve the methods of teaching*

PTSE 3.10*: feeling responsible for the results (positive and negative) of instrumental playing of the pupil*

All the items were couched according to typical forms of teacher self-efficacy measures (Bandura, 1997; Schwarzer, Schmitz & Daytner, 1999), while the contents of the statements were adjusted to piano teaching situations. For example:

I am able to play a vista during lesson without difficulty (PTSE 1.3 - musical area)

I can plan well the successive stages of pupil's work and set him/her realistic goals to achieve (PTSE 2.4 - pedagogical area)

I can make my pupils feel joy from contact with music (PTSE 3.7 – psychological area)

The participants were asked to indicate to what extent they can accomplish a given task based on their competence using a 4-point Likert scale. It was assumed that 4 points reflect a high level of competence, 3 points - medium level, and 2 points - low level. There weren't any responses indicating the lack of given competence (1 point).

Cronbach's alphas ranged for musical areas - 0.74, for pedagogical – 0.78, for psychological - 0.76, for total – 0.90 in the sample consisting of 130 piano teachers. The content validity was investigated with the participation of 14 experts (Chmurzynska, 2009)

105 supervisors of the sample of piano teachers have completed the questionnaire designed to make the assessment of the competence of their teachers. This questionnaire was based on the PTSE questionnaire, from which some of the statements (six from each area) were formulated anew in order to make a teacher the subject of assessment. It was necessary to omit the rest of the items, which the supervisors may not have answered.

V. RESULTS

A. General Self-Efficacy Level - The Comparative Study

To measure this construct *General Self-Efficacy Scale* (GSES) was used in the sample of piano teachers' examination. Then these scores were compared with the scores of the international research carried out by German scientists (Schwarzer, 1998), conducted with the participation of various national groups (also with the participation of the other Polish group). The complete comparative data scored by the piano teachers and other national groups are shown in Table 1. Student's t-test was used to verify significant statistical differences. The homogeneity of variance was checked and depending on the results the appropriate test was applied.

The mean of piano teachers scored 32.95. That reveals that the piano teachers demonstrate a very strong general self-efficacy level, stronger than other European nationalities (except for the Spanish group all the differences are significant) and much stronger than the Polish group participating in Schwarzer's research (t = 10.267, p < .0005). The difference in the means scores between piano teachers and other nationalities was significant (t = 8,662, p < .0005). It proves their very high self-efficacy level as a general personality disposition.

In order to determine the relation between general self-efficacy and piano teachers' self-efficacy the correlation between GSES and each of the three categorizes of PTSE (musical, pedagogical, psychological) was examined (Table 2).

Table 1. Comparison of general self-efficacy level of the Polish piano teachers and various international groups

Piano teachers: M=32.95, SD = 5.63, N = 130							
National samples	**M**	**SD**	**N**	**Homogeneity of variance F**	**p**	**t**	**p**
Spanish (Costa Rica)	33.23	4.38	953	1.652	.005	0.545	NS
Russian	32.04	4.72	495	1.423	.004	1.693	0.0461
Dutch	31.26	5.21	697	1.168	.116	3.178	0.0009
Greek	30.77	3.86	100	2.127	.005	3.478	0.0003
Indonesian	30.11	5.10	536	1.219	NS	5.253	0.0005
German	29.32	4.96	2129	1.288	.021	7.046	0.0005
Canadian	29.21	4.72	289	1.423	.008	6.602	0.0005
English (GB)	29.12	4.75	219	1.405	.014	6.503	0.0005
Arabian (Syria)	29.01	4.33	264	1.690	.005	7.022	0.0005
Hungarian	28.24	4.42	158	1.622	.017	6.356	0.0005
Korean	27.60	6.30	146	1.252	NS	7.450	0.0005
Polish	27.32	5.31	570	1.124	NS	10.267	0.0005
Chinese (Hong Kong)	23.12	4.91	1068	1.315	.014	19.045	0.0005
Japanese	20.25	6.21	430	1.217	NS	21.991	0.0005
Self-efficacy sum score (14 countries)	28.63	6.18	7767	1.205	NS	8.662	0.0005

The correlations were found to be moderate, ranging from r = .53 to r = .57 ($p < .001$). These results confirmed a significant association between GSES and PTSE in the three distinguished areas. If the sample of piano teachers' scores very high mean in this examination and general self-efficacy correlates significantly with PTSE, it is safe to assume that the level of PTSE can be appropriately high: The stronger self-efficacy, the stronger teacher self-efficacy should be.

Table 2. Correlations between general self-efficacy (GSES) and teachers' self-efficacy (PTSE) of the piano teachers

	PTSE		
	musical	**pedagogical**	**psychological**
GSES	.566**	.529**	.541**

**Correlation is significant at the .001 level (1-tailed)

B. Piano Teachers' Self-Efficacy Level

In fact, the distribution of responses obtained from PTSE questionnaire lets us conclude that the piano teachers have a very high level of professional self-efficacy. One can assume that based on the dominance of the responses revealing the high level in the three distinguished areas. Figures 1, 2, 3 present the proportions between the percentage of responses indicating a high level and the percentage of responses indicating a medium or low level.

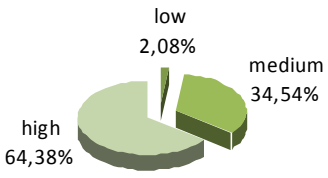

Figure 1. Piano teachers' self-efficacy level in musical area

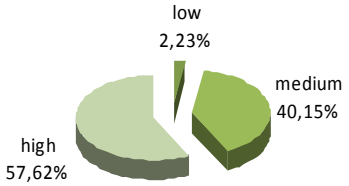

Figure 2. Piano teachers' self-efficacy level in pedagogical area

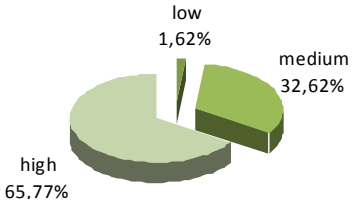

Figure 3. Piano teachers' self-efficacy level in psychological musical area

The stipulation how the piano teachers assess their own level of particular competence was the next step of this study. It was assumed that because almost all from the sample of piano teachers were graduates from music academies - and in the majority of cases (70%) they were from instrumental departments - the self-efficacy beliefs in their musical competence will be stronger than in their psychological or pedagogical competence for which, according to experts' opinions, instrumental teachers seem to be much less prepared.

In the musical area the competence determined as a PTSE 1.10: *being able to introduce the pupil into the formal, harmonic problems appearing in the pieces played by him/her in a competent way* (M = 3.77, SD = 0.46) and PTSE 1.8: *being able to sing in tune and with appropriate expression the musical phrase from the pupil's piece* (M = 3.75, SD = 0.48) have the highest self-assessment of piano teachers. They evaluated themselves the lowest in reference to PTSE 1.6: *being able to play a piece for the pupil on which he/she works, on the suitable technical level at any moment* (M =3.39, SD = 0.65) and to PTSE: 1.3: *being able to play "a vista" during lesson without difficulty* (M = 3.48, SD = 0.60).

The difference between the highest and the lowest self-evaluated competence is significant (Table 3), however the self-efficacy in the musical area is the most equal (compared to the others). One must point out that there is lack of very high and very low scores in self-assessment.

Table 3. Comparison of the highest and the lowest self-assessed musical competences (N = 130)

	PTSE 1.6 M = 3.39, SD = 0.65		PTSE 1.3 M = 3.48, SD = 0.60	
	t	**p**	**t**	**p**
PTSE 1.10 M = 3.77 SD = 0.46	5.4628	<.0005	4.3737	<.0005
PTSE 1.8 M = 3.76 SD = 0.43	5.4453	<.0005	4.3440	<.0005
PTSE 1.7 M = 3.75 SD = 0.48	5.0800	<.0005	4.0063	<.0005

Among pedagogical competences, the sample of piano teachers assessed definitely the highest competence determined as a PTSE 2.7: *being able to convey to the pupil (and in the case of younger children - their parents) honest and clear information about their progress* (M = 3.85, SD = 0.35). PTSE 2.8 (*being able to adjust the demands to the pupil's possibilities*) is the next of this hierarchy, but with the mean scores significantly lower in rapport with the previous one (M = 3.7, SD = 0.46; $t = 3.7480$, $p < .001$).

The lowest means obtained PTSE 2.3: *being able to foster an interest in music, even if the pupil is unwilling or reluctant* (M = 2.98, SD = 0.63) and PTSE 2.1: *being able to motivate the pupil towards regular practice* (M = 3.16, SD = 0.39). Also in this case the differences between means of these lowest self-assessed competences turned out significant ($t = 2.7700$, $p < .01$). In the pedagogical area we have noticed the biggest diversification of the self-assessments of the separate competences – there are very low scores, as well as very high ones. The biggest difference is between PTSE 2.1 and PTSE 2.7 ($t = 15.0158$, $p < .0000$). It confirms the rules of self-efficacy theory that an individual can have a different self-efficacy level in rapport with various competences and tasks from the same domain (Bandura, 1997, 2006; Tschannen-Morgan at all, 1998).

The piano teachers in terms of psychological area are the most confident in their competence PTSE 3.10: *feeling responsible for the results (positive and negative) of instrumental playing of the pupil* (M= 3.88, SD = 0.34) and PTSE 3.1: *being able to create safe and friendly atmosphere for the pupil during a lesson* (M = 3.83, SD = 0.38). They assessed themselves also highly in reference to PTSE 3.5: *being able to base on one's own standards in professional work* (M = 3.73, SD = 0.46) and PTSE: 3.2: *being able to establish the positive relationship based on mutual respect and understanding* (M = 3.72, SD = 0.47). One needs to point out that in this area there is the biggest number of high self-assessment scores.

The lowest self-assessment concerns PTSE 3.3: *being able to help the pupil to overcome the symptoms of stage* anxiety (M = 3.26, SD = 0.58) and PTSE 3.7: *being able to make the pupil feel joy from contact with music* (M = 3.45, SD = 0.51). At the same time the difference between their means is significant ($t = 2.8050$, $p < .01$).

On the basis of these scores a list of competences has been constructed, in which the sample of piano teachers feel the most and the least competent and efficacious. They have the strongest self-efficacy with reference to the following competences:

PTSE 3.10: *feeling responsible for the results (positive and negative) of instrumental playing of the pupil* (M=3.88, SD = 0.34)

PTSE 2.7: *being able to convey to the pupil (and in the case of younger children - their parents) honest and clear information about their progress* (M = 3.85, SD = 0.35)

PTSE 3.1: *being able to create safe and friendly atmosphere for the pupil during a lesson* (M=3.83; SD = 0.38)

PTSE 1.10: *being able to introduce the pupil into the formal, harmonic problems appearing in the pieces played by him/her in a competent way* (M=3.77, SD = 0.46)

PTSE 1.8: *being able to sing in tune and with appropriate expression the musical phrase from the pupil's piece* (M = 3.76, SD = 0.43)

A significant difference was found between the mean scores of the highest self-assessment of psychological competence (PTSE 3.10) and the highest self-assessment of musical competence (PTSE 1.10. 1.8) (respectively $t = 2.2167$, $p < .05$; $t = 2.5416$, $p < .05$).

The next places in this hierarchy were taken by three psychological competence (among them there is PTSE 3.8: *being able to show the pupil how much one believes in him/her, his/her possibilities and the headway, even if he/she experiences failure*) and one musical (PTSE 1.7: *being able to interpret the artistic meaning of a musical piece of work*). However, it is worth pointing out that the differences between them and the above-mentioned musical competence are not significant. All these competences (with the predominance of psychological competence) were found as the strongest points of the piano teachers' teaching practice.

The sample of piano teachers' has the weakest self-efficacy with reference to the following competences:

1. PTSE 2.3: *being able to foster an interest in music, even if the pupil is unwilling or reluctant* (M = 2.98, SD = 0.63)
2. PTSE 2.1: *being able to motivate the pupil towards regular practice* (M = 3.16, SD = 0.39)
3. PTSE 3.3: *being able to help the pupil to overcome the symptoms of stage anxiety* (M = 3.26, SD = 0.58)

4. PTSE 1.6: *being able to play a piece for the pupil on which he/she works, on the suitable technical level at any moment* (M = 3.39, SD = 0.65)
5. PTSE 3.7: *being able to make the pupil feel joy from contact with music* (M = 3.45, SD = 0.51)

All of the differences between the means (except for the differences between PTSE 1. 6 - PTSE 3.7 and PTSE 2.1 - PTSE 3.3) turned out to be significant: the biggest between PTSE 2.3 and PTSE 3.7 ($t = 6.6110$, $p < .005$).

The next places were taken by musical competence PTSE 1.4 (*being able to make the pupil create beautiful sounds*) and PTSE 1.3 (*being able to play a vista during lesson without difficulty*).

C. The comparison of the assessments of piano teachers' and supervisors

A decision has been made to examine how the same competences of the sample of piano teachers' were assessed by their supervisors. According to the previous research the teachers with stronger self-efficacy are assessed higher by their supervisors and the teachers with weaker self-efficacy – lower (Ashton, 1983; Gibson & Dembo, 1984). In this study we wanted to test if the supervisors' appraisals would support the high self-assessment of piano teachers. For this reason the assessments of the six selected competences from each area of PTSE made by 105 piano teachers were compared with the assessments of their supervisors (N =105).

It turned out that generally the supervisors assessed highly the same competences as their teachers did and the same were assessed lower by both groups. Among the 18 competences analyzed at this stage of the study the supervisors similarly to the piano teachers assessed PTSE 1.7, PTSE 2.7, PTSE 3.1 - the highest, and PTSE 1.4, PTSE 2.3, PTSE 3.3 - the lowest. Therefore these findings support piano teachers' opinions about their strongest and weakest points in their piano teaching. The only exception is PTSE 3.10. The sample of piano teachers' assessed themselves very highly - it was the highest evaluated competence from all, but the supervisors did not confirm this appraisal – they assessed the piano teachers' *feeling responsible for the results (positive and negative) of instrumental playing of the pupil* on the medium level.

In spite of this general consensus, the comparison between the means of the assessed competences by the both groups indicates that the supervisors' assessments were much lower than the self-assessments of the piano teachers. Among 18 pairs of competences t-test revealed only four non-significant differences (Table 4).

VI. DISCUSSION

In relation to the first aim of the current study, both the general self-efficacy level and piano teachers' self efficacy level have turned out to be very high. In terms of general self-efficacy, the subjects distinguish from the other Polish group as well as from other national groups. Almost all the differences were significant. It proves that the sample of piano teachers have strong self-efficacy beliefs in their personal competences to effectively deal with a variety of stressful situations. It remains to be further researched how these beliefs are affected by the piano teachers' experiences from successfully going through all the stages of professional music education. One needs to point out that it is one of the most difficult specializations.

Table 4. Comparison of piano teachers' and supervisors' assessment of selected competences (N = 105)

	Piano teachers		Supervisors		t	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
PTSE 1.1	3.65	0.48	3.49	0.59	2.488	.014
PTSE 1.4	3.56	0.50	3.24	0.60	4.563	.0005
PTSE 1.5	3.63	0.49	3.47	0.68	1.992	.049
PTSE 1.6	3.42	0.65	3.50	0.68	-.929	NS
PTSE 1.7	3.80	0.40	3.55	0.59	3.752	.0005
PTSE 1.9	3.59	0.51	3.23	0.62	5.043	.0005
PTSE 2.1	3.19	0.42	3.09	0.57	1.583	NS
PTSE 2.3	3.00	0.62	2.86	0.70	1.773	NS
PTSE 2.7	3.87	0.34	3.58	0.58	4.430	.0005
PTSE 2.8	3.71	0.45	3.33	0.63	5.025	.0005
PTSE 2.9	3.70	0.48	3.37	0.62	4.186	.0005
PTSE 2.10	3.54	0.52	3.04	0.78	5.888	.0005
PTSE 3.1	3.85	0.36	3.63	0.56	3.928	.0005
PTSE 3.2	3.76	0.45	3.50	0.72	3.589	.001
PTSE 3.3	3.25	0.58	3.11	0.66	1.688	NS
PTSE 3.5	3.78	0.44	3.50	0.65	3.940	.0005
PTSE 3.6	3.63	0.52	3.40	0.70	3.177	.002
PTSE 3.10	3.89	0.35	3.43	0.76	5.628	.0005

These results also support the findings of our previous study (Chmurzynska, 2008): the 40 instrumental teachers from specialized music schools scored also very high mean – 31.40.

In relation to the second aim the main findings indicate that the piano teachers' self-efficacy level is the highest with reference to specified psychological competences. Some of them were defined as the weakest points in the experts' opinions mentioned above (e.g. ability to create safe and friendly atmosphere for the pupil). Therefore a contradiction between generalized opinions of the music psychologists and educational experts about instrumental teachers and self-assessments of the participants surveyed in this study occurs. Self-efficacy beliefs arise - according to theory - (among others) on the basis of feedback from other people. Knowing the specific character of piano lessons in specialized music schools (e.g. pupil's dependence on a piano teacher) it is a

well-known fact, that pupils very seldom reveal their real opinions and thus give feedback to their teachers. On the contrary – pupils try to be very polite and well-behaved, do not show their reluctance even if the teachers' behaviors humiliate and offend them. In this way suspicion arises that teachers may not realize what their real level of psychological competences is.

The results of self-assessment in musical area turned out to be the most unexpected. Although the majority of the group are the graduates from instrumental faculties of music academies, their self-efficacy is weaker in the specific – pianist skills. The participants, who are professional pianists, feel the most confident in rapport with non-pianist competences (e.g. PTSE 1.10, PTSE 1.8), and the least confident concerning competences which require high pianist skills (PTSE 1.3, PTSE 1.6). While trying to explain this observation it is necessary to say that in case of PTSE 1.3 and PTSE 1.6 any shortage of these competences is immediately noticeable and identified by the teachers with the long period of training (17 years). They have a natural frame of reference (which is different than in psychological ones). They are conscious what it means to play the piano well. The results might prove a decrease in the teachers own practice and work on their musical technique. It might entail the lack of self-confidence regarding their pianist skills. The actual shortage of these skills can evoke the piano teachers' reluctance to play during lessons. Hence the above-mentioned complaint formulated by the musical experts seems to be justified. The low self-efficacy level in this competence can make pedagogical work in this domain difficult. On the other hand it is necessary to stress, that after finishing the pianist studies the major part of graduates lose the possibility to take part in public performances, and also the motivation to develop their pianist skills. It seems necessary to create some appropriate forms to allow them to perform.

As far as pedagogical area is concerned, it turned out that the respondents feel the least confident in competences which refer to the motivational teachers' skills, e.g. PTSE 2.1, PTSE 2.3, (also PTSE 3.7 from psychological area). One should remember that arousing pupils' interest in music and motivating them to regular practice is one of the most important tasks of instrumental teachers. To realize this challenge, teachers must possess knowledge about motivational mechanics, ability to apply various methods and strategies, exhibit emotional commitment, show enthusiasm in teaching and their own fascination for music, encourage pupils to think and solve the problems for themselves. In the context of the generally-held very strong self-efficacy beliefs and significantly low self-assessments in reference to these competences, it is obvious that the participants are aware of their shortages. This finding should be a stimulus for the institutions preparing further piano teachers to put bigger stress on their acquiring this kind of competence.

In relation to the third aim it turned out that the supervisors confirm self-assessments of piano teachers about the strongest and weakest points in their teaching. However, comparing both groups, the assessments of the supervisors are significantly lower. This finding may suggest that self-assessments of piano teachers are too high and optimistic.

It is not surprising: The phenomenon of teachers' thinking that they are very good at teaching was previously confirmed in many studies of general education (Czykwin, 1995). These findings prove that generally teachers demonstrate high self-appraisal, self-esteem and confidence in themselves and their possibilities. Their perception of the world differs from that of other peoples – it is characterized by choosing only specific signals from reality and avoiding others (Czykwin, 2000).

Summing up, all these findings require verification in a study including the observations of piano teachers' real behaviors during lessons. Such study is being currently devised.

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