Observing Teaching Practices Through the Lenses of Self-Regulated Learning: A Study Within the String Instrument Individual Context

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Abstract : Teaching and learning a musical instrument is challenging for both teachers and students. Teachers generally use diverse strategies to resolve students' particular issues in a one-to-one context. Considering individual sessions as a supportive educational context, the teacher can play a decisive role in stimulating and promoting self-regulated learning strategies, especially with beginning learners. The teachers who promote self-controlling behaviors, strategic monitoring, and regulation of actions toward goals could expect their students to practice more qualitatively and consciously. When encouraged to adopt self-regulation habits, students' could benefit from greater productivity on a longer path. Founded on Bary Zimmerman's cyclical model that comprehends three phases - forethought, performance, and self-reflection, this work aims to articulate self-regulated and music learning. Self-regulated learning appeals to the individual's attitude in planning, controlling, and reflecting on their performance. Furthermore, this study aimed to present an observation grid for perceiving teaching instructions that encourage students' controlling cognitive behaviors in light of the belief that conscious promotion of self-regulation may motivate strategic actions toward goals in musical performance. The participants, two teachers, and two students have been involved in the social inclusion project in Lisbon (Portugal). The author and one independent inter-observer analyzed six video-recorded string instrument lessons. The data correspond to three sessions per teacher lectured to one (different) student. Violin (f) and violoncello (m) teachers hold a Master's degree in music education and approximately five years of experience. In their second year of learning an instrument, students have acquired reasonable skills in musical reading, posture, and sound quality until then. The students also manifest positive learning behaviors, interest in learning a musical instrument, although their study habits are still inconsistent. According to the grid's four categories (parent codes), in-class rehearsal frames were coded using MaxQda software, version 20, according to the grid's four categories (parent codes): self-regulated learning, teaching verbalizations, teaching strategies, and students' in-class performance. As a result, selected rehearsal frames qualitatively describe teaching instructions that might promote students' body and hearing awareness, such as "close the eyes while playing" or "sing to internalize the pitch." Another analysis type, coding the short video events according to the observation grid's subcategories (child codes), made it possible to perceive the time teachers dedicate to specific verbal or non-verbal strategies. Furthermore, a coding overlay analysis indicated that teachers tend to stimulate. (i) Forethought – explain tasks, offer feedback and ensure that students identify a goal, (ii) Performance – teach study strategies and encourage students to sing and use vocal abilities to ensure inner audition, (iii) Self-reflection – frequent inquiring and encouraging the student to verbalize their perception of performance. Although developed in the context of individual string instrument lessons, this classroom observation grid brings together essential variables in a one-to-one lesson. It may find utility in a broader context of music education due to the possibility to organize, observe and evaluate teaching practices. Besides that, this study contributes to cognitive development by suggesting a practical approach to fostering self-regulated learning.

Keywords : music education, observation grid, self-regulated learning, string instruments, teaching practices