ENGLISH WORK FOR Pupils’ SELF-REGULATED LEARNING

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Abstract

Music schools in Latvia provide pupils with musical education both in the towns and rural areas of Latvia. Studies include instrumental playing, history of music, and music theory lessons. An actual pedagogical problem at the time is activation of pupils’ learning. Self-regulated learning acquires significant meaning for pupils’ future life. A way of helping pupils’ self-regulation in learning is differentiation of learning methods and forms. The aim of the paper is to research the meaning of music schools’ ensemble work (collective performance) for enhancing pupils’ self-regulated learning. Learning is a process where an individual inherits accumulated experience of the society, acquires skills, knowledge, attitudes, enhances his experience, individually and responsibly working and discovering himself, nature and society. Learning as an activity is based on learning experience. According to L.S. Vygotsky’s theory of learning, the cultural development depends upon social interaction. The use of ensemble work (collective performance) in school as a form of learning activity and method observes a reciprocal movement towards didactic goal, includes the components of due learning contents (knowledge, skills, instrumental playing experience, attitudes), the results of learning process and its evaluation. Analysis of the obtained data shows that music teachers choose ensemble work as method and form of teaching to indirectly influence the self-regulated learning of pupils, whereas the pupils do not fully understand the significance of ensemble work for enhancing self-regulated learning techniques.

Key words: ensemble work, self-regulated learning.

Introduction

Learning is a specific activity which implies experience and skills as personal qualities that allow or do not allow an achievement of learning goals set by the self or a teacher (Žogla, 2001). Actual pedagogical problem at the time is activation of pupils’ cognition. How to help pupils learning to learn, foster the independence and self-regulation in learning by observing individual approach? A way of helping pupils’ self-regulation in learning is differentiation of learning methods and forms (Andersone, 2007).

Music schools in Latvia provide pupils with musical education both in the towns and rural areas of Latvia. Studies include instrumental playing, history of music, and music theory lessons. The aim of the paper is to research the meaning of music schools’ ensemble work (collective performance) for enhancing pupils’ self-regulated learning.

Materials and Methods

As stated by pedagogue I. Žogla, learning as didactic notion includes two aspects – pedagogical and psychological. Pedagogical aspect’s learning content is variable and its separate components are significantly apart of each other which considerably increases the significance of learning approach choice (Žogla, 2001).

Learning is a process where an individual inherits accumulated experience of the society, acquires skills, knowledge, attitudes, enhances his experience, individually and responsibly working and discovering himself, nature and society, as defined in the Glossary of Pedagogical Terms (Pedagoģijas terminu skaidrojošā vārdnīca, 2000). Learning as activity is based on learning experience.

W. Dilthey argued that experience is a starting point of cognition and demonstrates an attitude to the world. He suggested that all human experience divides naturally into two parts: that of the surrounding natural world, and that of inner experience, characterized by responsibility for actions (Dilthey, 2000).

J. Dewey defined two main principles formatting the basis of human experience underlie the basis of the experience-forming:

• the principle of mutual cooperation,
• the principle of perpetuity or legacy (Dewey, 2005).

Hermeneutics offers a new way to understand the experience of arts. Originally devoted to the interpretation of sacred texts, hermeneutics was extended by M. Heidegger. He suggested that human beings are always in the process of interpreting the world and themselves, and saw in hermeneutics a structure of existence (Heidegger, 1962).

According to L.S. Vygotsky’s theory of learning, the cultural development depends upon social interaction.
Referring that the individual uses the world as instrument for his/her object orientated actions, author stated that this applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts (Vygotsky, 1978).

L.S. Vygotsky’s theory is complementary to the work of A. Bandura on social learning. According to A. Bandura’s concept of self-regulated learning, the behaviour depends upon controlling. Reflecting that the individual compares the learning as performance with traditional standards or competing with others/ourselves, he suggested such three steps:

- self-observation,
- judgment,
- self-response (Bandura, 1997).

As stated by pedagogue I. Žogla, learning is a purposeful cognitive activity in order of enhancing experience within a specially organized environment and with the help of another person which actualizes emotions, motives, interests, needs, contact, attitudes, and other individual qualities (Žogla, 2001). Learning activation is a resource which is realized by differentiation of learning forms and choice of appropriate teaching methods to increase the self-regulation in pupils’ learning process.

The use of ensemble work (collective performance) in school as a form of learning activity and method observes a reciprocal movement towards didactic goal, includes the components of due learning contents (knowledge, skills, instrumental playing experience, attitudes), the results of learning process and its evaluation. Ensemble work (collective performance) is realized through teacher– pupil co-operation by integration of individual and group practice into the learning process.

Ensemble work at music school is characterized by the involved pupils’ united efforts and responsibility for achieving the artistic goals in the piece of music being learned, by including the following tasks:

- playing a musical instrument,
- being able to interpret the visual music notation,
- control dynamics and rhythm in group playing,
- coordinate the way of sound production,
- collectively solve the tasks of ensemble playing,
- be aware of needs for improvement in individual playing.

In order to evaluate the importance of ensemble work (collective performance) at schools for enhancing pupils’ self-regulated learning, in 2008/2009 a pedagogical study was conducted involving 18 teachers and pupils of a Vidzeme area music school.

**Results and Discussion**

The pedagogical premises of ensemble work (collective performance) at music schools are being realised according to the educational standard on professional vocational education program ‘Instrumental music’ for educational contents’ amount and distribution (Educational standard, 2002).

The form of ensemble work in vocational education program is used in the subject ‘Collective performance’ with contents’ acquisition during six academic years (third through eighth grade, 560 lessons in total). Program realization plan includes keyboard and string instruments’ divisions as follows:

- piano playing,
- violin, viola, cello playing,
- accordion, Latvian psalter, guitar playing,
- double bass, percussion playing,
- flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon playing,
- saxophone, horn, trumpet, trombone playing,
- tuba, euphonium, other brass instrument playing.

Professional vocational education program ‘Instrumental music’ contents’ realization in practical education process in Latvia rural areas’ music schools is dependent on the presence of teachers at the each educational institution. Not all Latvian schools realize each of the program components every year. This is why ensemble work forms and contents in each particular situation are planned according to instrumental teachers’ and pupils’ presence.

A survey on situation in real pedagogical process in a music school in Vidzeme area was conducted in 2008/2009 with purpose of obtaining data from two independent groups (teachers and pupils). Data was processed with a Mann-Withney U test. The research is based on the data received from the analysis of the situation in the educational practise. During the 2008/2009 academic year, 18 pedagogues and pupils of rural music school in Vidzeme were asked to complete a questionnaire about developing self-regulated learning by using ensemble work (collective performance). A totally 7 pedagogues and 11 pupils took part in the assessing experiment. Respondents were interviewed in two question groups, and set reply data was obtained in six positions:

1) disagree,
2) rather disagree than agree,
3) not sure,
4) rather agree than disagree,
5) agree,
6) no data.

Ensemble work (collective performance) research was done using nonparametric methods, to establish differences between two unconnected sample units (pedagogues and pupils). Data processing and analysis by Mann-Whitney U Test in SPSS environment was applied on two independent data selections (Lasmanis, 2003).

Test results in the first question group on knowledge as resource for self-regulated learning analysed hypothesis that a significant difference in a number of replies between pedagogues and pupils exists:

As p-value=0.003<0.05, then with a 95% possibility can be concluded that pedagogues’ reply numbers differ significantly from the pupils’;

As p-value=0.039<0.05, then with a 95% possibility can be concluded that pedagogues’ reply numbers differ significantly from the pupils’ (see fig. 1).

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Test results in the second question group on ensemble experience as resource for self-regulated learning analysed hypothesis that a significant difference in a number of replies between pedagogues and pupils exists:

2.1. Obtaining performance skills for solo instrument playing.
As p-value=0.024<0.05, then with a 95% possibility can be concluded that pedagogues’ reply numbers differ significantly from the pupils’;

2.2. Obtaining responsible attitude for individual practising.
As p-value=0.000<0.05, then with a 95% possibility can be concluded that pedagogues’ reply numbers differ significantly from the pupils’ (see fig. 2).
Analysis of the obtained data shows that music teachers choose ensemble work as method and form of teaching to indirectly influence the self-regulated learning of pupils, whereas the pupils do not fully understand the significance of ensemble work for learning self-regulated learning techniques.

Significant components for enhancing self-regulated learning are:

- knowledge about ensemble music literature,
- knowledge about co-operation in ensemble work,
- performance skills for playing solo instrument,
- responsible attitude to practising.

Conclusions
1. Ensemble work (collective performance) as form and method of learning at music school satisfies the pupils’ need for contact and cooperation in practising.
2. Ensemble work (collective performance) at music school is a pedagogical condition for enhancing pupils’ self-regulated learning by obtaining knowledge and experience.

References