

STUDENTS' SELF-EVALUATION OF MASTERING PIANO PLAYING DURING A DISTANCE-LEARNING PROCESS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE AXIOLOGICAL APPROACH

Larisa MAĻKOVA

Latvia

email: lara.malkova@gmail.com

Abstract

The intensive social development of the society increases demands on the development of an active and creative personality. These demands bring to the forefront research on such problems that relate to processes which encourage an individual to be the subject of one's own existence and activity, constantly stimulating perspectives of one's development and ways and means of its implementation.

The skill of evaluating the results of one's activities, or self-evaluation, is an important factor of a student's learning activity. At introducing the concept of "self-evaluation", James (2003) acknowledged that the skill of self-evaluation influences the effectiveness of human's activity. The acquisition of self-evaluation skills encompasses not only the assessment of the quality of one's knowledge and skills, but allows to rationally construct one's learning activities on the whole. The necessity to possess such skills is especially obvious in case piano playing is mastered in the form of distance learning. Distance learning, having both its plusses and minuses, allows expanding the range of methods for mastering the piano playing under various conditions.

This paper focuses on the process of mastering piano playing within the context of the axiological approach by using criteria, indicators and levels.

Key words: *student's self-evaluation, mastering piano playing, distance learning, axiological approach*

Introduction

The reality of today dictates its own conditions. The intensive social development of the society increases demands on the development of an active and creative personality. These demands, in turn, highlight the necessity for focusing on the research on problems that are related to the processes which stimulate an individual to be the subject of one's own existence and activity, independently resolving

problems of developmental perspectives, as well as ways and means of their implementation. Any teacher can try to test themselves in new conditions.

The 21st century can be called the *online* epoch, since it is characterized by the growth in number of actions performed from a distance. Several new methods have appeared and are used in the process of learning piano playing, and the necessity for developing and providing learners with possibilities to self-evaluate their learning activities (in our case – piano playing) has come to the foreground.

Research aim: within the context of the axiological approach, to analyze learners' possibilities to self-analyze their learning activities of mastering piano playing in the distance-learning process.

Research subject: the development of learners' self-evaluation of their learning activities during the process of mastering piano playing in a distance-learning format.

Research methods: the analysis of literature on philosophy, psychology, pedagogy and learners' questionnaire survey (analysis of learners' self-evaluation).

The research is based on the axiological approach, making the evaluation of theoretical findings and interpreting the process and results of mastering piano playing in connection with the opportunities to improve distance-learning.

Mastering Piano Playing in a Distance Learning Process

A lesson taught from a distance or distance learning is the interaction between a learner and a teacher from a distance, implemented with the help of technological means, where all usual elements of educational process, namely, theory, practice, control and evaluation, have been preserved.

Several known studies on distance learning acknowledge that origins of distance learning are to be looked for in 19th century (Полат, 2004; Anderson, 2008; Grahame & Anderson, 2012). But the importance and problems of distance learning became especially acute in the recent 2 years due to sanitary-epidemiologic situation, when distance learning was the only way out in this situation (Hacaturjana, 2021). Teachers had to seek for new methods, and learn how to cope with new information and teaching/learning technologies.

During the time of Covid-19, the process of learning piano playing also took place predominantly from a distance. Several discussion seminars were conducted and teachers' opinions on the problem were sought and received. The analysis of these opinions allows formulating both the negative and positive factors of distance-learning piano playing lessons. Let's begin with the negative ones.

The first and most important thing is the fact that at *online* lessons a sound change takes place, which is a critical reason in case the result of the performance is assessed. A sound, transmitted during the lesson greatly differs from the original one in timber, dynamics and sometimes also in rhythm. Consequently, at distance learning lessons the quality of music performance as a kind of art may suffer.

Second, especially during the initial period of learning piano playing, when teaching a correct positioning of player's hands takes place, a direct contact between a teacher and a learner is of great importance. Of course, the necessary result can be achieved also via a distance-learning process, but this will take much more time.

The advantages of distance-learning lessons are:

- First, economy of time: time was not spent on going to school, it was enough to connect to the lesson, which needs only having a telephone or a computer (laptop) with the internet connection;
- Second, lessons take place in a usual home environment which promotes a freer behavior;
- Third, according to the author's observations, learners are more concentrated and attentive at the lesson, since their attention is focused on a small screen where the teacher is;
- Fourth, during a lesson taught in such a format, a learner remains alone with himself. Physically, there is no teacher beside who could help to put a hand on the right key. Learners learn to take full responsibility on themselves, become more independent as to the use of their skills, and learn to independently analyze things that are happening around, namely, they learn to do the self-evaluation of their performance. And it is a well-known fact that self-evaluation is part of self-control.

Self-control is a process of comprehensive studying, measuring and evaluating the results of the development done by the learners themselves. Psychologist D. Elkonin (Эльконин, 2011) maintains that self-control has a special role because the acquisition of this action characterizes child's ability to manage the whole learning process. Consequently, self-control is necessary for the management of a learning activity because otherwise learners' learning cannot be considered as ready. The compulsory conditions of this learning are:

- To study the examples of a self-control activity;
- To define the assessment criteria;
- To receive a constant encouragement to control one's activities in different forms.

Psychologist D. Elkonin (Эльконин, 2011) states that learners have acquired self-control activities if they can:

- Compare the results of their activities with the standard;
- Analyze whether their way of learning and means for achieving the aim are right (wrong);
- Analyze their mistakes or failures, reasons that have caused them and identify ways how to correct them.

During the process of the formation of self-control, a self-evaluation skill as a component of self-control is developed. Besides, there is a correlation between them: the better learners can control themselves, the more adequate their self-evaluations are. Self-evaluation makes an impact on the effectiveness of learners' learning activities and on the degree of their desire to achieve the growth. The skill to evaluate

one's own activity involves a qualitative assessment of one's strong and weak points and allows a rational organization of learning.

The phenomenology of the concept 'self-evaluation' is wide. The first scientist who introduced the concept of 'self-evaluation' into the structure of "one's own image" of personality was W. James (James, 2003). W. James' approach to self-evaluation includes self-respect, satisfaction with oneself, which the scientist imagined as a formula: self-respect = success (real abilities) divided by the level of claims.

Historically, the research on the phenomenon of self-evaluation carried out by many scientists has revealed several trends in its development. Those known better are:

- Psychoanalytical (Freud, 2000),
- Neo-Freudian (Sullivan, 2006),
- Behavioristic, when self-evaluation was analyzed as one of the factors regulating behavior (Bandura, 2000),
- Humanistic (Maslow, 1987; Rogers, 2004),
- Phenomenological (Бранден, 2018).

Problems related to self-evaluation have been explored also by L. Vigotsky (Выготский, 2005), A. Leontjev (Леонтьев, 2004), V. Rubinstein (Рубинштейн, 2000).

We have to note that in order self-evaluation would allow keeping learners' claims and their actual abilities in a harmonious proportion, it is necessary to emphasize that according to scientists' findings self-evaluation has several functions (see Table 1).

Table 1. Self-evaluation functions and their description

Function	Description
Stimulating	Motivates a learner to the action which might increase self-evaluation
Post-prognosticating	Blocks the action which might increase self-evaluation
Regulating	Provides acceptance of tasks and choice of solution by a learner
Emotional	Allows a learner to meet his needs and feel satisfaction, or vice versa be dissatisfied for unknown reasons
Protecting	Ensures personality's stability
Controlling	Provides self-control during the action
Developing	Motivates for self-development

The data given in the table allow concluding that self-evaluation has educational, analytical correcting, developing and controlling functions.

Research Design

The paper includes the analysis of the period, when at learning and preparing the composition with a teacher during a distance learning process, learners have to record their performances in a video format and send them to the teacher for assessment (in

this case parents' permission is necessary). Before they send video recordings to the teacher, learners themselves decide whether they want to send this specific video or they would like to take the opportunity of playing the program once more and improving some aspects. The discussion with learners revealed an interesting situation concerning the number of times learners performed and recorded the program at home before they sent it to the teacher.

During the research, opinions of 32 learners of Riga secondary school No. 88 have been studied and analyzed. For this analysis, researchers used criteria of mastering the piano playing within the context of the axiological approach which are described in the author's paper (Maļkova, 2015). Criteria offered in this paper (see Table 2) are based on the findings by human psychologists A. Maslow (Маслоу, 1987) and K. Rogers (2004) about self-realization as a value, which is expressed in its aspects: motivation, creativity, self-organization, communication.

Table 2. Criteria, indicators and levels of mastering piano playing in the context of the axiological approach

Criteria	Indicators	Levels*				
		1	2	3	4	5
1. Motivation	A learner:					
1.1. cognitive						
1.1.1. internal	1.1.1.1. wants to master piano playing by playing popular or jazz compositions;					
	1.1.1.2. wants to master piano playing by performing any kind of music;					
1.1.2. external	1.1.2. wants to master piano playing because he will perform music which the audience likes;					
1.2. achieving success						
1.2.1. internal	1.2.1.1. wants to master piano playing because he will internally feel more confident among friends;					
	1.2.1.2. wants to develop technical skills of piano playing for further professional activities;					
1.2.2. external	1.2.2. wants to master piano playing because is supported by the audience.					
2. Creativity	A learner:					
	2.1. wants to learn performing music on the piano by ear;					
	2.2. wants to acquire skills of improvising on the piano;					
	2.3. is interested in music of various style.					
3. Self-organization	A learner:					
	3.1. is able to set the aim;					
	3.2. knows how to plan time;					
	3.3. is able to overcome difficulties in learning;					
	3.4. is able to make self-evaluation and corrections in it.					

Criteria	Indicators	Levels*				
		1	2	3	4	5
4. Communication	A learner: 4.1. is sensible – sensitive to his emotions and needs; 4.2. accepts others such as they are; 4.3. can establish contacts.					

* Levels: 1 – Yes; 2 – Sooner yes; 3 – Sooner no; 4 – No; 5 – I don't know

Learners were asked several questions pertaining to the criterion “self-organization”:

1. *From which time of video-recording did your performance satisfy you and you sent it to the teacher?*
2. *Do you know how to set learning aims?*
3. *Did you plan the time of your performance videorecording?*
4. *Do you know how to overcome difficulties, to your mind?*
5. *Can you carry out self-evaluation?*
6. *Do you know the functions of self-evaluation?*

Learners' replies were grouped by the number of times mentioned most frequently (see Table 3).

Table 3. The result of learners' answers

Question (indicator of the criterion)	Number of learners		
	Yes	No	Don't know
1. From which time of videorecording did your performance satisfy you?	From the st time	-	
	Up to 10 times	9	
	More than 10 times	19	
	I was recording 2 days	4	
2. Do you know how to set learning aims?	32	-	-
3. Did you plan the time of your performance videorecording?	2	25	5
4. Do you know how to overcome difficulties, in your opinion?	25	7	-
5. Can you carry out self-evaluation?	17	-	15
6. Would the knowledge about self-evaluation functions diminish the number of videorecording times?	32	-	-

The analysis of learners' opinions allowed concluding that the performance recorded the first time had satisfied no learner. The greatest number of learners – 19 learners – have made recordings more than 10 times. From these they have chosen the best one (in their opinion) and have sent it to the teacher. But for four learners even a day was not enough to choose the best one. All learners knew what aim they desired to achieve. The majority of learners admitted that they know how to overcome difficulties in learning the piano playing. Two learners could carry out self-evaluation, but interpreted the importance of self-evaluation in a simplified way: their performance satisfied or dissatisfied them. Learners' answers show that in regard to

the question of time planning the main thing for them was to video-record the variant which satisfied them, regardless of time this could require. However, discussions with learners about the significance of self-evaluation functions revealed that all learners admitted that they would sooner like to spend less time on recording their performance.

It should be mentioned that learners were informed about the assessment criteria (see Table 4) which had been discussed and developed at lessons. Learners also have the access to internet resources where they can listen to the performance of several pianoplayers.

Table 4. Assessment criteria of Riga secondary school No. 88 learners' learning achievements in instrument playing at an open concert

Criteria	Points	Indicators
1. Correspondance of the repertoire to the requirements of instrument playing	3	Degree of program's complexity is low
	4-5	Degree of complexity is 50% below average
	6	Degree of complexity is average
	7-8	Degree of complexity corresponds to requirements
	9	Complexity of several compositions is above the requirements of a curriculum
2. Culture of performance (behavior, posture, artistic qualities)	10	Complexity of all compositions is above the requirements of a curriculum
	3	Culture of performance is not satisfactory
	4-5	Culture of performance is not satisfactory in some components
	6-7	On the whole the culture of performance is adequate, it lacks artistic qualities
	8-9	Culture of performance meets the requirements, there is freedom and certain artistic qualities
3. Appearance	10	Convincing, free, striking and artistic performance
	A point minus from the total mark for ignoring the indicator	3.1. Concert dress and footwear; 3.2. Tidy hair; 3.3. Nails cut
4. Compliance of the performance of a composition with the composer's instructions	3	The performance does not comply with composer's instructions, many mistakes in the text
	4	The performance partly complies with composer's instructions, some mistakes in the text
	5-6	On the whole the performance complies with composer's instructions, but there are some imprecisions
	7-8	On the whole the performance complies with composer's instructions, occasionally a little bit formal
	9-10	On the whole the performance complies with composer's instructions, it is logical and convincing.

Criteria	Points	Indicators
5. Technical level of the performance (tempo, precision, metro-rhythm, bowing, apparatus and articulation)	3	Technical level is low, several technical components are used wrongly
	4	Technical level is insufficient, several technical components are not precise
	5-6	Technical level is satisfactory, not all technical components are precise and convincing
	7	Technical level is good, but the quality of some technical components is not sufficient
	8-9	Technical arsenal of performance is used in different ways and is well balanced
	10	Technical level is high, the use of technical components is clear, precise and convincing and allows full focusing on revealing the content artistically
6. Artistic side of the performance (content, image, form, dynamics, agogic, phrasing, originality)	3	Technical level is low, several technical components are used wrongly
	4	Technical level is insufficient, several technical components are not precise
	5	Technical level is satisfactory, not all technical components are precise and convincing
	6-7	Technical level is good, but the quality of some technical components is not sufficient
	8-9	Technical arsenal of performance is used in different ways and is well balanced
	10	Technical level is high, the use of technical components is clear, precise and convincing and allows full focusing on revealing the content artistically

The learners admitted that during the process of video-recording they had developed higher demands on the results of their own work. Learners liked the method of assessing video-recordings, since it allowed improving the performance by making videorecording several times. Such demands are nothing else than a feature of self-control whose concluding stage is self-evaluation of learning.

In the author's case of a video-recording, learners have to learn how to plan their time and how to use it appropriately.

Conclusions

1. Self-evaluation plays a great role for the development of learners' understanding about the difference between things they lay claim to and things which they are actually ready for.
2. Research results testify to the fact that before entrusting the learners with the task to carry out self-evaluation in some learning stage (in our case – piano performance) it is vital to thoroughly discuss with them the description of the function of self-evaluation of their performance. Learners' awareness about the

self-evaluation functions will, by all means, promote planning of time at mastering piano playing during a distance-learning.

3. Several forms of distance-learning may promote the development of learners' personality in the context of the axiological approach.

References

- Anderson, T. (2008). *Theory and Practice of Online Education*. Athabasca University.
- Freids, Z. (2000) *Īgnums kultūrā* [Sullenness in Culture]. Rīga: Zvaigzne ABC (in Latvian).
- Grahame, M. & Anderson, W. (2012). *Handbook of Distance Education* (2nd ed.). Psychology Press.
- Насатрjana, L. (2012). *Sakarības starp skolēnu mācību snieguma izmaiņām, pašvadības un problēmrisināšanas prasmēm klātienēs un attālinātās mācīšanās laikā* [Connectedness between the changes of learners' learning achievements, self-management and problem-solving skills during learning in classroom and during distance-learning]. (in Latvian). Retrieved July 27, 2022, from <https://www.lu.lv/zinatne/programmas-un-projekti/>
- James, W. (2003) *Psychology: The briefer course*. Dover Publications.
- Мајkova, L. (2015) Criteria, indicators and levels of mastering piano playing. *Problems in Music Pedagogy*, 14(2), 161–169.
- Maslow, A. (1987). *Motivation and Personality*. New York: Addison-Wesley.
- Rogers, C.R. (2004). *On Becoming a Person*. London: Constable and Robinson.
- Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). *Mind in Society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Sullivan, H.S. (2006). *Interpersonal Theory and Psychotherapy*. Routledge.
- Бандура, А. (2000). *Теория социального научения* [Theory of Social Training]. Санкт-Петербург: Евразия (in Russian).
- Бранден, Н. (2018). *Шесть столпов самооценки* [Six Pillars of Self-evaluation]. Москва: МИФ (in Russian).
- Леонтьев, А.Н. (2004). *Деятельность. Сознание. Личность* [Activity. Consciousness. Personality]. Москва: Смысл (in Russian).
- Рубинштейн, С. (2000). *Основы общей психологии* [Foundations of General Psychology]. Санкт-Петербург: Питер (in Russian).
- Эльконин, Д. (2011). *Детская психология* [Children Psychology]. Москва: Академия (in Russian).

Received 26.07.2022

Accepted 21.08.2022