



Examine the Teacher's Role in Group and Individual Curriculum

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Abstract. At the higher education level, the role and identity of the music teacher change with the teaching form and teaching method. Although teachers' give more targeted advice to students according to their needs in the individual lessons, students' learning may lack the collaborative ability for group learning. Therefore, this research will explore the teacher's role and discuss, compare the role of music teachers in group and individual lessons, as well as the teaching strategies or reflections they adopt in different situations.

By analyzing the role of music teachers in individual and group lessons, the application of teaching strategies of teachers in individual and group lessons is investigated, and the learning model of group lessons can be used as a supplement to individual lessons. The result shows that teacher role are dynamic. In individual and group teaching, the role of the teacher is a relationship that moves back and forth between musicians and teachers. The teacher's role in the teaching process and the methods used are interrelated to the learning experience of the students and their development. Therefore, it is necessary for the teacher to constantly reflect, evaluate and learn together with the students in the teaching process.

Keywords: Teacher role · Student-centred learning · Individual music lessons · Group music lessons · Higher education

1 Introduction

The role of teachers has shifted from mentor to facilitator. Since the beginning of the 20th century, the centre of learning has changed from teacher-centred to student-centred, and now the role of the teacher has changed from a guide to a facilitator of learning [1] and student-led are encouraged to participate more in the learning process [2]. Teachers applying a student-centred approach start music teaching with a solid knowledge of pedagogy and child development, and they seek to learn age-appropriate music and teaching strategies to become masters of the educational process [3]. However, at the higher education level considering that each student enters the classroom at different stages of physical and mental development, teachers adjust teaching methods or strategies to meet the individual needs of students, to most effectively teach students with a wide range of music skills and knowledge, which is called differentiated teaching by today's educators [2]. In this process, the role of a music teacher is not static. Some

of these scholars believe that the role of the music teacher is dynamic, with a moving relationship between musicians and teachers [4]. This role change may vary from context, depending on the circumstances of the classroom [4]. Classroom learning can be divided into the master-apprentice model and group learning. Instrumental and vocal performances are usually taught through weekly one-to-one individual lessons with expert performers [1]. Group learning can be divided into collaborative learning, cooperative learning and other learning activities to foster student creativity, share leadership and responsibility, and create social and cultural cohesion [1]. Music teachers play the role of authority and facilitator respectively in these two classrooms learning modes.

Moreover, different teaching environments in individual and collective teaching encourage teachers to adopt teaching strategies that affect the development of students and the dynamic relationship between teachers and students. It has an impact on the development of students and the dynamic relationship between teachers and students. In individual music learning, the needs of the student will be given priority, and the relationship between the student and teachers may be closer [5]. In collective learning, the development of individual students is less dependent on the relationship between students and teachers [5], and it is mainly through peer-directed learning. This learning process enables students with common interests to consciously share knowledge and skills through interaction to experience new perspectives and ways of thinking and enhance students' sense of belonging [1].

Therefore, this study will investigate the teacher roles and compare the roles of music teachers in group and individual lessons, as well as the teaching strategies they adopt in combination with students' experiences and needs in different curriculum formats. By analyzing the roles of teachers in different curriculum models, this research can support teachers to understand the changes in their roles and teaching strategies in different teaching forms and stimulates teachers to reflect on them. This not only assists teachers' career development but also students' progress in music.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Theory Foundation of Constructivism

The teacher's role from the perspective of constructivism. From a social constructivist perspective, the role of the teacher in the classroom differs from the traditional classroom as it moves away from the teacher-centred model and encourages more student-led participation in the learning process [2]. Social constructivist teaching focuses on providing an environment where students are the focus of learning [6] [7]. While not all students enter the learning environment at the same level, teachers need to use what students already know to develop and design experiences that participants can understand and that are relevant and meaningful to the learners' lives [2].

In addition, teachers play an important role in the learning process because the active teaching strategies adopted by teachers can aid students to learn actively [8]. Among that, the key point of promoting students' active learning is to let students participate in the whole class activities, which is very effective in discovering students' creativity and talent [8]. Although the positive role of students in knowledge acquisition is well recognized, some scholars believe that the teacher's role should function as a co-learner and more

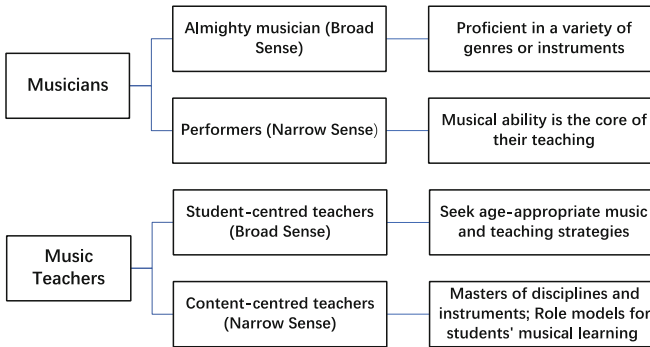


Fig. 1. Four teacher roles (Photo credit: Original)

knowledgeable other (MKO), providing the scaffolding for his or her students to fill in areas where learners lack understanding or skills [5]. Based on the above discussion, the importance of students taking the initiative to acquire knowledge in classroom activities has been recognized, but the role played by teachers and the methods used in the teaching process are different [5] [8].

2.2 Music Teacher Role

From a social level, music teachers seem to be a combination of multiple sub-identities, they can be musicians, educators or learners, but on an individual level, the role and identity of the teacher are based on the classroom situation in practice and dynamically changing. The meaning of a teacher's specific role comes from their understanding of their role [3]. For example, music teachers' judgment of their musical ability may affect their identification of teacher identity [4]. The better they felt when they performed music, the more likely they were to perceive themselves as musicians, and the more likely they were to see themselves as music teachers if they perceived their musical abilities as inadequate [4]. Moreover, some music educators see themselves as performers first and music teachers second in the classroom [9].

From the perspective of music teachers, they can have multiple roles in different teaching environments at the same time. Four music teacher roles are based on grounded theory approach development (Fig. 1) [3].

2.3 Individual Music Lessons

In some individual music classes, the teacher acts as an authority. In some folk and traditional music, such as Indian classical music, there are also apprenticeship systems through which young musicians are introduced and explicitly trained [10]. In such a training environment, the older musicians in the mentoring relationship may provide specific guidance and act as professional musical models with whom learners can talk, listen, watch and imitate [10]. From the perspective of social constructivism, this educational concept is called the educational method of traditional philosophy, which describes teachers as the agents of knowledge and skill exchange [2]. In this form of teaching,

students tend to become dependent on the teacher, who is seen as the ultimate authority, in one-to-one individual instrumental and vocal performance lessons (apprenticeship model). In the learning process, students are passively required to complete the goals, knowledge and plans set by teachers about their performance skills and learn by imitating the correct demonstration made by teachers [5].

Individual lessons do benefit students in acquiring individually relevant performance skills but lack the collaborative nature of group study. Activities in one-to-one lessons are often individual activities that are carried out within a teacher-directed instruction plan, which allows the student to focus on practising his weakest aspects. This traditional way of learning, through focused practice to learn musical scores, gradually internalizes tonal and structural relationships, providing opportunities for a deep personal connection with music, and allowing you to grasp the basics of the style relatively quickly [12]. But the disadvantage is that learners simply acquire the skills they learn and cannot connect them to other instruments (orchestra) or skills, and they have to live as musicians [12].

2.4 Group Music Lessons

In some group music classes, the teacher acts as a facilitator. From the perspective of social constructivism, the role of teachers is not to passively distribute knowledge to the classroom, but to let students' thoughts actively participate in knowledge construction [2] and transfer most learning control to students [13]. In group lessons, students can interact during learning in a collaborative or cooperative form [14]. Among them, cooperative learning is composed of students of similar levels and aims to build new knowledge and solve problems [2]. While, in collaborative group learning, students can share knowledge and teach each other with different levels of life experience and musical ability [2]. Thus, collaborative learning can be used to achieve differentiated teaching, where group members can contribute their strengths to the group according to their ability level. For learning to be meaningful to students, new learning must relate to their own experiences, or it may not be learned [14]. In the process of collaborative and cooperative learning, the student's learning is not just the repetitive action of the exercise, but their active awareness of the individual's problems or mistakes in the performance in the mutual learning, and through thinking (thinking about how to do) reminded by the teacher [6]. This learning process is regarded as a reflection in action, that is, the student learns from his peers in an environment with the teacher's minimum support [6]. In this process, teachers play the role of "intermediary", "more active and interventional" and promoter of learning to enhance students' sense of belonging, motivation and self-efficacy [1], to encourage students to come to class with positive emotion and to improve their musical ability [5].

While group teaching focuses on students, teachers will also learn together with students. Teachers promote and guide students' learning, they also place themselves in groups and learn together with students, which makes teachers and students form learning teams [6]. In a group music setting, teachers transfer their cognitive roles to learners, resulting in a hybrid extension system that fosters a shared sense of responsibility, and dynamic distribution of participatory learning across the group. But this does not mean that educators in these environments pay less attention to students, on the contrary, it shows that teachers are taking a step back from learning as students so that students

can take control of their learning [5]. This approach is more democratic than traditional methods of philosophical education and it also reflects the concept of informal pedagogy. The focus of informal learning is on learners, and their motivation to learn is often more immediate and intrinsic to the activity itself, as students are more motivated to learn how to play when they are allowed to bring their music [15]. Similarly, the intrinsic theory focuses on student-centred learning, where students have their views on thinking, learning, and knowledge [6]. Student-centred teachers are very interested in how students learn because it's important to understand how students learn, and you won't be able to teach them anything without understanding how they learn [3]. Therefore, teachers need to consider when to adopt the right strategies in music teaching and to what extent they pay attention to students' learning, interventions and guide the course content [2].

3 Suggestion

Reflection is essential for teachers to teach, both in group and individual lessons. Based on the previous analysis, it is found that in the context of individual and group lessons, teachers' roles and strategies in the teaching process are interrelated to students' learning process and students' experiences. Therefore, it is necessary for teachers to reflect, evaluate and learn together with students in the teaching process. Reflection should be an integral part of the teaching profession, but not all actions are directed toward learning, only those who are constantly reflecting along the way experience cognitive growth and thus change forthcoming behaviour [11]. This means that teachers need to immediately reflect on and adjust their roles and teaching strategies according to students' learning experiences and situations in different curriculum contexts. For example, adopting more flexible, reciprocal and collaborative teaching methods to help students develop individual performance skills by focusing on their needs, potential and feedback in individual courses [5].

Reflection is composed of two parts, one is a reflection on action, and the other is a reflection on action [12]. First, reflection on action is the reflection that occurs at the time of an event; another kind of reflection occurs after the event [2]. Also, teachers can use the interactive modes as a reflection tool according to the context and students' interests, interaction is natural, and sometimes the peer relationship between students and teachers can help teachers think about when to use a series of scaffolding, questioning and feedback strategies to achieve the best teaching results [12][16]. Therefore, reflective inquiry is considered a key component of teacher education, which makes them realize that professional knowledge is the result of thoughtful and purposeful reflection [12].

Moreover, assessment in teaching can support students' music learning. Assessment of students' learning in music is the core of the teaching process, and such assessment plays an important role in helping students' music improvement, as it can provide teachers with information as matching activities for students or providing guidance on the basis [17]. It seems to be similar to the concept of the reflective cycle but different in the experience and reflection parts (Fig. 2) [18].

Both in group and individual lessons, teachers should teach students to learn independently. Whether learning instrumental/vocal music, teachers should teach students how to explore their styles and musical talents, not how to play [11]. Teachers can not

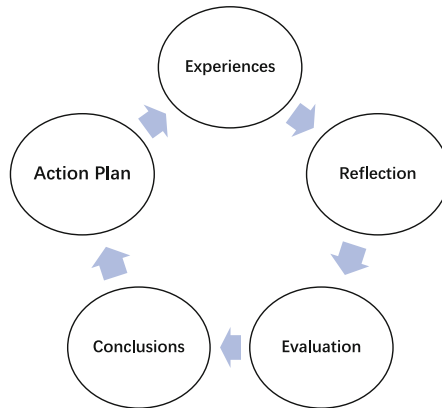


Fig. 2. Reflective cycle (Photo credit: Original)

only assist students to maintain an attitude toward music learning by actively reflecting on students' learning process, but also take guidance and negative feedback [12]. On the contrary, students can also actively reflect on their learning process rather than passively accept the teacher's knowledge. This cycle of reflection reflects an ongoing coaching relationship (according to Fig. 2). It can support students to know what they are good at, know what they need to improve and develop their ability to learn independently.

Group lessons can be complementary to individual lessons. In previous discussions of individual learning, teachers have greater power and control in individual teaching situations, but students' learning lacks integrity. In a study comparing the rate of improvement of trumpet and piano students taught in groups (assigned according to ability level) with those taught individually, it was found that those taught in groups improved faster than those taught alone [11]. In previous discussions, we found that collaborative learning is effective in both teaching and learning, and that group learning provides a more holistic learning environment and a higher level of interaction than the traditional apprenticeship model [11].

4 Contribution

Although various roles of teachers have been proposed in the previous literature, the changes in teachers' roles in different teaching forms have not been pointed out clearly. Therefore, this research comprehensively analyzes the role changes of music teachers in individual and group teaching forms and explores the application of teachers' teaching strategies and methods in individual and group courses. The result shows that the teacher's role is different in the individual course (authority) and the group course (facilitator).

In terms of practice, for teachers at the higher education stage, understanding the role of individuals in the curriculum aids them to adopt or develop more flexible and reciprocal teaching methods in the classroom, which in turn stimulates students' intrinsic motivation. In other words, teachers' roles and strategies in the teaching process are

related to students' learning experiences and development, so it is necessary to understand teachers' reflections and evaluations' effect on the teaching process. Through the reflective cycle, teachers can support students to understand and reflect on their learning situations, to cultivate their independent learning ability.

5 Conclusion

Overall, the existing literature has been found to fully point out that music teachers always maintain a role in different environments. At the higher education level, the role of teachers in these two environments has multiple sub-roles, and teachers in different roles and situations adopt different teaching strategies and methods for students. Both in a group and an individual environment, most teachers give control of learning to the students and urge them to assume the corresponding responsibility so that they can learn independently. In addition, through the interaction between teachers and students in the teaching process, the reflection and evaluation of both sides in the learning and teaching process are stimulated, and teachers are encouraged to adopt more flexible, interesting and suitable teaching methods for their students. From another perspective, strategies and methods in the teaching process are just a way to promote students to accept more diverse learning experiences. More importantly, it is hoped that students can think and learn more independently through and conduct mutual dialectical learning with teachers and peers.

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