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ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to topical issues of creating pedagogical conditions for learning to play the saxophone in distant format. The relevance of the research topic is due to the fact that during the period of quarantine on COVID-19 pandemic, education in music universities required new teaching methods and new pedagogical conditions. The research materials were the valuation results of pedagogical observation in two groups of 1st year students of the music university. The general sample of students was 150 people. The representative sample was 50 people selected by mechanical sampling. Two groups of 15 students, participated in the experimental sessions, and one control group were selected. The material was collected with author's methodology, conditioned by the research logic and objectives. The empirical study was carried out in three stages. The research methodology was based on a systematic approach and includes the methods of the general scientific group (analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction); as well as special methods: content analysis of scientific literature, the method of included pedagogical observation, statistical analysis. As a result of the study, the author came to the following conclusions: in order to improve the level of professional skills of playing the saxophone among 1st year students, it is important to create special pedagogical conditions in the distance learning format (the use of multimedia, digital and communication technologies, collective music-making online and individual work based on online classes).

Keywords: Saxophone, Music education, Pedagogy, Online technologies, Distance learning.

INTRODUCTION

The research relevance is due to the fact that the problems and opportunities of online learning in music universities, especially in the quarantine period, is especially acute for the entire international music pedagogical community. According to the field specifics of activity itself, playing a musical instrument requires the personal, physical presence of a teacher and a student in the same space and time. For example, the problem of physical presence replenishing of a teacher in musical institutions seemed to be a key one and required a prompt solution in many higher educational musical institutions, as well as in those countries where the traditional teaching methodology is still the main one (Hebert & Hauge, 2019).

From these positions, the experience of the international musical community in online learning to play musical instruments becomes vital. In our opinion, the most significant, in terms of teaching opportunities, is online learning to play the saxophone, since wind instruments require special attention from the teacher and student (Bates, 2012). The saxophone is one of the most popular woodwind musical instruments. For the saxophone, there is a rich musical repertoire in the widest range: from classical pieces to jazz. Because of this, the study of the problems and opportunities of online learning to play the saxophone seems to be particularly relevant (Bates, 2012).

In the historiography of the problem under study, there are two main opinions about the possibilities of online learning to play musical instruments in general and to play the saxophone in particular.

The first opinion is expressed in the works of supporters of the traditional system of education, in particular by such authors as Xin (2021), Ponkina (2017), and Rytov (2019)

The works of this direction reflect the following problems of online learning to play musical instruments:

1. Understanding learning objectives may not always be adequate on the part of the student, since online learning does not fully reflect the requirements of the teacher (Slippner, 2019)
2. The difficulty of explaining and correcting errors in online learning lies in the fact that the teacher cannot show all the techniques and methods of working with the tool using remote communication (Ponkina, 2017).
3. Requirements for special online learning programs have not been developed at the methodological level: each teacher presents his own, unique training program, and such programs are difficult to unify (Pereira et al., 2019).

In our opinion, these problems can be solved with a sufficient degree of efficiency, provided those reliable digital platforms and online resources (including electronic interactive manuals, textbooks and practical guides) are used.

This thesis is confirmed in the studies by innovative teaching methods supporters using online resources and digital technologies. These works include studies by Kalinina (2018), Waters (2014), and Martin and Waters (2015).

Researchers in this area highlight the following opportunities (advantages) of online learning to play the saxophone:

1. Free class schedule.
2. Arbitrary workload of classes depending on the topic being studied.
3. The flexibility of the curriculum itself and an individual approach to each student.
4. Using international methodological experience with the help of online resources and digital learning platforms. In our opinion, the international methodological experience is the basis for solving the problems of online learning to play the saxophone indicated by researchers.

International cooperation in the field of music education, which has developed over many decades, has led to wide opportunities for using foreign methodological experience in teaching the saxophone using various online resources and educational platforms (Waters, 2014).

The scientific literature reflects the following problems of online learning to play musical instruments:

1. Understanding learning objectives may not always be adequate on the part of the student, since online learning does not fully reflect the requirements of the teacher (Gudzyk, 2012).
2. The difficulty of explaining and correcting errors in online learning lies in the fact that the teacher cannot show all the techniques and methods of working with the tool using remote communication (Smyth & Rouhipour, 2013)
3. Requirements for special online learning programs are not developed at the methodological level: each teacher presents his own, unique training program, and such programs are difficult to unify (Hebert & Hauge, 2019)

In our opinion, these problems, which really exist, can be solved with a sufficient degree of efficiency, provided those reliable digital platforms and online resources are used (including electronic interactive teaching aids, textbooks and practical guides).

If we compare the problems and opportunities of online learning to play the saxophone indicated in historiography, we can identify essential criteria for analysis for further research on this issue, which we evaluated in our empirical study.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

As research materials, the evaluation results of pedagogical observation in two groups of 1st year students of the music university were used. The general sample of students was 150 people. The representative sample was 50 people selected by mechanical sampling. Two groups of 15 students, participated in the experimental sessions, and one control group were selected (20 students). The material was collected in several stages, conditioned by the research logic and objectives. The empirical study was carried out in three stages.

Table 1: Stages and timing of empirical research.

Empirical research stages	Survey schedule
Research of methodological background	1-14. 10. 2021
Survey (pedagogical observation)	15-19. 10. 2021
Collecting and analysis of the material	21-28. 10. 2021

We used the following works for saxophone as repertoire materials for the study:

1. Careless Whisper by George Michael;
2. Moondance by Van Morrison;
3. Just The Way You Are by Billie Joel;
4. Time of Your Life by Medley & Warnes;
5. Just The Two of Us by Bill Withers;
6. Money by Pink Floyd;
7. Born To Run by Bruce Springsteen.

The research methodology is based on a systematic approach and includes the methods of the general scientific group (analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction); as well as special methods: content analysis of scientific literature, the method of included pedagogical observation, statistical analysis using the advanced analytics program Neural Designer.

Table 2. Methods for assessing students' groups result.

Criterion	Rating scale for performing skills
Creative thinking	1-3 low level; 4-6 average level; 7-10 high level
Performing skills	1-3 low level; 4-6 average level; 7-10 high level
Aesthetic playing	1-3 low level; 4-6 average level; 7-10 high level

Online saxophone classes were held under the following pedagogical conditions:

- 1) creation of an interactive learning environment with the help of tasks for the development of performing skills;
- 2) development of performing skills;
- 3) using digital technologies.

Under these conditions we have studied three criteria:

- 1) creative thinking;
- 2) performing skills;
- 3) aesthetic forms of playing saxophone.

The material was collected in several stages, conditioned by the research logic and objectives. The empirical study was carried out in three stages.

This analysis technique made it possible to summarize the assessments of 50 students for each of the analysis criteria. The method of analysis proposed by us made it possible to translate the qualitative results of pedagogical observation into quantitative data.

RESULTS

After a preliminary examination of the professional skills of 1st year saxophonists, we received the following results (Figure 1).

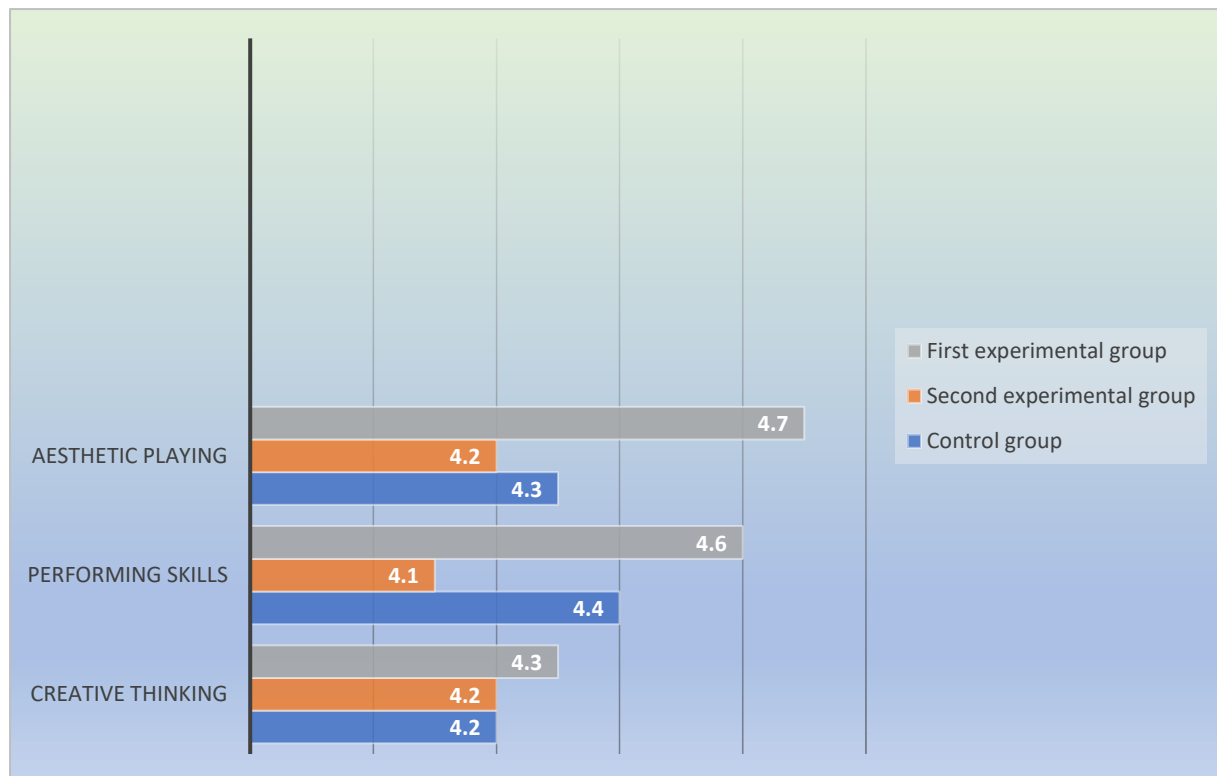


Fig.1: Results of a preliminary assessment of the level of professional skills in the control and two experimental groups (compiled by the author using the Neural Designer program)

As can be seen from the data, shown in Figure 1, initially, before the experimental classes, the level of professional skills of 1st year saxophonists was average in all three groups (two experimental and one control groups). In order to change the situation, we conducted a series of online classes.

Despite the fact that the repertoire we chose was for solo performance, we organized a synchronized saxophone game for students, breaking musical works into certain parts.

Such online work made it possible to achieve the maximum concentration of attention of all students participating in the online lesson: it was necessary to listen carefully and read notes so as not to miss the moment of their intervention in the performance of music.

The results obtained by us after such classes in the first group of students of saxophonists are shown in Figure 2.

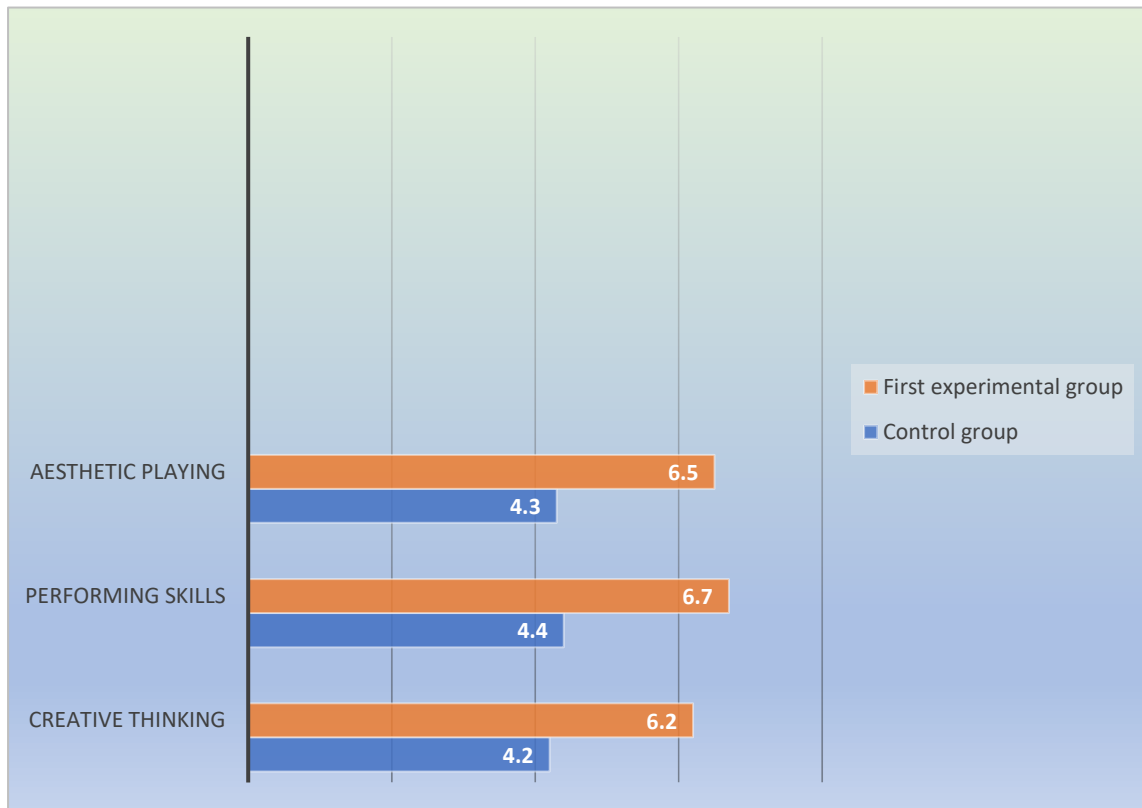


Fig.2: The level of professional skills in the control and 1st experimental groups after experimental classes (compiled by the author using the Neural Designer program)

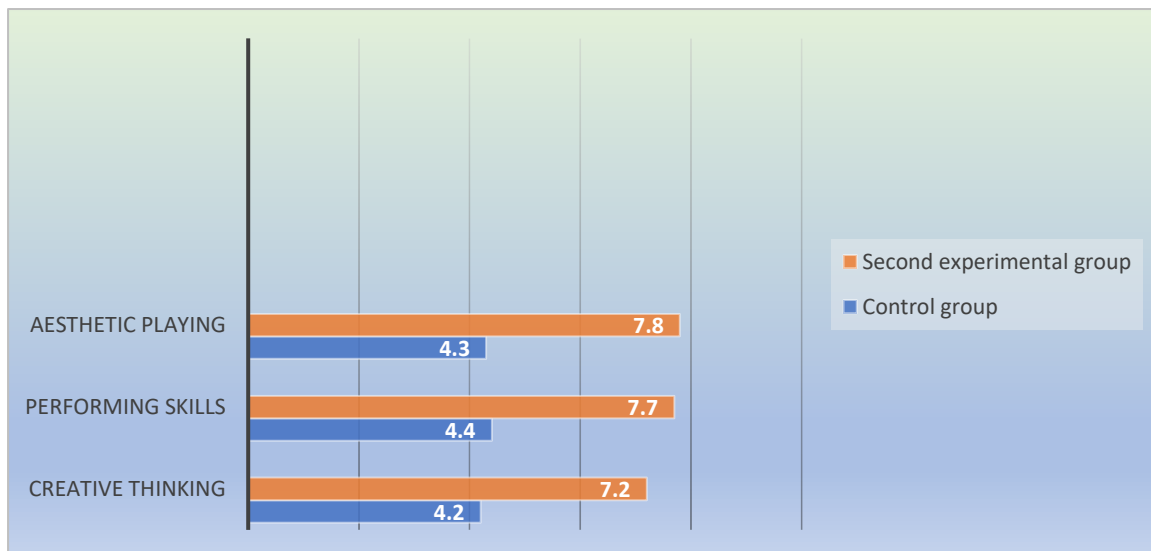


Fig.3: The level of professional skills in the control and 2nd experimental groups after experimental classes (compiled by the author using the Neural Designer program)

As can be seen from the data presented in Figure 2, in the first group of students, the level of professional skills increased by two positions, almost reaching the lower threshold of a high level.

At the same time, students noted that such online classes are very useful for developing ensemble skills, promote improvisation and improve the level of performing skills.

Similar results were achieved in the second group of students (Figure 3).

As can be seen from the data, presented in Figure 3, in the second saxophonists' group high indicators were achieved according to the studied criteria. Particularly effective was such a pedagogical technique as group online improvisation, when students were distributed according to timing and the tonality and rhythm of the musical theme was set. It should be noted that in these conditions of distance learning, the teacher can only influence students with positive motivation, awakening interest in the lesson form.

In general, it should be noted that when creating the pedagogical conditions, we have identified in the process of distance learning to play the saxophone, the level of professional skills of 1st year students in the music university increases.

DISCUSSION

The results, obtained by us regarding the effectiveness of the studied pedagogical conditions for the development of performing skills, are confirmed in the works by such authors as Xin (2021), Ponkina (2017), Rytov (2019).

The necessary pedagogical conditions for the creative thinking development in a theoretical way are considered in the studies by Kalinina (2018), Lee (2021), Lukashева (2018).

Present results and these are also consistent with the works by such authors as Liley et al., (1998), Johansen (2020), Kalinina (2018).

General methodological principles for online music learning are set out in the works by such authors as Good-Perkins (2021), Gudzyk (2012), Hase and Ellis (2018).

Practical spectrum methods for teaching music online are presented in the researchers by such authors as Bowman (2014), Chernysheva (2017) and Draud (2019).

However, online learning to play the saxophone as a practical direction of the teacher's work requires further empirical research in relation to the creation of a system of special pedagogical conditions.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of our study, we can draw the following conclusions:

1. The most effective for the development of professional skills of students of saxophonists is the pedagogical condition of the interactive environment (collective online music-making, joint improvisations and ensemble performance of works for saxophone).
2. For a successful educational process in the context of distance learning to play the saxophone at music universities, it is necessary to form an integral system of new pedagogical conditions that are effective for the online format of classes. Otherwise, it is impossible to get a clear development of professional skills among saxophonists.
3. In the distance learning format, the issue of paramount importance is to provide students with educational materials that provide up-to-date diagrams and examples of the analysis of music lessons, guiding questions for independent research, screening tests, guidance on the development of lessons, projects, extracurricular activities, etc.

For the convenience of their access to the available materials, it is necessary to develop an electronic training course and create a database on the subject (cloud storage). Students, thus, will have the opportunity to master a significant part of the material on their own, and the role of the teacher is realized as a guide and coordinator. In this we see the main difference from the traditional approach to distance learning to play the saxophone.

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