

Hetero-observation in the orchestral conducting classroom from the students' perspective: analysis of pre- and post-observational self-reports

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Abstract

This research explores the influence of hetero-observation on gestural learning by 28 first-year orchestral conducting students at a higher music education institution in Spain. For this hetero-observational study an exercise in two phases was designed in which each student conducted a different piece after one week of individual preparation. In the first phase each student conducted the work commissioned, and immediately after the execution they completed a self-report with open questions. After this a discussion/debate was held in which the external observers of the exercise (the peers and the teacher) analysed the performance on the podium and expressed opinions about it by exchanging suggestions and advice in order to improve it. In the second phase each student performed the same piece and, once more, received the hetero-observational feedback through an open debate, collecting new self-reports. Analyses of self-reports have shown that hetero-observation prevents unilateral transmission of knowledge and returns students to prominence in their training, favouring their active involvement in the process of individual and collective learning. From the results we can deduce that the students have felt a change of role in the classroom: they have started to act as teachers to their peers during the debates. This new role demands knowledge, contemplation of the observed, and a search for solutions to collaborate in the development of competencies of the others while looking back at themselves to visualise their own mistakes and successes in light of what was done by others on the podium. The results show that the hetero-observation is a tool for enhancing

individual and collective gestural competencies, and the peer interaction during the debates has served to set in motion mechanisms of motivation and regulation of learning within the group of participants.

Introduction

The European Higher Education Area (EHEA) has sought to find specific alternatives to the unidirectional transmission of knowledge. According to Imbernon and Medina (2008), students should take on a leading role in their own training and become involved in the teaching-learning process as its main subjects. In this framework the student's motivation and active participation are basic elements, and the teacher must design learning spaces and be a guide in the student's process of gaining knowledge and skills. How do we achieve greater involvement of the students? What kind of participatory and reflective strategies foster this involvement? Imbernon and Medina state that one of the most interesting pedagogical models is experimental reflexive learning. This model, according to the same authors, involves hetero-observational practices and is little known in the field of higher music education, despite its enormous potential for training and improving learning.

Hetero-observation and group learning

Huber and Durfee (1995, p. 128) described the 'behavior observation as hetero-observation in which the behavior of individuals and groups is observed'. More recently, hetero-observation has been defined by Harré, Clarke and De Carlo (2015, pp. 5-6) as the observation that takes place when 'one examines human performances such as verbal replies to questions, act-action sequences [...] and in general all phenomena existing external to and/or independently of the researcher, and susceptible to being actually noticed'. **Hetero-observation is usually linked to peer assessment** activities. These help to create a learning community within a classroom. Students who can reflect while engaged in metacognitive thinking are involved in their learning. Carrison and Ehringhaus (n.d., p. 2) claim that 'with peer evaluation, students see each other as resources for understanding and checking for quality work against previously established criteria'.

Adamé Tomás (2010, p. 7) asserts that group work is highly beneficial to education, not only as a methodology for the realisation of certain activities but as an end in itself

due to the values it develops in people such as knowing how to listen, cooperation, responsibility, acquisition of active and participatory attitudes etc. In this sense the group dynamics, carried out through the round table and the directed debate, have sufficiently demonstrated that group work helps, guides and serves to support the development and evolution of each person given their active role and protagonism in their own process of teaching-learning (Parra-Meroño and Peña-Acuña, 2012, pp. 15-17). The didactic approach of these activities aims to achieve the acquisition of knowledge, skills and abilities by students, encouraging and improving their critical thinking and intellectual independence (Martínez, 2010, p. 63).

Group learning is based on small groups of students working together towards a task in which each member of the team is responsible for a result that cannot be achieved unless the group members work together (Trujillo, 2002, p. 152). Cooperation and collaboration are prioritised over competition and enable competency-based learning (Miguel, 2006, p. 72). Despite the many hours of class time that students spend in a group together, we have failed to exploit the potential of peer learning in the same way that we value group interaction with the teacher and one-to-one instruction. In the field of Western higher music education, Nielsen, Johansen and Jørgensen (2018, pp. 339-340) state that so-called 'vicarious learning' (Bandura, 1997) – referring to the impact of observation on learning from visualising the peers doing successfully the same task than that of oneself – that may be addressed through group learning strategies needs to be explored in music academies 'given the strong individualized conservatoire culture'.

Peer interaction and collective scaffolding

'Peers' can be defined in several ways, e.g. in terms of age, skills and abilities that the students share in a classroom, or others. Philp, Adams and Iwashita (2013, p. 68) state that peers, as interaction partners in the classroom, can offer different types of learning opportunities. These authors describe the term 'peer interaction' as any communicative activity carried out between students where the teacher's participation is minimal or non-existent. Collaborative learning is closely related to a powerful sense of mutual and joint effort (Damon & Phelps, 1989, pp. 9-19), that is, it does not only refer to students who sit together and work on the same exercise (Galton & Williamson, 1992, p. 2). Students depend on each other to finish and complete the task. Swain (2000, p. 97) describes this collaborative dialogue as a dialogue in which subjects engage in the resolution of a problem and in the construction of knowledge. Peer interactions are characterised by a high degree of equality and mutuality which, according to the

research of Damon and Phelps (1989), has proven effective in problem-solving and in the productive exchange of ideas.

The interaction offers great potential for the development of higher cognitive learning processes (Esteve, 2004, p. 81). In this regard and of great interest are the proposals of the Vygotskian approaches aimed at collective scaffolding, which refers to the co-construction of knowledge from the knowledge that each member contributes and to the interaction (negotiation) within the group of apprentices (Nyikos & Hashimoto, 1997, p. 512). Blum-Kulka and Snow (2009, p. 298) refer to the term 'peer talking' – peer-to-peer conversation – as a symmetric, collaborative and multi-party participation structure. It is symmetrical in contrast to the teacher-student relationship in which the former has implicit authority and is perceived as a person with greater knowledge and experience. The role of the teacher in this peer interaction is essential, although sometimes it is not perceived (O'Donnell, 2006, p. 785). Responsible for the design of the work performed by the peers, the teacher is an omnipresent participant in the classroom, motivating and training the students in interpersonal skills as well as musical and linguistic skills (in the case of debates). According to O'Donnell (2006), the advantage of peer-assisted learning over teacher-student instructional learning is that the peer is perceived as closer and less distant as a model in terms of competition and closer in age and experience. In addition, each student can benefit emotionally from being temporarily placed in the role of teacher and, at a cognitive level, having to articulate explanations to their peers (Duff & van Lier, 1997, pp. 785-786; Watanabe and Swain, 2007, p. 121). In this regard, Logie (2012, pp. 7-18) states that the opinion of a colleague can help greatly, especially when giving feedback that helps make the conductor aware of leadership problems he or she may not be fully aware of when on the podium.

Regarding the types of groups, Donato (1994, p. 41) distinguishes between the collaborative interaction that can be achieved in groups without a connection (*loosely knit groups*) and well connected groups (*collective groups*), showing how the latter are able to jointly build the necessary scaffolding for the completion of a task. In the same line of argument, Nielsen, Johansen and Jørgensen (2018, p. 349) point out that 'not all collective learning forums may necessarily be experienced as constructive for all students' but, nevertheless, they suggest that peer learning forums can work as a supportive arena to diminish competition among peers and strengthen students' inner motivation.

Self-regulation of learning through hetero-observation

Marijan (2017) defines self-regulation as the ability to respond and adapt to the environment in the behavioural, emotional and mental domains. She adds that self-regulation is developed through interaction with our socio-cultural surroundings. McPherson and Renwick (2011) highlight the importance of self-regulation theory as a tool for acquiring and supporting musical knowledge and musical skills. The teaching-learning process from a self-regulation perspective has great potential in music education, in particular in instrumental didactics (Ludovico & Mangione, 2014).

Schunk and Zimmerman (2007, pp. 7-24) state that individual self-regulation is developed in four stages: observation, emulation, self-control and self-regulation. The observation is based on the socio-cognitive theory of Bandura (1986) which suggests that through observation we can learn to do things that we would not have been able to do before observing the behaviour performed by others. According to this model, observational learning is the first step towards self-regulation. Jabusch (2016) proposes a self-regulated learning (SRL) structure consisting of three phases: forethought or strategy planning, performance phase (application of the strategy), and self-reflection or self-judgement. These phases can be considered to be self-generated thoughts on personal behaviour, task, time organisation, goals and applied strategies. Marijan (2017, p.1) proposes a self-regulated learning (SRL) model as a complex multidimensional structure formed through interaction with the environment/context. Self-learning, self-analysis, self-judgement, self-instruction and self-monitoring are the main functions in this self-regulatory structure. In Marijan's opinion, co-regulation is needed to activate and monitor self-regulation. She defines this co-regulation as the instructions that the teacher introduces in the lessons. In Marijan's approach to SRL, two types of self-regulation are described, both of them interrelated: 1) the regulation of actions, thoughts and feelings in accordance to the external stimuli/environment; 2) the regulation of the internal processes that occur within the person.

Shanker and Bertrand (2013) propose an interesting model stating that in self-regulation we can find two systems that are constantly applied in continuum: tension created by external and internal stimuli and relaxation (stage of recovery). Awareness of the tension-relaxation process is of enormous value because this process manages the whole structure of functions in SRL (Shanker, 2016).

Personality traits and temperament are also important factors in SRL. Nielsen (2004) has found in her research that advanced music students with high self-efficacy beliefs

are more successful in learning than those with low efficacy beliefs. She also states that in the context of music education and self-regulated learning, 'epistemic beliefs may concern issues regarding technical and musical problem solving in the development of musical skills' (Nielsen, 2010, p. 3). McCormick and McPherson (2003) have demonstrated that self-efficacy is the strongest predictor of performance scores. They have also found that students at advanced courses or grades nevertheless appear to have lower self-efficacy, probably due to 'an increased awareness of their stage of development' (McCormick & McPherson, 2003, p. 39).

Researchers have defined and studied two major goal orientations amongst students in motivation and self-regulation literature: mastery and performance. According to them, mastery approach goals concern learning, improving and improving one's skills; mastery avoid goals concern avoiding misunderstanding and perfectionism. Performance approach goals involve demonstrating competence and outperforming others, and performance avoid goals involve not appearing incompetent relative to others (Wigfield, Klauda, & Cambria, 2011, p. 36). According to these two orientations, students with performance approach goals focus on how they will be able to outperform others and how to get the highest grade possible. At the same time, these students will plan how to avoid looking incompetent while doing the activity. On the other hand, students with mastery approach goals will focus on how the task will improve their skills and which strategies to use for that purpose. Recently, McPherson, Nielsen, and Renwick (2013) have argued for the need for a shift in the way music students are taught, taking into account all aspects involved in self-regulated learning.

The debate in the classroom as a learning tool. *The protective discourse*

Directed debate is an exchange of ideas on a specific topic and can serve to gain perspective on a situation from different points of view. Imbernon and Medina (2008) advise that the debate is neither a strategy for evaluation nor an objective verification: the student must perceive that it is a learning strategy. The same authors stress that in order to be effective, the debate must meet the following requirements: a) encourage the participation of all the members of the group; b) exhaust the subject of debate; c) the arguments must be logical, not based on personalisms; and d) everyone must respect and accept others.

Parra-Meroño and Peña-Acuña (2012, pp. 15-17) propose that in the debate phase, the one in charge of establishing the shifts of exposition and argumentation as well as

the reply must be the teacher. The intention of the teacher-moderator is to facilitate the exposure of all positions. In this way, the participation of all the members of the group is encouraged, and it is possible to appreciate not only the knowledge obtained about the topic of the debate, but also the logic of its argumentation, the attitude towards criticism, the ability to communicate etc. O'Donnell (2006) adds that the teacher must also intervene when the exchange between the pairs is unproductive or when behaviours that distract from the task take place, such as for example conflicts, exclusion or some dysfunction in the interaction.

Regarding the type of discourse generated during group debates, Ruiz Bikandi (2007, pp. 178-180) has studied the ways in which social roles are distributed within the group and how various identities are constructed and interlinked. She has also explored the declaratory polyphony concluding that there is a *protective discourse* that ensures that the interaction between the pairs does not hurt anyone, especially when it comes to highlighting faults or necessary improvement. The author summarises the characteristics of this protective discourse in the following: a) the voices of the group blur identity by submerging it in impersonal verbal forms that avoid direct attribution of the problem to the observed subject; b) when it is necessary to demonstrate a flaw, the entire group constitutes itself as one with the affected person so that the negative judgments are softened; c) through the use of subtle discursive mechanisms, the collective takes on the pinpointed error as its own; d) the group analyses and judges but does not take ownership of the achievements of the observed, contrary to what it does with the errors; e) this subtle distribution of merits and demerits between the group and the observed takes place thanks to the delicate management of the agentivity of the discourse, which enables good management of frustration and success within the group.

Previous research on hetero-observation in the field of orchestral conducting

Hetero-observation as a potential group learning tool in the field of higher music education is very rare in general, especially in the context of the conducting classroom. The few studies related to hetero-observation in the conducting classroom focus on the impact of the conductor's performance on the musicians through questionnaires completed by the latter, or on peer assessment between two students when one watches a video performance of the other. Throughout the literature we have

not found experiences in which hetero-observation takes place live – without video mediation – in groups and through an open debate in which observers and observed interact with each other with the aim of improving gestures.

Johnston (1993) carried out a study on the use of video as a tool for self-evaluation, hetero-evaluation and teacher feedback when evaluating gestural skills in students training to become music teachers. Each participant received advice from a partner and feedback from the teacher. The review of the videos by the pair and the teacher led to the determination of three areas of gestural technical strength and three other areas in which the participant needed to improve. The results indicate that the instructional process was effective and that the inclusion of the peer evaluation contributed to a more adjusted view of the abilities of each conducting student.

Bodnar (2013) states that the evaluation of others might be of interest as a teaching tool in the conducting classroom and uses Jorma Panula (n. d.) as an example of someone who, during the period between 1973 and 1993, incorporated social interaction in his conducting class at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki as an integral part of the learning process. To that end, when the orchestra finished a practice session, the students and the professor analysed and openly discussed the video recordings made during the session.

The main purpose of the present research was to contribute to the literature on orchestral conducting didactics by addressing the following questions:

1. Does the hetero-observation influence individual and collective gestural learning in the orchestral conducting classroom?
2. How do students feel about being observed and advised by their peers?
3. How do students feel about becoming judges and advisors on their colleagues' performances?

Method

Participants and their context

This research used a convenience sample composed of 28 students, 14 women and 14 men aged between 18 and 20, who were enrolled in the first course of orchestral

conducting as a compulsory subject in the music performance curriculum – Western classical music – in a institution for music higher education in Spain during the bienium 2015–17 (14 students on each course). None of the 28 students had received previous training in conducting. The experience took place at the end of the second semester of each year; during the first semester all participants received basic gestural instruction and learnt a methodology for scores analysis, always under the supervision of the teacher-researcher. During the research experience the students faced for the first time the independent preparation of a piece, without the help of the teacher.

Design of the experience

The experience had two phases. In Phase 1 the teacher gave a different piece to each participant. All the pieces were similar (Béla Bartók's small orchestral pieces) in terms of morphological, syntactic and timbral characteristics, length, gestural and expressive technical difficulties. Each student prepared independently the piece during a one-week period (the time between the classes of the course) and conducted it in front of a small instrumental ensemble of 15 musicians. The participants completed a self-report immediately after their performance, before the beginning of the group discussion, so that they felt free to voice their opinions without being influenced by what their peers might say. Immediately afterwards a debate was opened in which the observers (professor and peers) made critical judgments about the gestural and postural aspects shown on the podium by the observed. Once the discussion session was over, all the participants took home a form to complete the post-debate self-report with peace of mind and time to reflect. After or during the debate the participants made notes in their respective scores on the issues that were raised during the course of the session.

In Phase 2, a week later, the students conducted the same piece as in Phase 1. After each performance a debate was again opened where all the participants discussed their impressions of this second individual performance.

Instrument for data collection and analysis procedure

Pre and post-observational self-reports were distributed (See Appendix 1). For the analysis, the response types available for each of the questions were categorised, codified and applied to the same basic descriptive statistical analyses.

To facilitate gestural hetero-observation, the *Orchestral Conducting Gestural Competences Scale* (OCGCS) was used as a guide (Lorenzo de Reizábal & Benito, 2017). The students were familiar with this guide since it served as a reference for the study of gestures during the first semester (See Appendix 2).

Results and analysis

Results of pre-observational self-reports

Mood and emotions experienced

Regarding the mood and emotions experienced by the 28 participants during their first performance on the podium, three categories have been defined: a) Positive, when the experience has given the participant positive and rewarding emotions; b) Negative, when the experience has been a source of negative emotions; and c) Mixed, when the participant describes mixed sensations of both types or the remain undefined. The answers describing a positive mood constitute 43%, the negative ones 34%, and the responses with mixed moods 23%. Negative emotions include insecurity (43%), nervousness (29%) and frustration/discomfort (14%). A feeling of lack of control (7%) and feeling rushed (7%) are also cited in the self-reports.

I felt 'rushed'. At the beginning I saw that I had been mistaken about how I had thought about the piece, since I conducted it 'in 3' when I should have chosen to do it 'in 1'. (1501).¹

I did not feel that I had the sound in my hands, it was cerebral, I did not conduct in the present moment; my mind was ahead of me as well as behind me with what had already happened. (1505)

As for the positive aspects they experienced, the following stand out: relaxation/comfort (45%), security (25%), enjoyment (25%), and 'very conscious' (5%). It is

1 The research project lasted over two years. The first two numbers after the quotes refer to the year the student participated (15=2015/16 and 16=2016/17) and the last two numbers is the identification of individual students. There were 14 students from 2015-2016 and another 14 students from 2016-2017 in the sample.

necessary to clarify that one of the challenges of this experience is that they were required to conduct without stops or repetitions of passages. This corresponds to an ethnographic context of experimentation similar to that faced by a conductor when he conducts in public.

Regarding the category of mixed moods, the participants mainly refer to: lack of sufficient study (43%), improving over time (29%), worsening over time (14%), nervousness but controlled (14%). When the participant does not feel that the sound feedback corresponds to the previous idea that had been made mentally during the study, he feels discouraged and can begin to feel helpless and nervous:

I was relaxed about conducting, but I became uneasy when what I had in mind was not coming out. (1501)

The participants often described a degree of concern about getting the interpreters' response to be in line with what they wanted to communicate. This concern is an unequivocal sign that the participants have begun to focus their attention on the response of the sound to their gestures rather than on the gestural motor activity itself that had been the focus of attention during the gestural instruction received in the first semester.

(I felt) worried that the interpreters' feedback would not correspond. (I felt) better and better as I progressed, because the response was good. (1614)

I had the feeling that what I wanted to express corresponded to what I heard. (1513)

Lack of preparation was the biggest problem for participants who did not report positive feelings. Not knowing the piece in depth usually led them to 'get carried away' by what the musicians play, that is, they superficially conduct what they can read easily (the beat and little else) and feel that they are behind the sound events.

It also gives me the feeling that I have to process all the information of the piece very quickly since each passage goes by very fast and doing everything you want involves a lot of mastery, study and control. (1507)

Perceptions of lack of gestural efficiency

In relation to the perceptions of lack of gestural efficiency, the participants felt that the gestures related to dynamics (17%), phrasing (14%), preparation (10%) and articulation (10%) were not clear and did not produce the desired effect. In relation to tempo, the problems perceived were largely a lack of stability, a lack of adjustment to the indication of the score, and a lack of clarity in the *anacrusis* (upbeat).

Regarding the entries (cues), participants detected a lack of gestural clarity in the cues (42%), incorrect use of preparation gestures (16%), or not giving all entries (42%). Phrasing was ineffective for 14% of the participants, reporting a lack of directionality, a lack of use of the left arm to express the phrases, and the need to improve the gesture to be able to show them. The participants also found a lack of effectiveness in articulation due mainly to the lack of contrasts (38%) and the lack of *legato*, overusing *staccato* gestures (25%).

Finally, 10 of the 28 students reported not being efficient in communicating the character and expression of the music they conducted. Of these 10 students, five believed that they had not managed to convey it, three believed that it had been achieved on some occasions but not throughout the entire piece, and therefore they must improve before the next rehearsal, and two considered that although they had tried to communicate the character of the music, they lacked the appropriate expressiveness in order to successfully convey it.

My colleagues are going to judge me later

All the answers given by the participants to the question of how they have felt knowing that they were going to be judged later by their peers have been categorised into 6 blocks: 1- I do not care; 2- I want to learn from them and know their opinion; 3- It worries me and creates tension; 4- Nervous but positive; 5- I am interested in their judgments if I can take advantage of them and the criticism is constructive; and 6- Need to be recognised and valued by my peers.

A very interesting psychological point of view can be deduced from the answers regarding the relationships established between the subjects that are part of a system, as would be the case of the conducting classes in which this research was carried out. On the one hand, the first group under the heading 'I do not care' is dominated by the most uninhibited participants of the group who are not worried about the image they

might project to their colleagues when they conduct, or who at least have shown that they were not affected by the presence of colleagues as judges of their performance. The second category, 'desire to learn from others', expressed their commitment within the group. They are confident that the opinion of others will be helpful, especially since, as one of the participants says, 'we are colleagues who have gone at a similar pace, and you can learn a lot from their observations'. The group of responses collected under the heading 'concern and tension' reveals a certain resistance to being judged, valued or criticised by colleagues. Various emotions emerge, such as not wanting to be compared to another participant who conducts a similar piece, the feeling that you might be embarrassed in front of your classmates, or a fear of negative criticism.

The category 'nervous but positive' groups the responses of those participants who confess their nervousness about being judged by their peers, but on the other hand, they affirm curiosity and expectancy about knowing what their colleagues thought of their performance. In the category 'I'm interested insofar as I can take advantage' two answers have been included that share a certain sense of detachment or lack of interest in what they might get back from colleagues. One of them begins by expressing a thought with a tinge of irony: 'If we prepared our actions according to what people will say ...' (1607), which seems to mean that he will conduct the same way he usually does and that he is not interested in impressing his colleagues with his performance, nor does he care if his peers are judging him.

We must also make mention of the response that we have categorised as 'need for peer recognition':

I tried to do it as correctly as possible so that the opinions were as positive as possible. I wanted them to like what I did. (1511)

However, this participant also stated that her objective was to receive positive opinions from her colleagues in relation to her performance on the podium and that this is the motor that has moved her to work on the piece to be conducted as correctly as possible. This seems to suggest that hetero-observation can serve as a motivation for the study and preparation of the score and its gestures in order to 'look good' in front of colleagues and not be ashamed of their performance. On the other hand, when she adds 'I wanted them to like what I did', what can be interpreted is the personal need to feel valued and recognised by peers, reinforcing her self-esteem and self-concept.

Difficulties encountered during the study of the piece

Regarding the difficulties encountered during the study of the score, the participants have reported the following: 1- Gestural/technical elements (38%): difficulties related to technical gestures in the morphological and syntactic elements of the score; 2- Musical/expressive elements (48%): difficulties referring to the variations in the basic morphological and syntactic elements, such as the different gradations of speed, dynamics, articulations and, in general, to the discursive aspects related to character and expressiveness; 3- Analysis/Decision-making (14%): difficulties encountered in understanding the music and making appropriate gestural decisions.

As for the musical/expressive elements, the participants reported fundamental difficulties in the preparation of changes of tempo, character, dynamics and articulation. Also, the speed changes and changes in patterns – very frequent in these pieces by Béla Bartók – were difficult to control. Some participants were explicitly concerned with questions of musical interpretation that point towards a maturation when it comes to understanding the act of conducting as a communication of ideas of sound, feelings and emotions.

The problem of slow tempi is the boredom that the piece can cause. (1612)

The biggest difficulty I found is that the piece is very expressive and rubato, and transmitting that gesturally is my weak point. (1603)

Regarding the gestural technical aspects, participants flourish in marking their preparatory material, anacrusis and entrances (cues). With regard to the difficulties related to the analysis of the score, it is striking that the majority mention the choice of beat (whether to mark each beat or to group them). This lack of definition when choosing the beat marking leads them to err with the chosen tempo or speed as well as the character, the phrasing, and everything else that depends on speed for clear communication.

What can I contribute to the gestural improvement of the peer group?

This question was intended to inquire about the beliefs of the participants concerning their ability to contribute ideas, give advice and make value judgments to their peers. All the participants considered that they were qualified to advise and express opinions on the performance of their colleagues. They state in their responses that they can be

objective, provide an outside point of view and constructive criticism and highlight the failures and achievements that the observed is not aware of on many occasions.

I think that when you are conducting you are not fully aware of all the movements you make or don't. The people who are watching you see everything you have done at each moment and can convey it to you. (1603)

It is also important to highlight the affinity that is established in these debates between peers, since the dialogue takes place between equals, between peers who are learning in the same classroom, performing the same exercises, and with a similar level of knowledge. They are able to put themselves in the other person's shoes and to see their own faults in those of others, and *vice versa*.

I realised that I can contribute a lot. Through the score you see what has to stand out, and whether the gestures and expression of the colleague conducting resemble it. You ask yourself questions about what would be the best way to address the problems that you observe on paper, and study and observe the ways in which your partner has solved them. I think it's very productive. (1513)

How I give feedback to a colleague

The feelings and ways of experiencing feedback sessions with colleagues can be categorised as follows: 1- Sincerity, I always say what I think (24%); 2- I soften my opinions, sometimes with a sense of humour (11%); 3- My opinion is respectful to avoid upsetting anyone (22%); 4- First I highlight the positive feedback (19%); 5- I try to give constructive criticism (11%); 6- I feel a lot of responsibility, afraid to advise wrongly (13%).

Results of post-observational self-reports

100% of participants consider that the comments of the peers during the debate have been very helpful. Some explain why:

They have helped me a lot because they are in the same situation as me and they pay attention to details. They can understand why I have a particular flaw, because they also have it. (1605)

Yes, they have helped me to realize things I was not aware of. (1511)

Behaviour on the podium and general motor activity constitute the points in which the participants felt most helped thanks to the contributions of their colleagues. The same occurs with expressivity – understood here as the ability to communicate the character of the piece – as well as having a greater awareness of one's own image on the podium.

After the debate and in light of the advice from the peers, the participants focused their attention on the following items: 1- Size of the gesture (11.5%), usually linked to the dynamics ; 2- Corporal position (13%); 3- Clarity in the beat (13%); 4- Expressivity (13%); 5- Independence of the left arm (13%); 6- Tempo, especially the preparation of tempo changes (13%); and, to a lesser extent, the character and the changes of articulation and dynamics as well as agogic changes.

A very important issue that emerged from the hetero-observation of the pairs is the attempt to correct the image of lack of self-confidence, which often takes place on the podium. This evaluation from colleagues is of great value to the participants because other people's watchful gaze brings to the table what can only be seen from the outside. This outside view is less polluted, or, at least, less biased. The confidence the conductor exudes on the podium is part of the path towards an image of leadership recognisable by musicians and also part of the attributes that define the 'conductor' attitude or, as they sometimes express it, 'to really look like a conductor'.

Most participants said that they received advice on issues of which they were not aware. 36% affirmed that they already knew everything that they were told, however, they specified that receiving this redundant opinion pushed them to focus their attention on those aspects. Likewise, the vast majority of the participants considered that the opinions received from their peers have helped them to get an idea of the external image they project on the podium when they are conducting.

More or less yes, let's say that I find it similar to a video recording, with the bonus that you also receive advice that gives you much more than self-criticism. (1508)

The comment made by this participant shows a very interesting nuance that can make the difference between the feedback that one receives in a video recording and that of hetero-observation through the debate: the results when it comes to getting an idea

of one's own image from outside can be equally valuable, but in hetero-observation external advice is also received, while in self-observation only self-criticism is available.

After receiving the feedback from their peers, the participants mentioned that in the second performance on the podium they wanted to improve their musical expressiveness and gestural technique and achieve greater self-control by showing the confidence and security necessary to give the image of a leader. The frequency with which issues related to the image of leadership shown on the podium by the participants have arisen in the debates has caused concern over personal image and the projection of musical personality on the podium. This is one of the most interesting aspects that hetero-observation and peer assessment have promoted: focusing participants' attention on their image as a whole that projects music not only through technique, but also through attitudes and behaviours on the podium.

Finally, once the second performance had been repeated, the participants answered the last question of the self-report, which referred to the aspects that they considered to have improved or not. The perception of having clearly improved in their actions in phase 2 is shown amongst a large majority of participants (84%) compared to those who felt that some things had improved, but not others (16%). The improvements that they refer to are not only technical, but mainly related to the positive feelings they have felt on the podium such as greater confidence and more control. The aspects in which they perceived improvement are the following: a) Greater clarity, improvement of gestural technique; b) Knowing how to transmit what I want; c) Positive feelings in conducting: students report having felt comfortable, having been calm, enjoying themselves and wanting to conduct and continue doing it; d) Greater security and self-confidence; e) Greater body awareness; and f) Greater visual contact with the musicians.

Discussion

The responses to self-reports in our study suggest that hetero-observation positively affects individual and collective gestural learning, which was our first research question. These findings are in line with the results obtained by Johnston (1993) in his study.

In this research we have proposed a scenario for constructive interaction between peers inspired by methods and tools derived from ethnographic research, trying

to make a design as close as possible to the 'real' context in which the action to be learned takes place, in our case, in a simulated concert in which the student conductor is on the podium, alone, with the musicians in front and the audience – his colleagues and the teacher – behind, interpreting the assigned score 'in one go' without stops and in real time. With this scenario we have intended to use a perspective from the participants themselves (emic principle) where, as pointed out by Duff and Van Lier (1997), the central objective is to understand and interpret reality from the stance of the people involved. In this sense, we agree with Esteve (2004) on the idea that in these hetero-observational practices the process has been more important than the final result, since over a period of two weeks the gestural competencies of the students have improved. But what will allow them to continue to advance autonomously in terms of gestural issues is the experience of making informed criticisms, learning to observe and getting used to being observed.

In relation to the other two research questions, the students have at all times shown a high degree of involvement in the tasks entrusted to them. As they indicate in their self-reports, they have also understood the impact that this experience of hetero-observation has had on their own learning. At times they have perceived that they changed their role in the classroom: from students they went on to act as teachers of the rest of the peers during the debates, and this new role demands responsibility, knowledge, reflection on the observed and even a search for solutions and/or tips to convey to the colleague who is on the podium. Suddenly they become aware of what the teacher's role is and that they are sharing with her the task of correcting, of putting value on positive competencies, and of collaborating in the competence advancement of others. Interestingly, what they cannot perceive in themselves, they do see in the others, in the pair that is being observed. And when they become aware of what the others are doing, they turn their gaze towards themselves to try to visualise internally whether the errors of the others coincide with their own and whether the right gestures and correct attitudes are also within their own competence capacities. That is, when you look at the others, it is inevitable to 'look' or 'imagine' yourself in the same situation. Thus, the collective reviews its gestural activity while observing that of others in the hetero-observation sessions. This is consistent with the idea of vicarious learning from Bandura's socio-cognitive theory and shows that the collaborative dialogue that took place during the debates in this research were characterised by a high degree of engagement of participants in the effective resolution of individual problems, as stated by Swain (2000) and Damon and Phelps (1989).

On the one hand, it is worth reflecting on the fact that the hetero-observation process that has been carried out in this experience supposes the first stage for self-regulation of students, if we stick to the four levels defined by Schunk and Zimmerman (2007) to develop said self-regulation. During this experience the first observation level was covered according to the socio-cognitive theory of Bandura (1986). In our opinion, this hetero-observation activity has also covered the second level of development of self-regulation, since the students have tried to emulate, imitate the observed behaviour - or, where appropriate, avoid that observed behaviour. The next stage of self-control is, in our opinion, the limit to our investigation. It is true that there has been an improvement of all the gestural items treated in the classroom. Even new, more evolved ones have emerged, but the participants have not yet been able to complete this self-controlled search that leads them to an authentic self-regulation of learning. However, and according to our own experience, the progress made in the two-week period with this observational practice is of great value compared with the advancements experienced by the students following a traditional teaching methodology in conducting during the same period.

On the other hand, the two groups of students involved in this research during both academic courses can be classified as 'collective groups' as defined by Donato (1994). In line with this author, we have verified that our groups worked in a cohesive manner with a high degree of collaboration and commitment to the proposed task. Therefore, they can be considered as collective groups which, together, are able to build the necessary scaffolding to complete a task entrusted to them. The idea that the group was cohesive has been proven by the affection, solidarity, understanding and help that have been generated within it. The groups have shown themselves to be a cohesive system in which co-construction of knowledge has been possible thanks to the contributions of each member and the interaction between them during the debates. The results suggest that the metaphor of collective scaffolding as proposed by Nyikos and Hashimoto (1997) has been fulfilled during this experience of hetero-observation, and, according to Miguel (2006), we think this has been possible due to cooperation and collaboration being prioritised over competition. We are warned by the results of some studies (Donato, 1994; Nielsen, Johansen and Jørgensen, 2018) that not all collective learning forums are constructive for all students, but the results of our experience are aligned with those of O'Donnell (2006) and Blum-Kulka and Snow (2009), pointing out that the high degree of commitment, closeness and symmetry established within both groups in our study has functioned as a supportive arena to avoid competition among peers and reinforce the participants' inner motivation.

We agree with Adamé Tomás (2010) when he states that group work is not only beneficial at an educational level for the attainment of learning, but also as an end in itself since it encourages the development of very important values in education such as knowing how to listen, cooperate, take responsibility for one's actions, help others etc. We did not specifically intend to promote these values in the course of the collective sessions, but these hetero-observational forums have come to be a very powerful tool for establishing bonds of friendship, cooperation and empathy between very different people. All this has made possible a very cohesive group concerned not only with their individual achievements but also with those of the peers.

The self-reports have revealed the students' concern for not hurting their classmates and how they try to soften the opinions and put themselves in the others' place. The care that all participants have put into this task is endorsed by the use of a 'protective discourse' similar to that described by Ruiz-Bikandi (2007): use of impersonal forms, socialisation of errors, periphrasis etc.

In line with Watanabe and Swain (2007), it seems that the participants in our study have benefited emotionally (better self-concept, as has been explicitly seen in some self-reports) and also at a cognitive level, having to articulate a spoken discourse with explanations to their classmates. In accordance with Janbush's SRL structure (2016), the participants have also shown an ability to generate thoughts about their own gestures, goals and strategies encouraged by external stimuli from the group context in a necessary co-regulation to activate self-regulation, as Marijan (2017) proposes. However, in our study this co-regulation has been carried out mainly by the participants, not just the teacher, as proposed by this researcher. In the light of the results, we suggest that the regulatory mechanism of the participants has been set in motion to a large extent thanks to what we might call 'peer-regulation', which we could define as the dialogical intervention of the observers with the observed in a scenario of hetero-observational learning.

We have also observed during the rehearsals that participants have been emotionally changing from a state of tension to another of relaxation, which is consistent with the SRL theory proposed by Shanker and Bertrand (2013). In our study the participants have reported tension – prior to conducting before others, prior to receiving the assessment – together with moments of relaxation – after the practice, during the individual reflection, or at the moment of giving their opinion in the debate.

Likewise, we have found in our study groups the two types of motivation described by Wigfield, Klauda and Cambria (2011): on the one hand, most of the participants have shown personal traits consistent with the definition of 'students with mastery approach goals'. On the other hand, only a few have shown a profile of 'performance approach goals', as we have previously commented on in relation to participant 1511.

Finally, following the proposal of Parra-Meroño and Peña-Acuña (2012), during the debate the teacher has been in charge of establishing turns and replies and has addressed and coordinated the debate, directing it towards the previously planned objectives. A conclusion that emerges from this experience at a pedagogical level is that in order to raise an educational debate in the classroom, teachers must have sufficient preparation and knowledge and be able to obtain interesting results for student learning. These practices require planning from the teacher, clarity of objectives and application of principles that allow the collective to function as a cohesive system that learns from a socio-critical paradigm and enables the collective scaffolding. We agree with O'Donnell (2006) that the teacher is not the protagonist; she is in the shade, but always alert to redirect, inform, correct, propose, raise, organise, etc.

Limitations and possible future research

This research has only tackled the interaction of peers during the debates ('peer interaction') within the multiplicity of approaches that admit the interaction between equals. It would also be possible to design 'peer tutoring' activities – used often in language teaching, for example – 'peer talking' – conversation between two peers – or 'peer modelling' within the conducting classroom. It is intuited that these types of collaborative dialogues could be an appropriate scenario for the resolution of tasks in which two students have to solve a given problem through the exchange of ideas and knowledge, such as analysing a score to be conducted. It is also essential to investigate personality traits and their influence on SRL as well as the regulatory potential of peers in other important topics in the field of orchestral conducting, such as leadership, epistemic beliefs or professional identity.

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Appendix 1.

Pre-observational and post-observational self-reports to be completed as part of the hetero-observational experience. Source: self-elaboration.

HETERO-OBSERVATION EXPERIENCE	
PRE AND POST HETERO-OBSERVATIONAL SELF-REPORTS	
<p>GUIDE TO REFLECTION ON INDIVIDUAL PRACTICE BEFORE THE DEBATE</p> <p>1- How did you feel during your conducting performance? Brief description of your state of mind, sensations, emotion experienced, etc.</p> <p>2- Make a self-critical comment on the positive and negative aspects perceived during your conducting performance, related to the effectiveness of the gestures used to transmit the following dimensions / musical parameters of the score:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Tempo b. Rhythm and metric c. Cues for entries d. Articulation e. Dynamics f. Phrasing g. Character/expression <p>3- How did you feel knowing that your classmates were going to judge you later?</p> <p>4- Preparation of the score:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Dedicated time (in hours) b. Difficulties encountered c. Work plan followed <p>5- What do you think you can contribute to improving the performance of your classmates?</p> <p>6- When you review the performance of another colleague, how do you feel? How do you give feedback?</p>	<p>GUIDE TO REFLECTION ON INDIVIDUAL PRACTICE AFTER THE DEBATE</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you think your peers' comments have helped you? 2. In which aspects specifically? 3. What have you worked on to improve your performance after receiving the opinions of the group? 4. Are there any aspects that have been suggested in the group that you were not aware of during your first performance? 5. Are there any aspects that you did not like about your performance which have not emerged in the opinions of the group? 6. Listening to your peers, can you get an idea of what you look like from the outside when you conduct? 7. What aspects do you think you can improve today in your performance? <p>8- ONCE THE PERFORMANCE HAS BEEN REPEATED IN THE SECOND SESSION, describe your feelings, aspects that you think have improved and those that have not.</p>

Appendix 2

Orchestral Conducting Gestural Competencies Scale (OCGCS). Lorenzo de Reizabal & Benito, 2017.

Dimensions	Associated gestures	Indicators	Variables	
Tempo	Starting upbeat	Relationship upbeat-tempo	V1	
	Speed maintenance	Pulse stability	V2	
	Tempo terms in the score	Fit to score	V3	
	Tempo changes		Correct preparation of tempo changes	V4
			Correct setting of new tempo	V5
	Agogical changes (accel. & rit.)	Progressive changes	V6	
Rhythm and Metric	Beat patterns	Beat stability inside patterns	V7	
		Patterns technically correct	V8	
	Polymetries	Accuracy in metric changes	V9	
	Proportion changes	Accuracy in proportion changes	V10	
Cues	Preparations for cues	Gestures technically correct	V11	
	Use of left arm when giving cues	Left arm independence	V12	
Articulation	Legato	Correction in 1:1 Relations	V13	
	Staccato	Correction in 3:1 Relations	V14	
	Change of articulation	Clarity in articulation changes	V15	
Dynamics	Different degrees of dynamics	Adjusting the size of the gesture to the intensity of the sound	V16	
	Dynamic changes	Preparation of changes	V17	
Phrasing	Use of the left arm	Plasticity of gesture	V18	
	Separation of phrases: caesuras and breaths	Gestures technically correct	V19	
	Interruption of movement: pauses, fermatas	Adequacy of resting time	V20	
		Anacruses for resumption of the tempo	V21	
	Final cut off	Adjusted to dynamics	V22	
		Adjusted to articulation	V23	
Character of the music (Musical expression)	General body attitude	Correspondence body/music character	V24	
	Facial expression/eye contact	Correspondence facial expression / music character and eye contact frequency	V25	
	Expressive use of the left arm	Degree of involvement of the left arm in expressiveness	V26	
	Character/expression changes	Preparations technically correct	V27	

