

Presenter Name: Francis Dubé

Proposal Title:

Conceptions of learning, teaching, and evaluation of Canadian piano teachers who give private lessons at the pre-collegial level.

Description:

Teachers' pedagogical conceptions strongly influence teachers' instructional approaches. Thus, helping teachers improve the way they teach requires helping them change their conceptions as well. Investigating teachers' conceptions is therefore relevant from the viewpoint of teacher education and professional development. To be able to help teachers change their conceptions, we first need to know what conceptions they have.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the conceptions of learning, teaching, and evaluation held by Canadian piano teachers who give private lessons at the pre-collegial level. This topic has not been investigated yet in Canada. In a study conducted in Spain, Bautista (2009) identified three conceptions among piano teachers: *Direct* (similar to the "master-apprentice" model), *Interpretative* (a sophisticated version of the latter), and *Constructive* (aligned with constructivist pedagogical principles).

Participants were 171 piano teachers (148 female, 23 male) from 9 provinces and 1 territory of Canada. They taught individual lessons at the pre-collegial level. A multiple-choice questionnaire was administered online. The questionnaire consisted of 16 items (four about learning, seven about teaching, five about evaluation). The scenario presented in each item was followed by three response-choices, which were based on *Direct*, *Interpretative*, and *Constructive* conceptions. Participants were asked to indicate their opinion about each response-choice on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "totally disagree" to "totally agree."

The analysis of the Likert scale averages indicates a significant difference between the three conceptions ($F(2, 3953) = 274.2, p < .001$). The *Interpretative* conception achieved the highest average ($M = 3.7, SD = 0.99$), whereas the *Direct* conception achieved the lowest mean ($M = 2.9, SD = 1.1$). Overall, Canadian piano teachers tend to prefer *Interpretative* conceptions to *Constructive* conceptions, and *Constructive* conceptions to *Direct* conceptions. These findings suggest that programs for teacher education and professional development should focus on helping teachers develop constructivist pedagogical ideas.