

Preliminary Investigation of Suzuki Flute Instruction for Children with Disabilities

Principal Investigator: Rebecca Lile Paluzzi, Associate Professor of Flute
East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN

Children with special needs are being integrated into music programs in increasing numbers. Some reports of precocious musical abilities have been described in children who have disabilities but few efficacy studies have been conducted.

The highly individualized nature of Suzuki Method instruction has lead many parents of children with special needs to enroll their children in music instruction.

The purpose of this study is twofold:

- to describe the subgroups of children with disabilities currently enrolled in 3 similar Suzuki Flute programs in the US., and
- to pilot a descriptive coding format for evaluating potential differences in instrumental music learning for children with disabilities.

The results of this study will be used to design efficacy studies of instrumental music education for children with disabilities.

SUBJECTS

Thirty-six (36) students from three Suzuki Flute studios were initially used for the study. Twenty-four (24) students were subsequently selected for further study.

Typical Learners - 12

Speech Impaired Students - 8

Learning Disabled/Attention Deficient Students – 4

*The Effect of Suzuki Violin Instruction on Developmental
Music Aptitude of First Grade Students*

Da-Li Chang

School of Music, Michigan State University

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of Suzuki violin instruction on the developmental music aptitudes of first grade beginning Suzuki violin students. The sample consisted of 56 Taiwanese first grade students; 22 in Suzuki (experimental) group and 34 students in the non-Suzuki (control) group. The Suzuki subjects were drawn from various public elementary schools, while the non-Suzuki subjects were students of an intact class of a public school. The Primary Measures of Music Audiation (PMMA) was administered to all subjects as a pretest. All subjects, either control or experimental groups received general music instruction in their regular school program, with emphasis on singing and moving. In addition, students in the experimental group received weekly 50-minute violin lessons from the researcher in a group of 3 or 4, and a 90-minute group lesson every other week. The typical Suzuki listening assignment was purposely excluded from the Suzuki instruction in order to avoid the possible influence of listening experience on developmental music aptitude. At the end of 21 weeks of instructional period, PMMA was again administered to all subjects as a posttest.

Results indicated that in the population with high pre-instruction Tonal aptitude, Suzuki students were found to improve significantly ($\alpha = .05$) in rhythm and overall music aptitude compared to students in the control group. Contrary to results of other research, tonal aptitudes tended to improve less in the Suzuki students

than in the non-Suzuki students, but not significantly so. It was also found that the overall music aptitude of first grade students was significantly improved ($p=.01$) after 21 weeks of beginning Suzuki violin instruction.

*A Comparison of the Sight Reading Skills of Suzuki Trained
and Non-Suzuki Trained Violin Students*

Sharon M.D. Miller

Fifty-nine Baltimore County high school orchestra violin students served as participants in an investigation designed to determine whether there is a significant difference between the sight reading skills of Suzuki trained and traditionally (non-Suzuki) trained violin students. Critics of Suzuki's approach question the note reading ability in general and the sight reading skills in particular of students who have been initially been trained by rote. Traditionally trained students begin note reading soon after the onset of lessons. Each student was assigned an expertise rating based on solo literature being studied or by the orchestra director and was identified as Suzuki trained or traditionally trained. Participants privately performed the Sight Reading Instrument and were tape-recorded. Performance evaluations yielded a composite score and scores in five subgroup areas.

Sight reading scores were treated with an ANCOVA with the expertise rating as the covariate. A .05 level of confidence was established. ANCOVA results revealed no significant difference between the composite scores or the subgroup scores of Suzuki trained and traditionally trained students.

Two supplementary data analyses were conducted using the sight reading scores. 1) Use of an ANOVA revealed that Suzuki trained students had studied significantly longer (8 years) than traditionally trained students (5.25 years). 2) ANOVA results revealed that private traditionally trained students scored significantly higher than group traditionally trained students in three subgroup areas and the composite score.

From all three data analysis, it is observed that private traditionally training may be a more efficient method for developing violinists' sight reading skills than alternate pedagogical techniques. Additionally it was concluded that the rote training of Suzuki trained students did not appear to enhance or adversely affect the students ability to sight read.

*A Case History in the Experimental Analysis of Suzuki Education or What Happens When a 48-Year
Old Behavioral Researcher Takes Up the Violin*

Roger Bass
Carthage College

The parallels between Suzuki teaching procedures and the field of Behavioral Education are more than just a bit striking: We have similar positions on the role of practice, positive management of students, skill grouping rather than age or grade grouping, emphasis on the analysis of individuals' behavior instead traditional group-statistical designs, tactics for generating creativity and insight, structured curricula, a resistance to fads and trends, and much more. A key difference is that Behavioral Education began as an experimental field and became increasingly applied whereas Suzuki Education began as an applied field is become increasingly research-based. We traveled different roads but have the same destination. My goal is to introduce the audience to theoretical analyses, research methodologies, and teaching techniques my

field has found useful in the research world Suzuki Educators are entering. Specifically, at least these general areas will be covered:

(1) Parallels between our fields.

(2) What Behavioral Education has to offer Suzuki Education:

*Classroom behavior management techniques.

*Instructional design procedures.

*Teaching techniques based on well-established behavioral principles.

*Tactics for increasing creativity and insight.

*Research methods that enhance--not interfere with--teaching.

*A survey of music-education issues that behavioral education has already successfully addressed.

(3) Data the author collected on his violin practice that illustrates some of the principles and techniques described here.

(4) What behavioral education cannot do for Suzuki Education.

Aesthetic Sensitivity in String Pedagogy

By Cynthia L. Davis and Michael D. Bersin, D.M.A. **Cynthia L. Davis**, a junior music performance major from Parkville, Missouri, plans to pursue graduate studies in bassoon immediately after completing her studies at Central. **Dr. Michael D. Bersin** is an Associate Professor of Music at Central.

Musical aesthetics is the study of the relationship of music to the human senses and intellect (Epperson, 1990). Aesthetic awareness on the part of a music educator can have a profound effect on a student's perception of music. The basic music fundamentals--melody, rhythm, harmony, dynamics, and tempo--should be taught in order for the student to develop the abilities to experience the total aesthetic value of music. The teaching aesthetic perception and sensitivity can be approached in various ways based on an instructor's philosophical theories. The distinct differences in philosophy between Suzuki and traditional teaching approaches may lead to different levels of aesthetic comprehension and sensitivity. These differences may result in the apparent enmity between the disciplines. The purpose of this research was to examine this possible connection.

The subject group consisted of the ASTA-L Internet discussion list, associated with the American String Teachers Association. All subscribers were sent a questionnaire containing thirty items which assessed personal aesthetic philosophies, music teaching background, and demographics. The responses were entered into a database and tallied by a computer program which calculated the standard deviation and the 95% confidence level for each question, as well as ratios of responses for each Likert scale question.

Due to the inadequate number of responses, data were difficult to interpret with precise results. The survey did, however, reveal the distinct differences in philosophy between Suzuki and traditional teaching approaches may lead to different levels of aesthetic comprehension and sensitivity.

That aesthetic philosophies are not strongly represented or understood in this string teaching environment. The inability to relinquish enmity among various string teaching philosophies may lead one to question the apparent low priority displayed by this musical community toward understanding aesthetic sensitivity.