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An investigation of the initial stages of preparatory audiation

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Temple University, 1993

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OF PREPARATORY AUDIATION

A Dissertation
Submitted to
the Temple University Graduate Board

in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

by
Wendy K. Hicks
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ABSTRACT

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE INITIAL STAGES
OF PREPARATORY AUDIATION

by Wendy K. Hicks

Doctor of Philosophy

Temple University, 1993

Major Advisor: Dr. Edwin E. Gordon

The purpose of this exploratory research was to provide a record of the responses made by young children to music stimuli during acculturation so that the practical application of the music learning theory for newborn and young children may be enhanced and specific findings may be studied further. While young children were being exposed to a variety of tonalities and meters over the period of one academic year, comparisons were made of 1) their responses to a familiar song, sung to each child individually, without text, at specific intervals, 2) their responses to four unfamiliar songs, sung to each child individually, without text, at specific intervals, 3) the familiar-song responses elicited in procedure 1 and the unfamiliar-song responses elicited in procedure 2, and 4) the familiar-song responses and the unfamiliar-song responses arranged to neutralize the variables of order (familiar/unfamiliar) and time of response (beginning of class/end of class). Eight of twenty-two children, enrolled in a private music school participated in the study. Intact classes were randomly assigned an instructional music content series. Each class received

twenty thirty-minute music lessons of chanting, singing, and movement activities without texts. During the fifth, tenth, fifteenth, and twentieth lessons, videotaped recordings were made of each child's responses to a familiar song and an unfamiliar song without text. Three observers independently viewed the videotapes and made written recordings of each child's responses. Those responses were categorized as looking responses, non-pulsating responses, pulsating responses, miscellaneous responses, vocal responses, and responses of anticipation. The percentages of agreement among the observers for those responses ranged from 0% - 100%. The majority of responses made by young children were looking responses. Many non-pulsating responses, pulsating responses, miscellaneous responses, and responses of anticipation were also recorded. Several conclusions may be made as a result of this study. First, as they are continuously acculturated to music, some young children anticipate music and often physically and independently respond to music during silence. Second, some young children who are exposed to songs without texts performed by adults who accompany themselves with movement, respond to that stimuli without verbally or nonverbally being asked to respond or told to respond. Third, the movement responses made by young children to music are developmental and are at least dependent upon the fluctuation of physical and audiation maturation. Moreover, it may be expected that young children begin to make purposeful movement responses to music before they begin to make purposeful vocal responses to music. Fourth, young children who are acculturated to a variety of tonalities and meters can profit from those experiences.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
ABSTRACT	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vi
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	xvi
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION	
Introduction	1
Problems	11
2. RELATED RESEARCH	
The Moog Study.....	12
Comparison of the Moog Study to the Present Study.....	20
3. DESIGN AND ANALYSIS	
Sample.....	21
Design and Procedures	21
Analysis	26
4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATIONS	
Results.....	28
Discussion and Interpretation	93
5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	
Purpose and Problems.....	120
Design	120
Analysis	123
Results.....	124
Conclusions.....	128
Recommendations for Future Research.....	129

APPENDICES

A. SONGS AND CHANTS	131
B. TONAL PATTERNS.....	148
C. RHYTHM PATTERNS.....	150
D. FAMILIAR CRITERION SONG.....	151
E. UNFAMILIAR CRITERION SONGS	152
F. EXAMPLES OF OBSERVERS' WRITTEN RECORDINGS OF RESPONSES TO THE FAMILIAR CRITERION SONG AND THE UNFAMILIAR CRITERION SONGS	154
G. EXAMPLE OF A MUSIC RESPONSE PROFILE	158
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	159

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
1. Test Series of Music Examples and Nonmusic Sound Examples for the Moog Study	13
2. Tonal Content and Rhythm Content for Music Activities for Group I and Group II	23
3a. Looking Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifth Week	29
3b. Non-Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifth Week	30
3c. Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifth Week	30
3d. Miscellaneous Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifth Week	31
3e. Vocal Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifth Week	31
3f. Responses of Anticipation Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifth Week	31
4a. Looking Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifth Week	32
4b. Non-Pulsating Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifth Week	32
4c. Pulsating Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifth Week	33
4d. Miscellaneous Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifth Week	33
4e. Vocal Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifth Week	34
4f. Responses of Anticipation Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifth Week	34

5a.	Looking Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifth Week.....	34
5b.	Non-Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifth Week	35
5c.	Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifth Week.....	35
5d.	Miscellaneous Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifth Week	36
5e.	Vocal Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifth Week.....	37
5f.	Responses of Anticipation Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifth Week	37
6a.	Looking Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifth Week.....	37
6b.	Non-Pulsating Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifth Week	38
6c.	Pulsating Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifth Week.....	38
6d.	Miscellaneous Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifth Week	39
6e.	Vocal Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifth Week.....	39
6f.	Responses of Anticipation Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifth Week	39
7a.	Looking Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Tenth Week.....	40
7b.	Non-Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Tenth Week	40
7c.	Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Tenth Week.....	41
7d.	Miscellaneous Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Tenth Week	42
7e.	Vocal Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Tenth Week.....	43

7f.	Responses of Anticipation Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Tenth Week	43
8a.	Looking Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Tenth Week.....	43
8b.	Non-pulsating Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Tenth Week	45
8c.	Pulsating Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Tenth Week.....	45
8d.	Miscellaneous Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Tenth Week	46
8e.	Vocal Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Tenth Week.....	47
8f.	Responses of Anticipation Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Tenth Week	48
9a.	Looking Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Tenth Week.....	48
9b.	Non-Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Tenth Week	49
9c.	Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Tenth Week.....	49
9d.	Miscellaneous Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Tenth Week	50
9e.	Vocal Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Tenth Week.....	50
9f.	Responses of Anticipation Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Tenth Week	51
10a.	Looking Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Tenth Week.....	51
10b.	Non-Pulsating Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Tenth Week	52
10c.	Pulsating Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Tenth Week.....	52
10d.	Miscellaneous Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Tenth Week	53

10e.	Vocal Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Tenth Week.....	53
10f.	Categorized Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Tenth Week.....	54
11a.	Looking Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	54
11b.	Non-Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	55
11c.	Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	56
11d.	Miscellaneous Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	56
11e.	Vocal Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	57
11f.	Responses of Anticipation Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	57
12a.	Looking Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	58
12b.	Non-Pulsating Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	59
12c.	Pulsating Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	60
12d.	Miscellaneous Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	60
12e.	Vocal Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	61
12f.	Responses of Anticipation Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	61
13a.	Looking Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	62
13b.	Non-Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	62
13c.	Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	63

13d.	Miscellaneous Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	63
13e.	Vocal Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	64
13f.	Responses of Anticipation Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	64
14a.	Looking Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	64
14b.	Non-Pulsating Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	65
14c.	Pulsating Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	66
14d.	Non-Pulsating Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	67
14e.	Vocal Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	67
14f.	Responses of Anticipation Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	68
15a.	Looking Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week.....	69
15b.	Non-Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week.....	69
15c.	Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week.....	70
15d.	Miscellaneous Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week.....	73
15e.	Vocal Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week.....	70
15f.	Responses of Anticipation Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week.....	73
16a.	Looking Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week.....	74
16b.	Non-Pulsating Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week.....	74

16c.	Pulsating Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week.....	75
16d.	Miscellaneous Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week	76
16e.	Vocal Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week.....	77
16f.	Responses of Anticipation Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week	77
17a.	Looking Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week.....	78
17b.	Non-Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week	79
17c.	Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week.....	79
17d.	Miscellaneous Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week	80
17e.	Vocal Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week.....	81
17f.	Categorized Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week	81
18a.	Looking Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week.....	81
18b.	Non-Pulsating Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Twentieth.....	82
18c.	Pulsating Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week.....	83
18d.	Miscellaneous Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week	83
18e.	Vocal Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week.....	84
18f.	Categorized Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week	84
19.	Summary of Categorized Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifth Week.....	85

20.	Summary of Categorized Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifth Week.....	85
21.	Summary of Categorized Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifth Week.....	86
22.	Summary of Categorized Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifth Week.....	86
23.	Summary of Categorized Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Tenth Week.....	87
24.	Summary of Categorized Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Tenth Week.....	87
25.	Summary of Categorized Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Tenth Week.....	88
26.	Summary of Categorized Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Tenth Week.....	88
27.	Summary of Categorized Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	89
28.	Summary of Categorized Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	89
29.	Summary of Categorized Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	90
30.	Summary of Categorized Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Fifteenth Week.....	90
31.	Summary of Categorized Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week.....	91
32.	Summary of Categorized Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week.....	91
33.	Summary of Categorized Responses Performed by Group I to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week.....	92
34.	Summary of Categorized Responses Performed by Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song the Twentieth Week.....	92

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
1. Looking Responses Performed by Group I and Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song.....	94
2. Non-Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I and Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song.....	96
3. Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I and Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song.....	97
4. Miscellaneous Responses Performed by Group I and Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song.....	97
5. Vocal Responses Performed by Group I and Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song.....	98
6. Responses of Anticipation Performed by Group I and Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song.....	99
7. Looking Responses Performed by Group I and Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song.....	101
8. Non-Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I and Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song.....	102
9. Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I and Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song.....	103
10. Miscellaneous Responses Performed by Group I and Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song.....	104
11. Vocal Responses Performed by Group I and Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song.....	105
12. Responses of Anticipation Performed by Group I and Group II to the Unfamiliar Criterion Song.....	106
13. Looking Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song and the Unfamiliar Criterion Songs.....	107
14. Looking Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song and the Unfamiliar Criterion Songs.....	108

15.	Non-Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song and the Unfamiliar Criterion Songs	108
16.	Non-Pulsating Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song and the Unfamiliar Criterion Songs	109
17.	Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song and the Unfamiliar Criterion Songs.....	109
18.	Pulsating Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song and the Unfamiliar Criterion Songs.....	110
19.	Miscellaneous Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song and the Unfamiliar Criterion Songs	111
20.	Miscellaneous Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song and the Unfamiliar Criterion Songs	111
21.	Vocal Responses Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song and the Unfamiliar Criterion Songs.....	113
22.	Vocal Responses Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song and the Unfamiliar Criterion Songs.....	114
23.	Responses of Anticipation Performed by Group I to the Familiar Criterion Song and the Unfamiliar Criterion Songs	114
24.	Responses of Anticipation Performed by Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song and the Unfamiliar Criterion Songs	115
25.	Looking Responses Performed by Group I and Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song and the Unfamiliar Criterion Songs During Combined Weeks	116
26.	Non-Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I and Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song and the Unfamiliar Criterion Songs During Combined Weeks	116
27.	Pulsating Responses Performed by Group I and Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song and the Unfamiliar Criterion Songs During Combined Weeks	118
28.	Miscellaneous Responses Performed by Group I Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song and the Unfamiliar Criterion Songs During Combined Weeks	118
29.	Vocal Responses Performed by Group I and Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song and the Unfamiliar Criterion Songs During Combined Weeks	119

30. Responses of Anticipation Performed by Group I and Group II to the Familiar Criterion Song and the Unfamiliar Criterion Songs During Combined Weeks 119

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Music aptitude, music understanding, music achievement, and music appreciation are each dependent upon audiation, one's ability to hear and comprehend music for which the sound is not physically present.¹ According to Edwin E. Gordon, before one actually begins to audiate, he proceeds through preparatory stages of audiation.² A child may or may not acquire the ability to audiate before his music aptitude³ stabilizes at age nine. If he begins to audiate before his music aptitude stabilizes, he increases the opportunities for music enjoyment through audiation throughout his life.⁴ Consequently, an understanding of the stages of preparatory audiation is necessary for optimal music education. There is little objective information, however, about how a child proceeds through the stages of preparatory audiation.

¹Edwin E. Gordon, *Learning Sequences in Music: Skill, Content, and Patterns* (Chicago: G.I.A. Publications, Inc., 1988), 7.

²Edwin E. Gordon, *A Music Learning Theory for Newborn and Young Children* (Chicago: G.I.A. Publications, Inc., 1990), 29-30.

³Gordon provides a complete description of developmental music aptitude and stabilized music aptitude in *The Nature, Description, Measurement, and Evaluation of Music Aptitudes* (Chicago: G.I.A. Publications, Inc., 1987).

⁴Gordon, *Learning Sequences in Music*, 3-4.