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**The effects of teacher training upon the developmental music
aptitude and music achievement of kindergarten students**

Kane, Maryanne J., Ph.D.

Temple University, 1994

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Title of Dissertation: THE EFFECTS OF TEACHER TRAINING UPON THE DEVELOPMENTAL MUSIC APTITUDE AND MUSIC ACHIEVEMENT OF KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS

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THE EFFECTS OF TEACHER TRAINING UPON THE
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STUDENTS

A Dissertation
Submitted to
the Temple University Graduate Board

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

by
Maryanne J. Kane
January, 1994

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ABSTRACT

THE EFFECTS OF TEACHER TRAINING UPON THE DEVELOPMENTAL MUSIC APTITUDE AND MUSIC ACHIEVEMENT OF KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS

By Maryanne J. Kane
Doctor of Philosophy
Temple University, 1994

Major Advisor: Dr. Edwin E. Gordon

The investigator of this study designed a training program for kindergarten teachers for presenting tonal preparatory audiation guidance techniques and traditional rote song techniques to kindergarten children. The tonal preparatory audiation guidance techniques involved singing songs in various tonalities without words and echoing tonal patterns on the neutral syllable "BUM." The traditional rote song techniques involved singing songs in major and harmonic minor tonalities with words.

Three problems were addressed: (a) Does tonal preparatory guidance have a greater effect on kindergarten children's developmental tonal aptitude

than the traditional teaching of rote songs? (b) Does tonal preparatory audiation guidance have a greater effect on kindergarten children's singing achievement than the traditional teaching of rote songs? (c) With instruction from a music specialist, do kindergarten teachers become as effective in the teaching of tonal preparatory audiation guidance techniques as in the teaching of traditional rote song techniques to kindergarten students?

Two kindergarten teachers, one male and one female, and four groups of kindergarten children participated in the study. The children in the experimental group received instruction in tonal preparatory audiation guidance. The children in the control group received instruction in rote songs.

Prior to beginning the study, the kindergarten teachers' vocal abilities were assessed and all children in the study took the Primary Measures of Music Audiation (PMMA) as a music aptitude pretest. At the conclusion of the study, the kindergarten teachers' vocal abilities were reassessed. All children in the study took PMMA as a music aptitude posttest and received a singing achievement test.

From the results of non-significant t values, the investigator drew the following two conclusions: (a) There is no evidence to suggest that tonal preparatory audiation guidance has a greater effect on the developmental music aptitude or singing achievement of kindergarten children than the traditional teaching of rote songs; (b) Kindergarten teachers are as effective in the teaching of tonal preparatory audiation guidance techniques to kindergarten children as in the teaching of traditional rote song techniques.

TO JULIA KANE

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

According to Edwin E. Gordon and leading researchers in child development, fifty percent of all learning occurs before the age of five (Gordon, 1990). A child's future success (or failure) can be directly related to stimulation in the infant's life (Mc Donald and Simons, 1989; Stern, 1985). Researchers are even exploring the possibilities of prenatal experiences (Shetler, 1985; Spiegler, 1967/1968).

With this overwhelming awareness, all disciplines in education are promoting quality early childhood curriculums, including music education. To determine what to teach young children in music, however, teachers must examine how young children learn at a particular age. Researchers suggest that children learn music in the same way they learn a language. With language development, infants absorb sounds around them (or listen), experiment in making sounds (or babble), and eventually try to imitate the words spoken to them. The more adults engage in conversation with small children, read to them, and encourage them to speak on their own, the greater the children's vocabulary, language development, and cognitive skills prosper. Motivation is also heightened. According to Piaget, "The more a child has seen and heard, the more he wants to see and hear" (cited in Brand, 1985, p. 30). Obviously, children receiving that kind of stimulation enter kindergarten with readiness skills superior to those of children who do not benefit from such exposure. In fact, kindergarten teachers may have to

supplement listening, vocabulary, and language enrichment activities prior to beginning the kindergarten curriculum if incoming students have not received adequate preschool input.

Because children learn music in a fashion similar to learning a language, it is clear they must also develop a music listening vocabulary, experiment with vocal sounds and music babble, and eventually try to sing songs heard from adults around them (Gordon, 1991, p. 23). According to Moog (1975, p. 42), by two years of age every child is able to sing; however, the necessary music babbling will occur only if music is sung to the child by an adult. Unfortunately, in reality, most children do not receive appropriate exposure to music prior to entering kindergarten. Parents may play records, sing, and dance with the child, but often it is sporadic and unorganized. If language activities compensate for inadequate language preparation, it seems reasonable that music enrichment activities may compensate for inadequate music preparation. In most situations, a music specialist instructs kindergarten students once or twice a week and in some cases, not at all. Because kindergarten teachers meet their students everyday, it is crucial that they possess a clear understanding of what the appropriate music activities are and of the ways to incorporate such activities into the kindergarten curriculum on a daily basis.

Communication between the music specialist and the kindergarten instructor is essential in developing kindergarten music programs. Recognition of the need for communication is not a new concept. In 1984, MENC and the Association for Childhood Education International announced plans for a conference concerning music in early childhood. The

members of the conference proposed the following goals: "(a) to initiate active research that combines the knowledge of early childhood specialists, learning theorists, and music educators to formulate age-appropriate music programs, and (b) to initiate dialogue among early childhood specialists, music educators, and developmental psychologists to study the young child and musical growth" (Taylor, 1984, p. 70).

What are age-appropriate music activities in preschool music? Kindergarten teachers use music now in their daily lessons for "extra-musical" ends: number counting songs to assist with math readiness, friendship songs to promote social interaction, and finger play songs and chants to develop coordination. While those songs may be beneficial in math or language development, are they enough to foster music understanding? Current researchers in music learning theory suggest no and recommend the following preparatory audiation¹ guidance activities (Gordon, 1990):

1. singing short songs without words in various tonalities,
2. singing short tonal patterns on a neutral syllable,
3. performing short chants without words in various meters,
4. performing short rhythmic patterns on a neutral syllable, and
5. engaging in sustained, continuous movement.²

¹Audiation describes one's ability to hear and comprehend music when the sound is not physically present. For a definition, description, and detailed explanation of audiation and preparatory audiation guidance, see Edwin E. Gordon, *A Music Learning Theory for Newborn and Young Children* (Chicago: G.I.A. Publications, 1990).

²A child engaging in continuous, sustained movement maintains a steady, ongoing flow of motions with his or her body. These motions are not directed by the teacher, but are created by the child as he or she responds to music. Typical types of continuous, sustained movement are swaying back and forth and rocking. In contrast, the movements used while singing traditional rote songs with words often dramatize the words of the song. The movements change with the words of the song and, thus, may be