

DEVELOPMENT OF AN EARLY CHILDHOOD MUSIC
CURRICULUM FOR SOUTH KOREAN CHILDREN

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Joohee Rho

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Joohee Rho

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ABSTRACT

Development of an Early Childhood Music Curriculum for South Korean Children

Joohee Rho

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Doctoral Advisory Committee Chair: Dr. Beth M. Bolton

The purpose of this research was to develop and evaluate an extensive early childhood music curriculum for South Korean Kindergarten children based on music learning theory. The problems of this study were (1) to develop an appropriate, multi-level, comprehensive music curriculum, the *Audie Music Curriculum*, (2) to determine the effects of enriched music experience on developmental music aptitude, (3) to determine the effectiveness of the new curriculum to teach musical and non-musical skill, (4) to determine the extent to which the *Audie Music Curriculum* spurs interest in music education among teachers and administrators.

Development of the *Audie Music Curriculum*, as an action research study, consisted of a series of lesson plans for two academic years of South

Korean Kindergarten. A between subjects design was used to investigate the general effects of early instruction and the specific effectiveness of the *Audie Music Curriculum* for five-year-old subjects who experienced instruction for varied periods of time. The Tonal and Rhythm subtests of the *Primary Measures of Music Audiation*, serving as criterion measures, were administered three times during one year to Experimental Group I, who experienced the *Audie Music Curriculum* for one year, Experimental Group II, who experienced the *Audie Music Curriculum* for two years, and Control Groups I and II, who received no *Audie Music Curriculum* instruction.

A two-way Analysis of Variance (groups by administrations) showed that the two Experimental Groups were not different in tonal aptitude but were significantly different ($p < .05$) in rhythm aptitude at the end of the academic year. A *t*-test comparing Experimental and Control Groups at the end of the final Kindergarten year showed the *Audie Music Curriculum* efficiently increased children's music aptitude.

The analysis of questionnaires and interviews with school-teachers and administrators showed the *Audie Music Curriculum* was valuable in teaching musical and non-musical skills and teachers and administrators revealed the values and specialties of early childhood music education by experiencing *Audie Music Curriculum*. The results of this research suggested that a music learning theory for very young children was adapted effectively for children in a South Korean Kindergarten class setting.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

There are many goals in early childhood music education. One important goal is helping each child to maximize aptitude, or potential (Gordon, 1997; Valerio et al., 1998). Other important goals, beliefs, or objectives are developing a child's musicianship, or musical achievement, social and cultural understanding, movement and rhythm coordination, and sense of self within the family and society.

The Music Educators National Conference (MENC) recognizes the importance of early childhood music education. The MENC Early Childhood Special Research Interest Group, only one of several important special interest groups sponsored by the organization, provides a newsletter for its members and a forum for open discussion of early childhood music education. Further, MENC sponsors an early childhood music day at regional and division conferences so that teachers, parents, and caregivers can meet to discuss important issues in early childhood music. An education MENC publication, *Readings in Early Childhood Music Education* (Andress & Walker, 1992), attests to the importance of this branch of music education.

The following beliefs about the music learning of young children are outlined in the early childhood music education standards published by

MENC (1994). The standards provide guidelines for educators, music specialists, parents, and childcare providers.

1. All children have musical potential.
2. Children bring their own unique interests and abilities to the music learning environment.
3. Very young children are capable of developing critical thinking skills through musical ideas.
4. Children come to early-childhood music experiences from diverse backgrounds.
5. Children should experience exemplary musical sounds, activities, and materials.
6. Children should not be encumbered with the need to meet performance goals.
7. Children's play is their work.
8. Children learn best in pleasant physical and social environment.
9. Diverse learning environments are needed to serve the developmental needs of many individual children.
10. Children need effective adult models. (p. 9)

Commercial Early Childhood Music Programs

There are several important commercial early childhood programs in the United States. The largest and most influential are Kindermusik International, Music Together, and Musikgarten. The Suzuki early childhood approach to teaching instrumental music has been influential for many years.

Kindermusik International states that its early childhood music and movement program is based on the following beliefs: "every child is musical, every parent is the child's most important teacher, the home is the most

important learning environment, and...music nurtures a child's cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development" (Kindermusik, 2003, Kindermusik Philosophy section, para. 3). Children in Kindermusik (2003) classes "grow...without pressure to perform...with encouragement to explore, express and discover" (Why Kindermusik? section, para. 1). Kindermusik developers inform parents that "you'll witness a developmental evolution in language skills, emerging literacy, listening, problem solving, social skills, self-esteem, and musicality" (Classes section, para. 1).

Music Together, a Princeton, New Jersey based program which enjoys national success, provides a mission statement on its website. "Our mission is to provide the highest quality music and movement experiences to as many young children as possible, involving their parents and other adult caregivers, including early childhood professionals" (Musictogether, 2002, Our Mission section, para. 1). The basic principles of the Music Together (2002) philosophy are as follows:

1. All children are musical.
2. Therefore, all children can achieve basic music competence. (the ability to sing in tune with accurate rhythm)
3. The participation and modeling of parents and caregivers, regardless of their musical ability, is essential to a child's musical growth.
4. This growth is best achieved in a playful, developmentally appropriate, non-performance-oriented learning environment that is musically rich yet immediately accessible to the child's—and the adult's—participation. (Musictogether, 2002, Basic Principles section, para. 1-4)

Musikgarten, founded in the middle 1990's by Lorna Heyge and Audrey Sillick, the original founders of Kindermusik, hopes to "expose as many children as possible to music" (Musikgarten, 2003, Why Teach section, para. 1). The founders believe the following:

1. Music programs help develop the artistic nature of children and nurture their social skills by improving self-confidence, abstract thinking, the art of voluntary thinking, and stimulating creativity.
2. Music and movement experiences in early childhood have a measurable, positive, and highly significant impact on a child's development.
3. Children can learn a great deal through music, such as language, motor skills, social interaction and community.
4. Music is a way to bond families together and enrich communities. (Musikgarten, 2003, Why Teach section, para. 2-5)

Teachers who espouse the Suzuki approach embrace the concept of educating the whole child. The Suzuki approach promotes helping children to experience the "joy of music making." The approach has proven successful in developing talent, discipline, and self-confidence (Suzuki method at Suzuki music academy, 2003, Suzuki Method section, para. 2).

Shinichi Suzuki, developer of the approach, wrote that "we never forget that certain talents can be developed when a certain environment is provided" (1973, p. 10). According to Suzuki (1969), "originally all humans are born with considerable high potential for developing themselves" (p. 27). He does not believe that musical talent is a gift inherited by certain

individuals (Landers, 1984, p. 7). Careful nurturing can provide every child the potential to do anything. Suzuki's approach is based on mother-tongue acquisition. He believed that every child could learn his mother tongue without effort and considered it a universal demonstration of the learning capacity of children.

In Suzuki pedagogy, an environment that honors a child is created. Suzuki believed that praise, encouragement, firm training, and a high degree of parental and teacher responsibility could help children fulfill their human capacity. One of Suzuki's techniques was to use repetition to help students internalize knowledge. Repetition is intended to develop intuition, which is not an inherent skill, but one that grows through training and endurance (Wilson, 2000, para. 8).

Originally, only violin was taught using the Suzuki method. Suzuki education is now widely adapted to other instruments such as piano, cello, flute, voice, and even guitar. One of the largest American Suzuki programs, the Suzuki Music Academy in Ft. Lauderdale/Davie, Florida, has extended Suzuki education to very early childhood, promoting a curriculum designed to give parents of newborn infants and toddlers skills, practical strategies, and techniques for maximizing the benefits children can receive from classical music exposure and study (Suzuki Music Academy, 2003, The Classical section, para. 4).

Recently, many universities and colleges have begun to provide early childhood music programs based on widely accepted recognition of the importance of early musical experiences. Some universities have developed their own programs (Figure 1).

Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester, New York	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music T.I.M.E. (Toddler Infant Music at Eastman) • Music T.I.M.E.s Two • Music Makers • Clef Club 	4 month to 2 years old 2 and 3 years old 3 and 4 years old Kindergarten/ First grade
University of Connecticut Community School of the Arts, Storrs, Connecticut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music for the Very Young • Music for the Young • Music Time • Clef Club 	4-18months 18 months – 3 years 3-4 years 5 years
University of South Alabama Department of Music, Mobile, Alabama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childplay 	1-4 years
University of Miami School of Music, Miami, Florida	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music time for babies • Music Time 1 • Music Time 2 • Music Time 3 • Music Time 4 (Keyboard) 	Birth – 15 months 15 months – 3 years 3 – 4½ years 4½ – 6 years 6 – 8 years
Oakland University Music Preparatory Division, Oakland, California	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue Birds • Robins • Cardinals 	1 and one-half-2 years 3-4 years 5 years

Figure 1. Independent University Early Childhood Music Programs

Some universities have adopted commercial programs. Kindermusik is used in programs at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois;

Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois; and Webster University in St. Louis, Missouri. Musikgarten has an established presence at the University of Delaware in Newark, Delaware; Crown College in St. Bonifacius, Minnesota; and Music Together at the Music Conservatory of Westchester in White Plains, New York.

Early Childhood Music Programs Based on Music Learning Theory, as Developed in the United States

The music learning theory, or preparatory audiation, approach originated in 1984 at Temple University. The approach was offered to children 18 months to four years old and their parents. In 1991 the program expanded to include children younger than eighteen months old ("Babies Bounce," 1991, p. 1). The approach and adaptations of it are now in use in early childhood music programs at several major universities and community based music programs in the United States: Join the Music, Join the Circle, the early childhood music division of Temple Music Prep, at Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; the Children's Music Development Center at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, South Carolina; and the Early Childhood Music program at the Community Music School, Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan; Music Play at the State University of New York at Buffalo; Early Childhood Music Program at the University of Texas at Arlington; Music Play at the Community Arts School,

University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg; Preparatory Early Childhood Music at the Department of Early Childhood Music, the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore; Musicians All at The Music Academy of State College, Pennsylvania.

According to Bolton [personal communication, February 23, 2001], early childhood music programs based on preparatory audiation focus on four primary aspects of music experience: songs and chants in a variety of tonalities and meters, movement, tonal and rhythm patterns, and finally, songs and chants without words. Using these aspects to provide musical experience, teachers are guided by a hierarchical framework, which provides information about children's natural music learning sequence and the sequence in which music should be taught (Gordon, 1997). Teachers guide children informally through three types (acculturation, imitation, and assimilation) and seven hierarchical stages (absorption, random response, purposeful response, shedding egocentricity, breaking the code, introspection, coordination) of preparatory audiation with specific techniques and patterns for each stage (Gordon, 1997, p. 33).

The websites of several university programs based on preparatory audiation (Temple University, University of South Carolina, Michigan State University) offer similar goals and objectives. The three directors (Beth Bolton, Wendy Valerio, and Cynthia Taggart) studied with Edwin Gordon at an environment that promotes strong musical skills" (Taggart, n.d., para. 1).

Temple University and have co-authored several early childhood music and elementary general music texts.

Join the Music, Join the Circle, the early childhood program at Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania “develops the very young child’s potential in music and helps parents recognize and nurture their child’s musical strengths. The program provides a carefully planned sequence of music learning for children accompanied by parents or caregivers, and uses the natural human inclination for chanting, singing, and moving as the first steps in understanding melody and rhythm” (Music Preparatory, 2003, Join the Music, para. 1). Children enrolled in the program experience music in a “wide variety of tonalities and meters which help to build their musical vocabulary and stimulate their cognitive development...independent movement and games (that) encourage musical responses..., and solfeggio and notation...” (Music Preparatory, 2003, Join the Music, para. 2).

The Children’s Music Development Center, University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina, offers Music Play! for infants through 5 years. According to the director’s introduction, Music Play classes are part of an innovative program designed to develop the music potentials of young children” (Valerio, 2003, para. 1).

Early Childhood Music, a part of the Community Music School at Michigan State University, Lansing, Michigan, provides “a rich musical environment that promotes strong musical skills” (Taggart, n.d., para. 1).

The classes are designed “so that children can interact in any way they feel most comfortable” (Taggart, n.d., para. 2).

Music-Learning-Theory-Based Early Childhood Music Programs in Other Countries

Many aspects of American early childhood music education have been examined by educators from other countries. Several foreign students and educators have come to study preparatory audiation based early childhood music education in the United States.

Mikhail Hefer studied early childhood music at Temple University. She wrote a series of early childhood lesson plans with original music written for use in Israel (2000). She focused on musical content which features a variety of tonalities and meters using texts that refer to aspects of Israeli life, climate, and culture. She has returned to her country and is teaching early childhood music using her original songs and lessons. Hefer (2002) published a new compact disc recording, titled *Ba, Ba, BeShir* [ba, ba, with a song], which features her original music and her early childhood music program.

Regina Poškute-Grun (1999, 2004) translated *Guiding Your Child's Musical Development* (Gordon & Cameron, 1991), *The Experimental Early Childhood Song and Chant Book I* (Gordon et al., 1993), and *Music Play* (Valerio et al., 1998) into Lithuanian, making the ideas of preparatory