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Musical aptitudes and vocal competence of first grade students of primary school in the context of edwin

E. Gordon's theory of music learning

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SUMMARY

The theoretical foundations of this work are the assumptions of Edwin E. Gordon's theory of music learning, which applies to the musical development of children. The subject of the research is the development of musical abilities and vocal competences of children in elementary school, stimulated through innovative, alternative, and quasi-experimental (teaching a song on a neutral syllable without text) methods, in relation to the traditional methods of teaching songs in early childhood education.

This dissertation aims to determine the relationship between the alternative (teaching on a neutral syllable) and the traditional (repetition of song fragments with words) methods of teaching and learning a song. Additional aims are to investigate the scope of experimental methodical procedure in teaching/learning songs, in correlation with the musical vocal development of the surveyed students and the dynamics of musical abilities and readiness for harmonic and rhythmic improvisation. Furthermore, the relationships between the studied phenomena are investigated. In this dissertation, a nomothetic explanation of co-occurrence is adopted, referring to observable phenomena that can be empirically verified (verification, confirmation, or corroboration). As the purpose of this research is the confirmation or refutation of the chosen statements from E. E. Gordon's theory, the presented research is of a theoretical verification and correlation type.

The experiment consists of vocal performance of the melodic line based on the neutral syllable "la" by a teacher only in the initial stage of learning and teaching the song. After a qualitatively good mastery of the musical material by the children, the text of the song is introduced. Thereafter, children sing the whole song – both melody and text. In comparison, the traditional

course of teaching a song is mainly focused on repeating meaningful fragments of the song (musical phrases) after the teacher - that is, the melody is repeated along with the text at the same time. The experimental way of teaching a song results from the theory of Edwin Elias Gordon, who emphasized that when teaching a song - melody along with the text - children focus more on the text than on the musical layer (tonal, rhythmic), which may reduce the quality of musical performance of the song among kids.

Based on the analysis of the research results, it was found that the introduced song learning process, based on the theory of Edwin E. Gordon, brought significant results; the effect of experimental interactions was very high. Learning songs without words brings much better results than the traditional method of learning/teaching a song. As a result of special musical training, the level of vocal competence among the students of the experimental group increased significantly. There was also a significant increase in musical abilities (tonal and rhythmic) in the experimental group.