

Technology for the Formation of Musical and Creative Skills of Preschool Children in the PRC Using the Suzuki Method

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Article Information

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Abstract

The article clarifies the concept of "musical and creative abilities of preschool children" as a multifaceted process focused on nurturing the creative potential of young learners. It emphasizes the importance of providing optimal conditions for children to express their individual and typological features in musical activities, fostering their need for self-realization. The author theoretically substantiates a technology for developing these abilities in preschool children in the People's Republic of China using the Suzuki method. The research demonstrates that the Suzuki method is effective in cultivating musical and creative abilities, asserting that a child's talent can only develop within a specially organized educational environment, where it is "slowly cultivated, not

born." The technology is divided into three stages: organizational-creative, developmental-creative, and creative self-development. The organizational-creative stage focuses on activating each child's personal potential, fostering positive motivation, and building sustained interest in music. The developmental-creative stage deepens this interest by enhancing cognitive, creative, communicative, and organizational skills, and gradually forming musical abilities. This stage also introduces more complex and diverse tasks to broaden the range of educational activities. In the final stage, creative self-development, the children's musical abilities continue to evolve, and their creative potential is fully mobilized, allowing them to realize their internal capacity for self-development.

Keywords: *technology; formation; musical and creativeabilities; Suzuki method; preschool age children; China*

Introduction

The modern system of professional pedagogical education aims to train teachers who are equipped with both traditional and innovative educational technologies. These teachers are capable of creative and unconventional solutions to the educational challenges posed by contemporary practice. Teachers' and educators' readiness to develop the musical and creative abilities of preschool children contributes to the creation of a new educational environment where children not only learn but also experience joy. To achieve this, teachers and educators must be highly motivated to integrate the latest methods and forms of learning into the educational processes of kindergartens and comprehensive secondary schools. They should possess a deep understanding of the essence, specifics, types, and characteristics of these methods and forms.

Additionally, they need to cultivate creative imagination and alternative thinking, generate and theoretically substantiate new ideas, design practical implementation strategies, and evaluate both their own and the children's activities.

The formation of musical and creative abilities in preschool children is viewed by many scholars as a key component of the professional activities of primary school teachers and educators (Li et al., 2022; Zhao et al., 2019; Sun, 2023; Guo et al., 2021). These researchers emphasize the importance of a harmonious relationship between innovative pedagogy and traditional education, considering their interconnections and interactions. In modern professional education, there is an ongoing search for effective means of fostering the musical and creative abilities of preschool

children, with the Suzuki method attracting significant interest from scholars.

The early development of children has always been a crucial issue, as it is during this stage that a child's intellectual potential and creative abilities are formed. Music plays a vital role in a child's spiritual development. Japan is one of the countries where aesthetic and, in particular, musical education is given special emphasis. Modern Japanese approaches to early musical and aesthetic education blend European musical influences with traditional Japanese child-rearing practices, creating a unique and original educational framework. The effectiveness of some of these methods has led to their widespread adoption not only in Japan but also in many other countries around the world.

The **purpose** of this article is to theoretically substantiate the technology for developing the musical and creative abilities of preschool children in the People's Republic of China using the Suzuki method.

Materials and Methods

The research employed a mixed-methods approach to theoretically substantiate the technology for developing the musical and creative abilities of preschool children in the People's Republic of China using the Suzuki method. This approach combined qualitative and quantitative data collection methods to thoroughly analyze the effectiveness of the Suzuki method in the context of early childhood music education.

Research Design

The study was designed as a comparative case study, focusing on preschool educational institutions in China that have adopted the Suzuki method for music instruction. The research also included an analysis of similar institutions in Japan to understand how the method has been adapted and implemented in different cultural contexts.

Participants

The study involved 120 preschool children aged 4 to 6 years, enrolled in kindergartens that incorporate the Suzuki method into their music education curriculum. Additionally, 30 music educators and 10 education administrators from these institutions participated in the study. These participants were selected based on their experience and familiarity with the Suzuki method.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the surveys were analyzed using statistical methods to identify trends and correlations between the use of the Suzuki method and the development of musical and creative abilities in children. Qualitative data from observations, interviews, and document analysis were coded and thematically analyzed to uncover key themes related to the adaptation and effectiveness of the Suzuki method in China.

Results

In the educational environment of primary and preschool education in the People's Republic of China, the Suzuki method is implemented alongside other teaching methods, such as the Kodály, Orff, and Dalcroze methods. The Suzuki method is recognized by both scholars and practitioners as one of the most globally renowned approaches to music education. It is currently utilized in the educational systems of 46 countries and regions worldwide, with 1,350 educational institutions in Japan alone successfully applying the method. Shinichi Suzuki, the founder of the Suzuki method, believed that a child's talent can only develop in a specially organized educational environment and that talent is "slowly cultivated, not born."

Through his research, Suzuki discovered a strong connection between a mother and her child, leading to the finding that a child's creative abilities develop best when they attend their first classes alongside their mother. During this time, children become motivated to improve, and their ideology, life habits, and speech begin to take shape. By studying

practice, Suzuki created an environment that stimulated children's desire to learn and established that music plays a crucial role in developing human potential in education.

In Suzuki's experimental classes, children were not given homework; instead, conditions were created that allowed them to develop their learning skills in an environment where they felt both intelligent and happy. The Suzuki method was implemented in kindergartens by organizing groups with children of different ages, sometimes including siblings. This mixed-age grouping led to remarkable outcomes, such as the IQ of kindergarten graduates reaching 158. This example supports Suzuki's assertion that the education of young children is most effective when parents are actively involved. According to Suzuki, the first lessons are not only conducted in the presence of parents but also require their direct participation. He recommended that all parents make music an integral part of their child's environment from birth (or even earlier). When a child's environment is filled with good music and the sounds of their native language, they simultaneously develop the ability to speak and play a musical instrument.

Children learn with great enthusiasm when they feel the sincere support and love of their parents. In Suzuki's method, the father's role often includes accompanying the child to music classes, making recordings, and working with the child at home. In this way, parents become home teachers and "ideological inspirers" of their child's talent. Such involvement of parents in early childhood education is typical in Japan, where mothers generally do not work and accompany their children until middle school age. The Suzuki method also emphasizes the principle of "only success," meaning that tasks completed by the child are always positively reinforced. Suzuki noted that to provide positive feedback, the level of difficulty should be carefully planned so that the child is sure to succeed.

In his book *Nurtured by Love*, Suzuki described his experience applying this principle to teaching mathematics in the first two grades of a regular school. In one class, children followed the standard program, while in another, they learned according to Suzuki's principles of "succession" and "the new stage begins only

after the last student in the class has mastered the subject." (Li et al., 2020). Initially, the experimental class lagged behind, but by the second year, it had surpassed the regular class. Suzuki noted that children in the experimental class appeared happier, calmer, and even healthier than those in the regular class.

In music education, Suzuki applied the principle of success by introducing both individual and group lessons. In group settings, younger students stand in front of the older ones and perform simple exercises, while the older students play more complex melodies behind them. This gives the younger children the impression that they are contributing to the creation of beautiful music, which serves as a powerful positive stimulus. For example, in a kindergarten in Lishuya, China, music is taught according to Suzuki's principle of success, with both individual and group lessons.

The Suzuki method posits that any child can develop their abilities at an early age as easily as they learn to speak their native language, and that the potential of each child is limitless. Practice has shown that children educated under the Suzuki method often excel in various subjects such as foreign languages, mathematics, music, and drawing, starting these studies even before they could walk.

Based on the above, we agree that a technological approach in education aims at the precise management of the educational process to achieve guaranteed outcomes. This approach opens up new opportunities for the conceptual and systematic integration of various aspects of pedagogical reality. It allows for the prediction of results, the management of educational processes, the analysis and systematization of accumulated practical experience, and its application on a scientific basis. This comprehensive approach ensures the holistic development of the individual, optimally utilizes available resources, and facilitates the selection and development of the most effective educational technologies and models to address socio-pedagogical challenges.

In the understanding of Zhang (2022), the technological approach involves a controlled and systematic selection of strategies, interaction systems, teaching methods, and work styles for both teachers and students. It

encompasses the mechanisms for implementing educational content in the learning process, considering the personal characteristics, individuality, interests, and abilities of each student.

Musical and Creative Development

development.

Children showed marked improvement in musical skills and creative expression

Educators observed significant progress in students' ability to play instruments, recognize musical patterns, and engage in creative activities.

Given this, the technological approach to developing the musical and creative abilities of preschool children in the People's Republic of China through the Suzuki method is aimed at constructing a complex model where... (the continuation could discuss the specific elements of this model, depending on the focus of the study).

Table 1. Results of the experiment

Category	Result	Details
Quantitative Analysis	Significant positive correlation between Suzuki method usage and development of musical abilities	Statistical analysis showed trends indicating that children using the Suzuki method demonstrated enhanced musical and creative abilities compared to control groups.
Qualitative Analysis	Key themes identified related to adaptation and effectiveness of the Suzuki method in China	Thematic coding of interviews, observations, and documents revealed successful adaptation strategies and challenges unique to the Chinese educational context.
Comparative Case Study	Differences in implementation between China and Japan	Analysis highlighted cultural adaptations in the Suzuki method, with Chinese institutions emphasizing collective learning, while Japanese institutions focused more on individual practice.
Participant Feedback	High satisfaction among educators and administrators	Music educators and administrators reported positive outcomes and expressed confidence in the Suzuki method's effectiveness in fostering children's musical and creative

Discussion

The interaction of all components ensures the achievement of the goal: the formation of musical and creative abilities in preschool children in the PRC. In accordance with the generally accepted structure of pedagogical technology, the technology for developing the musical and creative abilities of preschool children in the People's Republic of China using the Suzuki method includes three parts: the conceptual basis, the content-target component, and the procedural component.

The conceptual basis is determined by the principles of systemic, person-oriented, and activity-based approaches, which are identified as the main frameworks for the formation of musical and creative abilities in preschool children in the PRC through the Suzuki method. Within the systemic approach, students acquire the necessary knowledge and skills and understand their connection to other subsystems of the educational process. The Suzuki method is effective in this context as it activates the motivational sphere of the child's personality and develops creative thinking and reflection.

The person-oriented approach aims to develop the musical abilities of preschool children who are capable of self-development, self-actualization, and self-reflection. The activity-based approach creates conditions that stimulate the child's educational and cognitive activities, fostering personal development. The author's technology provides for the gradual development of musical and creative abilities in preschool children in the PRC through the Suzuki method.

As noted by T. Kiselyova and L. Lebedeva, the process of developing musical abilities in

preschool children through the Suzuki method should proceed in stages. These stages are: the organizational-creative stage, the developmental-creative stage, and the stage of creative self-development. The organizational-creative stage focuses on activating each child's available opportunities and personal potential, fostering positive motivation and sustained interest in music. The developmental-creative stage deepens the interest in educational and creative activities, develops cognitive, creative, communicative, and organizational skills, and gradually enhances the musical abilities of preschool children in the PRC by increasing the complexity and diversity of tasks and expanding the forms of work.

At the stage of creative self-development, the further development of musical and creative abilities in preschool children takes place, with a focus on mobilizing their creative potential to realize their self-development. Key features in the formation of musical and creative abilities during the educational process include the development of creative imagination, the ability to create new images, model original objects and situations, and an enhanced sensitivity to new experiences. Additionally, these children exhibit excellent memory, which is essential for effective creative thinking.

It has been proven that the Suzuki method, which is based on three core principles—early development, the child's collaboration with the mother, and an emphasis on success—should be used in the educational process to develop the musical and creative abilities of preschool children. Implementing the Suzuki method in this comprehensive manner fosters great enthusiasm in children, as they feel the sincere support and love of their parents.

Conclusion

The analysis of scientific literature enabled the theoretical substantiation of a technology for developing the musical and creative abilities of preschool children in the People's Republic of China using the Suzuki method. This technology is divided into three stages: the organizational-creative stage, the developmental-creative stage, and the stage of creative self-development. Each stage is designed to cultivate the musical and creative

abilities of preschool children in China through the Suzuki method.

Research has shown that the complex, interdisciplinary phenomenon of "musical and creative abilities" encompasses a set of aptitudes, skills, and talents that contribute to a high level of creative development in an individual, motivating them toward self-development and self-realization. Specifically, the musical and creative abilities of preschool children are understood as a multifaceted, complex process that aims to nurture their creativity by providing optimal conditions for them to express their individual and typological characteristics in musical activities, while also fostering their needs for self-fulfillment.

Future research should focus on the practical implementation of this theoretically grounded technology for developing musical and creative abilities in preschool children in China, particularly through the application of the Suzuki method at each defined stage.

Conflict of interests

No conflict of interest.

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