
The Development of Prospective Music Teachers' Harmonic Hearing at Higher Education Establishments

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Abstract. The development of harmonic hearing is an essential component of the system of music teachers' training. The paper is concerned with the type of a case study which deals with the study of professional groups (a bigger and more diffusive group of 14 students). The process of training music teachers at sol-fa classes in a higher education establishment is analyzed and described. The sol-fa classes are oriented towards the development of harmonic hearing.

The purpose of the study is to develop a technology of conducting sol-fa classes oriented towards developing students' – the prospective music teachers' – harmonic hearing on the basis of a case-study methodology; to present the developed material and ways of its application in the training process; to analyze and summarize the results of the research done.

The research results show that the criteria relating to practical music making of students, such as polyphonic singing and intoning intervals and chords, and also those relating to creativeness, such as improvisation and composing the accompaniment for the melody, have been the most effective ones.

Keywords: *strategy, case-study, harmonic hearing.*

Introduction

The 21st century transformations in social, scientific and political spheres give an impulse to seeking for innovations in all fields of human activities, including that of education. The contemporary musical-pedagogical theory and practice of higher education establishments face a lot of problems: the content of music education changes, new forms of training music teachers appear, the technical equipment of the educational process is constantly improving. The effectiveness of musical activity first of all depends on the level of the development of musical hearing.

Harmonic hearing is one kind of musical hearing (Teplov, 1947). The development of harmonic hearing is a vital component of music teachers' training: the quality of intoning in the choir or ensemble depends on the developmental level of harmonic hearing. A well-developed harmonic hearing is by right considered a high stage of professional musical hearing and is of great importance for a prospective music teacher. It contributes to improving skills of sight-reading choral scores, speeds up the process of learning them, deepens the perception of polyphonic music and improves students' self-control while performing the compositions.

However, the contemporary music education does not pay proper attention to this component of musical hearing. The negative outcome this situation has produced is students' poor skills in reading harmony of choral scores, slow process of learning them, superficial perception of polyphonic music, inability to control one's own performance in the process of collective music-making, which is vital for them if choral traditions of Latvian culture of music are considered.

The sol-fa course, first of all, brings the problem of musical hearing into focus. Sol-fa studies at a higher education institution are supposed to provide not only interdisciplinary links (as emphasized by such scholars as I. Grauzdina (1975), J. Joffe (1991), L. Maslenkova (2003), but also their content should reflect and incorporate such important psychological processes as music perception, attention, musical memory, musical and creative thinking, motivation etc., which all make an impact on the development of a prospective teacher's personality, including also the development of harmonic hearing.

Therefore, to understand many problems pertaining to the development of harmonic hearing in a sol-fa course, and also to successfully tackle the practical tasks of training music teachers, a comprehensive empiric research is needed.

The purpose of the study is to develop a technology of conducting sol-fa classes oriented towards developing students' – the prospective music teachers' – harmonic hearing on the basis of a case-study methodology; to present the developed material and ways of its application in the training process.

Research Methods: modeling, the comparison and analysis of the results yielded by the diagnostic research and the results obtained from the next stage – the training stage – of the research.

Criteria of prospective music teacher's harmonic hearing

It is essential for every teacher to be aware of the already existing models of assessment and to start monitoring and collecting evidence of students' achievements during music classes (Adams, 2001). B. Teplov defines harmonic hearing (one kind of music hearing) as the perception of sounds, as the ability to perceive simultaneously many sounds as one whole (Teplov, 1947). The development of harmonic hearing, in its turn, is connected with a repeated listening to the sounding of chords and attempts to identify by ear the emotional originality of the sounding (Simons, 1980). On the basis of the analyzed models (Bennett, 1976; Swanwick, 1999; Swanwick, 2002) and specificity of the development of harmonic hearing the principal criteria of the development of prospective music teacher's harmonic hearing have been developed:

1) Perception by ear of different kind of consonances in music and skill to give their emotional-imagery characterization: here, during the process of perceiving chords / intervals it is important to stir to activity the mechanism of associations;

2) Analysis by ear of different sound structures and matching them with respective theoretical concepts: one should be able to draw the analogy between the audio-visual images of chords / intervals and their description, i.e. to be able to relate the image to theoretical concept and express it in words;

3) Reproduction of simple kinds of harmonic polyphony when making music individually or in groups: here, of great importance are students' skills to adequately implement the developed internal musical-aural perceptions of polyphonic music in practice – in various kinds of performing and creative activities (singing, playing music instruments etc.) (Davidova, Zavadska, 2012).

Schematically it can be depicted in the following way figure 1.

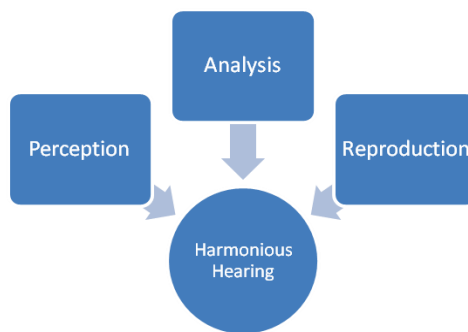


Fig. 1. *The Qualitative Diagnostic Criteria of the Development of Harmonic Hearing*

The above mentioned three criteria – perception, analysis and reproduction – are the basic criteria for the development of harmonic hearing.

However, we have to point out that during the process of studies at sol-fa classes, listening, analysis and singing always interact with one another, aural perceptions are analyzed and reinforced by singing, and vice versa, singing follows in footsteps of aural perceptions. Therefore these activities complement each other.

The principle function in the pedagogical diagnostics is the function of providing feedback during the teaching process. The importance of this function lies in the fact that the diagnostic data about the development level of the abilities of these or other learners at some definite stage are the main information for both the analysis of the previous pedagogical experience and constructing a further pedagogical process.

Results of the Preliminary Diagnostic Research

The development of musical abilities of prospective music teachers is related to the investigation and studying of the individual structure of harmonic hearing of each student. Applying the model of the development of prospective music teachers' harmonic hearing, worked out by the author previously (Zavadska, 2012), a diagnostic research was conducted in a group of students from the Faculty of Music and Arts at Daugavpils University. The research was aimed at studying the results obtained at diagnosing the level of the development of harmonic hearing of students in the programme "Music Teacher" and at identifying significant regularities and specificities which can be singled out on the basis of the results obtained from the analysis of diagnostic tasks (Zavadska, 2013).

14 junior course students of the speciality "Music Teacher" participated in the diagnostic research. The results obtained from the diagnostic research have been used for further developing the strategy of the case study and technology of conducting sol-fa classes oriented towards the development of harmonic hearing of students – the future teachers of music. The results of the diagnostics have been obtained from real conditions where "the phenomenon of interest unfolds naturally" (Patton, 2002, p. 39).

During the diagnostic research were identified and defined those difficulties which the prospective music teachers face in the training process when they have to tackle tasks pertaining to the development of harmonic hearing. First of all, attention should be paid to the difficulties identified at doing diagnostic assignments – perception of chords of the seventh and their inversions, using of bass at listening to blocks of interval sequences, analysis of modulations and writing musical dictation. These kinds of study work require concentrating attention, they are aural-activity oriented and need the control of students' inner hearing.

Creating Technologies for Conducting Sol-fa Classes on the Basis of the Case Study Methodology

The introduction of Case Study technologies into the practice of teaching is a problem topical for the contemporary professional education, including practice of music education too. Many researchers apply the case study technology in real-life situations, meticulously planned and created for the research (Soy, 1997), and propose methods for organizing and conducting successful research (Yin, 1984 / 1994; Stake, 1995; Petrushin, 1997).

Researcher Robert K. Yin defines the case study research method as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1984 / 1994: 23). Robert Stake (1995) points out that in case study the thing that matters is not methods but rather the object of the research – the case.

On the basis of the research done by Robert E. Stake, Helen Simons, and Robert K. Yin, several successive stages in conducting case study research are distinguished:

1. Determine and define the research questions;
2. Select the cases and determine data gathering and analysis techniques;
3. Prepare to collect the data;
4. Collect data in the field;
5. Evaluate and analyze the data;
6. Prepare the report (Soy, 1997).

Stage 1. Defining the research question

The basic information for the analysis of the previous pedagogical experience and constructing a further pedagogical process was provided by the preliminary diagnostic data about the developmental level of students' harmonic hearing at a definite stage of their development. Relying on these data, the research question has been formulated:

Which professional skills of prospective music teachers relate to the development of harmonic hearing?

The didactic principles of teaching sol-fa have been established by analogy with case study elaborations for higher education establishments proposed by E. Krasikova (2007) and relying on the specificity of teaching musical –theoretical disciplines in universities:

- individual approach to every student, consideration of their needs and learning style;
- giving them freedom in education (opportunity to choose different forms of education, types of tasks and ways of their fulfillment);
- providing students with sufficient amount of practical note materials;

- concentrated presentation of musical-theoretical material on practical (intonation) problems;
- opportunity of active collaboration between a teacher and a student at making music both individually and in groups;
- attention focused on the development of student's musical skills.

Stage 2. The preparatory stage of the research

The classes were conducted in a group of 6 first-year students of "Music Teacher" program. To determine the level of the development of harmonic hearing a preliminary diagnostic research was done, consisting of 12 written assignments, 3 assignments on vocal intoning (2 for individual and 1 for group music making) and one written assignment – writing down the second voice in a two-voice dictation assignment (Zavadska, 2013). The results about the level of the development of harmonic hearing of six (out of 14) students obtained from the diagnostic research are as follows:

Table 1. Results of diagnostic research in perception, analysis and reproduction

Students	Perception	Analysis	Reproduction	Total
PP	14	13	10	37
AG	15	13	6	34
AK	13	14	10	37
VV	10	9	5	24
VK	16	13	11	40
AF	13	12	10	35

On the basis of the criteria of the analysis of the preliminary diagnostic research results the indicators of students of this group are such: one student has a high level, four students – average level and one student – low level.

The results of diagnostic research show that the contingent of students is rather inhomogeneous and the level of the development of their harmonic hearing is unequal. This situation involves the necessity for a teacher to apply an individual approach to students, making up individual plans and developing strategies that would take each student's individual abilities and possibilities into account.

Stage 3. The Procedure of Conducting a Class on the Theme "Chord of the Seventh"

Taking into account the results of the diagnostic research, the thematic plan of classes was developed, oriented to the identified difficulties and complexities of the fulfilled

diagnostic assignments, the first of them being the theme “perception of chords of the seventh and their inversions”.

Table 2. Scheme for conducting classes on sol-fa

Stages	Teacher’s activity	Students’ activities
1. Before a class	Elaboration of the theme, selection of the note materials necessary for acquiring the theme.	Receiving note materials
2. During a class	Organization of classroom activities. Management of work with a group. Organization of the discussion on the results of the class.	Studying of musical-theoretical material for fulfilling practical assignments. Individual musical intoning. Listening to other students’ performance of practical assignments. Music making in a group.
3. After a class	Individual assessment of each student’s work	End of fulfilling practical assignments.

This research presents the material developed for one class on the theme “Chords of the Seventh”. However, work on the chords of the seventh may involve three chords of the seventh simultaneously – V, VII, II. Learning the chords of the seventh may be divided into several stages by analogy with mastering intervals as proposed by L. Maslenkova (2003):

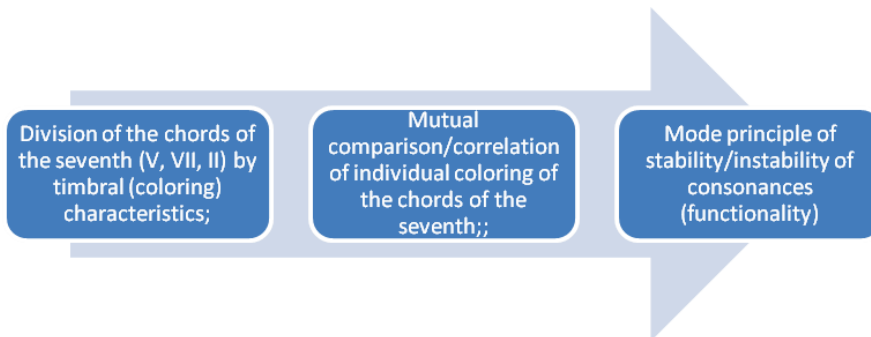


Fig. 2. Stages of work on mastering the chords of the seventh

Learning the chords of the seventh involves a complex method which is based on work with several elements simultaneously. The chords of the seventh must not be obligatory mastered in a strict sequence one after another.

Table 3. Algorithm for conducting a class

Nr.	Stage of the work during a class	Time
1.	Organizing part. Distribution of musical-theoretical materials.	5 minutes
2.	Theoretical information and practical examples for the analysis of the chords of the seventh	10 minutes
3.	Intoning of the chords of the seventh, vocal improvisation	15 minutes
4.	Music dictation	10 minutes
5.	Collective choral music making (sight-reading)	15 minutes
6.	Checking-up mastering of theoretical and practical material (including the independent home-assignment)	15 minutes
7.	Composing the accompaniment for a melody (home assignment and the discussion of a new material)	10 minutes
8.	Discussion of the results of the covered material together with students	5 minutes
9.	Summary given by a teacher	5 minutes

To develop students' skills of perceiving, analyzing and intoning the chords of the seventh, theoretical-practical knowledge about the structure, functioning, voice leading of the chords of the seventh under study is needed. The information of theoretical character was simultaneously reinforced by listening to and analyzing chord sequences (of instructive character: I-II-I; I-VII-V-I; I-IV-V-I) and fragments from instrumental and choral compositions (J. S. Bach *Tokate e moll* from Partita N6; P. Tchaikovsky *V symphony II movement*; E. Darzinsh *Mūžam zili*). At intoning the chords of the seventh vocal improvisation was used, with all students taking part in it: on the background of a sounding chord of the seventh and its resolution (different variants – in I, VI, through the group of chords of degree V) one or two students improvised one-voice melody.

For a music dictation a melody from symphony 96 by Joseph Haydn was given, one of the basic intonations of this melody being movement along sounds V. The dictation was played four times and simultaneously the melody line, structure, peculiarities of the mode and rhythm, difficulties relating to complicated intonation, covert two-part melody (in the second part of the theme) were analyzed together with students. The students were supposed to write down only the first sentence from Haydn's symphony, as a short "flash" dictation (by terminology of J. Joffe [7]) the second part was given as an independent written home assignment.

For a collective choral music making the material consisting of fragments from choral compositions by Latvian composers was offered:

- Latvian folk song *Rīga dimd* arranged by J. Cimze;
- E. Darzinsh *Nāru dziesma*;
- P. Barisons *Mūzai*.

Composing of the accompaniment for a melody was done in two steps: the first one – checking (demonstration of home assignment) and the second – discussion of the new assignment. The home assignment involved composing of the accompaniment for

a Latvian folk song *Seši mazi bundzinieki*, but the new assignment – the analysis of the accompaniment of a harmonic plane and different types of textures (figurations) for a Latvian folk song *Ziedi, ziedi, rudzu vārpa*.

Stages 4–5. Assessment and Analysis of Assignments Done by Students

The assessment of students' individual assignment on the analysis by ear was done according to a 10-grade scale. The results yielded by the aural analysis of the chords of the seventh were for all students quite high. This tells us about the fact that the acquisition of theoretical knowledge about chords and simultaneous reinforcement of this knowledge through aural perception (timbral-coloring characteristics, correlation, analogy, functionality) are a sufficiently effective method of work.

Table 4. Results of the assessment of students' work on analysis by ear

Students	Results of the assessment of the analysis by ear
PP	10
AG	7
AK	9
VV	7
VK	9
AF	8

Immediately before writing down a music dictation, students together with a teacher analyzed meter- rhythmic and intonation peculiarities of Haydn's theme. This work was not assessed right on the spot, because the second part of the dictation was to be written down by students independently by memory after the classroom activities.

Before singing, warm-up procedures developed by Davidson et al. and Santos & Del-Ben were used.

Table 5. Qualitative assessment criteria of solfège drills based on qualitative assessment of sight-singing presented by Davidson et al. (1988, p. 61–67)

Principles of development	Skills and concepts	Observed behaviors
Degrees of internalization	Warm-up procedures	1. In spite of listening to the tonality played at the piano, no warm-up procedures are done.
		2. Tuning procedures partially done.
		3. Tuning procedures done (scales, tonic, subdominant and dominant broken triads performed).
		4. Creation of personal tuning procedures.
		5. Silent preparation

This Warm-up procedure enables a teacher to fix students' skill of concentrating on the tonality and to project the results of this procedure to the next assessment of the assignment.

Students' independent (home) work consisted of:

- individual singing of monophony by heart;
- individual singing of sequences of intervals and chords;
- collective (trio) singing of polyphony.

The assessment of this assignment (according to 3-grade scale) was based on previously developed levels and indicators of the development of prospective music teachers' harmonic hearing (Zavadska, 2013) and yielded the results as follows:

Table 6. Results of students' individual work on singing

Students	Singing by heart	Intervals, chords	Singing of monophony	Total
PP	3	3	2	8
AG	3	2	2	7
AK	3	2	2	7
VV	1	1	3	5
VK	2	2	3	7
AF	2	3	3	8

Despite student VV's low result in two aspects, she received the highest grade for polyphonic singing. This can be attributed to the fact that this student has a considerable experience of choral singing, which greatly contributes to the development of skills of collective music making.

The assessment of the accompaniment for a song melody was also done according to a 3-grade scale. Each of the levels was assessed according to a 3-grade scale:

- low – 1 grade;
- average – 2 grades;
- high – 3 grades.

Table 7. Criteria for the assessment of composing the accompaniment

Criterion	Levels	Indicators
Composing the accompaniment for a song melody	low	Primitive use of chord sequences – T, S, D
	average	Textural accompaniment lacks the use of complex chords, digressions
	high	Original textural accompaniment with the use of digressions, chords of the seventh, untraditional sound combinations

The assessment of composing the accompaniment for the Latvian folk song *Seši mazi bundzinieki* was done by involving students themselves. Each student assessed the per-

formance of their course-mates. The assessment done by the students according to the criteria developed by their teacher produced on average the following results:

Table 8. Grades for composing the accompaniment

Students	Results for composing the accompaniment
PP	3
AG	1
AK	2
VV	1
VK	2
AF	1

On the whole, the results of assessments given by the students coincide with those made by the teacher, though two students might have been given higher grades taking into account the level of their preparedness in piano (both students are accordionists).

Stage 6. Discussion. Summary

The classes were completed by a discussion. The teacher acted as a coordinator and leader of the discussion. One of the issues of the discussion was:

What professional skills important for the development of harmonic hearing are developed at sol-fa classes in students' opinion?

When helping the students to scientifically substantiate the definition of professional skills, the teacher characterized different aspects of skills, giving her commentaries and remarks, asking students to express their opinion concerning the posed question. The joint discussion resulted in identifying such professional skills:

- analytical skills of aural analysis and writing a music dictation give students the possibility to accumulate internal aural perceptions, develop musical memory and thinking;
- skills of practical music making – vocal-intonation skills are skills that implement the reproduction of musical-aural perceptions into an external form of activity – into singing;
- creative skills at sol-fa classes – vocal polyphonic improvisation on the harmonic background of intervals or chords and also a skill to provide the accompaniment, and these skills reveal individual creative capacities of each student;
- skills of self-analysis – participation in a discussion promotes the awareness about and analysis of other students' and one's own position, develops students' comprehensive attitude to musical activities.

At summarizing the results of work, the teacher gives students the grades for their work in the classroom and for home assignments:

Table 9. Final grades for students' work

Students	Analysis by ear	Vocal intoning	Composing the accompaniment	Total
PP	10	8	3	21
AG	7	7	1	15
AK	9	7	2	18
VV	7	5	1	13
VK	9	7	2	18
AF	8	8	1	17

The results provided by the diagnostic research and those yielded by the training stage are practically identical. The stage of training has just begun therefore the development of prospective music teachers' professional skills is the matter of teaching of the coming years.

Conclusions

On the basis of the models under the analysis (Bennett, 1976; Stake, 1995; Swanwick, 1999). Soy, 1997) and specificity of the development of harmonic hearing the basic diagnostic criteria of the development of prospective music teachers' harmonic hearing: perception, analysis and reproduction have been developed.

The conducted research showed that the highest results were produced by the indicators relating to students' practical music making – singing polyphonic melodies and analysis of chord sequences by ear. This can be attributed to a choral singing tradition of Latvian culture. The good results obtained for the analysis by ear testify to the fact that the selected methodology of presenting theoretical and practical material has been right and has been reflected in the effectiveness of knowledge acquisition by students.

Despite the shown interest in original, non-standard and creative kinds of assignments, oriented towards developing imagination and thinking, the students experienced difficulties with composing the accompaniment for a melody. The strategy under development should pay more attention to developing this music teachers' skill as the accompaniment is a very useful kind of instrumental-performing activity enabling students to develop and perfect skills of improvisation.

Prospective music teachers' professional skills that are important for developing harmonic hearing are:

- analytical skills;
- skills of practical music making;
- creative skills;
- skills of self-analysis.

In the qualitative research the naturalistic approach was applied, "that seeks to understand phenomena in context-specific settings" (Golafshani, 2003, p. 600). The data analysis

of a conducted preliminary qualitative research, based on the case study methodology, is the basic source of information for the training stage under research, for determining the level of the development of prospective music teachers' harmonic hearing and constructing by a teacher the strategy of a further pedagogical process.

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Būsimųjų muzikos mokytojų harmoninės klausos lavinimas aukštojoje mokykloje

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Santrauka

Harmoninės klausos lavinimas yra svarbus muzikos mokytojų rengimo komponentas. Straipsnyje pristatoma tokia atvejo analizė, kuri tiria profesionalias grupes (14 studentų grupė). Analizuojamas ir pristatomas mokytojų rengimo procesas per solfedžio pratybas aukštojoje mokykloje. Solfedžio pratybomis siekiama lavinti harmoninę klausą.

Tyrimo tikslas – sukurti solfedžio pratybų techniką, kuri nukreipta į studentų, t. y. būsimųjų muzikos mokytojų, harmoninės klausos lavinimą ir pagrįsta atvejo studijos metodika; pristatyti sukurtą medžiagą ir jos naudojimą mokymo procese; analizuoti ir apibendrinti atlikto tyrimo rezultatus.

Tyrimo rezultatai parodė, kad su studentų praktiniu muzikavimu susijusios veiklos, tokios kaip polifoninis dainavimas, intervalų ir akordų intonavimas, taip pat tos, kurios siejasi su kūrybiškumu ir pasireiškia per improvizavimą ir akompanimento melodijai sukūrimą, yra efektyviausios.

Esminiai žodžiai: strategija, atvejo analizė, harmoninė klausia.

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