

Music Supported Instructional Strategy for Teaching of English Alphabets at Primary Level

Priya Rajan

English Dept., Jazan University, K.S.A., Saudi Arabia

Abstract

The significance of this present study is to bring out how effective would a new type of 'patternized' music be different from the traditional mode. The investigator has molded a new type of Alphabet song for the Primary level students taking in regard of the Letter-Pattern synchronizing it with the high and low pitch. The investigator assumes that the learners would be able to comprehend, read and write alphabets with precision and clarity. The investigator also assumes that learners would be able to acquire the English Alphabets quickly than the present mode of teaching. For the study, the investigator plans to teach in a four-patterned style: Print media and Cursive letters in both Capitals and small letters.

Keywords

Music Supported, Instructional Strategy, Teaching of English Alphabets at Primary Level

I. Introduction

"Music is the electrical soil in which the spirit lives, thinks and invents."
— Ludwig van Beethoven

We all know how greatly music affects our feelings and energy levels! Without even thinking about it, we use music to create desired moods-- to make us happy, to enjoy movement and dance, to energize, to bring back powerful memories, to help us relax and focus. Music is a powerful tool for our personal expression within our daily lives-- it helps "set the scene" for many important experiences. The world is marching towards prosperity in this century because of scientific and technological revolution. Computer age has made man to think of the unthinkable. We see significant changes taking place in every field of knowledge including education. All these changes bring changes in the educational pattern now and then. No doubt, the future of the country depends on the type of education the children are getting today. Presently the educational system makes children more informed and more skilled. However, does it train the learners to be better human beings? The answer is no. Education lacks something humane. How can it be brought to the system of education? In the ancient Greek education system, which held to be a model even today, proclaims "Gymnastics for the body and music for the soul" summarized the spirit of education. Music for the Greeks included all that was presided over by the muses. Thus, music represented all learning.

A. Background of the Problem

An average school in our educational system presents a picture of dreary, monotonous, mechanized atmosphere, specialized in making interesting things appears uninteresting and easy things difficult. Among all the ways that are possible for correcting this malady, and to make education natural, easy, absorbing and enjoyable, education through music is the best. Music enables the mind, refines the emotions, and elevates the soul through melodies and harmonious arrangement of sound patters. The power of music change the emotional makeup of the human beings been recognized. In some educational institutions, an unruly class been cured of undesirable tendencies through music. Music has a social dimension too. One of the most valuable aspects of music is that people of varying talents and backgrounds find adjustment through music. Music can be considered one of the basic needs of man. Without the knowledge of music, a person

cannot be said to be completely a human. Education through music helps a child to develop his innate abilities fully, contributes to enrich his living, and develops in him confidence in his abilities. It draws out all the distinct human qualities in man. Shakespeare's words in *The Merchant of Venice*, brings about the above point:

"The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils,
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus,
Let no such man be trusted."

Music has rich heritage that has come to us from time to time in memorial. It is not only a past time or amusement but also an art, which gives infinite joy to the mind and the heart. Music develops a sense of beauty in a person and contributes to his cultural refinement.

B. Importance of Music in Education

Aesthetic experience of music is dual: 'Perception' encourages 'Response'. Perception, the cognitive aspect, focuses on the elements- rhythm, melody, tone, quality, dynamics, design, and texture and their interpretation. The young child may acquire concepts of these elements by listening, moving, singing, playing, and creating with listening indispensable for other skills. Affective responses include the intuitions and insights into human feelings that the interplay of sound and motion can bring forth. Positive affective response is more likely to occur when classroom experiences evolved from the young child's life space. When using Music for learning,

- The music should be played in the background, never very loud.
- For best results, turn down the bass and position the speakers at least six feet from the listeners.
- Listening to more than 25 minutes of music at a time reduces the power of this effect
- Play the music when discussions have ended if possible after class too.
- Use music when students expected to do any kind of creating such as; research, note taking, creative writing, answering tests, art projects.
- Use the music when students expected to memorize or problem solve.

- At the beginning of a class period, using the music for 4 to 5 minutes allows students to relax and focus, helping with the transition into the current subject.
- Particular sounds, tones and rhythms, especially carnatic music can strengthen the mind, unlock the creative spirit, and miraculously, even heal the body.

II. Need and Significance of the Study

Although music has been an aesthetic part of our world for centuries, the study of its therapeutics effects gained intensity in the last half of the 20th century. Interest in the music's healing powers has accelerated in response to the growing scientific study of condition, perceptual neuropsychological development of brain and function, audio engineering and psychoacoustics. The development of music therapy as a discrete clinical discipline has also been a key factor. The left-brain is involved with general music ability in musicians, perception, and production of speech, perception of rhythm and prosody, lyric performance during singing, and the temporal sequences of reading ability. The right brain is involved with processing of musical pitch, control sound intensity, identification of musical chords, and melody perception in non-musicians, visual pattern recognition, singing, auditory pattern recognition, and expressive rhythmic and mellow behaviour. That is the reason why playing music in general can be important in working with this crucial early childhood period, since both essentially operate in a non-verbal way. The feeling aspect of music is essentially linked to the right hemisphere, musically, imaginary aspects, deeper needs, quality of sound, overall sense, even if obviously in our 'western' societies musical education has for quite some stressed the importance of the intellectual approach to music. Psychologically, education through music influences the all-round development of the child. This influence manifests itself in three ways:

1. Music promotes development in the sphere of the emotions along with developing the child's cognitive abilities. The emotional experience derived from music has an influence on the formation of child's normal and intellectual outlook.
2. Music activities tend to develop imagination and creative thinking. A child when confronted with such challenges, as having to create simple music, he puts his mind to work, tries to cope with the tasks of his own creative powers. Unquestionably, all this is carried over to other sphere of thought and activity.
3. Contact with music has an influence on the cognitive processes. The significance of music on child's thinking and its role as a source of knowledge and deep understanding of the world acts as an element in nurturing ways of cognizing the surrounding world with the help of music.

A. Hypotheses

The hypotheses formulated for the study are as follows:

H1 There will be a significant difference between the post-test mean scores of students in the Music Supported Instructional Strategy (MSIS) and Non-Music Supported Instructional Group (NMSIS).

H2 There will be a significant difference in the post-test mean scores of students, in the Music Supported Instructional Group (MSIS) and Non-Music Supported Instructional Group (NMSIS), in their learning abilities.

H3 There will be a significant difference between the MSIS and NMSIS in the process of writing skills.

III. Objectives of the Study

1. To prepare a Music Instructional Strategy for learning of English alphabets in Primary level.
2. To test the effectiveness of instructional material in the learning of English alphabets by comparing the post-test achievement scores of Music Supported Instructional Group (MSIS) and Non-Music Supported Instructional Group (NMSIS).
3. To investigate the quality of the writing of the primary level students using Music Supported Instruction.
4. To access the speed of writing of the primary level students using Music Supported Instruction.
5. To study the correlation between the musical and non-musical group.

IV. Methodology

1. Experimental Study: "Two Group Static Design"
2. Tools: A Music Supported Strategy, Achievement Test
3. The investigator has conducted a pilot study on a sample of thirty students of the Primary level from Cotton Hill Girl's High School, Trivandrum, Kerala, India.
4. The scores of the posttest of the two groups MSIS and NMSIS been statistically analyzed.

V. Analysis and Interpretations

A. Comparison of the pre-test scores of pupils in the MSIS (Experimental) and NMSIS (Control) groups under Speed in Writing

The mean and standard deviation of the pre-test scores of 81 pupils in the MSIS (Experimental) and NMSIS (Control) groups found out. The critical ratio computed and tested for significance. The data and results of the test of significance given in table 5.1

Table 5.1

Writing Skill	Groups	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	CR	LS
Speed in writing	MSIS	39	2.08	1.25	1.3	P<0.05
	NMSIS	42	1.73	1.17		

Level of Significance: 0.01 = 2.58, 0.05 = 1.96

It is evident from the analysis that there is no significance between the pre-test achievement scores of MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) groups under Speed in Writing. The critical ratio is 1.3 ($P > 0.05$), from this it can be concluded that groups MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) are more or less equal with regard to their pre-test achievement scores. Therefore, this indicates that two groups are almost of the same ability. Hence, the hypothesis formulated in this context viz., **H1 rejected**.

B. Comparison of the Pre-test Scores

Comparison of the pre-test scores of pupils in the MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) groups under Quality in Writing: Print Media

The mean and standard deviation of the pre-test scores of 81 pupils in the MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) groups found out. The critical ratio was computed and tested for significance.

The data and results of the test of significance given in the **table 5.2**

Writing Skill	Groups	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	CR	LS
Print Media	MSIS	39	1.97	1.19	1.71	P<0.05
	NMSIS	42	2.05	1.76		

Level of Significance: 0.01 = 2.58, 0.05 = 1.96

It is evident from the analysis that there is no significance between the pre-test scores of MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) groups under Speed in Writing. The critical ratio is 1.71 (P<0.05), from this it can be concluded that groups MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) are more or less equal with regard to their pre-test achievement score. Hence, the hypothesis formulated in this context viz., **H2 (i) rejected**.

C. Comparisons of the Pre-test Scores

Comparison of the pre-test scores of pupils in MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) groups under Quality in Writing: Cursive Media

The mean and standard deviation of the pre-test scores of 81 pupils in MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) groups were found out. The critical ratio was computed and tested for significance. The data and results of the test of significance are given in table 5.3

Writing Skill	Groups	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	CR	LS
Quality in writing: Cursive	MSIS	39	6.1	3.5	1.7	P<0.05
	NMSIS	42	4.6	4.6		

Level of Significance: 0.01 = 2.58, 0.05 = 1.96

It is evident from the analysis that there is no significance between the pre-test achievement scores of MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) groups under Speed in Writing. The critical ratio is 1.7 (P<0.05), from this it can be concluded that groups MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) groups are more or less equal with regard to the per-test achievement scores. Hence, the hypothesis formulated in this context viz., **H2 (ii) rejected**.

D. Comparison of the Posttest Scores

Comparison of the posttest scores of pupils in MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) groups under Writing Skill: Speed in Writing

The mean and standard deviation of the posttest scores of 81 pupils in MSIS and NMSIS under Speed in writing were computed. The critical ratio was calculated and tested for significance. The data and results of the test of significance are given in the table 5.3.1

Table 5.3.1

Comparison of the posttest scores of pupils in MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) groups under Writing Skill: Speed in Writing

Writing Skill	Groups	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	CR	LS
Quality in Writing: Cursive	MSIS	39	4.14	1.53	2.62	P<0.05
	NMSIS	42	2.33	2.26		

Level of Significance: 0.01 = 2.58, 0.05 = 1.96

The critical ratio obtained is 2.62. This critical ratio under Speed in Writing is significant at 0.01 level. Hence, it is evident that there is significant difference between the posttest achievement scores of MSIS and NMSIS groups under writing skill: Speed in writing. This means that the two groups differ significantly in the posttest scores under writing skills. Hence, the hypothesis formulated in this context viz., **H3 is accepted**.

E. Comparison of the Posttest Scores

Comparison of the posttest scores of pupils in MSIS and NMSIS groups under each type of quality in writing

The mean and standard deviation of the post-test scores of 81 pupils in MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) groups under each of the two types of Quality in Writing were computed. The critical ration was calculated and tested for significance.

5.5.1 Comparison of posttest achievement scores of pupils in MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) groups under the Quality in writing: Print Media (Upper and Lower Case)

The mean and standard deviation of the posttest scores of 81 pupils in MSIS and NMSIS groups under Quality in writing: Print Media was compounded. The critical ratio was calculated and tested for significance. The data and results for tests of significance are given in table 5.5.1

Table 5.5.1

The data and results of test of significance between posttest scores of pupils in MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) groups under Quality in Writing: Print Media

Writing Skill	Groups	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	CR	LS
Quality: Print	MSIS	39	6.58	1.82	7.69	P>0.01
	NMSIS	42	3.09	2.26		

Level of Significance: 0.01 = 2.58, 0.05 = 1.96

The critical ratio obtained is 7.69. This critical ratio obtained under Quality in writing: Print Media is significant at 0.01 level. Hence, it is evident that there is significant difference between the posttest achievement scores of MSIS and NMSIS groups under writing skill. Hence the hypothesis formulated in this context viz., **H4 (i) is accepted**.

5.5.2 Comparison of posttest achievement scores of pupils in MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) groups under the Quality in writing: Cursive Media (Upper and Lower Case)

The mean and standard deviation of the posttest scores of 81 pupils in MSIS and NMSIS groups under Quality in writing: Cursive Media was compounded. The critical ratio was calculated and tested for significance. The data and results for tests of significance are given in table 5.5.2

Table 5.5.2

5.5.2 Comparison of posttest achievement scores of pupils in MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) groups under the Quality in writing: Cursive Media (Upper and Lower Case)

Writing Skill	Groups	Sample	Mean	Standard Deviation	CR	LS
Print Media	MSIS	39	12.8	4.36	4.8	P>0.01
	NMSIS	42	7.35	5.8		

Level of Significance: 0.01 = 2.58, 0.05 = 1.96

The critical ratio obtained is 4.8. This critical ratio obtained under Quality in writing: Cursive is significant at 0.01 level. Hence, it is evident that there is significant difference between the posttest achievement scores of MSIS and NMSIS groups under writing skill. Hence the hypothesis formulated in this context viz., **H4 (ii) is accepted.**

F. Comparison of the Effectiveness of MSIS and NMSIS Groups in Developing Writing Skills (Using ANOVA)

The scores of 39 and 42 pupils of the two groups with one group practicing through Music Supported Instructional Strategy (MSIS) and the other group through Non Music Supported Instructional Strategy (NMSIS) were subjected to ANOVA. The data results are given in the table 5.6.1

Table 5.6.1

Summary of the results of ANOVA of the posttest scores of pupils in the Experimental (MSIS) and Control (NMSIS) groups in the test under speed in writing

Sources of variation	df	SSx	SSy	MSx	MSy
Among the means	1	1.2546	61.56	1.2546	61.56
Within the groups	79	85.5294	110.49	1.082	1.4

Fx = 1.16
Fy = 43.97
From the table F for df = 1, 79
F at 0.05 level = 3.97
F at 0.01 level = 6.99

The f-ratio for the pre-test (Fx) and posttest (Fy) were tested for significance. The table values of F for df 1/79 are 3.97 and 6.99 at 0.05 and 0.01 levels respectively. The obtained values of Fx is very low (Fx = 1.16, p>0.01). The low Fx value shows that there is no significant difference between pre-test of MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) groups. The two groups are equal in terms of pre-test achievement scores. The obtained value of Fy is very high (Fy = 43.97, p>0.01) This indicates that there is difference

between the posttest scores of MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) groups.

Table 5.6.2

Summary of the results of ANOVA of the posttest scores of pupils in the Experimental (MSIS) and Control (NMSIS) groups in the test under Quality in Writing: Print Media

Sources of variation	df	SSx	SSy	MSx	MSy
Among the means	1	1.98	224	1.98	224
Within the groups	79	76.2	306.67	0.96	3.88

Fx = 1.98
Fy = 57.73
From the table F for df = 1, 79
F at 0.05 level = 3.97
F at 0.01 level = 6.99

The f-ratio for the pre-test (Fx) and posttest (Fy) were tested for significance. The table values of F for df 1/79 are 3.97 and 6.99 at 0.05 and 0.01 levels respectively. The obtained values of Fx is very low (Fx = 1.98, p>0.01). The low Fx value shows that there is no significant difference between pre-test of MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) groups. The two groups are equal in terms of pre-test achievement scores. The obtained value of Fy is very high (Fy = 57.73, p>0.01) This indicates that there is difference between the posttest scores of MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) groups.

Table 5.6.3

Summary of the results of ANOVA of the posttest scores of pupils in the Experimental (MSIS) and Control (NMSIS) groups in the test under Quality in Writing: Cursive Media

Sources of variation	df	SSx	SSy	MSx	MSy
Among the means	1	11.556	1313.25	11.556	1313.25
Within the groups	79	731.669	1554.696	9.26163	19.6797

Fx = 1.24
Fy = 66.73
From the table F for df = 1, 79
F at 0.05 level = 3.97
F at 0.01 level = 6.99

The f-ratio for the pre-test (Fx) and posttest (Fy) were tested for significance. The table values of F for df 1/79 are 3.97 and 6.99 at 0.05 and 0.01 levels respectively. The obtained values of Fx is very low (Fx = 1.24, p>0.01). The low Fx value shows that there is no significant difference between pre-test of MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) groups. The two groups are equal in terms of pre-test achievement scores. The obtained value of Fy is very high (Fy = 66.73, p>0.01) This indicates that there is difference between the posttest scores of MSIS (experimental) and NMSIS (control) groups.

Discussion

The interpretation of the analysis showed that there are no significant differences in the pre-test scores between the MSIS and NMSIS groups. As the investigator had proceeded to instruct the experimental batch with Music Supported Instructional Strategy there occurred a significant difference between MSIS and NMSIS group in the posttest achievement scores. The critical ratio showed significant difference in the posttest scores. The computation of the ANOVA also determined the fact that there is a significant difference in the pre-test, posttest scores of MSIS over NMSIS groups. The investigator has now empirically proven that there is significant effectiveness in using music supported instructional strategy for teaching of English alphabets at primary level.

VI. Conclusion and Suggestions for further Research

Although music has been an aesthetic part of our world for centuries, the study of its therapeutic effects gained intensity in the second half of the 20th century. Interest in music's astonishing powers accelerated in response to the growing scientific study of cognition, perceptual neuropsychological brain development and function, audio engineering and psychoacoustics. The development of music therapy as a discrete clinical discipline has always been a key factor. The majority of research over the last forty years has focused on music perception and performance. Today basic science continues to yield promising new information about the neuroscientific effects of music.

The future of music is bright. **Additional study is needed:**

- to specify the effect of each of the components of music (i.e., rhythm) on specific areas of brain activity,
- to specific areas of brain activity during emotional responses to music,
- to study the neuromuscular effect of low-frequency vibration and music,
- to study the effect of music in retrieval in short and long term memory.

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Author's Profile



Priya Rajan (M. A., M. Phil, M. Ed.) is an Educationist, Teacher-Educator and an English Lecturer. She has taught in colleges, national and international levels, for over a decade. Currently, employed as a Lecturer in English, Jazan University, K.S.A.