

Teaching Piano to Pediatric Cochlear Implant Recipients (PCIRs): Implications and Effects

Abstract

The few studies on the effects of music instruction on deaf children (Abdi et al., 2001; Kosaner et al., 2012) conclude that music training enhances the ability of pediatric cochlear implant recipients (PCIRs) to recognize, enjoy, and reproduce music, suggesting that daily exposure and practice are positively correlated factors for them.

Virtually no research exists on *how* teachers can modify their formal music curricula to allow PCIRs to benefit from music lessons. Amid the plethora of research on music therapy for PCIRs, no individual formal lesson plan has yet been proposed to investigate the possibilities and effects of teaching PCIRs classical music on piano.

This paper examines the aural modeling method of teaching piano to deaf children with cochlear implants, focusing on the methodology, material, observations on practicing challenges, parental involvement, and overall implied strategies for teaching PCIRs. Five PCIRs participated in a six-month pilot study in which a Suzuki-based method and materials were used to teach music recognition and reproduction.

The aural approach to teaching classical music to PCIRs suggests that it *is* possible for them to learn to recognize musical patterns and contours and gain the ability to enjoy music. Moreover, parents and teachers reported that the opportunity to participate in and understand current music trends improved the PCIRs' social skills and behavior. Therefore, PCIRs should be included in music activities, guided by the appropriate teaching methodologies.