

TONE CONSTELLATION: A PERSONAL SPATIAL SCALE PRESENTATION. SEARCHING FOR AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO TEACHING MUSIC THEORY

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Background

In order to free students from a restricted view offered by standard notation, which does not reflect the sound, not even the most common phenomena, we embarked upon a four phase project "Searching for an alternative approach to Teaching Music Theory"

1. Feeling i.e. seeing (FS) tone positions during Solmization scale singing (SSS)
2. FS basic cadences
3. FS changes of hierarchy of tones when varying rhythm in a given melodic sequence
4. FS changes in tonal hierarchy varying melodic and harmonic rhythm

This paper deals with Phase one

Aims

To encourage students' imagination in understanding and analysing music both written and heard, concentrating on listening in an uninhibited way.

Method

First year students majoring in:

music pedagogy (28), composition (3), conducting (2), musicology (3), and piano (1) were involved in major SSS (Scale Singing using Solmisation syllables) both ascending and descending) in groups and individually. In order to complete the investigation, they were later requested to try major SSV (Scale Singing, one Vowel at the time both ascending and descending) individually. The additional testing was to check if vowels used in solmisation syllables affected tone positions. During SSS and SSV the participants were expected to locate tones they sing within their body and around them in three dimensional space.

Results

1. SSS both in groups and individually shows better results in locating tones in space than within their body.
2. SSV shows almost no affect that solmisation vowels have on locating tones

Conclusion

Students feel/imagine scale tones mostly in space and less within their bodies. The functionality of scale positions is much more significant than the effect of the vowels involved in the solmisation syllables.