

Challenges and Opportunities in Localizing Gordon's Music Learning Theory in Chinese Elementary Music Education: A Critical Perspective

Yutong Gu¹ & Sajastanah bin Imam Koning^{2*}

¹Faculty of Music and Performing Arts, Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia

²Faculty of Music and Performing Arts, Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia

*Corresponding author: sajastanah@fmsp.upsi.edu.my

To Cite This Article:

Yutong Gu, & Imam Koning, S. . (2025). Challenges and Opportunities in Localizing Gordon's Music Learning Theory in Chinese Elementary Music Education: A Critical Perspective. *Uniglobal Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 4(2), 79–87. <https://doi.org/10.53797/ujssh.v4i2.10.2025>

Abstract: Edwin Gordon's Music Learning Theory (MLT), which focuses on audiation and sequential musical skill development, has received international attention for improving music instruction efficacy. However, cultural, pedagogical, and institutional obstacles make its integration into Chinese elementary music instruction particularly difficult. This research critically investigates the localization of MLT in China's educational system, noting substantial barriers such as traditional rote-learning techniques, poor teacher readiness, and insufficient teaching resources. Concurrently, prospects stemming from China's ongoing educational reforms, technological advances, and a greater emphasis on learner-centered teaching are explored. By critically assessing these elements, the study makes strategic recommendations for successfully adopting MLT, offering theoretical insights and practical directions to educators, policymakers, and curriculum creators seeking to improve music education practices in China.

Keywords: Music Learning Theory, Audiation, Elementary Music Education, Localization, Curriculum Reform, Pedagogical Adaptation, China

1. Introduction

Music education is essential for enhancing pupils' cognitive skills, creativity, and cultural awareness. Edwin Gordon's Music Learning Theory (MLT), notable for its emphasis on audiation—the cognitive capacity to assimilate and understand music—provides a systematic method for developing musical skills through sequential learning processes. Internationally, MLT has successfully transformed music education paradigms from teacher-centered, notation-based instruction to learner-centered, audiation-driven techniques. Despite MLT's extensive international success, its implementation within China's educational framework remains predominantly unexamined and underdeveloped. Chinese basic music education conventionally emphasizes rote learning and teacher-centered approaches. Although proficient at cultivating fundamental musical literacy, these methods frequently constrain pupils' profound musical comprehension and improvisational ingenuity. Considering the current educational reforms designed to promote comprehensive student development and critical thinking abilities, investigating the relevance of MLT in China is both opportune and necessary.

Nonetheless, incorporating MLT into the Chinese educational framework is complex. Cultural traditions, educational methodologies, institutional demands, and budget limitations pose substantial obstacles. Educators familiar with conventional teaching methods may struggle to adapt to MLT's learner-centered approaches, and educational institutions may be deficient in resources or incentives to facilitate these transitions efficiently. Moreover, there is a paucity of empirical research and practical frameworks that facilitate the localization of foreign music education theories in Chinese classrooms. Furthermore, there is a paucity of empirical research and practical frameworks that facilitate the localization of foreign music education theories in Chinese schools.

To address these issues, this study poses the following guiding question: How can Gordon's Music Learning Theory be effectively localized in the context of Chinese elementary music education?

This question leads to the following specific objectives:

- i. To critically examine the compatibility of MLT with the cultural, pedagogical, and institutional contexts of Chinese elementary schools;
- ii. To identify major challenges and barriers in localizing MLT in China's music classrooms;
- iii. To explore the potential opportunities and policy openings for implementing MLT in current and future Chinese music education reform efforts;
- iv. To propose strategic recommendations for curriculum developers, educators, and policymakers aiming to adopt MLT in localized forms.

This article addresses these gaps by critically examining the challenges and opportunities associated with localizing MLT in China. It aims to provide educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers with insightful analyses and practical strategies for effectively integrating this internationally recognized theory into Chinese elementary music education, thereby contributing to the advancement and diversification of music teaching practices in China.

2. Literature Review

Literature Review & Theoretical Framework Edwin Gordon's Music Learning Theory (MLT) is a comprehensive framework that emphasizes the development of audiation—the ability to hear and understand music in the mind even when no physical sound is present. Audiation is considered foundational to all musical understanding, and Gordon proposed that music should be learned similarly to language acquisition: through listening, speaking (singing), thinking, and reading/writing. MLT introduces a detailed sequential learning model, consisting of preparatory audiation stages and formal instruction in tonal and rhythmic patterns. It places strong emphasis on pattern-based learning, tonal and rhythmic sequencing, and the differentiation between discrimination learning and inference learning.

Internationally, MLT has been adopted and adapted in various countries with notable success. In the United States, Shuler (2021) demonstrated that Gordon's Learning Sequence Activities significantly improved the vocal performance achievement of primary students. In Poland, Maciej Kołodziejcki (2020) analyzed diverse interpretations of audiation in educational contexts, while Kołodziejcki and Bonna (2013, 2014) conducted empirical research demonstrating the theory's impact in music education and its adaptability to Polish curricula. Turkey has also seen significant progress, with studies such as the adaptation and validation of Gordon's Primary and Intermediate Measures of Music Audiation (MAP/IMMA) indicating strong psychometric support. These international efforts affirm theory's flexibility, cultural adaptability, and strong impact on improving musical literacy and performance. MLT has also begun to draw interest in Asian countries, although the depth of implementation varies.

Despite these successes, the adaptation of MLT into non-Western cultural contexts remains a complex issue. Cultural and linguistic factors, differences in pedagogical traditions, and localized curricular goals can all influence the degree to which audiation-based learning can be naturally integrated. These issues underline the importance of a critical framework for analyzing theoretical transferability.

Emerging Chinese research on MLT (1980s-2025), Chinese scholarly interest in Gordon's MLT has increased notably since 2022, with multiple empirical studies exploring its application across diverse educational levels. For instance, researchers such as Chen (2024), Ran (2024), Lu (2023), and Liao (2023) have applied audiation-based methods to high school, elementary, early childhood, and vocational music education contexts, often yielding improvements in rhythm, pitch accuracy, and listening comprehension. These efforts highlight growing recognition of MLT's value but also reveal several challenges: rigid curriculum structures, limited teacher training, and conceptual barriers related to MLT-specific terminology.

The introduction of Gordon's Music Learning Theory into China began in the 1980s, primarily through translated theoretical texts. According to Tang Wentao's 2020 systematic review, a total of over 60 Chinese academic publications—mainly journal articles and graduate theses—have discussed Gordon's theory. Tang identified that earlier research focused on conceptual translation, theoretical introduction, and comparative analysis with other pedagogical systems (e.g., Orff, Kodály, and Dalcroze). These studies helped establish basic awareness of audiation and learning sequence concepts among Chinese scholars but often lacked practical or data-driven insight. Tang also noted a scarcity of localized curriculum design and limited teacher development resources as recurring concerns across early Chinese scholarship.

Since 2022, however, empirical interest in MLT has shown a marked increase. In that year alone, 6 academic articles were published focusing on MLT, followed by 2 in 2023 and 5 in 2024 (of which 2 were empirical studies). This emergent trend indicates a growing awareness of audiation-based pedagogy, yet the scale and depth of implementation remain limited. As of 2025, only two additional papers have been published, neither of which was empirical. The evolution from theoretical importation to cautious experimentation reflects the field's nascent engagement with localized application.

Together, these newer empirical studies and earlier theoretical explorations demonstrate an evolving trajectory of MLT in China—from conceptual importation to context-specific experimentation. Yet, a critical gap persists: most studies remain isolated interventions without broader systemic integration, and few adopt a multi-dimensional localization analysis that considers cultural, pedagogical, and institutional interdependencies. This article seeks to fill that gap by offering a critical perspective on how MLT may be constructively adapted within China's elementary music education system.

3. Contextualizing the Theory: Foundations and Realities of Music Education in Chinese Primary Schools

Chinese primary music education fits into a larger national endeavor to encourage holistic student development, as stressed by laws like the 2022 edition of the National Arts Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education. These reforms seek to encourage aesthetic sensitivity, inventiveness, and well-rounded competences, but music teaching at the basic level is nevertheless bound by certain long-standing structural and pedagogical characteristics. Traditionally, music classes in China prioritize teacher-centered instruction, with a significant emphasis on rote memory, score reading, and performance replication. The majority of classroom time is spent singing songs, learning fixed rhythmic patterns, and completing other instructional content from the textbook. Tonal listening, improvisation, creative composition, and abstract listening skills (such as audiation) receive relatively less attention in conventional sessions.

Curriculum and textbook design reinforce these inclinations. The most widely used music textbooks, such as the People's Music Publishing House (Renyin Edition) and the Guangdong Huacheng Edition, are organized around four major components: rhythm and movement games, singing and instrumental practice, listening and appreciation, and basic musical knowledge. The 2022 edition of China's national music curriculum standards explicitly outlines these domains in a structured framework that categorizes learning into four progressive domains: Feeling and Appreciation, Expression, Musical Creation, and Music-Related Cultures. Figure 1 illustrates the official framework and grade-based assignment logic that guides classroom instruction nationwide.

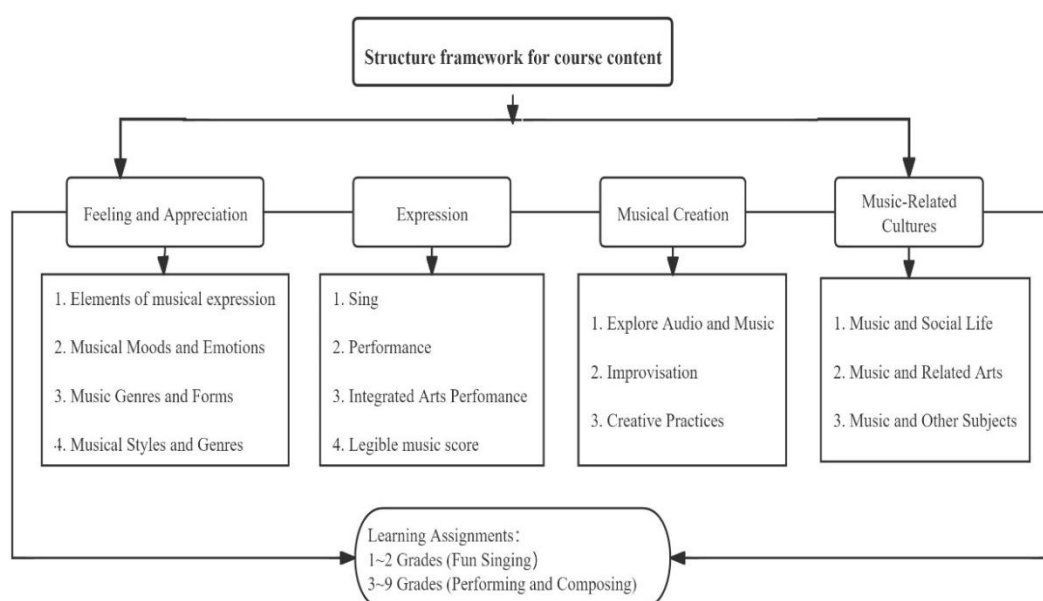


Figure 1. Structure framework for course content in China's national music curriculum (Grades 1–9) by the Ministry of Education (2022)

While "listening" is formally included, it is frequently interpreted as passive music appreciation, missing the active, patterned participation envisaged by MLT. Furthermore, contemporary curricular frameworks frequently prioritize aesthetic exposure over systematic skill development, especially in lower grades (Grades 1-3). While this is consistent with the national emphasis on encouraging interest and love of music, it may neglect Gordon's developmental window, which states that the ages of 0 to 9 are important for internalizing tonal and rhythmic audiation. This disparity emphasizes the necessity to balance early childhood educational expectations with MLT's age-sensitive theoretical imperatives.

Professional development for teachers is another challenge. Most elementary music teachers are trained in traditional conservatory models that focus on technical proficiency and classical repertoire, with little exposure to modern educational psychology or theories like MLT. As a result, many educators may lack the necessary pedagogical tools or conceptual frameworks to integrate audio-based learning systematically.

Finally, resource disparities between areas remain a persistent issue. Urban schools are typically better equipped with digital whiteboards, multimedia tools, and formal evaluation methods, whereas rural schools frequently lack musical instruments, space, and competent teachers. This discrepancy has an impact on the scalability of any novel instructional technique, including the use of MLT. These contextual characteristics not only define the operational realities of Chinese

elementary music classrooms but also reveal potential tensions and misalignments with Gordon's MLT, particularly the theory's emphasis on audiation, sequential pattern learning, and inferential musical thinking.

4. Evaluation Framework

To critically examine the feasibility of localizing Gordon's Music Learning Theory (MLT) within the context of Chinese elementary music education, this study constructs a multidimensional evaluation framework based on three interdependent dimensions: cultural compatibility, pedagogical alignment, and structural feasibility. This framework not only guides the analysis in subsequent sections but also offers a conceptual structure that integrates theoretical and contextual insights.

4.1 Cultural Compatibility

This dimension evaluates whether MLT's underlying assumptions about how music is learned, particularly audiation and pattern-based sequencing, align with Chinese cultural understandings of music, education, and learning. One of the most complex points of friction lies in the linguistic and phonological foundation of MLT's tonal and rhythmic instruction. Gordon's model emphasizes maintaining consistent tonal centers during language-based instruction and utilizing a gesture-rich pedagogy grounded in Western prosody and command structures. In contrast, Mandarin Chinese is a tonal language with complex pitch contours (four primary tones plus a neutral tone), and its speech rhythm prioritizes syllabic regularity over Western-style intonation patterns.

In practical application, this discrepancy results in challenges for Chinese teachers using Mandarin to deliver tonal instruction as envisioned by MLT. Empirical studies (e.g., Lu, 2023; Zhang, 2022) report that sustaining a fixed tonal center in Mandarin instruction feels unnatural to both teachers and students. Furthermore, MLT's hand-sign system for tonal and rhythmic patterning often creates confusion due to differences in gesture semantics and classroom communication styles in China. These linguistic and gestural mismatches complicate students' early engagement with MLT-based lesson structures.

Moreover, the late introduction and limited translation of MLT literature in China, along with the technical vocabulary used in Gordon's theoretical texts, have further impeded its widespread adoption. As noted in several Chinese studies (e.g., Wang, 2021), a purely "copy-paste" approach to adopting MLT has proven ineffective. Concepts like "duple vs. non-duple" and "micro-metric vs. macro-metric rhythmic structure" do not easily align with foundational rhythmic and tonal groupings common in Chinese music curricula. Thus, any localization effort must begin with actual classroom teaching content, conceptual adaptation, and culturally responsive pedagogy.

4.2 Pedagogical Alignment

This dimension assesses the congruence between MLT's instructional strategies, and the prevalent pedagogical methods employed in Chinese elementary music classrooms. The current instructional paradigm in China emphasizes highly structured, textbook-driven, and performance-oriented lessons. Improvisation, spontaneous audiation, or embodied pattern exercises—central to MLT—remain underutilized or absent. The integration of MLT's learning sequences into classroom instruction thus faces two major barriers: (1) teachers' lack of familiarity with audiation-based pedagogy, and (2) the inertia of institutionalized routines that favor efficiency and uniformity over exploratory learning. For example, Chinese music educators often adhere closely to printed teaching scripts and set repertoires, leaving little room for adaptive, student-centered musical exploration.

Additionally, as cited in Lv (2022), the pedagogical philosophy of MLT requires a fundamental shift in the teacher's role—from performer and instructor to facilitator and co-audiator. This transformation requires not only retraining but also a reconsideration of how authority and creativity are distributed in the classroom. Without such changes, direct transplantation of MLT techniques risks superficial adoption or unintended outcomes.

4.3 Structural Feasibility

This final dimension addresses the material and institutional conditions necessary for adopting MLT in a sustainable and scalable manner. It includes access to educational technology (e.g., audio playback, interactive whiteboards), time allocated for music instruction in the school schedule, class size, and regional inequalities in educational resources. This dimension also evaluates whether national or provincial curriculum standards provide enough flexibility to incorporate MLT-informed practices and whether school administrators and policymakers would be receptive to this theoretical shift. By employing this three-part framework, the paper systematically investigates both the constraints and affordances that shape the potential localization of MLT in China. The framework also provides a structured foundation for the next section, which examines the specific challenges in depth.

5. Findings and Thematic Discussion

5.1 Pedagogical and Institutional Challenges

One of the most significant barriers to localizing Gordon's Music Learning Theory (MLT) in Chinese elementary music education lies in entrenched pedagogical traditions and institutional structures. Chinese music classrooms are largely oriented toward teacher-centered instruction, textbook-based content delivery, and performance-driven outcomes. This stands in contrast to the process-oriented, audiation-focused learning sequences emphasized by MLT. Many elementary music teachers in China are trained primarily through teacher training universities, which focus on generalist education degrees rather than specialized conservatory-level musical instruction. As a result, these teachers often lack advanced musical literacy, particularly in areas such as tonal awareness, improvisation, and audiation-based instruction (Tang, 2020; Zhang, 2022). This gap in musical expertise poses a substantial obstacle to the implementation of MLT, which presupposes a solid foundation in tonal and rhythmic discrimination.

Moreover, current primary music textbooks in China tend to focus on fixed repertoire and song memorization, with limited emphasis on conceptual engagement with pitch, tonal patterns, or audiation thinking. While some units include "listening" sections, these are typically passive and do not facilitate the kind of pattern recognition and tonal inference that MLT requires (Wang, 2022). Without curricular structures that emphasize tonal learning as a process rather than a product, teachers are left without adequate pedagogical tools to cultivate audiation in young learners.

In addition, teacher-centered classroom culture and the prioritization of uniform student performance in public events constrain the learner-centered, exploratory approach foundational to MLT. Institutional norms still reward visible outcomes (e.g., choir performances) over internalized musical understanding, making it difficult for teachers to deviate from prescriptive scripts and introduce recursive, process-based learning sequences.

Institutionally, related departments and schools often fail to provide sufficient opportunities for music teachers to engage in professional development or peer exchange, creating a systemic barrier to pedagogical innovation. A core issue lies in how teacher training and school evaluation frameworks emphasize performance-based success in classroom activity design over the cultivation of foundational musicianship. Inter-school music class exchanges are frequently presented in the form of rehearsed public lessons or demonstration classes, focusing on delivery format, visual presentation, and classroom atmosphere rather than student-centered exploration or aural development (Zhou, 2021). As shown in Figure 2, demonstration classes are typically delivered in performance settings, with large groups of students facing a central teacher, often under rehearsed and choreographed formats that leave little room for exploratory or student-centered learning. This environment indirectly suppresses pedagogical experimentation, and limits open discussion of alternative approaches such as those advocated by MLT. This environment discourages pedagogical risk-taking and constrains the implementation of recursive, process-oriented approaches such as those embedded in MLT.



Figure 2. A demonstration lesson in a Chinese elementary music class retrieved from a public news article on elementary music education in China (2022)

Additionally, most current textbook activity designs are rooted in approaches derived from Kodály, Orff, or Dalcroze, often emphasizing physical responses to rhythm through clapping, stepping, or body movement (as shown in

Figure 3). While this method supports pitch association and motor coordination, it often emphasizes memorized sequences and visual reinforcement rather than fostering internalized musical understanding or audiation (Lu, 2023; Wang, 2022). As a result, students receive limited training in listening-based discrimination or tonal inference, weakening the development of audial capacity at early stages of musical instruction.



Figure 3. Kodály-Inspired Hand Sign Singing Activity from the Renyin Edition of the Chinese Elementary Music Textbook.

5.2 Cultural Tensions and Conceptual Misalignments

The fundamental elements of MLT, including audiation, sequential pattern training, and the application of rhythm syllables, are intricately integrated into Western tonal systems. When used inside the Chinese setting, these ideas frequently experience linguistic and cultural discord. A considerable problem exists in the utilization of gesture-based commands and monotone spoken instructions, which are integral elements of MLT. In Mandarin Chinese, a tonal language where pitch conveys meaning, adhering to a consistent tonal center in spoken communication defies inherent speech patterns. Educators indicate that this approach frequently appears odd and perplexing to both them and their pupils (Wang, 2022).

Moreover, current Chinese research suggests that numerous teaching materials by Gordon, particularly the "Jump Right In" series, are significantly influenced by Anglo-American folk music, which may not align with the tonal modalities and rhythmic customs of Chinese folk music. Chinese music education includes Western major and minor scales, with pentatonic and various modal systems, requiring culturally aware adaptation (Zhang, 2024).

Furthermore, cultural ideas of education, particularly the emphasis on discipline, conformity, and examination success—may conflict with MLT's emphasis on individual discovery, creativity, and experiential learning. Students may demonstrate reluctance to engage in improvisational or movement-based activities, viewing them as trivial or distracting. Furthermore, educational settings in China often exhibit large class sizes and conform to inflexible physical arrangements that restrict adaptability. Unlike Western settings, where music sessions typically take place in spacious, flexible locations that promote movement and collaborative exploration, Chinese schools predominantly emphasize order and confined seating configurations. The above-indicated conditions, along with a focus on classroom administration, may hinder students' capacity to freely engage in music and dance, so obstructing the embodied and improvisational learning experiences essential to MLT. While these frameworks serve important administrative and behavioral functions, they also sustain a teacher-centered dynamic that hinders student-driven auditory inquiry and creativity. Educators may hesitate to deviate from standardized instructional materials due to apprehensions regarding the potential impact on assessment outcomes.

5.3 Opportunities for Reform and Localized Adaptation

Notwithstanding these challenges, several emerging developments suggest promising directions for the contextual adaptation of MLT in China. Recent curricular modifications, notably the 2022 National Arts curricular Standards, emphasize creativity, expressivity, and customized development, which match with MLT's fundamental focus on audial growth and musical independence.

The proliferation of digital and interactive teaching technology in urban classrooms provides novel opportunities for the application of MLT-informed techniques, including tonal pattern drills, playback-supported audiation activities, and

visual rhythm mapping. Platforms like Seewo and music-focused applications can provide enhanced flexibility in the implementation of learning sequences.

Third, increasing empirical research in China has commenced investigating the compatibility of MLT principles with local classrooms. Research indicates that the integration of tonal and rhythmic sequencing with localized language, culturally pertinent musical resources, and adapted gesture systems can enhance instructional effectiveness (Lu, 2023; Zhang, 2024). This underscores the significance of educational hybridity over direct transplanting.

Moreover, localization necessitates a critical examination of current instructional materials and methods of delivery. Gordon's first curricular materials may not completely correspond with the stylistic characteristics or modal frameworks of Chinese traditional and modern children's songs. The tonal content, rhythmic phrasing, and pedagogical focus must be appropriately adjusted to guarantee relevance and impact for Chinese learners (Wang, 2023). The tonal intricacies of Mandarin Chinese and the lack of familiarity with Western gestural cues in classroom practices necessitate adjustments to instructional methods. Educators require support through flexible teaching models that permit tonal variation in language, gesture alternatives grounded in Chinese classroom traditions, and scaffolding tactics that develop from local listening practices.

In conclusion, successful localization of MLT in China relies not on strict adherence to the original model but on creating a culturally attuned and contextually relevant adaptation that leverages Gordon's theoretical strengths while considering China's policy alignment, cultural-linguistic characteristics, instructional materials, and teaching methodologies.

6. Conclusion and Future Research

This study rigorously analyzed the obstacles and opportunities related to the localization of Gordon's Music Learning Theory (MLT) in the realm of Chinese basic music education. Through a culturally contextualized evaluation framework and thematically organized findings, the paper revealed that effective localization of MLT hinges on reconciling theoretical integrity with pedagogical and cultural realities.

Identified key difficulties encompass deficiencies in teacher preparation, inflexibility of the curriculum, and pedagogical approaches anchored in performance-driven, teacher-centric models. At the cultural level, MLT's focus on Western tonal sequencing, gesture-driven directives, and monotonal instruction frequently clashes with the pitch-oriented characteristics of Mandarin and the spatial and behavioral organization of Chinese classrooms. These problems hinder the advancement of exploratory, audiation-based learning environments.

Nonetheless, the present educational framework in China offers significant opportunities for improvement. National curriculum policies prioritizing creativity and aesthetic literacy, along with the increasing accessibility of digital teaching technologies and practical experimentation, correspond with the fundamental aims of MLT. The growing academic focus on combining theoretical models like MLT with regional teaching materials, tonal systems, and classroom arrangements signifies a transition towards pedagogical hybridity.

This article indirectly underscores the significance of integrating technology, pedagogy, and content in future curriculum development. Activities informed by MLT must address audiation development needs while also considering the practical limitations of textbook structure and classroom delivery methods. These insights highlight the possible congruence between the theoretical advantages of MLT and frameworks such as TPACK, wherein technology and pedagogy are adaptable to address specific content and student requirements. In conclusion, instead of directly implementing MLT, Chinese elementary music education should engage in a thoughtful and iterative adaptation process—integrating Gordon's concepts with local musical environments, teaching frameworks, and educational philosophies.

Future investigations into the localization of Gordon's Music Learning Theory (MLT) in China commence by tackling the contextual problems stemming from language, cultural, and curricular discrepancies. A key objective is to reconcile MLT's tonal and rhythmic teaching principles with the content structure of Chinese music textbooks. Research is required to investigate the effective integration of audiation-oriented activities within the existing curriculum framework, rather than considering them as supplementary elements. This method would facilitate a more genuine and durable incorporation of MLT-based sequences into routine classroom instruction. Another essential aspect entails broadening the scope of empirical study via longitudinal and developmental investigations. Future research should examine the impact of MLT-guided instruction on student learning trajectories from early childhood to the latter stages of elementary education, in addition to short-term intervention trials. This research would elucidate the chronological progression of audiation skills and assist in identifying effective educational methodologies for various developmental stages.

Innovation in teacher training remains equally vital. Preservice and in-service programs must concentrate on pragmatic ways for tailoring MLT to specific classroom environments, emphasizing instructional adaptability, classroom diversity, and the availability of school resources. These training models must also prepare educators to synchronize audiation instruction with the educational objectives and musical literacy requirements specified in the Chinese curriculum policy. Furthermore, there is a significant necessity to examine the impact of technology on improving audiation training. Research may investigate the efficacy of interactive tools, such as Seewo whiteboards, rhythm

visualization platforms, and mobile listening applications, in facilitating structured, sequence-based learning within large, heterogeneous classes, especially in contexts with constrained traditional resources.

Future studies should include cross-regional comparative analysis to discern discrepancies and best practices within educational contexts. Comparative analyses between affluent urban schools and disadvantaged rural locations will yield insights into scalable and equitable approaches for MLT implementation. Such findings can facilitate the establishment of avenues for advancing musical equity and enhancing excellent learning experiences for all Chinese students. This investigation directly endorses the advancement of practice-based educational research, including the design and development of listening training modules rooted in MLT and tailored to Chinese curriculum contexts. Future research that integrates theoretical models with empirically validated learning sequences will be crucial in developing structured listening instruction for Chinese elementary schools, especially in Southeast regions where curricular reform and pedagogical innovation are currently in progress.

These study directions will together aid in establishing a culturally grounded, developmentally suitable, and pedagogically sustainable framework for the implementation of MLT in China, thereby enhancing Gordon's theoretical contributions through a localized and responsive educational perspective.

References

- Bonna, B. (2013). Research on the application of EE Gordon's theory of music learning in the music education in Poland.
- Bonna, B., Trzos, P. A., & Kołodziejki, M. (2014). Musical-Educational Research of the Adaptation of EE Gordon's Theory of Music Learning in Poland.
- Chen, Q. H. (2024). The application of Gordon's audiation theory in high school music composition classes. *China Music Education*, (357)03, 49–55.
- Kołodziejki, M. (2020). Heterogeneity of thinking about audiation in terms of scientific exploration of the status of music learning theory by Edwin Elias Gordon. *Edukacja Muzyczna*, (15), 191–246.
- Li, D. D., & Pan, S. S. (2024). Developing music activities in nursery care based on Edwin Gordon's Music Learning Theory: A case study of C Nursery in Nantong. *Child Pianist*, (324)24, 54–56.
- Li, Y. R. (2022). A practical study of Gordon's audiation-based music education theory in secondary school music teaching (Master's thesis). Jiangxi Normal University.
- Liao, F. D. (2023). An action research on Gordon's music audiation theory in vocal pedagogy (Master's thesis). Jiangxi Normal University.
- Lu, Y. T. (2023). A study on the application of Edwin Gordon's audiation theory in music education for children aged 4–6 (Master's thesis). Jiangxi Science and Technology Normal University.
- Luo, P. N. (2022). A feasibility analysis of applying Gordon's MAP test and music learning theory in basic music curriculum (Master's thesis). Yunnan Arts University.
- Lv, Y. (2022). A study on the musical aptitude of kindergarteners in Guangzhou (Master's thesis). Guangzhou University.
- Ran, Y. (2024). The application of Edwin Gordon's audiation theory in elementary vocal instruction (Master's thesis). Chengdu University.
- Shuler, S. C. (2021). The effects of Gordon's learning sequence activities on vocal performance achievement of primary music students. *Visions of Research in Music Education*, 16(2), 16.
- Tang, W. (2020). A systematic literature review on the application of Edwin Gordon's music education theory in China. *Journal of Xi'an Conservatory of Music*, 36(2), 121–126.
- Wang, J. Y. (2023). A practical study on the application of Gordon's music learning theory in junior high school vocal classes (Master's thesis). Zhejiang Normal University.
- Wang, S. N. (2022). A practical study of Gordon's music learning theory in Chinese elementary music classrooms (Master's thesis). Tianshui Normal University. <https://doi.org/10.27868/d.cnki.gtsxx.2022.000001>
- Wang, T. L. (2021). A practical study on applying Gordon's music learning theory in junior high school music classrooms (Master's thesis). Luoyang Normal University.
- Zhang, N. L. (2022). Design and experimental study of musical activities for younger children based on Gordon's audiation theory (Master's thesis). Jiangxi Science and Technology Normal University.
- Zhang, X. (2024). The implementation and significance of Edwin Gordon's audiation theory in piano instruction. *Art Evaluation*, (701)06, 111–116.

- Zhou, D. Y. (2021). An empirical study on the application of Gordon's music aptitude test in the Chinese context. *Journal of Xinghai Conservatory of Music*, (165)04, 112–118.
- Zhu, Y. T. (2021). Application of Gordon's music learning theory in music appreciation lessons for lower-grade primary students (Master's thesis). Hunan Normal University. reative ways of being. In Morss, J.R., Stephenson, N. & Rappard, J.F.H.V. (Eds.), *Theoretical issues in psychology: Proceedings of the International Society for Theoretical Psychology 2019 Conference* (3-12). Sydney: Springer. [Example for Paper in conference proceedings in print]