

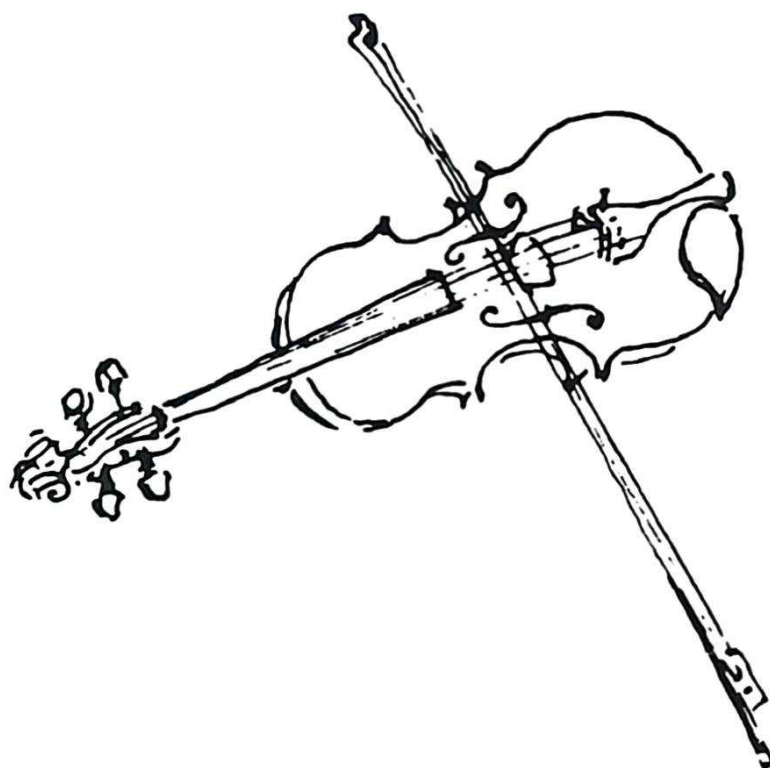
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Masayoshi Kataoka

"Education is nothing difficult: all you need to do is to know and carry out the knack to help your children develop ability, in the same way as you have successfully fostered language in them." Dr. Shin'ichi Suzuki says this in "Fostering Every Child Beautifully Is Our Mission, Your Mission." He asks all parents and teachers to understand his method and strive to raise our children with fine ability.

Ryoko Yoshida, violin instructor, reports her impressions of the 36th Summer School in Matsumoto in "An Experience That Generates Motivation." And the last installment of "These Steps Toward Tomorrow" by Kiyoshi Kato describes various experiences at the incipient stage of the talent education movement.

Dr. Suzuki provides three important instructions in his "Lectures on Music Instruction": first, play with the upper bow arm; second, string crossing; and third, practice with the upside down bow.

With this issue, we begin installments from *The Evolution of the Suzuki Method*, recently published as the second volume of *The Complete Works of Shin'ichi Suzuki*, 1985. The volume starts with *Ability Is Not Inborn*, 1951.

This issue concludes "A Record of Home Lessons" by Chihoko Takezawa. We are also pleased to publish it as a separate booklet. We believe that the booklet will be particularly valuable to new Suzuki families.

FOSTERING EVERY CHILD BEAUTIFULLY
IS OUR MISSION, YOUR MISSION

Shin'ichi Suzuki



Shin'ichi Suzuki and children
at the 14th Tokai District Concert, September 23, 1985

The educational movement of our association began when we realized that every child has the potential to grow with fine ability through the functioning of life's great driving force.

I was amazed to find the great fact that every child on earth fluently speaks the mother tongue. This led me to the discovery of an educational method which fosters every child. Hence this movement.

Take music for example. When my method is applied, with what superior musical sensibility and amazingly high ability can children grow? By fostering many children I have continually demonstrated this to the world.

Consequently, today it is clear that in fact ability is not inborn; that every child can be fostered as an outstanding individual, depending upon the way he is raised, through the wonderful workings of life.

Dear members, let me ask you, for the sake of your

children, to become thoroughly acquainted with this fact, and resolve that you will try making serious efforts so as to raise them with fine ability.

Education is nothing difficult: all you need do is to know and carry out the knack to help your children develop ability in the same way as you have successfully fostered language in them.

I plan to record my appeal and explanation about child raising at home and send copies of the tape to instructors. Let me ask each instructor to lend out the tape or play it in class for parents.

I would now like to greatly advance "the movement to foster every child beautifully." There still seem to be many students who are not yet well fostered. It is part of my mission to ask parents to arrive at serious and clear understanding for the sake of children.

Looking Forward to Graduation Tapes

In your practice, try to match yourself with the tape in beautiful tone and fine expression through sound.

Have students practice the graduation pieces daily with the tape for musical education, and at the same time help them learn to express with the tape the beautiful tone and skillful dynamics taught by the teacher.

It is my pleasure that graduation tape performances have become more musical each year. It is not enough merely to play without mistakes; I listen to your tapes enjoying the beauty of tone and the skill in dynamic expression, primary factors determining the level of each student. Practice with care for your teacher's instructions concerning tonal beauty and musical singing. If you do, I will know that you are a student with a well developed sense of music.

In the Suzuki method, the first goal is to beautifully foster musical sensibility. It also reflects the instructor's skill.

I would like each of you students to practice well

to refine your musical sensibility instead of being satisfied with merely being able to play the piece, and send me a beautiful, musical graduation tape. I will be looking forward. Taping for graduation is good for every student's study; it helps create ability. Let as many students graduate as possible. The ones who graduate students are their teachers; my role is simply to sanction it.

A New Approach to Refining Tone for the Violin School

— Message to Teachers —

I would like all violin teachers to try the following, starting today, as a new approach. (The application of the upside down bow hold is great.)

As an approach to refine tone:

Refine tone by instructing in playing with the bow held upside down, with the little finger on the bow tip, and the line connecting the bow stick and the horse hair kept vertical against the strings.

(1) When you teach tonalization using the Chorus from Judas Maccabaeus, always have the student play with both upside down and normal bow holds. Help create the ability to play with the same amount of sound when using the normal bow hold.

(2) Always have the student practice playing four or five earlier pieces using both upside down and normal bow holds.

(3) In class, have the student play the assigned piece both ways so as to refine tone.

Talent Education Newsletter, October 15, 1985



AN EXPERIENCE THAT GENERATES MOTIVATION

The 36th Summer School, First Session

Ryoko Yoshida
Instructor, Kanto District

I have participated dozens of times in the summer school which occurs annually around this time. I always learn with enjoyment and come away with profound memories.

This year I took several of my students. Getting off the train at Matsumoto Station on the afternoon of July 25, we were met by the Alps under an endless expanse of blue sky. At the instructor's preliminary meeting, Mr. Suzuki welcomed us with smiles, as vital as ever. He asked us to help improve students' tone during the session, giving us eight goals of instruction. In particular, he repeatedly emphasized "thumb tone." I knew I had to study this important theme with students starting the following day.

Lessons began the next day at the City Hall and Agata-no-Mori (Village Woods). I was responsible for the Handel Bourree class, so I headed for Agata-no-Mori, which feels like woods of music whenever I go there, melodies flowing from different classrooms.

I would like you to take a peek at my class. Students waited for me looking a little tense, this being the first day. I first asked them to show me their bow hold. Since we receive Mr. Suzuki's lessons at teachers' conferences and other occasions on the importance of the fingers for the bow hold, naturally we should be expected to know that; still, I was impressed to see students with good bow hold. Some, undoubtedly those who had won their own teacher's praises, swiftly held their bows in front of their faces. Others fixed

this and that, not yet looking confident. I let them fix their thumb, fix the bow tip, and play the Handel Bourree. I knew that they had looked forward to playing the piece at the summer school, for they performed it with eyes shining.

The lottery concert was an important part of our lessons. I tried it in my class, too. Children drew lots like true veterans and announced the drawn piece loudly before performance. Ones who drew "Big Hit" (i.e., the student can play any piece) were wild with excitement. I renewed my appreciation of the lottery concert approach which helps children review happily.

After the morning class was the opening ceremony, in which everyone felt somewhat formal. After that we teachers found ourselves in a situation we had not anticipated: we were to bring our violins to the stage for a lesson. "I am sorry I only talked yesterday at the preliminary meeting and didn't let you play. I want to make it up to you now," Mr. Suzuki said. This was quite unprecedented.

The afternoon group lesson was also pleasant. Mr. Suzuki won the children's hearts before they realized it, and it was as though their eyes were drawn into him. The students I had taken with me practiced hard after returning to the lodging, lest they disappoint Mr. Suzuki by revealing their lack of practice in the play-in the following day. Watching this, I was happy that I had brought them to the summer school.

"Fun Hour" was another exciting event for the students. They enjoyed haiku card games and admired Mr. Nagase's skill in magic.

While hearing wonderful performances in the afternoon and evening concerts, many students and parents shared common feelings: "He plays my piece so well. I wish I could play like that," or "When will my child play that piece?"

The last morning of the summer school is meant for demonstration of what each class achieved in the preceding three days. Both students and teachers become quite nervous during this concert. Teachers prepare the class aloud when it is its turn to go on stage: "You're

next; do your very best." Once on stage they quickly glance over students' posture and bow position with great seriousness.

Thus the four days ended; it was hot every day this year. Bus drivers were saying to each other: "This weather will last for a while. At this rate, there won't be any showers even in the mountains." The four days in that climate made me think that the summer school was always a place for experiences which generate motivation in students: they feel like trying hard when they get home and participating again next year. Since I asked my students to write their impressions, I am looking forward to reading them.

Let me thank Mr. Suzuki and the members of the committee who made efforts for the summer school. I am convinced that violin sounds will echo and re-echo again next year filling the region at the foot of the Japan Alps.

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Your contribution to Talent Education of St. Louis, the publisher of Talent Education Journal, will be deeply appreciated. Contributions made to Talent Education of St. Louis are entitled to U.S. Federal income tax deduction. Talent Education of St. Louis has been granted an exemption from Federal income tax under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

THESE STEPS TOWARD TOMORROW

Historical Narrative (3)



Kiyoshi Kato

Before it became what it is now, talent education has trod zigzag paths through numerous experiences. At the incipient stage of the movement, society's response was varied. Its progress was never smooth. Let me record some aspects of it.

It was soon after the movement began, when I visited Mr. K's place in Seijo, Tokyo. He was a strong theoretician and a specialist who had studied education many years in the States. I headed for his house after finishing the day's lessons. It was night. I walked relying on the moonlight, since there were hardly any street light, which was quite natural in 1949 when the impact of the war was still intensely felt. Every door was tightly closed. Peering through the dark, I passed a number of houses; it took me a while before I found Mr. K's nameplate on a gate. Due partly to the loneliness I was experiencing, I felt truly relieved when I saw his face. He had heard about our movement and wanted to know more. We used to go anywhere in those days, for we were desperately trying to find as many supporters as possible.

Big Apples and Small Apples

Mr. K was quietly listening to what I had to say, but suddenly commented: "Are you and your friends saying that big apples and small apples are the same? That is strange." The moment he said this, he fell silent again. His words were sharp refutation of our idea that "every child grows." The atmosphere grew uncomfortable.

At that time talent education philosophy was not as well accepted as now. It could not have been helped because we still had few educational results to demonstrate our points. Although we had spirit, the practice which would underlie our educational principle had only started. Even if we took several children with us and demonstrated how every child grew, this did not lead to immediate understanding. The result was often not much more than evaluations such as "the children's movements are cute," or "they play well considering their tender ages." Saying that "their ability has developed as you see" could not change the fixed traditional mentality in one day. In an age when research on the human brain had not yet advanced as far as today, those who heard us must have doubted our credibility, however emphatically we repeated our message. This was an age when physiology of the brain itself, which could have explained it theoretically, had not yet reached that point of understanding: our patience was tried beyond belief. Today, the science of the human brain has developed and research is progressing daily. Yet in those days we simply relied on demonstration. Listeners probably had no choice but to understand us just vaguely. Mr. K's parable of apples was indeed acrid, but let us ascribe that to the education he had received.

Confronting Educators

Consider just one of our principles, the earlier period: those who thought it appropriate to start education at age six or seven naturally disagreed when we advocated education from age three. We could not with-

draw just because we met disagreement. During the early days, we had no choice but to go out to many places. We decided to take every opportunity to make our appeal: we visited schools, kindergartens and meetings, each time bringing a few children. We were not readily accepted. "Musical talent is altogether different from everything else" — this was the strong feeling in those days. It was hardly convincing to people that the talent education approach could be applied to every area; talent education itself was still unknown, so the situation was quite impossible. Moreover, educators had a readymade concept, which inevitably led to confrontation. Since Mr. Suzuki and I were both young, we often engaged in heated debate with them. It was a job because we were trying to break through common sense. At the time when it was widely believed that "talent is inborn," we insisted that "it is not inborn": the counterattack was vehement. It was not rare that the debate continued so long that I arrived home at one or two in the morning.

A Learning Experience in the Streets

In the postwar days Mr. Suzuki and I constantly talked passionately about talent education's future. One late afternoon we were walking in Shibuya. In which direction and in what part of town we wandered while talking escapes me: when we realized, we had entered an alley of a somewhat dubious atmosphere. Taken aback, I looked on both sides of us and saw rows of drinking shacks and women calling customers. Mr. Suzuki and I were shocked. We tried to quickly leave, but found that it was a maze: however far we went, there was no exit.

On looking at my watch, I realized that we had walked round and round for about an hour. Our behavior must have seemed strange to those women. Each time we were addressed, we made our way through with ludicrously polite greetings: "Much obliged, thank you very much;" "Thank you very much, please excuse us." When we finally escaped, entered a nearby

noodle shop and relaxed, Mr. Suzuki said thoughtfully: "We've had a good experience today. Watching how it is in those streets intensifies our feeling that our education is needed now more than ever. Mr. Kato, let's work hard again from tomorrow. We cannot rest even one day, can we?"



Mr. Suzuki lectures before U.S. officers,
November 1948 at Marunouchi Education Center, Tokyo.

A Pair of Shoes

What supported the movement then, I think, was an outpouring of passion. When that is slender, no movement advances. In our activities we complemented material deficiency with spirit. On looking back, I am amazed by our endurance. It was also a time of deep caring.

Now, I have one episode to record here in passing. It is about a pair of shoes, a pair which I had Mr. Suzuki wear for his movement. This is a peaceful era, and shoe stores are overflowing with merchandise. In those days of destitution, even a pair of shoes was hard to obtain. The shoes in question were brought to me by a student of mine who visited my place one day when the war was worsening. "Since I am now leaving for the front, I no longer need these shoes. Thank you for

all you have done for me. I am sad that I am going without repaying your kindness, but please at least accept these. I doubt that I will come back alive...," he said and left the shoes. The shoes remained unworn, carefully kept in our shoe case. I thought: "They are just too precious for me to wear. Someone will eventually appear who deserves to use them; I will not hesitate to have him wear them then." Not many days after the student had left for the front, Japan lost the war and he was among those who never returned. Hearing the sad news, my heart was crushed.

When the movement began, I quietly took the shoes out of the case and handed them to Mr. Suzuki, glad that the gift from my sincere student now met a meaningful use.

There Were Many Troubles

When we look back, we realize that there is so much to learn from history. In retrospect circumstances manifest themselves clearly. At the particular moment, however, we are so involved that we often fail to see things with clarity.

About the time I opened a class in Tokyo and worked toward opening additional branch chapters, there were many difficulties between Mr. Suzuki and those who provided classroom space or were chapter coordinators. When I listened to them objectively, I found each side's argument correct. This was a period of hypotheses about education for both sides; understanding lacked depth, giving way to enthusiasm for improving the movement, which inevitably led to vehemence. Although they were together in talent education, both sides were still groping. Naturally there were many episodes. It could not have been easy because we were just beginning to create good examples which would support our ideas. I feel overwhelmed thinking of that rough-hewn incipient stage. Dependence on abstract theorizing produced clashes which were impossible to control.

Mutual Respect Alone Can Help

It was not easy to find a way to solve problems. Both sides had things to say. Both insisted that they were right, refusing to compromise. The causes of those troubles were varied. Once the argument started, there was no end. Both parties were worthy people; they were both learned. No matter which side I took, I would have hurt the other. When a problem was solved, there was a phone call from elsewhere about another problem. Each time I left the lesson and went out to moderate.

As I thought then, human beings have really strong egos. We tend not to want to compromise. In many cases, one can see the other party only from one's own side. Why can't we, I wondered, think by standing on each other's viewpoint?

The conclusion I came to while moderating was that we must respect each other, or respect and understand each other. Since this simple thing was not possible, there were problems. If I think well about it, people clashed despite themselves even while wanting to do what was good.

Branch Classes Open in Tokyo

In the middle of a lesson I would receive a call from the Tokyo office: "We want you to go to such and such kindergarten at such and such hour." I was to talk about talent education to kindergarten parents. Since time was limited, I would rush by car. I felt bad for my student about having to stop the lesson, but I had to leave, carrying materials for advertising the movement. I was not a particularly effective talker, but wherever I went, classes were gradually formed. Sometimes straining schedules continued for days so that I had to leave for a meeting the moment I arrived home. When I returned, I would resume lessons. Although I was busy, I experienced great joy in seeing my beliefs materializing step by step.

Around that time, chapters were established nation-

wide, including Tokyo, Saitama, Nagano, Nagoya, and Mie. There were thirty chapters in all, with over 1,500 students. It was only a matter of time before it reached 2,000. This was a period, I think, when talent education gradually became richer in content which supported theory.

From Dialogues with Mr. Suzuki

I have at hand a number of words Mr. Suzuki spoke when we were working together. I would like to quote from them.

"Unless teachers change, they cannot change children. It is necessary that teachers constantly reflect and think critically about their teaching method. Unless they believe that every child grows, true education is impossible. Report cards they hand to children are report cards on themselves. If they give C's and D's, they should think that they had to because they taught poorly."

"If we think we are an education-oriented nation, teachers should be treated better than anybody else. We should give them the highest salaries and make sure that they can study sufficiently and have a reasonable living."

"Are children the world over really demonstrating their abilities? Teachers should quickly mind their teaching approaches."

"At home parents are teachers; in society all adults are teachers."

"Human ability, including both sensibility and intellect, is formed from the day of birth. If we know this, we understand that the result is irrecoverable when child ability is left alone."

"A woman asked Darwin who is famous for his

theory of evolution: 'when would be a good time to start educating my child?' Darwin: 'How old is your child?' The woman: 'One and a half.' Darwin is said to have answered: 'Then you are one and a half years too late.' "

"Even children with low academic standing speak fine Japanese. How do you look at this fact? They fluently speak and comprehend this complicated language. This is a proof of the fact that their ability is skillfully fostered in that area."

"We have to get started on cultural enhancement for mankind as soon as possible. Culturally advanced countries should care for masses of culturally underprivileged children on earth, foster them from tender ages as highly cultured individuals, then let them work toward enhancement of their own cultures back home."

If I continue to quote Mr. Suzuki's words, they will prove endlessly rich and brilliant. Viewing actual Japanese education, however, I am not sure how far talent education philosophy has penetrated. At this rate it may take, as Mr. Suzuki predicts, forty or fifty years, or even more. Not only in educational circles but in society at large, Suzuki-ism cannot yet be said to have spread. Mr. Suzuki says: "Fine if it is looked at as a religion; fine to think it a child-raising religion; I would like more people to participate in this educational movement." Certainly he has been introduced in many newspapers and books, and he has written books himself. I, too, once discussed Oistrakh and talent education in my book, *Oistrakh Remembered* (Zen'on Publishing House). However, this was nothing more than a tiny candle in the big enterprise involving the nationwide child raising program which Mr. Suzuki dreams about. It has already been forty years since the movement started. Suppose we think of a project in terms of a hundred year unit. Can this nation, and again, can mankind, realize Mr. Suzuki's dream by creating happiness for all children on earth in the remaining sixty

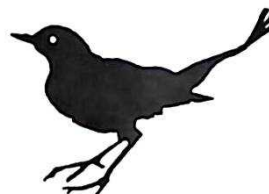
years? Will a world be realized which is filled with those who do not think of themselves but care for others?

As a Researcher

As I said in the beginning, Mr. Suzuki's steps are superhuman; we cannot possibly keep pace with him. I hear that he has no Sundays even now. Mr. Suzuki himself often mentions that. I am, on the other hand, simply continuing my quiet study as a researcher; but I believe that talent education as a movement and as a research field in education should go hand by hand. Research in each academically established area should be advanced, and participation of many researchers is hoped for. Talent has developed till today under the great leadership of Mr. Suzuki, but even the leader is a child of man, not God. It is certain that he will continue to need the assistance of many people inside and outside the country. While writing this essay reliving the past, I have realized that we cannot forget that talent education has become what it is today thanks to the cooperation of a vast number of people. However small each assistance might have been, the organization should be grateful for it, and assimilate it as part of its dynamism. All the more so if it aims at so big an enterprise as a nationwide child-raising program.

(The photo under the title is from Children's Recreation Party, Ueno, Tokyo, May, 1969.)

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VIII
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FOR CORRECT VIOLIN BOWING PLAY WITH THE UPPER ARM

Shin'ichi Suzuki

From long ago I have always taught, "Play with the arm." By the arm, I mean from the elbow to the shoulder. Many do the opposite, however: they play with the forearm, from the elbow down, refusing to understand me.

Let me state in clear terms here:

1. Play with the upper part of the arm, from the elbow to the shoulder. This is the very basis of violin playing technique. Hang the elbow down relaxedly, and let the upper arm "carry" the bow and play.

2. The rule is not to apply power in the wrist, but to relax it.

3. Do not twist the back of the bow hand either to the right or to the left; always keep it flat. The thumb nail should be "straight up" against the bow, and holding the bow with its right corner.

I would like you to carefully study and teach these three points.

Those who understand them and have acquired the ability to play with the upper arm can be said to have comprehended the correct bowing technique for violin. Pay careful attention at lessons to whether or not the back of the student's hand is flat, the bow is held with the right corner of the thumb nail, and the thumb nail for "panda" playing is vertically straight as it holds the bow. The student who is correctly instructed in these points will develop wonderful, fine tone.

I would like to assign the above as the primary project for student instruction this year. Let me ask you to study these basics of bowing, with special emphasis on instruction in playing the violin with the upper part of the bow arm between the elbow and the shoulder.

Give fine instruction to every student.

Let me add a haiku on bowing technique:

Wonder:

tone from the upper bow arm
first and foremost.

Thorough Instruction in String Crossing — with Etude in Book 1 —

String crossing is an indispensable ability. However, unexpectedly few students seem to be able to cross strings correctly and skillfully.

Let me ask you to teach proper string crossing as a crucial bow arm technique at lessons; advanced students, too, should learn this again freshly.

As I do at lessons from time to time, use my Etude in Book 1 for instruction in proper string crossing technique. Occasionally also check advanced students' bow arms for string crossing, by having them play this piece.

Frequently evaluate the string crossing ability of the bow arm of every student. You need to fully train your students in proper string crossing; you need to help them form proper habits.

Make good use of Etude at group lessons as well for instruction in string crossing.

Even if students may be able to play pieces well, their tone is no good unless they can cross strings properly with their fingers. They will suffer when they learn pieces like advanced concertos further along, for technical flaws will surface, keeping them from being able to play skillfully.

Let me repeat: use Book 1 Etude to help every student master correct finger manipulation as well as the ability of the right hand for string crossing.

Playing Pieces with the Upside Down Bow

Do not forget to have students, including beginners, play while holding the bow upside down, at the tip. At lessons frequently have them play the assigned piece

first with the bow upside down, then with the normal bow hold. This is to check if they have practiced at home so that they can play the piece with equally good tone whichever end of the bow they hold.

Again, use the upside down bow for tonalization exercises: instruct students so that they will gradually be able to play the Chorus from Judas Maccabaeus with the same tone using either bow hold. Check their tone to encourage practicing the assigned piece both ways at home.

Their tone will greatly improve if you have students practice producing tone with the well balanced upside down bow.

Anyway, growth of students' tone is the purpose of lesson instruction. Have students practice playing the piece at home with the tape; have them also play with the tape at lesson. This is the basis of the Suzuki method, and an educational approach for fostering fine musical sensibility.

Instruction in the upside down bow hold is very effective in carrying out our responsibility of developing fine tone. Use this approach from the beginner stage so that you can refine your students' tone.

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ABILITY IS NOT INBORN

From *The Evolution of the Suzuki Method*

Shin'ichi Suzuki

ABILITY IS NOT INBORN (1951)

Ability Development Observed in Language

I began to have questions about human ability which was said to be only inborn. This was about twenty years ago around 1930 or 1931.

The skill of eating with chopsticks and the sense that has developed in those fingers must appear as fine abilities in the eyes of foreigners.

The delicacy of finger tips for eating with chopsticks and the sensitivity of finger tips for playing the piano are, technically speaking, similar abilities. Further, in music, too, everything depends upon how it is taught: sensitivity and technical ability change greatly when instructors change.

"What is ability?" I asked myself.

Was there a distinction in cultural achievements between those which depended upon ability and those which did not? When outstanding power was demonstrated, people ascribed it to innate ability, and to its absence when clumsiness was observed.

However, when a student supposedly suffering from the absence of inborn ability was given good training under a different instructor, he would gradually begin to demonstrate outstanding power. Then people would say that in fact he had innate ability after all.

I felt myself in a fog as to exactly what ability was. In other words, I could only think that there was, in society's common sense, no fixed definition of the term ability, and that people were merely arbitrarily

using the term to explain consequences.

If such was the case, I thought, there was a need to create a clear definition of ability. As long as the specter, ability-and-the-inborn, hovered in the air, educational circles would remain haunted: bewildered by *the inborn* gift and ability, they would be unable to comprehend the essence of the growth of human ability. Until the essence of the ability growth was grasped, naturally education was impossible. Therefore, if one succeeded in education, they explained it away as an inborn gift; if one failed, they again ascribed it to an inborn quality. Educators shifted their responsibility to the specter, ability-and-the-inborn.

I thought we had learned the clear truth about historical inevitability or cause and effect. Yet in the human world everything was

inborn now that ability was created;
inborn now that growth was impaired.

This being the situation; it was impossible for the results of education to receive recognition.

Around the time when I was thinking about these things, something happened which made me aware of a contradiction: I saw that "society at large is convinced that children who are poor at such subjects as math and Japanese have poor brains." I had thought so myself until then. I realized, however, that these children supposedly with poor brains "speak Japanese with absolute fluency, and, moreover, freely utilize a vocabulary committed to memory with as many as 2,000 words at age six and 3,000 at age seven."

Don't they have wonderful brains? Depending upon how they are raised, children beautifully demonstrate their ability.

The true nature of innumerable children on earth who had looked like glass balls suddenly manifested itself before me as brilliantly shining diamonds.

I realized that the specter, the-ability-and-the-inborn, had been misleading human beings for thousands of years.

"Every human ability is a talent."

I made this tentative definition. The only brain that one possesses adapts to everything in the environment, functions, and comes to demonstrate various abilities in one's life.

Speech is a beautifully fostered talent.

Therefore, children's brains are far from being no good; if fostered, they have the potential to display such fine ability as they do in speech.

Weakness in an academic subject like math or Japanese indicates nothing more than failure in education in that field.

Adults who observe children with such fine brains and still conclude that their brains are poor are bewildered by the spectator.

Whether in math or Japanese, if the teaching method and conditions are changed to those for learning the spoken language and children are taught after the manner of speech education, they will certainly become good students who display the same degree of brain efficiency as they have shown in speech.

My experiments for the past twenty years as well as an experiment at an elementary school during the last three years have given me the confidence to emphasize the above.

Ability

I observed human ability from various angles. The result is that I believe that ability develops wherever there is training (stimulation and repetition), and that it develops faithfully reflecting the given conditions, whether good or evil, beautiful or ugly, skillful or clumsy. Again, human heart, personality, speech, motion and behavior, artistic abilities in literature, music and fine arts, anger and laughter, skill and sensibility are all abilities; they develop in response to the environment and the conditions *by which they are fostered*, and under the influence of *what grows within* (hereditary and physiological conditions).

Therefore, what we are advancing and researching

under the name of talent education is the education of total man, or education in truth, good, and beauty; as a research field, it involves the study of human ability and talent. While advancing it from our viewpoint and from psychological, physiological and pedagogical angles, we would ultimately like to make it a socio-philosophical theme.

Inborn

I thought about the relationship between inborn gift and ability and found it curious that, when observing general facts, people described a cultural achievement after it was already displayed as pre-existing ability, an inborn gift.

The Bach family which produced 120 musicians is considered to have enjoyed the heredity of musical traits, as is mentioned in genealogical studies.

It is said that no acquired character can become heredity. I clearly believe that "culture cannot be inherited." Therefore I cannot believe in heredity through lineage of special traits inherent in musicians.

I can say the following in clear terms on the basis of my twenty years' experience and observation as well as our recent experiments:

1. There is no heredity of special musical traits;
2. It is possible to raise anyone to be musically tone-deaf;
3. Sense and sensibility in music can be created (physiological adaptation);
4. No child is born with the musical scale;
5. It is possible to develop fine musical ability in everyone.

Thinking in this way, I no longer find convincing the traditional idea that "the brain has a trait, which is later developed." If I were to accept the idea of innate "cultural traits," I would have to accept the idea that "culture can be inherited."

When I consider what people call traits or potential (of what I call cultural ability), after all it is merely a theory deduced from consequences; no one correctly ob-

Therefore, I do not believe that specific (cultural) abilities exist in the brain; a human being can develop ability in any area by means of education.

Further, on observing the performance of the brain, I conclude that:

1. The function of the brain is adaptation;
2. What is hereditary is the superiority or inferiority of this function (the quality of adaptability);
3. The superiority or inferiority of the brain's performance shows as the degree of sensitivity and speed.

I further think that

man's ability is fostered in response to the environment; and grows inside him through response to what is outside.

Sensibility Is Not Inborn Either

A newborn heard a beautiful piece of music each time she cried (a record of a Haydn symphony was used). She would stop crying and listen quietly. This was repeated every day for a year. Besides the identical piece, a few pieces by Bach and Beethoven were occasionally played.

At age one the child could distinguish the pieces she had heard.

She would listen to Beethoven or Bach being played and, when the music changed to the Haydn symphony, she would suddenly swing her upper body, and try to keep the tempo, looking pleased. At one year and three months, she chose her music. When the Mozart Rondo was played, she moved her body keeping the rhythm, pleased. When it was switched to another record, she said, "All gone," demanding the Rondo back. When it was played again, she excitedly swung her upper body trying to keep the rhythm. The situation was the same with my niece who was raised from the beginning on Tchaikovsky's Serenade (string ensemble).

At one year and five months the child had a good violin playing posture, imitated violin playing with two chosticks, and the bow (chopstick) in her right hand

moved in tempo with her mother who sang by her side. I have seen similar examples now and then in classrooms in various local chapters.

Sensibility is fostered in this way; it is a power of physiological adaptation endowed by the environment.

Outstanding musicians like Bach, Beethoven and Mozart were all raised in outstanding musical environments, and went through physiological adaptation in the areas of intelligence, sensibility, and music. German children grow while listening to German pronunciation, and through physiological adaptation develop a voice for German speech which a Japanese cannot reproduce.

Vegetables which were given necessary fertilizer at the appropriate time taste good; when the timing is flawed, there is no apparent result. It is too late when fertilizer is added past the proper period.

Sensibility, which is said to be an inborn gift, corresponds to the taste produced by the added fertilizer in the process of human upbringing; it is not something people are born with.

In short, I deny the traditional concept of ability or particular inborn (cultural) traits; and I am trying to discover what, instead, is really inborn, and how it is possible to develop such ability.



Conditions for the Growth of Ability

Brain Performance

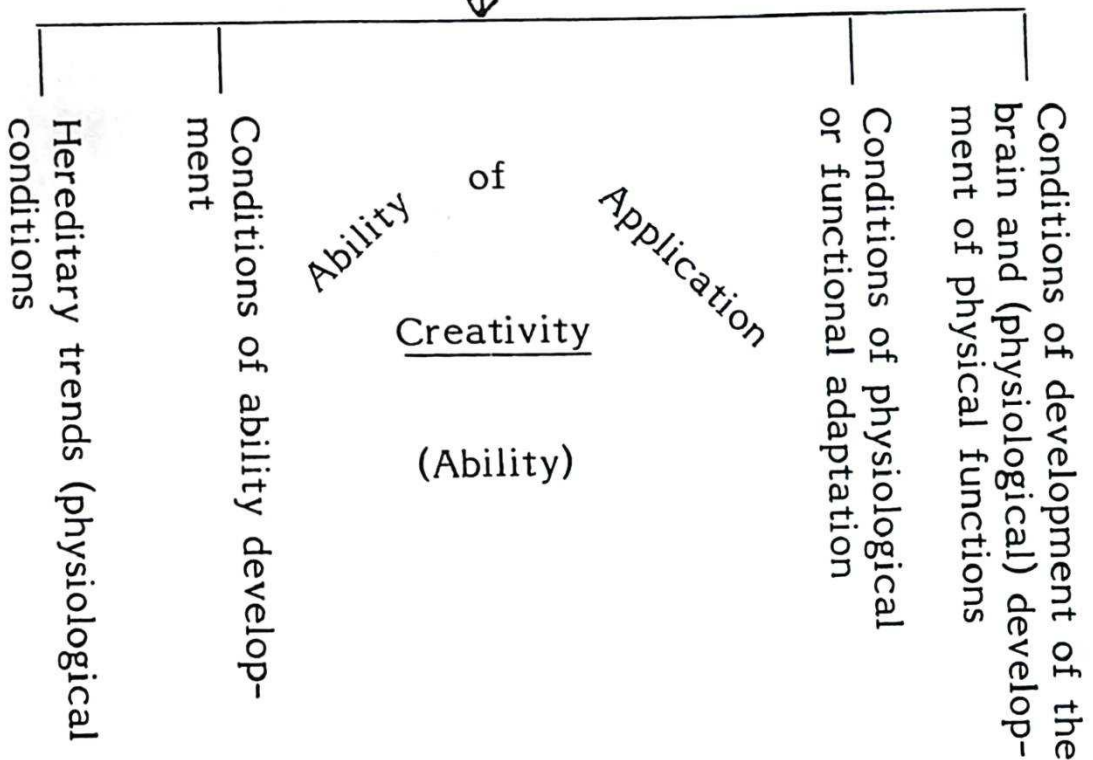
As I already stated, my idea of inborn gifts and ability is that "the essence of heredity is the quality of brain performance; culture itself is not inherited." The outcome of my observation of and experimentation with human ability on this basis is the following diagram of brain performance.

BRAIN PERFORMANCE

STAGES OF ABILITY GROWTH

Sensitivity and Speed
Adaptability

(Hereditary difference)



1. Brain performance starts with the function of "response," or adaptability.

2. Differences in hereditary quality of the brain merely exist in the sensitivity and speed of response. No cultural ability is inherited.

3. The stages of development from response to the ability of application (talent) are as follows:

- a. conditions of the (physiological) development of the brain
- b. conditions of functional adaptation
- c. conditions of the development of ability
- d. hereditary trends (physiological conditions).

These four sets of conditions create differences in the way ability develops.

Conditions of Brain Development

The physiological development of the brain is said to cease at age seventeen or eighteen. It is natural that the conditions of growth affect the development of ability.

When brain development is delayed due to illness, it is probably unavoidable that ability lags behind in accordance with age.

Environment is expected to affect the process of brain development. Again, when there are problems in the internal organs, this affects not only the growth of the body but the growth of the brain.

The nourishment of the nerves, or conditions necessary for the development of the nerves, must also be related to the development of the brain. The complex, marvelous mutual relationships between the brain and the other organs of the body involve delicate communications related to the growth and activities of each of them.

What is observed and experienced in the process of the development of the brain are the changes in the sensitivity of response.

Along with the development of ability, ability of reproduction is reinforced. Although, at a glance, it may

seem to indicate that the ability of response is reinforced, it only signifies the reinforcement of ability development. In fact I think an essential aspect accompanying the stages of the development of the human brain is that the sensitivity of its response, which is at its highest in infancy, diminishes with age.

In other words, to reproduce through imitation is an ability. Responsiveness, however, means the basic power to adapt to outside stimulation and environment, and, regardless of whether the ability of reproduction is demonstrated, to silently respond, prepare, change and adapt both physiologically and functionally. The younger the child, the stronger this power in the stages of development and formation of the brain; with the years, its sensitivity is gradually dulled.

This, I think, determines the quality as well as the limit of development, of the capacity of application (talent) which is demonstrated as ability in later years.

For example, German infants, by the conditions of growth while listening to parents' conversation, delicately perceive the tone color and pronunciation and prepare to reproduce them. They prepare for functional or physiological changes, and soon conditions for pronunciation impossible for Japanese are prepared so that they grow as German-speaking persons. Hearing outstanding music and good musical intonation in infancy helps them prepare for musical delicacy and sense of intonation in functional and physiological terms. I am talking of this kind of power. People used to think this an inborn gift. Human heart, too, is nurtured in this way.



Conditions of Ability Development

All growth is determined by the *conditions of nurturing* and the *conditions of spontaneous growth* under which human ability develops:

1. Hereditary conditions

- a. superiority or inferiority of the genes (quality of brain performance, i.e., sensitivity and speed of response)
- b. hereditary trend (various physiological conditions of the body aside from brain performance)

2. Health conditions

The above can be considered conditions for internal development. Development is also prompted by external influences, i.e., *conditions of nurturing*:

1. Environmental conditions

- a. superiority or inferiority of environment
- b. superiority or inferiority of the method and timing.

From the educational viewpoint, the best conditions for ability development will be:

the earlier period;
the better environment;
the more training;
the superior instructor;
the better teaching method.

These five conditions, I think, are essential.

The Earlier Period

Whether growing human ability or vegetables, conditions for growth are naturally the same.

"The earlier period" is of course taken for granted. In vegetable growing, if someone asked when to start growing them now that he has planted the seeds, people would laugh and suspect that his brain might be be-

having strangely.

Yet, some among those engaged in human education seriously debate whether or not early education is good. At certain times, even fine educators and scholars met and argued for hours about "whether to grow the planted seeds or wait awhile before starting to raise them." Today, people generally remain content with the educational policy of the state which decided that it is better not to start growing the seeds too early. What a relaxed attitude this is.

Hence the world as you now see. Education has in fact started the day of birth. This is all too clear if we look at the conditions of growth.

A woman asked Darwin:

"My child is one and a half years old. When should I start education?"

Darwin is said to have replied:

"You are one and a half years too late."

Today's parents still share the same common sense with parents of Darwin's time, and determine their seedling's future for less and less hopeful directions.

I am almost embarrassed to have to include "the earlier period" in the conditions of education. I feel that farmers may laugh at me. But, anyway, this is an age of amazing culture, amazing education. You and I are living in an old era which will, one hundred years hence, appear in funny stories.



What Happens If Children Are Left Alone

What happens if we leave children alone — this, too, is a rather miserable question. Obviously it is wrong to leave them alone. A better theme of study would be to query why such a foolish question is asked only in the case of development of human ability.

Let's begin with thinking about this. It falls together with the question of the inborn.

I would first like to list what are thought of as common sense.

First, everything is explained away by "the inborn." Common sense depends upon a handy and easy-to-handle tool called heredity, which is in fact incomprehensible, and keeps calling everything inborn — this is the single answer to whatever is unknown.

What obstinacy my child is born with;
 born with bad finger habit;
 born with a literary sense;
 born with a poor brain which can't handle math;
 a born charmer;
 a born artist;
 born elegant or inelegant;
 my child is born to be no good;
 born with a good or poor hand (writing)

There is no limit to the enumeration. However, even though common sense goes so far as to talk of a born artist, it does not, after all, include "a born green grocer" or "a born fish monger."

Again, it is said that there is damage to the brain if knowledge is fed early, stimulating the brain. When even a scholar appears who represents this idea, lazy parents think, "That's nice and simple; it is easier for us to leave children alone," and they go around propagandizing: "If babies use their brains early, there will be damage."

Then there appears Ms. So-and-So, who openly pretends profound knowledge, lecturing that "early stimulation to the brain greatly hinders later development," etc. Among these people are the so-called intellectuals who, faithful to what they have read, broadcast it as though it were their own idea and mislead society.

If it is best not to stimulate the brain early, take the initiative in conducting an experiment in child

raising: put your child in a white-walled square room lacking in stimulus, with no sound and nothing to see; isolate the child from the human world, and just provide meals. If you leave him in this condition till age six, you will have created a brain which is perfectly impossible to educate. This also proves a fine answer to the ludicrous question as to what happens if a child is left alone.

That every child starts with excellent brain activities through stimulation from an early period is *best demonstrated by speech*. In no other area can this intensive daily stimulation be seen.

All those who displayed outstanding ability received, from early childhood, *high degree, good stimulation* from their parents and environment. Their brain activities were well prepared and they benefited by diligence or effort to heighten ability, and were assisted by fine instructors. We should look squarely at this fact which constantly recurs in society. On seeing such outstanding human beings, people yield to superstition and idolize them as outstanding by birth.

This is a form of idol worship which exists in varying degrees in most people's minds today.

A child left alone will become hopeless. Beginning with utter failure, we can think of gradations of hopelessness: if left alone 10 percent, 10 percent of potential ability is impaired. According to how far the child is left alone, the degree of injury differs.

It is the same as that the hand, when unused, loses its function; a child who had to go through such an experiment in infancy would be a cripple for life. The hand will stop growing, lose the senses, and fail to gain any power.

What else can I say but that it is horrifying not to know that the same thing can happen to the development of the brain?

[To be continued.]



A RECORD OF HOME LESSONS



Chihoko Takezawa

Shoichi Yamamura
Instructor

This is a record by the mother of Kyoko Takezawa who joined the Shoichi Yamamura class, Nagoya in November 1969 at age three. It describes the week by week progress of home lessons during the first year of her violin training. It covers the stages from rhythm practice to the Gossec Gavotte and tonalization.

[Continued from the fall issue.]

July 20 — July 26

The assignment included two new things: adding the fourth finger to the scale; and the G Major scale. In the G Major scale, the second finger is put down close to the first finger on the A and E strings, but next to the third finger on the D and G strings. I was worried about whether Kyoko could make this distinction without logically understanding it. However, she accepted it more smoothly than anticipated and quickly learned to use the second finger differently according to the string. The intonation still seems imprecise: the fourth finger tends to be low, while the second finger is low sometimes and high at other times. As for Etude, she knew the notes in parts, but she did not seem to know

the piece as a whole clearly, and she could not easily play the whole piece straight through. It took her four days before she could play it more or less.

The fourth to the fifth measures especially gave her difficulty:



I should have showed her that the first eight notes in measure four concluded a phrase,



and the last eight notes started a new phrase:



However, I carelessly taught her that the figure



repeated three times. Perhaps for this reason, here and in a later section



the melody refused to come smoothly, and it took time.

Posture: although I believe that if I teach her the correct posture at each session, the accumulation of that will naturally become habitual, I was not yet able to help her form a good posture. Her posture collapses particularly easily when working on a new piece like Etude. We tend to emphasize getting the notes. I would like to help her master the correct posture using pieces she can play. It is too bad that it is difficult to eradicate flaws once bad habits are formed.

(Instructor) July 26

The single point of sympathetic vibrations
(great improvement).

Place the bow on the string. Lift. Place.
(Repeat two or three times.)

Start tonalization.



G Major scale (keep the correct tempo for
the last note: \downarrow).

Etude: played in four days.

Bach's Minuet No. 1: to be added.

July 27 — August 4

Kyoko participated in the summer school for the first time for three days between July 30 and August 1, joining the Perpetual Motion class.

Perhaps because the atmosphere of the summer school was unfamiliar, she went up on stage for the first joint play-in at the hall but remained holding the violin under her arm, not wanting to play at all. Although I thought that at this rate she might not play until the day was over, she seemed happier after entering the classroom for a smaller group lesson: surrounded by children approximately her age, she might have felt as though she had started nursery school which she had been longing to attend. She played happily with a different shine in her eyes. She seemed to be eagerly applying herself to what the teacher was saying. I saw a side of her which I did not usually see at home. I feared that she might not be able to maintain her concentration over two hours for the lesson, but she studied happily all the way through. Time felt very short to those observing, too. From the second day, Kyoko couldn't wait for her turn to get up on stage during the joint group lesson after lunch between 1 and 3 o'clock. We went to hear the evening concert which was difficult for Kyoko timewise. She quietly listened,

however, and the concert was wonderful. While we bathed in music all day, the three days of summer school ended in a flash of a second. I am really glad that we went: above all, Kyoko was able to enjoy studying in a pleasant atmosphere.

August 4 — August 16

At the grandparents' house, Kyoko enjoyed "group playing," as she called it, with older cousins who came to visit for the summer vacation. She was a little too pleased, and her bow was quite wild. Although she practiced as usual in terms of time, it was impossible to settle down for practice, and the accustomed pace

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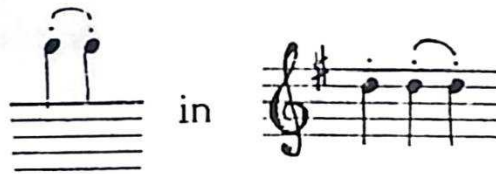
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was ruffled due to this little change in the environment. On coming home on the 4th, we had a hard time returning to the old way of practicing, including fixing what had become sloppy. She recovered the old pace faster than I had anticipated.

Minuet 1: she started it after returning on the 4th, and she more or less learned the notes in three days. The rhythm was a little uneven at the upbow notes in the first measure:



The eighth notes in the following passage tended to be uneven.



* * * * *

*Fix my power
firmly at the tip:
bow won't wobble.
Move on, pony hair,
as my elbow moves.
I won't let you float,
I won't press you down.*



Shin'ichi Suzuki

The intonation as well as the rhythm tended to be insecure in the following:



She was also unable to retain dotted half notes long enough. We tried working on these sections a few times. It seems difficult for her to play such notes as the dotted half notes in Minuet No. 1 and the half note at the end of the G Major scale long enough while keeping the beat.

I have paid attention to the elbow movement so that the elbow would work toward the strings in the tonalization exercise, with the unfortunate result, however, that her tone became pressed.

(Instructor) August 16

End of the summer break. She has made progress. The single point of sympathetic vibrations has improved a little.

At lesson today I focused on "action."

One approach is to make circles with the bow arm while playing upbows, finger 3 on the string (the single point of sympathetic vibrations).

Tonalization exercise: two beats to a note; first swing the vertically held bow right and left about 8 inches, tip fixed and elbow following the bow movement.

G Major scale: keep correct beat at the last half note ♩ .

Bach's Minuet No. 2: to be added.



August 17 — August 22

Although we had practiced in the same way as before so that the summer vacation would not be bumpy, the first lesson after the vacation seemed un-inspired. Kyoko seems to have felt it herself: this week she practiced with motivation. Even if the time spent was the same, I felt that the content differed according to the child's mood at the particular time. When her heart is in it, her tone is full of spirit, conveying liveliness. I wish she could always practice feeling this way.

Of the three daily sessions, I think the first one in the morning is the most fruitful (about one hour). At this point, her concentration lasts half an hour at most; past that time her mind starts to scatter. I let her rest after half an hour, then resume for another half hour. Sometimes the reviewing of the old pieces and the new piece take over one hour, but Kyoko does not yet seem to cope with that length: I feel that she just spends time without being able to really practice. She has started to be active in outdoor play, which makes it hard to have all three sessions during daytime. Recently part of her practice tends to be pushed to after supper.

Minuet No. 2: she plays it with pleasure as if it has become interesting as a piece. However, she cannot yet grasp the feeling of the piece. We worked many times on the triplet and the slurred notes in the following section:



She has not yet mastered them, for sometimes she can smoothly play them but not at other times.

Minuet No. 1: I let her try it with the piano accompaniment. She enjoyed playing, and seemed to keep the rhythm easily.

(Instructor) August 23

Δ *Upbow exercise, finger 3, single point of sympathetic vibrations: improved.*

Tonalization: match the right elbow with the height of the bow. Keep correct tempo in two beats; be even.

G Major: play above the round ends near the bridge of the f-holes. Aim at volume (good contact).

1. *The right elbow has become a little higher than the bow.*

2. *How to achieve good contact (place the bow from above). (The bow arm always works along the periphery with the contact point on the string as the center.)*

Add Bach Minuet No. 3 and Happy Farmer.



August 24 — August 29

Of the two pieces, Minuet No. 3 and Happy Farmer, I thought of giving the one after Kyoko could already play the other. However, I had her work just on Minuet No. 3 on the first day; I tried adding Happy Farmer on the second day so she could work on both pieces. Although I thought she might get confused unless she first learned the first piece, in fact there was no confusion because she more or less learned to finger the Minuet on the first day according to the finger numbers I called out. She learned the notes in two days or so in each piece, but it was difficult to refine them as we wished.

In Minuet No. 3, the recurring eighth note pattern did not go smoothly; it was quite ragged.



Or the second finger on E tended to be too high in the following:



In Happy Farmer, she could not stop skillfully with staccato notes:



Perhaps for this reason, she could not keep the rhythm and feel musical, which prevented her from expressing its light-heartedness. I do think she has grasped the feel of the music in her own childlike way, yet it seems difficult for her to express it.

She used to have to return to the beginning once she made a mistake in the middle of a piece. Recently it has become easier for her to play just that section again and go on.

August 30 — September 5


We have worked on tonalization with attention to the movement of the right elbow. Maybe because the elbow tends to be high, she often sounds as if floating. Although she tried to play the D Major scale carefully with a fair amount of awareness, only the forearm moves.

When she learned the notes of Minuet No. 3 and became used to playing it, the eighth notes and the slurred quarter notes, especially the last of the four, tended to slip, making the rhythm insecure:



I started to play the record of Book 2 in the beginning of the summer vacation. Lately I have been hearing a melody like the Chorus from Judas Macca-baeus when she is having fun at the piano.

(Instructor) September 6

Tonalization: prepare at , then play.

String playing technique (concept): since we are thinking of the vertical direction, wave the bow up and down above the violin, place the bow on the string from above, and play in the same direction without changing the bow balance.

Concept of the bow arm for upbows: think of leaning on the string since you are going in the direction of the periphery. If the elbow is high, it will be the opposite of this, causing the tone to become thin.

A good job on Bach Minuet No. 3 and Happy Farmer. Let's add the Gossec Gavotte.



September 7 — September 12

Study of string playing technique using tonalization: although I tried using various expressions such as "rest it on the string" and "lean on it," Kyoko did not seem to grasp it. So I taught her with my hand on hers, but, since I could not help carry the bow skillfully, I failed to let her comprehend. I just hope that she will experience the feel just once; then

Gavotte: Kyoko learned the notes in two days, but maybe due to problems in bowing technique, she did not reach the point of playing with correct rhythm. Since she seemed unable to correctly handle the slurred sixteenth notes, I first taught her to finger the notes without the slurs, then had her add the slurs. Although she seemed to understand that she was to play four notes in one bow stroke, she ran out of bow after the first three notes, for example, and looked far from being able to use a short bow space for all four notes. She did, after all, learn to play the notes slurred, but it still seems too difficult for her to play them evenly and to keep the rhythm.

The pizzicato notes gave us a hard time, for at the beginning she could not get any sound. Although she came to be able to produce sound while trying a



The earlier period
The better environment
The better teaching method
The more training
The superior instruction.

*(Five Mottos of
Talent Education)*

number of times, there is a confused look to the way she plays them because she cannot swiftly bring the right hand to the right place.

(Instructor) September 13

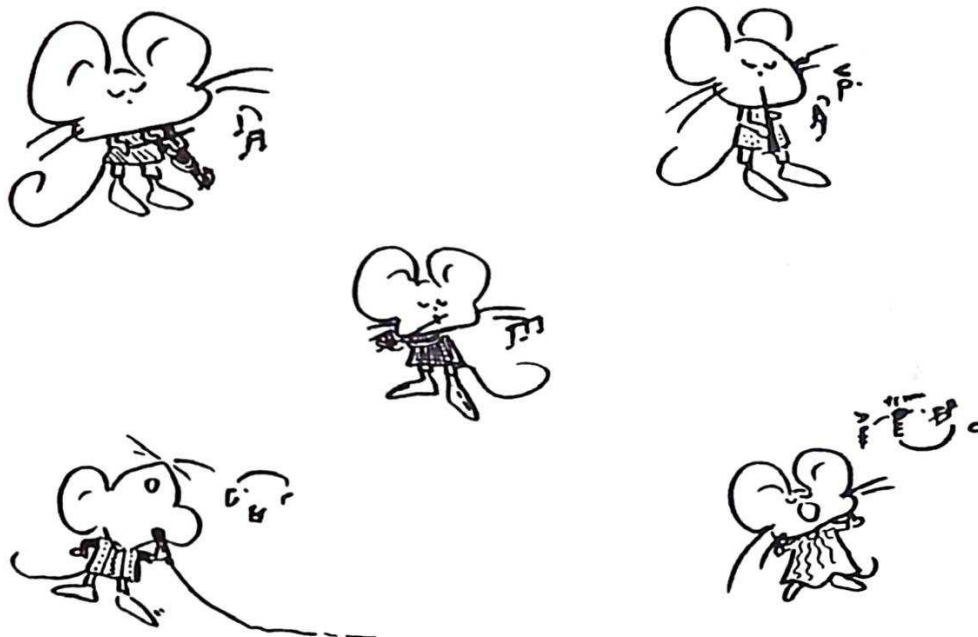
Tonalization: the right elbow has improved; it is good.

G Major: you've practiced well.

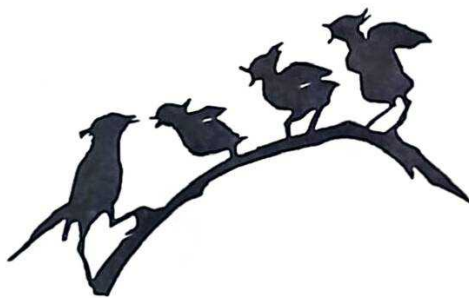
Book 2, Chorus; you learned the Gossec Gavotte, so let's refine it.

Practice about two hours a day, divided into three sections.

Wave the bow up and down. Place it on the string from above. Let's see if Kyoko can do it by herself. Finished Book 1 in 6 months.



Drawing by Sue Iriye



"Man is a child of the environment."

*"Sound breathes life —
Without form it lives."*

*"Strings are mindless
They only sing forth the heart
Of those who ring them out."*

— Shin'ichi Suzuki

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