



Teaching Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Musicians: A Guide for Secondary Choral Music Educators

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Research Motivation

- There is a **disconnect between music education and students with disabilities**, despite existing literature's implications that music is highly beneficial for students in these populations.
- There is **no required training regarding special music education** for pre-service educators.
- There is a **lack of resources available for music educators with Deaf / HoH students**; existing research mainly focuses on music therapy techniques.
- There is **negative inherent bias** regarding students in these populations and their musical aptitude, leading to **inequitable practices that exclude Deaf / HoH students** from participating in music.

Research Questions

1. What special education policies are music educators held accountable for?
2. Why is teaching Deaf / Hard-of-Hearing students relevant?
3. What are the different types of hearing loss and how are they treated?
4. What methodologies and strategies can apply to the choral music classroom?
5. What is the lasting impact of these students' involvement?

Methodology

Meta-Analysis

- **Systematically assessed the results of:**
 - Previous studies conducted on Deaf perceptions of music
 - Existing literature regarding types of hearing loss and treatment plans
 - Literature related to pedagogical deficiencies in the pre-service training of music educators

Qualitative Interviews

- **Conducted 26 interviews** with music educators, music therapists, ASL educational interpreters, HoH musicians, and choral composers
 - Interviews ranged from 10-50 minutes in length
 - Interview questions were written based on previously established research questions
 - Interviews were manually transcribed after their completion

Content Analysis

- **Developed a list of broad categories (22)** based on common themes
 - Selected quotes related to common themes to serve as data, sorting them into the established categories

Reliability Check

- **Created an online survey** using Qualtrics software
 - Used a random name generator to randomly select 5 (22.72%) of the categories to be evaluated
 - Pulled all quotes associated with each selected category and numbered them
 - Used a random number generator to determine which quotes would appear on the survey and their order
- **Sent survey to current CME students**
 - Measured interrater reliability by using the number of correctly matched interview quotes to their respective categories
 - Found the level of agreement for each question to be at least 70%, which matched the acceptability threshold suggested by Madsen and Madsen

Important Terminology

ALD	Assistive Listening Device
ASL	American Sign Language
CME	Choral Music Education
Deaf	Implies identity with Deaf community
HoH	Hard-of-Hearing (not Deaf)
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individualized Education Plan
UDL	Universal Design for Learning

Results

1. There is **not a lack in the understanding of policies**, but rather **pedagogical deficiencies** that leave music educators unprepared to teach Deaf / HoH students. Additionally, music educators who had a Deaf / HoH student experienced a **drastic change in perception** of their musical capabilities after witnessing their success.
2. Many **ALDs have Bluetooth capabilities**, allowing students to utilize a **wireless microphone system as an accommodation** in the classroom. HoH musicians also reported the importance of **hearing protection**.
3. Having a Deaf / HoH student in the classroom presents unique opportunities regarding the use of **ASL in performance, musical mentorship among peer leaders**, and the **utilization of school resources**, such as school audiologists and educational interpreters.
4. Appropriate methods include **one-on-one conversations**, adjustments in **seating arrangements**, consideration of **physical spaces**, incorporation of **visual aids and kinesthetic movements**, the use of **percussion**, emphasis of **music theory and history**, modification of **speech**, and the prioritization of **classroom culture**.
5. Music promotes **community, confidence, self-identity**, a sense of **purpose**, and academic **skill-building**. When each subject was asked, "what does music mean to you?" **not a single person mentioned sound**.