ABSTRACT

To access towards the effectiveness of higher order thinking skills towards children’s sight-reading ability improvement individually, this study used qualitative observations and a qualitative analysis of sight-reading ability improvement, upon four young piano beginners, with age, 7, 8, 9, and 10. The four subjects in this study were selected based on their distinct behaviors and distinct sight-reading abilities.

All students participate in seventh week of sight-reading lessons, which the first week was a pretest of sight-reading before proceeding towards the first lesson in the second week, and the seventh week was a posttest of sight-reading after a period of five-week sight-reading lessons associated with higher order thinking skills. This qualitative case study was determined to observe the following issues through the sight-reading tests and lessons: a) students’ commitment during the lessons, and manipulation of the lesson materials, b) role of higher order thinking skills and thinking techniques of the sight-reading lesson contents, c) the contribution of higher order thinking skills towards the students’ sight-reading experience, and d) comparison of students’ sight-reading improvement before and after the lesson period.

Researcher chose to conduct the research in case study form due to the importance of reveal the bits and details of how thinking skills play role in the whole process of teaching and learning, and how students’ gain benefits towards their sight-reading ability. The data collection was based upon the observation towards the video recording of each session, of each four students, focusing upon each subjects sight-reading performance and behavioral performance during their participation in the lessons.
ABSTRAK

Kajian ini merupakan kajian kualitatif, dengan memerhati secara teliti terhadap keberkesana kemahiran berfikir secara mendalam terhadap keupayaan membaca notasi muzik (*sight-reading*) pada kanak-kanak secara individual, dengan umur 7, 8, 9, dan 10. Keempat-empat kanak-kanak dalam kajian ini merupakan pelajar piano pada tahap permulaan. Pengkaji memilih empat kanak-kanak tersebut sebagai subjek untuk permerhatian berdasarkan dengan perbezaan keupayaan membaca notasi mereka, dan juga perbezaan tingkah laku mereka secara individu.

Pelajar-pelajar piano tersebut menghadiri tujuh sesi pembelajaran keupayaan membaca notasi muzik dalam tujuh minggu, dengan ujian keupayaan membaca notasi mereka pada sesi pertama sebelum menghadiri sesi pembelajaran pada minggu kedua, dan sekali lagi dengan ujian keupayaan membaca notasi pada minggu ketujuh, setelah mereka selesai menghadiri lima sesi pembelajaran membaca notasi muzik yang disesuaikan dengan elemen kemahiran befikir. Melalui ujian dan sesi pembelajaran tersebut, kajian kualitatif ini berazam untuk memerhatikan: a) kebolehan pelajar memberi kerjasama dan perhatian dalam pembelajaran, dan kebolehan mereka untuk memanipulasikan bahan bahan pembelajaran, b) peranan kemahiran berfikir secara mendalam dan teknik kemahiran berfikir untuk memupuk kemajuan keupayaan membaca notasi bagi pelajar-pelajar tersebut, c) sumbangan kemahiran berfikir secara mendalam terhadap pengalaman keupayaan membaca notasi pelajar-pelajar tersebut, dan d) menandingkan kemajuan keupayaan membaca notasi pelajar-pelajar tersebut sebelum dan selepas sesi pembelajaran.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation is a product of joint efforts of many individuals that I wish to express my sincere gratefulness to each of them.

Firstly, I tremendously thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Pan Kok Chang, who are the motivation for this work. Throughout the whole journey, he guided me, leading me and encouraging me each step of the way towards the success of this production. Thank you for the effort and time spent on directing me towards the correct pathway of this production.

Secondly, I sincerely thanks to my second reader of this research, Dr. Cheong Ku Wing, who were guiding me throughout the refinement of the contents of my dissertation. Thank you so much for the time spent and your great patience on helping me to complete this dissertation.

Thirdly, a sincerely thanks to all music school principals, who were allowing me to approach the participants of this research, welcoming me to visit their schools, and contributed a lot to the arrangements of interviews and lessons. Not forgetting my participants in this research, piano teachers of the participants who are willing to guide me throughout the whole research period. Thank you for all your efforts and willingness to assist me. I am so grateful to meet you all!

Fourthly, I express my gratitude towards another two piano teacher, Ryu Tan, and Michelle Lee, who were willing to participate into the revision of my data and analysis. Also, I express my sincere appreciation towards another friend, Yeoh Hui Ching, who
was willing to guide me upon my thesis writing. I appreciate all your fully support of this production, even accepting my request of help despite your busy working schedules!

Last but not least, without the patience, encouragement, and care of my family members, and my lovely friends, I could not have finished this project with great courage and confidence. Thank you so much to all of you!
DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to all my lovely family members: my parents, and my siblings who supported me throughout the moment of completing this thesis. Without all your cares and loves, I might not able to complete this product as smoothly. All your guidance was much appreciated. Also, I sincerely dedicated this dissertation to Ryu Tan, as you had accompanying me for searching information and sources, and the whole participation of the fieldwork of this product. Your patience towards my long research period was much appreciated too.