



IMPROVING THE METHODOLOGY FOR TEACHING INTERVALS AND CHORDS

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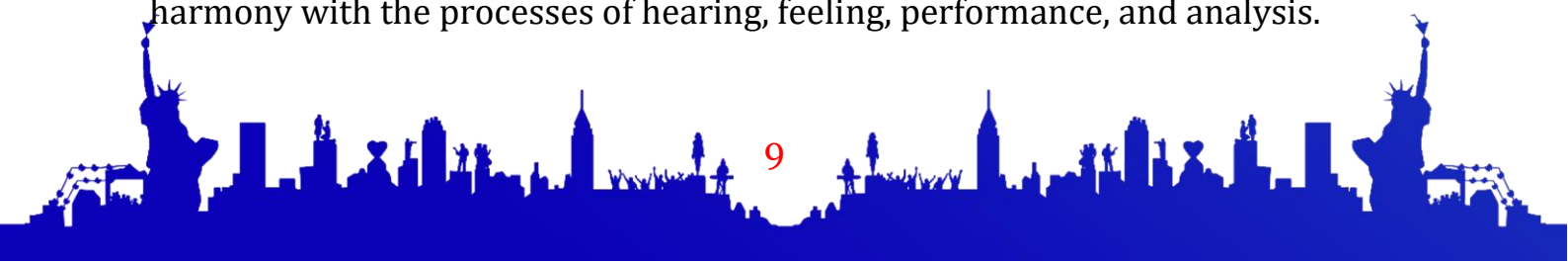
Abstract: This article examines the issues of improving the methodology for teaching intervals and chords within the disciplines of music theory. The concepts of interval and chord serve as an important theoretical and practical basis for the formation of musical literacy, auditory culture, harmonic thinking, and performance competencies. The article analyzes the possibilities of using visual aids, listening exercises, interactive tasks, analysis of musical examples, performance practice, and modern pedagogical technologies in teaching these topics.

Keywords: interval, chord, music theory, solfeggio, harmony, listening skills, musical literacy, musical analysis, performance practice, harmonic thinking.

Introduction

In the process of music education, the study of intervals and chords is one of the areas of special methodological importance. This is because intervals and chords are the most important basic concepts of music theory, through which a student understands the relationship between sounds, the internal structure of melody, harmonic harmony, and the patterns of musical thought development. Any melody, song, instrumental work, or polyphonic composition is based on specific interval relationships and chord structures. Therefore, the deep mastery of intervals and chords is an important condition for the formation of musical literacy, listening culture, performance skills, and creative thinking.

While the concept of interval expresses the distance of pitch between two sounds, an chord is formed by the combination of several sounds in a specific order. At first glance, these concepts seem theoretically simple, but understanding them practically, distinguishing them by hearing, identifying them in sheet music, and applying them in the performance process requires consistent practice, musical memory, auditory sensitivity, and analytical thinking from the student. In particular, teaching intervals and chords only through definitions, tables, or rules does not yield the expected results. This is because music theory, as a science directly related to sound phenomena, yields effective results only when taught in harmony with the processes of hearing, feeling, performance, and analysis.



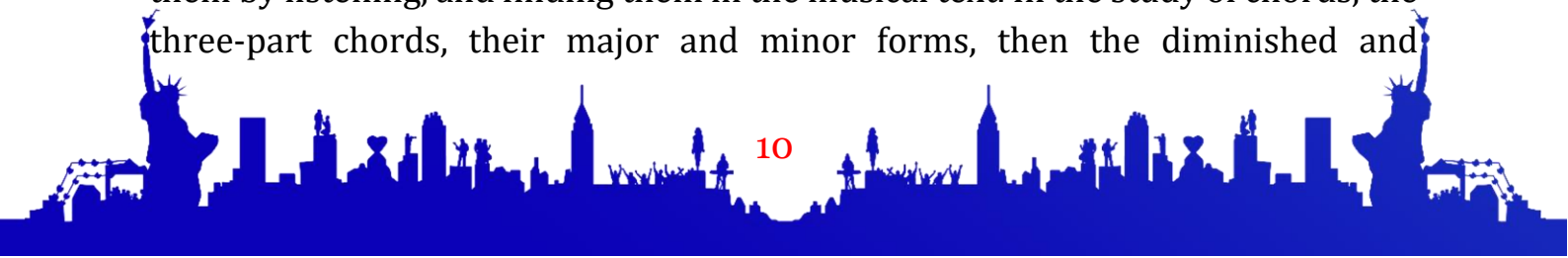


In the traditional educational process, intervals and chords are often taught based on theoretical explanations, examples of musical notation, and written exercises. Although such an approach is necessary to a certain extent, it does not always fully provide students with the opportunity to understand musical concepts through a live listening experience. For example, a student may theoretically know the structure of the major third and minor third, but if they cannot distinguish them by hearing or apply them in practical performance, it cannot be said that the knowledge is fully formed. Similarly, knowledge of the structure of major and minor chords must be accompanied by an understanding of their artistic and expressive properties. Consequently, when teaching intervals and chords, theory, listening, performance, and analysis should be considered as a unified methodological system.

Today, one of the main tasks facing music education is not to ensure students remember ready-made knowledge, but to achieve its independent understanding, application, and application in creative activity. This requires improving the methodology for teaching intervals and chords based on modern pedagogical approaches. The use of interactive exercises, listening dictations, cluster and comparison methods, analysis of musical examples, performance-related tasks, electronic programs, a virtual piano, and audio-visual aids contributes to a deeper mastery of the topic. In such a methodological approach, the student participates not as a passive listener, but as an active performer, analyst, and researcher.

In the process of teaching intervals and chords, visual and auditory instruction are of particular importance. Because the student should feel the distance between sounds not only in writing, but also through hearing. For example, listening to intervals such as a pure quart, a pure quinta, a minor second, or a major sextet through various musical examples, connecting them with familiar melodies, singing by voice, and performing on an instrument makes the mastery process effective. When teaching chords, it is advisable to explain their structure, rotations, function in the key, emotional impact, and function in the musical work together. This approach develops the harmonious thinking of the student.

Another methodologically important issue is adherence to the principle of stages in teaching intervals and chords. Initially, simple sound relationships, basic intervals, and their qualitative and quantitative aspects are studied. At the next stage, tasks are given such as constructing intervals, rotating them, identifying them by listening, and finding them in the musical text. In the study of chords, the three-part chords, their major and minor forms, then the diminished and





augmented chords, and then the septachords and their turns are studied sequentially. Such a sequence helps to organize the student's knowledge and make it easier to understand complex harmonic concepts.

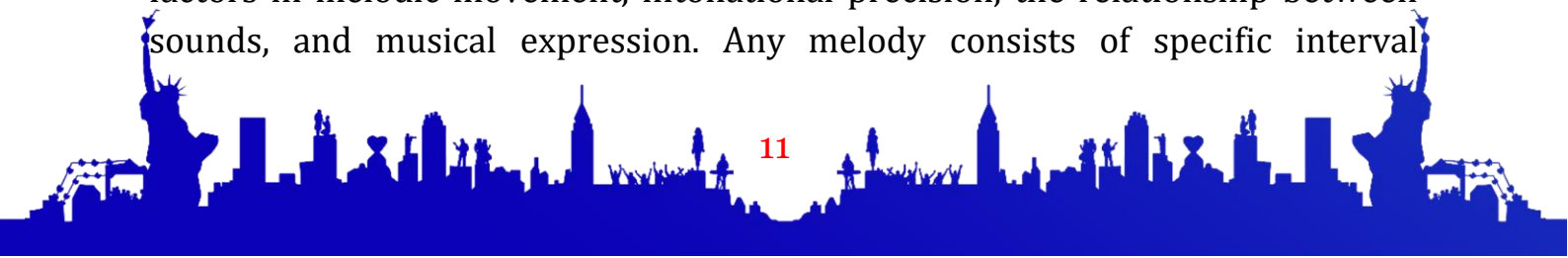
An individual approach also plays an important role in improving the methodology of teaching intervals and chords. Students engaged in music do not have the same level of hearing, theoretical preparation, performance experience, and perception. Some learners may be faster at notation, while others may be more active in listening exercises. Therefore, it is necessary for the teacher to give differentiated assignments taking into account the capabilities of each student and to organize additional exercises on topics that present difficulties. Electronic educational resources and interactive platforms can become an effective auxiliary tool in this process.

The connection with practical performance in teaching intervals and chords is also one of the important methodological conditions. If the student can perform the theoretical concept they are studying on their own instrument or voice, the knowledge will be further strengthened. For example, composing major and minor chords on the piano, finding interval relationships on the dutar or rubab, and performing intonationally pure intervals in singing transform theoretical knowledge into practical skills. This serves to ensure one of the main goals of musical education—the unity of theory and practice.

Theoretical basis

Improving the methodology for teaching intervals and chords primarily relies on the semantic essence of music theory, pedagogical laws, and the psychological characteristics of the musical perception process. Since every theoretical concept in music education is directly related to the phenomenon of sound, it is important to master it not only as a written rule or definition, but also by listening, feeling, performing, and analyzing it. In this regard, the concepts of interval and chord serve as an important theoretical and methodological basis for the formation of the student's musical thinking, auditory abilities, harmonic imagination, and performance skills as the main base units of music theory.

In music theory, an interval denotes the interval of pitch between two sounds. It differs in quantity and quality: names such as prima, secunda, tertia, quart, quinta, sexta, septima, and octave express the quantitative side of the interval, while signs such as pure, major, minor, augmented, and diminished indicate its qualitative characteristics. The concept of interval is one of the key factors in melodic movement, intonational precision, the relationship between sounds, and musical expression. Any melody consists of specific interval





relationships. Therefore, studying the interval allows the student to understand the musical text, perform the melody correctly, identify it by hearing, and understand the direction of musical thought.

A chord is formed by the combination of three or more sounds in a specific order. Chords are the fundamental units of harmonic thinking that create relationships of support, movement, tension, and resolution in a musical work. The three-part chords, their major, minor, diminished, and augmented types, as well as the seven chords and their turns, form the fundamental theoretical foundation of harmony science. Mastering chords thoroughly allows the reader not only to understand the musical text but also to understand the internal structure, tonal characteristics, and artistic content of the musical piece.

When studying the theoretical foundations of intervals and chords, it is necessary to consider their interdependence. Chords are based on specific interval relationships. For example, major and minor three-part chords are formed through tertiary intervals; a septachord is formed by adding a septima interval to a three-part chord. Therefore, it is difficult for a student who does not have a deep understanding of the interval to fully understand the structure of the chord. Therefore, in the process of teaching, first of all, interval relations, and then their function in the composition of chords should be consistently and gradually covered.

Theoretically, the teaching of intervals and chords is based on the principle of systematicity in music education. Systematicity means that knowledge must be presented in an orderly, logical sequence and in close connection with each other. Initially, knowledge about sound, sound series, pitch, mode, and tonality is formed. At the next stage, the concept of the interval, its structure, quality, rotation, and sound are studied. This is followed by an explanation of chords, their structure, functions, rotations, and their role in harmonic movement. Such a methodological sequence strengthens students' knowledge and helps them understand complex theoretical concepts step-by-step.

The pedagogical basis of this topic is also directly related to the principle of conscious and active acquisition of didactics. The student must not only memorize the interval or chord but also understand how it is structured, how it sounds, what musical function it performs, and how it is used in practical performance. For conscious assimilation, the teacher must combine theoretical information with musical examples, listening exercises, comparison, analysis, and performance tasks. Active mastery is manifested in the student's direct involvement in the topic, independent search, singing, writing, playing, and analytical activity.





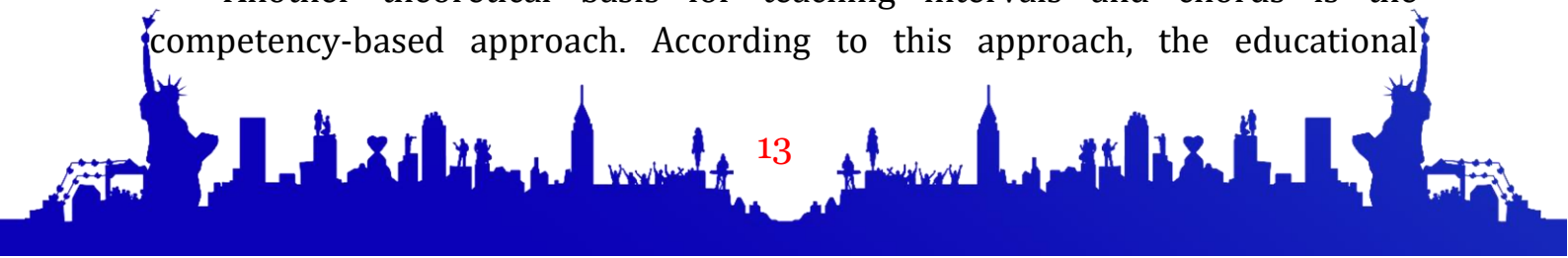
The principle of visual aids in teaching intervals and chords is also one of the important theoretical and methodological foundations. Although music is an art of sound, musical notation, diagrams, keyboard images, tables, color notation, and audio and video materials are of great importance in its study. For example, when the appearance of an interval in musical notation, the distance on the keyboard, and the form of hearing are shown together, the reader perceives the concept as a whole. When teaching chords, their main appearance, rotations, staging, and function in the key-tonic are conveyed through visual aids, transforming theoretical knowledge into practical understanding.

Musical auditory theory is also an important foundation for teaching intervals and chords. Hearing is a central component of music education, related to the perception of pitch, timbre, rhythm, mode, interval, and harmonic harmony. Listening to the interval, distinguishing the type of chord, sensing the harmonic sequence develops the inner hearing of the student. Internal hearing allows for the silent visualization of the musical text, the anticipation of musical thought, and the achievement of intonational clarity during performance. Therefore, theoretical instruction must be closely linked to solfeggio exercises.

From a psychological perspective, the mastery of intervals and chords is linked to the processes of perception, memory, attention, imagination, and thinking. When the student hears an interval, they compare it with a previous auditory experience, compare it with sound images in their memory, and associate it with a specific name. When perceiving chords, it is required to hear the harmony of several sounds at the same time, determine their quality, and feel their emotional impact. This process is not a simple auditory, but a complex musical-cognitive activity. Therefore, it is necessary to use methods of repetition, comparison, association, stages, and reinforcement in teaching.

Methodologically, analytical and synthetic approaches are used together in teaching intervals and chords. In the analytical approach, the student divides the musical material into parts: determines the sounds that make up the interval, the steps in the chord, and their quality and function. In the synthetic approach, individual sounds, intervals, and chords are perceived as a single musical image. For example, the student perceives a major chord not only as a "sum of a major third and a minor third," but also as a harmonic unit with a bright, stable, and basic tonality. The combination of these two approaches connects theoretical knowledge with artistic perception.

Another theoretical basis for teaching intervals and chords is the competency-based approach. According to this approach, the educational





outcome is evaluated not only by the volume of knowledge but also by the student's ability to apply this knowledge in practical situations. Competence in intervals and chords is manifested through the student's ability to theoretically define them, identify them in sheet music, distinguish them by hearing, sing them aloud, perform them on an instrument, find them in a musical work, and apply them in creative tasks. Therefore, the improvement of the methodology should be aimed at the comprehensive development of these skills.

The constructivist approach also plays an important role in modern educational theory. According to this approach, the student does not receive knowledge in a ready-made state, but builds it through personal experience, activity, and research. This approach is very effective when studying intervals and chords. For example, if a student determines the characteristics of an interval by comparing different sounds instead of memorizing a ready-made rule, independently constructs chords, and analyzes the difference in their sound, knowledge is formed more firmly and consciously. Therefore, problem-based questions, creative tasks, group analysis, and independent research methods are of great importance in this topic.

An integrative approach to teaching intervals and chords is also necessary. This is because these concepts are directly related to music theory, solfeggio, harmony, polyphony, musical analysis, performance, and composition. For example, intervals are manifested in solfeggio through listening and writing, in harmony through the system of chords, in performance through intonational clarity, and in musical analysis through the understanding of the structure of the work. Therefore, it is advisable to teach them within the general system of music education as a whole, rather than as a separate, isolated topic.

Among the theoretical foundations, the use of national musical materials is of particular importance. Uzbek folk melodies and songs, interval relationships in maqom samples, rhythmic features, and harmonic interpretations create a close and understandable musical environment for students. Interpreting the concepts of intervals through intonational turns, seconds, fourths, fifths, and tones characteristic of the mode found in examples of national music enriches the student's musical perception. At the same time, the comparison of samples from European classical music, contemporary works, and folk music helps to understand the expressive function of intervals and chords in various musical styles.

The theory of functional harmony is one of the primary methodological pillars in chord training. Functions such as the tonic, subdominant, and dominant





represent the stability, preparation, and resolution relationships of the musical movement. The student must understand the chord not merely as a collection of sounds, but as a unit performing a specific function within the musical process. For example, the resolution of the dominant seventh chord to the tonic creates a sense of harmonic tension and closure. Teaching such theoretical concepts in connection with listening, performance, and analysis forms harmonious thinking.

The theoretical and pedagogical possibilities of information and communication technologies are also taken into account when improving the methodology for teaching intervals and chords. Electronic sheet music programs, virtual keyboards, audio analysis applications, interactive tests, and online platforms allow the student to practice the topic independently, see mistakes, and learn again. For example, through a virtual piano, the student can see and hear the interval distance, compose chords in different keys, and test their rotations in practice. This reinforces theoretical knowledge with practical activity.

From the perspective of assessment theory, when teaching intervals and chords, it is important to determine not only the final result but also the dynamics of the student's development. Formative assessment, i.e., regular feedback during the learning process, identification and correction of errors, is particularly effective in this topic. If a student misidentifies an interval, the reason for the error should be immediately pointed out, compared with similar intervals, and rehearsed. Errors in structure, hearing, or functional analysis regarding chords must also be eliminated individually.

Furthermore, the theoretical foundations of teaching methodology are linked to the motivational aspects of education. Intervals and chords should be presented to students not as dry theoretical rules, but as a means of understanding real musical works, improving performance quality, and expanding creative possibilities. If the teacher can demonstrate the practical significance of each theoretical concept, the student's interest in the topic will increase. For example, identifying an interval turn in a popular melody or song, or analyzing the chord sequence in a familiar piece, encourages the reader to actively study.

Overall, the theoretical foundations of the methodology for teaching intervals and chords are based on the unity of music theory, didactics, psychology, musical listening, the competence-based approach, integrative education, and modern technologies. These foundations serve to develop students' skills not only in memorizing intervals and chords but also in listening, understanding, analyzing, performing, and creatively applying them. Therefore, improving the





teaching methodology of this topic is an important condition for harmonizing the theoretical and practical aspects of music education, developing students' musical thinking, and strengthening their professional competence.

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