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David Sarkisyan

HOW TO AVOID MISTAKES AND ACHIEVE A HIGH LEVEL IN THE STUDENT'S PLAYING TECHNIC AND PERFORMING WHEN TEACHING THE VIOLA

– Switching the violin to the viola

BACHELOR'S THESIS | ABSTRACT

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HOW TO AVOID MISTAKES AND ACHIEVE A HIGH LEVEL IN THE STUDENT'S PLAYING TECHNIC AND PERFORMING WHEN TEACHING THE VIOLA

- Switching the violin to the viola

This thesis consists of two parts. The artistic part is the Romantic Concert at the Crichton Hall in Turku the 11th of December 2019. The link to the concert is in the appendix of this thesis.

In the written part of the thesis, the pedagogical methods of the viola teaching and the switching the violin to the viola is studied.

Pedagogical and history books, as well as the author's own experience have been used as a research method.

After studying various teaching methods, the author concludes a result from them that it is worth a violist to start learning the instrument by first playing the violin and later switching to the viola.

In the future, the author will be able to use and apply pedagogical methods he has studied during the research in this thesis while acting as a music pedagogue.

KEYWORDS:

music pedagogue, viola pedagogue, viola teacher, viola student

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David Sarkisyan

MITEN VÄLTÄÄ VIRHEITÄ JA SAAVUTTA KORKEA TASO OPIKELIJAN SOITTOTEKNIKASSA JA ESIINTYMISESSÄ OPETETTAESSA ALTTIOVIULUA?

- Viulun vaihtaminen alttoviuluun

Tämä tutkielma koostuu kahdesta osasta. Taiteellinen osa on Romanttinen konsertti Turun Crichton-salissa 11.12.2019. Linkki siihen on tämän opinnäytetyön liitteenä.

Opinnäytetyön kirjallisessa osassa tutkitaan alttoviulun opetuksen pedagogisia menetelmiä ja viulun vaihtamista alttoviuluun.

Tutkimusmenetelmänä on käytetty pedagogisia ja historiankirjoja sekä kirjoittajan omaa kokemusta.

Erilaisia opetusmenetelmiä tutkittuaan kirjoittaja tekee niiden perusteella päätelmän, että viulistin kannattaa aloittaa soittimen opettelu soittamalla ensin viulua ja siirtyä myöhemmin alttoviuluun.

Tulevaisuudessa kirjoittaja pystyy käyttämään ja soveltamaan opinnäytetyön aikana tutkimaan pedagogisia menetelmiä toimiessaan musiikkipedagogina.

ASIASANAT:

musiikkipedagogi, alttoviulupedagogi, alttoviulunsoiton opettaja, alttoviulunsoiton opiskelija

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Appendix 2. The Program of the Thesis Concert

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Detache	Detaché is a technique where each note is played with a separate movement of the bowe.
Fingerboard	is a thin, long strip of wood, that is attached to the front of the neck of an instrument. The strings run over the fingerboard.
Vibarto	Vibrato is a slight fluctuation in pitch that's used to create a warmth or richness of tone. On the violin, it is a left hand technique; the effect is produced by rocking the finger from the wrist or arm. (Masterclass, music violin 101)
Bow	is a stretched stick to which a rosin-coated hair is attached.
Frog	is the end part of a string instrument's bow, which contains the mechanism responsible for tensioning and holding the hair of the bow.
Tip	is the upper part of bow.
Shoulder rest	is an accessory that can be found on violins and violas. Usually, the shoulder rest attaches to the edge of the back of the violin. The purpose of a shoulder rest is to provide a more comfortable position when playing by adding shoulder height and preventing the instrument from slipping.

1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis consists of two parts. The emphasis of thesis lies on the artistic part, which was the Romantic Concert at the Crichton Hall in Turku the 11th of December 2019.

The performed music pieces were: F.Schubert – Sonata Arpeggione, N.Rota – Intermezzo, M.Glinka – Viola Sonata.

In my written part of the thesis I will find out the pedagogical methods of the viola teaching and switching the violin to the viola.

Graduating from university in Moscow, I began to realise that I couldn't cope with the programme I was playing or it was costing me a huge effort to finish the piece with good quality. I began to analyse different aspects of my playing. I concluded that I had too many squeezes in my hands, so I had to look for the cause of the squeezes and fix the mistakes in my hands position. Despite the fact that I studied with a famous viola player and student of the founder of the Russian viola school, Igor Boguslavsky, he could not help me to find with finding my squeezes. After enrolling in Finland, the program became more complicated and it became even harder for me to play. I continued to experiment with hands staging, with muscle relaxation, I started reading books about violin and viola. The main goal of my thesis is to tell and explore ways of improving my own technical playing skills, such as the correct staging of hands. I want also to find out the differences of playing the violin and viola from the technical points of view. Also, I want to find out if it is better first to practice the violin with much more complex repertoire in order to learn all sorts of techniques, and then apply them to the viola playing.

2 HISTORY OVERVIEW

Despite the known fact that the viola is the ancestor of string instruments, the playing of the violin and cello evolved more actively than the viola. The viola was at the same time the first string instrument attached to the orchestra in the second half of the 16th century. It served as a connecting bridge between the passing viola era of the Renaissance period and the rising era of the violin. (Riley 1980,1-77) Because the violin is equipped with a bright sound that allows for virtuosic performance, it won the viola in a mutual historical competition between string instruments. The viola remains mildly more modest in its timbre.

The viola's mission has been paradoxical. On the other hand, the viola has played only a minor role in music making, but at the same time, it was irreplaceable. No orchestra - be it a chamber orchestra or ensembles - could do without a viola. (Riley 1980,1-133)

However, no musical group has given the viola an important lead role, except not numerous concert pieces of the 18th century. As recently as the 19th century, interest in the viola has been pretty much the same, even if the virtuosity cult began to flourish. The viola's parties in the orchestra became more complicated. The situation did not change, even if Paganini performed with his brilliant work "Sonata for Grand Viola" written especially for viola and orchestra. (Riley 1980,134-156) It can be explained by the fact that neither the public nor the majority of musicians were prepared to recognize the equal rights of viola and violin.

Another reason for the viola's stay on the side is that the viola is an instrument that cannot produce a perfect acoustic sound, even if the violin and the viola do not differ much from each other of their size. Despite the aforementioned facts, both instruments are very similar in design. Yet they sound different, especially for the two bottom strings. The viola's timbre is richer and deeper than violin's. No other string instrument has such a rare fascinating C-string, so captivating and rich.

Today, interest in the viola has grown. The viola has taken a more modern position among other string instruments. Today, concertos, sonatas etc in lot of different music styles are composed for the viola. The repertoire for the viola have become more challenging in general. Now the viola is appreciated and it is considered a musical instrument with great possibilities. The viola attracted interest among the famous composers such as B. Bartok, D. Milhaud, I. Stravinsky, G. Enescu, P. Hindemith, B.

Britten, Y. Bowen, W. Walton, A. Schnittke, D. Shostakovich and so on, who created brilliant masterpieces for the viola. Now solo viola performances are flourishing strongly. V. Borisovsky, founder of the Soviet viola school, L. Tertis, founder of the English viola school, a German composer and violinist P. Hindemith, and W. Primrose, a Scotland/USA violinist, have contributed significantly to the adoption of the viola as a solo instrument. (Riley 1980, 241-305)

3 TEACHING OF THE VIOLA PLAYING

There are many problems both in teaching method and instrumentation. Matters of primary education of young viola player are especially acute. This steps of the viola player development greatly from the primary steps of teaching any other musical instrument. The differences lies in the necessity of building up basic viola techniques on the bases of violin abc teaching. The above-mentioned V.Borisovsky considered such method “expedient and more over the only possible alternative”...(Jozefowicz 1977). This statement is approved by the fact that most of the famous viola players started their artistic career precisely that way.

3.1 Special features of viola playing

There are many problems with both the teaching methods and instrumentation of viola playing. Things related to the basic training of the young viola players are particularly acute for young viola players. The methods of initial teaching in viola playing differ greatly from the initial teaching of any other instrument. The differences lies in the necessity of building up basic viola techniques on the bases of violin basic teaching. The aforementioned V. Borisovsky considered such a method “the appropriate and only possible alternative” (Stoklitskaya 1984). This opinion was generally accepted; most of the famous viola players began their artistic careers just that way.

A key factor in viola pedagogy is the age of the pupil when the instrument is changed from violin to viola. V. Jozefowicz wrote in his book dedicated to Borisovsky: The general age of switching from violin playing to viola playing is between at the age of 14 and 16, when the hand structure and the size of the person have taken shape. There is no upper age limit, but the need to get to know the viola repertoire and the peculiarities of the skills associated with the instrument require a change and timeliness of the instrument as early as possible. (Jozefowicz 1977)

The problem of viola teaching is primarily related to educational and pedagogical repertoire. Violinists have a large variety of educational material. There is a clear system of intensive knowledge accumulation from the very start of the producing the musical sounds or from the first bow movement to mastering all the main techniques. Unfortunately there is nothing like that in viola teaching. We can only talk about

fundamental B. Campagnol etudes, as well as the rather complex and very useful etudes of F.Hoffmeister, J.Palaszko and M.Terian, and some anthologies. Unfortunately, the current viola teachers have nothing more available.

If we compare both the pedagogical and concert repertoire of the viola, we can see that the situation is quite the same. There are no concertos and sonatas suitable for training purposes that viola teachers could use as adequate material for teaching. Concertos written by composers such as G. Telemann, J.C. Bach, G. Handel and others cannot be suggested as educational material. It is recommended that viola students should first learn the works of C. Beriot, G.B. Viotti, A. Vieuxtemps, etc. on violin, before starting to learn how to interpret the works I have previously listed. There is also a real gap in the compositions for the viola of the 19th century. The composers did not pay attention enough to the viola works. The viola would have deserved them. The composers skipped the viola in their musical composition work. Consequently, current viola players suffer from the absence of romantic music of that time for the viola. A beginner cannot credibly decipher such masterpieces written for the viola that were made by the composers like A.Honegger, P.Hindemith, B.Bartok, among others composed. Those works have a real scent of romanticism that the fledgling violist is incapable of reaching because he has yet to acquire the skills needed to play romantic music.

3.2 First steps in teaching the viola

The pedagogical aspect of teaching beginners in viola playing can be divided into two phases. The first step is learning how to play the violin. It would be incorrect if a teacher who gives classes to a young violinist try to anticipate the student's viola views and try to find specific teaching methods that could allow a violin pupil to come a viola player. That would be completely wrong, because a teacher should not use different methods in his work with a future violin or viola players. These teaching methods are not much different — if at all.

3.3 Switching the violin to the viola

The second step in viola playing instruction is the difficulty when switching a pupil who started with violin playing to become a viola player. The situation is compounded by the fact that many of the viola players have not succeeded as violinists in the beginning

because they have had serious disadvantages at the hands, they have lacked motor hand movement freedom, have had poor coordination in their playing technique or other problems in the field of music etc.

So it is a very important problem to implement continuity while learning to play the viola. That's why not only skills in playing the violin should be preserved but new basic elements in mastering both the violin and the viola should be developed. Before we come to the study of the viola pedagogical problems we must consider the matter of the instrument size which influences greatly all kinds of techniques. Violas are different in sizes: small 370-400mm, medium 400-430mm, and large 430-470mm. Small violas are very rare in concert practice, such violas usually don't have deep volume tone. In such cases larger sizes are preferable. As far as pedagogical sphere is concerned they are very useful in adopting to full-size instrument. But we must bear in mind that each rule has its exceptions. So sometimes very useful to start with a full size instrument, that is with a large one.

It is very important to implement the continuity of teaching when teaching how to play the viola. Therefore, not only the skills learned in violin playing should be maintained but at the same time also the new basic elements of mastering both the violin and viola should be adopted and taught. Before we handle the research on viola's pedagogical problems, we need to take into account the issue of the size of violas, which greatly affects the playing technique.

Violas vary in size so that small instruments are 370-400 mm in size, 400-430 mm medium, and large ones 430-470 mm. Small violas are very rare in concert practice. They don't have deep timbre. In such cases, larger viola sizes are preferred. In a pedagogical sense, small violas are very useful before a full-size viola can be used. Still, we must keep in mind that every rule has its exceptions. So sometimes it is also very useful to start with a full-size viola.

Sometimes when a young violinist lags behind his group-mates it irritates him and it would not be the right way out to switch him to viola in this situation, using the latter as an intermediate too. The task of a teacher is to diminish these negative feelings. Everything that is connected with the failure in learning the violin should be excluded. Further if everything goes right it is possible to come back to learning instructive material in violin studying.

I take, for example, the situation where a young violinist swings his feet behind his group mates. This situation irritates him/her. In this case, it would not be right for the teacher to

change the violin to the viola. The job of the instrument teacher is to reduce these negative feelings. Anything related to failure when learning the violin playing should be ruled out. Further if everything goes right it is possible to come back to learning instructive material in violin studying.

In the history of viola playing, the main questions have concerned which is the more appropriate option, using a medium or large viola. A large viola has significant timbre advantages over a medium-sized viola. V. Borisovski was a passionate and determined admirer of large violas (500 mm), unlike his European counterparts, who preferred to play on 430 mm and smaller violas (Stoklitskaya 1984, Riley 1980, 241-305). However, the advantages of large instruments outweigh the disadvantages of playing them. In 1960, an international conference in Rome decided on the development of a standard viola. It was also noted that a viola of "at least 420 mm" size is the most preferable.

At a time when student moves from violin to viola, the basic principle of unity of artistic and technical development of the performer should not be missed. The viola player's work should not be reduced to correcting errors in the violin positions and adapting to a new instrument. The development of the Viola playing technique must be combined with an understanding about the specific expressive interpretive possibilities of the viola. In the teaching of the viola playing, the teacher must focus on the main issues, identify and develop the tendency of the playing student to the specific melodic intonation of the viola.

The process of studying a novice viola player must be geared towards the history of the viola. V. Borisovsky emphasised that "for those studying the viola as a solo instrument, it is essential to know the history of its outdoor form, the development of artistic performances, and the literary material devoted to the viola" (Stoklitskaya 1984). It is also important to cultivate a creative attitude when mastering the basics of the viola.

4 TECHNICAL ASPECTS IN TEACHING THE VIOLA

Let us consider the playing technical components of the viola. Due to the higher tension of the viola's strings (compared with the violin), the more energetic pressure of the bow over the strings is necessary when playing. According to B. Palshkov's data, the pressure required to play the strings gradually increases in the violin 55-305 g, from E- to G-string and respectively in the viola 240-500 g, from A-string to C-string (Ponyatovsky 1979, 25-43). Another peculiarity of viola playing is the wider scale length and the need for the fingers to be placed wider on the fingerboard. This inevitably puts more strain on the ligaments between the fingers, as well as the muscles of the arm and forearm. Because of these peculiarities, in playing the viola, the difficulties involved in acquiring and maintaining the freedom of the muscles and the movements are significantly increased. Using the weight of the arm of both hands more intensively could be a possible way to solve this problem.

4.1 The playing positions of the viola player

The viola player's playing position has three components:

1. The general playing position of the body
2. The playing position of the left hand (intonation)
3. The playing position of the right hand (sound production)

The overall playing position often includes only comfortable, relaxed leg posture, the whole body, the casual posture of the neck muscles, and the natural position of the shoulder. However, from a holistic point of view, it is also correct to include into the general playing position the skills of the violist's left and right hand.

The formation and development of such staging skills in the transitional period of viola studies is based on the weight principle of general violin staging organisation, which is the continuity of violist training. Correct hand position is realised through more complete use of hand weights, which constitutes one of the specific features of viola performance. At the beginning of the viola class, a lot of attention should be paid to exercises for conscious control of muscular relaxation and tension.

The formation and development of such skills concerning the playing positions in the transitional period of viola studies is based on the weight principle of general violin playing organization, which belongs continuously to the violist training. The correct hand positions are realized through more complete use of weight of the hands, which constitutes one of the specific features of the viola playing.

The exercise consists of training the free fall of the arms (relaxation of the muscles of the shoulder girdle, back) under the action of their own gravity. It is known that tightnesses occurring in any joints or muscles are transmitted to various links of the performing apparatus, as the human body by its nature is holistic. It is not possible to control all joints and muscles at the same time. It is advisable to focus on those parts of the body where tightness usually occurs. These critical points of the playing apparatus include: the entire shoulder girdle and in particular the shoulder joints of both hands, both thumbs, both wrist joints on which the freedom of all hand movements depends, as well as the elbow joint of the right hand. The control of these points can be carried out both in special exercises (principle: tension-relaxation) and in breaks by releasing movements (moving the arms to the sides, turning the hands, etc.). The absence of hands tension depends on the overall posture of the viola player.

What are the first steps in teaching the correct the playing posture of the violist's body? While basic skills are not new to novice violists, however, they must undergo different tests when moving to another instrument. Learning violin playing begins by mastering the rational playing position and body weight that rests steadily on both feet. At the same time, the violist should be able to balance the body weight freely so that it is easy for the player to shift the body weight from the left foot to the right foot, and vice versa. During the switching period, this skill must not only be checked but also corrected. The errors in playing positions, such as stooping, an unnatural lifting of the left or right shoulder, the curvature of the spine, etc., should be corrected. It is more useful to practice a rational playing posture with the instrument and bow in hand. A beginner violist needs to understand and feel the motor-playing position of both hands without isolating them from each other. A change in playing conditions (the size of the viola's fingerboard) due to the larger structure of the viola may cause, for example, the player to bend over. The viola player must extend his left hand much further when playing the violin (especially when playing in the position 1).

At the point of contact of the violin bow and violin strings, the bow is pushed and pulled back and forth, forcing the player's right hand to move slightly forward relative to his natural position. This causes extra difficulty in playing, especially in the end of the bow. This requires a lot of care in terms of learning how to keep the viola in the correct playing position. It is also important to learn how to adapt the left hand to it.

With beginner violinists, the left hand positioning can be arranged based on a conscious sense of the two points of support. As you develop your playing in positions and vibrato skills, gradually move to a single fulcrum (point of support). A different principle should be followed during the viola formation period. Here the wrist and the left hand in general should be completely released from the function of holding the instrument. They can only retain their role as an additional (weight) support. If one has only one point of support of the instrument, besides needing to make complete use of the weight of the one hand in the fingerboard he must have good hand support organisation. First of all, the shoulder rest must be chosen carefully.

Violin beginners who are not technically proficient, poor hand and body support is often the root cause.

With novice violinists, the playing position of the left hand can be placed on top of two conscious fulcrum points (primary and secondary fulcrum). When practising the correct playing position of the viola player, vibrato skills gradually shift to one fulcrum point (support point). During the switching period from violin to viola, a different principle must be observed. In this case, the wrist and left hand usually need to be completely released from the support of the instrument. They can only retain their role as an additional support. If the player has only one fulcrum of his instrument, in addition to making full use of the weight of the other hand to the fingerboard, he must have good hand support organisation. First of all, the shoulder support should be selected carefully. Weak hands and body support are often the root reasons that novice viola players are not immediately technically skilled players.

The incorrect organization of the player's body support causes the consequence that the instrument is largely supported by the fingers of the left hand. This limits the development of the technique of ringing the left hand and transfers the compression to the right hand. It follows that sticking the fingers of the viola's right hand to the viola's bow limits the weight of the bow over the viola's strings, and the ability to use the weight of the hand. Difficulties arise in playing and mastering the playing technique.

The development of good instrument's support is based on a good understanding and a clear sense of weight distribution between the following four points of contact: 1. the clavicle 2. the shoulder joint (the left side of the shoulder - rest) 3. the thoracic area (the right side of the shoulder - rest) 4. the left side of the lower jaw. The first three fulcrum points supporting the instrument from below are easy to feel in the body with the instrument. The fourth fulcrum requires searching. It is necessary to adjust this upper balancing support on the chin so that the weight of the head is transferred to it as much as possible, combined with a small amount of pressure. The ultimate goal is to keep the viola stable. When doing this, it is important to feel that the muscles around the fulcrum are loose (especially in the shoulder joint and neck area).

In order to control the muscles, special exercises are also required, based on the knowledge of the contrasts in the body. On inhalation, the muscles of the shoulder girdle and neck are consciously tense. On exhalation, the muscles relax. In the body, one can feel a sense of freedom. If the violinist has a tense grip, inherited from the past, from the instrument, the teacher may suggest that the pupil grip the viola first firmly with the chin, tension the neck muscles, intentionally raise the shoulder belt, and then loosen the muscles. This exercise gives a clearer sense of muscle excitement required in putting the player in balance with the player's body. Such exercises help a viola player become aware of the adjustment of the body and the correct position when playing the viola, and direct the student's attention to managing and repairing muscle strength.

4.2 Forming hands position

Once the viola student has learned to hold on to the viola, next it is the best to form a holistic understanding about the posture of both hands when playing the viola. To do this, after placing the viola in a supported position, one must "suspend" the left hand from the fingerboard of the viola by taking the viola's bow with the right hand and placing its focus on the viola strings. That is, "pause" the right hand with a bow. Thus, the novice viola player is able to form a complete understanding about the common playing position of the body, the instrument, the viola bow and both hands.

When the left hand is placed in the playing position, it is useful to activate the fingers (as if folding them into a fist), then to rotate the forearm, and then to bend the arm from the elbow. Finally, the shoulder of the arm is pulled away from the body. This is how the

whole left hand takes on a playful shape. This exercise helps ensure that the muscles are used one after the other rather than all at once, leading to their overload. The same exercise should be done with the right hand. The ultimate goal should be the desired sense of weight of the left hand on the fingerboard and the right hand on the viola bow over the viola strings.

At the beginning, the left hand can be placed in the playing position III and the viola's bow in the center. The greater freedom of the bent elbow joint contributes to the feeling of weight of both hands. When the left hand moves to the playing position I and the right hand moves the viola to the end of the bow (both arms bent from the elbow), the player can focus on the important task of weight shifting of the arms on the instrument and bow. At the same time, it is necessary to practice the ability to ease the pressure of the weight of the fingers on the fingerboard so as not to hamper the transitions. Although the movements of the right and left hand are not the same, these symmetrical actions are very effective, first of all, for the technical work of the playing with the instrument and for forming coordination skills.

Today it is easily thought that the whole body which is involved in the articulation of music should be modified by teaching into a balanced system. This is especially important to take into account in the early stages of teaching the viola. The balanced action of both hands helps in producing the peculiarities of melody and intonation on the viola.

The tilt of the instrument is important in the playing position of the violist. The violinist's playing position can range from a significant tilt (narrow position) to a more limited tilt (wide position). In a narrow position, the maximum use of the weight of the right hand is reduced. In viola playing, it is more typical to bring the instrument to the left and take a less inclined position. At the same time, the shoulders of both hands move forward from the body and the right hand takes a higher position, facilitating the transition of their weight to the bow.

The position of the left hand on the fingerboard over the strings of the viola is essential when playing the viola. The violist's hand is "suspended" on the fingerboard, it rests on rounded, strong fingers. The weight of the hand should be placed on the ends of the finger, so that the weight of the entire hand rests on them. The weight of the hand must move from one finger to the other. This all contributes to the active, firm contact of the hand with the fingerboard of the viola in such a way that there is no muscle tension in

the hand and forearm. The amount of force required to press the viola's strings is adjusted by the sense of freedom (not the pressing of the hand) of a relaxed hand, as well as observing the sound by listening to its quality. The criterion is clear intonation and the brightness of the sonority. Yankelevich noted that violinists often have "the insufficient weight of fingers on violin strings". It is because "no deeper volume is achieved. When playing the piano, this is expressed as looseness and vagueness including extra sounds, and when playing hard, the intonation of the voice sometimes even distorts".(Yankelevich 1983, 48)

A typical disadvantage in the quality of the viola's sound is also due to the incorrect timing of the coordination of playing fingers and the viola bow. In order for the viola's sound formation to be correct, the playing fingers must always work before the viola bow. Viola players often suffer from this lack of skill due to the nature of the instrument and the tendency to play with their free hand. There is an undefined sound as a result. Typical of novice violinists is the excessive pressing of the violin with a bow (which leads to clamping of hands). That also causes flaws in the volume of the sound, as well as drying or creaking of the sound. If these errors remain permanent, they prevent the violist's potential for artistic development. When using natural hand weight instead of pressing, even excessive weight on the viola strings does not lead to stiffness. During the transition period, when switching from the violin to the viola, one must thoroughly practice the skill of placing the weight of the hand naturally on the strings of the viola. This, along with the control of the viola's bow, is an important factor in the viola's sound formation. This act must always be combined with the skill of using of viola's bow, which influences the primers of sound.

The viola's longer measure, the lengthened finger position, and the difficulty of the fourth finger when playing the instrument, require careful exercise in placing the finger of the left hand on the viola's fingerboard. In terms of continuity of violist training, it makes sense to place fingers according to the principle of "fourth to first." The rounded 4th finger, the first moveable "rear finger" and holding the hand close to the viola's fingerboard are optimal from the playing technique's point of view. Combining the second or third finger with the fourth finger leads to additional hand movements. Therefore, the viola player should not round too much the fourth finger to avoid the unnecessary movements of the wrist. In addition, the "fourth finger problem" forces the caller to be careful with the

dominant movements of the elbow, especially when the fourth finger is placed on the lowest string of the viola.

In violin and viola playing, the continuity of intonation should be natural. Because of the greater length of the instrument and, consequently, the greater stretching of the fingers, the viola can be considered more difficult to play than the violin. Especially when it comes to the clarity of intonation in mastering the left-hand technique, which is problematic because of the fast tempo. If the violinist is accustomed to the intonation of the violin's fingerboard while playing various intervals based on kinaesthetic knowledge of the fingerboard, the change to wider distances is easy. If, on the other hand, the fingerboard of a violin is known as "point by point", mastering a more complex viola intonation is difficult, and the whole intonation of the pitch will have to be re-learned.

The thumb problem has also to be considered in viola playing. There is no essential difference in the thumb position between violin players and viola players. Thus, the thumb can be placed forward on the 2nd to 3rd fingers or moved back to 1 finger, which according to Struve is associated with individual peculiarities of the structure of the hand (1933). V. Borisovsky suggested that "the left thumb must be pulled back, it must always be centered on the peg, allowing the hand to have easier access to high positions" (Stoklitskaya 1984). The problem itself is complex and the solution might be confusing. The task of the thumb is to provide good support to the playing fingers. Its touch must meet two contrasting requirements: stability and freedom. The lack of stability is caused by the pressing of the thumb against the neck of the viola. In the violist's finger system, the thumb position is also important for the use of hand weight. However, this does not mean that the fingers and wrist themselves are passive. On the contrary, it plays a leading role in the technique of the fingers of the left hand and their motor autonomy. The skill to adjust the degree of weight of the left hand is developed in close contact with the technique of the right hand playing the viola bow — when playing at the frog of the viola, the weight must be lightened and when playing at the tip of the bow, the weight must be increased.

The posture of the thumb, along with the principle of weight, are important in the formation of a viola-specific vibrato. The varied vibrato pattern and mastery of various vibrato are appreciated in modern viola performance. Viola players must learn to play with unbroken vibrato, ensuring that all fingers play the same vibrato, that it passes from

one finger to another, and that it remains consistent when changing different strings. This is possible only if there are no stresses in the whole left hand, but it is relaxed. Ways to fix bad vibrato need to be found by removing muscle tightness. In addition, it is necessary that all the ends of the joints and finger should be free. Vibrato played on a viola should be based on the feeling of the weight of the hand. B. Struve writes in his work: “when playing vibrato, the fingers of the playing hand using their own weight appear droopy, in addition to utilizing forearm and elbow weight”. Otherwise, the finger may slide out of place when repeating vibrato. That causes poor intonation and sound quality. Tension in performance leads to uncontrollable, 'tremulous' vibration. (Struve 1933)

In the early stages of training, the violist is unable to vibrate all fingers equally. A viola playing student should find a vibrating finger (usually the second one), to determine a position where it is easier to vibrate (usually III or IV). At this point, the viola player must improve vibrato playing with one finger, release the vibrato from the uneven amplitude, etc. Once the caller has reached the relative good stage on this, the same skill is transferred to the neighbouring finger (located higher or lower). For a while, the neighbour finger is likely to interfere with the main finger, which has already mastered the correct vibrato movement. Therefore, the finger to be trained has to be “switched on” for a certain time, after which it is necessary to return to the original position and repeat the exercise. This process needs more scrutiny. After that, the exercise is to be changed, moving to other positions and adjacent strings. It is recommended to do this work regularly, but briefly for about 15-20 minutes a day — without not skipping a single day. After learning to play the uneven vibratos of the left hand, making the sound vibrate quite equally on all fingers, the student has solved only a narrow technical problem. However, this is a prerequisite for achieving artistic goals in the viola playing.

There is another way to practise vibrato. It is based on the creative endeavors of the performer. In this case, the artistic goals required for the music force the playing student to choose the appropriate means of expression, including learning vibrato play. While this method has many advantages, such as developing the artistic character of the performer, it also has flaws. Deficiencies in technical playing skills slow the adoption of the music repertoire. No wonder Borisovski disagreed with the pianists A. Schnabel and G. Neuhaus that an established performer supposedly has no need to engage in technical exercises. He said that the instrumentalists with an ongoing concern for pure

intonation and fingerboard control can hardly follow pianists on this issue. (Stoklitskaya 1984)

On the example of performing the *detache*, we can study the specifics of viola playing associated with the staged adaptation of the right hand to the bow. This is a major technique skill, and has a noticeable effect on sound production as a whole. As a student taking up the viola, you must compare viola playing with violin playing, feel the difference in sound production, and try to capture the feel that is new to you. It is more comfortable for the violist to play in the heavier part of the bow, so the bow (compared with the violinist) moves slightly towards the bow position. The heavier part of the viola's bow helps to avoid the extra effort to overcome thicker strings and the acoustic qualities of the instrument. Acoustic properties also play a role in the challenge of smooth bow movement. Flesch sometimes advises violinists to emphasize the technique with a quick bow movement at the beginning of each note, helping to release stiffness (Flesch 1930). This recommendation does not work for violists. When you release a bow in this way with a viola, a "hissing", unsteady sound ensues almost inevitably. The reason is that the string, which quickly passes over the strings of the instrument, which in the viola are not as sensitive as in the violin, does not have time to ensure full interaction with the strings of the instrument, nor to "pick up" sounds; the "gaining" sound involves constant contact between the bow hair and strings at each point of contact while the bow is being led. Unlike a violinist, the violist must ensure the steady movement of the bow along the strings throughout the note being played. The pull motion of the bow at any point inevitably leads to a loud distortion.

Closely related to the question of even bow movement is the speed of the bow. The violinist is allowed to play with a wide, fast bow on the string. On the viola, the bow must "walk" over the string more slowly. The faster the *detache*, the shorter the length of the bow. On the upper strings, the bow may be slightly wider and closer to the top. On the lower strings, the bow may be shorter and closer to the frog. The speed of the bow moves up and down accordingly. In search of a tight sound, the student often begins to "push", continuing to play with a bow that is too wide. This will only make the sound worse. In the example of Part I of Handel's Concerto, it is easy to determine the correctness of the *detache*. In this movement, there is often a contradiction between the beautiful, loose *detache* 'on the surface' and the husky, dull sound to the ear. The student is playing with relaxed right hand, and sound control is lost. Playing the viola with a wide touch does not release the right hand. On the contrary, it makes it difficult to produce a sound, and

the violist has feeling of discomfort, which can lead to the loss of sound control or physical injury. In cantilena, the principle of slow bowing is not broken. A skill developed on the *detache* will not allow the bow to be "driven" in the cantilena as well. A bow that is completely 'on' is the basis for a beautiful, broad tone. Working on the scale is extremely helpful in improving the culture of the sound and the organisation of the right hand. It is advisable to play the scale in a moderate tempo. It is required to cultivate the habit of the student to be concentrated and watch not only the clarity of the fingers of the right hand, but also the coordination, smoothness, slowness of the bow. Careful work on the sound of the scale is essential.

When working on the concerto repertoire, the student will encounter other difficulties which are dictated by the peculiarities of the piece. Sound production must be varied in technique, but it must still follow the methodical principle of even and slow bowing.

Optimisation of instruction continuity is an urgent problem for viola pedagogy. A comprehensive approach to the development and restructuring of skills during violist formation is required. It means cohesion of musical and artistic and technical development of a student, interrelation of elements of performing apparatus, cohesion of actions of left and right hands, etc. «The weight principal» of the organisation of playing movements is very assistive. This principal should be implemented from the first steps of the viola player formation.

The viola student is faced with certain psychological difficulties in the early stages of the viola studying when moving from violin to viola. In this case, it is necessary to know the psychological mechanisms that contribute to the transition between learned skills and kinesthetic and auditory sensations in a new direction. Usually, the instrument teacher shows how to play the viola, change the playing position, playing style, vibrato, etc. In this case, the student gets new coordinates for the action. The instrument teacher would do well to note the psychology involved in this matter and urge the viola student to first exaggerate those exercises, what the student should do when playing the viola. These exercises should first be overstated. Later with them the student achieves the ultimate goal in the playing technique, the slower use of the viola bow, vibrato, etc. This method is also effective in correcting the playing position and errors associated with the viola playing.

5 CONCLUSION

I have studied a lot of material, both pedagogical and technical, as well as the experience I gained during my studies, I can draw some conclusions.

At the primary stage of studying, it is better to learn to play the violin, to pass gradual mastering of technique, as well as to pass classical basic violin repertoire, of course, one can start studying primary stage with the viola, but there are no proper repertoire for viola, as well as because of the specifics of size and shape of viola it will be more difficult to study. That's why preferable to learn the violin bases and reach a certain level of mastery before moving on to the viola.

When switching to the viola, an important aspect is the choice of instrument size. The student's physiological abilities must be taken into account, as well as their hand position and hand squeezes, if any.

Having studied the literature on the structure of the violin and viola, especially their differences, I found out some peculiarities of viola playing.

In my thesis I have described how to teach and how to achieve the correct staging. The most important goal in teaching the viola is to help the student to find a comfortable posture, to help them find the most relaxed hand position, and also to teach them how to manage their body and hands weight correctly.

All I have found out during writing my thesis I will use in my future pedagogical practice.

While writing my bachelor's thesis, I have studied a lot of both playtechnical and pedagogical material related to viola playing. Based on the experience I have gained during my study about the viola and the information I gather from written sources, I can draw the following conclusions.

In the early stages of studying the viola, it is better to learn to first play the violin, and then later gradually move to the viola. The management of the playing technique of these instruments, as well as the classical exercise repertoire, differ significantly. Of course, it is also possible to start studying the viola straight from the beginning on the viola, but there is no proper repertoire for the viola. Beyond that, the viola's peculiarities, its size and shape are more challenging than the ones of violin. Therefore, it is recommended to

first learn the basics of playing on the violin and achieve a good playing level in it before switching to the viola.

When changing the violin to the viola, the choice of the size of the instrument is important. The physiological characteristics of the student should be taken into account, as well as their hands position and hand squeezes, if any.

After studying the playing of the violin and viola and the structure of the instrument, especially their differences, the peculiarities of viola playing became more pronounced.

In my thesis, I have described how viola playing is worth teaching and how to achieve the correct playing position. The main goal of teaching the viola is to help students find a liberated, comfortable posture, help them find a relaxed hand position, and teach them to properly manage body and hand weight.

All that I have found out while writing my thesis, I intend to draw on in my future work as a music pedagogue and viola teacher.

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