

## **B1 - ISSUES OF STUDENT ASSESSMENT IN MUSIC EDUCATION IN HUNGARY AND IN LUXEMBOURG**

**B1**

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### **Symposium Presentations**

#### **The role of formal analysis for improving musical skills: A study of eye movements**

Zsuzsa Buzás  
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János Steklács  
*Kecskemét College*

#### **Testing music-reading ability in conservatory students: Results of a pilot study**

István Benedekfi  
*Ball State University School of Music, Indianapolis*

#### **Music education in Luxembourg and its assessment**

Damien Sagrillo  
*University of Luxembourg*

#### **The effect of different warming-up sessions on the singing voice**

Tamás Altorjay  
*Doctoral School of Education, University of Szeged*

## SYMPOSIUM ABSTRACT

The symposium presents initial results from research projects on musical skills of conservatory students and also gives an outlook into assessment of music education in Luxembourg. Our aim is to explore the possibilities and methods of diagnostic assessment of musical skills and also to test different music abilities.

In Hungarian and in other European music schools and conservatories solfège and music theory target the improvement of musical skills, including music-reading and music-writing. At conservatory level the number of students who study solfège is about five thousand, in music schools their number is about 250 000 in Hungary. However, there has been very little research on solfège and its transfer effects as yet. The basic elements of musical syntax and grammar are taught from the first year in primary education and specialized musical education as well. Previous research in a conservatory has revealed that music-reading and writing abilities are strongly correlated with each other, and these musical abilities are strongly correlated with clear intonation and rhythmic skills ( $p < .001$ ), and also music writing shows a strong correlation with other skills, such as critical thinking, goal setting or concentration ( $p < .001$ ; Buzás, 2013).

The first presentation of the symposium is dealing with eye movement in music-reading in relation to musical performance. Using eye-tracking is becoming a popular methodological tool nowadays, and it also offers an opportunity to facilitate the development of student learning. The second presentation is a pilot study about testing music-reading ability with an online questionnaire. The aim of this research is to explore conservatory students' knowledge about musical patterns and symbols and also to reveal metacognitive music-reading strategies.

Different countries have different systems of music education that could affect the improvement of music-reading ability. The third presentation is dealing with the assessment of Western European countries' music education. In Luxembourg it is based on the francophone system of solfège, and conservatories offer special sight-reading lessons for future singers and professional musicians.

Vocational training forms one of the basic parts of music education. In this research the recording of the singing voice on sustained vowels of thirty singing college students was analysed. They arrived to the experimental session without any previous warm-up. The results show the pedagogical advantage of the use of nasal warming-up exercises besides the traditional oral warm-up tasks.

## MUSIC EDUCATION IN LUXEMBOURG AND ITS ASSESSMENT

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*Keywords:* music education; solfège

### 1. Assessment of Pupils

According to Martin Fautley (2012), not everything what is taught is always learned, and therefore music education also needs assessment. In my lecture I will first give a short insight into the formal school system in Luxembourg and its recent change from summative to formative evaluation.

In 1998 the parliament of Luxembourg voted a law of music education. The aim was to offer an equal level of music education in every region of the country and to motivate more children to attend music courses. The assessment system in music schools was based on summative evaluation known from general schools. Current tendencies finally try to adopt a more smooth method of evaluation in order to improve the pupil's learning success and in order to critically scrutinize the teacher's training activity. After the description of the organization of music schools in Luxembourg, I will consider this change of paradigm.

### 2. Assessment of the System?

Music education in Luxembourg is based on the francophone system of solfège, a method for future singers and professional musicians, including audiation for beginners at the youngest age. It is also partially transferred to some instrumental disciplines. However, during the last two decades, in these countries (France and Belgium) solfège has been replaced by a less rigorous and better-adapted method of musical training. In contrast to these countries, the Luxembourg system of music education never has been assessed. Music-school teachers graduate in the neighbouring countries. While degree holders from music universities based on the German system have to study educational sciences (a minority), their colleagues issued from the French tradition (the majority) never do so. They specialize in their main discipline, are skilful artists, but have no pedagogical grade and acquire educational skills in learning by doing or not at all. However, decisions concerning further development and pedagogical improvements should be managed in accordance to today's (pedagogical) needs.

My paper will focus on this weak point in giving a historical insight into the system of solfège and its didactics over the centuries beginning with *Guido of Arezzo* up to *Rousseau* until its current use in Luxembourg and, depending on it, the instrumental disciplines. I will focus on the pedagogical needs, which have led to changes over this long epoch. An independent evaluation of music education in Luxembourg by external actors is absolutely necessary. I will conclude with some reflections on statements by some alumni of music-schools, which could serve as a model for an external assessment.