

# *Diagnosis of Child Listening to Music in the Light of SUMs<sup>1</sup> Application*

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The presented paper is of theoretical-diagnostic-empirical character. The purpose of the research was to learn and analyse the possibility of evaluation of the pupils' achievements in relation to diversified listening to music. What was analysed was the possibility of an objective control over the introduction of some music-related theoretical terms basing on a selected method of activeness, i.e. listening to music. The research subject was the pupils' competences related to music listening. Two-phase diagnostic-educational research was performed in order to create the authors' (own) tool to diagnose the listening to music competence (in Polish *Sprawdzian Umiejętności Muzycznych* – SUMs). The first phase was based on the method of a diagnostic survey with the application of a questionnaire, observation, and testing. The second phase refers to the evaluation research and focuses on the further testing pupils' competences basing on the didactic tool – SUMs. Conducting the quantification and evaluation brings some benefits for a pupil and a teacher themselves. The children who are aware of the level of their competence (conscious of their strong and weak points) can apply their competences more successfully. In light of the above, the educational diagnosis can significantly increase the level of education quality and effects and (can) naturally direct the teachers-researchers' reasoning towards the issues related to the process of evaluation.

*Keywords:* musical skills, early school music education, listening to music, diagnosis.

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## INTRODUCTION

Despite the fact that *diagnosis* is usually associated with medical terminology, especially in the process of identifying and defining what a patient suffers from, this term is widely applied in didactics and music-educational evaluation. The precise comprehension of what pupils (already) know and are able to apply starting from the beginning of a school year is the key-factor in the methodological configuration which rather adapts the character of a challenge than a hardship (compare: Hale

and Green 2009). This academic elaboration considers the practical completion of an objective approach to the diagnosis of music-related competences with the application of the author's research tool which includes: a questionnaire for teachers, competence test related to listening to music (in short: SUMs) for the pupils and the evaluation sheet of the tool. What needs to be underlined is that the educational diagnosis significantly contributes to the increase of educational quality and influences and naturally directs the teachers-researchers' reasoning towards the issues related to the

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<sup>1</sup> SUMs is the abbreviation used for the research tool which in Polish stands for *Sprawdzian Umiejętności Muzycznych w zakresie słuchania muzyki*.

process of evaluation (Michłowicz 2012: 339). Therefore, this empirical-research elaboration meets the cognitive, utilitarian, educational function, which refers to the presentation of the research results in general music education.

#### ON EVALUATION IN TEACHING MUSIC

The measurement of achievements, understood as the teacher's diagnostic activity, refers to the process of learning, the completed content as well as the regulators of this course of proceedings (Niemierko 1990: 10). The indicated areas somehow constitute a type of directives to the proper functioning of school achievements. The teacher willing to monitor the stimulation of the competence development within the defined achievement must, however, accurately choose the educational content as well as define the scope of their expectations with the reference to their pupils. Additionally, teachers must select appropriate methods that will allow to check and to objectively evaluate the pupils' progress. The achievements understood as the whole of the undertaken actions refer not only to the hardship of child's obvious engagement but also to the input and the time of teachers' interactions forming the school reality.

It must be mentioned that musical education applies semantically quite diversified terms of educational achievements. The terms of achievement, ability, aptitude or competence are often applied interchangeably (Kołodziejski 2009: 33) and the result of such a state can cause lexical chaos in the evaluation being conducted in this area. John Sloboda claims that achievements are certain accomplishments based on the completion of the previously assumed targets (Sloboda 2002: 263–264). Following it, the pupils' musical achievements can be regarded as the change in the observable level of a plan of actions under realisation in the educational area defined previously by the teacher. It must be noted that such a development is only possible thanks to the accumulation of the continuous personal experiences by a pupil (Kołodziejski 2009: 33). Similarly, E.E. Gordon's reasoning can be presented which defines achievements mainly as the ultimate 'musical accomplishments', focusing their being on the development of audiation (Gordon 1999: 498, see also: Zwolińska 2010). Following Gordon's inspiration, it is assumed that musical achievements can be named the competences which pupils have accomplished

on their own, using their mental processes (Zwolińska 2014, Bonna 2016). In a reflection oriented in this manner, one must remember that every pupil has different, although inborn, inclinations to music learning. In accordance with the native concepts of development, it provides the possibility of a description of a dynamic potential of competences to acquire some defined (that is, specific) achievements in music learning by pupils until c. 10 years of age.

In this paper, musical achievements are considered in the context of the evaluation tasks of the process of musical education. The related key issues include measurement, diagnosis, and evaluation of achievements. Another important factor seems to be the very interpretation of achievements, which, as presented in the research results, refers to the description of the changes in music learning experience (including success and effectiveness) (Denek 2009: 17; Zwolińska 2010; Trzos 2007b). In the analysis of the process of evaluation what is necessary is the whole presentation of its key aspects with reference to the contents, the programme of interaction forms of musical activeness and thus also to the possibility of evaluating the completed results of music learning (Trzos 2007a: 239–250).

The role of diagnosis and its aim as 'description, explanation and prediction of the course of phenomena and directing them' occurs to be important (Skalbania 2013: 19). What also matters is an attempt to define some teachers' personal (colloquial) suppositions related to solving a certain didactic difficulty in music (Kołodziejski 2009, Trzos 2012). The literature emphasizes the significance of the teachers' conscious discernment and application of (nominal-tool) apparatus of didactic measurement in accordance with the already defined rules (Okoń 2003: 340–341, Weiner 2012). These rules allow monitoring the effectiveness and advisability of some actions, and the accepted symbol system (the so-called measure scale) '(...)' should reflect pupils' selected capacities' (Niemierko 2002: 153–154, see also: Gagne, Briggs 1992: 236–237).

#### THE RESEARCH METHOD

The aim of the research was to learn and analyse the possibilities of evaluation of pupils' achievements related to music listening. Therefore, what was analysed was the possibility of objective

monitoring of the implementation of some theoretical musical terms basing on a selected form of activity, i.e. music listening. The research subject was the pupils' competences related to music learning.

Two-phase educational research was conducted in order to construct the author's own diagnostic tool of listening to music competence SUMs (Pulchny 2016). The first phase was based on the method of diagnostic questionnaire with the application of the following techniques: a survey, observation, and testing. The second phase refers to the evaluational research and focuses on the further testing the pupils' competences on the basis of the didactic tool – SUMs.

In both phases, the sampling was applied deliberately. In the first phase, there were selected: 100 teachers of early school education (including 20 teachers-musicians actively working with pupils) and 375 pupils, aged 9–10, of Grade 3 (in total: 30 classes) who participated in the check of musical competences with reference to music listening. The research was conducted locally at seven primary schools in the city of Bydgoszcz (Poland) and was combined with the management of SUMs. In the second phase, the evaluation tools of SUMs were applied. This test is currently checked in purposefully selected Grades 3 at 12 (public or private) primary schools in the following voivodeships (provinces): Kujawy-Pomeranian, Mazovian, Pomeranian and Greater Poland (all of which are situated in Poland). The research in this phase has the national character and it is still in progress.

Three author tools were constructed: 1) the survey questionnaire (for teachers), 2) the competence test related to music listening SUMs (for pupils), and 3) the evaluation tool sheet. This paper presents some selected, and at the same time the most important, results of the first phase of the research.

## THE RESEARCH RESULTS

Teachers apply their own knowledge to the problems in musical education (Trzos 2012) and the manner in which the early school education teachers describe the fundamental terms related to music was inspected. The collected respondents'

responses allowed drawing some general conclusions related to the teachers' theoretical background in the area of musical achievements diagnosis with reference to listening.

The personal definitions of the **nomination 'educational achievement'** were the following:

- 'all knowledge and competences acquired by a pupil in the process of education';
- 'acquisition of knowledge, experiences and competences';
- 'equipping a pupil with the knowledge and competences related to didactics and upbringing';
- 'the child's developmental progress related to the curriculum requirements';
- 'the pupils' results acquired at school';
- 'the level of knowledge and competences';
- 'the learning results';
- 'the motor, verbal and intellectual knowledge, competences and attitudes';
- 'the pupils' competences';
- 'the added value achieved by a child during didactic classes at school';
- 'an aim, effect';
- 'a final effect of education, educational process result';
- 'the results of the didactic-upbringing process';
- 'the completion of the assumed contents';
- 'the effect of work in relation to the assumed aims';
- 'something that can be measured';
- 'a pedagogical success';
- 'something a child knows, understands and applies in various real-life situations';
- 'monitoring educational achievements with the application of various methods of measurement, observation';
- 'a change between the initial and the final stages'<sup>2</sup>.

The above-presented teachers' responses can be referred to three areas: the acquisition of knowledge resulting from the realisation of some particular curriculum contents, the acquisition of various abilities necessary in adult life and the formation of one's own attitudes. The special emphasis is placed on the observable process between the beginning of education and the final effect which can be measured. The respondents, perhaps in an unaware manner, combine the nomination 'educational achievement' with the process of

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<sup>2</sup> Respondents' responses (Pulchny 2016).

evaluation. The respondents' responses frequently are related to diagnosis, measurement and the aspect of curriculum. It is both clear and proper manner of perceiving this issue. However, one can hope that if teachers understand educational achievements properly, they will be developed properly by their pupils.

Among the **elements related to the process of the evaluation of musical achievements**, the teachers indicated the following (Example 1):

Category	N
diagnosing children's possibilities	51
checking the level of knowledge and competence	48
evaluation of selected educational achievements	30
selection of appropriate evaluation criteria to a particular achievement	33
searching effective manners of teaching and learning	36
developing teacher's proficiency	26
monitoring the development of children's competences	43
others	3

Source: the authors' own research

Example 1. The elements related to the process of pupils' achievements evaluation

More than 80% of the respondents identify the process of the evaluation of achievements with diagnosing the children's potential. What can be frequently observed at schools is the tests checking the pupils' new knowledge of a defined part of subject. Such actions allow planning further work with the group of pupils, as well as discovering some separate pupils' predispositions. The teachers most often diagnose the pupils' level of knowledge and competences. For them two issues are important – good results at the end-of-class three test and equipping children with some indispensable competences they are able to apply in their life. The respondents under the research perceive the process of evaluation in the context of working with a pupil. Relatively few of them (c. 40%) think that the issue of evaluation is applicable to them as well – it also refers to the change of teachers' own teaching methods or development of their work proficiency. A child's development is not possible without prior insight into one's own self. Only three respondents paid special attention to the importance of feedback in the process of children's education (see Pulchny 2016).

Motivating and making pupils aware of their strong points allows forming a person confident of their virtues and not afraid of taking some difficult decisions in their life.

The teachers' opinions related to their knowledge of **sources of knowledge on achievement diagnosis related to music listening** were sampled. The respondents put their opinions on a numerical rating scale. The scale from 1 to 5 (1 – the most important sources, and 5 – the least important ones) was used to order the respondents' responses (Example 2).

	Number of indications					Mode
	5	4	3	2	1	
School documentation	15	18	8	7	8	4
Personal professional experience	22	10	12	10	5	5
Consultations with other teachers	7	9	15	12	8	3
Curriculum requirements	10	13	11	10	10	4
Academic literature	11	12	6	21	8	2

Source: the authors' own research. Numerical rating scale: 5 (always), 4 (often), 3 (sometimes), 2 (rarely), 1 (never), 0 (no response)

Example 2. The sources of knowledge indispensable to the diagnosis of achievements related to music listening

As it results from the authors' own research, the early school education teachers mainly apply their own professional experience while defining the achievements related to music listening. The respondents declare that they often make use of legal documentation and regulations. The curriculum documentation, however, is the set general directives which should be completed, whereas opinions and findings highlight the individual needs of particular entities. General schools, however, have difficulty with an individual approach because the conditions at school (overpopulated classes, classroom adaptations, additional specialist care) are unfavourable. The teachers are reluctant to share their opinions on diagnosing educational achievements. Perhaps, it happens due to the fact that the school ambience seems unfriendly. The teachers completely trust neither their principals nor colleagues; therefore, they avoid discussing issues that might expose their ignorance. The research indicates that the respondents rarely consult academic literature. Most likely, they apply their own

experience and personal knowledge related to managing the diagnosis of musical achievements. This type of approach can lead to a situation in which the process of evaluating achievements (not only musical) is not performed appropriately.

#### PUPILS' MUSICAL COMPETENCES IN THE LIGHT OF SUMS APPLICATION

##### The originality of the product applied

The assessment is a tool designed for the early school education teachers who are interested in diagnosing their pupils' competences related to the forms of music listening. Apart from some specialized (and commercial) tests related to musical evaluation, this area lacks some solutions that are, on the one hand, an attractive form of work during classes of music education, and, on the other hand, a complete assistance in measuring and evaluating pupils' achievements in this field. The application of SUMs assesses pupils' musical activeness highlighting mainly their action in the following areas: 1) **formulation and comprehension of definitions** and 2) **knowledge consolidation**.

1. Formulation and comprehension of definitions implies some difficulties related to such elements of music as:
  - dynamics,
  - melodics,
  - harmony,
  - rhythm and tempo,
  - articulation,
  - colour.
2. Knowledge consolidation considers the difficulties related to the application of knowledge (names, range, know-how) about:
  - structure of music periods (in pattern AB, ABA),
  - types of human voice,
  - familiarity with dances (the waltz, the polka, the krakowiak) and march music,
  - sounding colour of basic instruments (melodic, harmonic, percussion),
  - musical notation (in types of music listening and reading).
  - The originality of the product is determined by the authors' elaboration of the music-related material (including sounds) of the examples and the indications for the teacher of the theoretical background on which the concept of active music listening was prepared.

The tool includes the Worksheet, the Proper Responses Sheet (Answer Key), the Instructions for Teacher, the Tool Evaluation Sheet and the CD.

##### The creative change in subject under application

The actions related to the application of SUMs were preceded by survey research (a questionnaire) among some early school education teachers in selected educational institutions (state-owned and private primary schools – the list is provided below). The collected data allowed getting acquainted with the practises referring to music listening in Grades 1–3 and at the same time raising the afterthought of the school environment responsible for the completion of the core curriculum at the first and second phases of education. Achieved in this way, the practical purpose of this survey research confirmed the necessity (teachers' interests) of such a didactic tool application which can be a definite response to the diagnosis demand also in the musical area of early school education. Basing on the teachers' critical approach, the survey research in the first phase can be regarded as the proper of pilotage evaluational research of the tool under application (Pulchny 2017: 147–149).

The subjects which applied SUMs (as the evaluation prototype) were provided with:

- 1) **methodological support** in terms of using the tool in the didactics process (1. the procedure of diagnosing and evaluating competences of music listening, 2. stimulating some innovative methodological solutions related to the implementation of music definitions in Grade 3 of primary school, 3. using the tool in the conditions of working with a pupil with some special and particular educational needs, 4. detailed documentation of the pupils' musical achievements, 5. selection of the current literature of detailed methodology for the teachers.)
- 2) **academic support** in terms of using the evaluation research results (1. diagnosis of pupils' competences under SUMs application, 2. free access to the academic publications of the Faculty's employees which refer/will refer to the results of further testing of the tool under evaluation, including the prepared audio materials, 3. ordering some consulting services, including workshops for teachers and parents concerning early school musical education, 4. possibility of participating in

some events promoting the results of the research conducted at the Faculty of Music Pedagogy at UKW in Bydgoszcz.

The repetitiveness and duration of the product under application

The test is prepared to be systematically applied in the didactic work of early school education teachers. Owing to the increase in the demands related to musical education what can be expected at the second phase of education is the increase in the importance of the diagnosis of pupils' initial competences after the completion of the first phase of education. Thus, SUMs can also be applied for this purpose.

In order to check the distribution of results of all pupils who took the theoretical part of the test, the below-presented example was prepared (Example 3).

Number of scored points	Number of people	Number of scored points	Number of people
0	0	16	42
1	0	17	50
2	1	18	45
3	0	19	43
4	0	20	36
5	1	21	27
6	0	22	18
7	1	23	10
8	1	24	6
9	1	25	4
10	3	26	3
11	5	27	2
12	15	28	0
13	13	29	0
14	14	30	0
15	34		

Example 3. Linear distribution of the mean test results

The maximum result to be scored in the theoretical part of the test was 30 points (see Example 3). No one was able to achieve it. The highest score was achieved by two persons and it was the score of 27 points. The pupil with the lowest score got only two points. Reading the table above, it can be noticed that it is similar to a regular distribution. Most respondents were placed in the point range 15–21. It can be stated that this group, in accordance with the assumed evaluation scale, is of an average level. The table presents that 50 respondents scored 17 points in the test. It can be considered a good result as it is over 50% out of the total of 30 points. The relation  $Me > D$  can be observed. A half of the pupils scored not more than 18 points or 18 points precisely, while the other half – not less than or 18 points.

Each pupil achieving the final result was in one of the four divisions:

- from 0 to 12 points – low level;
- from 13 to 21 points – average level;
- from 22 to 26 points – high level;
- from 27 to 30 points – very high level<sup>3</sup>.

#### The Usefulness of SUMs

The data presentation takes place on the basis of SUMs Evaluation Sheet. In the first point of the Sheet **the teachers were requested to assess the particular task of the test** (using the numerical rating scale from 1, it being the lowest assessment, to 5 – the highest) with reference to the selected criteria: the relevance to the core curriculum, the level of task comprehension, the level of difficulty, the differentiation of examples, the adequacy of assessment and the quality of musical examples. On collection of all the (40) sheets, the analysis of the results was performed. Basing on the respondents' indications, the arithmetic mean was calculated which comprised the assessment within each category. Finally, the ranges were established (similarly to school average grades) displaying the quality level of some particular tasks of the test. They are the following:

- from 0 to 1.75 points – the lowest level;
- from 1.76 to 2.75 points – the low level;

<sup>3</sup> While defining the point ranges and establishing the levels of children's musical competences, Beata Bonna's proposal was partially used; she created her own test of musical competences. The classification was extended with one additional level – the highest level. The purpose of this was to select the most talented pupils. This will provide teachers with some information as they will be able to broaden the most talented pupils' knowledge (Bonna 2016: 220).

- from 2.76 to 3.75 points – the average level;
- from 3.76 to 4.50 points – the high level;
- above 4.50 points – the highest level.

The subject of the evaluation process is the selection of appropriate material allowing pupils to accomplish a higher level of achievements (in case of one's own research – the ones related to music). The table below juxtaposes the mean responses by two groups of respondents for the particular test tasks conditioning their relevance in the process of evaluation (Example 4).

Music parameters	Musicians' evaluation	Early school education teachers' evaluation
1. Dynamics	4.05	4.32
2. Melodics	4.55	4.47
3. Articulation	4.45	4.57
4. Tempo	4.4	4.33
5. Harmony	4	4.4
6. Instrument sound	4.45	4.8
7. Voice type	4.45	4.68
8. Formal construction	4.4	4.33
9. Name of dance style	4.5	4.15
10. Notation comprehension	3.45	4.2

Example 4. The assessment of the test tasks with reference to their relevance in the process of evaluation

Both groups of the respondents claimed that the selected musical contents related to the test tasks were quite relevant in the process of evaluation in the field of listening (see Example 4). According to the early school education teachers, the most important competences influencing children's musical development include: recognising an instrument by its sound, indicating the type of human voice and telling the difference between staccato and legato sounds. Professional musicians, however, regard the ability to define the direction of melody as the most crucial in the process of evaluation. The respondents' assessment can support the approach claiming that the selected tasks face very important areas of a pupil's musical activeness. The greatest discrepancies in the respondents' assessment can be observed at task No. 10. For

early school education teachers, the comprehension of musical notation is more important in the process of evaluation than for professional musicians. These disproportions can result from the level of knowledge of the surveyed group related to the musical possibilities of the primary schools' pupils<sup>4</sup>.

Another category of the test assessment was to learn its **content realisation compatibility with the core curriculum defined by the Ministry of National Education**. The results are presented below (Example 5).

Music parameters	Musicians' evaluation	Early school education teachers' evaluation
1. Dynamics	4.28	4.7
2. Melodics	4.61	4.75
3. Articulation	4.28	4.85
4. Tempo	4.28	4.7
5. Harmony	3.78	4.65
6. Instrument sound	4.83	4.85
7. Voice type	4.5	4.8
8. Formal construction	4.17	4.47
9. Name of dance style	4.39	4.25
10. Notation comprehension	3.83	4.11

Example 5. The assessment of the content of the test tasks with reference to its compatibility with the core curriculum

Looking at the above table (see Example 5), it can be stated that the respondents are of the opinion that all the contents of some particular tasks of the test are compatible with the directives of the core curriculum. Both groups of respondents regard the task Nr 6 (recognising an instrument by its sound) completely compatible with the core curriculum. The professional musicians thought low of tasks 5 and 10. According to them, the core curriculum seems to provide very little relation to the contents of the above-mentioned tasks. It probably happens so, as too general perception of musical notation in the core curriculum leads to the lack of willingness to extend this area of education. The teachers-musicians also highlighted that the task related to harmony was enriched

<sup>4</sup> The musicians who were previously lectured on the issues of the manners of evaluation of musical achievements often claimed that the knowledge of notation of musical sounds is not necessary to a child not attending a music school. As they put it, an early school pupil should experience music by amusement.

with the presentation of indirect melodies (apart from typical consonances and dissonances.)

The teachers were also asked to assess the test in the aspect of **considering the commands comprehension** of there presented tasks. After the mean had been calculated, the following table was prepared (Example 6).

Music parameters	Musicians' evaluation	Early school education teachers' evaluation
1. Dynamics	4.4	4.75
2. Melodics	5	4.55
3. Articulation	4.2	4.35
4. Tempo	4.35	4.4
5. Harmony	3.3	4.45
6. Instrument sound	4.75	4.95
7. Voice type	4.6	4.55
8. Formal construction	3.65	4.5
9. Name of dance style	4.85	4.75
10. Notation comprehension	3.8	3.65

Example 6. The assessment of test tasks in the aspect of considering the commands comprehension

The teachers in both groups find most of the test commands comprehensible for pupils (Example 6). As the groups under survey put it, the content of task two, six, seven and nine should not raise any doubts in the categories of their response and interpretation. While formulating all the commands a lot of care was given to adjusting the language to the level of possibilities of comprehension by the early school education pupils. The professional, subject-matter terminology which was related to musical definitions was paraphrased in such a manner that it invoked pupils' imaginations (the commands included adjectives and adverbs used by children and they were also compatible with the graphical form of the test). Both groups of the respondents had a low opinion of the comprehension of the final task of the test. It is suspected that its content is too complex and therefore it can cause problems in proper reading and comprehension of some particular phases of the action. This thesis is confirmed by the conclusions drawn after the children's observation.

Some of the group under research have not even made any attempt to perform the notification of musical notes. The pupils who tried to complete that task found it difficult (Task 10).

Analysing the above-presented table, another important aspect related to the assessment of Task 5 of the test can be observed, i.e. the mean result suggested by the early school education teachers is much higher than the result suggested by the musicians. Its cause might be in the perception of the formula 'sounds good'. For the professional musicians it, probably, has too colloquial character, therefore, the majority cannot accept it (as the nomination introduces some interpretation chaos and indicates the subjective reception of some particular musical examples). However, it is an intentional formulation due to the preferential character of the music-related content being listened to. It is a subjective and because of this reason – a controversial feeling.

The teachers also attempted to assess particular tasks of the test with reference to **their level of difficulty**. The results are presented below (Example 7).

Music parameters	Musicians' evaluation	Early school education teachers' evaluation
1. Dynamics	2.5	2.75
2. Melodics	2.9	3.2
3. Articulation	4	3.55
4. Tempo	3.25	3.15
5. Harmony	4.32	3.7
6. Instrument sound	1.8	2.3
7. Voice type	2.9	3.15
8. Formal construction	3.9	3.65
9. Name of dance style	4.15	4.05
10. Notation comprehension	4.61	3.9

Example 7. The assessment of the test tasks with reference to the level of their difficulty

On the basis of the authors' own research presented in the table above (Example 7) it can be stated that the constructed tasks of the test are versatile in terms of the level of difficulty. Most of them will naturally constitute an average problem for younger pupils (these are the tasks assessed in the range from 2.76 to 3.75). In accordance with the assumptions, the primary tasks of each theoretical part of the test (comprehension of definitions, knowledge consolidation) are characterised by the lowest level of difficulty. Both the early school teachers and the musicians stated that the competences related to defining



the loudness of a melody and recognising the instrument by its sounding should not be any problem for the pupils. According to early school education teachers, the most difficult task of the test is the one which is related to naming the witnessed dance. During the conducted observation it was noticed that for the pupils the most difficult task was the one related to naming the particular dances. On hearing a melody, children were able to sing/hum that but they did not remember the names of dances. It probably happens so because the acquisition of dances is based on remembering steps – during the activity pupils pay little notice to the terminology related to the name of the dance which they are learning.

One of the purposes of the constructed tool diagnosing the level of children's achievements related to music listening was to create **the diversified contents of musical examples**. The teachers also assessed this aspect of the test (Example 8).

Music parameters	Musicians' evaluation	Early school education teachers' evaluation
1. Dynamics	4.35	4.55
2. Melodics	4.25	4.5
3. Articulation	4	4.45
4. Tempo	4.3	4.55
5. Harmony	4.3	4.63
6. Instrument sound	4.5	4.74
7. Voice type	4.7	4.8
8. Formal construction	4.2	4.68
9. Name of dance style	4.35	4.75
10. Notation comprehension	4.5	4.5

Example 8. The assessment of the content of the test tasks with reference to the diversification of musical examples

Both groups of the respondents admitted that the prepared test of the musical competences was diversified in relation to musical examples (Example 8). They noticed and praised the fact that the presented melodies were tonally and rhythmically diversified. Some particular tasks include the sounding of various musical instruments. These elements make the created diagnosing tool more attractive to pupils and more helpful for teachers (it allows for a teacher to draw detailed conclusions and search for the relations between other aspects of a younger child's musical activeness).

The respondents whose task was to evaluate the usefulness of the test SUMs were additionally provided with the instruction which included **the proposal of pupils' actions and their results**. Example 9 (below) illustrates the mean distribution of the respondents' responses.

Music parameters	Musicians' evaluation	Early school education teachers' evaluation
1. Dynamics	4.5	4.7
2. Melodics	4.39	4.65
3. Articulation	4.39	4.5
4. Tempo	4.58	4.55
5. Harmony	4.72	4.25
6. Instrument sound	4.89	4.85
7. Voice type	4.78	4.65
8. Formal construction	4.55	4.75
9. Name of dance style	4.61	4.75
10. Notation comprehension	3.58	4.55

Example 9. The assessment of the content of the test tasks with reference to the appropriateness of the awarded points

Analysing the mean results of the observation in two groups of the respondents under research, it can be stated that the suggested manner of test evaluation occurred appropriately and fair to a child (Example 9). In addition, the descriptive evaluation sheet allows for a more precise diagnosis of each pupil's musical competences and the definition of the approximate potential of the whole class (group). The early school education teachers gave Task 5 a slightly lower valuation (even though the result is still within the range 'high'). This group claims that presenting a melody of an indirect character (neither consonance, nor dissonance) will be related to some subjective emotions of the pupils tested in this research. Therefore, it becomes difficult to assess this task objectively.

The final criterion of the written evaluation of the test elements is **the quality of the musical samples** recorded on CD. The mean result of the respondents' responses is presented in the Example 10 below.

Music parameters	Musicians' evaluation	Early school education teachers' evaluation
1. Dynamics	2.85	4.55
2. Melodics	2.7	4.72
3. Articulation	2.7	4.16
4. Tempo	2.85	4.63
5. Harmony	2.55	4.47
6. Instrument sound	2.5	4.89
7. Voice type	3.55	4.75
8. Formal construction	2.85	4.67
9. Name of dance style	2.8	4.63
10. Notation comprehension	3.05	4.63

Example 10. The assessment of the content of the test tasks with reference to the quality of musical samples

Having analysed the results of the research, one can observe the huge discrepancy of the mean grades awarded by the early school education teachers and the musicians. The first group declared that the quality of the musical samples was on a very good level, whereas the second group claimed that the musical samples were of poor quality. Probably, the teachers-musicians gave poor grades for the artistic values due to the lack of live instruments in the musical samples. The recorded melodies were converted with the application of a synthesizer and despite its good quality, the specialists easily found the lack of the original sounding. The musicians who on everyday basis practise the live instruments can get irritated with the sounds processed artificially<sup>5</sup>. According to the early school education teachers, the produced samples were absolutely sufficient – the respondents even asked quite frequently whether they could save the CD as they wished to (be able to) make use of it in the future. While conducting the observation it was also noticed that the pupils also enjoyed the musical samples. The children got interested as some of the melodies happened to be cheerful and even hilarious to them.

<sup>5</sup> Despite some criticism from the musicians on the quality of the musical samples, it is still claimed that the processed sounds do not have the negative influence on child's musical development (their perception of music.) There are, however, a lot of tests which measure the level of competences or achievements (i.e. tests created by Edwin E. Gordon) which also do not base on the live music samples. It must be added that many of them are completely standardised. It also must be remembered that creating the musical framing using live instruments to a test is an extremely expensive issue (that is for this moment impossible to be realised). Moreover, in the majority of the tasks, their difficulty was not related to the timbre.

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

Basing on the analysis of the research data, it can be stated that the early school education teachers most frequently apply their common knowledge while defining the fundamental terms related to music listening. They possess relatively profound musical knowledge but they are unable to convert it into some practical competences. The respondents, however, frequently reach for the curriculum documentation which constitutes a particular guidepost to their further actions. The early school education teachers refer to the process of evaluation mainly in the context of the diagnosis of their pupils' achievements. They do not focus on the modification of their working methods in order to increase the effectiveness of education. They are not innovative and they do not want to search for the so-far-unknown evaluation styles related to music listening.

Implementing measurement and evaluation brings profits to both pupils and teacher themselves. Children who are aware of their possibilities (they know their strong and weak points) can better take advantage of their competences. Thanks to the diagnosis in evaluation, a teacher is able to individualise their actions with reference to the methods applied and working tools used. It also allows stimulating educational innovative approaches and creating favourable learning conditions as well as triggering the children's cognitive curiosity in order to explore mysterious and at the same time wonderful world of music more profoundly.

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