

EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MUSIC READING AND SPATIAL ORIENTATION SKILLS IN AN ONLINE TEST ENVIRONMENT

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Research in recent decades highlights the importance of music teaching and learning, the relation between musical abilities and other cognitive areas, and possible transfer effects. Connecting visual and auditive stimuli forms the basis of music reading and writing. The symbols of musical notation and their position carry meaning both in the vertical and the horizontal dimension. This is the reason why spatial and orientation abilities play a more important role in music reading than in word decoding (Fazekasné, 2006).

In our research we aimed to test one of the core components of music literacy, i.e. music reading as well as its relationship with spatial orientation skills among 9–12 year-old students. A total of 204 music school students from grades 4 to 8 participated in the study.

The melodic reading, rhythmic reading and audiation skills of students were tested with our self-developed online tool, where tasks with music symbols and signs were also integrated. These were supplemented with a self-developed spatial orientation ability test. Although there was no significant difference between the successive grades, music reading skills improved significantly between the fourth and sixth grades. Moderate and strong correlations were found between music reading achievement and the components of music reading, i.e. melodic reading, rhythmic reading, audiation, music symbols and signs. A significant correlation can also be observed between spatial orientation and music reading skills. There were strong correlations between certain music subjects, i.e. orchestra and music history and the music reading achievement. We found significant correlations between students' attitude towards some activities of solfege lessons, i.e. singing and music listening. Music reading achievement does not depend on maternal education or socio-economic status. Apart from its theoretical significance, the practical benefit of our research lies in providing foundations for the development of programs for music reading.

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