A Software Tool for Studying Music Practice: SYMP (Study Your Music Practice)

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**REFERENCES**

SYMP generates audio to videotape.

**Step 1:**
• Learning and score
  • The program allows a person to transcribe music practice and readily obtain graphic summaries and statistics showing how practice was organized and which passages and difficulties were a focus of attention.
  • SYMP differs from other transcription tools for music (SCRIBE) or language (e.g. ELAN) in that the data can be more flexibly reviewed by measure or beat, musical structure, type of practice, starts/stops, practice segments, etc. with graphical representations as well as raw data for direct analysis with statistical software (e.g. SPSS, SYSTAT, MATLAB).

**Step 2:**
• Step 1: The Performer/Researcher inputs data for each practice segment (uninterrupted playing of the piece): Start and end times (green columns), and the bar where playing starts and stops (yellow columns). The first module is where the data from the practice and from the music is entered. The other 4 modules provide graphical representations of the musician’s data and summary statistics for the researcher. The data used below for illustration are from Chaffin, Lisboa, Logan and Begosh (2009).
  
**Step 3:**
• SYMP generates the blue boxes below
  • The Performer/Researcher inputs information about the musical structure of the piece and about the musician’s decisions about technique, interpretation, and performance. A “1” indicates that the feature or cue (e.g. a section boundary) is present in that bar. A “0” indicates that it is absent. This information will later be related to the information from Step 1 about how the musician practiced.

**Step 4:**
• The Performer/Researcher receives a summary of the data in graphical form. The examples show how the user can track changes across sessions for: practice tempo, amount of time practiced, number of measures played overall, and from memory. (The charts for Step 3 are sample data.)

**Step 5:**
• The Performer/Researcher chooses one of the musical features or cues entered in Step 1 by entering a “1” next to it in an auto-generated table.

**Step 6:**
• The Performer/Researcher can see which measures were practiced in each session. The charts read from bottom to top with each blue line representing continuous playing of the corresponding measures. The features/cues selected in Step 5 are overlaid as vertical green lines. The example shows a musician practicing a piece in sections and then playing through without stopping.

**Step 7:**
• The Performer/Researcher can ask to see where playing started and stopped in one or more practice sessions. This allows him/her to examine how starts and stops relate to the features or cues selected in Step 5.

**Step 8:**
• This graphs shows the number of times each feature was repeated. This can also include one or more practice sessions. It allows the Performer/Researcher to examine how repetitions relate to the features or cues selected in Step 5.

**Step 9:**
• The researcher can extract predictors and dependent measures for use in regression analyses that determine which features and cues are reliably related to the behavioral measures entered.

**USING SYMP**

**General Layout:** SYMP contains 5 modules. The first module is where the data from the practice and from the music is entered. The other 4 modules provide graphical representations of the musician’s data and summary statistics for the researcher. The data used below for illustration are from Chaffin, Lisboa, Logan and Begosh (2009).

**References**


For more information or to download SYMP:
http://www.htf dcc. uconn. edu/psychlab/musictab. html