

50 EXERCICES

ETUDES SUR LE COUP DE LANGUE TERNAIRE

Par F. LIGNER

The triple-tongue articulation consists of separating a series of triplets. One should practice each of the following syllables very slowly and evenly.



To pronounce the *tu tu*, place the tongue against the upper teeth and between the stretched and slightly open lips in such a manner that the tongue can escape to the bottom of the mouth allowing the air to enter the mouthpiece and produce the first two articulations shown above.

To form the *ku*, hold the tongue against the lower teeth very close to the normal position. This syllable is very difficult to pronounce. Therefore one must practice it slowly and accent it in order to begin it so that it will eventually be as clear as the *tu*.

One should be able to produce a set of triplets in which all of the notes are equal and one cannot distinguish the *ku* from the *tu*, thus arriving at a correct performance.

(Note) Exercises 8, 9, 15, 29, and 30 must be practiced especially slowly to accomplish the greatest velocity especially with evenness. ¹

Thanks to the French Defense Ministry and Madame Dominique Hausfater (Director of the Multi-Media Library Hector-Berlioz at the Paris Conservatory), one can identify the method's author as Felix Desiré Ligner who was enlisted into the band of the *Garde de Paris* in 1864 as a Musician Second Class at the age of twenty-two. As a military musician, he may have been trained at the Paris Conservatory where Jean Baptiste Arban's *Methode* had been approved to be used for the training of military musicians in 1863. One might even speculate that Ligner was in a class that used Arban's method, if not being taught by Arban himself. Further, Ligner is the arranger of the overtures to Berlioz' *Benvenuto Cellini* and Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* for band. In the former arrangement, he is identified as having received an honor as a teacher; however, the

¹ Le coup de langue ternaire consiste à détacher une succession de triolets.

On devra travailler très-lentement et avec beaucoup d'égalité les syllabes suivantes :

[Exemple]

Il faut prononcer les syllabes *tu, tu*, placer la langue contre les dents de la mâchoire supérieure et entre les lèvres tendues et légèrement entr'ouvertes de sorte que la langue en se retirant au fond de la bouche laisse échapper l'air dans l'embouchure ce qui produit les deux premiers coups de l'exemple ci-dessus.

Quant à la syllabe *ku*, la langue doit se tenir contre les dents de la mâchoire inférieure et presque à sa place ordinaire. Cette syllabe est très-difficile à bien prononcer. Il faudra donc la travailler lentement et l'accentuer pour commencer afin que plus tard elle sorte aussi franchement que la syllabe *tu*.

Il faut arriver dans une suite de triolets à ce que toutes les notes sortent bien également et que l'on ne distingue pas la syllabe *ku* de la syllabe *tu*, de là viendra l'égalité du son et par conséquent une exécution correcte.

(Nota) Il faut travailler les numéros 8, 9, 15, 29, et 30 le plus lentement possible et arriver à la plus grande vitesse surtout avec égalité.

records that might clarify this are lost. In this book, Ligner anticipates both linguistics and speech therapy by describing the actual position of the tongue in the mouth, instead of a language-constrained alphabet. In 1867 Ligner is identified as an alto horn player in the band. Between 1869 and 1872, Ligner is identified as a cornet soloist with the band of the *Garde de Paris*.

The use of an alphabet to teach articulation is problematic in that different languages have significant variants in the pronunciation of shared letters, not to speak of alphabets that add or subtract letters. Herein lay the problems associated with the historic or “Arban” approach to teaching articulation. As a Romance language, French requires a “dental T” in which one places the tongue forward in the mouth to the point where it touches both the upper and lower teeth. To approximate this in English, we must pronounce a “soft TH.” The letter “K” does not appear in the French alphabet as there is already a “hard C” that suffices. An examination of a French dictionary will show that any word containing a “K” has a foreign origin. When Arban chose “K” for his second syllable, he was trying to emulate or suggest a consonant (that is to say, an articulation) that he could not otherwise suggest in the French alphabet. He was not the first as French flute tutors had been using it for many years, and Arban credits these as his source for articulation. As early as 1535 Silvestro Ganassi included a “che” (sounds “K” in Italian) in his table of paired articulations, never explaining the actual means of producing it.

In order to altogether avoid the shortcomings of an alphabetic approach to teaching triple and double tonguing, I propose a meta-alphabetic set of symbols that not only differentiate between the two articulations but also suggest the position of the tongue in the mouth for the two articulations. For the single touch of the tongue to the tip of the upper teeth, I suggest a symbol called a “dagger” from an extended font set: †. For the second sign I have chosen its companion sign, the “double dagger,” to suggest the double touch of the tongue as it combines a “normal” with a conscious use of the area just behind the tip of the tongue on the upper teeth while the tip of the tongue is anchored at the lower teeth : ‡,

Hopefully, these signs will suggest to teacher and student that there are two points of contact for this second stroke. The resulting pedagogical markings will hopefully allow one to accurately and correctly accomplish this challenging technique freed of the limits inherent in a language-based approach. In the new style, Ligner’s first example would appear thus:



The fifty-three exercises that follow provide a more systematic approach to the problem of both triple and double-tonguing. Hopefully, these signs will suggest to teacher and student that there are two points of contact for this second stroke. The resulting pedagogical markings will hopefully allow one to accurately and correctly accomplish this challenging technique freed of

the limits inherent in a language-based approach. In the new style, Ligner's first example would appear thus:



The fifty-three exercises that follow provide a more systematic approach to the problem of both triple and double-tonguing. The choice of teaching triple-tonguing before double-tonguing is likely to keep the two articulations from collapsing upon one another. Further, an examination of the history of the pedagogy of wind instruments (starting with the cornetto) always taught paired articulations – “L-R,” “D-R,” “T-CH,” “T-R,” etc. For an excellent source for further information in this fascinating aspect of wind playing, please see *Articulation in Early Wind Music* by Edward Tarr and Bruce Dickey published in 2007 from Amadeus Press (ISBN 13-978-3-905786-02-06). In it you will find numerous examples of the history of wind pedagogy to excite your wonder at the previously uncollated history of our art.

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1

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Exercise 1, first system. The score consists of five staves of music in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first two staves begin with a treble clef and a common time signature. The first staff contains two triplet markings over the first six notes. The music features eighth and sixteenth notes with rests, and a final whole note. Below each staff is a series of rhythmic flags indicating the placement of notes and rests.

2

Exercise 2, first system. The score consists of four staves of music in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature. The first staff contains two triplet markings over the first six notes. The music features eighth and sixteenth notes with rests, and a final whole note. Below each staff is a series of rhythmic flags indicating the placement of notes and rests.

3

Musical score for exercise 3, consisting of four staves of bass clef notation in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat. The first staff includes two triplet markings above the first two measures. Each staff is accompanied by a series of rhythmic symbols (vertical lines with flags) below the notes.

4

Musical score for exercise 4, consisting of four staves of bass clef notation in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat. The first staff includes two triplet markings above the first two measures. Each staff is accompanied by a series of rhythmic symbols (vertical lines with flags) below the notes.

5

Exercise 5 is written in bass clef, common time (C), and B-flat major. It consists of five staves of music. The first staff begins with two triplet markings (the number 3) over groups of three eighth notes. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, often grouped with slurs and accents. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

6

Exercise 6 is written in bass clef, 2/4 time, and B-flat major. It consists of five staves of music. The first staff begins with two triplet markings (the number 3) over groups of three eighth notes. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, often grouped with slurs and accents. The piece concludes with a double bar line.