

Book Review



Hungarian Educational Research
Journal

2019, Vol. 9(4) 742–748

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<https://akademiai.com/loi/063>

Akadémiai Kiadó

DOI:10.1556/063.9.2019.4.63

**Váradi, J., & Szűcs, T. (Eds.). (2019).
The past, present and future of music
pedagogy – Handbook of the presentations of
the conference for the 50th anniversary of
higher educational music teacher training.
Debrecen, DUPress**

Reviewed by Csaba Péter¹

Research in the field of music pedagogy has a significant role in the scientific world. Similarly to other sciences, the examination of this media from various aspects is important. Fortunately, Hungarian researchers have the possibility to make the results of their research available for the audience. A perfect example is the handbook, published in 2017, titled “*Multicoloured music pedagogy. Studies on the role, methods and social effects of music pedagogy [Sokszínű Zenepedagógia – Tanulmányok a zeneoktatás szerepéről, módszereiről és társadalmi hatásairól]*” edited by Judit Váradi, PhD and Tímea Szűcs, PhD. In the “*Education in the 21st century [Oktatás a 21. században]*” volume series, this was the first time when a book presenting studies related to music pedagogy had been published. The editor of this series is Gabriella Pusztai, DSc. In 2019, the volume edited by Judit Váradi and Tímea Szűcs was entitled “*The Past, Present and Future of Music Pedagogy – Handbook of the Presentations of the Conference for the 50th Anniversary of Higher Educational Music Teacher Training [A Zenepedagógia múltja, jelene és jövője – Tanulmánykötet a felsőfokú zenetanárképzés 50 éves évfordulója alkalmából rendezett konferencia előadásairól]*” and it was published as the continuation of the previous handbook.

The volume is divided into 4 chapters and includes 22 studies. The first chapter deals with the methodological characteristics of music education. The second chapter elaborates on

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the historical background of music pedagogy. The third discusses the perspectives of music education. The fourth contains studies written in English. It is titled "*Dimensions of music pedagogy*."

The authors of the first chapter are Andrea Asztalos, László Gönczy, Zsuzsanna Hegedűsné Tóth, Judit Kompár-Rómer, Ildikó Lehotka, Ildikó Reikort, and Tamás Szalai.

The authors of the second chapter are Gábor Dragony, Mihály Duffek, Gergely Kovács, Tímea Szűcs, and Gábor Tokodi.

The authors of the third chapter are Szabolcs Bandi, Sándor Imre Nagy, and Bence Vas who are authors of a cowritten paper; Alice Hausmann Kóródy, Emerencia Héjja Bella, Tünde Kornélia Pintér, and Csilla Imola Székely who are single authors of their own article; as well as Éva Vas and Gabriella Deszpot as coauthors of another paper.

The authors of the fourth chapter are Mária Glocková, Ákos Gocsál, Szabolcs Bandi, Ewa Parkita, Anna Parkita, and Maria Strenacikova.

The first study of the first chapter was written by Andrea Asztalos. It is entitled "*Voice-Production Errors in Elementary Age [Énekhangképzési problémák az általános iskolai korosztályban]*." The author presents the developmental process of children's singing ability using international academic literature and then she describes her own research. Using different methods during the investigation, she made a distinction among four types of voice-production errors in the case of children; then, she developed a solution for all and tested them as well. The results confirmed that using these methods, these singing problems can be improved within 2 years.

The second study is related to László Gönczy. Its title is "*Music History Courses as the Indicators of the Contextual and Methodological Problems of the School of the Arts in Higher Education [Zenetörténet-kurzusok mint a művészeti felsőoktatás rendszerszintű tartalmi és módszertani problémáinak indikátorai]*." As it is indicated in the title, the author targets the higher education, specifically music history courses in his research. He makes a theoretical approach toward the methodological and contextual issues of this subject. From the perspective of national higher education in musical arts, effectiveness is necessary to be improved in the case of these courses. The method selected by the author is to gain full-scale knowledge about the prospective freshmen. The examination was a pilot investigation, which was provided by the BA freshmen and by the freshmen of the undivided teacher-training program of two universities, of the University of Szeged, Faculty of Music and of the University of Pécs, Faculty of Music and Visual Arts. During the investigation, it was revealed that the knowledge gained about the participants of the education and the adjustment of the content to them are significant for the successful and fruitful education.

The third study is the work of Zsuzsanna Hegedűsné Tóth. Its title is “*An Innovative Music Pedagogical Method for 3-9 year-old Children [Egy innovatív zenepedagógiai módszer 3-9 évesek között]*.” The author presents the method of music pedagogy, which was developed by herself and which has been operating since 2010. The age group is identifiable on the basis of the title. We can mention mainly nursery-age children, preschoolers, and children from the junior section. The theoretical background of the whole method is demonstrated from the viewpoint of both general didactics and music pedagogy.

The fourth study was written by Judit Kompár-Rómer. It is entitled as “*About the Methods of Hungarian String Folk Music Education [A vonós magyar népzene oktatásának módszereiről]*.” In this brief essay, the author summarizes the essence of the difficulties of folk violin plays. She emphasizes the music teaching methods of village communities and the lessons learnt from them. This issue is examined by the introduction and description of the “Transylvanian School” and the “School of Highland.”

The fifth study is related to Ildikó Lehotka. It is entitled as “*Márta Albertné Balogh: My Fourth Songbook – The Listening Material of Fourth-Graders’ Music School Book in Primary School [Albertné Balogh Márta: Negyedik daloskönyvem – A negyedik osztályos általános iskolai ének-zene tankönyv zenehallgatási anyaga]*.” The essay deals with the listening material of the previously mentioned school book. It provides a detailed picture of the school book, and it is implicated in an investigation from various aspects whether the listening material of the school book adequately covers the excerpts of the book. We also receive a brief theoretical summary about the importance of listening to music and by showing us a half-structured interview, about both the teachers’ and students’ opinion on music listening during music classes.

The author of the sixth study is Ildikó Reikort. Its title is “*Music Pedagogy with Traditional and Modern Musical Instruments – The ReikArt Multidisciplinary Approach [Zenepedagógia tradicionális és modern zenei eszközökkel – A ReikArt összművészeti megközelítés]*.” In this paper, we can read about the methods for the novel application of multidisciplinary fields. These methods help to process the experience provided by music. This summary of the author can be particularly fascinating for those readers who are interested in the pedagogical methods of Klára Kokas.

The last study of the first chapter entitled “*The Overview of Research Tools Used to Measure the Ability to Sing in Music Pedagogy [Az éneklési képességek mérésére szolgáló kutatási eszközök áttekintése a zenepedagógiában]*” was written by Tamás Szalai. We can read about the difficulties in implementing the Kodály concept and about the situation of music education. Subsequently, we can learn the concept of skill and capability in a clearly defined chapter. In the main part of the paper, we can learn the methods used to measure

the ability to sing. For instance, musical ability and musical skill test, performance test, and attitude test. Thereafter comes the introduction of acoustic-measuring instruments; these tests are carried out with computers. The third category is the one that was developed specifically for a certain research by the researchers. At the end of the summary, proposals are mentioned to make future research more precise and efficient.

The author of the first study of the second chapter is Gábor Dragony. The title of the article is *"About the Past and Present of Folk Music Education Concerning Artistic Education [A népzeneoktatás múltjáról és jelenéről a művészeti nevelés tükrében]."* The author gives a summarized preview of the history of national folk music education, from the dance movements, which were casual Hungarian folk dance events, to the institutionalized, ongoing folk music education. The research examines a field of which the comprehensive, national investigation has not been carried out so far, so it could be interesting for people dealing with folk music.

The title of the second study is entitled as *"50 years of Music Teacher Training – From a Debrecen Perspective [A zenetanárképzés fél évszázada – debreceni szemmel]."* Its author is Mihály Duffek. We have an insight into how the national music teacher training has been developing since 1996 in Hungarian higher education institutions. Subsequently, we can learn the academic teaching staff of the University of Debrecen, Faculty of Music and the changes over time and the well-known, cultural engagement of the Faculty.

The title of the third study in the second chapter is *"Religious Music and Community-Creation: The Role of Choir Directors in the History of Debrecen Calvinist College Choir Kántus [Egyházzene és közösség-teremtés: a kórusvezetők szerepe a Debreceni Református Kollégium Kántusának történetében],"* the author of which is Gergely Kovács. The study presents a big-time interval, ca. 140 years, and puts the major emphasis on the work of three choir directors, who were directing the choir, mentioned in the title, for an outstandingly long time. Thus, we receive the detailed picture of the development of the choir and of how it achieved the highest professional level.

The author of the fourth study in the second chapter is Tímea Szűcs. The title of the work is *"Music Education from Parochial School to Primary School of the Arts [Zeneoktatás az egyházi iskolától az alapfokú művészeti iskoláig]."* It is a historical work summarizing briefly the history of national music education. The first chapter immediately introduces a bigger period, more precisely the period between the 9th and the 19th century. We gain a picture of what characterized music education in every century. Later on, the period from the 19th century till present days is presented. This is divided into two. In the first part, the development of music is depicted. It is followed by the development of instrumental music. We gain a very detailed description of music education by summarizing its main points.

The author of the fifth study is Gábor Tokodi. The title is "*Mandora Manuscripts of the 18th Century, New Repertoire in the Literature of Classical [A 18. századi mandorakéziratok, új repertoár a klasszikus gitár irodalmában].*" In this summary, we can learn not only the special instrument, mandora, but we receive an overview about the history of the 19th century music played on the guitar, when classical guitar, which is used nowadays, was non-existent. At the end of the paper, the author provides the instrument, mandora as an example in a Hungarian relation.

The authors of the first study in the third chapter entitled "*The Musician Personality Concerning Pedagogical and Mental Hygiene Aspects [A zenész személyiség pedagógiai és mentálhigiénés aspektusai]*" are Szabolcs Bandi, Sándor Imre Nagy, and Bence Vas. The authors discuss the relations of musicians' personality psychology and the common field of musicology and personality psychology in a brief overview. Spreading out from the relation between music and personality, the field of personality is being investigated from various aspects.

The title of the second article is "*Multidisciplinary Opportunities and Tasks of Music Pedagogy [A zenepedagógia multidiszciplináris lehetőségei és feladatai].*" The author is Alice Hausmann Kóródy. In this paper, through various fields, like native language or traditions, we can learn what multidisciplinary means, and how music education can help to form our value systems and literacy. The author mentions the biggest obstacle, which is no other than the minimal number of music lessons per week with respect to public education.

The author of the third study in this chapter is Bella Emerencia Héjja. It is entitled as "*The Introduction of the Family Background Concerning the Family Structure, the Number of Siblings, the Parents' Educational Level and the Communication between Parents and Children among Musical Secondary Vocational School Students [Zeneművészeti szakgimnazisták családi hátterének bemutatása a családszerkezet, testvérek száma, a szülők iskolai végzettsége és a szülők gyermekükkel való kommunikációja mentén].*" The study presents a questionnaire survey, conducted in a high school specialized in music and its results. In the first chapter, the family structure is examined. Here, we can get to know what type of families exists nowadays. Within the chapter, we gain a picture of how the number of children has changed over the past decades. We can read conclusions concerning how the parents' highest level of qualification influences child-bearing. In the next chapter, she examines the communication between the parents and their teenage child. The author presents her own empirical research in this paper. The investigation describes in details and from various aspects of the fields, which are mentioned in the title of the summary.

The title of the fourth study is "*The Assessment of Musical Education Regarding Elementary School Students [A zenei nevelés megítélése általános iskolás tanulók körében].*" The author

is Tünde Kornélia Pintér. As it turns out from the title, the investigation was conducted with students and its aim was to unravel their attitude toward musical education. We receive an overall view of the previously mentioned topic by examining four fields, such as attitude toward playing a musical instrument, listening to music, and the preferences of listening to music, attitudes, and satisfaction. The results are very telling and thought-provoking.

The author of the fifth study is Csilla Imola Székely. The paper is entitled as *“Freestyle Improvisational Dance to Classical Music in the Music Pedagogy of Klára Kokas [Szabad improvizációs tánc komolyzenére Kokas Klára zenepedagógiájában].”* The essay is completely built upon the music pedagogical methods of Klára Kokas and it gives an insight into a method of music perception and reception. Through the Kokas-life work, the author demonstrates how music and dance improvisation helps children to express themselves.

The authors of the last study in the third chapter are Éva Vass and Gabriella Deszpot. The title of their paper is *“Full Attention and Flow-Experience Regarding Children in Kokas-Pedagogy [A teljes figyelem és a flow-élmény a gyermekeknél a Kokas-pedagógiában].”* Similarly to the previous work, the pedagogy of Klára Kokas is presented for the reader, but it is examined from a different perspective. At present, the focus is put on creative flow-experience. The authors examine free movement inspired by music and the relation of musical knowledge and creativity in the context of Kokas-pedagogy as the main issue of the study. The analytical method developed by the authors is also depicted in details.

Mária Glocková wrote the first paper of the fourth and final chapters. The title is *“Politics and Art.”* This paper, similarly to the three other ones of this chapter, was written in English. As it turns out from the title, it discusses the relationship between politics and art. First, we can read about the definition of politics. It raises the question: What is political art? According to her, the arts cannot depend on politics. Arts has to be impartial and independent. Later on, we can read about the musical life of the former Czechoslovak Republic in details. The development of Slovakian folk music and the formation of Slovakian national opera are described comprehensively.

The authors of the second summary are Ákos Gocsál and Szabolcs Bandi. The title of their study is *“An Assessment of Pre-Service Teachers’ Entering Beliefs About the Teacher’s Role.”* Five groups of the University of Pécs, Faculty of Music and Visual Arts took part in the research. In the author’s paper, we can read about the results of the investigation made with these groups. The results are remarkably interesting and the different opinions of the student groups were clearly outlined.

The title of the third study is *“Educating Future Music Teachers in Poland – Theoretical Assumptions and Examples of Good Practice,”* written by Ewa Parkita and Anna Parkita.

The essay discusses theoretical and empirical observation. It investigates how a university affects a creative music teacher's personality development. The authors present this through the Institute of Music of city Kielce.

In the handbook, the last paper of the last chapter was written by Marai Strenacikova. The title is "*Music School Teacher's Preparation for Educating Children With Special Needs.*" This paper is about the education of children with special needs. It describes why it would be necessary to give teachers proper training for the education of these children, and it enlists three factors that interfere with the training of music school teachers for the education of children with special needs.

At the end of the handbook, we can read the English abstract of every essay and we can find the authors' contact information who published in this essay collection.

I would especially recommend this volume to music education teachers. It also can be a useful reading for anyone interested in arts education. We are talking about a very diverse volume, so anyone who is interested in this topic will find his/her most interesting study.