

Research and Innovations in Music Teacher Training Programme in Hungary

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Abstract : Improvisation is an integral part of music education programmes worldwide since teachers recognize that improvisation helps to broaden stylistic knowledge, develops creativity and various musical skills, in particular, aural skills, and also motivates to learn music theory. In Hungary, where Kodály concept is a core element of music teacher education, improvisation has been relatively neglected subject in both primary school and classical music school curricula. Therefore, improvisation was an important theme of a one-year-long research project carried out at the Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest. The project aimed to develop the music teacher training programme, and among others, focused on testing how improvisation could be used as a teaching tool to improve students' musical reading and writing skills and creative musical skills. Teacher-researchers first tested various teaching approaches of improvisation with numerous teaching modules in music lessons at public schools and music schools. Data were collected from videos of lessons and from teachers' reflective notes. After analysing data and developing teaching modules, all modules were tested again in a pilot course in 30 contact lessons for music teachers. Teachers gave written feedback of the pilot programme, tested two modules by their choice in their own teaching and wrote reflecting comments about their experiences in applying teaching modules of improvisation. The overall results indicated that improvisation could be an innovative approach to teaching various musical subjects, in particular, solfege, music theory, and instrument, either in individual or in group instruction. Improvisation, especially with the application of relative solmisation and singing, appeared to have been a beneficial tool to develop various musicianship skills of students and teachers, in particular, the aural, musical reading and writing skills, and creative musical skills. Furthermore, improvisation seemed to have been a motivating teaching tool to learn music theory by creating a bridge between various musical styles. This paper reports on the results of the research project.

Keywords : improvisation, Kodály concept, music school, public school, teacher training

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