

## Teaching skill building in music performance: A new theory and methodology

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Kulcsszavak: music ability, teacher training, methodology of performance pedagogy

### Absztrakt

I argue that the core, or essence, of musical giftedness is a set of music-specific abilities that enable a person to uncover meanings from musical materials and to fully concentrate on them during the act of listening, or performance, through feeling. The latter involves the ability to ‘navigate’ in real time in the musical flow, i.e., to be able to readily switch the attentional focus between the future, the past and the present during listening to, or performing, music. Based on pedagogical practice, this ability is likely to rely on a more general empathic capacity and may be taught to most people, including those scoring relatively poor on standard musical aptitude tests measuring ‘melodic’, ‘rhythmic’, or ‘harmonic’ skills. As developing this ability is of vital importance for performers, efficient performance and performance teacher trainings ought to include methods focusing on attentional skills related to the real-time ‘navigation’ in the musical flow. In my paper, I present a new, complete pedagogical methodology that aims to develop the performer’s ability to securely and comfortably ‘navigate’ in the music while performing a piece. To achieve this, the methodology focuses on mastering three vital attentional skills, regardless of the performer’s instrument and including singers. First, it aims at developing the ability to anticipate, that is, to form a clear cognitive and affective image of the forthcoming structural units. (This includes, but is not limited to, the estimation of the durations of the forthcoming, usually hierarchically embedded, structural units through feeling their length.) Second, exercises of this methodology help to form a clear mental image of the preceding musical units to which the subsequent ones are to be measured. Third, the methodology includes a series of exercises that help deeply feeling the present moment in music. Both the individual exercises and the full methodology can be used with singular success from the very beginning up to the most advanced levels of music education, yielding a uniquely powerful toolkit for the music teacher and the developing artist. The acquisition of this toolkit enables the musician to ‘let go’ in the moment, to be emotionally deeply engaged with music with full concentration, but also to take expressive risks and to deal with mistakes while performing. Among the most important benefits of the toolkit provided by the methodology are the following: the musician saves considerable practice time, and the use of the toolkit is able to open the way to the performer’s authenticity, creativity, feeling of ‘ownership’ over the music, and spontaneity (typically, while avoiding most of its negative aspects). The methodology was gradually developed during the past decade at two European conservatoires and it has already been introduced at several institutions in Central and Southern Europe, including music schools and the teacher training at the tertiary level.

### Szakirodalom

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