

Professor F.J. Mönks, the Greatest Mentor, Facilitator of Talent Nurture in Hungary, In: Ziegler-Fischer-Stoeger-Reutlinger (eds). *Gifted Education as a Lifelong Challenge*, LIT Verlag, Berlin, Zürich, Münster, 2012.25-42. p

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Professor Mönks, the outstanding international authority on talent research, the 12-year-long chairman of the European Council for High Ability founded in 1987 has been intensely supporting talent nurture in Hungary for 25 years as well as spreading the fame of the Hungarian talent nurture all over the world. In the beginning his support meant providing the opportunity for Hungarian researchers to join the international forums of talent development, making it possible for us to get information on the new theories, practical methods of talent development that started to be spreading globally from the second half of the 80s. (Balogh, L. 2011/b) It was of great importance when the Hungarian Éva Gefferth was chosen a member of the general committee of ECHA just as it was set up, being followed at this post by Mária Herskovits first, then by László Balogh later. Thus from 1987 to 2004 we had first-hand information on the pedagogical and psychological relevance of modern talent nurture. This information was badly needed, since in the decades following World War II the cause of talent nurture - mainly due to socio-political reasons - suffered a major set-back. Naturally, Prof. Mönks did not only make it possible for some privileged researchers to study abroad, but also made considerable efforts so that experts could attend the ECHA Conferences in as large numbers as possible, moreover, he gave financial support, too, for this cause. That explains that in the 90s and at the turn of the millenium the number of Hungarian attendees at these conferences was always among the highest in comparison with other nations, with many lectures held on the researches and practical programs in Hungary. Moreover, Prof. Mönks, since being elected president of ECHA (1992), has been taking an active part in the development of talent nurture both in public – and higher education in Hungary: during his 3-4 annual visits he delivered lectures at many conferences, as well as organised important international conferences in Hungary under the aegis of ECHA. Some of the most remarkable ones were the following: 1990: the 2nd International

Conference of ECHA, Budapest; 1997.: „Modern methods in talent nurture”, International Conference held in Törökszentmiklós; 1999.: conference COMENIUS-HOBE in Mátészalka; 2000.: the 7th international conference of ECHA held at Debrecen University; 2004.: „Talent nurture in the European Union”, Taktaharkány; 2006.: „Possibilities of cooperation between the state sector and civil organisations”, Budapest, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county; 2011.: European Union Presidency conference on talent – Budapest: the professor helped organise the conference as a foreign expert of the Organising Committee. He also played an active role in launching new talent-developing programs via continuous personal consultations in many settlements and schools, recently at Talent points, too. He has had several studies published in Hungary on how to develop the practice of talent nurture. Two of his monographies are particularly worth mentioning: Developmental psychology, URBIS Publishing House, Budapest, 2004., „If the child is talented....” Geniusz Könyvek, Budapest, 2011.

All the above testify to the fact why Prof. Mönks has been regarded the major facilitator, mentor of the development of talent nurture in Hungary in the last 25 years. However, it will be instructive to look into the fields where we have received the most expert help for advancement from him and how we managed to take advantage of them. Three areas must be highlighted: the further development of practical talent nurture programs in schools; the planning of further training forms to prepare teachers for efficient talent-developing work; the boosting of talent research in Hungary. We are going to examine them one by one as follows.

1. Further development of talent-nurture programs in schools

The European Council for High Ability / ECHA / - established in 1987- gave a considerable impetus for the development of school talent nurture. The Hungarian Section of ECHA was also set up in 1987, recruiting the country's experts on talent nurture, while growing out of it the Hungarian Talent Nurture Association was established in 1989. This organisation has been playing a major role in spreading in Hungary the most up-to-date forms of talent nurture. The change of the regime took place at the same time, which also created a favourable situation for the development of talent nurture in schools; the newly-acquired greater freedom of schools made it possible for them to launch talent programs, as well as funds arrived from several sources. The new educational law, the relevant government – and ministerial acts called more attention to the importance of talent development than before. From the mid -90s a considerable enrichment of different forms of talent nurture in Hungarian schools could be seen, with a background of continuous international cooperation. Currently many schools take part in it /COMENIUS-Program/ together with schools of other European countries, in search of efficient forms of talent nurture. Prof. Mönks is a determinant figure of this development, too. While in the decades

following World War II there were no enrichment forms in the Hungarian schools, let alone complex talent developing programs, since the mid-90s more and more up-to-date methods have emerged in Hungary to spot and develop talented children, thanks primarily to Prof. Mönks' manifold help. These can be summed up as follows.

Talent nurture programs are effective if children get in them on the basis of their abilities. That's why it is so significant to search for and identify talents, which was very accidental until the early 90s. In practical work a major advancement has been made since that time: the teachers use varied methods, since every main type can be found in the practice of schools. (ibalogh, L., 2004, Balogh, L., 2011./a; David, I. - Math, J., 2001) However, as far as frequency is concerned there are big differences: many schools do not apply creativity-tests, and there are hardly any examinations of self-image and learning strategies. In the modern talent – interpretation and – development the ones mentioned above also play an important role, talent nurture done without them lacks the necessary basis. It is positive, though, that many schools apply multi-source information collection, and measuring the ability level - an adequate method for choosing the children - is often among the applied methods. Sadly, the following pose problems. On the one hand it is rather unfortunate that even today children get into the program without the teachers applying streaming methods in half the number of programs. On the other hand in quite a high number of cases we meet school achievement, general level of knowledge among the applied methods, neither of which is the most effective form. Another negative aspect is the shortage of psychological methods. It is promising, however, that these are getting more and more widespread, due to the more efficient further training of experts. (More about this later.)

Various efficient methods – termed enrichment - of school talent nurture are applied all over the world. Basically these can be divided into two groups: one characteristic is that they stand apart from curricular forms / division, advanced level teaching, groups according to abilities etc./, the other is extracurricular activities / study circle, self-teaching group, block, weekend programs, summer camps, etc./. In today's school practice every meritorius form of talent development can be encountered during the lessons. It is the local traditions that basically influence which kind is applied in higher number. As a matter of fact all can be effective, although we found that it is the ability group that offers the most opportunities and this is the most frequently used one in the member states of the European Union. It is worth mentioning that more than half of the measured students take part in talent nurture within the framework of lessons. Nevertheless, there is a great difference in the number of programs in the individual schools: there are schools with ten programs, while some others do not have any. Of course the number of programs demonstrates the popularity of the special areas, and it is not surprising that foreign languages, science subjects, mathematics, information technology and the mother tongue are at the top of the list. Among extracurricular activities there are many which are not connected to

subjects, offering opportunities to discover and develop non-intellectual abilities. Besides the above mentioned forms there are other important tools of school talent nurture. Although their significance in the system is less than the ones mentioned before, it is worth giving an overview of them. (Balogh, L. 2012;; Balogh, L. - Balla, L. - Nagy K. - Szombathy, É. 2003; ; Pasku, J., 2001; Titko, I, 2001; Vizi, T. 2001) Acceleration, a globally widespread form of talent nurture, offers the student the possibility to go through the educational system at a higher than normal pace. Most often it means skipping a class, but it can also happen that a student advances faster than his peers in one particular subject. These forms do not really work in Hungary, their occurrence is sporadic, mostly in foundation schools. The reason for this is basically the inflexibility of the Hungarian educational system. Competitions are also effective forms of talent nurture. We are proud of the many different forms present in Hungary, what is more, we are the „champions” of Europe in this field. Subject-based competitions have a great tradition in our country, most of which are organised by the Ministry of Education and its relating institutions. The last decade has seen both regional and local competitions mushrooming, which are an integral part of school talent development and considerably contribute to identifying talent, too. Other important means of talent nurture are summer camps, festivals, exhibitions. Although we also have them, their number is not high. Regrettably, since after the change of regime – due to a shortage of funds – their number has been decreasing. This trend should be reversed, since these opportunities are very important in development of the talented, offering new scope to assess comprehensively one’s own „production”. The system of personal mentors is rather widespread in the world – especially in secondary school age-groups. Their role in the development is important: the mentor organises the student’s extracurricular possibilities and guides the individual developing programs, especially in the case of high ability students. Mentor-teachers are employed in almost all the secondary schools of the member states of the European Union, whose sole task is guidance, they themselves do not hold lessons. We are considerably lagging behind in this field, but no efficient talent nurture is possible without individual development! The forms of counselling are also indispensable for successful work. This comprises several kinds: counselling for the student, for his/her teacher as well as for the parents. This work can be done by a psychologist or a „gifted education expert”, too. There are hardly any psychologists employed in Hungarian schools, but the postgraduate training of gifted education expert training was launched at Debrecen University in 1997. Today there are more than 1000 teachers who have acquired this special qualification. It is necessary to increase the number of psychologists in schools – not only for the sake of efficient talent nurture!

Despite all the shortcomings mentioned above there has been a major advancement in applying up-to-date methods of talent development in Hungary in the last two decades, which, to a great extent, can be credited to Prof. Mönks! (Balogh, 2012; Balogh, L., 2011./b; Balogh, L. -Tóth, L., 2001/a, 2001/b;

Balogh, L- Balla, L - Nagy, K- Szombathy, É., 2003; Balogh, L. - Nagy, K., 1991, 1994, 1996; Csermely, 2011; Mönks, F.,J. - Pflüger, R., 2005; Persson, R., S. - Joswig, H. - Balogh., L., 2000; Turmezeyné, Heller, E., 2007)

2. Creating the forms of teachers' further training in the context of talent

In our country the teachers did not have access to suitable training in their special talent-developing work up to the early 90s. Since talent nurture got into the focus of attention of the teaching profession in the 80s, the demand by teachers for such trainings started to grow. This progress was due to several reasons.

- The social changes accentuated achievement-orientation in every field of life, and it became evident that neither the individual nor the country can attain high achievement without identifying and efficiently developing abilities, talent.
- Interest in talent nurture was also intensified by the changes in the school system as well as by the strengthening of school autonomy. Elementary – and secondary schools make efforts to create their own profile, often incorporating the special local system of talent development in the process.
- The National Curriculum requires the schools to make their own curriculum, which has the benefit for them to include talent developing programs in it. It is necessary to find and create those forms of activities in small groups or individually which facilitate the intensive individual development of talented children, since homogenous class work does not offer suitable conditions for this.
- The economic polarisation in our society, namely the ever-increasing poor layers puts a lot more responsibility on schools, experts than before in talent development. The forms that ensure for children from poorer backgrounds to develop intensively had to be created.

However, there was a discrepancy between these challenges and the teachers' preparation: on none of the courses (BA, BSc, MA, MSc) did they acquire knowledge to recognise and intensively develop talent at any level. Of course even back in those times there was a tradition of talent-developing programs and some high achievements were attained, but only little this work rely on the conclusions drawn from research in Hungary and abroad. (Balogh, 2001; Balogh, L. - Dávid, I. 1994.; David, I. - Balogh, L., 2001) Although the demand

for new knowledge had been present in teachers for years, there was no system-like knowledge or training program available to meet this demand. It is well-known that the ECHA worked out a post-graduate training program for teachers to raise the standard of the developing work. The ECHA-Degree-training program was founded at Nijmegen University, the Netherlands, in 1994. For many years Prof. Mönks was the director of the Institute, who not only gave his consent to the introduction of this post-graduate training program in Hungary but also offered his kind help with launching the training here. Prof. F.J. Mönks played a determinant role in starting the „gifted education expert training” at Debrecen University in 1997.

The „qualified expert in gifted education” further training (29./1997. government law) awards university or college degree, the pre-requisite of which is university or college qualification in pedagogy or psychology. Training time: 4 semesters, the lowest number of lessons: 625

The training requires the previous acquisition of knowledge necessary for the work of a teacher, so during the training the problems of talent development are focused upon. The general topics of the teaching profession were incorporated in the curriculum only with the aim to make a link between old and new knowledge. The training program, which adopted the program of similar training under way in many developed countries of Europe, includes the following topics:

- Theoretical introduction: history of talent nurture, talent and society, modern interpretation of talent, its components and kinds.
- Methodology and development: diagnosis of talent, talent-development programs, counselling, individual development, the role of the teacher in talent development, underachievement, learning disorders.
- Specialisation: these provide the theoretical background of pedagogical and managerial activities concerning talent development, from the fields of social pedagogy, curriculum planning, mental hygiene and organisational development.

There are altogether 165 hours external trainings included besides the theoretical preparation, which serve as the basis for the final paper. Theoretical studies make up 34% of the training time, while 66% is dedicated to internal and external practical studies. (See the subjects in the enclosed program description, more details: Balogh, L., 2001).

The teachers, psychologists with this degree can use their special knowledge mostly in school talent development but other educational institutions (e.g. kindergartens, student hostels) and special institutes (educational and career

guidance institutes, family guidance centres, public education institutions, talent points can also benefit from what they have learnt.

Program descriptions of the training 'Talent-developing teacher'

Course	1 st term		2nd term		3rd term		4th term		Form of assessment			
	L ¹	S	L	S	L	S	L	S	SE	CG	CE	FE
I. Theoretical introduction												
1. History of research and nurture of high ability	20	-							1			
2. Definitions and sorts of talent	20	-							1	2		
3. Components of high ability	20	-	20	-					1	2		
4. Talent and society	20	-							1			
5. Talent and socio-emotional development			20	-						2		
6. Creativity, pedagogical implications			10	20*						2		
II. Methodology and development												
1. Diagnosis of talent			10	10	10	10				2	3	4
2. Talent-development programs					10	10	-	10		3	4	4
3. Methodology of enriching programs					10	10	-	10		4	4	
4. Underachievement, learning disorders					10	10				3	4	
5. Counselling, individual development					10	10	10	10		3	4	4
6. The role of the teacher in talent development	-	20*					10	20*				4
7. Seminar for final paper					-	10	-	10		3	4	
III. Specialisation (optional, 90 hours, 1 obligatory course)												
1. Mental hygiene in schools												
2. Organisational development												
3. Development of the education (list of courses : see next page)												
Obligatory : (210 lecture courses, 160 seminars)	80	20	60	30	40	50	30	60	4	10	2	1
Optional (minimum : 90 hours)	Depends on the choice of specialisation											
External trainings : 165 hours (15 hours to each assigned course)	-		30		75		60					

The subjects signed with * are trainings, they do not end with marks.

a) *The graduates are familiar with:*

- the history and the most important theories of talent development
- the developmental specificities of talented students
- the different approaches to talent
- the fields of talent development and the basics of co-disciplines
- the methods of talent diagnosis, the professional-ethical rules of handling and processing data,

- the principles and methods of talent-counselling
- the methods of self-teaching and effective communication

b) *The graduates are suitable for:*

- doing independent research and developing work in talent development,
- using practical methods, analysing and intervening procedures applied in talent development,
- planning talent programs independently
- doing talent-pedagogical work in educational, developing institutions where the work is in line with their talent – qualifications,
- applying individual-, group – and family counselling to facilitate development and change,
- following the new results of partner disciplines.

The graduates of the first year in 1999 declared their claim for further cooperation, thus „THE WORKSHOP OF ECHA DEGREE HOLDERS” was set up in care of Debrecen University and the East-Hungary Section. of the Hungarian Association for High Ability. This further training workshop holds a symposium every half year, at which a talent-developing institution with a long tradition /school, educational guidance institute, further training centre, region etc./ presents its practical results. There are about 60-100 ECHA-degree-holders attending these two-day programs. These meetings do not only contribute to professional enrichment but they are also meaningful social encounters, so much missed in our society.

It is no exaggeration to say that launching the training of gifted education experts at Debrecen University can be regarded as a landmark in Hungarian talent nurture, thanks mostly to Prof. Mönks, who has continuously been taking an active part in the training as well as controlling the program in Hungary. The success of the training is justified by the fact that the other four higher education institutions have adopted the training program of Debrecen University and formed their own profile in training gifted education experts based on it. Currently there is gifted education expert training under way at five places: Debrecen University, Eötvös Lóránd University, Szombathely Teacher Training College, the College of Eger and the Szarvas College of Szent István University. In all probability the personal and material conditions will be ensured for the training to be launched at further higher education institutions in the near future, since success in talent development depends on the further training of a great number of teachers.

The Genius Integrated Talent-developing Program led by Prof. Péter Csermely was launched in 2009 (Csermely, 2011) with the aim to offer more training for gifted education experts in particular fields. In 2010-11 more than 100 course programs were planned (5-30 hour further trainings) involving the best Hungarian experts, in the topics below. Prof. Mönks gave us a helping hand in this work, too, as a counsellor. (Details: www.geniuszportal.hu)

What these trainings include can be divided into 5 major groups:

A) Psychological, pedagogical background

Definitions, models, identification, personality traits, underachieving, etc.

B) Roles in the programs:

Pedagogue, psychologist, counsellor, coordinator, mentor, parent, etc.

C) Developing methods, devices

Enrichment, acceleration, differentiation, complex programs, project-methods,

Cooperative learning, drama pedagogy, etc.

D) Developing special abilities:

Complex science, mathematics, music, sport, literature, language, information

Science, arts, etc.

E) Factors of the environment:

School, family, peers, society, talent points!

This overview demonstrates how rich the offer is, as a matter of fact this variety of the further training of gifted education experts stands out in comparison with other European countries. It is no surprising that the training is so successful: so far more than 14 000 experts – most of them teachers – have taken part in this training.

3. Boosting talent research in Hungary

There was serious research carried out from the middle of the last century (Géza Révész, László Nagy, Pál Ranschburg), however the work was broken after World War II and until the 80s no important research was done in Hungary. In the years before and around the change of regime talent nurture got into the focus of professional attention. Besides these changes in Hungary, talent nurture saw an upswing in Europe, too, which strengthened Hungarian research, due to the role the “European Council for High Ability” played and our intensive cooperation with Nijmegen University.

Talent research is connected to universities, institutions, out of which the following were the most determinant in the last decades:

- Debrecen University
- Loránd Eötvös University
- The Psychological Institute of the Hungarian Scientific Academy

- The Talent Guidance Centre of the Municipal Pedagogical Institute

At all these places there was and there is intensive research under way, adjusting to with the international trends, in the following topics:

- school programs, their influence on talented children;
- talent-diagnosis;
- self-image, self-esteem of the talented;
- extracurricular activities;
- underachieving talented students, counselling;
- talent development in special talent fields (e.g. music, sport, mathematics, science, etc.).

Prof. Mönks also played an important role in reviving talent research in Hungary: in 1993 he gave invaluable guidance in elaborating the sub-program “talent research” of the psychology PhD program at Debrecen University. He also held courses in this field as well as supported the professional development of PhD students by offering them scholarships to Nijmegen University. Several PhD students spent several weeks in Nijmegen with the scholarships they were granted, and one of the lecturers at the Psychological Department of Debrecen University acquired his PhD degree there with the help of a 3-year-scholarship. Prof. Mönks also helped colleagues and teachers write their dissertations with his expert advice, and we are proud to say that 20 have already been defended. In the following we are giving an overview of the topics of PhD dissertations that were completed with Prof. Mönks’ collaboration. The director of studies in all these cases was László Balogh, head of department. Nowadays several of the lecturers of the department act as directors of studies of recent dissertations: László Tóth, Imre Dávid, Ferenc Mező, Judit Kiss Páskuné.

1. Imre Dávid: A comparative study of the means in talent identification in the intellectual sphere

For years one of the central questions of talent research has been how we can spot, identify the talent of a child. Quite frequently it poses a bigger problem than developing work proper, because once we have discovered the talent there is a wide variety of devices available we can choose from to facilitate development. Imre Dávid did examinations which compared talented and average primary school children on the basis of intelligence, special cognitive abilities, creativity and motivation, which are all classical aspects in diagnosing talent. As a new element he adapted the Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT), one of the devices widely used in the international practice of talent identification, to the Hungarian circumstances and compared the results with the above parameters as well as the school achievements. With complementary

examinations he also revealed the teachers' opinion, experience concerning talent identification and talented students. The results of the dissertation made by Imre Dávid help both psychologists and school teachers in their everyday work to identify talent. (More details: David, I. - Math, J., 2001)

2. Judit Kiss Páskuné: The role of out-of-school education in developing abilities – with special focus on talent nurture

Taking advantage of sparetime beyond compulsory activities at school has always played an important role in developing talent. The author examined the importance of education other than within the schools system as well as extracurricular school education: how efficient they are, what they are or are not good for, what is the student motivated by to make use of these services. This work, too, is a rich source of a lot of useful information both for experts working in practice and researchers. (More details: Pasku, J., 2001)

3. Ferenc Mező: Talent identification based on opinions

One type of talent identification relies on the opinion concerning talent of the social environment, peers, teachers or even the person itself. The aims the researcher set are the following:

- The fundamental question: to what extent are these opinions reliable, exact, realistic?
- How does the opinion-forming person's characteristics affect the opinion?
- How does the target person's characteristics affect the opinion?
- To what extent can the different attributes (intelligence, creativity, characteristic features, etc.) be judged?
- Opinions about the opinions: is the student right in his perception of what the teacher, parents, classmates think of him?

Answering these questions in practical pedagogical work is instrumental.

4. Kornélia Gömör: Development of talented students in integrated and streamed classes

It is a serious theoretical and practical problem to decide which educational organisational forms are the most efficient for the development of talented students.

Today, when the principle of integration is expected to be more and more consistently applied in the school developing work, this question is of particular importance. With psychological methods the author is examining how

important background factors (general intellectual abilities, learning strategies, motivation, anxiety and other personality traits) develop in integrated or streamed surroundings.

5. Margit Bóta: Examination of self-image in talented students in the context of family background

The author was granted her PhD degree for doing research in an important field of talent development. It is a well-known fact that the family background has a fundamental influence on the formation of self image, which depends on the structure of the family, the emotional atmosphere, the pattern of interactions within the family, the financial situation. This issue had been widely studied, however, in Hungary a complex examination of talented children in this context was missing. So the research done by Margit Bóta fills a gap and both teachers and parents can turn to it for help in the practice of development.

6. Erika Heller Turmeneyné: The development of musical abilities at the age 6-10

We have a lot of knowledge about musical talent, however research following the development of this special ability with longitudinal examination is scarce. That is why the researcher's work is vital both at home and abroad, especially because she makes an attempt at creating a new system of musical abilities. The work focuses on the following main areas:

- Factors influencing the development of musical talent and abilities;
- Theoretical models for developing musical talent and abilities,
- The practical aspects of developing musical talent and abilities;
- *The development of individual musical abilities and their connection in the ability structure of talent. (More details: Turmezeyné, Heller, E., 2007)*

7. Róbert Orosz: Elaboration and examination of non-specific developing program for sports talent

The author aimed at working out such a non-specific developing program for skills and abilities, which helps 14-18-year-olds to develop their talent in sport through abilities which are not sport-specific. It is common knowledge that besides activity-specific factors, non-specific factors such as creativity and social connections also significantly contribute to unfolding talent. The affective and cognitive factors that influence performance in sport are gaining more and more importance in modern practical sports psychology.

The researcher focuses upon the following non-sports specific factors:

- self-confidence, positive self-image,
- assertivity
- concentration and mental alertness
- social skills (the capacity to be trained, readiness for cooperation, empathy
- failure tolerance
- anxiety
- creativity

The results of the examination are expected to offer help for experts to efficiently develop sports talent.

In addition to the research outlined above there are other works dealing with certain particular fields of talent, however they dominantly focus on other pedagogical-psychological issues, so we are not going to write about them now. Nevertheless, the variety and high number of research topics show that there are still blank areas in school talent nurture. On the other hand the research results so far prove that practice in schools can benefit from meaningful research. Moreover, it is one guarantee that school talent development in Hungary – in the vanguard of Europe at present – will not decline in the following years and the dormant talent of fewer and fewer students will remain undiscovered.

Finally, I feel I must say thanks to Prof. Mönks for the considerable help he gave me in my own research. He called my attention to the so-called psychological background factors that play a dominant role in the development of promising talents, besides the development of abilities. This was the reason why my colleagues at the department and I launched a longitudinal examination involving more than 1000 students participating in talent programs, with the aim to study these factors. In lack of space I am only going to give a brief outline of the most important aspects of the study, as well as the conclusions relating to the practical work of talent development.

No similarly complex and large examination had been done in Hungary in this topic, so well-founded conclusions can be drawn for the practical side of the developing work. Margit Bóta, Imre Dávid and Judit Kiss Páskuné also contributed in certain areas of the examination and the analysis.

What we studied were as follows:

- the connection between learning motivation and the development of general intellectual abilities,
- the connection between learning motivation and the development of self-image.
- the correlation between the development of general intellectual abilities and self-image,

- the connection between general intellectual abilities and the development of anxiety,
- the connection between learning strategies and self-image,
- the correlation between learning strategies and anxiety,
- the connection between anxiety and the development of self-image.

(The details of the examination results can be found in: Balogh, 2012.)

As mentioned above establishing the correlation between these factors is a breakthrough in Hungary not only from the point of view of research but is instrumental in the practice of the developing work, too. Therefore we make recommendations for practical pedagogical work at the end of the relevant chapter, which are the following:

First of all - based on the three measurements – we must state again that the “background factors” of talent – and ability development we examined operate in a system and they are interrelated in many aspects. Which are the most important correlations?

- *There is a close connection between learning motivation and self-image*, namely a positive self-image has a favourable influence on the learning motivation and vice versa. So it is hard to imagine a child with a negative self-image who is eager to study.
- *There is a similarly close connection between learning motivation and learning strategies*: the more motivated a student is, the bigger the chance is that he will apply the more efficient information-processing methods.
- It is also undisputed that *the more anxious a student is the more likely he is to apply reproductive, mechanical learning methods*.
- The connection between anxiety and self-image is also very close: the lower the student’s self-esteem, the bigger the chance for anxiety.

These important statements also show that the background factors are impossible to develop separately: learning motivation, self-image, anxiety and learning strategies work in an organic system, they can be developed only together. We have to reconsider the pedagogical work in schools bearing this in mind, since today the individual factors mentioned above get into the focus of attention only sporadically, so meaningful results are hard to get in this way. The results of our examinations can be a starting point for a novel school developmental strategy, with special attention to shaping personality traits besides abilities. It is evident for all of us that without these there is no high student achievement.

I could go on enumerating Prof. Mönks' merits in the development of talent nurture in Hungary, but as proved by what has been said above it is a fact that without him the cause of the Hungarian talent nurture were not at the level it is now. We are all aware of his outstanding international role in developing talent research, his model made with Renzulli will always be a starting point both for experts working in practice and researchers, his authority is recognised worldwide. In recognition of his two-decade-long support in Hungary he was awarded the following prizes: "Kelemen László Prize" – by Debrecen University, 2000., "For the Talented Prize" – by the Hungarian Talent Society, 2009., Career Prize for Serving Talent" – by the Hungarian National Council for High Ability 2012.

Hereby we express our gratitude and thanks to the 80-year-old Prof. Mönks for all the help and support he gave us in reviving the Hungarian talent nurture in the last quarter of a century. Hopefully, we will be able to rely on his knowledge and experience in the future, too. God bless him, Many happy returns of the day!

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