REVIEW

of the dissertation

written by Maya Penkova Andasorova, a part-time PhD student at the Department of Music and Multimedia Technologies, Faculty of Educational Studies and the Arts - Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

on topic:

"Integral approach and methodology of music education in 4th grade"

for the awarding of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor"
in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional field 1.3 Pedagogy of teaching... (Methodology of teaching music)

SCIENTIFIC SUPERVISOR: Prof. Adrian Georgiev, PhD

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Doctoral student's data and compliance of the procedure with the current regulations

The PhD student Maya Andasorova graduated with a Master's degree in "Primary School Pedagogy" at the University of Veliko Tarnovo "St. Cyril and St. Methodius". She has many years of pedagogical experience, and since 2007 has been working at 7th "Sveti Sedmochislenitsi" school, Sofia, where she is a mentor primary teacher. She has been enriching her professional qualification in various forms of specializations and has a First professional qualification degree. She participates in the development and operational management of 4 projects, one of which – "Innovative School" – directly corresponds to the topic of her dissertation. She is a co-author of Music textbooks 1 – 4 grade, teacher's books and the textbooks of PH RIVA, approved by the Ministry of Education and introduced in Bulgarian school practice in 2016.

Maya Andasorova's doctoral program was completed within the deadline and the dissertation is aimed at defense in accordance with the requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations on the terms and conditions for obtaining scientific degrees and holding academic positions at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

Topicality of the problems in the dissertation

In the introduction the doctoral student argues in detail and convincingly the relevance of the problem, justifying her reasons to choose the topic of her work with emphasis on the integrated approach and the need to apply new pedagogical techniques in music education in primary school**.** The two fields of experimental work are clearly outlined: 1) development and testing of integrative methodology, combining multidisciplinary problem-based lessons, observations and project activities; 2) and the use of modern techniques and technologies in music education with author's tools testing *(Kahoot test*) for measuring and evaluating the knowledge, skills and competencies in the field of Music at the end of the 4th grade. The working hypothesis accentuates not only the main line in the research project, the approaches and methodology aimed at increasing the efficiency of learning music-theoretical knowledge, practical skills and competencies of students, but also the conditions and environment in which the experiment is being implemented – the innovative 7th "Sveti Sedmochislenitsi" school, Sofia. The tools describe the methods introduced in the different stages of research and experimental work. The short glossary clarifies the basic terminology which is used in the research process.

Structure and content of the dissertation

The dissertation presented for evaluation has been developed in a volume of 207 pages, of which 188 are the main text. It is structured with an introduction, four chapters and a conclusion, including a list of references and 4 appendices. The data from the experimental study are illustrated in 4 tables and 41 diagrams.

In the first chapter of the dissertation are traced in a separate section the historical traditions of Music studying in Bulagrian schools. It is obvious that with this review the doctoral student does not aim at a systematic scope of the ideas and tendencies in our musical and pedagogical heritage after the Liberation (1878) until today. The thesis focuses on practices from the end of the 19th and the beginning of

the 20th century, related to the main musical activities and the methodology of their teaching, musical literacy, development of aural skills, and others. An example of this is the analytical perusal of the articles on these issues by the anonymous author under the pseudonym of A moll, Georgi Baidanov and Karel Machan.

The directions and changes in the modern system of music education and training are focused on the innovations in primary school, pertaining to the formation of knowledge, skills and competencies of students in the field of music. Within the framework laid down by the State educational requirements and the related to them normative documents, the PhD student finds her research space: the application of an integrated approach and the outlining of teaching methodology grounded on problem-based lessons, observations and project activities in extracurricular environments.

The second chapter of the dissertation examines and summarizes the *"Didactic systems for music education and upbringing of students from the primary stage of training".* The knowledge of the traditional, predominantly European systems, some of which have remained relevant to this day (eg J. Dalcroze, C. Orff), the contribution of generations of Bulgarian music educators, as well as the new trends in music teaching, are prerequisites for author's innovative view and methodology of teaching Music in primary school. This view is based on the notion that modern music education systems operate in pluralistic spaces, and ideas from different didactic systems are adopted in pedagogical practice to be tailored to the goals and tasks of studying in real and virtual learning environments.

The third chapter of the dissertation *"Pedagogical design of the experimental research"* presents the organizational model, content, goals and tasks of the research work which aim to test: innovative methodological model of interdisciplinary problem-based lessons **(3.2.);** methodological directions for creating and conducting observations in extracurricular learning environment **(3.2.2)**, and project activities in music education in 4th grade as part of "Arts" field in the State educational requirements. **(3.2.3)**

These three panels of the experimental study consistently describe in terms of content the specifics of the structural organization, the methods and approaches, the goals and the conclusions from the planned classes, as well as the realization of the observations and projects in school and in extracurricular educational environment.

During the research period a total of 32 observations were made – 16 of them of problem-based lessons, 6 of which in an external environment and 10 in project activities. The thematic lesson units have been developed and specified with the team of 4th grade teachers, and the observations - through contacts and coordination with national music institutes, the Academy of Music, the program "Fortissimo in class", and others. The project activities program is in fact a short "history of art", which includes a theoretical and a practical part, emphasizing the interaction between music and visual art. It unites the efforts of a large part of the pedagogical staff of 7th school, who share the understanding about the role of the arts in the aesthetic and personal development of students.

The measurement of the results of the experiment on the application of an integrated approach and methodology of teaching music to fourth-graders is based on the author's tools - *Kahoot test,* which includes 37 test tasks with optional or free-answer questions**. (3.3.)** The data indicate the level of knowledge, skills and competencies, and the performance activities are monitored and researched in a real learning environment, and for this purpose an evaluation card is filled in for each student.

The analysis presents the results of the research on the individual criteria of the State educational requirements for the initial level in primary school, illustrated with diagrams, comments, recommendations and conclusions about the achievements of the students. **(3.3.7.)** The main musical activities (singing and listening) and musical means of expression (rhythm, dynamics, timbre, tempo) are covered. Creative tasks are included - composing and performing rhythmic accompaniment, skills for recognizing groups of musical instruments, types of orchestras and choirs, knowledge of the musical notation, musical genres, and others. The quantitative results summarized in Tables № 4, 5 register the achievements of the experimental and control group, and convincingly prove the working hypothesis and the goals laid down in the study with data showing the high success rates of the students from the innovative school, upgraded with the introduction of new methodological approaches in Music education in curricular and extracurricular environments.

The final stage of the experimental study coincides with the period of the unexpected challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, which require changes in the organization of the educational process and adaptation to the new conditions in a remote environment.

The fourth chapter of the dissertation traces the directions of change in the content of individual thematic modules of the research project, the "design" of the problem-based music lessons and project activities due to the limited contacts and access to cultural institutions. At the same time, the advantages of distance learning are highlighted, defining its role in activating students' work with E-textbooks and resources, group work and creative activities (recording, making videos, etc.), which upgrade their basic knowledge and enrich their digital skills.

In the conclusive part, the PhD student summarizes the results of the research experiment, emphasizing the support and participation of the pedagogical staff at 7th school - Sofia in the process of its implementation. Based on the accumulated experience, she formulates conclusions and directions of future work, which are of conceptual importance not only for Music education, but relate to the opportunities for enrichment and change of teaching methods that can be implemented within the SER and the established programs in Bulgarian schools.

Scientific-theoretical and practical-applied contributions

I accept the contributions formulated by the doctoral student with the remark that it would be better if they are differentiated as scientific-theoretical and practical-applied. They present the research contributions of the experimental study, among which I would like to highlight those related to the organizational and content aspects of the innovative methodological model of problem-based lessons, observations and project activities, as well as the author's *Kahoot test.*

Thesis summary

The thesis summary fully reflects the content of the dissertation.

Publications on the topic of the dissertation (content and implementation of the scientometric requirements)

There are 3 publications on the topic of the dissertation, published in specialized collections of scientific-practical conferences at Sofia University, one of which with international participation. The list includes music textbooks for 1.-4. grade, teacher's

books and textbooks with the participation of the PhD student as a co-author. Her contribution is not specified.

In this quantity, the scientific publications cover the national minimum requirements for the implementation of the scientometric indicators.

Notes, recommendations and questions

Only two models of interdisciplinary problem-based lessons conducted within the experiment are attached to the main text of the dissertation. The project activities are not illustrated with photos, videos and audio recordings, nor with materials illustrating the results of the work in groups, in a team or the individual achievements of the students. It would be interesting to consider the work plan of a project on the theme "Baroque" or "Impressionism", the selection of the musical material and pictures, the description of the tasks and activities assigned to the students. Does the PhD student have information about problem-based learning and practices in other innovative schools?

Conclusion

Based on the analysis and the results achieved by applying the author's model of interdisciplinary problem-based lessons, observations and projects in the practice of the innovative school, **I confidently give my positive vote and propose to the esteemed scientific jury to award Maya Penkova Andasorova the educational and Scientific degree "Doctor" in the field of higher education: 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of teaching… (Methodology of teaching music).**

Prof. Stefanka Angelova Georgieva, PhD
(signature)

10.06.2022 , Stara Zagora