

Review

of the scientific work submitted by
Assistant Doctor Diana Veskova Petkova for the competition announced by Trakia University for the needs of the Faculty of Pedagogy for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in "Methodology of music education", in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical Sciences, professional direction 1.3 Teaching Methodology in Music Education, published in the State Gazette, issue no. 38/28.04.2023.

Assistant Dr. Diana Veskova Petkova is the sole candidate in this competition. I will focus my attention on the works she presents. The monograph "Musical Computer Technologies in Education" is characterized, first by the well-chosen software for use by teachers and students. Among other features that make the book valuable not only for music teachers but also for their students are:

1. The historical development of computer technologies for music is traced.
2. Musical software is classified according to its purpose in music lesson (training, instructional, gaming, research, creative), as well as according to the specific purpose of individual programs (notation, audio editors, sequencers). In the exposure, each type of program is analyzed separately, providing useful information.
3. The possibilities of incorporating musical encyclopedias, interactive educational books and textbooks, and educational game programs into music lessons are explored.
4. Detailed explanations are provided on the application of computer programs in music lessons for two of the three main musical activities - music perception and composition of music, comparing this with the implementation of this activity in traditional music lesson. Examples of music arrangement are also given.
5. In the tasks developed by Dr. Petkova for familiarizing students with the various functions of the studied computer programs, the less obvious functions of the software are sought, those that students may not discover on their own. This facilitates quicker orientation in the program's capabilities and makes its use easier.
6. Serious feedback is established with the students to clarify their opinions, which should be taken into account in future work with music software. This is evidenced by well-formulated questionnaires included in the appendices.
7. The entire content is richly illustrated with tables and graphics, which complement the acquired knowledge and substantiate the stated claims.

In the monograph "Design for Informal Music Education" Diana Petkova:

1. Successfully extracts the most essential information from numerous works by leading authors on the topic of formal and informal education, systematizing the knowledge obtained into clear and informative graphics and tables.
2. Highlights the significantly greater adaptability of informal education to the specific needs of individual learner. Based on this, the candidate builds her proposed system for informal education.
3. Focuses not only on children of preschool and school age but also on the youngest - her approaches encompass and music activities for children aged 1 to 3 years.

4. Draws upon both current global achievements in early childhood music education and the practice of informal education in Bulgaria. Diana Petkova uses this solid foundation to create her methodical system for informal education of young children, divided into three age groups - 0 to 1 year, 1 to 3 years, and 3 to 5 years, with parental involvement in the first two groups. The proposed organization of the educational process is extremely flexible, consisting of individual short-term modules, each tailored to the child's age. Enrollment in the art organization where the training is conducted is not fixed in time, meaning there is no strict adherence to the start of the school year.

5. She develops her own model for musical notation education for children starting at the age of In this model, the emphasis is on the motoric representation of various tonal qualities and organized sound sequences. This motoric representation also includes the expression of emotional reactions to the music being perceived.

6. To enhance adaptability in learning, provide a greater variety of activities, and offer richer information, Petkova creates educational programs. All of them are age-appropriate and attractive to the learners.

7. The author also develops educational projects, with social-educational projects targeting not only children from the art organization but also children from a Family-Type Accommodation Center. The projects are described with their included musical content, goals, objectives, expected results. The sequence of actions required for successful project implementation is also discussed.

8. Dr.Petkova ensures that when implementing educational programs and projects, children have the opportunity to become familiar with the musical instruments discussed in their lessons, to hear live performance of specific instrument by professionals, and thereby to listen to composition not covered in textbooks, i.e. to gain additional impressions. This allows them to simultaneously expand their musical culture and make contact with new professional musicians (not just their teachers).

9. Through the projects "Children in the Orchestra," "Children in the Orchestra 2," and "SymphoKids," the author ensures that participants become part of a children's orchestra, initially for percussion instruments, and later, as their instrumental skills develop, in various ensembles for independent performances. In the "SymphoKids" project, educational concerts are held in kindergartens and primary schools, providing the children with performance experience on various stages and in front of unfamiliar audiences. All of this serves as a powerful stimulus for deeper engagement with music and a heightened interest in works belonging to the world's musical treasure trove. Through gradual, controlled accumulation of musical listening experiences and diverse interactions with music facilitated by qualified educators, children gradually begin to distinguish valuable musical compositions from "music" of questionable quality.

10. Diana Petkova has directed the educational project "BGBravissimo" towards introducing children to Bulgarian professional music. The project is once again based on direct communication between children and music. It presents works by Bulgarian classical composers and newer authors, incorporating an interactive method of introducing the main thematic material, the character of the music, and the typical techniques used by the composer. Meetings with some of the composers, conductors, and performers of the pieces that have been played are organized. These encounters leave lasting impressions in the children's memories.

11. The author's proposed active, diverse, and engaging music activities contribute to the development of musical abilities in the children enrolled in the art organization, as well as their peers from family-type homes. All of these activities promote communication skills and socialization among participants.

12. Diana Petkova has provided the activities described in the book for evaluation by various groups of experts - professional musicians (performers and music educators), experts in the field of social activities, as well as parents of the participating children. Their assessments are positive.

The collective monograph "Intermedial Horizon for Literary and Musical Education" authored by Desislava Siderova and Diana Petkova was created with equal participation from both co-authors. It is aimed at higher education for future literature and music teachers. As contributing factors in the book, I can highlight:

1. The authors have thoroughly examined different types of relationships with music in the works of Bulgarian writers and poets, presenting the works of individual literary creators within the context of five chronological types of interaction between the two arts.
2. Another type of relationships, the influence of speech on musical compositions, has been explored in both vocal and instrumental music. Iconic musical compositions are examined, not only by Bulgarian but also foreign composers. Works with similar titles but fundamentally different interpretations of the given theme are compared. Examples of various forms of interaction between the two arts are summarized in two tables.
3. Two approaches for teaching corresponding literary and musical works have been developed, seeking interaction not only based on emotional similarity perceived by the audience but also according to their semantic proximity.
4. Variations for presenting the interaction between literary and musical work in education have been created, depending on whether the primary work is literary or musical and whether both works will be listened to simultaneously at the end of the pedagogical interaction. In the first scenario, where the two works do not sound synchronously, after active engagement with the literary and musical opus, the one being taught is revisited, now emotionally and semantically "charged" with the experience and knowledge of the other work. In the variations where both works are played simultaneously at the end of the pedagogical interaction, they are synchronized based on their dramaturgy, and the degree of semantic and emotional correspondence between the two original artistic images is explored.
5. For the purposes of educating future music and literature teachers and conducting research that assesses their abilities, criteria, tasks covering both classroom and extracurricular activities for students, a four-level scale for evaluating the results demonstrated by the students, and questionnaires have been developed.

Everything in the book is structured meticulously, following a uniform presentation plan. However, I would like to become familiar with - and this is missing from the exposure - at least one specific lesson on one of the described topics, such as how literary and musical works are presented to children, what their reactions are, and to what extent the set goals are achieved in the lesson. Similar specifics are absent from the described study with students. Examples like these, revealing the essence of the piloted pedagogical interaction, would have been a valuable

argument in support of the effectiveness of the intermedial teaching system developed by the authors, which is demonstrated in the book through percentage analyses.

Through the remaining publications provided for evaluation, Diana Petkova stands out as a specialist with a rich musical culture, diverse interests, team collaboration skills, a research-oriented approach, and excellent organizational abilities.

In the article titled "Specialized music software - a tool for creating an interactive educational environment in music education", Assistant Petkova examines the application of two free computer programs: one for musical notation and score playback and another for sound editing, along with a sequencing program in a demo version. The use of these programs in mass music education fully meets the requirements of the curriculum for music education, prepared by Ministry of Education and Science, even though the curriculum does not specify that students need to be familiar with a sequencer. The software proposed in the article is not only sufficient but also enriching, providing additional knowledge. Diana Petkova compiles a table outlining the specific functions of each of the three programs, which offers valuable ideas for using the software in music education. In addition, the author suggests specific activities in music lessons where each of these computer programs can be utilized. This not only diversifies the means of communication between the teacher and the students but also facilitates the assimilation of musical information through an engaging approach for young people.

Diana Petkova's diverse and extensive music pedagogical practice provides her with valuable experience and a broad perspective on mass music education, teaching amateurs, and future professional musicians. Her enduring interest in the application of digital tools in music lessons further contributes to her profile as a modern specialist with numerous opportunities for working with the latest pedagogical tools and learning resources. All of this makes her an erudite professional who can be very valuable as a teacher of music education methodology.

I have known Diana Petkova since her student years when she studied in my piano class at Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts - Plovdiv. I have detailed observations of her precise and diligent work as a pianist, as well as her consistently excellent results in concerts and semester exams. I also participated in the evaluation commission for her practical state exam, where she impressed with her creativity, solid preparation, and timely reactions.

Having reviewed the documents submitted in the competition by candidate Assistant Dr. Diana Veskova Petkova, I find that her publications have significant scientific and practical value. They have the potential to serve as a basis for further research and are applicable in music education. Some of her works provide methods applicable to music activities in the earliest childhood, others in preschool education, and third in elementary music education and among the provided research works, there are also those related to university education. This wide age range speaks to the diversity of her musical competencies. Based on all these conclusions, in accordance with the Law of the development of the academic community in the Republic of Bulgaria, and in accordance with Article 74 and Article 75 of the Regulations for development of the academic community at the Trakia University Stara Zagora, I confidently support the candidacy of Asst. Prof. Dr. Diana Veskova Petkova for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in "**Music Teaching Methodology**".

Prepared by:

Prof. Dr. Krasimira Georgieva Fileva-Ruseva

Plovdiv, August 24, 2023

Signature: