

REVIEW

by

Assoc. Prof Velislava Karagenova,

AMDFFA "Prof A. Diamandiev", Department of Piano and Accordion

of dissertation work

to Evgeniya Tagareva on the subject:

Specificity of the Piano Training Methodology for Persons with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

1. General presentation of the procedure and the materials presented for review

The documentation of the procedure for the defense before a scientific jury of a dissertation with author Evgeniya Tagareva meets the requirements. The following legally required materials are presented:

1. Order No RD-27-094 of 25.06. 2024 for the appointment of a scientific jury by the Rector of AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev" - Plovdiv

2. Order No RD-27-104 of 16.12.2019 for discharge, based on a decision taken by the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Music Pedagogy – Protocol No. 31/11.12.2019.

3. The dissertation is 244 pages. The structure of the work is introduction, six chapters, conclusion, contributions, and references. The cited literature includes 141 titles, of which 73 are in Latin, 65 in Cyrillic, and 3 are Internet sources.

2. Brief biographical data of the candidate

Evgeniya Tagareva graduated from the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts. Since 2022, she has been the Secretary of the community center "Hristo G. Danov - 1904", where she also works as a piano teacher and head of a creative literature school. Her presence in the cultural life is associated with the organization of the International Summer Art Academy "The Fire of Orpheus", participation as a leader and expert in literature and music in the projects: Creative Sparks Youth Academy, The Word of the Young (national projects); We for us in Europe, To create Europe Together, Opposites (international projects). She is the author of numerous publications in the field of poetry and music. Among the more important ones are *House in the Sky*, 1993 (published by "Ti Si"); *Right of Return*, 1995 (published by "Hristo G. Danov"); *Music from the Temple*, 2013 (published by the "Fire of Orpheus" Foundation); Collection of author's compositions for piano *Sounds from Infinity* (2019).

E. Tagareva is the founder and chairman of the Orpheus Fire Foundation, a member of the Society of Plovdiv Writers (member since 1995) and the Union of Bulgarian Writers - Sofia (member since 2022). The winner of the grand prize at the International Poetry Festival "Spirituality without Borders" statuette "Inspiration" / 2021/

3. Relevance of the topic

I consider the chosen topic to be extremely relevant. The need for such extensive scientific research in the educational space has been stated for a long time. Against the background of statistical data from the European Union, that at least 15% of persons of school age are defined as persons with SEN, the need for an in-depth understanding and knowledge of the problem is important for every educator. The fact that this dissertation work *Specificity of the piano training methodology for persons with special educational needs (SEN)* is based on the researcher's long-term personal pedagogical experience in the chosen field - working with children with SEN, and its approval, proves its authenticity, practical orientation and implies its applicability.

4. Expediency of the research methods used to achieve the set goals

The following **METHODS** were used in the study:

Analytical - An examination of existing theories and practices related to the topic of study.

Empirical - Finding research - a pedagogical experiment with students with SEN

Given the specifics of the work, I find that they adequately cover all the commented spheres, stages of work and elements of it.

5. Evaluation of the dissertation work

It is noticeable that the work is carefully thought out and structured. In the introduction, the author sets out the goals and tasks of her research and the urgent need for it. - to "*systematize the existing practical and theoretical experience in teaching piano to persons with SEN and supplement it with new up-to-date pedagogical ideas that meet the dynamics of modern conditions for education and upbringing*".

The first chapter covers the existing scientific literature on the problem, examined in different directions – the state of piano training for persons with SEN, author's research in the field of music and special pedagogy, research in the field of medicine and psychology, modern technologies and the place in this educational process, the role of new scientific fields – supporting the educational process for persons with SEN – art therapy, music therapy. The presented impressive bibliography of 141 sources reveals the deep interest in the scientific achievements on a global and national scale, as well as the ability of the doctoral student to summarize, systematize scientific literature and draw conclusions.

The second chapter describes the pedagogical experiment carried out, the methods used, thoroughly clarifies the concept of SEN and reveals the specific characteristics of the target groups that participated in the research.

The third chapter covers all the stages accompanying the process of piano training for persons with SEN, the areas for building compensatory mechanisms and the possibility of achieving successful results in the course of musical training.

The next three chapters – fourth, fifth and sixth – deserve special attention as they focus in concreteness on the piano training of the two main groups – students with sensory disorders, as well as the learning aid created for them, and students with mental and motor disorders.

The large informative load of the research and the concreteness of the speech reveal the professional competence of the author, the logic and pedagogical clarity in the set parameters of the work. The doctoral student has extensive knowledge and culture on the problem and shows creativity in methodological proposals and practical solutions in the educational process. In the last chapters, the researcher's desire to offer solutions that optimize the work processes for both the student and the piano teacher can be clearly felt. E. Tagareva is looking for a permanent solution to a complex of problems, affecting certain transmission levers. As a conduit of professional skills and knowledge, it is the teacher who subtly models the student. However, the learning process is not only cognitive, it is also emotionally engaging. In order for the teacher to build a neat system in his work, to help a student with SEN, he must know those methods that would contribute to a full-fledged result. The benefits of a method can be traced in different areas – sustainability of the results, speed of their achievement, economy of the system, balance between expected and achieved, communication aspects.

6. Contributions and significance of the dissertation work

The choice of topic is well motivated by Tagareva. The complex processes involved in teaching piano to persons with SEN are covered in full, with attention and sensitivity to the delicate matter.

The outlined research problem clearly enough shows that the author not only knows the subject with which she works, but also masters it in detail and knows how to present and summarize it. She demonstrates awareness and broad knowledge of the scientific studies and publications on the topic worldwide, knows how to handle scientific literature, express personal opinion and criticism. The work reveals professional dedication to the chosen problem. It is drawn from practice, a fact that underlines its value and the possibility of serving as a teaching aid for every educator. In today's fragmented time, when we are looking for more flexible solutions, more direct and more rational, saving time, this work is undoubtedly a contribution to the native piano methodology, in a specific field of it, which is the education of persons with SEN. I accept all contributions of this research listed by the candidate.

7. Recommendations and critical remarks

I would recommend that the work be published and made available to music education institutions, in order to facilitate the pedagogical activities of teaching teams when working with persons with SEN.

8. Abstract

The abstract fully presents the content of the main work.

In conclusion: The results achieved during the research give me the reason to propose to the respected scientific jury to award the educational and scientific degree "DOCTOR" in professional field 8.3. Music and Dance Art, doctoral program Music Studies and Music Art to doctoral student Evgeniya Tagareva.