

## OPINION

by **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eduard Magardich Sarafyan**  
on a dissertation thesis  
for awarding the educational and scientific degree **Doctor**  
Professional field 8.3 Music and dance art,  
Doctoral programme *Musicology and music arts*  
To  
**Kalina Decheva**

doctoral student at the Department of Classical, Pop and Jazz Performing Arts, Faculty of Music Pedagogy, Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts „Prof. Asen Diamandiev” – Plovdiv  
titled: **LANGUAGE AS A BONDING FACTOR IN MUSICAL-STAGE ARTS**  
Academic supervisor: Prof. Dr. Toni Shekerdzhieva – Nowak

**The dissertation thesis** of the doctoral student Kalina Decheva titled **LANGUAGE AS A BONDING FACTOR IN MUSICAL-STAGE ARTS** meets the *scientometric indicators* for acquiring the educational and scientific degree "Doctor". The doctoral student presents a scientific work, which in its content and volume meets the requirements for a complete and valuable scientific product in the field of musical-stage arts. The abstract consists of 59 pages, where the doctoral student synthesizes the major aspects of the research to fully reveal the content of her dissertation work.

### **Brief biography**

Kalina Decheva graduated from Veliko Turnovo University "St. st. Cyril and Methodius" in 1995, Major: English Philology. At present she is a senior lecturer in English at AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev" – Plovdiv. Her main research interests are in the domain of the influence of music on optimization of the English language teaching for arts students and the role of language as a bonding factor in musical stage arts. She has taken part in a numerous conferences and seminars for foreign language teaching, translation and interpretation as well as English literature.

### **Characteristic features and assessment of the dissertation thesis**

The forwarded by the doctoral student Kalina Decheva dissertation thesis titled *LANGUAGE AS A BONDING FACTOR IN MUSICAL-STAGE ARTS* contains a total of 225 pages, organized into introduction, three chapters, conclusion, bibliography, appendices, scientific contributions and a list of publications by the author connected with the thesis topic.

**Introduction:** It argues the motifs for the choice of topic and clearly and precisely defines the object, the subject, the goal, the tasks, the research assumption and the methods of the research.

**The object** of the reserch is the specificity of the bonding role that language plays in the musical-stage pieces and its manifestation in the process of working on the musical work.  
**The subject** of the research is the relationship that language builds between the trio: author

– performer-artist and audience. **The goal** of the dissertation thesis is to prove the role of language as a bond between the author's idea, the singers and their audience when performing a musical-stage piece. The numerous **tasks** the doctoral student sets and covers are as follows:

- To conduct theoretical analysis of the constructs under discussion (of language as a means of communication; of the English phonetic system with a focus on its specifics; of the musical-stage arts opera, operetta, musical);
- To make an overview of the opinions of leading music educators and musicologists on the unity of verbal text and music;
- To present some empirical evidence for the effectiveness of the model for development of language skills;
- To specify criteria for the transfer of the effects of mastering language abilities in the music-stage activity, taking into account the contextual peculiarities and the level of language competence of the students from the vocal classes;
- To discover and formulate the reasons for failures and difficulties when working with a verbal text in a foreign language (English) when performing a musical-stage piece and suggesting an algorithm for dealing with them.

The dissertation thesis defends the scientific assumption that the language of a musical-stage piece is a bonding factor in musical-stage arts. **The scientific assumption** is based on theoretical overview, linguistic analysis, empirical research as well as on the personal professional experience of the author as a linguist and English language consultant and educator for vocal classes.

**Empirical and theoretical** methods were used in the present study. The empirical ones include survey and research of the available literature about the constructs discussed, social questionnaires, interviews, observation. The theoretical methods are used in the comparative studies, analyzes and summaries.

**Chapter one** presents a theoretical analysis of the research constructs, which are connected with language and its major function for conducting communication; of the English phonetics; of musical-stage genres. It proves the symbiosis between verbal text and music in a piece of music. The aim is that overview to prove the main thesis that language is the very factor which, along with music, serves as a bonding element in musical-stage arts.

**Chapter two** highlights certain difficulties when the repertoire is in English and the cast is of multinational origin. The empirical observations are analyzed and some models are suggested for overcoming weaknesses at work with an English text of a musical-stage piece. It is paid particular attention to the specifics of articulation of certain English sounds by the student-singers from China. Because the scientific assumption of the dissertation is that the language is a bonding factor in musical-stage arts, the author finds the reasons for impeding that bond and suggests a strategy (type of a protocol) to be used in the rehearsal process and to be easily applicable to ensure good results.

**Chapter three** reveals the motivational techniques following Carol Dweck's Theory of Motivation. They will build grounds for high quality of language production and boost the performer's self confidence when using it on stage. The author chooses Carol Dweck's Theory of motivation because of the fact that it defines a motivational frame for progress and success.

### **Applicability of the results of the dissertation thesis**

- The research done is materialized in the shape of **a model for foreign language learning (English)**, enhancing the development of musical-stage abilities (when working on the verbal text in a musical-stage work).
- Empirical evidence of the effectiveness of the model is presented, as well as criteria for the transfer of the effects of mastering language competence in the music-stage activity, bearing in mind the contextual specifics and the level of language competence of the vocal students.
- The effects of applying the model in the context of aesthetic experiences and perception of musical works are traced
- The research reveals the influence of the suggested didactic model on motivation, flow experience and mind sets, through which the effectiveness of the learning process and achievements are thematized.

### **Contributions of the dissertation thesis**

- The dissertation presents a critical analysis of the concepts of language development in the context of vocal performers' training, as well as the various barriers while mastering the phonetic features and semantics of the foreign language and their impact on stage musical performances together with the satisfaction and sense of self-efficacy.
- The dissertation creates a model of language training in a foreign language (English) aiming at the development of musical performance abilities when working on the verbal text of a musical-stage work.
- The dissertation traces the effects of the model application in the context of the aesthetic experiences and the perceptions of musical pieces.
- The dissertation also highlights the effects of the suggested didactic model on motivation, flow experience and mind sets, which define the effectiveness of the learning process and its achievements.
- The dissertation supplies with empirical evidence for the effectiveness of the model for the development of language competence, as well as with the criteria for the transfer of the effects of mastering language abilities in musical-stage activity, taking into account the contextual characteristics and the level of development of each class.

The present dissertation is of high scientific value and is applicable in practice as the suggested model can be used in the process of training performers for musical-stage works, regardless of their English language proficiency level, which is a guarantee for language improvement and for mastering specific musical abilities.

Based on everything that has been said so far, I claim my positive assessment on Kalina Decheva's dissertation thesis "*Language as a bonding factor in musical-stage arts*" under the skilled academic supervision of Prof. Dr. Toni Shekerdzhieva-Nowak. I consider that the dissertation thesis fully meets the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria. I appeal to the reputable scientific jury to award Kalina Decheva with the educational and scientific degree "*Doctor*" in professional field 8.3. – *Music and Dance Arts*.

15.12.2024 г.

Plovdiv

Written by:

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