

Opinion

By Assoc. Prof. Veselin Karaatanasov, PhD
on the dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree of "Doctor" in
professional field 1.3 - "Pedagogy of teaching..."

Author: Antoaneta Hristova Stoyanova
Form of education: regular PhD studies
Scientific organization: Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"
Faculty of Educational Studies and the Arts
Department "Music and Multimedia Technologies"

Topic:

Foreign Language Children's Songs in Music Education at Preschool and Primary School Age – Problems of Author's Translation and Adaptation

Scientific supervisor: Prof. Ganka Nedelcheva, PhD
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1. Defence Materials

The documents provided by the candidate meet the requirements set out in the Regulation for the Implementation of the LDASRB, adapted to the specifics of the above-mentioned higher education institution.

I received the following documents in digital format:

- dissertation work;
- Abstract;
- creative autobiography;
- Publications list

All mentioned files cover the necessary set of documents in accordance with the provisions of the LDASRB.

2. Biographical data and general information

From 1990 to 1995, Antoaneta Stoyanova studied Primary School Pedagogy and Radio Journalism at Sofia University, where she graduated with a Master's degree. From 2004 to 2006, she specialized in opera singing at École Normale de Musique de Paris "Alfred Cortot" and at Conservatoire Régional de Cergy-Pontoise, Paris, where she graduated with a gold medal. Stoyanova's next specialization in opera singing, within a year (2008-2009), was at A.R.T. Musica, Roma (Accademia di Formazione Artistico Musicale).

Since 1999, she has been a translator from and into French at Sofilm, Bulgaria. From the following year until 2003, she was an office manager at Eurodialogue Association (NGO), Sofia. For a brief period (2006-2007), she worked as a tour operator with English and French at BalkaNova Ltd and Eco Monde Ltd. Between 2009 and 2014, Stoyanova was an artist-chorister at Sferisterio Opera Festival (Macerata, Italy). The candidate's last mentioned job is as an English language teacher, working with the sector "Kindergartens," at Nov Svjat LTD and Nov Svjat 2017 LTD (with minor interruption during the so-called pandemic).

3. Dissertation

The dissertation text approved for defense is titled "FOREIGN LANGUAGE CHILDREN'S SONGS IN MUSIC EDUCATION AT PRESCHOOL AND PRIMARY SCHOOL AGE – PROBLEMS OF AUTHOR'S TRANSLATION AND ADAPTATION." It is developed within 173 pages and includes an introduction, four main chapters, conclusion, contributions, and four appendices. The reference literature includes 4 sources in Bulgarian and 15 in foreign languages – Russian, French, Italian, and English.

The dissertation work examines the specificity of translation, especially in foreign language children's songs, as a peculiar symbiosis between music and text presented in a short song format.

The aim is stated as the investigation and analysis of foreign language children's songs, with the purpose of structuring and applying specific methodological approaches based on this analysis.

Regarding the subject matter, the study is focused on the content of foreign language children's songs translated into Bulgarian and their application in music education activities in preschools and primary schools.

The object of the research is the use of translated foreign language songs and their application in music activities in preschool and primary school.

The main tasks are:

- To explore original sources related to the topic (theoretical and practical approaches to translation both domestically and abroad).
- To describe the specifics of translating children's songs, defining a specific conceptual framework.
- To examine the current state of the issue.
- To investigate publications on educational programs and selections and the corresponding interdisciplinary connections.
- To prepare a diagnostic toolkit for conducting the research – observations, surveys, interviews, discussions.
- To prepare an appendix with song lyrics and explanations for each of them, serving as an additional resource for music teachers in kindergartens and the early stages of schooling.

The hypothesis of the study states that if conditions are created to work on the text, adapted to the final realization of the song, it will have value and influence on the formation and development of children's emotional intelligence and will find its wide application. It should be noted here that the hypothesis itself is derived from the researcher's personal experience as a translator of over a hundred songs from seven languages.

The first chapter addresses the issue of authorial translations with their processes and stages, and the conceptual apparatus that serves them. Stoyanova delves into and thoroughly analyzes the chain: original – authorial translation – arrangement – singers-actors – producer/publisher – recording – listeners/performers, as she believes that the sequence of components in this aggregate of subjects works in complete symbiosis.

The second chapter is dedicated to the theoretical aspects of translation through the publications of song translators from Europe, North America, and New Zealand, their views on the characteristics of the original and the way translation texts are executed, as an integral part of the musical line; some possible and permissible changes are discussed aiming for the successful completion and application of the final product.

The third chapter stems from the previous one, and here the author focuses on the analysis of different types of songs. The author's reflections and years of experience as a translator are described to assist the research work. The examined songs or parts of them are presented in tables to illustrate the examples.

The fourth chapter, as the last one, represents an experimental pedagogical study – the reception, understanding, and reproduction of translated songs by children. The degree of their emotional reactions and satisfaction is noted. The experiment covers a wide age range, tracking the reactions of children in kindergarten and students in the early stages of schooling. A comparative analysis is presented, with two groups created for this purpose – control and experimental. The degree of reaction is examined according to various criteria, which, after statistical processing, provide indications for the understanding and interpretation of the translated children's song. For greater objectivity, questionnaires with parents, interviews with music educators and producers are used, which complement the observations and analyses of the study. Summaries are presented in the form of tables on pages 119, 121, 125, and 128.

The conclusions and contributions are focused on the so-called "author's translation" of children's foreign-language songs and concern the translator, their activity in a practical-applied aspect, along with the use of foreign-language songs by teachers in kindergarten and school. In the final part of the dissertation, interdisciplinary connections across different academic disciplines are indicated, solutions to problems related to author's translation of children's foreign language songs are summarized, and their application for

obtaining a final quality product is discussed (where the translator's style plays a primary role, of course).

5. Final Summary and Evaluation

I have thoroughly reviewed the documents provided by Antoaneta Stoyanova. After careful reading of the dissertation, I believe that the defence can be considered successful. The candidate demonstrates a willingness to work and possesses extremely high and profound theoretical knowledge. At the same time, she has proven, at a high level, her translation and creative talent, high motivation, and serious ambitions for further development.

The dissertation text is presented in an academic style. It is characterized by depth and is explicitly supported by rich creative and artistic material. The statements are well-founded and understandable. The content of the work is perceived without particular difficulty. The individual chapters are analytical and logically interconnected. The style and organization of expression are evidence of the close and fruitful communication between the doctoral candidate and her academic supervisor. The citations are appropriately placed, and as for the musical examples, they complement the content and assist in the analysis of the issues discussed.

Based on the above, without any reservations regarding the conceptual apparatus used and the author's competencies, along with the contributions made, **I give my positive evaluation.**

6. Conclusion

Given the significance of the research, I recommend that the academic jury come together to award the educational and scientific degree of "Doctor" to Antoaneta Stoyanova in the professional field 1.3 – "Pedagogy of Teaching..."

Sofia
May 9, 2024



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