

Opinion

by

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FOR THE AWARD OF THE EDUCATIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC DEGREE "DOCTOR"

TO

Antoaneta Hristova Stoyanova

IN THE PROFESSIONAL FIELD 1.3 "Pedagogy of teaching..."

Teaching Methodology in Music

IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC AND MULTIMEDIA TECHNOLOGIES, FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL
STUDIES AND THE ARTS AT SOFIA UNIVERSITY "ST. KLIMENT OHRIDSKI"

On the topic:

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

Overall presentation of the procedure and materials received for review:

Antoaneta Stoyanova is a PhD student at the Faculty of Educational Studies and the Arts at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" with scientific advisor Prof. Ganka Nedelcheva, PhD. My impressions are based on the presented documents: autobiographical information, dissertation, and abstract. **"Foreign Language Children's Songs in Music Education at Preschool and Elementary School Age – Problems of Author's Translation and Adaptation"** - this is the topic of the dissertation I received for review. The documentation meets all the requirements for the procedure for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor."

Relevance of the topic:

In the introductory article, Antoaneta Stoyanova addresses the relevance of her theoretical interests and the motives driving them: "At the present moment in Bulgaria, the issue of translating foreign language children's songs has not been studied. This provides arguments in favor of the high degree of relevance of the topic set forth in the dissertation" – she says. In today's strong globalization of social relations, the foreign language song becomes an integral part of the auditory environment of young children at preschool and primary school age. With a clear awareness that this period for growing Bulgarian children holds immense significance, the PhD student assigns to the

song as a whole and especially to the translated foreign language song a significant role in shaping and molding their aesthetic and emotional upbringing.

Relevance of Research Methods for Achieving Stated Goals

In the dissertation, a clear and logically formulated goal is outlined - "to investigate and analyze foreign language children's songs, and on this basis to structure and apply specific methodological approaches in their translation into the native language." From this foundation, Antoaneta Stoyanova sets a number of multifaceted tasks, the illumination of which through a methodological path (via observations, experiments, and analyses) shapes the specificity of the problem as a whole. The subject and object of the research are precisely indicated, as well as its main hypothesis, that "if conditions are created for working on the text, tailored to the final realization of the song, then it will have value and influence on the formation and development of children's emotional intelligence and will find its wide application." Particularly valuable is the fact that the dissertation is based on an exceptionally rich personal and professional experience. The PhD student has translated over a hundred foreign language songs (from seven languages), which have been published and in various forms serve as a resource in early music education.

Evaluation of the Dissertation (Understanding of the Problem, Structure, Content, etc.)

Antoaneta Stoyanova structures the dissertation into 4 chapters with an Introduction, Conclusion, Contributions, and Bibliography. Interviews and studies among the children audience are presented in tabular form in the appendices.

The first chapter of the dissertation examines the specificity of the translated song. The PhD student proceeds from a clear awareness of its role in the processes of upbringing and education, in building communication skills and emotional intelligence in the youngest children. The scarce information regarding the problems of linguistic adaptation of foreign language children's songs makes the present work valuable and constructive, to some extent "pioneering". Passing through various types of translations (literal, artistic, poetic, scientific-technical, etc.), Antoaneta Stoyanova classifies the types of children's songs and reaches the basic conceptual system of translation and its essential characteristics. According to the PhD student, quality translation has its regularities, its obligatory approaches. A properly considered title is of importance for initially capturing children's attention. The same applies to the chorus and key words - particularly important for the emotional perception of the song. The problem of the translator's authorial style is clearly and deeply

addressed. "... the individual style of the author of the verbal text enters into close interaction with the individual style of the translator. This is the moment of transforming verbal material in a certain way, with a certain impact, for a certain recipient. The individual style of the translator is predetermined by the degree of his linguistic culture, the scope of his literary culture, and quick professional reflexes for transformations, i.e., he is a factor of great artistic and aesthetic significance."

A significant place is also devoted to prosody issues. In classical song patterns, the strong syllables of the text should coincide with the strong beats in the metric groups. The PhD student presents this regularity as mandatory for good translation.

The **Second Chapter** focuses on the theoretical aspects of translating children's songs. Antoaneta Stoyanova provides an exceptionally interesting overview of important scientific views, born from the vibrant practice of leading specialists in the field of foreign language song adaptation. First and foremost, she presents the five principles of **Peter Low** - singability, sense, naturalness, rhythm, and rhyme, conducting a detailed analysis of each. Following are the interesting views and professional recommendations of **Johan Franzon** for adapting the text to the original melody. The problems of translation are thoroughly examined in the book "Translation for Singing" by **Ronnie Apter** and **Mark Herman**. According to the PhD student: "The two authors refer to Low's principles to highlight important aspects that become a starting point for the translation process - 'feeling, sound, rhyme, joke, allusion, repetitions - it is impossible to know in advance which of these components will dominate.' Attention is drawn to the problems encountered in translating slang words and humorous expressions, seeking a 'key' to the problem of 'musico-centrism or logocentrism'. Methodological views of **Philip Tagg** are presented in detail - particularly close to Antoaneta Stoyanova's personal standpoint. 'The translator's task is not only to retell the interesting foreign-language story, always considering the melody, but also through the melody of the text to convey a lesson without turning the song into something strictly didactic,' says the author, citing an example with the Bulgarian translation of the Italian children's song "Torta di pere e cioccolato" ("Pear and Chocolate Cake").

Third Chapter of the dissertation is titled "Specific Translation Tasks for Different Types of Translation Songs." I highly appreciate the theoretical aspects outlined in it as contributory and directly related to the vast practice of the PhD student as a translator. With numerous verbal and musical examples, Antoaneta Stoyanova argues her views on linguistic adaptation of various types of

children's songs: greeting songs, play songs, counting songs, lullabies, narrative songs, fairy tale songs, and many more. In this chapter, Antoaneta Stoyanova's personal experience, linguistic erudition, translation talent, musical sensitivity, and sensitivity to children's psychology "manifest" their high professional level, supported by an abundance of examples and personal translation arguments. I cannot but note the elegance of a poetic gift, creating captivating textual patterns for the earliest childhood. I congratulate the PhD student for the fine presentation of her dissertation translation work and emphasize its contributory cultural significance.

Fourth Chapter of the dissertation is titled "Influence of Children's Translation Songs on the Emotional Development and Learning of Children in Kindergarten and Primary School Education," presenting the following hypothesis: "Artistic translation, without adhering literally to the original meaning, emotionally affects children, creates positive attitudes, contributes to cognitive, intellectual, verbal, motor, and especially emotional development of children." Antoaneta Stoyanova conducts research in a Sofia kindergarten and among students from second and third grades, describing them with specific tools, main tasks, and evaluation criteria. She also presents the obtained results. Through the comparison of results, she reaches basic conclusions for her dissertation work, which she shapes into recommendations for teachers, parents, and young translators. **Thus, in the Conclusion**, the doctoral student brilliantly defends her hypothesis, based on results from thorough observation and experiments.

Contributions and Significance of the Dissertation:

The dissertation bears all the marks of a useful and beneficial applied science. Due to the lack of Bulgarian publications on the subject and the strength of its thoroughness, this study represents a new, unexplored theoretical direction for preschool and early school pedagogy and psychology. It opens up horizons for music science, indicating a wide range of multidisciplinary issues where language, psychology, and music find clear intersections. Just as Antoaneta Stoyanova's authored book "The Magical World of Children's Foreign Language Song," as a practical resource, so her rich dissertation work is a significant theoretical basis for school educators and methodologists. Supported and illustrated with CD and DVD samples, the current dissertation will only reveal its high utility and motivate new professional research in this perspective.

Conclusion: After all that has been said, as I sincerely congratulate the academic supervisor, Professor Ganka Nedelcheva, PhD, for her precise assistance in this truly valuable work, I confidently propose to the esteemed jury to award the educational and scientific degree of "Doctor" to Antoaneta Hristova Stoyanova, worthy of her contributions.

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