

OPINION

by Prof. Dr. Vesela Ivanova Geleva, Lecturer in Choral Conducting in the Department of Music Pedagogy and Conducting at the Faculty of Music Pedagogy, Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts "Prof. Asen Diamandiev" in Plovdiv

regarding Doroteya Gencheva Lyutskanova, a candidate for the award of the educational and scientific degree of "Doctor" in the field of higher education 8. "Arts," professional field 8.3 "Music and Dance Art," scientific specialty "Musicology and Musical Art" at New Bulgarian University - Sofia, Department of Music.

Doroteya Lyutskanova was born in Lom, where she completed her secondary education. She earned a bachelor's degree in "Music Pedagogy" at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" and a master's degree in "Vocal Performance" at New Bulgarian University. She participated in music seminars at NBU with Milcho Leviev and Vicky Almazidu, and since 2015, she has been a fellow of the "Milcho Leviev and Vicky Almazidu" Foundation. For two consecutive years, she was a member of the jury at the International Jazz Competition in Bucharest, as well as numerous international competitions. Currently, she is the manager and teacher at the "DORI DIOS" music center and a teacher of pop and jazz singing at the National School of Music and Arts "Panayot Pipkov" in Pleven. Her students have won numerous awards from national and international competitions. D. Lyutskanova is a licensed vocal coach in Bulgaria using the American Speech Level Singing methodology and organizes seminars and training on vocal work during mutation.

The dissertation titled "Contemporary Approaches in Working with Changing Voices" has a total of 265 pages, including an introduction, four chapters, conclusion, references, and four appendices (diagnostic map, breathing exercises, lesson plan, and 53 interviews). The bibliography contains 139 titles, 60 in Bulgarian, 29 in Russian, and 50 in English, as well as internet sources. The work, the three scientific publications on the topic, and the abstract meet the legal requirements for structure, volume, and content. The conducted research is relevant in its essence and has a direct relation to modern approaches in vocal methodology in pop and jazz performance. In the introductory part, the doctoral candidate presents the motives for choosing the topic—the desire of the educator to offer maximally effective and innovative solutions to

cope with the problems of vocal work during the mutation period. The aim of the study is to prove, based on a reasoned analysis supported by authoritative opinions of educators and global vocal practices, that working with mutated voices is possible and beneficial within reasonable limits and with a suitable precise pedagogical approach. In this regard, the doctoral candidate sets various tasks related to a detailed analysis and systematization of the accumulated experience in the specified field, presentation of personal teaching experience, including practical exercises, presentation of results from interviews with colleagues-educators, Justification of the significance of Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, as well as the influence of music on the development of specific brain structures.

In the first chapter, a general historical overview of concepts for working with the child's voice during mutation is provided, along with the Bulgarian experience on the topic. The doctoral candidate presents the most significant theories of american vocal educators who advocate the thesis that singing should continue during the age transformation. As a licensed vocal coach in Bulgaria using the american Speech Level Singing methodology, Dorotea Lyutskanova demonstrates solid knowledge in the field of american vocal-method schools and the latest theoretical achievements, proving the possibility of working with the falsetto register during mutation.

The second chapter focuses on the changing voice with its anatomical and physiological specifics, as well as the stages of transformation depending on gender. The technical parameters of the voice in different periods of its development, the characteristics of timbre, range, and registers are examined. The theories of John Cooksey and Henry Leg are explored as suitable for accurately diagnosing the maturity of the voice. The valuable personal pedagogical experience of the candidate is particularly highlighted in the presentation. In the variety of examples given, Doroteya Lyutskanova finds innovative and adequate solutions to the individual problem of training a young singer.

The third chapter, "Diagnosis and Practical Methodological Work," is central to the research and is directly oriented towards the activities of the vocal pedagogue. The candidate presents a variety of reasons presupposing vocal problems: psychological, physical, physiological, and sonic, applying a table for recording results. Determining the standard for quality vocal sound in relation to the respective genre is of interest.

The subsection "Diagnosis" concentrates a significant part of the work's contributions. Lyutskanova proposes innovative approaches to identifying the issues of changing voices and

specific approaches to resolving these cases: vowels and consonant sounds, vocalizations, and voice demonstrations. She examines the two modes of the vocal mechanism - speaking and singing, their functionality, and differences. Special attention is given to vocal breathing and support building, emphasizing that full voice sound can be achieved by mastering control over the shape of the vocal mechanism, sound control, and breathing support.

The proposed vocal exercises are mainly from the candidate's personal practice, adapted to the different stages of mutation in adolescents, and are graduated in the context of the problems to be overcome (initial, peak, or fading stage of mutation). The suggested lesson plans for different stages of vocal development, illustrated with numerous exercises and detailed methodological justifications, have a high contributory value.

The relevance of the research is complemented by the examination of contemporary vocal singing techniques used as a standard in the pop genre, providing an opportunity for the full realization of the vocal potential. It is noteworthy that D. Lyutskanova denies the self-centered mastery of technique and recommends rational awareness to precede the technical development of the student.

The object of the fourth chapter is modern approaches to building vocal habits in the mutation stage. The theory of multiple intelligences by Howard Gardner, presented by the doctoral candidate, is interesting. Understanding and empirically applying this theory lead to the multifaceted development of the future artist and the revelation of their full creative potential. In the performing arts sphere, which requires complex performance skills, this theory is of essential importance and high applicability. The final subsection of this chapter contains the organization and structure of the lesson, working on vocal habits, the technique, and musicality of the singer. The candidate pays special attention to vocal hygiene, prevention, and protection during the mutation period. Among the contributory moments in the work, the following should be highlighted:

- Based on the examined traditional and innovative scientifically grounded global practices, general parameters and criteria characteristic of the changing voice have been derived, serving as a starting point in the educational process.
- The proposed diagnostic approach provides an objective analysis of the condition of the changing voice. To facilitate the vocal pedagogue, the classification of vocal problems into separate groups has been suggested.

- A rational methodological approach has been justified, along with the use of a set of specific exercises proven to be effective in the candidate's practice.
- Sample lessons with different solutions to specific vocal problems have been developed, along with logically arranged vocal exercises.
- The experience of 53 interviewed vocal pedagogues has been summarized, complementing the results of the scientific research.

With this scientific work, the doctoral candidate demonstrates serious scientific interest in the pedagogical field, supported by rich performing and teaching activities, accumulated valuable methodological knowledge and skills, and a desire for high achievements in the chosen field. The research can serve music educators, leaders of vocal groups, students, and performers working in the field of pop music and jazz, providing practical ideas, methods, and techniques. In this sense, I recommend that it be published soon.

Considering the above, I propose to the esteemed academic jury to award Doroteya Gencheva Lyutskanova the educational and scientific degree of "Doctor" in the field of higher education 8. "Arts," professional direction 8.3 "Musical and Dance Art," scientific specialty "Musicology and Musical Art," and I wish her success in her future creative projects.

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Geleva

Prof. Dr. Vesela