

REVIEW

of **Oksana Storonska,**

Associate Professor, Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences,
Assistant Professor of the Department of Pedagogy and Innovative Education,
Lviv Polytechnic National University

of the **thesis**

Professional Training of Masters in Music Therapy at Universities of the USA

written by

Li Shanyin

submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the specialty 011 Educational, pedagogical sciences

1. Topicality of the performed work and its connection with the relevant plans of the branches of science

The 21st century is characterized not only by significant achievements in many areas of our lives, but also by various crisis phenomena, such as military conflicts, pandemics, etc., which increase the instability of the present and create uncertainty about the future, and therefore significantly undermine the health of the population, causing the exacerbation of psychophysiological problems and the spread of neurological, somatic, emotional, etc. disorders. The need to counteract these trends actualizes the search for modern effective practices of improving the health and the psycho-emotional state of citizens, including music therapy, the use of which requires the appropriate degree of professionalism of specialists in the relevant field.

The importance of ensuring high-quality training of music therapy specialists to work with different categories of the population, in particular children, adults, and the elderly with an extremely wide range of psychoneurological disorders, makes comparative pedagogical research highly relevant in order to study foreign experience in this area and identify constructive approaches to solving this pedagogical problem. Therefore, the thesis of Li Shanyin, aimed at studying the theory and practice of professional training of music therapists at universities of the USA and based on the analysis of educational programs of the last five years is highly relevant and timely.

The topic of Li Shanyin's thesis Professional Training of Masters in Music Therapy at Universities of the USA corresponds to the topic of scientific work Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of the Personal and Professional Development of a Modern Specialist in the Conditions of Integration into the International Educational Space carried out at the Department of Pedagogics and Innovative Education at Lviv Polytechnic National University (number of state registration 0121U113179). The topic of this thesis was approved (Minutes № 3/22 dated 24.10.2022) and specified (Minutes № 8/24 dated 25.03.2024) at the meetings of the Academic Council of the Institute of Jurisprudence, Psychology and Innovative Education of Lviv Polytechnic National University.

2. The most significant scientific results contained in the thesis

Evaluating the most important achievements of the qualification research work submitted for our consideration, first of all, we would like to note those that are of great

importance for the development of pedagogical theory and practice, namely the revealing of theoretical foundations of professional training of masters in music therapy in the system of university education of the USA, the highlighting of the current regulatory basis as well as the key components of the process of professional training of masters in music therapy in US universities, in particular the content, methods, forms of organization, etc., the clarifying of features of clinical training of masters in music therapists in this country. Moreover, the author's recommendations regarding the possibilities of using constructive ideas of the American experience in today's educational practice are a significant contribution to the development of the system of professional training of music therapy specialists in Ukraine.

3. New facts obtained by the dissertator

Analysing the results of scientific research of Li Shanyin, we can state that most of the author's achievements have scientific novelty. *For the first time*, a comprehensive analysis of the professional training of masters in Music Therapy at US universities *was performed*. The theoretical and methodological foundations of the professional training of music therapy specialists *were analysed and substantiated* (behaviourism, cognitive constructivism, social constructivism, connectivism; methodological approaches: competency-based, activity-based, personality-oriented, cultural, interdisciplinary, integrative). The content of professional training of masters in Music Therapy (which is practically oriented and aimed at the development of the ability to: carry out client diagnostics; integrate knowledge about the cultural diversity of clients; jointly develop an effective and clear support plan through diagnosis of customer needs, selection of measures; use knowledge and resources to organize therapeutic care; communicate; maintain clinical documentation, etc.) *was analysed*. The organizational forms (interactive lectures, seminars, educational conferences, research training, trainings, etc.) and teaching methods (reverse brainstorming, concept mapping, collaborative learning, servicelearning, problem-based learning, distributed learning, project-based learning, etc.) *were characterised*. The specifics of the practical component of the professional training of masters in Music Therapy *was studied*. On the basis of a comparison of the experience of two countries, directions for the implementation of constructive ideas of the American experience into the system of higher education of Ukraine at the strategic, organizational, methodical, research levels *were defined and justified*. The content of concepts "Music Therapy", "music therapist", "Music Therapy curriculum" *were clarified*. The comprehension of the concepts in the field of higher Music Therapy education, master's training as well as features of masters in Music Therapy theoretical and practical training organisation *were improved and expanded*. The theses on the organization of master's training in Music Therapy in accordance with modern theories and substantiated methodological approaches *were further developed*.

4. The degree of validity of the scientific statements, conclusions and recommendations formulated in the thesis

An analysis of the thesis content and publications that highlight the results of Li Shanyin's research gives reasons for conclusion that presented scientific statements and findings are grounded and reliable. The need to conduct a study of professional training of masters in Music Therapy at universities of the USA has been due to a number of contradictions between: 1) the society's need for music therapy specialists who are ready

to provide highly qualified services to various segments of the population, and the lack of music therapists' training practice in many countries, including Ukraine; 2) the current trends in the development of higher music therapy education and the needs for the development of appropriate legislative, substantive, methodological and methodical support for the professional training of future music therapists; 3) the need for a comprehensive analysis of the constructive ideas of the American experience and the insufficient level of its analysis and generalization in pedagogical comparative studies.

The thesis has been done at an appropriate scientific level. It clearly justifies the choice of the research topic, defines its object, subject, aim and objectives, and the content of the abstract highlights the essential aspects and main provisions of the thesis. The research was conducted on a broad source base, including monographs, scientific articles, regulatory documents, etc. The novelty and reliability of the findings and conclusions of the thesis are also ensured by the use of a complex of interrelated methods corresponding to the research goals and objectives. The main scientific statements and results of the research paper have been widely approbated at scientific and practical international conferences and are fully covered in Li Shanyin's scientific publications.

Therefore, the high scientific level of the thesis, its relevance, accomplishment, and practical significance are undeniable, which confirms the dissertator's thorough study of the problem under investigation, the scientific validity of the results of the given objectives and conclusions.

5. Significance for science and practice of the author's obtained results

The significance of the research lies in the fact that materials highlighted on the pages of the thesis, scientific propositions and conclusions are used by institutions of higher education, in particular, while teaching of the following courses: "Comparative pedagogy", "Actual problems of the theory and history of pedagogy", "The theoretical and conceptual foundations of professional of education", "Special seminar: Actual problems of modern pedagogical education", "Psychology", "Psychological counselling with the basics of psychotherapy". The findings and materials of the thesis can be used for further scientific research, during the development of educational programs, the state standard of higher education, etc.

6. Recommendations for the use of the results and conclusions of the thesis

The main findings of the thesis can be used for further scientific studies of foreign experience in professional training of music therapy specialists as well as in improvement of the methodology of comparative pedagogical research. The research results are also significant from the perspective of their use in order to improve the professional training of music therapy specialists in higher education institutions and the development of new courses for students, methodological recommendations for teachers on the application of constructive ideas of the relevant American experience in their own work.

7. Assessment of the content of the thesis and its completeness

Li Shanyin's thesis is a complete academic paper with a clear structure and sequence content of scientific statements, which correspond to the purpose and logical solution of the research objectives. The work consists of two abstracts in English and Ukrainian languages, a list of the author's publications, an introduction, three chapters, conclusions to the chapters, general conclusions, a list of references, and appendices. The content of the work, which is additionally visualised with figures and appendices, clear

conclusions and generalisations demonstrate the high degree of validity of the scientific findings and the quality of the research.

In the first chapter, *Theoretical and methodological fundamentals of music therapists' professional training*, the professional training of music therapists is described and analysed as the subject of scientific and pedagogical research. This chapter presents the theoretical fundamentals and methodological approaches to professional training of masters in Music Therapy.

In the second chapter, *The organisation of professional training of masters in Music Therapy in US universities*, the peculiarities of professional activity and professional requirements for music therapists in American society are described and analysed. This chapter presents the individual educational trajectory of the master of Music Therapy. The content of music therapists' training at the master's level, as well as the forms and methods of training music therapists in the American experience are analysed. The features of music therapists' practical training are characterized.

The third chapter, *The possibilities of using the constructive ideas of the American experience of training masters in Music Therapy in Ukrainian educational practice*, explains the state of training masters in Music Therapy in higher education institutions of Ukraine. The comparative analysis of certain aspects of the professional training of masters in Music Therapy in Ukraine and the USA is carried out. The possibilities of using the constructive ideas of the American experience in the educational practice of Ukraine are substantiated.

In the general conclusions, Li Shanyin was able to clearly present the results obtained, confirming that the defined objectives were achieved.

8. Discussion points, recommendations and comments on the content of the thesis

In general, while highly appreciating the scientific and practical significance of the obtained results, there are still some discussion points and suggestions to the content of the work:

1. In our opinion, it would be worth analysing the history of development of the system of music therapists' professional training in the USA, which would contribute to a better understanding of its current state.

2. It seems appropriate to present in the thesis in more detail the mechanisms for controlling the quality of music therapists' professional training in the USA, in particular, the certification procedure at the American Music Therapy Association.

3. In paragraph 2.1. it would be advisable, in addition to identifying the general characteristics of professional training programs for masters in Music Therapy at various American universities, to briefly identify their specific features or differences.

4. In our opinion, the work should also outline the prospects for postgraduate education for masters in Music Therapy in the USA, which would contribute to a more complete reflection of their training system in this country.

5. The linguistic and stylistic design of the thesis corresponds to the peculiarities of the academic style, but there are certain punctuation and spelling mistakes.

9. Completeness coverage of results in publications

The materials of the thesis are covered in 8 publications of the author (6 of them are individual): 4 articles in journals included into the list of specialized scientific

publications of Ukraine, 4 works which certify the approbation of thesis' materials on the conferences.

10. Conclusion

To sum up, the reviewed Li Shanyin's thesis on the topic "Professional Training of Masters in Music Therapy at Universities of the USA" is an independent and complete academic paper. It has solved a number of scientific problems and obtained the findings containing scientific novelty, theoretical and practical value for pedagogical science and practice.

We affirm that the thesis deserves a positive assessment and meets the requirements of the Order On Approval of Requirements for Thesis Formatting (as amended) No. 40 of 12 January 2017 by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, and the Procedure for Awarding the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy and Cancellation of the Decision of a One-time Specialised Academic Council of a Higher Education Institution or Research Institution to Award the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 44 of 12 January 2022). Its author Li Shanyin deserves the award of the scientific degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the specialty 011 Educational, pedagogical sciences, field of knowledge 01 Education/Pedagogy.

Reviewer:

Associate Professor, Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences,
Assistant Professor of the Department of Pedagogy
and Innovative education,
Lviv Polytechnic
National University



Oksana STORÓNSKA

Scientific Secretary
Lviv Polytechnic
National University



Roman BRYLYNSKYI