



## CONCEPT AND MODEL OF CONTINUITY OF PRINCIPLES OF THE RUSSIAN PIANO SCHOOL IN CHINA'S MUSIC PEDAGOGY

**Zhu Jing**

*Nanchang, China*

***Yelena Stepanovna Polyakova***

*Minsk, Republic of Belarus*

**Abstract:** *This article presents the analysis of continuity of principles of the Russian piano school (RPS) in China's music pedagogy: the essence of the category of continuity in education, including piano performance, has been revealed; the concept of continuity has been developed based on the leading functions of the RPS that contributed to its specificity, longevity, productivity and significance for the world music performance process; a prognostic model of continuity of the RPS principles for the practical implementation in work of Chinese pedagogues-pianists has been proposed.*

**Keywords:** *continuity in music education, RPS principles, China's music pedagogy, concept, model.*

### Introduction

Multidimensionality of the phenomenon of culture determines its openness to various research and methodological approaches. Theoretical analysis of our study allows us to state that the principles of the Russian piano school, introduced by immigrants at the beginning of the twentieth century, are the basis for the Chinese piano school. Of course, these principles were accepted and rethought creatively in accordance with Chinese cultural traditions. Nevertheless, continuity of the principles of these two piano schools can be observed.

Let us now consider the essence of the category of continuity in the music teaching/learning process. This concept was introduced into practice of the pedagogical process at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, continuity as a principle of organising the music teaching/learning process in the world piano training has not been considered yet, especially continuity

between the Russian and Chinese piano schools has not been reflected.

It should be noted that the category of continuity is particularly important for the system of music training, upbringing and education. Music education and training, and furthermore professional music education and music pedagogical education, is impossible without high-quality instrumental training due to complexity of music activities, significant time spent on mastering performance and professional competencies in the field of music, an individual form of training in music performance.

This implies the need to use, for effectiveness of the global music teaching/learning process, the best practices of the leading performance schools, among which the Russian piano school (RPS) holds one of the leading positions. All the above emphasises the relevance of the study of continuity of the RPS principles in China's music pedagogy.

## Main part

The well-known Belarusian scientist A. P. Smantser develops pedagogical foundations of continuity in training. As far as continuity in music education is expressed in the interaction of various stages and levels of the system of continuous music education (pre-school and school education, secondary and higher education, general, additional and professional education), it is exactly this continuity that determines close integration of these stages for the purpose of regularity, advance and integrity of the process of musical development of personality. Moreover, continuity is necessary for

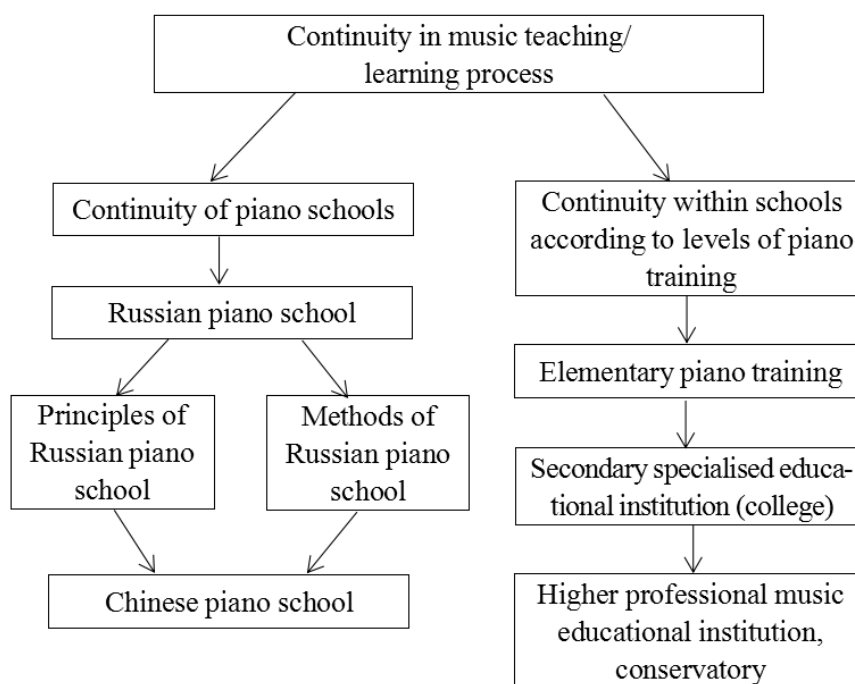
individual musical development of personality, for its socialisation and its musical professional growth.

Consider continuity in two directions of its implementation:

- continuity of piano schools;
- continuity within schools according to levels of piano training.

This will allow to use the principles and methods of piano training developed by the global music teaching/learning process.

The diagram below reflects two directions, which we have identified, for implementing continuity at piano schools (fig. 1).

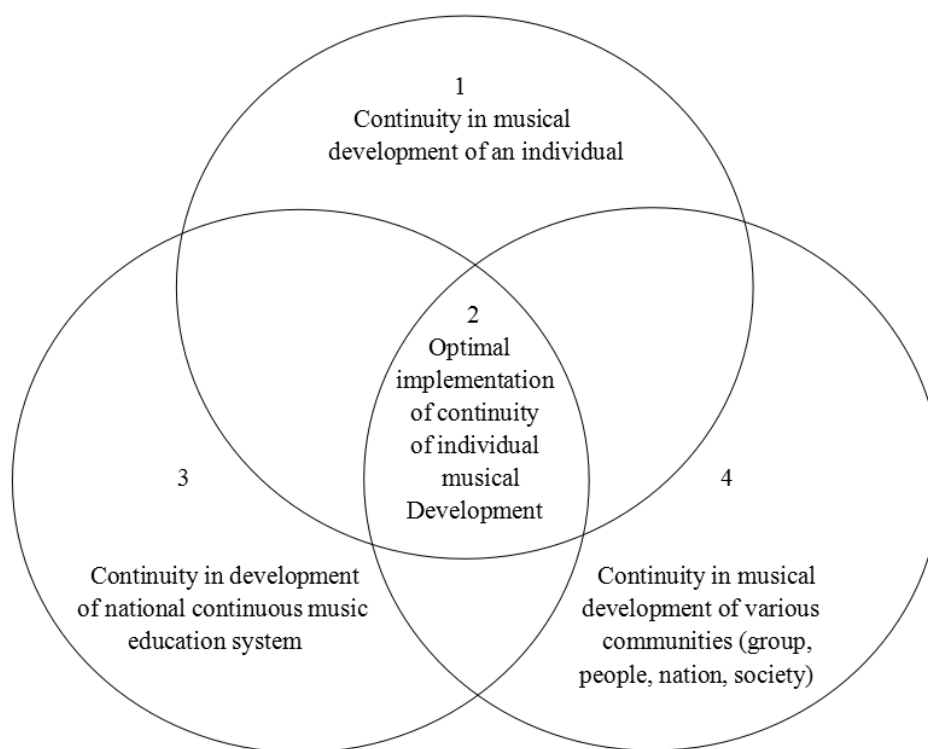


**Figure 1 - Continuity in music teaching/learning process of piano schools**

The problem of continuity in music performance was researched into by the famous Belarusian scientist V. L. Yakoniuk, who notes that continuity of performance schools „... implies: a) inheritance by coming epochs of finished artworks, *art* as such; b) inheritance of artistic *traditions* appearing as a combination of ideological and aesthetic principles of creativity; c) inheritance of *guild* traditions, i.e. formal

technological *mastery*“ [13, p. 111]. In general, it can be stated that continuity is necessary for both the existence of performance schools and individual development of personalities within these schools.

It should be noted that continuity is a universal principle that functions identically in any national education system, including the musical one (fig. 2) [5, 8, 10, 11].



**Figure 2 - Continuity as interconnected development of a system, an individual, a community**

*The first circle* is continuity in musical development of an individual.

*The second circle* is continuity in development of the national music education system.

*The third circle* is continuity in musical development of various communities (group, people, nation, society).

*The intersection of the circles* (4) shows the interconnection of different directions of continuity. It should be noted that continuity of individual musical development is possible at the intersection of all three directions only. The continuity of musical development of an individual is based on continuity of the education system and continuity in musical development of various communities. At that, the best option of implementing the principle of continuity in individual musical development and teaching to play piano is the intersection of three directions of continuity (number 4 in the figure 2).

The lack of continuity in music training and education was recognised in many countries in

the 20<sup>th</sup> century by the world musical community and musical pedagogical community: Jack Dobbs (England), C. Reynolds and E. Harper (USA), L. A. Barenboim (Russia) [6]; at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> centuries, by Y. S. Polyakova (Belarus), Liu Shikun, Zhou Guangzhen (PRC), etc.

Within the framework of the higher music education system, it is particularly important to improve the work of the higher school based on continuity of the most important principles of instrumental training. The principles of the Russian piano school underlie the formation of many national schools, and, at the current stage of their development, the internationalisation of education strengthens international and intercultural ties, ensuring continuity of the music teaching/learning process in different regions of the world.

As the famous Belarusian scientist A. P. Smantser says, „on the one hand, tendencies in development of the modern education and pedagogical theory caused an increase of the

relevance of the problem of interconnection of all the parts of the continuing education system, and, on the other hand, abundant factual materials on practical implementation of continuity have already been accumulated“ [8, p. 7].

However, the analysis of dissertation research into the problem of continuity shows that only two dissertations have something to do with continuity in the music teaching/learning process. The candidate's dissertation by M. A. Salenko (Moscow, 2000) explores continuity of the music historical training of a music teacher between a pedagogical college and a pedagogical university, and the doctoral dissertation by S. A. Fadeyeva examines continuity in the processes of music upbringing and education between a kindergarten, a school, a college and a higher educational institution (Moscow, 2007).

Our research reveals the main functions and principles of the Russian piano school and examines two important and interconnected processes of continuity implementation: between different levels of piano education (school, secondary specialised educational institution, higher educational institution), as well as continuity of principles of the Russian piano school in the global music teaching/learning process, i.e. within national piano performance schools.

Now we can examine, in more detail, the essence of continuity in the piano school and **develop the concept of continuity of principles of the Russian piano school in music pedagogy of China**. In our definition, we consider the Russian piano school as a scientific category, which represents a certain type of cultural tradition. At that, the cultural tradition itself is based on continuity of customs and cultural heritage transmitted from generation to generation and reproduced during a long time. Continuity in the music teaching/learning process appears as the need for the positive development that ensures its advance while maintaining the essential elements of the old in the new.

Continuity at one level (quantitative changes) and continuity at different levels (qualitative changes) (E. A. Baller) can be identified in the scientific literature. In the mainstream of our research, continuity within piano schools is their evolution (quantitative changes), and continuity at various levels of music education is step-wise and reflects qualitative changes in a creative and performance image of a musician.

„The ratio of quantity and quality in philosophy is characterised by the measure that expresses the dialectical unity of quantitative and qualitative characteristics of objects“ [8, p. 14]. Thus, for each level of piano training, there is a measure characterising a certain stage of pianistic development and providing a possibility of natural transition from one training stage to another: from a school to a secondary specialised educational institution, from the latter to a higher educational institution. At the same time, each level of piano training leads to a new qualitative state of student performance.

The role of the teacher is very significant, he/she needs to understand the complexity of transition of a young pianist from level to level: pupils leave one system of musical activity with the destruction of the stereotype, and are included in a higher level of education while creating a new system of relations and mastering new activities. With a critical attitude to the student's past experience, nevertheless, it is necessary to retain everything of value in it.

The concept of continuity of principles of the Russian piano school in music pedagogy of the PRC is based on the interconnected development of the music education system, musical development of an individual and musical development of various communities (group, people, nation, society) that ensures optimal implementation of continuity of the RPS principles in individual musical development. The basis for systematisation of principles of the RPS is the specific functions that reflect its



essential characteristics, ensure its effectiveness, reveal its uniqueness against a background of other schools. The first group includes the principles that *determine the function of the student's comprehensive personal development*. The principles of independence, intellectualisation of the learning process, freedom of pianistic apparatus, of associative relations, of repertoire selection, etc., make it possible to form the learner's worldview, to expand their horizons in order to provide space for their full personal development. The second group is represented by the principles that *ensure the function of productivity of the music teaching/learning process*: movement from internal representation of an artistic image to its external practical embodiment, multi-colour sound production, rhythm formation, pedalling, etc., the use of which accelerates formation of performance skills of the students. The third group includes the principles that *enhance the function of effectiveness of polysubject personality-oriented interaction* between the teacher-pianist and the student: individual style of musical thinking, organising a creative, benevolent atmosphere, rational use of the student's time and efforts, etc., that allows to increase the effectiveness of instrumental training due to emotional inclusion of the subjects in the music teaching/learning process.

If we look more closely at the essence of continuity in the music teaching/learning process, we can note the following **leading (dominant) tendencies** that can be seen throughout the entire period of existence of musical and performance arts. First of all, it is the *creative nature, mutual influence and interpenetration of methodical ideas and practices, the principle of holism (integrity)*, which acts as a stable tendency of functioning of the Russian piano school based on continuity.

Another important point to note, which ensured integrity of the Russian piano school, is

the tradition of church singing to give priority to the meaning of a performed piece of music rather than to the technique of vocalisation, when the emotional experience of the meaning exceeded the technical perfection of the performance. All the above made it possible to fuse various European performance schools into a single phenomenon based on Slavic mentality, secular, religious and folk traditions of the people, which most fully reflects the essence of Russian attitude and understanding of the world and allows to define the spirituality of philosophical and pedagogical grounds as the basis of integrity of the piano school.

It may be noted that continuity is also manifested in the tendency of *oral transmission of musical knowledge*, including the latent one. This is confirmed by the existence of the personalised schools of oral tradition in line with a single direction of Russian pianism (N. G. Rubinstein, F. O. Leshetitski's piano schools and many others) that took shape as harmonious systems of piano training [1].

Some more tendencies can be formulated when analysing the essential characteristics of the music teaching/learning process in considering the piano school. Thus, the humanistic orientation of the teaching/learning process is based on regularity and continuity of the school development, synergetic grounds of its self-organisation, unity of its spatio-temporal existence, awareness and/or intuitiveness in transmission of the school traditions.

After analysing the global music teaching/learning process, we can trace the roots of the Russian piano school by the example of performance schools in several countries. Thus, the Belarusian pedagogues-pianists M. A. Berger, V. I. Semashko, G. N. Petrov, A. K. Klumov, E. G. Alterman, G. I. Shershevski were pupils of K. N. Kalantarov, V. I. Safonov, K. N. Igumnov, G. G. Neigauz, S. E. Feinberg, V. V. Sofronitski [12].

The origins of the Ukrainian piano school and its close ties with the Russian piano school can be

also traced back through V. V. Pukhalski and his pupils (V. S. Gorovits, L. V. Nikolayev, B. L. Yavorski, G. M. Kogan, A. A. Alshwang, E. Y. Liberman and others) [3].

The establishment and development of the Chinese piano school is closely connected with the names of B. S. Zakharov, D. G. Karpova, S. S. Aksakov, A. G. Tatulian and others, as well as their pupils: Ding Shande, Jiang Dingxian, Yi Kaidi, Li Cuizhen, Li Xianmin, Wu Lei, Huang Tinggui and others [9]. Over time, continuity of the RPS principles in Chinese piano pedagogy moved from their direct borrowing to their subtler rethinking in the mainstream of integrative processes that provides the basis for successful piano education.

Now, we can begin to **consider a model of continuity of the RPS principles in China's piano pedagogy.**

The task of creating a theoretical model of continuity of principles is based on theoretical and methodological grounds of continuity, identified stages of development of piano performance in the PRC, tendencies of a process of continuity of principles, levels of integration, continuity of principles and methods, as well as on developed criteria for diagnosing results of implementation of this model in practice (see fig. 3). Continuity of piano schools is a complex process for modelling. A model can become as complex as the process itself. It is more rational not to develop an isomorphic model, but to develop a homomorphic one, where a single element of the model corresponds to the complex of elements of a prototype. All the above theoretical positions allow us to determine the proposed theoretical model of continuity (see fig. 3) as ideal, homomorphic, prognostic and consisting of the following:

**Unit of values and goals**, including:

- *fundamental beliefs*: both in Russia and China, music is recognised as a value for a person, society and the State; its main functions

are social, developmental, upbringing, educational, etc.;

- *goals of continuity*: the goals of continuity in the music teaching/learning process are: improvement of quality of music education in the PRC and other countries, further positive development of piano pedagogy in the world, transition from direct borrowing to integration of piano schools of Russia and China, etc.;

- *approaches and principles that concretise them*

- *culturological approach* with the principles of multiculturalism, productivity, axiological expansion of personalised meanings of cultural phenomena, organisation of the music teaching/learning process in a multicultural educational environment [5, 6, 7];

- *historical approach* with the principles of dialectics, analytics, globality of educational issues, scientific objectivity, unity of the common to humanity and the national [4];

- *activity approach* with the principles of engineering and transformation of personality and activity, free self-realisation, personification of the music teaching/learning process, orientation of music teaching activity towards the integrated personality of the student, compliance of the music teaching activity with conditions of formation and development, self-motivation and self-determination of personality [2, 6].

**Contents unit**, including:

- continuity of the RPS principles in models of music education: at the level of organising the music teaching/learning process (ensuring comprehensive development of the student's personality); at the level of a curriculum (use of play the piano (actualisation of the meanings of an artistic image of a piece of music, development of the polyphonic nature of music mental activity based on distribution of attention, method of passing remarks, method of intonation comprehension, method of subconscious assimilation of emotional information, etc.).



UNIT OF VALUES AND GOALS	<b>WORLD-VIEWS (GROUNDS):</b> Music is a value for a person, society and the State Music has social, developmental, upbringing and educational functions
	<b>GOAL OF CONTINUITY OF RPS PRINCIPLES</b> Improvement of quality of music education, further positive development of piano pedagogy, transition from direct borrowing to integration of piano schools of Russia and China
	<b>APPROACHES:</b> Cultural approach, historical approach, activity approach
CONTENTS UNIT	<b>CONTINUITY OF RPS PRINCIPLES IN MODELS OF MUSIC EDUCATION:</b> - at the level of organising the music teaching/learning process (ensuring comprehensive development of the student's personality); - at the level of a curriculum (use of disciplines that expand the horizons of students); - at the level of contents of disciplines (repertoire, including a variety of genres and styles)
	<b>CONTINUITY OF TEACHING/LEARNING METHODS BASED ON RPS PRINCIPLES:</b> <b>General didactic methods:</b> verbal, visual, practical, etc. <b>Methods of music education:</b> method of music generalisation, method of interconnection between music and other art forms, method of creating an artistic and communicative situation, etc. <b>Methods of teaching/learning to play the piano:</b> actualisation of the meanings of an artistic image of a piece of music, development of the polyphonic nature of music mental activity (its technical and artistic aspects) based on distribution of attention, method of passing remarks, method of intonation comprehension, method of subconscious assimilation of emotional information, etc.
PROCESS UNIT	<b>STAGES OF FORMATION OF CHINESE PIANISM BASED ON CONTINUITY OF RPS PRINCIPLES:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• professional education, penetration of principles of Russian pianism (the 1920s);</li> <li>• cooperation with the USSR in the 1950s, borrowing of the RPS principles in Chinese pianism;</li> <li>• rejection of bourgeois culture, including the RPS principles (the 1960s-1980s);</li> <li>• return to international cooperation in piano performance and to continuity of the RPS principles at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century;</li> <li>• continuity of the RPS principles and the entry into a new stage: integration with Chinese pianism, high achievements at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.</li> </ul>
	<b>TENDENCIES AND PATTERNS OF CONTINUITY OF RPS PRINCIPLES:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• actualisation of values of piano performance;</li> <li>• establishment of the system of professional music educational institutions (dissemination of the RPS principles);</li> <li>• creation of the national performance piano school based on direct borrowing of the principles of Russian pianism;</li> <li>• scientific and methodical understanding of the origins of the Chinese piano school;</li> <li>• continuity of the RPS principles based on integration, in the Chinese piano school, of traditions and innovations in the mainstream of broad international cooperation</li> </ul>
	<b>CONTINUITY OF RPS PRINCIPLES BASED ON INTEGRATION OF CHINESE AND RUSSIAN PIANISM:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Between pianistic schools (inter-divisional: between different author's schools);</li> <li>• Within pianistic schools (inter-structural: different pedagogical systems on the same platform);</li> <li>• Integration of the piano school with emerging innovations based on philosophical and worldview traditions (trans-structural synthesis: wen, wu, qigong)</li> </ul>
RESULT UNIT	<b>CRITERIA AND INDICATORS OF CONTINUITY OF RPS PRINCIPLES IN PRC</b> 1. Independence (in choosing a program, methods of work, interpretation); 2. Awareness (of an artistic image, of playing activity, of one's own personality: appearance of an artist and his/her pianistic apparatus); 3. Artistry (touch (toucher), intonation, pedalling)
	<b>RESULT</b> Implemented continuity of the RPS principles in music pedagogy of China

Figure 3. - Model of continuity of the RPS principles in music pedagogy of China



Process unit, including:

- *stages of formation of Chinese pianism based on continuity of the RPS principles*: professional education, penetration of the principles of Russian pianism (the 1920s); cooperation with the USSR in the 1950s, borrowing of the RPS principles in Chinese pianism; abandonment of bourgeois culture, including the RPS principles (the 1960s-1980s); return to international cooperation in piano performance and to continuity of the RPS principles at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; continuity of the RPS and entry into a new stage: integration with Chinese pianism, high achievements at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

- *tendencies and patterns of continuity of the RPS principles*: actualisation of value of piano performance, establishment of the system of professional music educational institutions, creation of the national performance piano school (direct borrowing), scientific and methodical understanding of the origins of the Chinese piano school, continuity of the RPS principles based on integration and international cooperation;

- *continuity of the RPS principles based on integration of Chinese and Russian pianism*: *inter-divisional continuity* between pianistic schools and different models of education; *inter-structural continuity* within pianistic schools and between personal pedagogical systems of teachers; *continuity of trans-structural synthesis* as integration of the piano school with emerging innovations based on philosophical and worldview traditions, etc.

**Result unit**, including:

- *criteria and indicators of continuity of principles of the Russian piano school in the People's Republic of China*: independence: choice of a program, methods of work, interpretation; awareness of an artistic image, of playing activity, of one's own personality; artistry: touch (toucher), intonation, pedalling;

- *result*: implementation of continuity of the RPS principles in China's music pedagogy; achievements of Chinese pianism based on creative mastery of the principles of the Russian piano school; the effectiveness of continuity and integration of the schools proved by the numerous victories of Chinese pianists at international competitions; axiological result not only for Russia and China, but also for the theory and practice of the world piano performance.

### Final part

Thus, the theoretical analysis of the historical piano performance process allowed us to develop the concept of continuity in functioning of the piano schools:

- continuity in the music teaching/learning process acts as the need for the positive development based on the specific functions of the RPS, which ensure its advance while maintaining the essential elements of the old in the new;

- the leading tendencies in implementation of continuity are creative nature of methodical ideas and practices, their mutual influence and interpenetration; integrity, oral tradition and latent knowledge.

The leading functions of the Russian piano school, which determined its specificity, longevity, productivity and significance for the world music performance process, have been used for systematisation of principles of this school.

The analysis of the practical implementation of continuity in work of Chinese pedagogues-musicians has allowed us to develop the prognostic model of continuity of the RPS principles in China's music pedagogy, which includes: world views and goals; principles and methods of the RPS at the level of organising the teaching/learning process, a curriculum and contents of disciplines; stages of development of Chinese pianism, tendencies and patterns of the process of continuity; integration levels (inter-divisional, inter-structural, trans-structural





synthesis); developed criteria and indicators (independence, awareness, artistry).

The research results may be used in the practice of performance classes at secondary specialised and higher educational institutions, and in general, the research materials actualise the value of positions of Russian pianism for the theory and practice of the world piano performance.

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### INFORMATION ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Zhu Jing** is senior lecturer of Nanchang Hang Kong State University. Scientific interests: piano pedagogy and performance; theoretical and practical aspects of formation and development of a professional teacher-musician.

City of Nanchang, People's Republic of China, E-mail: jing9611@yandex.ru.

**Polyakova Yelena Stepanovna** is Professor of the Chair of Music and Pedagogical Education in the Educational institution of Belarusian State Pedagogical University named after Maxim Tank. She is Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences. Scientific interests: problems of improvement of music education and music and pedagogical education; philosophical, methodological, theoretical and practical aspects of formation and development of a professional teacher-musician.

City of Minsk, Republic of Belarus, E-mail: poljakova.elena@mail.ru