

# نگار بوبان

نوازنده عود، آهنگساز و موسیقی شناس

NEGAR BOUBAN ,PhD

Musicologist / Composer / Oud Player

## Curriculum Vitae

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### Negar Bouban

*Musicologist, Oud player and Composer*

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*This is an overview of Negar Bouban's work as musicologist and musician, covering (page numbers in brackets):*

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- **University Education:**

PhD in *Art Studies*, focus on Persian Classical Music Theory, with interdisciplinary approach to language and music, Alzahra University, Tehran, 2009.

Master's degree in *Architecture*, focus on Room Acoustic design for Persian Music, University of Tehran, 1999.

- **Professional Training:**

Musical Acoustics, focus on intonation and musical intervals, working as research and teaching assistant to Dr. Khausrow Maulana (PhD in Acoustics, professor at University of Tehran), since 1998.

Persian *Dastgah* Music and *Oud*, with master Mansour Nariman, since 1992.

- **Academic and Professional Positions:**

Committee Member of the Mock exam, for evaluation of assessment framework for Dutch Professional-Doctorate program: Arts + Creative (*Kunst + Creatief*), Rotterdam, October 2025.

Lecturer at the Department of Music, University of Tehran, 2015-2019, and in academic years of 2001-2005.

Assistant professor at the Department of Music, Faculty of Arts and Architecture, Azad University of Shiraz, Shiraz, 2009-2016.

Guest lecturer of Oud and Persian Music at Pop Akademie, Mannheim, since 2017.

Lecturer at the Department of Sound, Faculty of Engineering, University of IRIB, Tehran, 2012 and 2003-2005.

Lecturer at the Faculty of Music, Arts University, Karaj, 2002.

Instructor of Oud and Persian Music at Girls' Conservatory of music, Tehran, 2014-2019.

Instructor of Oud and Persian Music at Boys' Conservatory of music, Tehran, 2007-2009.

Jury Member for the annual *ART OMI: Music residency*, 2020-2023.

Jury Member at the *National Festival of Youth Music*, Tehran, 2013-2025.

Member of the Editorial board of *Music Quarterly Zangar*, Shiraz, 2016-2018.

- **Ongoing Research Projects:**

- I. **Intonation** in Persian modes of *Dastgah*:

Aiming to clarify how modes in *Dastgah*-s are built and recognised based on and cued by specific intonation and interval-clusters; with some level of precision not currently reflected in scholarly work, as the pre-existing literature and decades of scholarly work on modes in *Dastgah* is yet to form a consistent theoretical framework, as well as connecting with the practice of the music in a more coherent way.

- II. **KDC** (KUG *Dastgahi* Corpus) Project (collaborating with):

Taking part as both, musician and musicologist, in recordings and annotations that shape the Corpus to study different aspects of *Dastgah* music, I joined the project in 2021, invited by Babak Nikzat and Rafael Caro Repetto (the initiators of KDC). In 2023 we presented a lecture-concert in Graz, and later a paper in AAWM in 2025. The project continues to develop further.

- III. A **Sound Theory** for Persian Classical *Dastgah*:

Theoretical approach could best be examined when one puts them into practice and teaching. The goal of this line of work is to create a coherent, comprehensive and yet concise framework that can help learners, teachers and researchers, as well as modern tech-tools, develop and function in the field of *Dastgah* with more certainty and clarity. As yet the existing literature and common teaching material do not present a firm ground for understanding and leave many vague and open-to-interpretation areas, from which both research and education processes are suffering.

- **Selected Writings, Papers and Presentations:**

In English

'Bridging Theory and Practice in Iranian *Dastgahi* Music, Corpus-based Analysis of *Gushe* Patterns', with B. Nikzat & R. Caro Repetto, at AAWM 2025.

'Problems of Modal Theory Applied to Persian *Dastgah* Music: How Attempts to Explain *Dastgah* as Modal Entities have created Complications', in: S. Weiss & B. Nikzat (Edt.), **Rethinking Musical Mode**, Graz Studies in Ethnomusicology vol. 30, 2025.

'Mojannab interval-class and the Question of Precision in creating and recognising Modes in Persian *Dastgah* Music: a pilot study on perception of Mojannab in the mode Afshari', the *Third Symposium of the ICTMD study group on Sound, Movement, and the Sciences (SoMoS)*, Oslo 2024.

'Varieties of Mojannab in musical intervals of Persian Music: Past and Present', to be

published in the Proceedings of the International Conference of Music of Persian-Speaking Countries and Regions, Haale (Saale), Germany 2023.

'Flexibility versus Diversity in Interval-Sizes: The unanswered question of Mojannab Intervals in Persian Dastgah Music', the 23rd Annual Congress of the Gesellschaft für Musiktheorie (GMTH), Freiburg, Germany 2023.

'Rhythm as Pattern and the Study of Free Rhythm: the case study of Persian classical music', the 1st international conference of Analytical Approaches to World Music (AAWM), UMass, USA, February 2010.

In Persian

'A Phonetic study of metrics and rhythm in Persian folk poetry', with Maedeh Mirtalayi, in: **The Persian Metrics: A Historical Study-3**; the proceedings of the 3rd congress on Metrics in Persian and Iranian Poetry, pp 105-123, Niloofar publications, Tehran 2019 (first presented at the 3rd congress of Metrics in Persian and Iranian Poetry, Tehran, 2016).

'Quest and questions: MohammadReza Shajarian and his legacy in Persian music', in: **Honar-e Musighi (Art of Music) Monthly Music Magazine**, no. 173, Autumn 2018.

'A Study in Organology; Structure of Oud (Barbat) in Sassanid, Ilkani-Timurid and Safavid era, Iran', with Maryam Dolatifard, in **Honar-ha-ye-Ziba: Honar-ha-ye-Namayeshi-va-Musiqi (Journal of Fine Arts)** no. 3-23, Autumn 2018, pp 77-85, University of Tehran Publications.

'Dastgah System in Persian Music Theory vs. Old Metrics in Persian Poetry', in: **Zangar Music Quarterly**, no. 6, Autumn 2017.

'Barbad, the Sassanid court musician: a profile', in: **Zangar Music Quarterly**, no. 4&5, Winter&Spring 2017.

'Ear Training: an interview with Dr. Khausrow Maulana', in: **Zangar Music Quarterly**, no. 4&5, Winter&Spring 2017.

'Fundamentals, Theories or Music theory? What are we in pursuit of for Persian Music?', in: **Zangar Music Quarterly**, no. 3, Fall 2017.

'Authentic or Spurious? Artist and his/her work', in: **Zangar Music Quarterly**, no. 2, Summer 2016.

'Music and Skills', in: **Zangar Music Quarterly**, no. 1, Spring 2016.

'The Role of Feet in Persian Poetry Rhythm: a musical attitude towards the function of feet as group-markers', in: **The Persian Metrics: A Historical Study-2**; the proceedings of the 2nd congress on Metrics in Persian and Iranian Poetry, pp 343-355, (Tehran-2013), Hermes publications, 2015.

'Visual Representation of Syllable Weight and Duration; a tool for comparative analyses of rhythm in Persian poetry and music', in: **The Persian Metrics: A Historical Study-1**; the proceedings of the 1st congress on Metrics in Persian and Iranian Poetry, pp 259-288, (Tehran-2010), Persian Academy publications, 2011.

'A New Look at Metrics in Persian Folk Poetry', with Omid Tabibzadeh, in: O. Tabibzadeh (Ed.), **A tribute to Abolhassan Najafi** (*Jashn-name-ye Abolhassan Najafi*), Niloofer Publications, Tehran 2011.

'Musical System and Intervals in the Systematist School of Maraqi: performance today', in: **Showqnameh** booklet with the 3-CD music album *Showqname: revived collection of compositions attributed to Maraqi*, Avaye Barbad, Tehran 2011.

'Manifestation of Persian Language in the Structure of Persian Dastgah Music', presented at the Institute of BookCity, Tehran, 2010.

'The Music of Phonemes in Hafez' Poetry', presented at the Congress on 'Music in Hafez's Poetry', Institute of BookCity, Tehran, 2010.

'Timing of Vowels in Speech: a new approach to rhythm in language with musical attitude', *Linguistics' Summer-School lectures* in Bu-Ali Sina University, Hamedan, July 2010.

'A Phonetic Study of Rhythm in the Feet of Persian Words; Prose and Poetry', in: **Journal of Researches in Linguistics** (a biannual Journal), no. 1, Autumn&Winter 2009-2010, pp 101-121, University of Isfahan Publications.

'Studies of Rhythm in Classical Music of Iran: review and questions', in: **Honar-ha-ye-Ziba: Honar-ha-ye-Namayeshi-va-Musiqi** (*Journal of Fine Arts*) no. 38, Autumn 2009, pp 87-94, University of Tehran Publications.

'Mythical Elements in Assurik Tree, the Pahlavi Poem', with A. Dadvar, in: **Honar-ha-ye-Ziba** (*Journal of Fine Arts*) no. 32, Winter 2008, pp 109-118, University of Tehran Publications.

'Rhythmic Quantitative Indices for Persian Language: a comparative study with English and French', in: **The proceedings of the 7<sup>th</sup> Iranian Conference on Linguistics**, pp 378-403, Allameh University publications, Tehran 2007.

'Precision in Persian Miniature Paintings for Musicological Studies: a close look at details of instruments and players in some paintings of Safavid era', the *International Conference of School of Isfahan*, Isfahan, 2007.

'Referential Indexing of Pictorial Sources containing Musical Instruments', with. Khosro Moulana, in: **Honar-ha-ye-Ziba** (*Journal of Fine Arts*) no. 13, Spring 2003, pp 118-130, University of Tehran Publications.

'Combination of Contrasts: a review on Hossein Alizadeh's solos and improvisations', in: **Farhang-o-Ahang** (Culture and Music magazine), no. 17, pp 28-31, 2007.

'Music: the Enigma of Cognition', in: **Farhang-o-Ahang** (Culture-and-Music magazine), no. 16, pp 48-52, 2007.

- **Oud Books:**

'Zir-o-Bam-e Oud' (High and low of Oud): a book of intermediate exercises for Oud players, HamAvaz Publications, Tehran 2018.

'Oud Method for Persian Music': an iBook for learning the essential techniques on the Oud for Persian Music, 2016.

● **University Courses**, designed and held (consecutive semesters at universities in Iran):

❖ Courses on *Persian Classical (Dastgahi) music, theory and practice*:

Dastgah and Persian Radif for Oud players, Persian Dastgah Theory, Stage Performance, Ensemble Performance.

❖ Courses on *Sound and Musical Acoustics*:

Fundamentals of Musical Acoustics, Room Acoustics, Intonation: Tones and Temperaments, Music appreciation and Ear Training for Sound engineers.

❖ Courses on *Music Treatises of Iran*:

Music of Systematist and Scholastic schools in Iran, based on treatises from 9th to 16th century, Maqam and its history in relation to musical acoustics.

● **Workshops** (events hosted by *international institutes and universities*):

*Intercultural Oud Workshop*: together with Abdul-Wahab Al-Kayyali, Universität Freiburg, December 2025.

*Cross-Modal Perspectives*, Qatar Music Academy, Doha, December 2025.

*Let's Make Music: Persian Songs and Rhythms*: together with Sara Fotros, Tamburi Mundi, Freiburg, April 2025.

*Sounds and Reflections*: Oud Music Seminar together with Kamilya Jubran, Sharjah Art Foundation, UAE, October 2024.

*Follow Dastgah in Persian Music*: on Dastgah concept and its structure in Persian music, Rhythmitica Music Academy, February-April 2023.

*Meet Persian Music*: a guide to Persian music, Rhythmitica Music Academy, September-November 2022.

*Learn and Understand Persian Classical Music as a Living Creative Tradition*, a three-session workshop hosted by ISMEO and Conservatorio Santa Cecilia, Rome, December 2021.

*Understanding Persian Dastgah Music*, a three-session workshop on for Master and

bachelor students at Turkish Music Department of Codarts, November and December 2021.

*Challenging Musical Mode Theories on Persian Dastgah Music in Practice*, a two-session workshop on how theory reflects in practice, at the *Symposium 'Rethinking Musical Mode'*, Kunst Universität Graz, November 2021.

*Learn Persian Dastgah Music through Phrasing and Timing Templates*, Rhythmitica Music Academy, 2021.

*Persian Music Creatively: Learning through the work of Saba*, a three-session course, MusicBoat, March 2021.

*Why Microtones?: a workshop on intonation in Persian Dastgah music*, MusicBoat, November 2020.

- **Supervised University Students' Theses:**

*In addition to many supervised final performances of Oud students for a Bachelor's or Master's degrees in music at the University of Tehran,*

*Here are a couple of students' research projects, led and supervised by Negar Bouban:*

'Comparative Study of Three General Scales of Safi-al-Din Ormawi, Mansour Zalzal and Alinaqi Vaziri, on Persian Dastgah Music played on Tar: a practical study to test the intervals as perceived', a project for bachelor's degree of music by: *Hasan Vahidian*, Azad University, Shiraz, 2016.

'Musical Intervals in Performance of Segah by Master Jalil Shahnaz on Tar: measuring fundamental frequencies of tones on wave recordings', a project for bachelor's degree of music by: *Niloufar Siavashi*, Azad University, Shiraz, 2016.

'A Comparative Study of Tar-Making Templates in Iran', a thesis for master's degree in Musicology, by: *Maryam Gha'emi*, Arts University, Karaj, 2015.

'Reconstructing Abdol-Qader Maraqi's Metal-Plates Musical Instrument; based on an old treatise', a project for bachelor's degree of music by: *Farnaz Entezari*, Azad University, Shiraz, 2014.

'Cataloguing Musical Instrument depicted in Hunting Scenes of Tagh-e Bostan's Rock Relief', a project for bachelor's degree of music by: *Mahshid Rahimi*, Azad University, Shiraz, 2014.

'Transcription of a Naqsh from Banayi's 15th-Century Treatise: re-writing the piece to western notation and the missing information', a project for bachelor's degree of music by: *Zahra Khazami*, Azad University, Shiraz, 2014.

'A Study in Organology; Structure of Oud (Barbat) in Sassanid, Ilkani-Timurid and Safavid era, Iran', a thesis for master's in Art Studies, by: *Maryam DolatiFard*, Azad University,

Tehran, 2013.

'Musical Intervals in Four Types of Ajnas in Persian Dastgah Music; an experimental approach to measure intervals on wave recordings of multiple performed Ajnas on Kamancheh', a project for bachelor's degree of music by: *Raziyeh JeyranZadeh*, Azad University, Shiraz, 2013.

'Kamancheh's Relative Spectrum of Tones: a preliminary study for directionality of the instrument', a project for the degree of bachelor of music by: *Maryam Gha'emi*, Azad University, Shiraz, 2011.

● **selected Musical Compositions & Released Albums:**

*Meykhaneh*: a piece for Oud, Santour, Qeychak and vocals, to be released 2026.

*Persian Garden at Night*: a piece for Oud, Santour, Kamancheh & Percussion, commissioned by Berlin's Museum of Islamic Arts, 2025.

*Khayyam in Dialogue*: a piece for multi-lines of Oud & Vocals, commissioned for the exhibition 'Coming together' for Guggenheim Museum in Abu-Dhabi, 2025.

*When I Dream of my Kurdish Roots*: a piece Oud and vocals in three movements, based on Kurdish music. 2025.

*The Peak*: a piece for multi-lines Oud and vocals, based on a song by Ali Tajvidi. 2025.

*Lantern*: a piece for Oud and vocals, on contemporary poetry of Hossein Monzavi, 2022.

*Mirror the Voice*: a piece for three Ouds and vocals, on contemporary poetry of Forough Farrokhzad, a commissioned piece for Landscapes-of-Hope's 'Requiem for Justice' festival, streamed September 2021.

*THE*: a piece for solo Oud & Vocals on contemporary poetry of Nima Youshij, 2021.

*A Dead Wind*: a piece for solo Oud & Vocals on contemporary poetry of Ahmad Shamlou, 2021.

*A Tribute to Ariadne*: a program-piece for Labyrinth's Mitos Maqam Orchestra of Labyrinth-Crete, 2019.

*On Fire*: a 10-track album of solo Oud and vocals, 2018.

*Neest*: a piece for 3 Ouds, alto-Kamancheh and vocals, 2018.

*A Tale, Foretold*: DVD and Audio CD album of a live solo performance in Tehran 2014, released by Avaye-Barbad, Tehran 2016.

*Eyvan-e-Jan*: music for selected Persian works of Ahmad Qazzali: commissioned for the audio book, released by Moin Publications, Tehran 2014.

*Through*: a 7-track album of solo Oud and vocals, 2012.

*In Turn*: an 8-track album of solo Oud and vocals, 2011.

*The Poetry of Loving you*: A piece for Violin, Viola, Oud and vocals, 2010.

*Continu*: an 8-track solo Oud album, released by Mahriz, Tehran 2008.

- **Music: Ethno+Musicological Projects:**

*There have been a couple of notable projects in Negar Bouban's practice of music that were shaped by and rooted in ethnomusicological and/ or musicological research.*

*Here are the highlights:*

*Whispers of Zagros*: a composed concert program for Oud, Tambour, Percussion and vocals, based on and rooted in themes from Bakhtiari, Lori and Kurdish music, performed as concerts in 2025, and as live music for the silent film 'Grass: A Nation's Battle for Life' (Documentary 1925) in Kommunales Kino, Freiburg, 2024.

*NAH*: a multi-cultural Project to form dialogues between different music cultures and a Jazz Big Band, co-directed with Ralf Schmid and Leonie Fritsch, Hochschule für Musik, Freiburg, 2024.

*Meanders* : a multi-cultural trio-Project to collectively compose, based on themes from three different music cultures: Aramaic, Celtic and Persian, on Oud, Santour and Violin/ Viola, with Babak Kouhestani and Hamid Moradian, recorded and released in 2020.

*From Persian Garden*: a collection of seven Tasnifs and twenty Ajami Pishrows, from the compositions attributed to Ajams (including Iranians) in Ottoman repertoire, Maraqi Ensemble and MohammadReza Darvishi, Mahoor publications, 2020.

*Showqnameh*: Compositions attributed to Abdolqader Maraqi (d. 1435): Maraqi Ensemble, Homayoun Shajarian and MohammadReza Darvishi, Avaye-Barbad, Tehran 2011.

- **Music: Selected works in collaboration:**

*Canticum Profugorum*: an oratorio composed by Krzysztof Knittel for Oud solo, Soprano and baritone singers, percussions, philharmonic orchestra and choir, Silesian Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Yaroslav Shemet, Anaklasis, 2025.

*Eurasians Unity*: a World-Jazz ensemble Project, initiated as the main project of Women-in-Jazz festival 2014 (Halle, Germany), which won the RUTH award (Der deutsche Weltmusikpreis) in 2015, and in 2018 recorded and released its collective music album,

titled Eurasians Unity.

*Sentinel*: music for two voices, Oud and Santour, composed by Babak Bouban, 2018.

*Here Comes the Rain*: compositions by Siamak Jahangiri, Noufe music Publications, Tehran 2016.

*Gone to be Back*: compositions by Sirous Jamali, Saazavaz Publications, Tehran 2016.

*Sing*: composed by Babak Bouban, released by Naqme-Hezardastan, Tehran 2015.

*Eshghim-Gal*: compositions by Hossein Alizadeh for Hamavayan Ensemble, Ghoghnoos records, Tehran 2015.

*Badeh-Toei*: compositions by Hossein Alizadeh for Hamavayan Ensemble, Ghoghnoos records, Tehran 2014.

*Mandu*: original soundtrack of the movie *Mandoo*, composed by Ali Samadpour, 2012.

*Among the Clouds*: original soundtrack of the movie, composed by Ali Samadpour, 2012.

*Fever*: music for two voices, Oud and Santour, composed by Babak Bouban, 2011.

*Sarkhaneh*: compositions in the old Iranian style, composition by Said Kordmafi, Mahoor Publications, Tehran 2010.

*Charm of Tambak*: Exploring rhythm through poetry for children, solo Oud in songs for children by Leyla Hakim-Elahi, Mahoor Publications, Tehran 2008.

*Kopachinha-ye Alborz*: compositions by Siamak Jahangiri, released by Par-pirar Publications, Tehran 2004.

*Shivang*: music and poetry of *Mazandaran*, arrangements by Siamak Jahangiri, released by Par-pirar Publications, Tehran 2003.

- **Music: works in collaboration with Visual Artists:**

*Story of a Curse*, (a short animated film by Negin Sharifzadeh): composition and performance on Oud and vocals, 2013-2014.

*Beyond Reach*, a music video by Parissa Mohit on the piece "Distant" (from the album *Through*), 2014.

*Even Gray Feels Blue*, a stop-motion animation by Negin Sharifzadeh made in conversation with 'the Last Turn' (from the album *In Turn*), 2011-2012.

- **PhD Thesis: Subject and abstract:**

Foundations of Rhythm in Iranian Classical Music and Persian Language

The concept of the so-called 'free rhythm' in musics of the East, and especially Middle East, has always been somehow taken for granted and not seriously examined. Although there have always been discussions about the relations between the language of every region and the structure of its music.

Here the research shows that the aspect of time in both Persian music and language, shaping their Rhythm, meaning timing and grouping structures, is very clearly following the very same concepts and rules:

The timings of tones in the Persian music and syllables in Persian (Farsi) language shape a number of cell-like tiny groups of sound elements (either syllables or tones) that work as patterns; patterns that can be recalled and recognised. Rhythmic phrases are simply structured by putting these patterns in a row, with the least of change within each; with the attitude that is usually known as Additive rhythm. Four basic patterns were found for Persian language and 20 in Persian Classical music of Radif.

Based on such an 'additive' attitude, it is easily possible to create all different levels of rhythmicity by how repetitive patterns appear in a phrase.

The above stated findings are observed, examined and proven through phonetic and audio experiments on the wave recordings of utterances of language and performed free-rhythm melodies, as well as comprehensive analyses on phonological approaches to both.

### *Abstract:*

This PhD dissertation is a comparative study on rhythm in two domains: Iranian Classical Music and Persian Language, with rhythm defined as the **timing of elements in any sequence of sounds** in music or speech. The elements, each occurring at a moment in time, build a temporal structure, which can be remembered and recognised, and here we have referred to such **temporal structures as rhythmic patterns**.

Our main goal in this study was to assess the **patterning** in each domain, by which we mean that there are certain **cell-like rhythmic patterns** that can generate the whole body of rhythmic phrases in the hierarchical organisation of musical pieces and utterances in the language. There seems to be a common foundation in both shaping of the patterns, and the way they are assembled to form phrases and pieces in the domains we studied.

Iranian Classical 'Radif of 7 Dastgah-s' (by *Dariush Tala'ee*), and phonological words in Persian language were chosen as the corpus of this study. Rhythmic patterns of the two were extracted and compared with each other. Pattern extraction from "Radif" was carried out on a software system, designed and produced especially for this research. Along with the phonological extractions (based on segmentations), some phonetic observation was done on waves of the extracted patterns both solely and in combination, to observe the variability of the timing structures.

Considering the fact that usual rhythm transcription methods in phonology and music are not efficient for a comparative study like this, we have designed some graphic symbols that are able to exhibit the rhythmic structure in both: Persian words and *Radif* phrases. Such symbols are designed to communicate simply visually and with no training.

The results showed that:

In both domains, rhythm is **duration-based**, and not stress-based: the key distinction that shapes rhythmic patterns is duration and quantity, not stress (or accent).

Both domains are **highly patterning**. 20 rhythmic patterns in '*Radif*' and 4 types of foot in Persian words can generate the whole body of phrases rhythmically in the corpus.

Construction of both patterns and phrases is **additive**: sequences of sounds in a pattern and a phrase are shaped by simply adding up quantities, and by adding one or more quantities to a pattern (putting one element beside the existing group), other patterns are constructed.

The neighbouring of patterns can define different degrees of periodicity that can range from free prose to fully disciplined poetry, and pieces of non-pulsatile free rhythm to periodic pulsatile pieces. Thus, free rhythm in pieces of '*Radif*' can compare to free poems in Persian.

- **Other research interest areas:**

Music Perception for Theory of music, specifically in Middle Eastern music.

Diversity of Tuning systems and intonation, especially in non-equal temperaments.

Experimental Studies of *Maqam* theory in music.

Studying rephrasing vs. improvisation in music, specifically in Persian *Dastgah*.

Interdisciplinary studies in music and linguistics.

Early music treatises of the Islamic world and its influence on other cultures.

Musical systems and the role of musical instruments in the evolution of interval-systems through time.

- **Languages:** Persian (Farsi: mother tongue), English (fluent), German (B1 certificate).

- **Other skills and interests:**

Teamwork, both as the leader and a team-member.

Designing research plans, Courses and lesson plans according to the set goals.

Improvisation, both in solo and group performances.