

## OPINION

From Prof. Margarita Koleva, Ph.D.

Regarding dissertation work:

„Individualization and differentiation of pedagogical interaction in kindergarten“, for acquiring a degree “Doctor of Science”

From Assoc.prof. Rozalina Plamenova Engels – Kritidis, Ph.D.

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- **Actuality of the problems researched in the dissertation - scientific and applied scientific resources**

The dissertation work of Rosalina Plamenova Engels – Kritidis, Ph.D. is a serious scientific attempt for a new reading of the individualization and differentiation of pedagogical interaction in kindergarten problems. The author's scientific interest and reasoning for extensive research on the problem relate both to her understanding of the role of individual differences and the potential of the child in the process of their development, education and socialization, as well as to the need to remodel the technological construct of pedagogical interaction with the child of the 21st century. Remodeling that would actually operationalize the real problem of pedagogical science - individualization and its reconciliation with the differentiation of pedagogical interaction, as well as to reveal the options for inclusive education of children with different opportunities. These guidelines set out the relevance of the research problem as well as the importance of dissertation work in the field of pre-school pedagogy. Moreover, today there is a research deficit of developments on issues with proven theoretical and practical effects. The problem of "individualization" and the related "differentiation" is almost unregulated in pedagogical practice, which naturally affects the quality of children's knowledge, skills and competences.

The relevance of the dissertation research is confirmed by the importance of the two main theses, theoretically interpreted in the development - the thesis about the nature and meaning of the idea of individualization and differentiation of pedagogical interaction on the basis of the personal potential of the unique child and the thesis of permanent learning. by experiencing and personally meaningful childhood experiences, of children's discoveries and encouraging the child's discoverable spirit, of learning by doing, etc. goals of stimulating children's experiences in direct interaction with the goals of transforming their experiences. Essential to pedagogical practice are the emphasis on the role of individualization and differentiation of pedagogical interaction with children for the individual educational progress of each particular child.

The relevance of the problem is also outlined by the clearly formulated conceptual parameters of the dissertation research: purpose, object, subject, leading research hypothesis and five sub-hypotheses, research criteria and indicators, research methods, research stages, participants in the research, expected results. It can be stated that at every stage of the dissertation



development of Assoc. Prof. Rosalina Engels – Kritidis, Ph.D. , the relevance of the problem is produced - both in the process of theoretical research and in the sense of the research procedures and their applied aspects.

- **Parameters and information resources of the dissertation work**

The dissertation submitted for official defense by Assoc. Prof. Rosalina Engels – Kritidis, Ph.D. consists of 312 standard pages, of which 16 pages bibliography and 4 pages annexes. Information resources are appropriately selected, and competent as well as accurate analysis is a good theoretical basis for objective presentation of the studied issues. Organizationally, the dissertation research is designed and presented through an introduction, five chapters, a conclusion, inferences and recommendations, a bibliography, annexes, all of them substantively bound and subject to the strict logic of the research procedures. The text includes 14 tables, 47 figures and 56 pictures. The bibliography contains 140 titles in Bulgarian and 50 in English.

As a comprehensive development, the work offers good proportionality, coherence and logic to the research - each chapter has its own vision, revealing the main accents of the developed problem and enriching the programmatic orientation of the research in its conceptual parameters. Respectively, the work can be considered as an author's research product with specific substantiation of these and practical conclusions.

- **Formulation and content of the dissertation:**

The dissertation work of Assoc. Prof. Rosalina Engels-Kritidis, Ph.D. is a scientific development with a precise and scientifically defended interpretation of each of the author's main topics. A conclusion must be drawn that Assoc. Prof. Engels-Kritidis, Ph.D. possesses the necessary scientific-theoretical and research competences for composing a comprehensive scientific-applied research with a clear programmatic orientation, analytical theoretical part and sound construction of the research procedures. The author's leading idea that "the key to effective individualization and differentiation of pedagogical interaction is learning by experiencing and personally meaningful childhood experiences, while respecting the well-being and active involvement of the child" in the pedagogical interaction process is duly justified as in a staged plan also in each and every part of the work and very important with suggestions for practical implementation.

In the sense of the set goal - proving the importance of the individualization and differentiation of pedagogical interaction with children, as well as research and development of research and educational technologies for their practical application in kindergarten are all components of the research process. I consider the subject, subject, hypotheses, research tasks, organization and methodology of the research to be scientifically substantiated and consistent with the research searches of the author. **I find it necessary to refine the subject and object of the study.** The approach of Assoc. Prof. Engels-Kritidis, Ph.D. to composing scientific assumptions - specific by age and gender - in the direction of supposed correlations between educational progress, well-being and the degree of full participation of each child in different activities is of interest. it details the study towards objective and quite interesting results. And as a consequence - the presented conceptually technological variant - dynamic Educational Model for individualization and differentiation, focused on expanding the possibilities for educational progress of each child. **I highly evaluate this programmatic orientation and conceptualization of the dissertation research by Assoc. Prof. Rosalina Engels-Kritidis, Ph.D. The author's personal philosophy and scientific commitment to the problem of her dissertation are visible and noteworthy.**



The theoretical study of Assoc. Prof. Rosalina Engels – Kritides, Ph.D. is extensive, different views are presented, opinions are compared, subjective views of the author, etc. are formed, all with the necessary responsibility and competence.

The finding study is based on a rich instrumentarium of methods, very well organizationally “positioned” in the parameters of each of its stages or phases. This part of the development deserves special attention and high evaluation in terms of organization precision, quality of implementation, coverage of respondents. The rich database allows for a multilayered and correct analysis of the phenomena studied. Statistical methods used for processing and analysis are also appropriate in this case - correlation analysis; Student's t-criteria for statistical hypothesis testing;  $\chi^2$  to establish relationships between respondents' attitudes and their age and position. As a result, the author of the thesis confirms the reliability of the research procedures and proves the correctness of the hypotheses and sub-hypotheses raised.

Analyzing and correlating various theoretical statements and practices, correctly presents the results of her research searches and their statistical processing Assoc. Prof. Rosalina Engels – Kritidis, Ph.D. clearly defines the characteristics of her concept of the **variable-dynamic educational Model for the individualization and differentiation of interactions between children the garden.** „*marking inexhaustible (but still limited by current needs) alternative options for personalizing interaction with each child through adequate synchronous or consistent educational projections that take into consideration specific individual differences at a given time, while respecting the particularities and respect for the personality of all other children in the group*“

I highly evaluate the conceptual parameters of the Model for the individualization and differentiation of interactions in kindergarten, as well as the possibilities for its operationalization. Aspects such as:

- Ability to group and regroup children based on self-decisions, self-esteem, difficulty and interests.

- Requirement to provide a supportive environment and interactions in the group, ensuring smooth and natural transitions between the intended pedagogical situations and the unintentional, child-initiated interaction - the intended play situation and vice versa...

- Ability to decompose the global goal into more private ones, making it simpler for one of the groups of children and complicated for others; in the third, to be thematically related to the interests of particular children; in the fourth - to comply with certain physical or mental limitations, etc.

- Individualization and differentiation of pedagogical interaction is first and foremost a planned activity, based on the knowledge of the child, its strengths and weaknesses, its capabilities, needs, interests. It is not only a form of organization - it is a holistic approach to interacting with the child.

- Compulsory knowledge and consideration of the development of each child's individual potential: a key prerequisite for effective individualization.

- Active implementation of learning by experiencing and personally meaningful children's experiences, stimulating activity and discovery by children, personal initiative and children's choice, etc. skillfully "assigned" by the teacher

- Promoting the uniqueness of the child's personality while respecting the value and self-confidence of all children in the group.

- The individual characteristics of each child are used to build the team in the group and many more.

Particularly attention and appreciated are the developments proposed by the author of the thesis for the practical work of the child's teacher in the classroom - deliberate and unintentional situations, games, interest activities, logical tasks, electronic technologies,



puzzles, etc. A variety of pedagogical tools for individualization are offered, and differentiation, of pedagogical interaction "marking inexhaustible alternatives to personalizing interaction with each child."

### **Regarding the contributions**

The conceptual orientation of the dissertation, the in-depth theoretical study, the organization and content of precision empirical studies, their results and their interpretation, the importance and meaning of the proposed Educational model of pedagogical tools for the individualization and differentiation of interactions with the processes of interactions reason to summarize that the dissertation presented by Assoc. Prof. Rosalina Engels-Kritides, Ph.D. is a development with a significant contribution to the preschool pedagogical theory and practice.

**The detailed introduction to the dissertation work of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rosalina Engels-Kritidis, Ph.D. gives me a reason to accept without notice the theoretical, research and practical applied contributions of the development.**

On the problems of dissertation work Assoc. Prof. Rosalina Engels-Kritidis, Ph.D. presents 12 publications, some of which are co-authored.

The abstract is presented in a volume of 52 pages. Structurally and substantively, it meets all requirements and objectively reflects the content of the dissertation, and retains the original numbering of tables and figures in it.

Based on the scientific importance of the research problem "Individualization and differentiation of pedagogical interaction in kindergarten", the high quality and extensive of development, competent analyzes, conclusions and summaries, as well as the significant contributions of theoretical, research and practical nature evaluation of the presented work and with conviction I propose to the Honorable Scientific Jury to award Associate Professor Rosalina Engels-Kritidis, Ph.D. with the degree "Doctor of Science" in Higher Education field 1. Pedagogical Sciences, Professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (Preschool education).

Author of Opinion:

Prof. Margarita Koleva, Ph.D.