

STATEMENT

concerning scientific degree dissertation on:

„An innovative model for the formation of personal and social competence in the classroom“

with author: Ekaterina Zlateva Tomova

For award of education and science degree ‘Philosophical Doctor’ (PhD)
in professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (theory of education and didactics)

I. Dissertation topic relevance and structure of the work.

The dissertation topic is both relevant and significant, addressing an interesting and specific matter - the classroom activities for shaping personal and social competence in children. The focus is on pupils in the initial stage of education, where the subject studied has particular value.

Ekaterina Tomova presents her research work in a 316 pages dissertation and Appendices in a separate volume. The dissertation structure is clear, the problems studied are presented in a meaningful logic: from the rationale, through analysis, to conclusions.

The main text is divided into Introduction, four Chapters, Implications, Conclusion, and Bibliography listing 162 Bulgarian and international sources. The four chapters structure is subordinated to sound logic following the chronology of concepts individual meaning and their interconnections. Appendices include detailed carried out by the PhD student six lessons for the class hour with identical elements (purpose, tasks, methods, means, lesson course), as well as survey cards for teachers and parents, projective methodology, results with data, correlations and analyses, control measurements - both comprehensive and standing.

II. Dissertation content - assessment

The dissertation topic related concepts, doctoral student ideas and their practical implementation are very well structured and presented. The introduction includes components necessary for an introductory topic statement: argumentation on problem studied importance and need of research, statement the object, subject, hypothesis, goal, tasks, impressive number of research methods, and study stages. The *theoretical section* consists of three chapters on the main conceptual issues in an adequate and logical construction:

detailed examination of competences, then the significance of class time and the opportunities to form such competences, up to situations arising from the innovative model, and finally most detailed empirical research review. The work demonstrates very good mastering and understanding of the issues, both in theory and practice: authors, theses and concepts; conceptual apparatus and documents; current status and trends; projections in practice - including vast array of international experience. The phenomena are considered in a multifaceted manner, skillfully connecting the general and the particular in the dissertation scope context. The *empirical section* in chapter four, being the largest of the work, presents the doctoral student own research among a large number of respondents: parents, teachers and students, in three stages - ascertaining, forming, and controlling. The instrumentation and the results are presented in great detail, visualized, analyzed - distributed both by groups and in a comparison. A huge volume of work, rich research, with analytical insight into the various phenomenon dimensions, detailed reporting of findings and ratios, interpretations and interrelationships, is carried out; with methodological and educational contribution.

The text ends with Implications and Conclusions, being a suitable synthesis of the author leading ideas, results and proposals emerging of the overall theoretical and empirical study. In its entirety the work impresses with its high style and at the same time easy readability, research depth and breadth, fine logic, structured thoughts and relevant coverage. These are foundation for my positive assessment of both the dissertation main section and its natural extension - the appendices, where not only the practice diverse instrumentations are presented but also analytical results and correlations, which I regard as useful in methodology point of view. The methods and resources, the conducted classes topics and joined propositions as appropriate to implement, are well selected, the overall work being in accordance with the dissertation purpose of 'formation and development of personal and social competence in children' in the relevant age group.

III. Notes and Recommendations:

- On the main dissertation body: references should be presented in an identical manner - in some cases reference pages are indicated in the text, in others - in the bibliography.

- Concerning the Appendices - Table of Contents and pagination should be added for easier orientation. In topic 4, given the Game structure, the topic title and the analysis in the thesis item 4.4.2.2., may have more accurate game name ‘*What Am I*’, and more importantly: the statements in should be reformulated more oriented to actions than to qualities and characteristics, i.e. no epithets, especially negative ones - to avoid the effects of labellings.

IV. Dissertation Contributions

My overall assessment of Ekaterina Tomova's work is positive not only because of the indisputable importance of the topic and the way in which it is developed in theoretical, empirical and methodological terms, but also as a development with its own specific contribution to practical-applied fields of pedagogy. The outlined five ‘dissertation major contributions’ are well argued therein.

V. Assessment of the Dissertation Abstract and the Author Publications on the Topic:

The abstract meets the requirements for syntheses and reflections on the dissertation topic. The author presents eleven publications, all in the dissertation topic scope; data from six of these are integrated in the dissertation, included in the bibliographic reference, and it would be good if also clearly indicated and referred in the text.

VI. Conclusion:

The presented dissertation and materials attached provide me reason to support the award of the educational and scientific degree ‘Philosophical Doctor’ in professional field 1.2. Pedagogy to Ekaterina Tomova.

January 29, 2023

Statement author:

Assoc. Prof. T. Manasieva, PhD