

OPPINION

of a dissertation for the acquisition of an educational and scientific degree
"Doctor of Science"

Area of higher education: 1. Pedagogical/educational sciences,

Professional field: 1.2. Education/Pedagogy ,

Scientific specialty: Theory of education and didactics

Dissertation title: *“Reflective (re)conception of qualification interactions with pedagogical specialists (a multimodal meaning-centered model)”*

Author: Assoc. Dr. Sofia Hristova Dermendzhieva

Reviewer: Prof Dr Marinela Velikova Mihova – St Cyril and St Methodius

University of Veliko Tarnovo

The opinion was written on the basis of order 2620/25.07.2023 of the Rector of Thrace University.

Actuality of dissertation

The problem of the qualification of pedagogical specialists is permanently relevant because it is tied to the necessary competencies that teachers should possess in order to organize quality education in a society that is infinitely dynamic and difficult to predict. The study of the external determinants in combination with the internal motivation for conscious participation in the organized forms of professional qualification makes the topic of the dissertation research "Reflexive (re)thinking of qualification interactions with pedagogical specialists (multimodal meaning-centered model)" is undoubtedly scientifically significant.

Assoc. Prof. Dermendzhieva links the qualification of pedagogical specialists, on the one hand, with the educational policy determined by the priorities of the EU, and on the other hand, with the personal needs of the generation of the digital world. The new educational reality, a product of reforms

and implementation of innovations, is understood theoretically, which develops pedagogical science in the direction of the new educational paradigm. But the success of the implementation of reforms and the implementation of innovations depends on the preparation of teachers and their competence adequate to the new reality, in which the key component is both understanding and making sense of change, as well as its management. In this sense, Assoc. Prof. Dermendzhieva's opinion is very accurate, that in order to be successful in his professional realization, the teacher "must learn continuously in sync with the emerging fields of knowledge, in other words, he should continuously master and develop current pedagogical competences" , which raises the issue of the quality of training activities in the continuing pedagogical qualification.

In order to understand the author's research idea and the way of its implementation, we should note that the quality of training activities is problematized as a form of continuing qualification and professional development.

Compositional unity of the dissertation

The presented dissertation work is structured according to the scientific standards that are required for this type of development. The content is organized into an introduction, four chapters, a conclusion, references and appendices. It covers a total of 433 pages (400 pages of main text, 10 pages of references and 23 pages of appendices) and includes 6 figures, 9 diagrams, 34 tables and 63 diagrams. 301 literary sources were used, of which 110 in Cyrillic, 191 in Latin and 15 normative documents and Internet resources.

In the introduction, Prof. Dermendzhieva not only introduces the specific issues of the research and correctly indicates the grounds for it, but also very precisely clarifies its main parameters (object, subject, goals, research tasks, hypothesis, phasing of the research). The purpose of the study - "is to create and test a multimodal meaning-centered model for managing interactions in continuing education with pedagogical specialists." (p. 7) is original. It is proof

of scientific ambition, the ability to critically analyze the existing reality and a clear and reasoned vision for improving the quality of the continuing qualification of pedagogical specialists.

The selected research toolkit is diverse, based on established theoretical and empirical research methods and enables multi-faceted analysis and reaching in-depth and complete conclusions.

The structure of the dissertation is logical and is conditioned by the set goal of the research. The separate parts of the dissertation research are not mechanically assembled, but form a compositional unity united by the common goal.

The exposition includes four informational units, deployed in a way that allows to build and achieve a complete and generalized picture of the studied phenomenon - continuing pedagogical qualification - with a focus on the functionality of the conceptualized model for meaning-centered interactions based on the organization of a multimodal educational environment .

In the dissertation research, its conceptual-logical framework can be very clearly highlighted in terms of content and time aspect of the organization and implementation of the present research. The six stages of the research identified by the author are clearly distinguished, precisely defined and logically connected.

The first chapter "Methodological interpretation of the concept of "lifelong learning" is basic for the study. On the basis of a dynamic analysis of strategies, policies, draft documents and regulations, topics related to the basic training and continuing qualification of pedagogical specialists are problematized in the context of the philosophy of the lifelong learning concept. The connection between the transformative function of education, the training of pedagogical specialists and their professional competences and the need for permanent professional development resulting from formal, non-formal and informal education is argued and convincingly shown. The expanded analysis of key documents and current research is united by the understanding that "a new type

of education could be realized by teachers who understand the importance of educational reforms and accept the idea of permanently upgrading and enriching their competence profile" (p. 86) .

The second chapter "Perspectives of the educational reform and meaning-centered management of the continuing qualification of pedagogical specialists" is structured in three paragraphs, including a projection of the educational reform on the professional competence of the teacher and his professional development in the perspective of pedagogy for multiple literacies. The prerequisites and content parameters of the concept of meaning-centered management of the continuing qualification of pedagogical specialists are defined.

On the basis of a critical analysis of the relationship between the academic training of future teachers and the acquired practical skills for the teacher's professional realization, on the three-aspect differentiation of the meaning of continuing qualification and determining the conditions for its effectiveness, the author's position is set that "the professionalization of teachers is a dynamic construct , in which pedagogical competences can be upgraded as a result of understanding/mastering the current context in the course of continuing qualification (p. 120). The relationship between professional competence, continuing qualification and functional dynamics in the relationship "multimodality - multiliteracy" is argued in detail and in depth. The philosophical, psychological and pedagogical prerequisites for meaning-centered management of the continuing qualification of pedagogical specialists are outlined.

In the third chapter "Aspects and levels of the meaning-centered approach to managing qualification interactions with teachers in a multimodal educational environment", three focuses are distinguished: an overview of policies, approaches and strategies for conducting the continuous professional development of teachers in the context of the pedagogical competences of the trainer as developing human capital; operants of the educational technology based on a multimodal educational environment for meaning-centered management of

qualification interactions with pedagogical specialists and a conceptual-technological model for meaning-centered management of qualification interactions with pedagogical specialists in a multimodal educational environment.

In the fourth chapter, the experimental study of the developed multimodal meaning-centered model of interaction in the continuing qualification of pedagogical specialists is presented. The arguments for the predictive study and the motivation for the author's research intentions as well as the design of the experimental study are developed in detail and with scientific precision. A competent and convincing analysis of the results of the final stage of the study was made.

The conclusion is the meaningful summary of the findings, data and dependencies presented in the presentation. In it, Assoc. Dr. S. Dermendzhieva offers reasoned answers to the stated research intentions.

I categorically state that the proposed study is an original work of Assoc. Dr. S. Dermendzhieva.

The abstract basically presents all the more important parts of the dissertation work.

Scientific contributions

The scientific work proposed for review is a serious achievement in pedagogy and its contributions should be sought and discovered in this field of science. It is one of the few studies dedicated to the continuing qualification of pedagogical specialists and increasing its quality.

Contributions in a theoretical aspect:

1. On the basis of the methodological understanding of the concept of lifelong learning, a serious, theoretical and multifaceted study of the continuing qualification of pedagogical specialists was made and its significance for the quality of the pedagogical interaction between the trainer and the trainee was revealed.

2. In the context of the professional competence corresponding to Education 4.0, the projections of the educational reform on the professional qualification and professional development of the pedagogical specialists are outlined in a meaningful and reasoned manner.

3. There is a targeted study proving the key role of the meaning-centered interaction within the continuing qualification, which leads to the transformation of the meaning of the professional experience, adding to its context new meanings, which is a prerequisite for the self-transformation in the professional identity in the direction of self-efficacy.

4. On the basis of convincing interdisciplinary scientific argumentation, a conceptual-technological multimodal meaning-centered model for educational interactions within the continuing pedagogical qualification has been developed.

Contributions in a practically applied aspect:

1. An innovative "Multimodal meaning-centered model" for managing interactions in continuing qualification with pedagogical specialists has been developed and tested in detail.

2. A rich pedagogical toolkit for systematizing and organizing the teacher's professional activity is described in detail and critically analyzed, utilizing the resource of multimodal educational practices to increase the quality of teaching in a real and digital environment.

3. A detailed analysis of significant correlations relevant to the successful implementation of a multimodal meaning-centered model for educational interactions within the continuing pedagogical qualification was made.

4. The dissertation research contains 61 author tables and 35 diagrams. In themselves they can be seen as a contribution because they can serve to search for dependencies with another research focus.

Compliance with the minimum national requirements for the scientific degree "Doctor of Science"

A summary of the scientific output, presented by Assoc. Dr. S. Dermendzhieva, shows that, in terms of volume and quality, it meets the minimum national requirements set out in the ZRASRB, the Regulations for the Application of the ZRASRB and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at Thrace University – Stara Zagora (for the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences"). The total number of points is 498.32.

Conclusion

The dissertation presented for discussion and defense has indisputable merits. It is a complex and in-depth study of an actual problem for pedagogical science, related to the improvement of the continuing qualification of pedagogical specialists. On the basis of large-scale theoretical and experimental research work, specific conclusions and recommendations relevant to modern educational policy and practice have been formulated.

Taking into account the outstanding merits of the dissertation work on the topic "*Reflective (re)conception of qualification interactions with pedagogical specialists (a multimodal meaning-centered model)*", as well as the overall scientific contribution of the author on the topic of the dissertation, I propose to the respected members of the scientific jury to awarded to Prof. Dr. Sofia Hristova Dermendzhieva the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences", in the field of higher education - 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional direction - 1.2. Pedagogy, scientific specialty – Theory of education and didactics.

15.09.2023

.....

Prof. Marinela Mihova