

## REVIEW

By Prof. Margarita Karamihova, Dr.Habill

on PhD thesis developed at the University of Sofia, Faculty of History, Department of Ethnology

3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences

3.1. 3.1 Social, Economic, Social and Cultural Sciences (Ethnology of Transition)

Author: Dafina Pandin

Topic: „Value-oriented models of interaction in an interethnic educational environment (1991-2016)“.

### ***1. PhD, dissertation, abstract and publication data.***

The doctoral student Dafina Pandin was enrolled in doctoral studies in a full-time form of study by Rector's Order RD 20-613/ 25.02.2021, for the period from 1.03.2021 to 1. 03.2024. During the period of study, she completed all the tasks set out in her Individual Curriculum. After completing the procedures provided for in the Law and the Regulations, the doctoral student was enrolled with the right to defend her thesis by Rector's Order RD- 220-884/ 17.04.2024. After the necessary refinement, the dissertation work was discussed and directed for defense by the Council of the Department of Ethnology at the Faculty of History of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", held on 12.11.2024.

In the progress and implementation of the entire procedure until the work was directed for public defense, no violations were made and the stipulated requirements were met. Based on the documents presented, there is every reason to conclude that the procedure for developing the doctoral thesis and its direction for defense was carried out in full compliance with the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation, as well as with the internal Regulations on the conditions and procedure for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions at Sofia University. The given further course of the procedure fully meets the requirements of the aforementioned regulatory acts.

The dissertation consists of an introduction, three chapters, conclusion, bibliography, appendices and contributions with a total volume of 276 pages. 32 pages present appendices that were sent to me electronically. The bibliography includes 298 titles, of which 181 are academic sources and 117 are electronic sources.

The Introduction follows good academic traditions. It clearly sets out the goal and the tasks that must be completed in order to achieve it. The subject and object of the study, the working hypothesis and its supporting hypothesis are precisely defined. The doctoral student has chosen to briefly present in the Introduction the methods she applies in her research. The stated goal of the dissertation determines its relevance and significance. I sincerely congratulate the doctoral student and the scientific supervisor for the chosen and very well-developed topic.

The first chapter is entitled “Ethno-pedagogical reflection in the system of organized preschool education in Bulgaria in the period 1991 – 2016 (situational analysis)”. A brief introduction traces the historical path of preschool education in Bulgaria from 1878 to 2016. Separate paragraphs comment on various conceptual projects, concepts and state programs in the system of organized preschool education after 1990. The dynamics of state policy towards disadvantaged children, especially those belonging to different ethnocultural groups, are critically presented. The chapter ends with a discussion of the commented problems and a list of cited literature, an approach that is followed in some of the following chapters.

Chapter two is entitled “Value-oriented reflective practices of interaction in an interethnic educational environment in Bulgaria”. Separate paragraphs comment on the history and activities for the practical application of the achievements of the Bulgarian school within the framework of the reflective approach – ethnopsychological pedagogy. Logically, attention is paid to ethnopsychological markers of the value-oriented behavior of the child in the system of organized preschool education.

The doctoral student has chosen to offer a SWOT analysis of strategic and normative documents in the field of organized preschool education in Bulgaria in the period 1991 – 2016, presented in the first chapter of the dissertation. In the event of a possible publication of the work, I would recommend that this analysis accompany the presentation of the documents in the previous chapter, in order to avoid repetitions and achieve the goal set in the Introduction. The doctoral student demonstrates excellent mastery of the SWOT analysis method. By applying it, she reaches valuable conclusions.

The third chapter is entitled “Field study of reflexive value-oriented models of interaction in an interethnic educational environment (1991 – 2016)”. It presents the applied methods and the stages of collecting empirical information. From a methodological point of view, the findings on the presence/absence of distance and elements of subordination with the interviewees are very valuable.

The results of collecting empirical information from various specialists in kindergartens through questionnaires are presented and analyzed. A precise profile of the respondents is outlined, which was not done when applying the interview and observation methods. The strengths and weaknesses of the value-oriented approach in different regions and different groups, according to the interviewed experts, are analyzed.

Particularly valuable, from the point of view of scientific and applied contributions, is the developed draft of a theoretical-empirical model for the application of a reflexive value-oriented educational policy in an interethnic environment in Bulgaria. It highlights the need to implement a new educational direction “Ethnocultural competence and value-oriented interaction” in the program systems of innovative kindergartens. It can be adapted to the conditions of kindergartens, in accordance with the markers of the specific environment (demographic, socio-cultural, economic, etc.) (p. 236). The benefits, but also the limitations of the model at this stage, are commented on.

The Conclusion provides a synthesized presentation of the research process and comments on its main conclusions. The importance of value-oriented policy in Bulgarian education is emphasized, which should be implemented as a priority from the earliest stages of children's education.

The work has a clearly defined authorial character. I have not identified any unlawful use of other people's works.

The abstract is 55 pages long. It correctly presents the content of the dissertation, presents the scientific contributions, a list of publications on the researched problems, a short annotation in English. The abstract fully corresponds to the doctoral thesis.

The doctoral student reports 5 publications in Bulgarian. With them, she covers and exceeds the requirements of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation, as well as the internal Regulations on the terms

and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions at Sofia University.

The information provided upon request indicates that the doctoral student has presented the results of her research at authoritative academic forums. During her doctoral studies, she participated in three successful national projects and in international one (KA220-HED-09C48086 under Erasmus+), through which she collected empirical information, but also validated the results of her research. Her participation in the seminars for doctoral students in Slaveyno in 2022 and 2023 allowed her to upgrade her expert competence.

## ***2. Scientific Contributions***

I accept contributions of a scientific-theoretical and scientific-applied nature, outlined in the Abstract (p. 53).

## ***3. Recommendations:***

The work will benefit if it is substantiated by what chronological and academically acceptable formulation the 3 stages in the development of preschool education in the period 1944-2008 are determined (22 pages).

When preparing for publication, it is appropriate for the author to bring the cited titles in the footnotes in accordance with the established standards. The separation of the works cited after each chapter in Russian from the list of works in Cyrillic (Bulgarian) is puzzling. In future publication, it would be more acceptable if the bibliography were combined into a common list (Cyrillic, Latin) at the end, as is academic practice.

Both the dissertation work and the Abstract need serious editorial and proofreading intervention.

## ***4. Conclusion.***

Based on the objective requirements for dissertations for obtaining the educational and scientific degree of „doctor“, as well as taking into account the achievements of Bulgarian and European Ethnology, I express a positive opinion and recommend to the members of the scientific jury to award Dafina Lachezarova Pandin the educational and scientific degree of "doctor" in Ethnology in the scientific field 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field: 3.1. Sociology,

anthropology and cultural sciences („Ethnology - Ethnopsychological models in education“) for the work „Value-oriented models of interaction in an interethnic educational environment (1991-2016)“.

10.01.2025 г.

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