



ACTUAL PROBLEMS OF MODERN SCIENCE

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On improvement of the quality of scientific personnel certification in the field of pedagogical and psychological specialties (the text of the report made on 20.11.2012 at the VAK meeting at the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation)

My most esteemed colleagues!

Here, in this hall there have gathered people who are responsible for a condition and possibilities of improvement of the business of scientific personnel certification in the field of pedagogical and psychological specialties.

And I, who have mounted the platform, bear the same responsibility in full.

Therefore I would like to notice that the purpose of my report is not in reproaching somebody for something, but it consists in designation of painful points, our defects in this plan, by having planned ways of their elimination as it is impossible to stand the formed, practically critical situation any further.

The first and the most important is that we clearly have to define what scientists' certification is, as a result of which we confer the degrees of candidate and doctor.

It is especially necessary to emphasize, that existence of an academic degree doesn't give its owner grounds to name himself/herself a scientist.

It is a question of a scientist's qualification. The future will show whether he/she is a scientist or only seeks to become it.

Let's remember great Mechnikov who repeatedly declared, "I'm not a scientist. I am a scientific worker". Descendants have said that he is a scientist indeed.

Unfortunately, today the "scientist" term is leveled both consciously, and unconsciously by efforts of many pseudoscientific and scientific structures.

A person has just managed to receive the first required academic degree of a candidate of science (just listen, ponder – c a n d i d a t e, i.e. a claimant to scientific activity), and they call him/her a scientist. From here there are competitions for young scientists, grants for young scientists...

It is time to stop and steady down, pardon my pun. There are no young or mature, aged or old scientists. There are different categories of scientific workers, to some extent conferred on a corresponding scientific degree. Even in pure psychology (without saying a word about other aspects) the person, having received a scientific degree, takes a significant place in the system of science, but unfortunately he/she is quite



often not ready for this. As a result there is not a simple lost of the society's respect for scientific activity, the whole understanding of science is lost. From here there is an increase of a role and value of scientific personnel certification.

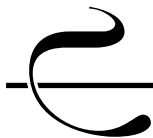
Certification, i.e. conferment of a degree, assumes, and I have to remind of this, not a simple appraisal of a dissertation work, but an appraisal of a scientist's fitness for science, scientific community by his/her scientific publications – articles, monographs, scientific reports, speeches at any conferences, symposiums, participations in debates when the thesis acts as a generalization of the acquired materials representing scientific interest.

Therefore, recommending at a faculty meeting or laboratory, and then considering at the Academic and, at last, the Dissertation Council the presented thesis, we have to estimate not simply its text (especially today when in the presence of the Internet it is very simple to arrange the parts of it, without speaking about advertisements of firms and private persons who openly offer to prepare such text at a certain price). I repeat, we have to estimate not only and not simply the thesis text, but scientific achievements of the author, his/her scientific position, his/her "I" in science. That is, certifying a scientific worker, we have to understand whom we certify, giving him/her a chance to enter into the world of science. Thus, we, the certifying, should answer a question, "What does the applicant introduce into science?" Especially as today, except the people who enter into science because do not think their lives without it, there rises the flow of persons considering it as a way of increase of own social status, as a resource of career growth. It is a question of receiving of academic degrees by the people not participating or participating in a very limited degree in preparation of dissertation works.

What should the Dissertation Council do in case of presentation of a well-done work and intelligible speech of an applicant at defence, knowing, that the work is written by other people? It is possible and, probably, it is necessary to address to the European practice where the system of multidimensional responsibility of scientists is developed, in particular, where there are provided consequences for the academic career of the persons caught in violation of scientific ethics. For example, according to the documents approved by the Senate of the Max Planck Society on November 24, 2000, they include: deprivation of doctor's degree; deprivation of the right to teaching; an action for return of money, grants; recall of the scientific publications intended for public, and some other measures.

Dear colleagues, at our last meetings I tried to pay participants' attention to a weak presentation, in fact, lack of methodological position of many applicants, even of a doctoral degree.

To a certain extent it is connected with a state and development of science, with conditions of its functioning in modern knowledge space where they observe an exorbitant extension of information of different levels and characters against the background of change of world outlooks, that has not only considerably expanded, but also complicated a modern person's outlook, causing the necessity of development of new methodological principles and value and purpose attitudes.



Unfortunately, new world outlooks and methodological approaches are often badly mastered by many candidates for a degree confusing proposition of essentially different concepts of postmodernism, post-nonclassical rationality, post-positivism and others, as frequent giving them an incompatible combination, without revealing and without using in dissertation researches in practice.

Indistinctness of theoretical and methodological positions, i.e., in essence, absence of logic of knowledge of the studied phenomena, scientific ignorance in a great number of doctoral dissertations (needless to say about candidate works), when the applicant is guided by various positions developed in different schemes of the theory of knowledge; in result of these we see a methodological base as a “commemoration book” with surnames of known authors, quite often together with names of the dissertation council members and opponents. For example there is O.V. Varnikova’s doctoral dissertation “Formation of professional competence of higher school students in the foreign-language training process”, defended in the Penza State Teachers’ Training University where Professor V.V. Polukarov was an educational consultant, Professor Z.V. Perepelkina, Professor O.G. Oberemko and T.G. Ivoshina were official opponents, the Krasnoyarsk State Teachers’ Training University was the lead organization. The applicant has said that a theoretical and methodological basis of her research were (I quote), “Key propositions of philosophy of science and methodology of scientific researches (12 surnames are enumerated); fundamental personality theories (the list of 8 surnames is given). But then writer of the thesis writes that besides them, she was guided by (just listen): the system approach to the analysis of the social phenomena, processes, systems (17 surnames are given); the activity approach (5 surnames are listed); the communicative and activity approach (6 surnames); the competence based approach (13 surnames are listed); the cognitive approach to knowledge problems (3 surnames). Without stopping at this, the applicant says that that a methodological basis of the thesis were: psychological and pedagogical researches (it is not specified what particular researches, but there is a list of 20 surnames), theories and concepts of the person’s personal formation as an active subject transforming the world and self (8 surnames); researches of laws of professional formation of the future expert (13 surnames), modern concepts of the education content (8 surnames), concepts of individualization, contextual and productive training, professionalizing of training, creative self-development (10 surnames), conceptual and didactic aspects of training of adults (9 surnames), education humanitarization and humanization, including by means of learning of foreign languages (5 surnames). Then we are amazed to find that as methodological bases the applicant also gives language teaching methodology in a professional sphere and formation of foreign-language competence (the list of 4 surnames is given), language teaching methodology and theory (14 surnames are listed), and, besides, teaching theory of the foreign-language professional focused communication (4 surnames).

I wonder what was the condition of the members of the Dissertation Council who approved the work with a methodological basis like that? If it was not under hypnosis,



it is necessary not to address to a psychological-pedagogical commission of VAK experts, but to apply for the urgent medical and psychiatric assistance.

After all such substantiation of theoretical and methodological bases is quite typical unfortunately.

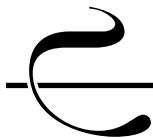
Though it is easily understood that a methodological basis of dissertation research can't be formed from the works of certain scientists, enumeration of their surnames and the directions studied by them at the mention of whom there is a frequent confusion of theories, concepts, certain proposition and results.

An abracadabra like that also affects a choice character, and forms of application of the methods acting as a component of research methodology. Today in a considerable number of dissertation works laborious instrumental or experimental research procedures are substituted for inventories and questionnaires of a doubtful provenance, the validity and reliability of which need scientific corroboration. As a result, for example, a factual research of a psychological phenomenon (behavior, state, reactions, learning, etc.) is substituted for an average multitude of the quantitative estimates imitating the phenomenon. But, as we know, there is no "average" person; therefore the received results are a fiction in fact. Besides, a disbalance towards natural science methods of research without a relation with humanitarian methods of knowledge, which have obviously sunk, considerably reduces the possibilities of studying of the person living in a complex modern situation where he/she is exposed to influence of a number of factors.

My most esteemed colleagues, you know that the modern world has essentially changed. The space of functioning of mankind, rhythms, tempos of its movement have changed. Great technical, technological, production, cultural achievements, on the one hand, and on the other – a world crisis: economic, social, demographic, ecological, that has covered all spheres of activity of human community, including the Russian society, objectively fix a really new historical condition of development connected with boundary changes of a phased character.

The major consequence and at the same time the indicator of the current state of society are essentially new possibilities, positions, abilities of the person who has appeared in a qualitatively new world caused by the occurred and occurring changes when thanks to the Internet and television in no time he/she can jump over numerous geographical and political borders, visit different continents of the Earth, at ocean bed and in space that generates, in addition, destruction of habitual processes of cognitive activity, and a gap between the well-established connections, interdependencies, intellectual, emotional, physical, psychological intensity, instability as a result of which there is a change of perception, consciousness, thinking, the sphere of motivation and needs.

Thus the existing education system, having no time to assimilate the occurred transformations, ceased to meet claims laid to it, putting forward, making conditional the necessity of construction of a qualitatively different education focused not on intergenerational transmission of sociocultural experience, but on educa-



tion – **f o r m a t i o n** of the person, his/her self-education, self-determination demanding creative abilities – not only cognitive, but also communicative, and organizational.

The need for development of the strategy of transformation of education which acts as a real force of reproduction of society, as well as the necessity of creation of an integral picture of mental, neuropsychological, psychophysiological, personal development of modern people, especially growing, their training for life in the quickly changing world, activates development of essentially new scientific theories, concepts, search of technologies, mechanisms, methods, ways of training, education, development of people, growth of their morality and spirituality that gives an exclusive relevance to psychological and pedagogical sciences in which there are huge lacunas of the unresolved problems connected both with cognition of the modern person, and with construction of the process of education.

Today it became fashionable to shout, that things look black concerning our education. What do we do to make it good? What did we offer in respect of improvement of growing people's scholarship, increase of their culture? What did we develop, prove regarding solution of the problem of preservation of logical thinking in the century of prevalence of virtual information, regarding combination of its different types, in particular, transformation of information into knowledge?

Although it is elimination of these and many other blank spots, if to believe what is written in psychological and pedagogical theses regarding theoretical value and scientific and practical application of the conducted researches, that the whole army of aspirants to the degrees of doctor and candidate does today. After all only over the last three years – 2009–2011 – the VAK Presidium (according to the recommendation of the council of experts) has approved 605 doctoral dissertations on pedagogics and psychology, having rejected only 12 doctoral dissertations, however, 13 applicants removed their works from further consideration by themselves, having received evidence that they were unfit by means of the council of experts of VAK (between ourselves).

Thus, there are 605 performed doctoral works on pedagogics and psychology, which solve an important scientific problem according to the regulations on an academic degree. And, I repeat, over three years there are more than six hundred of such works! At the same time during the same period there were defended (don't be afraid) 5927 Candidate's dissertations on pedagogics and 1668 on psychology. Though for the present 2012 the data is not cited yet, it is possible to say that in our fields of scientific knowledge there was a tectonic shift – after all such a number of the theses having, as it is written in each one, topicality, scientific novelty and practical importance, contain hundreds and thousands solved problems, new discoveries. However, the picture is qualitatively different unfortunately.

On the one hand, we observe a pressure from a huge stream of the dissertation researches devoted to different by importance, character, orientation problems which are considered at the functioning dissertation councils. Today there are 237 of them



on pedagogics and 88 on psychology! I must say that when, for example, I defended a doctoral dissertation in 1969, in the great country uniting Russia and Ukraine, Belarus and Moldavia, the republics of Transcaucasia, Baltic and Central Asia, there were only 4 councils on psychology – in Lomonosov Moscow State University where Alexey Nikolaevich Leontiev was a chairman, at the Leningrad University where Boris Gerasimovich Ananiev was a chairman, at the Kiev University where Grigory Silovich Kostyuk was a chairman and at the Tbilisi University where Alexander Severyanovich Prangishvili was a chairman. At the same time these councils had no right of access to VAK. At first their decisions were affirmed by a so-called large Council of University where not the applicant, but the named chairmen made statements. And only then the documents went to VAK. Thus, I have to note, that the people defending doctoral works, have already known their respectable colleagues sitting on the Academic Council, both by the works, and, as they say, by sight – meeting at various kinds of conferences, symposiums, seminars, scientific disputes for many years.

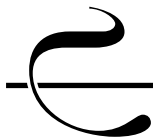
Today we have not 4, but, I repeat, 88 dissertation councils on psychology and 237 on pedagogics, and ironically enough we meet very often the applicants, about whose works we didn't even hear.

Today, probably not casually, experts note a very low level of a considerable number of dissertation researches. Thus, as conversations with the applicants for an academic degree called to VAK show, commonly enough such applicants are not simply unprepared for scientific activity as a whole, but do not know a subject already defended by them at corresponding dissertation councils and declared as a solved problem.

This state of affairs not simply leads to science obstruction by pseudoscientific opuses, reducing the value of scientific knowledge, discrediting the value of dissertation works as scientific researches, but is also a direct threat for the process of growth and development of scientific personnel. Does it surprise that in society there is a very dangerous tendency of formation of the skeptical relation to people of science though the majority of them is made, as we know, by its selfless votaries making a weighty contribution to development of scientific knowledge?

Dear colleagues, we cannot bear such things any further. If we have vestiges of responsible relation to self, own activity, science, I do not even speak about service to it, to the person and society, it is necessary to decide clearly and definitely – either we really mean business of qualitative improvement of scientific personnel's certification, or move aside and not disturb those who did not yet lose a concept of debt and responsibility. I talk not about the applicants for scientific degrees, but about us, about those who bless, admit ignoramus to scientific activity as participants enjoying full rights.

Let's face it. Our expert community – members of departments, laboratories, members of academic and dissertation councils, academic advisers, consultants, opponents, lead agencies, experts of VAK – are responsible for that the scientific activity of many candidates for a degree is carried out not up to the mark, at the underestimated requirements of researchers.



The analysis of the dissertation researches on pedagogics and psychology received by VAK shows a number of inadmissible, but, to our sorrow, repeating from year to year shortcomings.

First of all, it concerns not only the methodological illiteracy of many applicants mentioned by me, but also a choice of a theme of research which can serve as an initial guideline in wide space of the carried-out scientific activity; replenishment of scientific community by experts of high qualification is its result. To our shame (though, the category of shame is not studied in psychology), the choice and approval of a considerable number of theses is not defined by urgent basic aims, but occurs at random, without continuation of research and connection with others, without groundwork for the future.

Still insufficiently clearly our expert community fulfills the requirements which are clearly written down in the Regulations on conferment of academic degrees where it is unambiguously specified that the thesis is not a simple generalization of any materials, but a result of the prolonged scientific search, creative statement and solution of a major task, in a concentrated form expressed in a research theme. It is clear, we cannot dictate a theme, but it is impossible to allow their purely blind choice.

However bitter it is, as a rule, today the choice of a theme of research is not defined by scientifically and socially significant aims, but it is invented, frequently proceeding from a theme which was defended by a department head or an educational consultant, or from simple possibilities of a certain "material" collection. Those themes which are approved, defended, presented by dissertation councils to VAK visibly indicate this.

For example, this year the Chelyabinsk State Teacher' Training University tries to enrich pedagogical science with the research of I.L. Orekhova on (just listen, please) "Ekologization and valeologization of the diversified training of students for health improving activity in educational institutions". Thus, educational consultant - Professor Z.I. Tyumaseva, official opponents - Professor T.F. Orekhova (from Magnitogorsk), Professor N.P. Ryabinina (from Chelyabinsk), Professor V.P. Solomin (from the Herzen State Teachers' Training University of Russia) – participated in a choice and assessment of this; the Orenburg State Teachers' Training University was the lead agency.

The Chelyabinsk State Academy of Culture and Arts keeps pace with the Chelyabinsk State Teacher' Training University; it affords weighty ground for brotherly association of their dissertation councils. This academy tried to enrich the pedagogics of our country with the work of T.P. Stepanova "Diversification (as you can see, it is a favorite term in the Chelyabinsk region) of leisure communication: methodology, theory, technology". Without having found neither the first, nor the second and the third in the thesis, VAK has rejected this thesis where Professor N.N. Yaroshenko was an educational consultant, Professor E.L. Kudrina, Professor M.I. Dolzhenkova and Professor N.G. Apukhtina were official opponents, and the St. Petersburg State University of Culture and Arts acted as the lead agency (I wonder, "What and where does it lead?").

The Moscow State Regional University (our gratitude to its chairman Professor E.E. Minchenkov) keeps pace with Chelyabinsk in terms of innovative formulations



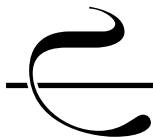
of dissertation themes of this sort. For example, A.M. Stepanov's theme was "Formation of a spiritual and moral component of ecological competence of schoolchildren by means of the Russian song folklore". The Sholokhov Moscow State University of the Arts as a lead agency made its contribution to immortalizing of this theme.

How can we understand a theme of I.O. Eliferenko's thesis "Ontogenesis of a system of training of an expert of creative professions in the context of sociocultural and pedagogical transformations of the XX century"? I would remind everybody who recommended and made examination of this work that in accordance with English (and it is according to any psychological dictionary) "ontogenesis" is development of living creatures from the birth until the end of life; in the dictionary of foreign words "ontogenesis" (from the Greek "ontos") is an individual development of the living being from a stage of fertilization of an ovum till the individual life termination. Therefore it is unclear, from what ovum Eliferenko and those who assessed this applicant proceeded at consideration of the system of training of the expert of creative professions. I ask the dissertation council of the Moscow Pedagogical State University, official opponents – Professor A.A. Skamnitskomu, Professor A.Y. Belogurova and Professor L.P. Illarionova and the lead agency – the Moscow State Regional University.

The other applicant O.V. Kovalchuk with the help of the dissertation council at the Yaroslav-the-Wise Novgorod State University tried to make a weighty contribution to pedagogical science by a thesis on a theme "Innovative development of the municipal education system in the context of the projecting and qualitative paradigm".

The applicant fixes a research problem as a search of paradigmatic bases defining new approaches, regularities and principles, means and methods of control over innovative development of municipal educational systems. Let's lay aside the discussion of the problem concerning the ways of unification of bases, approaches, regularities, principles etc. into one problem. Let's look at research problems. Neither of them (and there are 5 of them) meets the idea of "search" declared in the research problem. The "methodology" connected with search of "paradigmatic bases" is significant in this regard. At first the projecting and qualitative management is defined as an approach, then as a concept. By the way, this introduction is recorded as the research theoretical importance. But in the following chapter the concept turns into the projecting and qualitative paradigm. This "blitzkrieg" ends by that the newly-made "paradigm" becomes a context within which there is a management of innovative development of the municipal educational system. What should be a hypothesis for implementation of the "search" of this kind? It seems that the applicant himself knows nothing about it, as four of five propositions of the hypothesis are obvious and do not demand proofs. Who disagrees with that the essence of innovative development of the municipal educational system as its key purposes has achievement of pedagogical and social results or that the success of such management demands existence of an integral concept, and the concept itself, as well as innovative development, should have a system character?

What should be the aims of realization of such a hypothesis? Naturally, they should be connected with it. At first the essence of the projecting and qualitative de-



sign should be revealed, further they should construct its concept, then a model, offer ways of diagnostics of success and to prove its efficiency by means of experimental and searching way (What did the applicant mean here?). We have a standard logic of a writer of a university degree thesis, at the best – of an applicant for the candidate's degree. Therefore the text of both the thesis, and the author's abstract is filled with other terms and pseudo-scientific turns of speech. Among them there are "innovative development of the municipal educational system", "the polytheoretical foundation of the model", "municipal quality standard", "dual management", "the basic foundation of development of conceptual bases", "the basic foundation of paradigmatic bases", "polytheoretical platform", "educationprudence", "sistemology", "cybernetic and situational approaches", "system and synergetic approach", "full life cycle and quality loop".

If to free the work from these and other farfetched "clothes", we'll have the known general scheme of management, including organizational, functional and parametrical components within which quality assessment is a sort of basis for all other components and system parts. There are no signs of scientific novelty in this work. But meanwhile official opponents – Professor A.M. Tsurulnikov, Professor I.A. Bogachek, Professor V.I. Zvonnikov and the lead agency – the Volgograd State Teachers' Training University – gave positive reviews, hoping, probably, for own impunity.

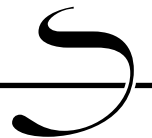
With the help of the Dissertation Council of the Bashkir State Teachers' Training University the next applicant, A.A. Simonova, enriches pedagogical science with the work "Innovatively focused training for pedagogical management in continuous professional education". Here Professor L.K. Grebenkina, Professor F.S. Teregulov and Professor V.Y. Sinenko were official opponents, and the Chelyabinsk State Teachers' Training University was a lead agency once again.

E.F. Khakimov has enriched science with the thesis "Construction of the practice of polycultural education on the basis of the poliparadigmatic approach" that was promoted by the Udmurt State University.

By means of the Moscow City Teachers' Training University A.A. Hairulina presented pedagogics with the work on the theme "Training of school teams for competitions on aerobics". Colleagues, this is not a methodical letter or instruction, but a scientific thesis (Do you imagine?).

The Russian State University of Physical Training, Sports, Youth and Tourism keeps pace with the Moscow City Teachers' Training University; it presented us with A.A. Ivanov's doctoral thesis on the theme "The technology of health self-improvement of the student-sportsman in connection with a preillness state". Probably, that was a vague state of the educational consultant Professor S.A. Polievsky, official opponents Professor E.S. Tsyganov, Professor A.O. Egorychev, Professor A.V. Chogovadze and the lead agency – the Moscow State Regional University.

The Adygei State University aspires to meet lacks in pedagogical science by I.N. Grekova's thesis "Formation of rational structure of interaction with a support in a various distance race among students of non-core higher education establishments". We obviously see the applicant's running from a scientific distance as far as it is possible.



At the Dissertation Council of the Moscow City Psychological and Pedagogical University M.E. Sachkova decided to reveal "Social psychology of a middle status pupil in the modern Russian educational space". Official opponents: Professor A.M. Prikhozhan, Professor I.G. Dubov, Professor I.B. Bovina, and the lead agency – once again the Moscow State Regional University– helped her.

E.Y. Lipilina carried out studying of a paramount, in her opinion, theme "Development of the creative potential of the future development engineer of garments". The council of experts of VAK, having rejected this work, could not know, what an urgent scientific problem was seen by the Dissertation Council of the Stavropol State University under the chairmanship of Professor V.A. Magina and the Moscow State Teachers' Training University which has acted as the lead agency.

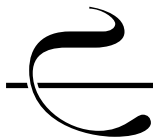
The trouble is that may name some more tens of similar dissertation works; among them they distinguish dissertation councils of the Southern Federal University, the Yaroslavl State Teachers' Training University, the Yakut State University, the Moscow City Teachers' Training University, the Kazan Volga Federal University, the Kuban State University, the Nizhny Novgorod State Linguistic University, the Derzhavin Tambov State University and many others.

How can we characterize the current situation? We can characterize the current situation as an activity officially sanctioned by hundreds of experts of our expert community – psychologists, pedagogues, specialists in didactics, methodologists whose works do not study global socially significant problems, do not reveal features of development of the modern growing person and have no necessary influence on the education system?

I do not want to assert that the majority of candidates for a degree are engaged in the pseudoscientific work not aiming at the solution of urgent problems. But the fact remains – the mass of dissertation researches on pedagogics and psychology very poorly (this phrase is optimistically constructed) influences the person's cognition and development of the modern education system.

It is enough to look at formulation of research hypotheses, their contradiction with purposes, aims, content of the work represented by an applicant, lameness of its experimental base, illiterate use of sources to understand that many dissertations, passed through all examination steps and defended, took place only thanks to indifference of the members of Dissertation Councils.

Otherwise how can we explain applicants' weak understanding of an essence, sense of own scientific work that is reflected in formulations of the theoretical importance and scientific novelty of the work, i.e. in conceptual validity of the received conclusions, availability of research results. Novelty is often formulated as known truths or trivial results of research; the new (in a theory and methodology) which is created by an author is not emphasized. As a rule, the enumeration of the author's certain achievements, and the theoretical propositions presented out of a context, prevails in the theoretical importance.



Results of research are stingily described and are often represented by empty statements, without revealing of a substantial essence of an author's contribution to pedagogical and psychological sciences. This is the point where there is an absence of understanding of a problem, inability to reveal, show contradictions, difficulties at its solution, possibilities, theoretical value of the obtained new data. Thus in many works there prevails a repetition of already known propositions, but formulated in the new, borrowed from other sciences, or foreign lexicon terms introduced into own researches by a writer of a thesis without their adaptation when the new problems demanding further researches are not isolated or when the applicant makes a certain discovery of the well-known points and regularities. As a result there are no new ideas; antiquated positions are not disproved; there are no debatable conclusions. Thus, practically from an abstract to an abstract there is a cliché (I quote): "The reliability of the research basic propositions and conclusions is ensured by consistency of realization of the chosen methodological approaches, the logic of work scheme, correspondence between a complex of methods of research and research purposes and aims". Thus it is not specified wherein consistency and correspondence is expressed.

One wants to laugh, but not to cry (according to a known anecdote joke), at reading of scientific conclusions where they often enumerate well-known propositions. For example, one of applicants has established (and it is quite seriously presented by the author of dissertation) that the greatest psychophysiological tension of students is caused by tests and examinations. Well, how do you like this innovative revelation given axiomatically, without comparison with other stressful states?

Thus in a number of theses there is no data concerning what was received in the research result; there is no explanation of the declared propositions, their essence and functional load.

In some cases an applicant and also those who open doors into science before him/her perceive pedagogical science very simply, believing that it is enough to introduce some pedagogical terms into the text and the thesis on pedagogics is ready. Thus a certain problem which does not belong to this scientific area is quite often considered.

As an example I would like to cite E.V. Ustinova's thesis "Formation and development of hippopedagogical ideas in Russia and abroad", defended at the Moscow City Teachers' Training University, despite a negative review of such a significant lead agency as the Herzen State Teachers' Training University of Russia.

Substantiating the relevance of the research, the author notes the objective necessity of fuller identification of positive possibilities of interaction of the person and the nature, search of new means of the coordinated development of the person and the nature, considering it on a material of the pedagogical organization of interaction of a person and a horse. The text of the author's abstract and the thesis causes bewilderment, for all that the horse is a beautiful, clever animal which different breeds are bred for various purposes: labor, sports and even nourishing. The main plan of the author consists in substantiation of the essence of hippopedagogical ideas that



assumes (according to the applicant) the disclosure of “historical experience of development of the Russian and foreign education where emergence and development of hippopedagogical ideas is represented as a process in which the pedagogical component acts as a complex phenomenon of education; there are the all-pedagogical and specific features determined by an object of organization of pedagogical interaction (the horse) and cultural and historical tradition of its perception; they ensure the reasonability and productivity of introduction of the ideas promoting enrichment of the theory and practice of modern general, additional and correctional education.

There are questions. How does a pedagogical component (and the component of what: either of the process of development of ideas or pedagogical ideas themselves) act as a complex education phenomenon in development of hippopedagogical ideas? What is understood under the complex phenomenon of education? Why do they consider the pedagogical component of the idea as the complex phenomenon of education?

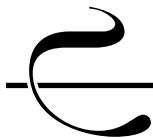
On what basis is it possible to distinguish a horse as an object of pedagogical interaction organization?

Can the process of appearance and development of ideas provide reasonability and efficiency of introduction of these ideas?

In the considered work it is declared that the author “grounds introduction of the concept “hippedagogical ideas” from the Greek “hippos” and the concept “pedagogics””: on the basis of the analysis of the terms used in various sports and therapeutic models of organization of interaction of the person and the horse these are both hippotherapy, and different types of riding. But it is well known that introduction of a new concept demands observance of certain logical operations whereas in the analyzed thesis its central concept “hippedagogical ideas” is entered arbitrarily and unsubstantially. Here there are the following hippopedagogical ideas, according to the applicant: riding training; influence of interaction with a horse on emotional and communicative spheres of the child’s personality; consideration of a horse (we should note, in the author’s edition it was consideration of a “horse”, instead of the “interaction organization”) as means of education.

In the contents of the thesis these ideas are revealed on example of riding training; training of specialists – instructors (trainers) of riding, reflecting either a hippotherapy area, that is correctional pedagogics, or an area of a technique of riding training, that is techniques of adaptive physical training, sports training which are independent scientific pedagogical disciplines. Thus the ideas presented by the applicant are a projection of known pedagogical ideas about the importance of organization of interaction of the child with the natural world (including with a horse) and do not contain any new pedagogical knowledge.

Consideration of the thesis of N.A. Burmistrova on the theme “Methodical system of training in mathematics of the future bachelors of the economy direction on the basis of the competence-based approach” impresses not less; it was defended in the Dissertation Council of the Siberian Federal University.



According to the classical works of pedagogical science the methodical system of training (MST) has to reflect the purposes, content structure, organizational forms and methods, teaching aids. For a doctoral research level all these five MST components have to possess novelty and theoretical, practical importance.

But the factors causing the necessity of renewal of all or some components of the MST, as well as the necessity of formation of the others, instead of the existing, are described neither in the text of chapters of the thesis, nor in results of research.

Statements of the author that "the requirements the Federal state educational standards of higher professional education (FSES of HPE) are defined as a prototype of the purpose of training as the MST system forming component" are trivial, obvious and can't lay claim to results of the doctoral research.

The fourth chapter, describing the concepts of monitoring, criteria of estimation of a level of formation of mathematical competence, falls beyond the thesis name and the work context; it is an artificial addition. It seems that as parts of the thesis the applicant presented certain texts, substantially poorly connected among themselves and not adequate to the name of the work.

There is no novelty in specification of the concept of mathematical competence among the future bachelor of the economy direction; in "replenishment of structural components of mathematical competence" there is also no novelty.

The propositions of the concept presented by the applicant do not influence formation of the MST components in any way, thereby, precluding from speaking about the theoretical importance of the MST, as the author formally lists the MST components, without revealing an essence from changes in the competence-based approach aspect.

Appropriateness of the carried out experiment raises doubts because each parameter is estimated after a 5-mark scale. Besides, the integrated estimation of a level of formation of mathematical competence is primitively calculated. This applicant had an educational consultant Professor V.A. Dalirgen, such a serious lead agency as the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia; official opponents were Professor A.Z. Zhafyarov, Professor S.I. Osipova and Professor E.K. Breitigam.

I will not tire you with further analysis of a great number of theses which poor quality is not an exception, to our great grief.

Dear colleagues, the quality and even number of publications of a considerable number of applicants start serious questions. One of them is connected with that a number of the future doctors of science have the list of publications, including in so-called "VAK journals" which majority is made by the points published only in own region of residence of a dissertation author. Thus the majority of points do not declare any new researcher's stand based on principle, being limited by a purely narrative text on the presented subject.

Here in the general list of applicants' publications there is a loophole through which not only a scientific degree, but also scientific activity is leveled. They often show us so-called monographs, with the volume of 3-4 printer's sheets, typed on the



home computer; the number of printed copies quite often have, excuse me, 100 and less printed copies. But not only the volume of a monograph and its number of printed copies causes worry; it is caused by misunderstanding of the specifics of this type of scientific edition. The monograph offered by the researcher, going to be defended, presuppose existence of the developed concept, substantiation of the author's scientific position, but not unification of a number of his/her different works, or statement of the obtained data in a volume.

The other loophole is defence before the Dissertation Councils of civil higher educational establishments of the works prepared in a system and on materials of the military personnel of the Ministry of Defence, the Interior Ministry, Federal Security Service, public procurator's office, the Ministry of Emergency Situations and other power ministries and departments. Thus, in the Pyatigorsk Linguistic University Krasilnikov A.Y. has defended the dissertation on the theme "Education of professional responsibility of personality" (on the example of customs officers). In the Derzhavin Tambov State University V.N. Khlamov has defended the dissertation on the theme "Organizational and pedagogical conditions of priority development of endurance at cadets – future specialists of land services of the Air Force of the Russian Federation".

Considering these works, the council of experts of VAK was convinced that these dissertation councils are not able to estimate the scientific and practical importance of the conducted researches properly, including to define their standard and legal validity, and a degree of privacy of the materials used in work.

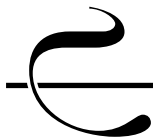
I think in these cases it is clear that applicants of a scientific degree try to defend weak works in councils which do not know the specifics of activity of the relevant ministries and departments.

Not casually VAK has created 4 dissertation councils; two of them are in the city of Moscow on the basis of the Military University of the Ministry of Defence and the Moscow University of the Interior Ministry of Russia and two of them are in St. Petersburg on the basis of the Academy of the Ministry of Emergency Situations and the University of the Interior Ministry of Russia.

It is necessary to put an end to a vicious practice of admission to defence of theses which Dissertation Councils are not able to estimate at a proper level.

Dear colleagues, it's our own fault that in result of the defended pedagogical and psychological dissertation researches there are no new ideas, discoveries, denial of antiquated positions; such works are few and far between. Meanwhile, in modern conditions, new "time challenges", emergence of unpredictable non-standard situations, society waits for teachers' and psychologists' search of non-standard solutions of really arising problems, a breakthrough in understanding of new realities of education and development of the growing person by means of education.

Certainly, in the general stream of dissertation works there are also serious researches. But, despite really interesting and perspective researches on pedagogics and psychology, expansion of their theoretical and empirical base, increase of attention to experiment, the general decrease in a level of applicants' scientific activity causes



worry; they fix narrow scientific horizons and naive empiricism of many authors of dissertations, inability to develop a research subject consistently and systemically, preponderance of pointless theorizing, low level of identification of the performed work with approaches, traditions, existing in science, substitution of concepts for terms, isolation of research from science theory, and education practice.

How could our scientific, including expert community, which has made the created situation possible, allow this? Let's be truthful, roots are covered in irresponsibility of departments of higher educational establishments and laboratories of research institutes, their heads and reviewers; indifference of the academic councils stamping purposeless works and formalism, unscrupulousness of the dissertation councils which have refused, in fact, carrying out of scientific discussions, comparison of different opinions generating new ideas, opening new directions of research.

In 1983 I became an unwitting accomplice of a shame of the President of the Academy of Pedagogical Science of the USSR Mikhail Ivanovich Kondakov. In front of me he received a delegation of the Mongolian national republic, headed by the Minister of Education and Science of the friendly country. The Mongolian statesman stated many words of gratitude, however in the conclusion of conversation he declared that starting from the following year his country wouldn't send people to our postgraduate course any more, as (I reproduce his words precisely) they had a sufficient number of candidates of science, and now they needed serious training of scientific personnel. Therefore they entered into a contract with Poland and England. Such a loud slap in the face was quite grounded. We really took care of graduate students from Mongolia, Vietnam and some other countries in every possible way, consciously underestimating requirements, and as a result produced (pardon my slang) pseudoscientific personnel. I can't forget as once before the Academic Council of the Psychological Institute of our Academy there was a defence of the Candidate's dissertation of the graduate student from Vietnam. After an opening speech of the Vietnamese applicant the Presiding academician A.A. Smirnov, asked whether the council members have any questions. "I have three questions", stated a corresponding member Natalia Aleksandrovna Menchinskaya and began to look for pieces of paper which were handed to her by a scientific adviser of the Vietnamese. "Yes, I've found – my first question is..., the second question is..." Not having found a piece of paper with the third question, Professor said, "All right, please, answer these two questions".

"Dear Natalia Aleksandrovna", the applicant started his speech. "Let me answer your questions extempore (he carefully pronounced this difficult for his speech word) – on the 1st – so and so, on the 2nd – so and so, and on the 3rd – so and so". The laughter shook the audience – extempore the applicant answered the question that was not asked. Unfortunately, it is not ridiculous, but it is very sad. Especially today, when not Mongolian, but our heads state intention to send young people to postgraduate course of England and the USA, thereby not appreciating our system of training and certification of scientific personnel.



The alarming state which has developed with this major business is visibly reflected in many aspects of defences carried out nowadays. In particular, it is shown not only in questions to applicants prepared beforehand which are distributed among a council members of, but also in a formalized character of the conclusions presented to VAK where there are no essential characteristics of novelty, theoretical and practical importance of a dissertation work; there is a repetition of the text of an author's abstract and quite often presented by a pseudoscientific language.

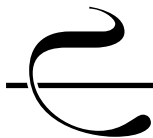
Serious complaints are caused by the practice of appointment and work of the official opponents who quite often give a biased, distorted assessment of theses because their candidates are selected for reasons very far from scientific adherence to principles, according to Griboedov's immortal recipe, "How not to take care of a dear little man".

The same thing also concerns the lead agencies which, leaving "inconvenient remarks and questions", do not consider various sides of the thesis, including its arguable points.

It is time to speak about the responsibility of post-graduate students' scientific advisers, raising their personal responsibility and eliminating the institute of the scientific consultants "preparing" doctors of science.

Does a scientific worker, capable to solve a major scientific problem, to open a new direction in science need a nurse with baby's bibs and nappies – the technologically equipped descendant of Pushkin's Arina Rodionovna?

The presence of such scientific nurses generated, as it is well-known, by their aspiration to receive an academic title of professor and the Provision on doctoral studies, is nonsense, visible contradiction. For if the applicant needs an educational consultant, he/she did not yet grow to independent solution of a scientific problem and should not aspire to the highest academic degree of doctor of science, that is the master in own field of knowledge. My honourable friends, you know that in recent years there were many measures directed on improvement of the quality of theses. In particular, it was introduced the requirement of the publication of the main scientific results in the reviewed scientific journals and editions; it was defined the minimum of scientific publications for candidates for the doctoral degree, representing the results of own research in the form of scientific report; there are renewed passports of scientific specialties according to the changes caused by development of scientific knowledge and expansion of problem fields of the research search; the form of a conclusion of an agency on the basis of which a research was carried out is minutely regulated; the requirement of obligatory placement of the text of an author's abstract of dissertation in open access (the Internet network) is introduced; the procedure of carrying out of the meeting on defence of the thesis is clearly regulated; the practice of carrying out of open sittings of Dissertation Councils on protection of theses in online mode is formed. The certain measures increasing the efficiency of Dissertation Councils are taken. Thus, they introduced a new form of the report of a Council work in result of a calendar year; requirements to publications of members of Dissertation Councils are increased.



At the same time, in spite of efforts of VAK, actions of certain pseudo-scientific officials made such changes in Propositions on awarding of an academic degree which underestimate claims to doctoral degree and promote the uncontrolled receiving of the candidate's degree. For example, let's take such an incident – nowadays in case when a candidate's dissertation give rise to doubt, the Council of experts of VAK cannot call the applicant, his scientific adviser, the chairman of a Dissertation Council, but has to write the appeal against the Dissertation Council. Meanwhile, the appeal – as the Explanatory Dictionary of Russian explains – is a complaint to the supreme authority; it means to complain, look for someone's decisive opinion. And the Encyclopedia treats the appeal as “an appeal of any resolution in the supreme authority”. And we have that the supreme authority – VAK – makes a complaint against the Dissertation Council controlled by it. Everything is put upside down.

We know that the present management of VAK actively struggles for due order in the sphere of certification of scientific personnel, including by entering of necessary amendments in the relevant documents.

Among the undertaken measures it is necessary to designate the responsibility of the department graduating an applicant both for a research theme statement, and for the quality of work of a scientific adviser and for a thesis examination.

Among other documents of the applicant to the doctoral degree, it is essentially necessary to oblige Dissertation Councils to present to VAK, not only a work text, but also his published monographs and main scientific articles.

As a criterion of fixing of lead agencies it is important to define an obligatory existence of the recognized experts in the examined problem, reflecting it in the documents presented to VAK.

It's time to reconsider the list of reviewed journals, having forbidden them to take money for publication not only from graduate students, but also from applicants for doctoral degree. Thus, we believe that from a number of “VAK editions” it is necessary to remove the so-called scientific notes of higher educational establishments. Today the following thing occurs – the applicant performs a work, for example, in Blagoveshchensk, he/she is published only in scientific notes of the Blagoveshchensk higher educational establishment, his/her opponents are from Blagoveshchensk, the lead agency is also from Blagoveshchensk. This applicant is widely known in narrow circles of Blagoveshchensk or any other city (I do not want to offend Blagoveshchensk – beautiful Amur city with carved palisades). Here it is possible to name tens of other cities where there is the same “local” picture as a result of which completion the applicant gains the diploma of not local, but the All-Russian scale.

In this regard I would like to pay attention of our expert community to illiterate speculation connected with the fact that, you see in the west (the USA and Europe) an academic degree is awarded by the institutes of higher education. From here there is an aspiration of a number of our institutes of higher education to get such right. All right, but it is necessary to remember that such institutes of higher education give own, instead of the nationwide diplomas confirmed by the Higher Certifying Com-



mission of the country. And when in the developed countries there is a position to be filled through competitive selection, in the announcement it is accurately specified that they accept documents on award of an academic degree, given by such and such higher educational establishment (the others shouldn't worry about it). So if a person gained a doctor diploma in the middle of nowhere, he/she can work only there, without receiving, by the way, an additional payment for an academic degree.

My most esteemed colleagues, it is time to increase the responsibility of Dissertation Councils, scientific advisers, opponents and lead agencies, having established that in case of refusal of the recommended one doctor or two candidate works, they would lose the right to carry out the activity connected with certification of scientific personnel of the highest qualification for terms up to 5 years.

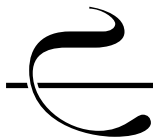
By the way, as a preventive measure I would suggest to hang out on the VAK site, having published in the bulletin of VAK, and also in the "Poisk" newspaper, the list of names of those scientific advisers and consultants, whose charges were not approved by VAK in the required academic degrees in 2011–2012. In my opinion, the same list of names is also demanded by those official opponents who gave positive responses on the theses rejected by VAK (both doctor's, and candidate's). The scientific community has the right to know those who promotes emergence of would-be scientific, pseudo-scientific creations, to know and promote their public "popularity".

It's time of urgent reduction of the number of dissertation councils, at simultaneous strengthening of their structure. For example, in the Herzen State Teachers' Training University of Russia or in the Moscow State Teachers' Training University there are tens of Dissertational Councils on teaching methodology – separately in mathematics, in biology, in history, in literature etc. It is possible and necessary to unite them, having closed ranks of serious specialists on teaching methodology.

The necessity of reconsideration of a role of Dissertation Council in certification of scientific personnel is ripe. My most esteemed colleagues, it is necessary to return to it the status of the scientific structure which is responsible for this major business.

The applicant mounting the platform of the Dissertation Council is to prove, defend his/her position in science. And we give him/her 10–15 minutes, shoving him/her (forgive my slang) the questions helping him to elucidate a subject of work, but not disclosing his/her personal position in science. And after all we certify not the work, not the way the applicant knows this work, but the person who defends, proves the right to a certain place in science.

It has to define the logic of discussion of the applicant's work in the Dissertation Council, including the content of the questions and performances in free discussion. I speak about it because the analysis of the asked questions and the course of discussions allows to distinguish aspects which reduce the quality of scientific discussion of the results received by the author of dissertation. First, as you know, often the questions are formal "giving a hint" about a necessary answer, for example, "How do you define the concept ...?", or "How many pupils participated in experiment?", "What were nationalities of the schoolchildren who participated in it?" But very seldom they



ask the questions on how the research problem was defined, what was the basis for formulation of the hypothesis.

Practically there are no questions concerning development of scientific knowledge which is recorded in the concepts chosen by the author as a theoretical basis of research.

In free discussion in speeches of the council members it is not always possible to hear reasonable judgments about the content of the defended dissertation research. Instead of these they hear verbose reasonings remotely relating to a considered problem, or they speak about own conducted researches.

Dear colleagues, it's time for real increase of responsibility of Dissertation Councils by introduction of personal responsibility not only of a council chairman and scientific secretary for the quality of the thesis examination, but also of all members of a council. At carrying out the competitive procedures on election to a professorship it is necessary to consider the work of the applicant for this position as a member of Dissertation Council that will promote increase of importance and prestigousness of this activity in professional community.

All of us, dear colleagues, should unite to create, at last, the conditions intolerant of pseudo-scientific activity in the scientific environment, without allowing profanation, fighting for the scientist's honor. It is not a question of mistrust to the army of candidates for a degree, but it is a question of raising of the bar of our requirements on an essentially new level. And it concerns the whole expert community. Certainly, the work of opponents, members of Dissertation Councils and the Council of experts of VAK is connected with serious loads. At the same time it is an exclusively honourable work because we are responsible not only for that is already made in the conducted researches, but in our hands there is the future of science, possibilities of formation of the new scientific base.

Therefore nobody can humble science, offend scientific community by that someone has found it possible to treat the thesis defence as an access moment necessary only for strengthening of ambitions or receiving of certain benefits. After all the vast majority of the Russian scientists came to defence of the theses and, thanks God, still comes as established scientists who scrupulously relate to own professional activity. It has nice traditions, and our duty is to protect and increase them.

Thanks for attention!