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**DANIELA ANDONOVSKA-TRAJKOVSKA<sup>1</sup>**

**INDIVIDUALIZATION OF THE TEACHING PROCESS - A PRINCIPLE  
FOR PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

**ИНДИВИДУАЛИЗАЦИЈАТА НА НАСТАВАТА КАКО ПРИНЦИП ЗА  
ПОДДРШКА НА ИНКЛУЗИВНОТО ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ**

**Апстракт**

Индивидуализацијата на наставата е дидактички принцип со чие почитување се обезбедува поддршка на учениковите потреби, интереси, можности, способности во насока на нивно натамошно развивање. При тоа, при планирањето на индивидуализираната настава се земаат предвид индивидуалноста и неповторливоста на личноста на ученикот. Од друга страна, инклузијата е принцип со којшто се обезбедува вклучување на сите деца во наставниот процес независно од нивните полови карактеристики, етничката припадност, социјалниот статус, здравствените и психолошките карактеристики и нивно заедничко коегзистирање во исти контексти во кои во преден план се истакнуваат заемното почитување, толеранција, помагање и непречено развивање на индивидуален, но и на социјален план. Оттука, очигледна е и поврзаноста меѓу овие два принципа со кои наставниот процес добива хумана димензија. Во овој труд, посебно ќе се разгледуваат различните начини за овозможување на инклузивното образование преку почитување на дидактичкиот принцип индивидуализација на наставата.

*Клучни зборови: инклузивно образование, персонализација, индивидуализација, инклузија*

**Abstract**

Individualization of the teaching process is didactical principle that provides support for the student's needs, interests, abilities, capabilities in terms of their further development. In the process of planning and programming the individualized lesson plans, individuality and uniqueness of the student are taken into account. On the other side, inclusion as a principle presupposes inclusion of all children in the educational process with different: gender, ethnicity, social status, health and psychological condition and their mutual coexisting in same contexts in which mutual respect, tolerance, help, appreciation and individual and social development are accentuated. Therefore, the relationship between these two principles that give the teaching process a human dimension is very obvious. This paper will examine several different ways of organizing inclusive education by sticking to the didactical principle of individualization of the teaching process.

*Key words: inclusive education, personalization, individualization, inclusion*

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### **Individualization and inclusion among other didactic principles**

The teaching process in primary school should have such organization and conceptualization that will act as a reflection of the main principles or core values that are related to the contemporary understanding of the process of teaching and learning. It should contribute to the development of the student's personality in the frames of the modern global society that influences the process of redefinition of the educational goals, and the methodologies for teaching and learning.

The general didactical principles are directed towards conceptualization of the contemporary education as a process in which the student is the subject that is actively engaged in the learning processes, thus s/he is fully responsible for his/her own learning and development, but also for the development of the community to which s/he belongs.

There are several general principles that teachers have to have in mind while planning their modern educational practices: scientific approach, linking the theory and the practice, gaining knowledge that lasts, rationalization, systematization, democratization, correlation and integration within the educational contents, creativity and proactive behavior, individualization, differentiation, inclusion, intercultural communication and interaction. Principles such as scientific approach, linking the theory and the practice, actualization, rationalization, systematization, correlation and integration within the educational contents refer mainly to the concretization of the educational objectives by having in mind the contemporary trends in the sciences that they are related to. Psychological and educational sciences should also be taken into account, because they influence the process of defining the educational goals, the process of selecting the educational contents and their distribution across the curriculum, and they are also related to the application of the teaching and learning methodology. The principles such as creativity and proactive behavior, individualization, differentiation, inclusion, intercultural communication and interaction are connected mostly with the teaching and learning methodologies.

Individualization of the teaching process and the inclusion in the schools contribute to the process of addressing the needs of each student.

Inclusion as a didactical principle enables inclusion of all children in the regular schools with no regards of the students' nationality, social status, culture, religion, abilities and possibilities. Each child has right on quality education and equal opportunities for socialization with different people. It is pointed out that people have similar features, but also they are different in many ways, and such differences should be embraced and appreciated as benefit (Calenda et al., 2016: 2448), as a quality and opportunity for accelerated and increased individual and social development. That is the reason why inclusion as a principle that has already been adopted in the teaching process can reinforce the intercultural communication and tolerance, which is necessity that has arisen out of the contemporary global society's development in which mobility of the subjects on national and international level has reached high level.



## **Individualized approach in the teaching process as a precondition for quality inclusive education**

The profile of the inclusive teacher is based on four core values: 1. *valuing learner diversity – learner difference is considered as a resource and an asset to education*; 2. *Supporting all learners – teachers have high expectations for all learners' achievements*; 3. *Working with others – collaboration and teamwork are essential approaches for all teachers*; 4. *Continuing personal professional development – teaching is a learning activity and teachers take responsibility for their own lifelong learning*. (Teacher Education for Inclusion: Profile of Inclusive Teachers, 2012: 11)

Inclusiveness of the educational process can be achieved in many different ways, such as enabling access to educational institutions for students that are identified as members of a vulnerable social group<sup>2</sup> and the students that are categorized according to the International Classification of Functioning Disability and Health (2001). Inclusiveness can also be achieved through personalizing the education in order to address the needs of each child, which is extremely significant for maintaining the quality of the education and the development of the social system, and very big challenge to the educators and the educational leaders, as well. R. Macedonia is a country that puts much efforts in providing the human rights for each child according to The Conventions on the Rights on the Child (1989). In addition, Macedonia has brought and adopted The National Programme for the Development of Education 2005-2015, and continued to act in accordance with the Programme during the past ten years. One of the key areas of intervention in the Programme is providing education of all: *education must be available to everybody who lives in the Republic of Macedonia, regardless of their age, sex, religious or ethnic affiliation, health condition and financial circumstances* (National Strategy for the Development of Education in the Republic of Macedonia, 2004: 21). There are also mechanisms for early identification of the children that should be in the educational system and their inclusion in the system (The National Programme for the Development of Education 2005-2015, 2006: 37). Increasing of the inclusiveness of the children with special educational needs is the objective that has been emphasized, thus trainings for inclusive teachers are planned (2006: 22, 51). The latter puts lights on the change of the teaching and learning methodologies as an envisioned necessity.

Analyses of the European experts in the area of inclusive education that have been done supported by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Macedonia have shown that inclusiveness is being supported by the policies, but there is a lack of implementation practices (Џонстон, 2010: 40). For that purpose,

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<sup>2</sup> Vulnerable groups according to the National program of educational development 2005-2015 in Macedonia (132-133) are: children that are coming from undeveloped areas, children with learning difficulties, children who don't have high achievements in school, children that are coming from poor families, children with one parent, children with dysfunctional families, children that are coming from families that have prejudices and stereotypes in very explicit manner, children with chronic diseases, children with mother tongue that is different than the language of use in school.

UNICEF with support provided by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Macedonia conducted project for inclusive education, and trainings for inclusive teachers “Inclusive Education Teacher Training Modules” (2012-2014), and with targeted group consisted of: university professors, pedagogues, psychologists, sociologists, defectologists, primary school, representatives of the Ministry of education and science of R. Macedonia, and representatives of the various NGO’s. In the frames of the previously mentioned trainings for inclusive teachers, individualization as a didactic principle was emphasized, meaning that all the efforts were directed toward conceptualization of the inclusive approach as approach that contains strategies for addressing each child’s needs and interests. *Individualized learning is learning in which each child is accepted as personality with talents and abilities, specific family background, social identity, and with previous learning experiences* (Холенвегер и др., 2015: 117).

The process of implementing of inclusive practices depends on the consistency of practicing of the individualization as a principle, which can be recognized in the report of the analysis of the programs for inclusive education in the region written by expert of the Council of Europe: *It is necessary to provide support for teachers for the purpose of improving their individualized educational practices, managing diversity and supervision of the students’ achievements as important components of inclusive education* (Холенвегер, 2014: 15). *Students are not perceived only as learners, but as persons with their-own biographies, experiences, abilities and aspirations. It is based on the assumption that deep learning only happens if the learner finds certain sense in that process and when it is in harmony with his/her-own identity and interests* (Холенвегер, 2015: 59).

Personalized teaching requires teachers with specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will contribute to the process of organizing teaching and learning activities for the purpose of each child’s development (Milenković et al, 2016: 3768). It points out the necessity of developing teachers’ competencies that will be related to the concretization of the educational goals, educational content, and practicing appropriate teaching and learning methodologies.

Personalized approach may be manifested in various manners as follows: preparing personalized teaching plan for the child that has been categorized according to the International classification of functioning Disability and Health (2001), i.e. for the child that has medical note about his/her health condition; through the everyday planning of the teaching process for the students that do not have specific educational needs related to their functionality and health. In addition, there is an option of formulating specific educational objectives that are based on the regular curriculum, for the children with cognitive disabilities. There are also possibilities of implementing various personalized educational contents if necessary. Personalized methodological approach that is related to teaching and learning is consisted of specific organizational teaching forms and methods that are adapted to the students’ abilities, interests and needs. It is necessary to map the students that are identified as members of the vulnerable groups and to ease their access to education. It is also important to increase their participation in the educational process by using various interactive teaching methods in order to



increase their self-confidence, to develop tolerance, cooperation, mutual respect and appreciation among all of the students.

## Conclusion

Inclusive education is organized system of gaining knowledge and skills by the means of appreciating the individuality and uniqueness of each student. In addition, educational activities should be organized in order to develop each child's personality which will enable creating active citizenship that will contribute to the social development, as well. Thus the teacher should use appropriate personalized methodological teaching and learning approach that will address the needs, interests and abilities of each student without exception. It is believed that each child can achieve school success, but the path to success is personalized, i.e. each student will reach the goals by using different methods. It will be necessary to make redefinition of the educational goals and objective for a student, or to make different choices regarding the educational contents for the other, or changing the teaching and learning methodology that will be consisted of different combinations and time distribution of organizational forms and teaching and learning methods, different teaching tools, materials, and tasks, different possibilities for assessment of the students' achievements, different approaches in terms of communication and interaction among the main constituents of the famous didactic triangle.

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