

Intellectually Gifted Children With Dyslexia

PORTEŠOVÁ, Š. *Rozumově nadané děti s dyslexií*. Prague: Portál, 2011.

(book review)

Reviewed by Jana Jičínská

The following review is dedicated to the extensive but very often underrated topic of children with so called dual exceptionality. The publication is based on the research work of psychologist doc. Mgr. Šárka Portešová, Ph.D., who devotes herself to this theme in the field of developmental psychology. Every year there is a large number of publications on education of children and youth with special needs which focus on various areas – those, for instance, include re-education, compensation, individual education plan and various documents relating to diagnostic, advisory and corrective activities designed both for educators and parents and other professionals. With respect to the area of handicapped children there is disproportionally less literature which could adequately saturate the current needs of this heterogeneous group of pupils and students with diverse potential of abilities and skills but simultaneously with uncaught limits which impede the enjoyment of school as well as later academic success compared to the others who do not have such handicaps. The publication monitors the given area relatively well, providing very interesting practical insights and inspirations documented with rich graphic material – e.g. using images, charts and graphs. In view of the fact that the author works as a developmental psychologist, it is obvious from each approach that she is in contact with the reality of today's school and is able to respond adequately and reason the contemporary needs of parents and children. The book contains a large number of case reports documenting various limits and difficulties of pupils, however, simultaneously we can find here instructions and recommendations or suggestions for further development of these topics, or procedures for school and consulting practice. The content of the book is logically structured; the work evidences coherence and integrity. The author very well combines practical and theoretical level, smoothly moving from analysis to synthesis. The publication draws on sources of English provenance, making it more comprehensive and more plastic, thus giving the readers the opportunity to compare

approaches in the Czech Republic and abroad. The division of the book corresponds to the logical structure of topics and their links. The first chapter deals with the scientific research of talents and various conception of talent, the conception of IQ and its limits in the assessment of outstanding abilities of pupils. The second chapter introduces briefly the legislation of the Czech Republic and the current view of those gifted and the “dual exceptionality”. The third chapter offers the perspective that particularly attracts psychologists and special educators. It discusses the issue of identification of the gifted handicapped pupil and what are the possibilities of care for such individuals. In view of the fact that the theme of identification is quite demanding, it is necessary not only for parents of the gifted children and teachers but also for other people or professionals who come into contact with gifted individuals whose abilities are disguised with handicaps to cooperate in assessing their interests, in which their abilities are masked by handicaps. The fourth chapter reflects the common myths arising in connection with those gifted having the learning disabilities. The fifth chapter focuses on the particularities of the individual plan and its aspects for gifted children with dyslexia. In the sixth chapter, the author attempts to bring a typology of gifted children with dyslexia, their relationship between the talent and disorder. The seventh till twelfth chapters gradually reflect psychological and special pedagogy approaches and needs of pupils with dual exceptionality. They inform about the emotional problems of gifted children and the ways they express their needs, whereas the author demonstrates numerous case reports and evidences of pupils and their parents. It is important to mention also the fact that the failure of pupils is not always the fault of one party, but a big role is very often played by all engaged in the pupils' education. It should also be noted that the talent could also bring some social problems – exclusion, lack of understanding, a sense of otherness. Very often these students – especially girls – long to be average, so that their talents are not seen, in double exceptionality the fear of failure is evident; therefore they need psychological support from specialists, but the most from their parents. The publication therefore offers an infinite number of inspirations and perspectives that could dramatically help the active screening of these individuals as the potential we have in them can become a valuable source of scientific and technical progress. These individuals may be a driving moment of science, culture and technology. The excessive propensity for average and disregarding for this issue brings up a lot of damage – not only indifference towards the needs of these pupils, but also the loss of valuable skills of these highly motivated, yet underrated pupils. We believe that this book has brought new knowledge thus broadening the spectrum of views of the issue of children with dyslexia. We recommend it to everyone interested in pedagogy, psychology, social work, special education and also medical sciences. However, it can also bring new stimuli to all parents with gifted children or children with handicap.

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