



## OPINION

from **prof. Mariya Ilieva** Ivanova **PhD**, *St Cyril and St Methodius* University of Veliko Tarnovo  
(*scientific position, academic degree, name, surname, educational / scientific institution*)

for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" (PhD) in professional field 3.5. Social Communications and Information Sciences.

with a dissertation on the topic: "Media Literacy: Comprehension and Use of Media Text in Upper Secondary School",

presented by **Nelly Ilieva Ilieva**, full-time doctoral student in the Department Press Journalism and Book Publishing of the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication

with supervisor: **prof. Andreana Eftimova DSc**



## I. Evaluation of the qualities of the text of dissertation

The topic of the proposed dissertation is emphatically relevant given the current trends towards activation of media influence and manipulation in public life. Turning the perspective to the ability of adolescents, living constantly in a media environment, to understand the information and evaluate the impact to which they are subjected, is markedly significant and should be highly appreciated.

The dissertation is built following the classical compositional structure – introduction, four chapters, conclusion, bibliography and appendix. Norms established in practice for the distribution of content have also been observed. In the introduction, the actuality of the problem, the social impact of its solution, the object, the goals and tasks of the research are presented in depth. Substantial attention is paid to the interdisciplinary nature of the work, which also requires the researcher to have significant theoretical training in various fields of knowledge - media studies, linguistics, cultural studies, sociology, teaching methodology, etc. Research methods are correctly presented depending on the research tasks. In building the hypothesis, the teacher's experience is combined with knowledge acquired in the process of preparing the dissertation, which is also one of the goals of the educational and scientific degree "doctor". A very good impression is made by the ability to limit the scope of the dissertation work, while outlining prospects for future work.

Moving logically in the comments of the main terms between the reports of the European Commission and the works of Umberto Eco, Dennis McQuail, Roland Barthes, Roger Fiedler and others. sufficiently iconic names in the theory of communication and semiotics, the author manages to show her excellent training on media communication in the theoretical and applied aspects. Sometimes, this examination of different perspectives in different scientific paradigms seems to stretch too far the direction in which the reasoning in the thesis is expected to be.

Tracing the relationship between media and audience/society in historical and current contexts is extremely interesting and useful for those working with contemporary adolescents. The review of the concepts of the media text as a cultural, social and linguistic phenomenon is done thoroughly, correctly and with attention to the goals of media literacy education. When clarifying the concept of media literacy (mainly for the dissertation work), arguments from a variety of sources are cited - scientific studies, media literacy index, Open Society reports, etc., which makes the study an invaluable assistant in studies of various types.

The most essential part of the proposed dissertation is the fourth chapter, in which, through original experiments of the author, the ability of upper-year high-school students to extract information and evaluate the manipulative impact of certain media texts is tracked. The author deserves congratulations for the created and conducted surveys, for the analyzes of each of them, as well as for the conclusions of these analyzes - extremely useful for work at school. The application of theoretical knowledge in an innovative model of studying students' competencies is a significant contribution of the doctoral student (and of her supervisor). In clear diagrams and comments, students' skills or inabilities to extract information, tolerance for the shortcomings of media texts, and demonstrated indifference to linguistic means of emotional impact and manipulation are illustrated. The students' inability to separate subjective from objective information is categorically outlined, which largely determines the correct reception of the media text.



The PhD student has made her arrangements about the selection of the texts, and I understand the arguments for the appropriateness of the texts in the first experiment. As for the brilliant text of Lyuboslava Ruseva in the second experiment, one could consider whether it is suitable both in terms of genre and depth for the age and the linguistic, but also the socio-cultural competence of the average Bulgarian high-school student. It seems to me that there the results are to some extent predetermined. However, this does not diminish the value of the proposed original survey, which can be applied to any text.

The language of the research is clear and professionally correct, and the sporadic mistakes made are more of a technical nature and do not affect the overall very good impression of the presented dissertation work.

The text of the abstract corresponds to the content of the dissertation.

## **II. Contributions of the dissertation research**

The contributions are presented correctly in the prepared report.

The most valuable part of the research is the results of the conducted experiments, which can be used in the teaching of the Bulgarian language in order to increase the media literacy of adolescents, as well as for the preparation of new teaching aids, therefore I recommend the printing of this part of the dissertation in methodical editions.

## **III. Notes and recommendations**

With a view to the possible publication of the text, I have the following recommendations:

- To specify the subject of the study with a clearer and unpatterned utterance.
- When reviewing the history of media education, a few sentences should also be written about situation in Bulgaria.
- To include the numbering of chapters and sections in the text as indicated in the table of contents, in order to unambiguously perceive the connections between the meaning fragments.

## **IV. Publications and participation in scientific forums**

The PhD student has presented five publications, three of which have been published and two are in press. It thus meets the minimum national requirements for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "doctor".

## **V. Conclusion**

After the overview of the dissertation work, considering its undoubted scientific and applied value, as well as the fact that it fulfills all regulatory requirements, I vote FOR awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor" to the doctoral student Neli Ilieva Ilieva.

Jury member: prof. Mariya Ilieva PhD

Date: 22.08.2022

Veliko Tarnov0