

Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" - Faculty of Educational Studies and the Arts

### **Opinion**

by Prof. Dr. Teodora Radoeva Petrova-Ivanova, lecturer at the Faculty of Journalism and Mass

Communication at Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski",

professional field

3.5 Public Communications and Information Sciences

RE: Monograph, entitled "Media Literacy – Experience Reconsidered, Monograph, named "Digitalization and Education - Innovation, Creativity and Interculturalism", presented by Danail

Kirilov Danov for his participation in a competition for the academic position of "Professor" in

the field of higher education, 1.2. Pedagogy (Media Pedagogy),

opened for the needs of the Department of Preschool Pedagogy at the Faculty of Pedagogical

Sciences at Sofia University,

announced in SG, no. 67 / 28.07.2020,

#### **General data about the competition**

The Information presented by the candidate Danail Danov complies completely

with the minimum national requirements given by the Regulations for

application of the Law for Academic development in higher education in Bulgaria and exceeds significantly the minimum requirements determined by the group of indicators for the different

scientific and academic degrees and positions.

Danail Danov is the only candidate in this competition. He has presented two

monographs for the competition along with a list of ten other publications, all related to the subject matter of the competition.

The Commission for Admission of Candidates appointed by order of the Rector of Sofia University has reviewed the documents submitted by the candidate and has seen a full compliance of the submitted documents with the requirements of the Rules of Sofia University and the respective legal norms. The scientific jury of the competition was appointed by order of the Rector of Sofia University RD 38-46 / 25.09.2020.

As a member of the Jury it is my duty to present the following opinion, which is composed in accordance with the requirements for academic reviews and opinions.

The candidate Danail Danov is an established researcher and leading expert in the field of mass communications and the role of new information and communication technologies for the purposes of education. He has written in both Bulgarian and English numerous articles and studies on the education of children and adults and other groups of students. Established and sought in his capacity of a lecturer and trainer, Danov has conducted many courses on media literacy, and has published lots of papers in this field. His work as an expert at the Media Development Center has contributed significantly to the organizational and program management of both media training and education. His professional career, including positions such as Deputy-Chair of the Board of Directors of the Bulgarian national radio, its Secretary-General, Coordinator of the Media Program of the Open Society Foundation, release producer at the Bulgarian Section of the BBC World Service, London, speak in support of his competence in the field.

Mr. Danov is a longtime journalist with enormous practical experience which has helps him to teach courses such as media studies and media literacy. Danov's professional path is related to project management and facilitation of practical training in direct and online mode in the field of media, communication and human resources development, training programs for professionals

from various fields from over 30 countries. I say this because this international experience helped him in the assessment in the practical field of education in a number of European countries, an important matter that has been analyzed in-depth in his articles.

Mr. Danov's professional activity as a university lecturer began at Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski" as a senior assistant in 2014. at the Department of Preschool and Media Pedagogy of the Faculty of Educational Studies and the Arts of Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski". His growth "on the ground" during these almost eight years continues and he is currently an "Associate professor" and "Doctor of sciences" in the same department, and his research and professional research over the past thirty years has developed mainly in three fields: media and communications, application of new information and communication technologies, education and training.

His scientific publications and research, as well as the courses he teaches, are in these three areas, which unite his scientific and professional growth. His analyzes of educational practices and his work with undergraduate and doctoral students in the field of education and training in Bulgaria and other European countries complement the practical and applied nature of his works. Assoc. Prof. Danov lectures at the faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication of Sofia University, and in other universities, teaches and conducts courses in English, aimed at BA's, MA's and PhD's.

I emphasize all this, believing that his research and professional activity has contributed for his strong participation in the competition for "professor" in direction 1.2. Pedagogy (Media pedagogy).

### **Research activity and results**

The documents submitted by the candidate for the competition are grouped in four categories: publications, covering the period November 2019 - September 2020 / after the competition for

"Doctor of Science" /; information related to joint research work with students and doctoral students; participation in national and international projects; teaching activity as a lecturer in various prestigious Bulgarian and foreign institutions.

The publication, presented for this competition, entitled "Media Literacy – Experience Reconsidered", IMS, Sofia, 2020, ISBN-978-054-07-4912-9, is a monographic work on issues related to the need of "a clearer understanding of the essence of media literacy and its ubiquitous application as a comprehensive concept and educational strategy ", as D. Danov himself emphasizes. In terms of scientific significance and practical applicability of this monograph, I will emphasize in the first place the relevance of the issue of media education in the 21st century.

The development of the understanding of concepts such as media literacy, media pedagogy, digital skills, etc. is discussed in the context of EU requirements for the development of media and information literacy and analyzes the critical reading of the development of the theory of media literacy in Europe as a result of technological changes in the educational environment. I dare say that the monograph "Media Literacy – Experience Reconsidered" is a methodically organized research based on research, description of regulations and educational policies, analysis of individual practices in education in different countries in Europe.

The monograph also presents a historical overview of the development of the concept of "media literacy" and the media literacy policies of European countries since the first research by Sonia Livingston. I think I would not be wrong to say that the monograph uses an integrated methodology, which is the basis of the comprehensive scientific approach to the concept and introduction of educational policies on media literacy presented in the book.

Another publication, which Danail Danov has offered to participate in this competition with is his book, entitled "Digitalization and education - innovation, creativity and interculturalism", IMS, Sofia, 2020, ISBN 978-954-07, which is dedicated to the new skills and competencies that are

needed by learners in order to be able to fully participate in the educational process in the XXI century. Here I will emphasize on a concrete focus of the research - the justification of innovative education, as well as the study of creative approaches in education.

Here I find Danov's approach as quite appropriate - from the general to the concrete, namely from the clarification of the concepts and essence of the processes taking place in education, as a result of the digitalization of all areas, not only in educational technologies. I would also like to emphasize the scientific and practical-applied significance of these two monographic researches, as well as the methodical and detailed description of the theories, sources, practices, and documents used. The relevance of the two main monographs offered for the competition is indisputable, emphasizing the fact that education is one of the most important areas in our lives, although we often do not realize it, but we witness and live in a distance and digital education.

The two presented monographs contribute to applied research in media pedagogy.

A list of another 32 publications (some co-authored) in Bulgarian and English in specialized scientific journals, which are respectful as research, is presented. The publications with contributions in the field of the competition are 12 articles and one study, which present the research and scientific activity of Assoc. Prof. Danov. Among them are titles such as "Media Literacy and Media Pedagogy - Interconnection and Crossroads", "The Digital World and its Impact on Man", "Application of New Digital Technologies in Education", "Interculturality and Education", "Media Literacy Study Guide", etc.

They provide the courses taught by Mr. Danov to familiarize learners with author's publications. The publications are readable and written in professional language. In the Information submitted by the candidate, 30 citations and references to his works can be noted. I believe that with the presented works, with his experience as a teacher and professional, Mr. Danail Danov proves that he is a worthy candidate and meets the requirements of the announced competition.

### **Teaching and learning activities**

According to the report, Assoc. Prof. Danov teaches courses at different levels of education at the university: "Media Studies", Introduction to the specialty "History and Theory of Public Relations", "Journalistic Genres and Formats", "Digital Media", "Information and Communication" technologies in teaching and working in a digital environment", Media pedagogy". Media and information literacy "and others as the competition is provided with the necessary study load. Assoc. Prof. Danov, in the opinion of the students, is a strongly demanded and authoritative lecturer.

### **Opinions, recommendations and notes on the activity and achievements of the candidate**

I accept the activity of Danail Danov as a researcher and lecturer, to this we can add his overall professional activity, as evidence of his successful participation in the competition. Recommendations and critical remarks can be made to any scientific work, and to any text. I think he could develop his research and continue to monitor the changing educational environment in Bulgaria and other countries around the world.

### **CONCLUSION**

The presented research, the courses that the candidate reads in the competition, as well as the qualities of the books presented as habilitation papers, show the competence and contribution of Danail Danov in the research of media literacy and education. The candidate's publications, the possible opportunities for practical application of the research results, give me reason to conclude that he is a worthy candidate in the competition.

I should also note that the attached materials for the competition are sufficient and show high publication activity of the candidate. As a result of all that has been said so far, I recommend to the esteemed members of the Scientific Jury to award Danail Danov the academic position of "Professor" direction 1.2. Pedagogy (Media Pedagogy), announced for the needs of the Department of Preschool Pedagogy at the Faculty of Pedagogical Sciences at Sofia University. I will vote for this.

Sofia, October 24, 2020.

Prof. Dr. Teodora Petrova