

REVIEW

On the scientific works of Assistant Professor Svetlana Stankova, PhD,
participating in the competition for the academic position Associate Professor in
the Professional Field 3.5. Social communications and information sciences
(Management of the communication situations) of the FJMC

Reviewer: Prof. Dobrinka Stancheva Peicheva,
PhD; DSc - Member of the Scientific Jury

Research activity

Assistant Professor Svetlana Stankova, PhD, is the only candidate in the competition.

The main habilitation work with which she participated in the competition is the monograph: "Refugee Movements to Bulgaria in the Period 2011-2015. Communication Situations and Media Practices." Sofia: St. Kl. Ohridski Publishing House, 2019, 208 p. In addition to this monograph, Dr. Svetlana Stankova has included two other monographs: The Radiophenomenon. Sofia: Avangard Prima Publishing House, 2014, 173 p., intended for the study material and "The Press - Political Mediator". 2010, Sofia: "St. Kl. Ohridski" Publishing House, 288 p.

Stankova presented in the framework of the competition a study: "Reflection of the election campaign for the European Parliament 2019 in Bulgaria by "Trud" newspaper in the FJMC Yearbook at Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski ", 2019, vol. 26, p. 177-195 and 23 articles, 19 of which were included on the topic of the competition: Social networks in political communication"; "Digital political dialogue and social networks"; "Catalonia crisis - lack of communication or protection of democracy"; "Fake news - manipulations and mystifications in the context of the US presidential election (November 2016)" The Charlie Abdo attack - the roots of hatred"; "CSR: business decisions and public communications"; "The Reverse Political Images of Parliamentary Elections 2013", The Image of the Enemy - An Effective Political Technology"; Media of the Power vs. the Power of the Media"; "Euroscepticism and Euro-optimism in recent presidential campaigns of Bulgaria and the Czech Republic" University libraries - a bridge to the single European educational space"; The Press as a Tool for Creating Political Identity (Presidential Campaign 2006). "2006 Presidential Campaign on Press Pages –

Moderate, Epidermal or Preterm; “Coaching - an incentive for career development”. “Entrepreneur vs. Player,” “Brno - a dream come true”.

The main habilitation work of the candidate for the academic position of Associate Professor is the work "Refugee Movements to Bulgaria in the Period 2011-2015. Communication Situations and Media Practices. Sofia: St. Kl. Ohridski Publishing House, 2019, 208 pp. The book is published. It has a scientific editor, two reviewers and consists of 4 chapters with a volume of 208 pages.

The habilitation work is a theoretical, methodological and empirically-verified conceptualization of an extremely important element of the communication process, excluded more than half a century from the five-question model of Harold Lasswell disseminated subsequently by many scientists as acting communicative paradigm.

Dr. Svetlana Stankova starts from the fact that the communication process is not limited to the 5 elements described in the model of Harold Laswell "who says, what he says, through what channel, to whom, with what effect". She derives the sixth element - 'under what conditions', through its own theorizing and empirical verification of the communication situation, following Douglas Wapples and his six-element model, published 6 years earlier than H. Lasswell's model, namely “who says, what says, through what channel to whom, under what conditions and to what effect.”

The same message - confirms Svetla Stankova - can take a different meaning according to the communication situation in which the interpreted content is accepted."

By introducing and appropriately proving the importance of the communication situation in describing the communication process, she contributes to the development and verification of D. Wapple's six-question communication model, which contains the specific situation or, in other words, the conditions under which communication takes place. With the development and verification of the six-question model of Douglas Wapples, which, similar to the author, was developed on the research field of the press, Stankova is one of the other contemporary researchers such as Ehsan Sabaghian, Jennifer Stromer-Galley, Steve Sawyer, who also contribute to the endorsement of D. Wapples' model as a relevant communication paradigm.

I generally define habilitation work as a work of value for communication theory. Stankova argues her emphasis on the communication situation with other authors, including Bulgarian authors - El. Nikolov, D. Peicheva, S. Popova, El. Dobрева, E. Savova, M.Petrov etc.

The communication situation Stankova defines as a variable and a unit open to the influences of the other communication elements and exerting a reverse influence.

Of some importance to the theory of communication are a few more contributions from Stankova's monographic work. A definition of a communication situation has been launched from the point of view of communication theory, namely: any communication interaction occurring in a specific space-time context in which participants use a common sign system and communication channels to transmit or receive a specific message.

- The clarification of the confusion of the terms "communication situation" and "communicative situation" - the concept of "communication situation" is associated by the author with denotate, and the concept of "communicative situation" with attribution.

The attempt to classify communication situations by different categorical levels and features and to present them in a tabular form is also of value.

Based on the specific empirical conditions and situations, Stankova makes the following supporting statements:

- under the influence of the media, people's attitudes can change, especially when their knowledge is weak;
- certain characteristics of the audience shape the media messages;
- certain segments of the content of the messages could influence the impact of what is heard, seen, read.
- people's influence depends on the knowledge available on the subject.
- the less the audience is aware of the complexities and contradictions of the issues discussed in the text, the more significant are the changes in their attitudes.
- media presentation techniques lead to different attempts to change knowledge; changing attitudes; shaping of ideas.

In general, manipulations are considered variables that depend on the individual characteristics and the substantive dimensions of communicative suggestions. For their effectiveness, decisive are the sources of impact, what they say, the means, the ones that are used, the people they are targeted at and the conditions under which they are made.

Another contributive moment is the interconnection and interweaving that Stankova brings between the elements of the communication paradigm - communicators, media, messages, effects, etc. Contributing to the communication theory by introducing and arguing the

communication situation as a compulsory element of the communication process, she contributes to the communication situation management by:

- definition of the management of the communication situation - "a social technology aimed at systematically imposing and maintaining the desired attitudes of the addressees through the use of various techniques". (p.71).

- indication of communication effects in the implementation of communication situation management strategies,

- validation of management relevance (modeling as an important variable for correlation communication situation and media representation and for the success of context makers - politicians, experts and journalists and their influence on recipients' perceptions and evaluations.

In addition to contributions to communication theory, habilitation work is distinguished by other author's contributions:

- a systematic conceptual review of previously published, but not translated, according to the author, publications by leading scientists in the field of migration research;

- the concept of "international migration management" has been introduced, with the main object: 1) the participants who have to justify the increasing interventions in the field of migration; 2) practices that are part of migration policies and often undertaken by institutions that enforce this view; and 3) a set of discourses and narratives about what migration is and how it should be addressed.

- the migration is presented as a normal and potentially positive process, taking into account the interests not only of a country or region, but of the world and humanity as a whole;

- the communication situations of the specific migration movements - forced migration movements to Bulgaria in the period 2011-2015 relate to media practices and communication effects, thus drawing the connection between theory and practice.

The propaganda strategies and techniques described in the observed media practices - negative stereotyping and common denominator - the "invasion of aggressive Muslims", "the terrible rabble" are described as wearable are contributing to the study. (p.99)

Contributing to the study is the specific definition for managing the communication situation, namely, "social technology aimed at systematically imposing and maintaining the desired attitudes of the addressees through the use of various techniques". (p.71).

The monograph is one of the first works to outline the hypothetical communication effects in the implementation of propaganda strategies for managing the communication situation and their political and social effects - desensitization, alienation, defamation and humiliation of "others", hate provocation, rejection, even violence. In this way, it reasonably equates the famous 7 propaganda techniques created in 1937 by the Institute for Propaganda Analysis of the USA and the modern populist techniques and means of political communication of K. Mude, M. Kanovan etc. in managing the communication situation.

By affirming as a working circumstance the connection of the communication situation with media representations and the various possibilities for their management/modeling and linking them with the influences of the politicians, sociologists, journalists with different attitudes and arguments influencing the perceptions of the audience, the author reveals different practices and illustrates manipulative effects.

By theoretical and empirical verification of the communication situation as a mandatory element of the communication paradigm, Stankova can be emblemized as the specialist in this subject in Bulgaria. The fact that the analysis of specific communication situations is also the subject of a doctoral dissertation in 2010 related to the press as a political mediator of the presidential campaigns of Bulgaria and the Czech Republic (2006-2008) in which it draws a series of analogies in the communication situations in the political race in both countries is further evidence in this direction.

The bibliography of the book includes 242 sources, of which 129 are in Cyrillic and 113 in Latin and empirical material, containing 1498 media publications, shows a good knowledge of the existing literature and a serious volume of empirical material.

The attached articles reiterate the topics of propaganda and populism, as well as the relations between the media and politics. An essential point is the explication of manipulation related to the use of language to form attitudes and structure moral and political values, influencing public opinion.

Identifying the reasons why one is more receptive to exaggerating or distorting the truth and the different motivations of the creators of fake news is an important theoretical commitment by Stankova in clarifying this phenomenon.

A study conducted on Donald Trump's tweets in the first year of his election as president of the United States (Digital Political Dialogue and Social Networks) has launched a contemporary-

sounding conclusion that "when technological means are available, but not intellectual and professional maturity in their use, social networks involve a large part of people in a world of reality, in which prejudice and addiction are more important than the facts, and the emotionalisation of the political is essentially the object of unscrupulous manipulation."

It is also beneficial to systematize the influence of social networks as part of the digital political dialogue in specific aspects - the ability to manipulate, the opportunity to activate civic participation, the opportunity for economic benefits, etc.

The article "Social Networks in Political Communication" looks at the differences in engaging consumers with political content and identifies the diversity of interpretations regarding political participation online. The influence of contextual aspects is highlighted and an attempt is made to make sense of the concept of "political online participation" with a venue. An important contribution is to consider the mutual dynamics between the activities of citizens (individual or group) and the mobilization and communication strategies of political institutions, depending on the social context.

Teaching

The candidate for the academic position of Associate Professor has been a part-time lecturer since 2007 at the FJMC, and since 2018 has been on a basic employment contract, occupying the academic position of "Assistant Professor".

Directly related to the subject of the competition is the course "Building Communication Effects". Other author's courses include Media in politics, The Image of the enemy in the media, and Political image. She has also taught authoring courses for the Master of Arts (MSc) - Media Agenda for specialists and non-specialists.

Stankova is a guest lecturer at South-west University "N. Rilski", where she also has a new author's lecture course in Culture and media at the Bachelor of Radio and culture.

From the academic year 2014/2015 she leads the exercises in the discipline "Building an image" in the specialty "Public Relations", as well as in the courses "Contemporary world media in the field of "Publishing" and "Communications and the World media", in the specialty "Communication management" - all in the Bachelor's degree program.

He is also the author of a curriculum for students in the European program ERASMUS + - "Enemy image in media".

Participation in research projects

Dr. Svetlana Stankova has participated in two European projects: in the period 2013-2015 in project BG051P0001-3.3.07-0002 "Student Practices", implemented with the financial support of the Operational Program "Human Resources Development", co-financed by the European Social Fund the European Union and in the period 2016-2018 in the Student Practices - Phase 1 project implemented under the Operational Program "Science and Education for Intelligent Growth", co-financed by the European Union through the European Structural and Investment Funds;

She is a member of the scientific team in a national project at the Research Fund on the theme: "Model of an effective visual-communicative and media environment for forming and educating new audiences in the arts and cultural and creative industries through shared spaces".

She has also participated in international projects, namely - she was a member of the team of the Communication Strategy for Preparing Bulgaria for EU Membership project, Dublin, November 2003.

Participation in National and international conferences

Dr. Stankova has participated with scientific reports at sixteen national and international conferences and forums.

Specializations

Dr. Svetla Stankova specialized for six months in the Department of Social Sciences at Masaryk University, Brno, in the period February-August 2008, in the field of educational and cultural exchange of the Ministry of Education and Science.

Membership in professional organizations

Stankova is an active participant in the UBJ . She is the scientific secretary of the 65th Association of the Union of Bulgarian Journalists, as well as of the Bulgarian Academic Communications Association.

Professional experience

Dr. Stankova has a practical journalism experience at the FOCUS News Agency and the Press Secretariat of the Presidency of the Republic of Bulgaria.

Dr. Stankova also meets the requirements of the point system for admission to the competition. There are more points than the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position of Associate Professor.

Conclusion

The contributions of the candidate and the fulfillment of all the requirements and scientific criteria give me a reason to vote Yes for the academic position of Associate Professor in the FJMC in the professional field 3.5. Social Communications and Information Sciences (Communication Situations Management) to be held by Dr. Svetlana Stankova.

Reviewer:

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