

OPINION

by **Assoc. Dr. Dimka Dimitrova Nikolova-Ivanova,**

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of a dissertation for awarding the educational and scientific degree „**doctor**“

Field of higher education *1. Pedagogical sciences*

Professional direction *1.3. Pedagogy of training in...*

Doctoral program *Methodology of teaching Bulgarian language*

Author: *Stoyka Yordanova Chakarova*

Topic: *Developing the communicative competence of students through project-oriented training in the Bulgarian language*

Research supervisor: *Prof. Dr. Tatyana Gavrilova Angelova*

General presentation of the procedure and the PhD student

With ordinance No. RD38-612 of 20.11.2023 of the Rector of Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski“ I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury to ensure a procedure for dissertation defense for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree „doctor“ in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional direction *1.3. Pedagogy of training in...*, doctoral program *Methodology of teaching Bulgarian language*. The author of the dissertation is Stoyka Yordanova Chakarova - PhD student at the Department of Methodology at the Faculty of Slavic Philology, supervised by Prof. Dr. Tatyana Gavrilova Angelova from SU „St. Kliment Ohridski“.

The set of materials submitted by the doctoral student is in accordance with Art. 65, para 5 and Art. 67, para 5 of the Regulations on the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions at SU „St. Kliment Ohridski“ and includes the necessary documents. The doctoral student submitted a dissertation with a total volume of 327 pages. 211 pages of which are the main text, 116 pages are the appendices, abstract which is 52 pages. Besides all lastly mentioned are included 5 publications.

Relevance of the topic, knowledge of the problem and research methodology

The topic of the dissertation work is related to the modern trends in education in general, and on the other hand to the current trends in the teaching of the Bulgarian language. The investigated problem is placed in the context of the competency based approach in education and the concept of key competences, the communicative orientation of Bulgarian language training and the opportunities to work on projects both in the specific subject of study and with the inclusion of various institutions and organizations outside the school and by transferring what is learned in school to a real-life context.

It is evident from the bibliographic list and the text of the dissertation that the doctoral student knows not only the basic, but also the current scientific research on the problem. Moreover, the Doctoral student knows how to problematize and synthesize information from various scientific sources.

In the introductory part are clearly stated the reasons for choosing the topic. In the first chapter are precisely presented: the subject, goal and tasks of the research, the hypothesis which is a subject to proof, as well as the chosen research methodology.

Characterization and evaluation of the dissertation work and contributions

The dissertation consists of an introduction, four chapters, terminals, conclusion, bibliography and appendices. The theoretical foundations of the research are presented in the second and partly in the third chapter, impressing the author's wide awareness of the categories of *competence* and *literacy*, on the issues of communicative competence and functional literacy, on constructivism and education, when she outlines the conceptual framework for what is described in the following chapters of the dissertation methodological options. It is likely that some of the details in the information (for example on constructivism in philosophy) may be omitted as they fall outside the focus of the study. I accept as working the idea of developing communicative competence in the context of Bulgarian language training in connection with digital and civic competence.

As noted by S. Chakarova, in some scientific studies and in normative documents of the Ministry of Education and Culture, a clear distinction is not always made between some of the main working concepts. Therefore, she tries to distinguish between *literacy* and *competence*, as well as to characterize the different types of literacy. On the one hand, to clarify the relations between the concepts of *literacy/functional literacy*, and *competence/key competences*, on the other hand. I appreciate the efforts which are made, although some of the explanations need further refinement which would increase the theoretical contribution

of the dissertation research. For example, the relationship between the semantic volume of the concepts of *reading literacy* and *functional literacy* needs to be more precise. Project-oriented, project-based, and problem-based learning are convincingly and argumentatively distinguished both in terms of the opportunities for mastering knowledge and skills in a certain scientific field, in the context of the curriculum for the specific subject, and in view of their role in the formation of behavioral patterns and personal qualities and competencies of students from both high school stages.

The detailed descriptions of the proposed methodological options of the various projects are impressive - stages of work, activities, teams, roles of the participants. This is showing S. Chakarova's ability to observe and analyze the changes in the students, as well as the effect of the methods and approaches used; to comment on the opportunities that the respective project provides for developing each element of communicative competence and for achieving the expected results according to the curricula; to propose ideas for cross-curricular connections (with Philosophy education for example) and for developing key competences (digital, civic, etc.).

The fourth chapter presents the experiential project-oriented training on the „Dream Garments“ project – content and functional features are being presented as well as achieved results in psychological terms, in axiological terms, with a view to improving communicative competence. The given statistical data unequivocally confirm the positive changes in the students' motivation and in the quality of the speech products created, as well as in the effectiveness of their communicative activity in real social conditions. I believe that the technological solutions proposed by the doctoral student can be applied in the work of other teachers, so I recommend that the dissertation be published as a book.

The text of the dissertation is well structured, clear, stylistically and content homogeneous, enriched with four various tables and 22 figures. It would be good to refine the linguistic and graphic formatting of the text in some places. The list of used sources includes 51 titles in Cyrillic, 23 in Latin and 11 normative documents.

I accept the contributions which are correctly indicated by the doctoral student, proposing to redefine the third of them to emphasize the newly established, since the elements of communicative competence have been derived in various earlier sources, as is clear from the text of the dissertation.

Evaluation of the publications and the abstract

The articles presented under the procedure exceed the required number and testify to Stoyka Chakarova's deep, consistent, and purposeful interest in the individual aspects of the subject under consideration. It is evident from the bibliographic data that the articles have been published in established scientific and specialized publications, which is a sign of their value.

The texts of both the dissertation and the articles clearly outline the doctoral student's personal contribution to the study of the topic, outline her positions and scientific statements, testify to the generation of original ideas and their testing in his own pedagogical practice.

The abstract is made according to the requirements and correctly reflects both the conceptual framework of the study and the main results achieved in it.

CONCLUSION

The dissertation contains theoretical and scientific-applied results that represent an original contribution to science and meet the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation, and the Regulations of SU „St. Kliment Ohridski“.

The dissertation shows that the doctoral student Stoyka Chakarova possesses in-depth theoretical knowledge and professional skills in the scientific specialty *Methodology of teaching Bulgarian language and literature*. Furthermore, she is demonstrating qualities and skills for independent conduct of scientific research.

This is the exact reason why I confidently give my positive assessment not only for achieved results and contributions, but also for the conducted research, which had been presented in the dissertation work and the abstract. I suggest that the honourable scientific jury need to award the educational and scientific degree „doctor“ to Stoyka Yordanova Chakarova in the field of higher education: *1. Pedagogical sciences*, professional direction *1.3. Pedagogy of training in ...*, doctoral program *Methodology of teaching Bulgarian language*.

10.02.2024

V. Tarnovo

Prepared the opinion.....

(Assoc. Dr. Dimka Dimitrova)