

OPINION

by Doc. Dr. Dimka Dimitrova Nikolova-Ivanova PhD,

VTU "St. St. Cyril and Methodius", Faculty of Philology,

Department of "Methodology of Language and Literary Education and Literary
Studies"

on a dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree "**doctor**"

Field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences

Professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of teaching in...

Doctoral program *Methodology of Teaching in Bulgarian Language and Literature*

Author: *Tsvetelinka Tosheva Draganova*

Topic: *Literature Education in the Second Gymnasium Stage of Secondary School*

Scientific supervisor: *Prof. Dr. Temenuzhka Gancheva Teneva*

By Order RD No. 16-113 of 15.07.2026 of the Rector of ShU "Bishop Konstantin Preslavski", I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury for the public defense of the dissertation of Tsvetelinka Tosheva Draganova for the acquisition of the ONS "Doctor" in the field of higher education: 1. Pedagogical Sciences; professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of Education in..., doctoral program "Methodology of Teaching in Bulgarian Language and Literature", and by protocol No. 1/27.07.2026 of the meeting of the National Council I was assigned to prepare a statement for the dissertation on the topic "Literature Education in the Second Gymnasium Stage of Secondary School".

Data on the doctoral studies, dissertation, abstract and publications

Doctoral student Tsvetelinka Tosheva Draganova was enrolled in part-time study by order RD-10-054 of 27.01.2022, and Prof. Dr. Temenuzhka Gancheva Teneva was appointed as the scientific supervisor. Discharged with the right to defend from 01.02.2026 by order RD-10-134 of 25.02.2025. The documents and materials provided show that all procedures (including the change of the topic of the dissertation) are in accordance with the ZRASB and the relevant regulations.

The doctoral student has submitted a dissertation with a total volume of 252 pages, of which 215 pages are the main text, 21 pages are the appendices; an abstract with a volume of 42 pages, as well as the texts of 4 publications.

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

The topic of the dissertation is related to a specific stage of literature education - the second stage of secondary school, and focuses attention on the changes, trends and deficits in this segment after the entry into force of the Law on Literary Education in 2015 and the newly approved curricula in literature. The very formulation of the topic shows

that doctoral student Ts. Draganova adheres to the concept of literary education, and not just training (see p. 39 et seq.), i.e. considers the process as an open process, related not only to the acquisition of certain specific knowledge and skills, but also to changes in the personal development of students.

From the bibliography and the text of the dissertation it is evident that the doctoral student knows basic and current scientific research on the problem, is able to problematize and synthesize information from various scientific sources. To outline the theoretical foundations of her concept, she draws on current research in the fields of philosophy, cognitive science, psychology, as well as integrative research by Bulgarian and foreign authors. She comments on the issues of reading and reception of literary texts both in a more general sense and with a view to teaching literature. The review of the research allows her to conclude that “contemporary literary education is faced with complex, “multiple” challenges – internal and external – that it must overcome, while at the same time maintaining the tension between two different cultural paradigms and their respective codes – that of “classical” works, analog in nature, and that of the student reader, “digital by birth” (p. 21). Guided by this understanding, the doctoral student explores the possibilities for integrating different types of reading into the literary education process.

The introductory part clearly and correctly states the reasons for choosing the topic, the object and subject, the goal and the tasks arising from it, the research hypothesis, as well as the approaches and methods used to prove it.

Characteristics and evaluation of the dissertation work and contributions

The dissertation work consists of an introduction, three chapters, a survey study, separated as an independent part, a conclusion, contributing points, applications and bibliography.

Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the study, the first chapter provides a theoretical overview of ideas and concepts of a philosophical, cultural and literary nature in order to describe “a radically new, unique in its complexity and multi-layered educational situation, which increasingly defiantly demands an answer” (p. 23). The text shows that the doctoral student is familiar with key studies on the topic, is able to analyze and synthesize scientific information, linking it to the topic of her research, and has her own position on the issues discussed in the studies. It would be good to discuss the meaning with which some terms are used (for example, mediatalization p. 24), as well as to specify earlier the scope of the concept of literary and educational discourse (it appears in the heading of 1.2. on p. 25, and only on p. 40 is T. Teneva's view on the essence of educational discourse cited, to which the

doctoral student apparently adheres), since the term discourse is used with a very different scope and understanding. The doctoral student turns the outlined cultural, philosophical and literary aspects of the educational context into a basis for searching for methodological solutions and tools and for operationalizing solutions for literary and educational discourse, understood as a specific communicative event, as interaction and action with a complex essence. A meaningful transition from the general context in which the research problem is posed, and the specificity of the methodological aspect is the consideration of the change in the curriculum in the second stage of high school as an “institutional framework, normative grounds, critical reflections” (p. 44).

Already in her research hypothesis, Ts. Draganova emphasizes that the new literature curricula are part of a concept for change in the educational situation, but on the other hand, this aspiration for change is thwarted and slowed down by some deficits, by limitations of a different nature, as well as by a certain inertia in the teaching of literature. Therefore, for the doctoral student in the second chapter of the dissertation, it is particularly important to show where and why these deficits appear, by analyzing the curricula for general education preparation in literature for the 11th and 12th grades and seeking answers to important questions: about the relationship between the curricula and the literary canon, about the historical as a concept and context in these curricula, how and to what extent the literature textbook allows the teacher to construct and model the educational context.

Quite logically, after the theoretical and conceptual framework (first chapter) and the normative context (second chapter), we proceed to the core of the study – possible methodological approaches and solutions based on the rich and diverse teaching experience of the doctoral student (third chapter). And in this part, Ts. Draganova focuses on key issues for literature education: problematization of the genre as an approach to the world of the literary text; comparative interpretation as an opportunity for “the teacher themselves, in parallel with the normatively set educational content, to select and offer texts, to outline associative fields and to compose diverse tasks” (p. 133; I agree that so far in literature education the teacher has not had this freedom, the question is another to what extent they are ready to take advantage of this opportunity); the student essay as a speech genre and methodological tool for building competencies; the potential of literature education for acquiring civic competencies. In this part of the dissertation, Tsvetelinka Draganova once again demonstrates the ability, based on theoretical research and her personal teaching experience, to clearly state her position on the discussed problem and to propose possible practical solutions.

I find the idea of conducting a survey with Bulgarian language and literature teachers in the 11th and 12th grades from different types of secondary schools to be particularly successful, in order to explore other points of view and attitudes towards the researched topic.

The text of the dissertation is well structured, clear, stylistically and substantively homogeneous. I accept the contributions indicated by the doctoral student as correct.

Assessment of publications and abstract

The articles submitted under the procedure testify to the in-depth, consistent and purposeful interest of Tsvetelinka Draganova in the individual aspects of the topic 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 abstract is prepared according to the requirements of the relevant regulations and correctly reflects both the conceptual framework of the research and the practical solutions proposed in the dissertation.

Conclusion

The dissertation contains theoretical and applied results that represent an original contribution to the field of literary education methodology and meet the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of the ZRASRB and the relevant Regulations of the ShU "Bishop Konstantin Preslavski".

The dissertation shows that doctoral student Tsvetelinka Tosheva Draganova possesses in-depth theoretical knowledge and professional skills in the scientific specialty of Methodology of Teaching in Bulgarian Language and Literature, demonstrating qualities and skills for independent conduct of scientific research.

Due to the qualities highlighted in this opinion and of the materials presented, and of the doctoral student, I give my positive assessment and propose that the esteemed scientific jury award Tsvetelinka Tosheva Draganova the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in the field of higher education: 1. Pedagogical Sciences, professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of Teaching in ..., doctoral program Methodology of Teaching in Bulgarian Language and Literature.

06.09.2026

V. Tarnovo

Opinion by

(Doc. Dr. Dimka Dimitrova, PhD)