

IS1404 E-READ: Evolution of Reading in the Age of Digitization

Position paper

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WG(s):

The research interest of the Bulgarian MC members is situated in the area of *WG2: Developmental aspects of reading*. The reason for that is based on the current significant communication issues, such as functional illiteracy, media literacy and digitization.

In contemporary globalized, multi-lingual and highly digitized communication world the phenomenon of functional literacy is becoming very important and challenging. Basic reading and writing skills, especially in technologically driven environment, do not always prove comprehensive and adequate in a knowledge-based society. Functional literacy stresses on the ability to understand and employ information in daily activities at home, at work and in societal life.

Functional illiteracy may become a factor contributing to exclusion and poverty that restricts democratic and social participation and is seriously detrimental to personal fulfilment and the defence of rights. A combination of factors such as individual learning conditions, unfavourable familial socio-cultural and academic conditions, as well as general development trends in the society itself can contribute to functional illiteracy.

Some international surveys – the *Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey (ALL)*, the *International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS)*, the OECD's *Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competences (PIAAC)*, the *Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)*, the *Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study* and the *Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (TIMSS/PIRLS)*, etc. reveal that low skills found in countries pose problems for individuals trying to cope with work and life in modern societies where the demands for literacy skills are on the increase.

Furthermore, user's competences in dealing with media, which can include anything from mobile phone usage to programming a television to any number of different PC-supported applications, software and use of internet search-engines on a daily basis, require specific, upgraded skills which can enable people to analyze, evaluate, interpret and create messages in a wide variety of media modes, genres, and formats. UNESCO policies aim at catalyzing processes to introduce media and information literacy components into training curricula worldwide. New, digitized media landscape shifts in focus from individual expression to community involvement, developing the social skills through collaboration and networking and requires new media literacy.

Investigation of the parameters of both functional illiteracy and media literacy might be of major importance to outlining the impact of perception of text, audio- and audio-visual presented digitally.

1. **Potential research contribution** in light of, or linked to

A. WG interest and Scientific programme:

We would like to contribute to the scientific program of the *WG 2* with a comparative research on transformations in reading in mediatized society as well as to join the research program of the COST IS 1404 Action and the WG. 2.

B. Action objectives (pages 7-10 in the MoU):

The BG team may contribute at:

- writing country review based on the reasons of the Action, that will be presented at the WG meetings. An edited volume with country chapters (written under common template) may be published. This volume may also include a few general introductory chapters, as well as concluding chapters related to the four working groups;
- conceptualizing the effects of mediatization associated with digitization of reading. This includes outlining the impact of digital media on young people's attitudes to reading, as well as detecting the influence of specific characteristics of digitally presented texts on the evolution of reading and understanding of texts in the context of digital literacy.

2. **Interest in:**

A. organizing and/or participating in a **short-term scientific mission (STSM)**.

Optional: pursuing what research questions/projects; where to/with whom; linked to what objective(s) of the Action:

Basically, the BG team is interested in STSM. The specific destinations and proposals for coordination will be presented after the MC meeting in Ljubljana.

B. organizing and/or participating in a **Training School** (please indicate what kind of training [theoretical; methodological; technical]).

Optional: linked to what objective(s) of the Action:

The BG team is ready to provide doctoral students for participation in theoretical and methodological training schools.