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*Irena Vassileva, Elisaveta Boyadzhieva*

*THE LONG (FULL) DEFINITE ARTICLE – A MEASURE FOR LITERACY?*

*The article explores the highly problematic and widely discussed issue of the so-called “long (full) definite article” in Bulgarian, namely the arguments for and against its further maintenance in Modern Bulgarian. On the basis of theoretical analyses, as well as a number of examples and an experiment the authors come to the conclusion that this article represents an anachronism in present-day language since it is a case marker in a language which has otherwise lost its case system and has become truly analytical. It is also claimed that the preservation of the article leads to artificial and elitist views concerning native speakers’ literacy and to condemning as illiterate those who ignore it.*

*Keywords: Bulgarian, full definite article, literacy, long definite article*

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