

OPINION

by Assoc. Prof. Anna Savova Georgieva, PhD,
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of the materials submitted for participation in a competition for occupying the academic position "Associate Professor" in Professionally field: 1.3. Pedagogy on Education in ... (Methodology on the training by Bulgarian language and literature in primary stage on education), for the needs on department "Didactics" of the Faculty of Education at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", announced in State Gazette No. 56 of June 30, 2023

Grounds for submitting the opinion: By order № RD 38-453/19.07.2023 of the Rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" I have been appointed a member of the scientific jury in the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field 1=3= Pedagogy of Education in ... (Methodology on the training by Bulgarian language and literature in primary stage on education), announced for the needs of the Faculty of Education at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski", announced in State Gazette No. 56 of June 30, 2023.

Maya Sotirova Sotirova is the only candidate in the competition.

1. Data on the competition regarding the application's compliance with the minimum and additional requirements for holding the academic position "associate professor".

The competition has been announced for the needs on "Didactics" department of the Faculty of Education at SU " St. Kliment Ohridski ", in State Gazette , issue 56 of 30.06.2023 and is provided with the necessary auditorium employment.

One application was received and approved by PhD. Maya Sotirova Sotirova, a full-time lecturer at the South-western University "Neofit Rilski". After conducted procedure for checking on eligibility, with a decision on relevant faculty commission she is admitted a to participation in the competition .

In the procedure there is no violations , and the presented set from documents corresponds to the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and of The regulations on the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" .

The candidate answers of the minimum national requirements by 2b of ZRASRB for scientific area 1. Pedagogical sciences, for borrowing on the academic position "Associate Professor", namely:

- The candidate in the competition holds a scientific teaching academic position in a higher school from 2007 to the present moment.
- Since 2002, he has obtained the Doctorate of PhD - area 1. Pedagogy, by scientific direction 1.1. Theory of education and didactics.

- The candidate has submitted a peer-reviewed monographic work in the field of the competition. The monograph does not repeat thematically presented for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "doctor" and his previous publications.

- A total of 22 publications were submitted for participation in the competition, of which 1 monograph, 17 independent and 3 co-authored articles and reports published in magazines and scientific collections.

- The additional requirements under art. 112, para. (2), which are related to the teaching, research and artistic activity of the candidate, are also fully completed and are presented in Appendix 14.

- The application satisfies the minimum national requirements under art. 2b paras. 2 and 3 of ZRASRB, and in accordance with the data from Appendix 11 of the applicant, the quantitative values by groups of indicators are as follows:

Indicator group A: 50 (with 50 required)

Indicator group C: 100 (with 100 required)

Group of indicators D: 375 (with a required minimum of 200)

Group of indicators D: 555 (with a minimum of 50 required)

Total for all indicators: 1080 (with 400 minimum required).

As can be seen from the presented data, according to the two groups of indicators (groups G and D), according to in which there is an opportunity to achieve higher than the minimum required points, the candidate collects a total of 930 points, which is 680 points more than the minimum required 250 points (200+50 points). Maya Sotirova has an active publishing activity and a high number of citations by other authors.

2. Data about the participant in the competition:

Maya Sotirova has a master's degree in primary school pedagogy (1988-1992), in the period 1994-1997 she was a full-time doctoral student and in 2002, after a successful public defense, she was awarded a doctorate in professional direction 1.1. Theory of education and didactics (code 05.07.01).

From 2000 to the present, she has been a university teacher, since 2007 she has been the main assistant, and in 2011 she was elected as an Associate Professor of Professionally field 1.2. Pedagogy, at the South-western University "Neofit Rilski".

She performed administrative and managerial functions, actively participated in the implementation of scientific projects, has a rich scientific output and participation in national and international scientific forums. Her teaching activity includes exercises and a number of different lecture courses in "Bachelor" and "Master" degree, she was the academic supervisor of diploma and doctoral students.

Maya Sotirova is recognizable in scientific circles, which is also confirmed by the reference for citations of her scientific publications.

3. Scientific research activity

To participate in the competition under Professionally field 1.3. Pedagogy of Education in ... (Methodology on the training by Bulgarian language and literature in primary stage on education) the candidate PhD. Maya Sotirova presents publications and activities realized after 2011 and in the thematic area of the current competition.

Maya Sotirova participates in the author's team of one of the alternative, approved by the Ministry of Education and Science and used in school practice, study sets for learning Bulgarian language and literature for 1st - 4th grades, with a first edition in the period 2016 – 2019 year, but not has indicated them in the list of publications for participation in the competition (they are applicable when occupying the academic position of "professor").

Maya Sotirova participated in the current competition with 22 publications - 1 monograph - habilitation thesis and 20 articles and reports in Bulgarian and foreign languages, 10 of which are referenced and indexed in global databases. The candidate presents the results of his research through reports in participation in 4 national and 5 international conferences. Participated in 5 trainings to increase the qualification of university teachers preparing future teachers.

From 2010 to the present, Maya Sotirova is a member of the editorial board of the electronic journal "Rhetoric and Communication", indexed in The European Reference Index for the Humanities and the Social Sciences (ERIH PLUS), where she mainly publishes. Participates in the editorial board of Sborniks reports from a scientific conference (2014).

4. Main contributions

Maya Sotirova presents her habilitation thesis with the title "*Custom training by Bulgarian language in primary stage on the main one educational degree*" (2023 , -214 p., ISBN 978-619-7121-56-8) , with two scientific reviewers and a scientific editor.

The work is structured in an introduction, four chapters, a conclusion and a bibliographic reference for the 182 information sources used.

In the first and second chapters (p. 5 – 98) are relatively contained long quotes and basic general theoretical productions on Bulgarian and foreign authors by the problem for the training in general - essence , specificity on approaches to the processes on learning and teaching , assessment.

In the third chapter, an attempt is made to conceptualize the idea of "personalizing Bulgarian language learning" in terms of "transformation – of learning content, methods and goals", in relation to different types of learners and specifics of the learning environment.

In parts of the exhibition emphasis is placed on training and inclusion on students with special educational needs – through general and additional support , compilation on individual programs and individual plans in which, according to the Inclusive Education Ordinance (2017), the item is reduced the study content and number hours for studying on laid down in the classrooms programs for general education preparation knowledge.

On others places in the exhibition comments application of differentiated approach at work in mixed classes and the need in one educational hour the teacher, teaches educational content laid

down in the curriculum programs by Bulgarian language and literature for different class. Opportunities in the process are also mentioned on training and assessment everything they use electronic resources and tests that the student performs through electronically device.

As an example of a concrete implementation of personalized training, PhD. Maya Sotirova quotes productions from "Book for the teacher" to the educational ones set and from first to fourth class for training by Bulgarian language and literature, in which he is a co-author.

Not enough are the specific ones methodically tags and suggestions for achieve on personalized presentation on the study content from the separate ones components in the complex educational subject "Bulgarian language and literature"- primary literacy, literature training (reading), teaching on spelling and grammar, creation from the students on laid down in the classrooms programs kinds oral and written texts at generally in the studio preparation in class by Bulgarian language and literature in 1st - 4th grade.

In the fourth chapter of the habilitation thesis are presented data from empirically questionnaire study with 304 teachers who work in different types of schools - public, private, "middle", "protected", Sunday schools abroad.

The data obtained by filling in a Google form and presented in summary form, do not allow qualitatively distinguishing its specifics on the training by Bulgarian language in them – learning it as born language in the native language environment with 7 o'clock weekly (but with advanced or lagging students with SEN, with poor Bulgarian language skills) or in a foreign language Wednesday with a total of 3 hours weekly and with insufficient quantity available educational resources on Bulgarian language.

It would be good to more clearly present in separate paragraphs a concept of "personalization of training by Bulgarian language and literature in primary stage on main educational degree" at work with the different contingent trainees - students with SEN, with students who do not have a good enough command of the Bulgarian language, when working with mixed classes, as well as in mass general education.

In the others publications presented for participation in the competition, the definitions of the types of speech skills and language competences are commented on in a more general theoretical plan. I can accept the definitions given by the candidate for the contributions in the presented publications: with an emphasis on "competence and communicative-oriented learning in Bulgarian at the initial stage of primary education", "multilingualism and intercultural communication in the educational space", "intercultural, communicative and sociolinguistic competences of future teachers", insofar as language and communication - in oral or written form - are a fundamental component of interaction in all spheres of life, including in intercultural education and work with students with developmental deficits.

With a clear emphasis on the subject of the current competition - teaching Bulgarian language and literature in primary grades, are the following eight publications: No. 6, 11, 12, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23.

The other publications submitted for participation in the competition are thematically related to the following areas:

- emphasis on intercultural education - No. 3, 8, 15, 16;
- students from ethnic communities and children with special educational needs - No. 5, 7, 9, 17;
- university education and training of future teachers - No. 4, 10, 13, 14.

In the attached reference for citations, there are also citations of publications that are related to the teaching of Bulgarian language and literature in the initial stage of primary education.

5. Conclusion

Based on the established scientific achievements, the overall teaching and academic activity, I give my **positive assessment** and propose PhD. Maya Sotirova Sotirova to be selected on the academic "**Associate Professor**" position at SU " St. Kliment Ohridski ", Professionally field: 1.3 . Pedagogy of Education in ... (Methodology on the training by Bulgarian language and literature in primary stage on education), for the needs on department "Didactics" on the Faculty of Education at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski", in the competition announced in State Gazette No. 56 of 30.06.2023

Date: 23/10/2023

Member of the scientific jury:
(Assoc. Proff., PhD Anna Georgieva)