

STATEMENT

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Fani Evgenieva Boykova
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of the materials submitted for participation in the competition
for the academic position of 'Associate Professor'
at Sofia University "Kliment Ohridski"
in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences
professional field: 1.3. Pedagogy of teaching
(Methodology of teaching the Bulgarian language)

By order № RD 38 - 238 of 17.05.2021 of the Rector of Sofia University "Kliment Ohridski" I was appointed a member of the scientific jury of a competition for the academic position of 'associate professor' in the field of higher education: 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional field: 1.3. Pedagogy of teaching in (Methodology of teaching the Bulgarian language). In the competition for 'associate professor', announced in the State newspaper, issue 22 of 16.03.2021, the only candidate participating is Dr. Despina Mirolyubova Vasileva, Chief Assistant in the Department of Methodology at the Faculty of Slavic Philology at Sofia University "Kliment Ohridski".

The presented by Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Despina Mirolyubova Vasileva set of materials for participation in the procedure is in accordance with ZRASRB.

The documents are well developed and arranged. The reports and lists contain the necessary information, among which the most important documents are: Diploma for ONS "Doctor"; List of publications for participation in the competition; Information for the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements under art. 2b of ZRASRB, Reference to the citations with a complete bibliographic description of the cited and citing publications; Information on participation in research projects, etc.

The scientific texts with which Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Despina Vasileva participates in the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor", are distinguished by: the relevance of the developed issues; with a variety of research approaches used; demonstrate the professional competence of an excellently prepared methodologist; outline the deep scientific interests of the candidate in the field of the competition.

The main habilitation work - the monograph "Development of cognitive and metacognitive reading skills in Bulgarian language teaching", focuses on an important topic for the effectiveness of modern education and has a clear practical application orientation. Possible approaches for updating the practices of working with text are proposed, focusing on the selection of texts according to their graphic design, presence or absence of non-linguistic components (tables, diagrams, graphs), their presentation on different media (paper or electronic), their accompaniment by illustrative material.

The monograph consists of an introduction, four chapters, conclusion and appendices. Its development demonstrates a good knowledge of the topic by Dr. Vasileva and her wide bibliographic awareness of the researched problem. The research methods are in accordance with the topic, goals and tasks that the author sets when developing the topic.

The first chapter provides an analytical overview of research that defines the concept of "reading" in terms of teaching Bulgarian. The peculiarities of in-depth reading and staccato reading are presented in the context of modern digital communication. Both the prospective and the problem areas for reading on paper and on electronic media are distinguished. The professional competence of Dr. Despina Vasileva as an experienced methodologist stands out in presenting models of text perception applicable to the practice of teaching Bulgarian language. The research of the reading process is historically traced and the interrelations between motivation and reading comprehension are summarized.

A contributing component of the monographic study is the notion of "reading competence" analyzed in Chapter Two, which has so far been neglected in relation to research on the understanding of "reading literacy", as the author notes. A working hypothesis for characterization of the procedural nature of "reading competence" has been developed, consisting of three components: reading skills (presented as cognitive and metacognitive skills); reading behavior (covers possible actions of the reader in the act of reading); attitudes towards reading (behaviors during reading, preferred texts and reading conditions, preferred sources of information). The development of reading skills in cognitive and metacognitive terms is situated in relation to the Bulgarian language curricula 5th - 8th grade. The conclusions about the attitudes towards reading are supported by quantitative and qualitative analysis of data from the survey of over 500 students. The research tools make it possible to identify applied reading strategies and attitudes for preferred genres and types of texts.

The observations and conclusions from the conducted research through the system for control and tracking of the eyes (Eye Tracing), presented in the third chapter, have a clear practical-application value for building reader competence. The focus of the research is on establishing how the comprehension of a text is influenced by its medium (paper or electronic), how the retention of the reader's gaze affects the overall perception of a text. The detailed analysis of the results gives the author grounds to argue a system of procedures for developing the skills for perception and comprehension of the text.

The fourth chapter proposes a model for developing reading skills by applying metacognitive strategies, to the application of which students are not directed explicitly, instead engaging them to perform logically and meaningfully related questions and tasks. The accompanying methodological commentary justifies their perspective for developing specific skills. In terms of its structural and content characteristics, the fourth chapter stands out as a valuable methodological tool with a pronounced practical application focus for pedagogical practices in the first stage of high school.

The monograph "Development of cognitive and metacognitive skills for reading in Bulgarian language teaching" by Dr. Despina Vasileva puts in the center of research interest the essential features of reading as a process that can be directed and developed, enriching the methodological literature with theoretical formulations and applicable in practice ideas.

The presented by Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Despina Vasileva articles for participation in the competition for "Associate Professor" outline the range of professional research interests of the author in current topics in the field of Bulgarian language teaching. The author presents developments in digital civic competence, in training on public speaking and working with media texts with significant practical application value (№5 and № 6). The problems of formation of reading comprehension skills, reading attitudes, to the current topics in pedagogical practice of developing reading competence and mastering reading strategies are discussed in articles № 2, 3, 7, 8, 9. Theoretical formulations and developed methodological ideas provide innovative approaches and practices for the modernization of Bulgarian language teaching.

Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Despina Vasileva has presented a sufficient number of scientific papers published after the materials used in the defense of ONS "Doctor". Their original scientific and applied contributions set a practical perspective for improving the effectiveness of Bulgarian language teaching.

The overall review of the production submitted for evaluation of Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Despina Vasileva creates the image of a purposeful researcher who competently contributes to a number of theoretical and practical-applied aspects of the methodology of teaching the Bulgarian language.

Conclusion

The scientific and teaching qualifications of Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Despina Vasileva are undoubted.

After getting acquainted with the materials and scientific works presented in the competition, analysis of their significance and the contained in them scientific, scientific-applied and applied contributions, I find it reasonable to give my positive assessment and recommend to the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal for selection of Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Despina Mirolyubova Vasileva for the academic position of 'Associate Professor' in the field of higher education: 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional field: 1.3. Pedagogy of teaching in (Methodology of teaching in Bulgarian).

July 27, 2021

Prepared the opinion:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Fani Boykova