

## **REVIEW**

by prof. Dora Levterova-Gadjalova, DSc  
of the materials submitted for participation in the competition  
to occupy the academic position of "associate professor"  
at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"  
by field of higher education Pedagogical Sciences  
professional direction 1.2. Pedagogy (Speech Therapy)

In the competition for " associate professor ", announced in the State Gazette, no. 48 of 28.06.2022 for the needs of the Department of Speech Therapy at the Faculty of Education and Arts, Elena Kirilova Boyadzhieva – Deleva, Ph.D. participated as a candidate.

### **1. General presentation of the received materials**

By order No. PD-38-392 of 13.07.2022 of the Rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury of a competition for the academic position of " associate professor " at Sofia University in the field of higher education Pedagogical Sciences, professional direction 1.2. Pedagogy (Speech Therapy), announced for the needs of the Speech Therapy Department at the Faculty of Education and Arts.

Only one candidate, Elena Kirilova Boyadzhieva - Deleva, Ph.D., submitted documents for participation in the announced competition

The set of paper materials presented by Elena Kirilova Boyadzhieva - Deleva, Ph.D., is in accordance with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of Sofia University.

Candidate Elena Boyadzhieva - Deleva, Ph.D., submitted a total of 31 scientific works, 2 studies, 3 individual monographs, 1 chapter of a collective monograph, 1 textbook, 24 articles, 3 posters from conferences. 31 scientific papers that are outside the dissertation are accepted for review and are taken into account in the final evaluation. Scientific works on the dissertation for the educational and scientific degree „Ph.D.“ and the 3 posters related to scientific

developments are not reviewed. The distribution of scientific works according to relevant headings, in the country and abroad, is as follows: 3 monographs in Bulgarian, 1 textbook in Bulgarian, 2 studies in Bulgarian, 1 chapter of a monograph in English indexed in Scopus, Scopus ID 8.5066E+10, 21 articles in Bulgarian, of which 1 article indexed in Web of Science, 1 article indexed in EBSCO, Index Copernicus, Europub and Global Impact & Quality Factor (GIF 1.822 for 2018), 13 articles in the National Reference List of NACID and 3 articles in English, of which 2 articles are indexed in EBSCO, Index Copernicus, EuroPub, CEEOL, Scilit and Global Impact & Quality Factor (GIF 1.822 for 2018). All academic papers presented are full-text content.

The fulfillment of the minimum national requirements under Art. 26 of ZRASRB by scientific field 1. Pedagogy, professional direction 1.2. Pedagogishta - Speech therapy by Elena Boyadzhieva – Deleva, Ph.D. is as follows:

group of indicators	A 50
group of indicators	B 100
group of indicators	G 517.5
group of indicators	D 340
group of indicators	E 135

It can be seen that the minimum national requirements are covered twice more than those required by the candidate in the announced competition.

## **2. Brief biographical data of the candidate**

Elena Boyadzhieva – Deeva, Ph.D. holds a Bachelor's degree in Speech Therapy, a Master's in Speech Therapy and a Master's in Special Pedagogy (Kinesitherapy for people with neurosomatic diseases) from Sofia University. She received the educational and scientific degree „PhD“ in professional direction 1.2. Pedagogue, Special pedagogy – Speech therapy.

She works as an intern speech therapist at the National Center for Social Rehabilitation - Saint Mina Day Center, as a speech therapist at 28 Secondary School "Aleko Konstantinov". Since 2009, she has been an assistant in the Department of "Special Pedagogy and Speech Therapy", and since 2018 he has been a chief assistant. He speaks English, French and Russian.

She has participated in 9 projects, one of which is under the Erasmus + program and one under the COST program, 9 training seminars by invitation of external organizations. Coordinator of the Therapeutic Hall of the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Arts (since 2019, after the resumption of the activity of the hall). Member of the editorial board of Pedagogika magazine (Education Journal, EDU, ISSN print 2327-2600, ISSN online 2327-2619). Co-founder of the Association of Privately Practicing Speech Therapists (SPSL), August 2019, and member of the Board of Directors in the position of Secretary until 2021. Member of the International Association of Therapeutic Taping Specialists MASTERT from 2021. Member of the Network of Trusted Speech Therapists group at the Association maxillofacial anomalies (ALA), since 2015. Member of the Association of Speech-Language Pathologists in Bulgaria from September 2004 to August 2019. Participation in an expert group at NAOA for conducting accreditation of the educational and scientific degree „PhD“ in the specialty speech therapy in Neophyte Rilski Secondary School (March-April 2012) and for program accreditation of Bachelor's and Master's programs in Speech Therapy at Neophyte Rilski Secondary School (June-July 2015). Owner and manager of the EL-BO Speech Therapy Center since 2013.

### **3. General characteristics of the applicant's activity**

Elena Boyadzhieva – Deleva, Ph.D., teaches the courses "Neuropsychology", "Communicative disorders in craniofacial malformations", "Speech fluency disorders", "Acquired dysarthric and dysphagic disorders", "Application of therapeutic massage in speech therapy", "Planning and structuring of speech therapy" in the specialty "Speech Therapy", in "Bachelor program". In "Master programs: "Communicative Developmental Disorders (PRC)" and MP "Speech Therapy (for graduates of other specialties)" - full-time and part-time form teaches subjects such as "Diagnosis and Therapy of Developmental Language Disorders" , "Diagnosis and therapy in childhood autism", "Acquired language disorders" and others. She is the head of a pre-graduate/internship practice for students. Guides students to participate in Student Science Forums. Works with students and Ph.D. students on projects and volunteer initiatives.

#### Evaluation of the candidate's scientific and scientific-applied activity

In the presented 3 independent monographs, Boyadzhieva, Ph.D., examines the problems of speech disorders in childhood. The monograph "*Diagnosis of speech and its disorders in childhood*" interprets the etiopathogenesis of speech disorders in childhood, with a comparative

and critical analysis of their clinical picture. The methods for screening and diagnosis of speech disorders are systematized from the point of view of similarities and differences in the way of assessment, content and procedures, as well as the psychometric indicators they should cover. The author's standardized battery Test of Oral Motor Abilities (TOMS) is presented in its completed form.

The monograph *"Oromotor speech therapy: Theoretical aspects and practical application"* focuses on oromotor therapy ("Application of therapeutic massage in speech therapy", "Communicative disorders in craniofacial malformations", "Acquired dysarthric and dysphagic disorders", "Dysarthric and dysphagic developmental disorders, etc.). As a contributing aspect, the detailed systematization of the means of logopedic oromotor therapy according to the principles of medical rehabilitation, and the description of myo-gymnastics as a system of exercises, different from classical articulation gymnastics, are outlined. Different techniques for different types of massages are presented. Special attention is paid to the passive means of oromotor therapy: massage, postisometric relaxation, as well as manual and postural maneuvers applied to dysphagia and some forms of dysphonia.

The monograph *Speech, language, and cognitive development in children with cerebral palsy* analyze interdisciplinary issues of the complex pathology of childhood cerebral palsy over language, speech, and cognitive development. A detailed overview of the typical development of motor, language, speech, and cognitive processes in early and preschool age is presented. The peculiarities of the development of these spheres in children with cerebral palsy are examined in detail. The data obtained from the author's experimental research emphasize the relevance of the topic and the work, directly related to the need to arrive at specialized and at the same time complex speech therapy therapeutic strategies for childhood dysarthria and its accompanying disorders.

*"The collection of forms for speech therapy practice. Help for speech therapy students.* includes blanks and forms intended for diagnostic, therapeutic, and consultative work, and a survey on the game activity of children of preschool and primary school age. A Picture Test for Articulation and Phonology Diagnostics is presented.

In the presented chapter /co-authored/ from the book *"Managing Children with Developmental Language Disorder: Theory and Practice Across Europe and Beyond"* a

chronological analysis of the development of speech therapy theory, practice and qualification activities in Bulgaria is introduced.

The two studies presented in the competition are related to the diagnosis of oral motor abilities related to speech and processes outside of it (eating and oral praxis) of children between 4 and 7 years of age with a limited phoneme inventory and/or highly incomprehensible speech, how- and with a comparative analysis of several models of verbal communication, explaining the relationships between the levels of conceptual-linguistic knowledge, instrumental information processing processes in speech production and speech perception and memory operations.

The published articles cover several scientific and applied spaces:

- family and school context counseling [1], speech therapy support [2], pedagogical methods and speech therapy [3]; prevention and early intervention [6], need for articulation therapy [8], exercise classification [22]

- childhood speech apraxia [4], childhood autism [5], specific language disorder [7], autistic spectrum [10], language disorders [15], speech disorders [12], [13], children with stuttering [16] ], aphasia and dysarthria [18];

- diagnosis of play in special educational needs [17], levels of complexity in diadochokinetic tasks [24], grammatical abilities and mental operations in cerebral palsy [24];

- telepractice [11], [14], [19];

- digital resources for student training [20], [21].

As can be seen from the presented scientific output, Boyadzhieva – Deleva, Ph.D., has deep interests in the field of speech therapy theory and practice, which cover both studies of individual language and speech disorders, as well as problems of diagnosis and therapy. The innovative nature of the candidate's scientific research in competition with the developments of speech therapy telepractice and digital resources for training students in speech therapy is noteworthy. In this context, the contributing moments in the scientific production of Boyadzhieva – Deleva, Ph.D., bring out multi-layered dimensions in speech therapy practice.

The most significant scientific and scientific-applied contributions of Elena Boyadzhieva – Deleva, Ph.D., can be distinguished in several aspects:

- creation and standardization of an author's battery Test for oral motor skills (TOMS), which finds and can find even wider application in speech therapy practice.

- interpretation and systematization of the means of logopedic oromotor therapy and analysis with descriptions and examples of myo-gymnastics as complementary, supporting, or replacing traditional articulatory gymnastics.

- structuring and presentation of complex speech therapy therapeutic strategies for childhood dysarthria and its accompanying disorders.

The in-depth scientific studies of Elena Boyadzhieva - Deleva, Ph.D., have not gone unnoticed by the wider scientific community. On the contrary, her works are widely cited by the Bulgarian and international scientific community and the citations of her publications are as follows:

1. Web of Science Clarivate Analytics /1950. - 2022/ – 7 citations

2. Scopus ELSEVIER /1960 - 2022/ – 2 citations of 1 indexed document

h-index: 1

3. ScienceDirect – 1 citation

4. citations established in the traditional way, Google Scholar, Google Books - 28 citations

5. Indexed Publications

5.1. Central and Eastern European Online Library /CEEOL / – 3 publications

5.2. Russian Scientific Citation Index eLIBRARY.ru /РИИЦ/ – 1 publication

Separately, candidate Elena Boyadzhieva – Deleva, Ph.D., provides information on another 28 citations in Bulgarian and foreign scientific works.

4. Assessment of the candidate's personal contribution

I accept that the formulated contributions and obtained results are personal merit of the candidate Elena Boyadzhieva - Deleva, Ph.D.,.

## **5. Personal impressions**

I do not personally know the candidate Dr. Elena Boyadzhieva - Deleva.

## **CONCLUSION**

The documents and materials presented by Elena Boyadzhieva - Deleva, Ph.D., meet all the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LAD), the Regulations for the Implementation of the LAD and the relevant Regulations of the SU "St. Kliment Ohridski".

The candidate in the competition has submitted a sufficient number of scientific works published after the materials used in the defense of the educational and scientific degree „Ph.D.“. The candidate's works contain original scientific and applied contributions that have received international recognition, a representative part of which has been published in journals and scientific collections issued by international academic publishing houses. His theoretical developments have practical applicability, and some of them are directly oriented to academic work. The scientific and teaching qualifications of Elena Boyadzhieva - Deleva, Ph.D., are unquestionable.

The results achieved by Elena Boyadzhieva - Deleva, Ph.D., in the educational and scientific research activities fully correspond to the minimum national standards adopted in connection with the Regulations for the Application of the ZRASRB.

After getting acquainted with the materials and scientific works presented in the competition, analyzing their significance and the scientific, scientific-applied, and applied contributions contained in them, I find it reasonable to give my positive assessment and to recommend the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to the Faculty council of the Faculty of Education and Arts of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", for the election of Elena Boyadzhieva - Deleva, Ph.D., to the academic position of "associate professor" at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" in field of higher education Pedagogical Sciences, professional direction 1.2. Pedagogy (Speech Therapy).

11/10/2022

Reviewer: .....

(prof. Dora Levterova-Gadjalova, DSc)