

STATEMENT

ACORDING TO THE COMPETITION FOR ACADEMIC POSITION “ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR”

in the area of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional field 1.2. Pedagogics (Logopedics), announced in State Gazette, Issue 48/28.06.2022
by Assoc. Prof. Miglena Simonska-Tsatsova, PhD, SWU “Neofit Rilski”

1. Compliance of the procedure and the submitted documentation with the current regulations

The announced competition for the needs of the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Arts at SU “St. Kliment Ohridski” has been announced in accordance with the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria and Regulations for its implementation. The procedure and the submitted documentation for participation in the competition meet the specified regulations. All documents necessary for participation in the procedure have been provided.

2. General biographical presentation of candidate/candidates (education, qualifications, professional experience, etc.)

Only one candidate takes part in the competition – Chief Assist. Prof. Elena Kirilova Boyadzieva-Deleva, full-time teacher of Logopedics at Faculty of Educational Sciences and Arts (FESA) of SU “St. Kliment Ohridski”. She has acquired all educational degrees to the date at the FESA of SU “St. Kliment Ohridski”: Bachelor of Special Education (Logopedics) in 2004, Master of Logopedics (Developmental Communication Disorders) in 2006, Master of Special Education (Kinesitherapy of persons with neurosomatic diseases) in 2008, and PhD of Special Education (Logopedics) in 2015.

Immediately after graduating as Bachelor in 2004, she started to work as a speech therapist. In 2009 E. Boyadzieva-Deleva started her career as an Assistant Professor at the Department of Special Education of SU, and since 2018 she has been hold the academic position “Chief Assistant Professor”. For the period 2004-2022, she participated in more than 25 types of trainings with different duration to increase her qualifications in aim to acquire specific knowledge and skills in the field of language and speech pathology. Dr. Deleva speaks fluent English and French.

The provided biographical data is proof of consistent and purposeful development of the professional competences of Chief Assistant Professor Elena Boyadzieva-Deleva and her progress not only as a teacher, but also as a scientist and practitioner, necessary for an academic career in the field of speech therapy.

3. Educational activity

Chief Assist. Prof. Elena Boyadzhieva-Deleva possess extensive teaching experience as an assistant and chief assistant at FESA. For more than ten years, she has been teaching at the Bachelor's and Master's programs in Logopedics at FESA, conducting seminars and practical exercises directly related to the declared professional skills and scientific interests, respectively, in 6 study courses for both of them. She guides groups for undergraduate speech therapy practice, too. She has also developed lecture courses on the compulsory course "Application of therapeutic massage in speech therapy" and on the elective course "Planning and structuring of speech therapy", which is a confirmation of her potential to structure independently educational content.

In support of the high teaching skills of E. Deleva is also the work with students and doctoral students on educational and scientific projects for participation in scientific forums, for the development of digital learning resources and the creation of a didactic video fund to support the practical training of FESA, for the development of a software product for psychomotor training in autism, for stimulating and leading volunteer initiatives, etc.

4. Scientific activities

The candidate's research activity is related to active participation in projects. One of the noteworthy projects that she leads is "Development of digital learning resources and creation of a didactic video fund for the Therapeutic Room of the Faculty of Education Sciences and Arts to support the practical and e-learning of students", which is of utmost importance for the implementation of learning in an electronic environment during the Covid-pandemic.

Another significant project directly related to the competences of Dr. Boyadzhieva-Deleva is the participation in the COST action on the topic "Enhancing children's oral language skills across Europe and beyond - a collaboration focusing on interventions for children with difficulties learning their first language“.

5. Scientific production

5.1. Compliance with the scientometric indicators for occupying the academic position

The scientific papers and citations provided by Dr. Boyadzhieva-Deleva fully covers the minimum scientific requirements for the academic position "associate professor"

in the area of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional field 1.2. Pedagogy, according to Art. 2b and Art. 24 of Law for Development of the Academic Staff in Republic of Bulgaria. It should be noted that from group D of indicators, where the minimum number of points is 200, Elena Boyadzhieva-Deleva provided data on publication activity corresponding to 517.5 points. There are also significantly more points under indicator group D, which refer to citations: with minimum requirements of 50 points, 340 points have been declared. Although, according to group E indicators, no activity is required for holding the academic position of associate professor, 135 points were counted for participation in projects and publication of a university manual.

5.2. Content analysis of the presented scientific works for participation in the competition.

Chief assistant professor Elena Boyadzhieva-Deleva participates in the competition with two monographs, a published dissertation book, one textbook, a chapter of a collective monograph, six publications in refereed and indexed journals in world-renowned scientific information databases and 17 articles and reports, published in peer-reviewed journals or edited collective volumes. The main part of the scientific production is aimed at the essence of language and speech disorders in childhood (1.3, 3.1, 5.4, 5.5, 5.7, 5.24) and their diagnosis (1, 2.1, 4.1, 5.12, 5.23) and therapy (1.2, 5.2, 5.3, 5.6, 5.8, 5.11, 5.14, 5.15, 5.19, 5.22). It is essential for the evaluation of the candidate that a large part of the publications is based on empirical data:

- Children's cerebral palsy - proves that the general motor disability and the lack of sufficient manipulative experience in children with cerebral palsy are the basis of the inhomogeneous development of the language and cognitive sphere of functioning. The monograph "Speech, language and cognitive development in children with cerebral palsy" presents data obtained from the author's experimental research and offers 4 specialized and at the same time complex speech therapy strategies for childhood dysarthria and its accompanying disorders.
- Test of oral motor abilities (TOMA) - the presentation of the test battery in the monograph "Diagnosis of speech and its disorders in childhood" was preceded by publications showing data on the process of development and standardization of the test. This quiz is a proof to the author's research skills. The creation of such a product is related to the study of a large contingent, and the analysis and standardization require knowledge in other scientific fields and a long period of time.
- Prevention, counselling and early intervention - explores awareness of early intervention and primary data on its implementation as a form of prevention through counselling and specific methods of treatment.
- Telepractice - this new for Bulgaria concept became necessary in the conditions of the Covid pandemic. The application and effectiveness of telepractice in our country was studied through a survey among speech

therapists. One of the publications also presents data from the application of telepractice in persons with aphasia and dysarthria.

Part of the scientific output is also related to in-depth theoretical analyses, leading to important conclusions and proposals for practice. This is the work "Oromotor speech therapy: Theoretical aspects and practical application", which is aimed at describing the relationship between the oromotor mechanisms of eating and speech in the context of their ontogenetic development both in normal and in different pathologies, based on which also offer models for oromotor therapy.

6. Scientific-theoretical, practical-applied, artistic and other contributions

The development of a Test Battery for Oral Motor Abilities, which the author defines as semi-standardized, due to the number of individuals examined, can be defined as an indisputable contribution element in theoretical and practical-applied terms. The results conclusively prove the applicability of the test in children with developmental speech disorders. It can be argued that until now there is no similar toolkit for the mentioned disorders in our country, which will be extremely useful for clinical practice.

Another significant contribution from the scientific production is the monograph "Oromotor speech therapy: Theoretical aspects and practical application", in which for the first time in Bulgarian the influence of harmful habits in the oral area and orthodontic disorders on nutrition and speech is described in detail, making a bridge between logopedical therapy and orthodontic treatment, as well as the detailed systematization of the means of logopedic oromotor therapy according to the principles of medical rehabilitation and the application of myogymnastics. In the practical-applied aspect, the proposed Protocol for a complex speech therapy examination, accompanied by pictures, also contributes.

Consideration of the possibilities for telepractice in communication disorders can also be defined as a contributing element. The analysis of the data obtained from the studies in which disorders the application is possible and what are the limitations of the application is essential for speech therapy practice in our country.

7. Personal impressions

I know the candidate from the period of doctoral study. I define Dr. Boyadzhieva-Deleva as a consistent, goal-oriented and detail-oriented scientist. Her participation in projects and conscientious publications with professors from different institutions are proof of her teamwork skills, ethically and collegiality.

8. Notes, recommendations and questions

I have no notes, recommendations or questions for the candidate.

9. Conclusion

The candidate for the academic position "Associate Professor" possesses high research qualities, proven by the necessary publication output and scientific contributions.

Based on the above, I give an overall positive assessment of the scientific and teaching activities of Chief Assistant Professor Elena Kirilova Boyadzhieva-Deleva for taking the academic position "Associate Professor" in the area of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (Logopedics) at the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Arts of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

7.11.2022

Author of statement:

(Assoc. Prof. Miglena Simonska-Tsatsova, PhD)