

## **OPINION**

by Doc. D-r Dr. Dimka Dimitrova Nikolova-Ivanova,  
Lecturer at the Department of Methodology of Language and Literary Education  
and Literary Studies at the University of Veliko Tarnovo "St. St. Cyril and  
Methodius ",

on the materials submitted for participation in a competition for the academic  
position of 'Associate Professor' at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski ",  
announced in SG, no. 22 of 16.03.2021, for the needs of the Department of  
Methodology of FoSS in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences,  
professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of teaching in... (Methodology of teaching in  
Bulgarian)

### **1. Competition data**

By order of the Rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" (SU) № RD  
38 - 238 from 17.05.2021 I have been appointed a member of the scientific jury in a  
competition for the academic position of 'docent' at Sofia University in the field of  
higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of  
teaching in) (Methodology of teaching in Bulgarian), announced for the needs of the  
Department of Methodology of FoSS at Sofia University.

One candidate has submitted documents for participation in the competition:  
Chief Assistant D-r Despina Mirolyubova Vasileva, Lecturer at the Department of  
Methodology of FoSS at Sofia University.

The presented by Chief Assistant D-r Despina Vasileva set of materials is in  
accordance with the Regulations on the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific  
degrees and holding academic positions at the Sofia University. Chief Assistant D-r  
Despina Vasileva has submitted a total of 9 scientific papers, of which 1 monograph

and 8 articles. Procedural violations in the preparation of documents in connection with the participation in the competition were not found.

## **2. Candidate data**

Chief Assistant D-r Despina Vasileva graduated in 2007 with a degree in Bulgarian Philology at the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski "; in 2012 she completed a bachelor's degree in Psychology at the Sofia University. From 2006 to 2008 and in the period 2013-2017 she worked as a Bulgarian language and literature teacher. Since 2009 she has been an assistant, and since 2013 - Chief Assistant in the Department "Methodology of teaching Bulgarian language and literature" of FoSS at Sofia University. She conducts classes on the methodology of teaching Bulgarian language and practices (current and undergraduate) with students from different specialties. She is a co-author of textbooks and teaching aids.

## **3. Description of the scientific works**

The candidate participates in the competition for docent with the monograph "Development of cognitive and metacognitive reading skills in Bulgarian language teaching", which is characterized by a strong relevance of the studied issues. The research has both theoretical and practical value. In the study of the leading problems - for reading and its variants, for the specifics of reading a text from paper and electronic text, the abstract-analytical approach is skillfully used. D-r Despina Vasileva shows systematization and depth of scientific thinking, comments on theses and ideas in view of the peculiarities and needs of Bulgarian language teaching, traces the changes in the forms of reading in view of the modern educational and cultural context, highlights the factors influencing the process.

A theoretical contribution is the definition of the concept of "reading competence" as a dynamic concept, including three components: reading skills (cognitive and metacognitive); reader behavior (manifested through the use of appropriate metacognitive strategies in the act of reading); reading preferences

(understood as preferred conditions, reading time, sources of information). Valuable for the methodology of teaching the Bulgarian language are the tools described in the monograph and the results of a study of reading preferences among Bulgarian students and the study of the reading process through the technology of eye tracking (Eye Tracking), as observations and conclusions allow to take of appropriate methodological solutions and thus increases the effectiveness of training.

In the monograph, in addition to general problems with theoretical value for the science methodology, issues related to the direct work of teachers in the formation of reading skills in teaching the Bulgarian language are analyzed; Methodical models for working with texts and types of tasks for developing the cognitive and metacognitive skills of the students (grades 8-10) through strategies for planning the work with the text are proposed. Everywhere in the text - both in the interpretation of the facts and in the substantiation of innovative ideas for didactic procedures – Chief Assistant D-r Despina Vasileva shows systematization and depth of scientific thinking, thinks from transformational and evaluative positions, defends her ideas.

The presented articles for participation in the competition for associate professor outline the professional research demands of the author: on the one hand, reading as a speech activity - attitudes ("Attitudes to reading (study among Bulgarian students)"), motives ("Motivation and reading"), strategies ( "Use of metacognitive strategies in the teaching of Bulgarian language and literature - a factor for the formation of a thinking generation"; "Development of reading strategies in the context of learning strategies"), varieties ("Study of reading comprehension skills in paper text media and screen text '); and on the other - the work with different in style and genre texts of the Bulgarian language classes ("A possible model for working with media text in Bulgarian language classes", "Aspects of studying public speaking in Bulgarian language classes"). One of the articles is related to the concept

of digital civic competence - "Pledges of digital civic competence in Bulgarian language teaching". The presented articles testify to a lasting scientific interest in the issues outlined in the monograph, reveal awareness of the problems of the topic, skills for scientifically based methodological analysis of facts, phenomena and processes, ability to offer ideas, justify these and construct technological solutions, which pragmatizes language learning in secondary school and strengthens its communicative orientation.

#### **4. Scientific contributions**

The scientific texts with which Chief Assistant D-r Despina Mirolyubova Vasileva participates in the competition for the academic position of "Docent", are characterized by topicality of the studied issues, with professional competence; show deepening and expanding the scope of scientific research, variety of research approaches used, ability to justify innovative methodological options that lead to increased efficiency of language learning.

We can summarize the main scientific contributions reflected in the publications with which Chief Assistant D-r Despina Mirolyubova Vasileva participates in the competition for associate professor of Bulgarian language teaching methodology, as follows: scientifically based synthesis of connections and interdependencies between the concepts of reading, motives and attitudes, strategies (for reading and learning); semantization of the concept of "reading competence" as a dynamic concept, including three components: reading skills, reading behavior, reading attitudes; conceptual presentation of the concepts *civic competence*, *digital competence*, *digital civic competence*.

The following can be mentioned as contributions of practical value: construction of functional methodological variants for reading work in order to develop cognitive and metacognitive skills; creating methodological models for planning and

organizing the work on public speaking on a civil issue; creative ideas for working with media texts and texts from the civil sphere.

### **5. Teaching work**

My acquaintance with Chief Assistant D-r Despina Vasileva initially came to be through her publications. Later I had the opportunity to meet her in person and to have direct impressions of her scientific and teaching activities when participating in conferences, seminars. I know her as a warm-hearted and friendly colleague who is responsible for her professional activity and has developed teamwork skills.

### **6. Conclusion**

The documents and materials submitted by Chief Assistant D-r Despina Mirolyubova Vasileva meet all legal requirements. The candidate in the competition has submitted a sufficient number of scientific papers in which there are original scientific contributions. Her theoretical developments have practical applicability.

After getting acquainted with the scientific papers submitted for the competition and analysis of their significance and the scientific contributions contained in them, I find it reasonable to give my positive assessment and recommend to the Scientific Jury to propose to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Slavic Philology SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" to elect Chief Assistant D-r Despina Mirolyubova Vasileva to the academic position of 'Docent' at the Sofia University in the professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of teaching in... (Methodology of teaching in Bulgarian).

24.07.2021

**Reviewer: .....**  
**(doc. d-r D. Dimitrova)**