

## OPINION

FOR THE COMPETITION FOR OCCUPATION THE ACADEMIC POSITION  
"ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR" IN THE SCIENTIFIC FIELD 2. HUMANITIES,  
PROFESSIONAL FIELD 2. 1. PHILOLOGY, BULGARIAN LANGUAGE

(APPLIED LINGUISTICS),

ANNOUNCED IN DV, ISSUE 22 OF 16. 03. 2021

Candidate: Chief assistant professor Dr. Venera Mateeva-Baicheva

Author of the opinion: Dr. Mirena Atanasova Patseva-Momova, Associate Professor Dr. at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski ", Department of Bulgarian as a Foreign Language, Faculty of Slavic Philology, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Chairman of the Scientific Jury, appointed by order of the Rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" № RD 38-240 dated 17.05.2021.

### 1. GENERAL CONDITIONS OF THE COMPETITION

The competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the field of 2. Humanities, professional field 2.1. Philology - Bulgarian language (Applied Linguistics) has been announced for the needs of the Department of Bulgarian Language as a foreign language, Faculty of Slavic Philology at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in the State Gazette, issue 22 of 16. 3. 2021.

Documents for participation were submitted by one candidate - chief assistant Dr. Venera Mateeva Baicheva.

### 2. BIOGRAPHY OF THE CANDIDATE

Venera Mateeva-Baicheva graduated the National High School for Ancient Languages and Cultures "St. Constantine-Cyril - the philosopher". She graduated Bulgarian philology at Sofia University and a master's program in Linguistics with a master's thesis on "Study of dialect competence of migrants from Razlog in the capital city." In the period 2009 - 2013 she was a full-time doctoral student in the specialty "General and Comparative Linguistics (Psycholinguistics)" at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski ", Faculty of Slavic Philology, Department of Bulgarian Language. She acquired the scientific and educational degree "Doctor" with a dissertation on "Ontogenesis of complex sentences in Bulgarian language." Since 2015 she has been working at the Department of Bulgarian as a Foreign Language at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Faculty of Slavic Philology as a chief assistant.

The seminars she teaches are Bulgarian as a foreign language at the Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Chemistry and Pharmacy (in English), Faculty of Biology, and for students in the Erasmus program (level A1 and A2). Her lecture courses at the Bachelor's Degree are in Phonetics and Lexicology of Contemporary Bulgarian Language (Faculty of Law - Bulgarian translators), and at the Master's Degree in Gender and Language and Syntactic Interference between Related Languages (Language and Cultural Space). Since 2020, she has been the head of the Master's Programme "Language and Cultural Space. Bulgarian as a foreign language". She participated in three scientific projects and is the head of one project. She has teaching experience in other educational centers and schools.

The review of the materials for the professional development of Venera Mateeva-Baicheva convincingly shows that she has the necessary professional experience in the specialty in which the competition was announced. The attached documents, certifying her academic development, her experience as a lecturer and the academic workload, show that the chief assistant Dr. Venera Mateeva-Baicheva meets the conditions under Art. 24. (1) of the Law for development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and of art. 53. (1) of the Regulations for the application of Law. The competition documents comply with all regulatory requirements.

## 2. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CANDIDATE'S RESEARCH AND SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITY

The list of publications of Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Venera Georgieva Mateeva - Baicheva, presented for participation in a competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field 2.1. Philology (Bulgarian language - Applied Linguistics), announced by Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in SG, issue 22 / 16.03.2021 contains two books, three articles in peer-reviewed and indexed publications and nine articles published in non-indexed journals and scientific peer-reviewed collections. In addition, she is involved in writing of 5 textbooks and 8 manuals for students.

Her first book is based on a her dissertation for the award of educational and scientific degree "Doctor" entitled *The complex structures in children's speech. Model of the ontogenesis of the complex sentence in the Bulgarian language*, ISBN: 978-619-7313-147, Erove, Sofia, 294p.

The habilitation thesis, entitled *Language Aspects of Sharing Foreign Culture (Modern Methodology and Procedures in Bulgarian Language Teaching as a Foreign Language)*, ISBN: 978-619-7313-15-4, Erove, Sofia, 190p. is dedicated to the mastery of the Bulgarian language by foreigners.

The topicality of the field of the monograph is indisputable and is connected both with the growing interest in the study of the Bulgarian language by foreigners, and with the unsolved problems related to the conceptualization of the teaching of the Bulgarian as a foreign language.

The wording of the title evokes expectations for culturological issues, but the work is focused on mastering of key morphological aspects of the Bulgarian language. The work is organized

in five chapters. The first chapter outlines the goals, objectives and methodology of the study. The aim of the monograph is formulated as consideration of the noun and verb system of the Bulgarian language from a linguodidactical point of view. A "questionnaire" was chosen as the main research technique, which was conducted in the form of a grammar test.

The second chapter discussed basic concepts such as second or foreign language, bilingualism, multicompetence and interference. It presents the stages of mastering the second language and identifies some cognitive processes. Traditional and modern theories for mastering a foreign language are considered, citing authors belonging to the English-language tradition, as well as Russian and Bulgarian works on the subject.

The third and fourth chapters present observations and analyzes of the specific difficulties of mastering the Bulgarian language as a foreign language, based on empirical research on language material from practical work with foreign students at Sofia University (a total of 66 respondents at the level B1-B2, holders of 12 different languages). In generalized form, noun categories (grammatical gender, number, determination) and verbs categories (tense, aspect, mood) were considered. An analysis was made of the identified difficulties and regularities in mastering nouns and verbs in the Bulgarian language. Particular types of mistakes and strategies for overcoming them were identified.

The fifth chapter begins with an overview of theories, schools and methods in foreign language teaching. General didactic principles are also outlined, which are applicable in the Bulgarian language as a foreign language. The place of the Bulgarian language among the official languages of the European Union is also considered, and current tasks of its teaching as a foreign language are outlined. Among them, on the first place is the clarification of the distribution of linguistic information by levels and development of reference books defining the scope of the language material (formulated by Koleva-Zlateva 2014).

The results of the research can serve as material and guidance for students in master's programs in foreign language teaching and for young teachers of Bulgarian as a foreign language, as well as for compiling teaching materials and assessment tests for the needs of teaching Bulgarian as a foreign language. For the future scientific work of the candidate, I recommend the selection of a homogeneous group of respondents, which would allow to formulate specific conclusions about language interference.

## CONCLUSION

The documents and materials submitted by Venera Mateeva-Baicheva meet all the requirements of the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for implementation of the Law and the respective Regulations of the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

In conclusion, I can say that Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Venera Georgieva Mateeva - Baicheva is a very well prepared teacher and researcher. She is a competent specialist with lasting interests and achievements in the field of teaching Bulgarian as a foreign language. Her activity impresses her colleagues at the Faculty of Slavic Philology at Sofia University.

Mateeva-Baicheva's works have practical applicability, as some of them are directly oriented to the educational work.

Based on the presentation of scientific papers with proven practical contributions I support without any hesitation the election of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Venera Georgieva Mateeva - Baicheva, I recommend the members of the esteemed Scientific Jury to vote FOR her to be elected to the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field 2.1. Philology, scientific specialty "Bulgarian language" (Applied Linguistics) and I propose to the esteemed Faculty Council to approve her candidacy.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mirena Patseva

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