

POSITION

by Prof. Dr. Temenuzka Gancheva Teneva,

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of the materials submitted for participation in a competition for the academic position of "associate professor" in the Department of Preschool and Primary School Pedagogy of the Trakia University, Stara Zagora by professional direction **1.3. Pedagogy of training in ...**, scientific specialty **Methodology of training in Bulgarian language and literature**. In the competition for docent, announced in the State Gazette, no. 99 of November 28, 2023, and on the website of the University of Trakia university, Stara Zagora, for the needs of the Department of Preschool and Primary School Pedagogy, **Dr. Desislava Ilcheva Siderova** participated as the only candidate.

1. For the applicant:

Dr. Siderova has been a long-term assistant in the teaching methodology of Bulgarian language and literature in the Department of Preschool and Primary School Pedagogy, and since 2023 – a doctoral student in educational theory and didactics at the Department of Pedagogical and Social Sciences. Her other qualifications, such as an MA in Economics from the Svishtov Academy of Economics and Advanced English, broaden the range of possibilities for researching and applying pre-school and early school education in the contemporary social context.

2. Submitted materials for the competition:

Desislava Siderova has provided a reference with scientometric data meeting the requirements for holding the academic position of "associate professor". Her publications examine various aspects of the pedagogical conversation in preschool and elementary school – linguistic, literary, integrative, metacognitive. The concepts of text-centrism, of the holism of the educational discourse in kindergarten and the 1st – 4th grade interval, of the intercultural, psychological and socially grounded education of the youngest are some of the most relevant tools for the modern situation to support the development of the personality with a view to of the prospects for its realization in the technocratic multi-layeredness of tomorrow. Personally, I was interested in the topic of "independently asking questions to the literary work" (7.1), since I also deal with the specifics of questioning in the literature lesson, aimed at searching and discovering the meaning in the literary text¹. I am also very interested in the mediality of literature with music, as well as with all other arts, the correlation of folklore with artistry as an aspect of intercultural education. I support the strong pragmatic emphasis in all of Siderova's works, because in the time of "applications" the use of what has been learned, the advantage of "being able" over "knowing" is decisive for the self-assertion of the individual in the "network of relations with others" (according to H. Arendt).

¹ Teneva, T. About the question in the literature lesson. *Bulgarian language and literature*, 2018/5, 571 – 587.

As for the habilitation thesis **Metacognitive strategies for preschool education in Bulgarian language and literature**, however, I have serious disagreements. The work does not meet the structural and content requirements of the monograph genre - to independently and thoroughly investigate a significant problem from a certain scientific field. The problem of metacognition is serious enough for such a study, but it is not presented thoroughly and scientifically enough. The whole structure is turned upside down – the theoretical part is presented only in Chapter Three and cannot be accepted as satisfactory with only 8 pages of thesis presentation of metacognitive strategies. There is a lack of specification of the conceptual apparatus, the manifestations of metacognition are used without sufficient support from the authorities who defined them. The first chapter is mostly describing experience that is useful for students, but without a methodological concept of the reflective method as a manifestation of awareness/metacognition and the goals arising from it, it dangles only as concrete examples. Again due to the lack of a theoretical framework, the second chapter does not clearly distinguish the students' reflexivity from that of the children who are the object of their influence. Even formally, confusion arises from the use of "points" further in and further out in the order to separate the individual stages and activities. The volume of the "monograph" is unsatisfactory – the amount of 118 pages of the main exposition is not real, since a large part of the first chapter is in tabular form, which narrows the text. 25 sources are also not convincing support for a study of this magnitude. The survey in the application, which is not argued as a metacognitive act, has a number of shortcomings - an unnecessarily large number of questions, some of which are similar, and it is not clear what is the reason for their variation (eg 22, 23 and 24); others are not logical in wording (43 can ask about the student's self-assessment, but cannot impose it with "must"). There are a lot of mistakes left in the whole work: – literary: when working with the author's fairy tale "Chicken and Duckling" by Vladimir Suteev, it is said that the genre is epic (true), but it is commented on as a folk tale, and at the end there is even a question about its continuation (inadmissible for author's text); in the process of the conversation, some of the questions require ready-made answers, which renders them meaningless; – grammatical: mostly incorrect articulation; – technical.

3. Procedural discrepancies:

The examination of the documentation for the competition revealed some disturbing discrepancies with the legal provisions: – In the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, Section III Conditions and Procedure for Occupying the Academic Position "Associate Professor" it is said that "*Candidates for occupying the academic position "Associate Professor" " must meet the following conditions: 1. (suppl. - SG No. 30 of 2018, in force from 4.05.2018) have acquired an educational and scientific degree "doctor", which for the specialties of the regulated professions must be from the same specialty*" – Siderova is she defended her PhD in "theory of education and didactics" (1.2.), and applied for the academic title of "associate professor" in the specialty of teaching methodology in Bulgarian language and literature (1.3.); – When accepting documents for participation in the competition, it is mandatory to present a diploma for ONS "doctor", the official note is not a valid document (obviously, however, it was not possible to receive it

within one day, such is the distance between the defense and the last day of the time of submission of documents);

– The two main publications: the habilitation work and the monograph on Siderova's dissertation were not published at the time of submission of the documents – on the catalog page of the National Library it is noted that "publication is expected on 29.02.2024"², something that even not confirmed now.

4. About the contributing moments:

The five directions in which the offerings are made are actually only 1. and 2., and the rest are their more private aspects. In their definition, there is also a discrepancy with the thinking about the scientific contribution as a conceptual innovation, discovery, addition, changing the existing thinking about a scientific object, field, as well as its practical applicability. This part of the documentation needs editing.

5. Conclusion:

The production of Dr. Desislava Siderova proposed for participation in the competition has scientific and practical-applied qualities, but the non-compliance with the monographic genre of the candidate's habilitation thesis and the admitted deviations from the legal criteria for acquiring the academic position of "associate professor" motivate the award as unfounded her in the current situation.

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Prof. Dr. T. Teneva

² <http://booksinprint.bg/Publication/Details/9080ac09-052f-4a26-8af6-460a467776db>
<http://booksinprint.bg/Publication/Details/68464d0e-1a4d-43b8-9c5f-e1ea12ce4a27>