

POSITION
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Regarding: evaluation of the documentation and scientific production presented in a competition for filling the academic position "**associate professor**" at Trakia University – Stara Zagora, Faculty of education, area of higher education 1. Pedagogical Sciences, professional direction 1.3. Pedagogy of training in...

This statement was prepared on the basis of order No. 641/22.02.2024 of the Rector of the Trakia University – Stara Zagora for holding a competition for "associate professor", announced in accordance with Art. 4 and Art. 25 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, Art. 57, para. 1 and para. 2 of the Regulations for the implementation of the RSARB. In the announcement in the Official Gazette, no. 99 of 28.11.2023 competition (for the needs of the Faculty of education, department "Preschool and primary school pedagogy") for associate professor in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional direction 1.3. Pedagogy of training in..., one candidate participated – Assistant Professor Desislava Ilcheva Siderova.

I. Professional biography of the candidate.

Desislava Ilcheva Siderova was born on 22.05.1975 in the city of Stara Zagora. In 1999, she graduated in Bulgarian philology at the University of Veliko Turnovo St Cyril and St. Methodius (educational and qualification degree "master", professional qualification "philologist, teacher"). In the period 2000 – 2004, he studied the specialty "Insurance and Social Affairs", MP "Social Management" at the Academy of Economics "Dimitar Apostolov Tsenov" – Svishtov and obtained the educational qualification "Master" in Economics. In the period 2008 – 2009, he received an additional professional qualification "Intercultural Education" at the South-West University "Neofit Rilski" – Blagoevgrad. She works professionally as a teacher of Bulgarian language and literature in secondary schools in Stara Zagora. From 2005 to the present, he has been an assistant in teaching methodology in Bulgarian language and literature in the Department of "Preschool and Primary School Pedagogy" at the Faculty of Pedagogy of the Trakia University – Stara Zagora. According to NACID data, with diploma No. 260 dated 27.02.2024, D. Siderova was awarded the educational and scientific degree doctor, PN 1.2. Pedagogy. The candidate in the competition took part in the work on 22 projects, respectively – 4 national and 18 university.

II. Scientific production and activity of the candidate:

Specifically, the scientific production presented by Assistant Professor D. Siderova for participation in the competition includes: 2 monographs; 1 book ("The text as a phenomenon of the educational environment") based on a defended dissertation; 1 studio; 15 articles, of which 1 was published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information; 8 citations, of which 6 in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information; 2 – in monographs and peer-reviewed

collective volumes. In the main part, the presented publications are on topics related to the field of the announced competition. Six of the articles are in English, one in Russian, two articles are the result of co-authorship.

Of the two monographs presented, one is the result of co-authorship – "Intermediate horizon for literary and musical education". Within 135 pages, this work brings out the characteristics of intermediality; justifies goals, approaches and algorithmic options for their application as an educational resource. This work offers a view of intermediality that is refracted through the prism of the potential for interaction between the literary and musical arts in education. A methodical system is presented with a focus on students - future kindergarten and elementary teachers, aimed at developing their professional competence for implementing pedagogical interaction in kindergarten and at the initial stage of education, focusing on communication with two cognitive areas – literature and music. It is not clear why, with a distribution protocol for 50% participation in the National Centre for Information and Documentation reference proposed by the candidate, 15 points are provided for this monograph.

The monograph "Metacognitive strategies for preschool education in Bulgarian language and literature" is presented as the main habilitation thesis. Valuable in the research is the self-assessment sought as feedback for the work of students during their practical preparation for teachers in preschool education regarding their skills for organizing the educational activity, appropriateness of the didactic materials preferred in pedagogical situations, etc. The proposed paper presents the results of a study conducted by D. Siderova on the models of practical training of students being prepared to become teachers. In general, in terms of content and structure, the work does not meet the requirements of the monograph genre. The work is not presented on paper. It was initially offered in a 101-page version by email to the jury members and subsequently in a 141-page version (additionally sent by email while the evaluation process was in progress), of which 123 pages were main text with multiple pages in tabular format that did not correspond of the required number of characters. An impression is created of non-compliance with the normative volume of pages for such a work, the fact is that it is unrelated to the thematic focus of the competition under direction 1.3. The monograph proposed for evaluation does not show knowledge and compliance with basic requirements for such scientific production: inversion of the construction; undefinedness of the conceptual apparatus on the basis of agreement or opposition with the opinion of authorities; groundlessness of the theoretical concepts on which the scientific statements rest; non-conceptualization of one's perspective on metacognitive strategies; lack of criteria for evaluating the functionality and effectiveness of the use of similar strategies in university education; incomprehensibility of the survey in the context of a theoretical and pragmatic-methodological concept of metacognition. In the development, a quantitative and semantic imbalance between theoretical and pragmatic-applied emphases is observed. The theoretical and pragmatic-applied accents related to the theme of the work – metacognitions (mentioned in the introduction and presented in Chapter III with a volume of six pages) are minimal in the research. The conclusion of the work brings out the main highlights of the presented survey in the context of insufficient correlation with the main stated topic of the habilitation work. It does not become clear the main criteria of the researcher on which he studies, compares and analyzes the "metacognitive strategies" only through a questionnaire survey with 63 students (a number that does not give the impression of representativeness of the sample) through insufficiently clear connection of the questions with

the indicated problematic. The survey is not argumentatively read as a metacognitive act or toolkit; the effectiveness of it was reported only on the answers of the respondents to the individual questions without summarizing the parameters of D. Siderova's research paradigm. A weakness of the "habilitation work" is the basing of the general conclusions only on a minimalist questionnaire survey, in which, as a subjective type of research, questions involving additional subjectivity (self-evaluation of the work of the intern-teacher according to the emotional reactions of the children) are included, unnecessary tautology in the individual questions (different issues are identified on similar issues – the meaning of the game, of game concepts, of game technologies). The main emphases of the traditional monographic research have definitely been shifted, the own position on the subject of metacognitive strategies is insufficiently argued. The examples from practice are self-servingly presented, there is a lack of conceptualization of the author's statements about the applicability of reflection as metacognition in educational practice. It is noteworthy that the presented practical activity is not based on a pre-founded theoretical concept; the work seems to be a sharing of the main highlights of the daily teaching work on the implementation of the relevant teaching horary. The citation in the relevant work is insufficiently correct – indicating only the author and year without indicating a specific page of the relevant scientific production. Paradoxically, the volume of researched sources related to the researched issues is small – 26 in number (two of which – of the candidate herself).

The articles and studies discuss various linguistic, literary, psychological, communicative, metacognitive and interdisciplinary problems; contain useful practical information. The main thematic highlights in D. Siderova's articles are relevant: the methodological toolkit for teaching Bulgarian language and literature, the technological models for working with text as an important resource for the formation of students' communicative competence - articles No. 7.1, 7.2, 7.4, 7.7 , 7.9; the dynamic communicative aspects of working with an artistic text in linguistic-literary education - articles No. 7.2, 7.3, 7.6, 7.8, 7.14; the qualification of pedagogical specialists on the problems of intercultural education – article No. 7.5; text-centrism as a key factor in the university training of future teachers – articles with No. 7.10, 7.11, 7.12.

III. Assessment of the contributions of the scientific production submitted for participation in the competition.

D. Siderova's ideas about:

- The generalized and argumentatively supported concept of fundamentality and transversality of the communicative competence of the students; the proposed text-centric educational concept, substantiating the relationship between text-centrism and anthropocentrism and the significance of the communicative approach to the text in the teaching of Bulgarian language and literature in preschool and primary education (explained in theoretical and pragmatic-applied terms the significance of the technological model related to asking questions when working with an artistic text; the derived types of tasks when methodically working on a miniature composition, etc.).

- A logical presentation of ideas about the functionality and importance of text-centrism in university education; the generalized strategies for forming communicative competence of future teachers.

- Addressing the problem of metacognitive strategies in the university preparation of future teachers and the significance of their knowledge in the process of building the professional

competence of these teachers.

Its activities on:

- the summarization of various practical ideas for the text-productive activity of the child/student from the primary educational stage;
- the derivation of the functionality of methodological ideas for the development of didactic textual competence of students – future teachers.

IV. Academic and teaching activity of the candidate.

According to the submitted references for the academic year 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 Desislava Ilcheva Siderova leads seminar exercises and Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria in bachelor programs in compulsory disciplines: "Methodology of teaching Bulgarian language and literature in kindergarten", "Methodology of teaching Bulgarian language and literature in I - IV grades" and in optional disciplines: "Music and text in education", "Development of Bulgarian speech in preschool education" and "Literary text and communication in preschool age". At OKS "master" he teaches the compulsory disciplines "Educational strategies in Bulgarian language in kindergarten", "Language and literary communication in grades I – IV", "Language and literary communication in kindergarten" and the optional disciplines "Communicative strategies in learning Bulgarian language", "Communication through music and text" and "Development of Bulgarian speech in preschool education. He also leads seminar classes in the disciplines "Modern Bulgarian Language", "Literature for Children", "Pedagogy of Verbal Performing Arts", "Mastering the Bulgarian Language in Bilingualism". For the academic year 2023/2024 and the following academic year, no reference has been submitted.

V. Critical notes and recommendations.

In the spirit of objectivity, it is necessary to summarize my numerous critical remarks regarding the incomplete compliance with the established procedure and the candidate's way of self-assessment when positioning himself in the competition:

- Non-fulfillment of the minimum national requirements according to Art. 2b of Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria for "associate professor". A scientific work with claims of "habilitation" was presented, not corresponding to the direction of the competition – 1.3., and the topic of the work is according to 1.2; the characteristics of the work do not imply the calculation of points for the relevant indicator from the Minimum National Requirements.

- Failure to comply with all regulatory requirements under the procedure. Participation in the competition in case of non-compliance with the requirements of Art. 78, para. 1 of the "Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at Thrace University" regarding the obligation of the candidate for participation in the competition to submit to the scientific department of the faculty a "PhD diploma or a notarized copy". The candidate in the competition submitted a service note, Reg. No. 307/27.02.2024 certifying the upcoming issuance of a diploma for ONS "Doctor" (Appendix No. 1), although according to data from NACID, a Diploma for ONS "Doctor" is available as of 27.02.2024.

- Failure to comply with the provisions of Art. 24, para. 1, item 3 of the ZRASRB, as well as the provisions of Art. 74, para. 1, item 3 of the Regulations for the development of the academic staff at Trakia University – Stara Zagora regarding the presentation of **published**

monographic work... According to data of the National Register of Published Books in Bulgaria as of 26.03.2024, the works with which they participated in the competition (for documents submitted as of 28.02.2024) "The text as a phenomenon of the educational environment" (Appendix No. 2) and "Metacognitive strategies for pre-school education in Bulgarian language and literature" (Appendix No. 3) have a draft to be published on February 29, 2024.

- I also consider modesty and moderation in reflection and self-assessment to be the dignity of a scientist. In this context, the identification of D. Siderova as a doctor in the article from 2023 in the magazine "Pedagogika" raises a misunderstanding – in the actual implementation of a final meeting on her competition for a doctor at the end of February 2024.

- The authority and confirmation of the name of D. Siderova would benefit from greater objectivity and the manifestation of a certain modesty. It gives the impression that the candidate in the competition does not distinguish between a developed scientific problem and a contribution to its specific development. The candidate's self-esteem is surprisingly high when presenting his own point of view for his twenty-four scientific contributions in five main directions (three of which actually represent aspects of the two main contribution streams – "Linguistic education in higher education" and "Literary education in elementary stage", future known questions/objections considering that her main work is aimed at preschool education).

- The manifestation of patience in climbing the ladder of professional growth and moving along it with more respect for regulatory requirements, authorities, derived theoretical concepts and procedural deadlines. The ability of D. Siderova to publish two books within 24 hours, to register with the NACID and to submit documents for habilitation – one day after the final meeting for the acquisition of the ONS "doctor" (if the relevant protocol was not signed by online the members of the scientific jury present at this meeting, for which I vouch as a participant in its jury in the procedure for acquiring the educational and scientific degree doctor "doctor").

I also make the following recommendations to the candidate in the competition:

- To support his professional growth with greater precision (both quantitatively and qualitatively) in the production of monographs, books and articles (some of the articles proposed for review are 3-4 pages long).

- To show precision in the preparation of documentation for key competitions presenting the positioning her in the scientific space (in the proposed "Summaries of scientific works and publications" there is no information about publications with Nos. 7.12, 7.13, 7.14; initial and repeated (during the evaluation procedure) presentation of a monograph that does not meet the normative requirements in terms of volume, does not include in the characteristics of the scientific genre, inconsistent with the direction of the competition).

VI. Conclusion.

Based on the review of scientific works and the violations found in them I declare **the negative** her assessment of the opinion for occupying the academic position "associate professor" announced by the competition by Desislava Ilcheva Siderova. The assessment is also substantiated by the non-compliance of part of the documentation provided by the applicant with the requirements of the of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the implementation of the of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions at Trakia University – Stara Zagora. All this gives me reason to recommend the respected Scientific Jury to give a negative assessment to the application and yes **Does not offer** of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Pedagogy at Trakia University – Stara Zagora to elect Desislava Ilcheva Siderova as an

"associate professor" in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional direction 1.3. Pedagogy of training in

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