



REVIEW

By Prof. Dr. Yuliya Doncheva, PhD,

‘Angel Kanchev’ University of Ruse, Natural Sciences and Education Faculty,
Pedagogy Department of the materials, presented in regard of an opened
procedure for a competition for academic position of Associate professor, in
higher education 1. Pedagogy sciences, professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of
Education in ... for the needs of Preschool and Primary School Pedagogy
Department, Pedagogy Faculty, Trakia University – Stara Zagora, promulgated
with State Gazette, issue 88 / 20.10.2023,

1. Findings and assessment of the competition procedure:

A competition for the academic position of Associate Professor is opened based on Ordinance 4378/06.12.2023 of the Dean of Trakia University – Stara Zagora, promulgated announcement in State Gazette, issue 88/ 20.10.2023 on the grounds of Art. 4, Para 5, i. 5 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in Republic of Bulgaria, Art. 5, Para (14) of the Regulation on Development of the Academic Staff in Trakia University and a Report of the Dean of the Pedagogy Faculty.

Only one applicant participates in the competition and this is Chief Ass. Dr. Yordanka Dencheva Ilieva. The applicant is admitted to participate after a review of the documents required. The applicant complies to and has fulfilled all minimum national requirements, scientometric criteria for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions, as per Art. 2b, Para 2 and 3 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in Republic of Bulgaria and the additional university requirements as per the Regulation on Development of the Academic Staff in Republic of Bulgaria.



All initial procedural and normative rules are observed during this procedure. There are no violations ascertained, the procedure is in progress, the competition is legitimate.

2. Data for the professional and academic profile of the applicant:

The professional and carrier pathway of Chief Ass. Dr. Yordanka Ilieva is mainly in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogy sciences, professional field 1.2. Pedagogy and also professional field 1.3. Pedagogy in the education in ... Her professional autobiography clearly shows that after graduating from university she continuously worked in the area of the preschool education as a teacher (from 1993 to 1994), chief teacher (from 2014 to 2022) and a Chief Expert in Preschool Education in the Regional Education Inspectorate (Ministry of Education and Science, the town of Shumen, in 2014). She continues her professional and career development with Doctor science degree, successfully defending her Doctor degree in Methodology of Education in Mathematics and Informatics (in kindergartens) in 'Bishop Konstantin Preslavsky' University of Shumen (2014 to 2018). She works as a guest lecturer in "Methodology of forming elementary mathematics concepts in kindergarten" in 'Bishop Konstantin Preslavsky' University of Shumen (from 2010 to 2016). From 01.03.2022 until the present moment she is a Chief Assistant in Methodology of Education in Mathematics in Preschool Age in Trakia University, Stara Zagora.

In line with Art. 29 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in Republic of Bulgaria she is entitled to participate in the competition since she complies with all criteria, chronologically presented above.

She participates in a number of national projects, international science forums, trainings, qualifications, activities and others. Her professional interests are in the areas of Methodology of Education in Mathematics in kindergarten, STEAM approach and other areas, integrated in the Preschool pedagogy.

She is fluent in two languages, levels B1 and B2 – English and Russian language.

Her creative autobiography and the applicant professional and academic profile show a persistence in the path, the direction, the goal that she successfully pursues.

3. Assessment of compliance of the science production in line with the requirements of Law on Development of the Academic Staff:

The applicant participates in a competition for the Associate Professor academic position with a science production, presented and verified for compliance with the minimum national requirements as per Art. 2b, Para 2 and 3 of the Law on Development of Academic Staff in Republic of Bulgaria, as follows:

Group of Indicators A: 1. Dissertation work for awarding educational and science degree “doctor” → **50 points.**

Group of Indicators B: Indicator 3: A habilitation thesis (monograph) → = **100 points.** (Ilieva, Yo. (2023) *STEAM atelier “Mathematical kaleidoscope” in the kindergarten.* A Monograph of 191 pages. Printed by: ‘Bishop Konstantin Preslavsky’, Shumen University Publishing house, ISBN 978-619-201-736-1.)

Group of Indicators G:

Indicator 5: (G 5) – 1 pcs. Published book based on defended dissertation for the awarding of educational and scientific degree “doctor” → = **75 points.** (Ilieva, Yo. (2023) *Innovative didactic-technological model “I know how to measure – I can learn everything alone”,* A monograph, 146 pages, Printed by: Leni AN’, Ruse, ISBN 978-619-7616-38-5.)

Indicator 6: (G 6) – 1 pcs. Articles and reports, published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information – **30 points.**



Indicator 7: (G 7) – 11 pcs. Independent - Articles and reports, published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes – **110 points**.

The amount of the indicators from 4 to 10 – total number of 215 points out of the minimum required – 200.

Group of indicators E:

Indicator 11: (D 11) – 2 pcs. Citations or reviews in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information – **30 points**

Indicator 12: (D 12) – 5 pcs. Citations in monographs and peer-reviewed collective volumes - **50 points**.

Indicator 13: (D 13) – 4 pcs. Citations or reviews in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals – **20 points**.

The amount of the indicators from 11 to 13 – total number of 100 points out of the minimum required – 50.

The comparable minimum requirement for number of points as per group indicators, **for the Assistant Professor academic position, summarized as per indicators from A to D is the sum of total 465 points** and the minimum number of **400**.

The information provided categorically shows that the applicant complies with and even surpasses the minimum science-metric indicators, required for the Assistant professor position.

4. Content and assessment of the scientific contributions:

The scientific contributions in publications (independent and as a co-author), in line with the Law on Development of the Academic Staff and the Regulations on the Terms and Conditions for the Academic Positions, are as follows:

Habilitation thesis - monograph: **1 pcs.**

Total number of publications: **12**, out of which:

Articles and reports published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information: **1 pcs.**

Articles and reports published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes: **11 pcs.**

Period of publishing: from 2001, 2003, 2005, 2022 to 2023. Three of them:

- Ilieva, Yo. (2001) *Didactic games for safe traffic, natural disasters and emergencies*. Bi-monthly scientific-methodological magazine "Home, child, kindergarten", Sofia, issue 5, pages 51 – 55, ISSN 1310-0580.

- Ilieva Yo. (2003), *Health and life protection of children at risk*. Collection of scientific works "Education and art", Shumen, 'Bishop K. Preslavsky' University Publishing House, pages 392 – 394, ISBN 954-577-216-6.

- Ilieva, Yo. (2005) *The European tales in the productive activity of the children*. Monthly science-methodology magazine "Preschool education", Sofia, issue 4, page 34-36, ISSN 0204-7004.

In terms of theme they do not correspond to the profile of the competition "Methodology of education in mathematics in preschool age", yet considering the integrative nature of the educational directions and the Cores of the State Educational Standards in Preschool Education (Ordinance 5/2016), reading and interpreting their content, scientific contribution and application of the interactive and competencies approach I approve their presentation and accept them as suitable.

The colleague exposed in details, correctly and in particular the original contributions, to which I completely consolidate. Ch. Assistant Dr. Yordanka Ilieva in her report has derived, summarized and presented the scientific innovations (contributions), in a *scientific-theoretical* and *applied-practical nature*.

I define the practical content side of the publications proposed for participation in the competition, corresponding to the topic of the announced competition for Assistant Professor, differentiated thematically in the following areas: "Methodology of education in mathematics in preschool age" as well as Pedagogy of education in..., with exposure of the following highlights:

Current problems and modern trends in the field of mathematics in preschool education are presented, offering strategies for the inclusion of the Bulgarian education to European standards.

Classic and modern concepts and research on the problems of learning mathematics in preschool age are systematized.

Mathematical competences are considered as key constructs in the formation of basic knowledge until the child enters school.

In an experimental plan, the reliability and validity of the systems of criteria and indicators for research on mathematical knowledge and skills among preschool children have been proven.

The specifics related to the development of mathematical thinking and acquisition of basic mathematical knowledge in preschool age are revealed.

The mathematical competence in preschool children is experimentally investigated, and based on the results, a reliability analysis is made according to criteria and indicators.

A wide range of reasons for negative trends in forming mathematics and STEAM competencies are ascertained.

A diagnostic tool set is developed for the determination of the level of development of mathematical and STEAM competencies.

Besides the circumstantial and detailed presentation of the thematic aspect of the scientific publications up to this point, I will highlight the scientific

contributions in a very schematic form, also derived on the basis of the basic production submitted for participation in the competition, namely:

A habilitation thesis (monograph) → = 1 pcs. (Ilieva, Yo. (2023) STEAM atelier "Mathematical kaleidoscope" in the kindergarten. A monograph of 191 pages. 'Bishop Konstantin Preslavsky' University Publishing house, Shumen, ISBN 978-619-201-736-1.) The monograph work deserves recognition because of the nature of the practical-application aspect, the innovation and the perspective in sustainable plan regarding the education in preschool age.

Published book, based on defended dissertation for awarding of Doctor educational and science degree (Ilieva, Yo. (2023) Innovative didactic-technological model "I know how to measure – I can learn everything alone", Monograph, 146 pages, Printed by: Leni AN', Ruse, ISBN 978-619-7616-38-5.). The completion and the successful defense of such a scientific work arouses admiration, bearing in mind the subsequent reviews by academic lecturers with proven experience, professionalism and erudition in their field, which in no way gives me reason to underestimate its dissertationability. Content characteristics and topicality are present.

The academic scientific production, provided for participation in the competition, does not contain any weaknesses, impropriety and unethically, proven also through a protocol for certifying their presence in the bibliographic database. The language, style and expression of the works from a linguistic point of view are at a level comprehensible to the target groups.

Concluding the mandatory part of the review on the contributions I have to highlight that they are on the required level for the academic position of Assistant Professor.

5. Assessment of the teaching, academic and expert activity of the applicant.

Chief Assistant Doctor Yordanka Ilieva is a holder of compulsory basic academic disciplines - Bachelor educational-qualification degree "Pedagogy of mastering elementary mathematical concepts in kindergarten", "Methodology of teaching mathematics in 1.-4. class" and "master" educational-qualification degree - "Qualitative characteristics of mathematical preparation in kindergarten and 1.-4. grade", "Qualitative characteristics of mathematical preparation in grades 1-4".

The academic management has provided her with an average annual classroom occupancy and workload, with an annual norm of 360 hours. She also participates in developing and updating curricula for her academic disciplines, in full compliance with the announced competition. She also participates in scientific conferences and round tables, in different scientific projects. A lecturer loved by the student audience.

6. Critical notes, prepositions and recommendations:

I have no critical notes. Usually, the proposals have a recommendatory nature and they are related to the scientific achievements and attitudes in the long years of growth and recognition of the applicant. In this regard, it would be good for her to expand the dissemination and publication activity in and outside the borders of Bulgaria, so that research, knowledge, skills, competences, expertise, such as these, can be heard and visible both for ours and for the international academic community. To activate lecture and extracurricular activities to an even greater extent. Obligatory to realized guidance of diploma students and reviews of diploma theses, as well as of doctoral students.

The academic position "associate professor" assumes and obligates, promotes a much greater deployment, motivation and involvement of young



people towards development, prosperity and new achievements in the name of the highest educational level of our country!

7. Conclusion:

Based on the above-said I herein categorically, justified and undoubtedly give my *positive assessment* of the scientific production, the achieved practical and applicable results and contributions, as well as the complete appearance of the applicant activities. I propose to my colleagues from the respected scientific jury, as well as to the members of the Faculty Council to elect *Chief Ass. Dr. Yordanka Dencheva Ilieva* to take the academic position of Assistant Professor on the grounds of Art. 4, Para 5, i. 5 of the law on Development of Academic Staff in Republic of Bulgaria, Art. 5, Para (14) of the Regulation on Development of Academic Staff in Trakia University in the area of higher education 1. Pedagogy sciences, professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of education in ... for the needs of Preschool and Primary School Pedagogy Department, Pedagogy Faculty, Trakia University – Stara Zagora.

Date: 7th January 2024

Review by:

The city of Ruse

(Prof. Dr. Yuliya Doncheva, PhD)