

REPORT

**of Dr. Tatyana Gavrilova Angelova, Professor at Sofia University
„St. Kl. Ohridski”**

regarding the materials submitted for participation in a competition
for the academic position of **„Associate Professor“**
at Plovdiv University „Paisii Hilendarski”

by field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences

professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of teaching...(Methodology of mastering the Bulgarian language in kindergarten)

In the competition for „Associate Professor“, announced in the State newspaper, issue 57, dating from 26.06.2020, and on the website of Plovdiv University „Paisii Hilendarski“ for the needs of the Department of „Preschool Pedagogy“ at the Faculty of Pedagogy, **Ekaterina Georgieva Cherneva** from the same faculty is applying as a candidate.

1. General presentation of the procedure and the candidate

Presentation of the procedure and description of the materials received for review.

Subject:

By order № P33-4710 of the Rector of the Plovdiv University „Paisii Hilendarski“ (PU), dating from 25.09.2020, I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury of a competition for the academic position of „Associate Professor“ at PU by field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of teaching...(Methodology of mastering the Bulgarian language in kindergarten), announced for the needs of the Department of „Preschool Pedagogy“ at the Faculty of Pedagogy.

Documents for participation in the announced competition have been submitted by a **single candidate:**

Chief Assistant Dr. Ekaterina Georgieva Cherneva from the Department of „Preschool Pedagogy“ at the Faculty of Pedagogy at Plovdiv University „Paisii Hilendarski“.

The set of paper materials presented by Ekaterina Cherneva is in accordance with the Regulations for development of the academic staff of PU „Paisii Hilendarski“ and consists of the following documents:

- an application form to the Rector for admission to participate in the competition;

- a CV in European format;
- a diploma for specialization / educational and qualification degree „Master“ - original or with an attachment of a notarized copy;
- a diploma for educational and qualification degree „Doctor“ - original or with an attachment of a notarized copy;
- a list of scientific papers;
- a reference for compliance with the minimum national and additional faculty requirements;
- annotations of the materials under Article 65 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at PU „Paisii Hilendarski“ (RDASPU), incl. self-assessment of the candidate's contributions;
- a declaration of authenticity and originality of the attached documents;
- a certificate regarding work experience;
- documents for educational work;
- documents for research work;
- documents according to the additional requirements of the respective faculty;
- other documents;
- a set of documents on electronic media - all of them attached to the submitted materials for review.

Ekaterina Cherneva has submitted a total of 26 scientific papers: 1 monography, 1 book, 1 article in a refereed journal, 20 articles in non-refereed journals, textbooks and teaching aids and a list of 8 folders with practical and applied developments related to the teaching, research and qualification activity conducted by herself. 26 scientific papers are accepted for review, which are not used in the dissertation and are taken into account in the final evaluation. 3 scientific papers on the dissertation are not reviewed. The distribution of scientific papers by relevant sections, in the country and abroad, is as follows: in the country - 1 monography, 3 articles in a textbook for master's degree students, 20 scientific articles in refereed journals. Of these abroad - in foreign publications - 6 papers, regarding the participation in international scientific conferences - 6 papers.

Documents (in the form of official notices) for participation and for implemented developments in the process of external evaluation are also presented - expert evaluation of test tasks for National external evaluation for completed initial stage, which supports the administration and quality achievement of the National external evaluation.

I have no remarks regarding the documents.

2. General characteristics of the candidate's activity

Assessment of educational and pedagogical activity and preparation of the candidate (teaching aids, lecture courses, work with students, graduates and doctoral students)

The presented materials regarding the teaching activity of Ekaterina Cherneva document her active participation in the work with bachelor's and master's degree students. In this way, the results of her research and her expert training in the field of preschool education are popularized. Ekaterina Cherneva also leads qualification courses contributing to the career development of preschool teachers.

Assessment of the scientific and the scientific-applied activity of the candidate

The presented scientific papers for participation in the competition are evidential for the active appearance of Dr. Cherneva in academic life not only in the country but also abroad. She presents a habilitation thesis, which is related to the professional field of the announced competition. Of the 26 scientific papers submitted for the competition, the publications can be classified by type (25 articles; 8 reports with participation in international and national conferences), by place of publication (1 article in a refereed international journal; 6 reports in papers in international scientific conferences abroad; 6 articles in national journals; 6 reports in papers in international scientific conferences in Bulgaria; 8 reports in papers in national scientific conferences, sessions and seminars; 11 scientific university papers), by language (6 in English; 20 in Bulgarian), by number of co-authors (25 independent; 1 with a single co-author).

Contributions (scientific, scientific applied, applied) and citations

Content analysis of the main scientific, scientific applied, applied and methodical contributions. Characterization of the main achievements. Contributions to and significance for science and practice (what they are based on). Prospects for development.

A special attention to the monography, with which E. Cherneva participates in the competition, will be paid: „Educational model for the formation of fine motor skills of the child“, published in 2020 by the University Publishing House of PU „Paisii Hilendarski“. As a research subject Dr. Cherneva chooses the key problem regarding the development of fine motor skills, without which the child cannot successfully complete the literacy process. The candidate offers her own concept for building a model for the formation of fine motor skills of the hand, making a productive connection between teaching in the kindergarten and in the preparatory stage of first grade. In this way E. Cherneva fills the deficit in the specialized literature of an unanimously adopted system of exercises for mastering fine motor skills. The theoretical review is evidential for a serious scientific awareness

and the statements about when it is most appropriate to start literacy of the child are convincing. Dr. Cherneva conducts her own research on the achieved degree of formation of fine motor skills in the preparatory group. The qualitative and quantitative analysis of tested variants for test assessment of school readiness complete the overall solidity of the conducted research. Based on the results of her research, E. Cherneva builds an educational model for the preparation of the child's hand for writing both for the kindergarten (third chapter) and for the primary school (fourth chapter). Of a particular interest is the comparison between handwriting and keyboard typing made in the last part of the monography. As it is known, the age at which a child begins to type on a keyboard is decreasing. And typing on the keyboard affects not only fine motor skills, but also speech development, especially the syntactic development of the child.

The book „Pedagogical aspects of the value orientation of the child at primary school age“ is based on a defended dissertation for the award of educational and scientific degree „Doctor“. The publication of the book brings credits in the National Centre for Information and Documentation, which contributes to the adequate amount of scientometric indicators. But it is not a subject of review for the competition, because it has already been consumed for the acquisition of educational and scientific degree „Doctor“.

An additional attention to the article entitled „Innovative options for speech hearing development at preschool age“, presented for the competition, will be paid. The article seeks an answer to a key question for the child's speech development: how to provide prerequisites for the formation of auditory and pronunciation skills, on which the successful language mastering depends. The offered options are innovative and suitable for preschool age due to their playful nature.

The 3 articles, although published in textbooks and manuals for students, summarize the concept of systematic work on language and literature education in primary school, as well as on oral and written related speech of the child. Not surprisingly, the article entitled „Primary school language learning system" attempts to explore two key components of student preparation in primary school - language and pragmatic competence of the young student. The article is useful with the formulations regarding the practical applicability of the system based on the new curricula for the initial educational stage.

The second article is devoted to a system of literary education in primary school. The subject of research attention is the perception of the literary work and the artistic text by the young student. The author chooses two adequate approaches to the problem: communicative - verbal and literary – aesthetic. The researcher justifiably focuses on the genre feature, on the basis of which intended for study literary works of Bulgarian and foreign authors are grouped. A valuable feature of the text is that

methodical solutions are offered, on which the successful literary education of the young student depends.

The third article is devoted to the work on oral and written related speech. In this way, the presented work system in the initial stage, with which the future teacher gets acquainted, is rounded off. A strong point of the development is its basing on statements from text linguistics for the text as a communicative unit and from psycholinguistics, in this case the theory of speech activity of A.A. Leontiev for the phases in the speech activity - orientation in the speech situation, planning of the speech intention, its realization and the control over the performance.

The researcher's interest in the problems related to the auditory-pronunciation skills of young students is also reflected in the article „Alternatives for the formation of sound culture at preschool age“. The understanding that the child's further literacy depends on the phonemic hearing is convincingly substantiated. In practice, there are often cases of difficult pronunciation of sounds such as *r* and *l*, precisely because there is a lack of phonemic hearing for them. As it is known from speech therapy, the child should „hear“ the sound via the brain in order to begin to pronounce it correctly.

A research with independent scientific contributions is the one entitled „Literacy readiness“, where it is stated, that the literacy process can begin in the kindergarten. The beginning of this process is traced, maintaining the understanding of continuity between teaching in the preparatory group and in the first grade. This is an approach that is also used in the foreign scientific literature. Operationalization of the concept of *literacy readiness* is made in the article „Main components of school readiness in Bulgarian“.

E. Cherneva is able to promote her scientific experience not only in the country but also abroad. Her publications in English journals document her interests in the problem of early reading instruction in the kindergarten. It is appropriate to emphasize the relevance of these searches in the context of current research in literacy education, such as PIRLS.

The candidate also focuses on the syntactic and morphological aspects of speech development of young students in her articles: „Opportunities for syntactic development of preschool children“ and „Alternatives in the morphological development of preschool children“.

Contributive regarding the creation of innovative teaching models are the publications on the use of mind maps and associative networks. E. Cherneva offers methodical solutions that stimulate the creative thinking of preschool children, for example in the articles: „The use of mind mapping in teaching native language in nursery school“ and „The use of mind mapping in the associated speech training in kindergarten“.

The author also discusses the speech development of children and their attitude towards their rights in the articles: „Innovative options for speech development of the preschool child“ and „Opportunities for mastering children’s rights via the educational field Bulgarian language“.

E. Cherneva chooses current topics as a research field, such as those related to the application of information technology, a major challenge for preschool education. This is done in the article „Stimulating the speech development of the preschool child via information technologies“.

It can be summarized that the contributions are the personal work of the candidate. They are related to new aspects of existing scientific fields such as the speech development of the preschool child, new methods and technologies of education at this age, which is mentioned in the publications of E. Cherneva.

The noted citations also testify the scientific statements of E. Cherneva. From the scientometric indicators reference it is clear that the candidate has a total of 90 points - 20 points from citations in monographies and refereed volumes with scientific papers and 70 points from citations in non-refereed publications. These citations are comprehensive and relate to the developed scientific topics. They are dating from the last years of academic development - 2017-2020.

Based on the reference, it can be summarized that the contributions of E. Cherneva correspond to the professional field of application and are distinguished by theoretical and practical significance. The quantitative scientometric indicators for holding the academic position „Associate Professor“ are observed, as well as the specific requirements of the Faculty of Pedagogy at PU „Paisii Hilendarski“. The publications in authoritative publications document the recognition of the candidate among the scientific circles in our country and abroad.

The reviewer's assessment of the candidate's personal contribution in the relevant publications and the extent to which the formulated contributions and obtained results are her personal merit.

My assessment as an author of a report regarding the candidacy of E. Cherneva is entirely positive, taking into account that the personal contributions and the results of the research are the personal merit of the candidate.

3. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no critical remarks and recommendations.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials presented by **Ekaterina Georgieva Cherneva** **meet all** requirements of the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), the Regulations for implementation of LDASRB and the according Regulations of PU „Paisii Hilendarski“.

The candidate in the competition **has** submitted a **significant** number of scientific papers, published after the materials used in the defence of the educational and scientific degree „Doctor“. The work of the candidate consists of original scientific and applied contributions, which have received international recognition and a representative part of them are published in journals and scientific collections of international academic publishers. Her theoretical developments have practical applicability, as some of them are directly oriented towards the educational work. The scientific and teaching qualification of Ekaterina Cherneva is **unquestionable**.

The results achieved by Ekaterina Cherneva in teaching and research **fully** comply with the specific requirements of the Faculty of Pedagogy, valid in relation to the Regulations of PU „Paisii Hilendarski“ for application of LDASRB.

After a careful acquaintance and an analysis of the materials and scientific production submitted by the candidate for participation in the competition, as well as taking into account their importance and scientific, scientific-applied and applied contributions, I find it reasonable to give my **positive** assessment and **to advise** the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Pedagogy regarding the nomination of Chief Assistant Dr. Ekaterina Cherneva for the academic position of „Associate Professor“ at PU „Paisii Hilendarski“ by field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of teaching...(Methodology of mastering the Bulgarian language in kindergarten).

5. 11. 2020 г.

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Prof. Dr. Tatyana Angelova