

REVIEW

by Prof. Nelly Stoyanova Ivanova, Dr. Habil. - Professor at Sofia University
"St. Kl. Ohridski"

of the materials submitted for participation in the competition
for the academic position "**Associate Professor**"
at Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv

in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences

professional orientation 1.3 Pedagogy of teaching in... (Methodology of Mastering Bulgarian
Language in Kindergarten)

In the competition for "associate professor", announced in the State Gazette, No. 57 of 26.06.2020 and on the web page of Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv for the needs of the Department of Preschool Pedagogy at the Faculty of Pedagogy, **Ekaterina Georgieva Cherneva** participates **as a candidate** from Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

1. General overview of the received materials

Subject:

With order No P33-4710 of 25.09.2020 by the Rector of Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv (PU) I have been appointed as member of the scientific jury for the competition for the academic position of '**Associate Professor**' at PU in area of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional field 1.3 Pedagogy of teaching in... (Methodology of Mastering Bulgarian Language in Kindergarten) announced in the State Gazette, No. 57 of 26.06.2020 and on the web page of Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv, for the needs of the Department of Preschool Pedagogy at the Faculty of Pedagogy at the PU "Paisii Hilendarski".

To participate in the announced competition for *Associate Professor*, the candidate has submitted documents as an only candidate Chief Assistant-Professor Dr. **Ekaterina Georgieva Cherneva** – PU "Paisii Hilendarski".

The presented set of materials in a printed and an electronic form is in accordance with the Regulations for development of the academic staff of PU, and includes the following documents:

- Application;
- CV;
- Diplomas and Diploma Supplements (Bachelor's and Master's degrees, Doctoral Degree, Certificate for English Proficiency);
- Work Experience Certificate;

- Documents of teaching activity;
- Document containing a record of scientific and project activity;
- Protocol by the Faculty Council;
- Individual scientometric indicators and their compliance with the minimal national requirements;
- List of publications;
- Declaration of originality;
- Scientific publications (1 monograph, 1 book based on the defended dissertation for the awarded educational and scientific degree "Doctor", 1 article in a refereed journal, 3 articles in a textbook for Master's students and 20 scientific articles in non-refereed publications); and others. Annotations of scientific papers in Bulgarian and English Languages;
- Documents certifying the candidate's involvement in teaching and research activities, etc.

The candidate for *Associate Professor* Ekaterina Cherneva has suggested **for review a total of 26 scientific works**, namely: 1 monograph, 1 book based on the defended dissertation for the awarded educational and scientific degree "Doctor", 1 article in a refereed journal, 3 articles in a textbook for Master's students and 20 scientific articles, and a list of 26 research papers (plus 3 publications that are explicitly stated to be related to the dissertation).

26 scientific papers are accepted for review which are outside the dissertation and are taken into account in the final assessment.

3 scientific papers on the dissertation are not reviewed (3 articles, published in the Journal "Primary Education" in 1995, 1997 and 1998), they have served for the purposes of a previous procedure - to defend a dissertation for the acquisition of doctoral degree.

2. **Brief biographical data (of the applicant)**

Ekaterina Cherneva graduated in Primary School Pedagogy at Higher Pedagogical Institute - Blagoevgrad, in 1986. She holds a Master's degree in Teaching Methodology in Primary School Pedagogy - PU "P. Hilendarski" since 1992. Doctor of pedagogy since 2000, after doctoral studies at FDNU - Faculty of Children's and Primary Teachers (now FNOI - Faculty of Education and Arts) at Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski". From 1986 to 2016 she was a primary school teacher at the "V. Petleshkov" Primary School Plovdiv. At the same time - in the period from 2000 to 2016, she was a part-time lecturer in Methodology of Bulgarian Language Teaching at the primary school at

the Department of Primary School Pedagogy at Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv. Since 2016 she has been a senior assistant at the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv in the Methodology of Mastering Bulgarian Language in Kindergarten. She also works at the Department for Qualification and Professional Development of Pedagogical Specialists at the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv, in TsKOKUO (Center for assessment in preschool and school education) - Ministry of Education and Science. She is a member of the Ethics Committee of the FP at PU Paisii Hilendarski since 2020. She has a total of 34 years of teaching experience.

3. General characteristics of the candidate's activity

The teaching and research activity of E. Cherneva is rich and diverse.

From the reference for classroom and extracurricular activity in the set of documents on the procedure it is evident that the candidate for associate professor **has much more than the required classroom activity** (over 800 hours per year) in the majors Preschool Pedagogy, Preschool Pedagogy and Foreign Language, Preschool and Primary School Pedagogy. In these majors E. Cherneva holds lecture courses, seminars and teacher training in the discipline *Methodology of mastering Bulgarian language in kindergarten* - in Bachelor's and Master's programs. At the same time, at the Bachelor level in the majors Preschool and Primary School Pedagogy, Primary School Pedagogy and Primary School Pedagogy and a Foreign Language she teaches the discipline *Methodology of teaching Bulgarian language at the initial stage of primary education* - lectures and seminars, in Bachelor's and Master's programs (Preschool and Primary School Pedagogy and "Teach For Bulgaria"). In the Master's programs of the PPSP major she conducts lecture courses and seminars in the disciplines *Technology of mastering Bulgarian language in kindergarten*, *Technology of mastering Bulgarian language in the initial stage of primary education*. She also teaches the discipline *Alternatives in language learning and speech development training in preschool and primary school age* - lectures and seminars - in the major Alternatives in preschool and primary school pedagogy – for Master's. In the Master's program Pedagogical Interaction and Creativity in Kindergarten and Primary School of Sofia University she teaches the discipline *Pedagogical interaction and creativity in mastering the language in preschool age* - lectures and seminars. E. Cherneva **has developed curricula in these disciplines** for Bachelor's and Master's degree. In her teaching activity she **uses modern teaching methods and the latest achievements of communication and information technologies.**

E. Cherneva is a **reviewer** of diploma theses. **She consults** students, graduates, teacher trainers. **She participates in examination committees** for semester and state exams, in the **prospective student campaigns of PU**, in **accreditation committees**, etc. **She is the supervisor** and consultant of over 40 Bachelor's and Master's degree graduates as well as **of students and PhD students** for participation in student scientific forums, and **of primary teachers**, candidates for the acquisition of the 3rd professional qualification degree. **She is an active participant in webinars, scientific conferences, doctoral schools, seminars**, etc.

She takes part in **research projects** by MES and PU "P. Hilendarski".

She is an active participant in all initiatives of PU "P. Hilendarski".

She is reviewer of scientific papers.

The rich and diverse teaching and research activities of the candidate is evidence of the high level of her teaching, pedagogical and methodological training.

The scientific and applied activity of the candidate for *Associate Professor* E. Cherneva are closely connected with her teaching and learning activities. Evidence of this are **her scientific publications**.

In the procedure for the scientific position of *Associate Professor* a total of 26 scientific publications have been proposed for review, namely: 1 monograph, 1 book based on the defended dissertation for the awarded educational and scientific degree "Doctor", 1 article in a refereed journal with impact rank, 3 articles in a textbook for Master's students and 20 scientific articles in non-refereed publications, (of which 5 papers in proceedings volumes from international conferences and scientific forums held abroad (in English) and in Bulgaria; 2 papers in proceedings volumes from national conferences; 8 articles in national scientific-methodical journals; 1 in a jubilee collection; 4 in collections of scientific publications, editions of the University Publishing House "P. Hilendarski" (2 of these publications are in co-authorship - with one co-author). The author has stated that all her publications are peer-reviewed.

From the publications proposed by E. Cherneva for the purposes of the competition for *Associate Professor* the following titles of works that have scientific, scientific-applied, applied and methodological contributions and can be distinguished:

–**Monograph** "An educational model for the formation of the child's fine motor skills."

University Publishing House "P. Hilendarski", Plovdiv, 2020. The author offers **alternative options for the formation of fine motor skills of the child in kindergarten and in first grade**. Based on an in-depth and correct interpretation of theoretical statements from

various sources and authors of publications on fine motor skills and their importance for mastering writing, the need for the formation of children's fine motor skills is argued. A thorough analysis of the results of a study on the level of fine motor skills in a preparatory group is presented – through the *author's own test* for the study of fine motor skills. This becomes the basis for the further development of the *author's original educational model for preparing the child's hand for writing in kindergarten and in the initial stage of the basic educational degree*. *The scientific, scientific-applied and methodological contributions* of the author are the results from the creation, substantiation and enrichment of the methodical ideas for the preparation of the children's hand for writing, presented in the form of a game and graded by difficulty. Special attention is paid to the problems of fine motor skills in the pre-letter stage of literacy in the first grade. Based on the analysis of the results of the study of fine motor skills in the pre-letter period are created and justified **methodical ideas for the development of fine motor skills in the pre-letter period**. The current problem of the "writing by hand vs keyboard" ratio is also interpreted. *New methodological ideas in a given scientific field and the related problems are substantiated*.

– Published **book** on the basis of a defended dissertation for the awarded educational and scientific degree "Doctor" "**Pedagogical aspects of the values orientation of the child in primary school age**", Fast Print Books, 2020. Based on an in-depth theoretical analysis of the problem of education of values and values orientation of children of primary school age in the rapidly changing socio-economic conditions and the analysis of the results of the application of specific methods (*Who's who interview? (to reveal the qualities of the characters from Bulgarian folk tales); Guess who's in the hat game!; "The choice of the director"; ranking favourite characters from children's stories and TV shows for children; assessment work in mathematics; sociometric method; Kelly test; Kelly's Repertoire Grids test*), are proposed and substantiated specific **methodological options aimed at forming a values orientation of students in terms of interpersonal interaction during teamwork**. *The scientific, scientific-applied and methodological contributions* of the author stem from the creation and substantiation of specific methodological ideas for the formation of values orientation of students in terms of interpersonal interaction. *The author's hypothesis is substantiated. New methodological ideas in the scientific field and related problems are proposed and argued*.

– **Article** in an indexed and referenced journal "**Innovative options for the development of phonemic hearing in preschool age**", In: **Pedagogy**, S., 2018, No. 5, pp 657-664. This is an article in a magazine with an impact rank. Emphasis is placed on the speech hearing

development in preschool age. **A model created by the author, consisting of systematized exercises in game variants, supporting the aural perception, aural attention and aural memory of the child in the preschool period,** is proposed and justified. The game is at the basis for mastering the sound culture. The exercises in the model are suitable both for the conditions of the kindergartens and for application at home. These are at the foundation for the *scientific, scientific-applied, applied and methodological contributions* of the author in the substantiation of specific methodological ideas for the development of the phonemic hearing of the preschool child. *The author's hypothesis is substantiated. New methodological ideas in the scientific field and related problems are proposed and argued.*

–**Materials in teaching aids for students “Language teaching system in primary school.**

In: Manual for the state exam on the methodology of education in kindergarten and the initial stage of Secondary School, University Publishing House “P. Hilendarski”, 2015, pp. 67-78. ISBN 978-619-202-101-6. The curriculum is traced by grades, with an emphasis on the orthographic, spelling, punctuation and grammar rules that students must master. Special attention is paid to the formation of orthographic acuity in the first grade, to the spelling skills in the second and third grade, to the mastery of knowledge about the main parts of the sentence in the fourth grade. **"System for literary education in primary school. In: Manual for the state exam on the methodology of education in kindergarten and the initial stage of Secondary School, University Publishing House "P. Hilendarski", 2015, pp. 55-67.** The contents of the teaching of literature and the new concepts by classes are considered, and *specific methodological steps and ideas in the perception of different folklore and literary types: fairy tale, poem, story, fable* are offered. **"System of training in related oral and written speech. In: Manual for the state exam on the methodology of education in kindergarten and the initial stage of Secondary School, University Publishing House "P. Hilendarski", 2015, pp. 78-90. ISBN 978-619-202-101-6.** The educational content by classes is followed and the types of *retelling* and essays are presented. The methodological techniques for the development of students' speech at three levels - lexical, syntactic and level of related speech are interpreted. *The methodical steps for the formation of skills for creating different genre manifestations of students' oral and written speech - narration, description, reasoning* are presented. Through the interpretation of the curriculum in Bulgarian language and literature in the initial stage of the basic educational degree and through the methodological ideas proposed and summarized by the author in the articles in this manual, the students' preparation for

the state exam is facilitated. These are at the foundation for the *scientific-applied, applied and methodological contributions* of the author. *The author's hypothesis is substantiated.*
The author's hypothesis is substantiated.

–From the *articles published in non-referenced editions*, the following publications of E. Cherneva in scientific-methodical journals can be distinguished:

–*The article "Alternatives for the formation of sound culture in preschool age."* In: "Education", 2015, No. 4, p.102-112. The problem of development of the phonemic hearing of the child in preschool age is interpreted. The **methodical ideas and game techniques for the preparation for literacy of children, for the development of their phonemic hearing** are justified. This is the basis for the *scientific-applied and methodological contributions* of the author's ideas in the article. *New ideas in a scientific field and related problems are proposed and argued.*

- *The article "Readiness for Literacy"*. In: Pedagogy, 2015, No. 6, pp. 857-867. Based on the analysis of the results of a study, proposed and justified are **alternative methodological ideas for the implementation of the native language education in the kindergarten and the preparation of the child for mastering the reading and writing in the process of literacy**. These are the justifications for the *scientific-applied and methodological contributions* of the author's ideas, found in the article. *New ideas in a scientific field and related problems are proposed and argued.*

- *The article "Alternatives in the morphological development of children in preschool age"*. In: "Home, child, kindergarten", 2016, No. 2, pp. 11-25. Proposed and justified are **methodical ideas for 12 games for mastering the parts of speech**. These are the justifications for the *scientific-applied and methodological contributions* of the author's ideas, found in the article. *Proposed and argued are new ideas in a scientific field and related problems. The author's hypothesis is substantiated.*

– From *the reports, published in proceedings of international and national conferences, and scientific forums* the following publications can be highlighted:

- Cherneva E. **Options for development of coherent speech in kindergarten**. In: The second International conference on education development and psychological science in Eurasia, Venna, November 27, 2015, p. 33-40. **Methodical ideas for using the short genres (note, invitation, greeting card, letter) for early learning of related speech in kindergarten** are proposed and argued. These are the justifications for the *scientific, scientific-applied and methodological contributions* of the author's ideas,

found in the report. *Proposed and argued are new ideas in a scientific field and related problems. The author's hypothesis is substantiated.*

- Cherneva, E. **The use of MIND MAPPING in teaching native language in nursery school.** – The sixth International conference on education development and psychological science in Eurasia, Venna, September 19, 2016, p. 17-23. **Methodological ideas for the use of mind maps in kindergarten and at home in mastering the parts of speech, the adjective in particular, have been proposed and substantiated.** These are the justifications for the *scientific, scientific-applied and methodological contributions of the author's ideas*, found in the report. *Proposed and argued are new ideas in a scientific field and related problems. The author's hypothesis is substantiated.*
- Cherneva, E.G. **The Use of Mind Maps in the Associated Speech Training in Kindergarten.** International conference on modern researches in science and technology (Germany, Berlin), Conference Proceedings, January 31, 2017, Scientific public organization Professional Science BERLIN, GERMANY. 2017, p. 440-446. **Methodical ideas for using mind maps when creating a narrative text by the child in kindergarten** are proposed and argued. These are the justifications for the *scientific, scientific-applied and methodological contributions* of the author's ideas, found in the report. *Proposed and argued are new ideas in a scientific field and related problems. The author's hypothesis is substantiated.*
- The article "**Stimulating the speech development of the child in preschool age through the use of information technology.**" In: Information technologies in education - challenges and opportunities. Proceedings of the scientific-practical conference "Mathematics, Informatics, Information Technology, Application in Education", Plovdiv, UP "P. Hilendarski", 2019, pp. 333-343. Emphasis is placed on the integration of information technology in vocabulary work with preschool children and specific **methodical ideas for enriching children's vocabulary** are proposed. These are the justifications for the *scientific, scientific-applied and methodological contributions* of the author's ideas, found in the report. *Proposed and argued are new ideas in a scientific field and related problems. The author's hypothesis is substantiated.*
- The report "**Didactometry and readiness in the preparatory group of the kindergarten.**" In: Classics and innovations in pedagogical practice. IV International Pedagogical Forum, Asenovgrad, 2019. Emphasis is placed on the continuity between the kindergarten and the primary school in the educational field "Bulgarian language and literature".

Proposed and justified is **an alternative variant, containing the main groups of tasks for outgoing diagnostics of the achieved level of language development of the seven-year-old child.** These are the justifications for the *scientific, scientific-applied and methodological contributions* of the author's ideas, found in the report. *Proposed and argued are new ideas in a scientific field and related problems. The author's hypothesis is substantiated.*

- The article in a collection published by UP "Paisii Hilendarski", **"Early Reading Learning in the Global Society and the Opportunities of Bulgarian Preschool Education."** In the collection **"Man and Global Society"**, Plovdiv, UP "Paisii Hilendarski", 2019, pp. 119-129. The problem of early reading education in some countries has been interpreted, specifying its place in Bulgarian preschool education. The results of the research conducted for two consecutive years (2017 and 2018) with children from kindergartens in Plovdiv are summarized and analysed. **Game options for forming interest in reading and for increasing the motivation for learning of the five-six-years-old child** are argued for. *Proposed and justified are new ideas in a scientific field and related problems.*
- The article **Methodical options for the formation of dialogical speech at preschool age.** In: Balkans scientific vector, 2020, Band 4, No. 1 (7), pp. 67-71. **Methodological options for the development of related oral dialogic speech for each age group from three to seven years of age, suitable for teaching children with poor command of the Bulgarian language** are developed and defended. These are the justifications for the *scientific, scientific-applied and methodological contributions* of the author's ideas, found in the report. *Proposed and argued are new ideas in a scientific field and related problems. The author's hypothesis is substantiated.*
- The article **"Mastering spelling rules in the first grade in terms of remote learning."** In: Management and Education, University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov", Burgas, Volume 16 (3), 2020, pp. 30-37. An analysis of a diagnostic study to establish the degree of mastery of spelling rules in Bulgarian in first grade in terms of remote learning is presented. The advantages of remote learning are indicated. Difficulties were also found in the process of online learning at the initial stage of the basic educational degree. These are the justifications for the *scientific-applied contributions* of the author's ideas, found in the report. *The author's hypothesis is substantiated.*
- The review focuses on some of the scientific publications, which are the original ideas of E. Cherneva. No attention is paid to scientific publications, articles and reports, that are co-

authored. But it is necessary to emphasize that **the candidate is part of the team of authors who created textbooks in Bulgarian language and literature approved by the Ministry of Education and Science** - on the previous curricula in Bulgarian language and literature (created by a team with two more co-authors and approved by the Ministry of Education and Science in the period 2003-2005, namely: Tankova, R.K. Cherneva, V. Ivanova. Bulgarian language textbook for third grade, Prosveta, 2004; Tankova, R.K. Cherneva, V. Ivanova. Bulgarian language 4. Grade, Prosveta, 2005, etc.). They are not proposed for review, but are listed in the reference to the cited sources. The creation of textbooks in Bulgarian language and literature for the initial stage of the basic educational degree is **proof of the application of the methodical ideas of E. Cherneva in school practice**, for *scientific-applied, applied and methodological contributions* in her research work.

I accept the scientific, scientific-applied, applied and methodological contributions derived by E. Cherneva. The contributions found in the candidate's publications are related *with the formation of the sound culture and speech hearing of the child, with the enrichment and development of their vocabulary, with the formation and development of grammatically correct speech, the connected oral and written speech, the fine motor skills of the child, with the preparation for literacy, with the level of mastering the spelling skills in the conditions of remote learning, with the development of a system for the development of the connected oral and written speech of the students in the initial stage of education*, etc. In the publications of E. Cherneva the proposed, substantiated and approved in practice specific methodological ideas and models of teaching Bulgarian language and literature in preschool and primary school age the *scientific, scientific-applied, applied and methodological contributions* are evident. **The proposed methodological ideas are an original author's construct, created and substantiated by the candidate on the basis of conducted research.**

From the documents proposed under the procedure it is evident that the applicant for *Associate Professor* has the required number of **citations** in monographs (1) and in articles in unreferenced journals with scientific review, and in conference proceedings and anniversary collections (15), by Bulgarian authors. The noted citations are in publications by authors who are outside the teams in which the candidate has participated. The cited publications by the candidate for associate professor have not been used for the purposes of other previous procedures.

The reference regarding the individual scientometric indicators and their compliance with the minimal national requirements attached to the documents in the procedure shows that **the quantita-**

tive indicators of the criteria for holding the academic position *associate professor* are met, and for some of the indicators the number of points significantly exceeds the requirements.

4. Assessment of the candidate's personal contribution

The research and applied research activities of the candidate are distinguished by the depth and correctness of the conducted research, with the diversity of her research interests, with the continuous development, further development and upgrading of her ideas. They are evidence of scientific achievements and are of a contributing nature to the development of the scientific field in which she works. Through her scientific publications E. Cherneva contributes to the creation of new and enrichment of existing methodological ideas for teaching Bulgarian language and literature both in preschool and at the initial stage of basic education. Through the proposed and substantiated original concepts and author's models for teaching the Bulgarian language, she casually establishes a connection and continuity between these two stages in the education and development of the child - preschool and primary school age. The author's models presented in the publications have been tested in practice and the results of their application have been thoroughly analysed. This is where *the scientific, scientific-applied, applied and methodological contributions of the publications of the candidate for associate professor* lie.

5. Critical remarks and recommendations

I recommend that E. Cherneva creates a comprehensive methodology for teaching Bulgarian language and literature in preschool and at the initial stage of basic education, **by presenting the opportunities for continuity in training and proposing methodological ideas for their implementation.**

6. Personal impressions

E. Cherneva's publications are a testament to the depth and consistency of her research and teaching work, to a correct and conscientious attitude to the problems she studies, to her broad interests, to her creativity.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials submitted by Ekaterina Georgieva Cherneva, **meet all** requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act in Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), the Regulations for application of ZRASRB and the respective Regulations of PU "Paisii Hilendarski".

The candidate in the competition **has** presented a **sufficient** number of scientific papers published after the materials used in the defense for the educational scientific degree 'Doctor'. In the works of the candidate there are original scientific, scientific-applied, applied and methodical contributions, which have received international recognition, as some of them are published in journals and scientific collections, published by international academic publishers. Her theoretical explorations have practical applicability, as some of them are directly oriented to the work in education. The scientific and teaching qualification of the candidate in professional field 1.3 Pedagogy of training in ... (Methodology of Mastering Bulgarian Language in Kindergarten) **is unquestionable**.

The results achieved by Ekaterina Georgieva Cherneva in teaching and research activities **fully** comply with the specific requirements of the Faculty of Pedagogy, adopted in connection with the Rules of PU for application of ZRASRB.

After getting acquainted with the materials and scientific works presented in the competition, analysing their significance and the scientific, scientific-applied, applied and methodological contributions contained in them, and taking into account the depth, professionalism and ethics in the teaching and research work of the candidate, I find it reasonable to give my **positive** assessment and to recommend to the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Pedagogy for the election of **Ekaterina Georgieva Cherneva** to the academic position of 'Associate Professor' at the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv in professional field 1.3 Pedagogy of teaching in ... (Methodology of Mastering Bulgarian Language in Kindergarten)

10.10. 2020

Reviewer:

(Prof. Nelly Ivanova, Dr. Habil.)
(academic position, name and surname)