

## REVIEW

by Prof. Dr. Irina Koleva Koleva - Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"  
of the materials submitted for participation in the competition for the academic position:  
"Professor"

at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" - Smolyan Branch by field of higher education 1.  
Pedagogical sciences; professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (Theory of education and didactics)

In the competition for 'Professor', announced in the State Gazette, issue 40 of 14.05.2021.  
and on the website of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" for the needs of the  
Department: "Philological and Pedagogical Sciences" at the Branch in Smolyan, as a  
candidate participates Assoc. Prof. Sc.D. Nina Dimitrova Gerdzhikova from Paisii  
Hilendarski University of Plovdiv - Smolyan Branch.

### 1. General presentation of the received materials

In the competition for the academic position: "Professor", documents were submitted by one candidate - Associate Professor Sc.D. Nina Dimitrova Gerdzhikova. The documents submitted by the candidate are in accordance with the requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act, the Regulations for its implementation, as well as the Regulations for the development of the academic staff of Paisii Hilendarski University and the additional requirements of the Faculty of Pedagogy. The presented package of documents meets the minimum national requirements for the scientific field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences; Professional field 1.2. (Theory of education and didactics). The candidate provides for review a habilitation monograph, two independent monographs, 1 co-authored monograph, 5 studies, 11 articles in referenced and indexed world-famous databases, 47 articles in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes, 1 textbook and 1 workbook.

#### Subject:

With order № P33-3120 from 12.07.2021. of the Rector of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" (UP) I have been appointed a member of the scientific jury of the competition for the academic position "Professor" in the University in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences; Professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (Theory of education and didactics), announced for the needs of the Department of Philological and Pedagogical Sciences at the Branch in Smolyan.

For participation in the announced competition are submitted documents by:

Assoc. Prof. Sc.D. Nina Dimitrova Gerdzhikova from Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv – Branch in Smolyan.

Presented by Assoc. Prof. Nina Dimitrova Gerdzhikova set of materials on paper is in accordance with the Regulations for the development of the academic staff of University of Plovdiv, and includes all necessary documents such as application form to the Rector for

admission to the competition, CV in European format, diplomas, list of scientific works and so on.

The candidate Nina Dimitrova Gerdzhikova has attached a total of 5 studies, 4 monographs, 1 textbook and 1 workbook, 58 articles, as well as a list of research papers. 69 scientific papers are accepted for review, which are outside the dissertation for the scientific degree "Doctor of Science", for educational and scientific degree "Doctor" and academic position "Associate Professor". In the final evaluation are considered the participation in 3 national educational projects for which the relevant certificates are attached. 1 article published by a large number of co-authors is not reviewed. The distribution of scientific works corresponds to the indicators in the minimum national requirements in scientific field 1. Pedagogical sciences.

## **2. Brief biographical data of the candidate**

Assoc. Prof. Nina Dimitrova Gerdzhikova has been a lecturer in pedagogical disciplines since 1985, initially at the D. Petrov Teachers' Training Institute, Smolyan, and later as an assistant and chief assistant, doctor at the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv – Branch Smolyan since 1992. Since 2002 she was elected to "Associate Professor" in the same institution. From her appointment until now, the candidate has taught the scientific disciplines: Didactics, Theory of Education, Introduction to Pedagogy, Comparative Pedagogy, Pedagogy. She has been elected to head of the department three times, which confirms her broad scientific competence and qualities for the administration of internal academic processes.

## **3. General characteristics of the candidate's activity**

### ***3.1. Assessment of educational and pedagogical activity and preparation of the candidate***

Currently, the candidate provides training in the following lecture courses: Didactics, Theory of Education, Primary Pedagogy, Pedagogy and Inclusive Education. All of them are structural for determining the acquisition of professional competencies by future teachers. The published textbook on pedagogy and the workbook on multicultural education are proof of professional competencies of Assoc. Prof. Gerdzhikova. The conceptual apparatus used by her corresponds to both the traditions and the modern tendencies in the pedagogical knowledge. Both learning tools contain a didactic aid that contributes to the acquisition of pedagogical and research competencies by students.

The candidate connects her activity as a lecturer with the support of students from different specialties to enter the field of research. This is confirmed by the student conference for scientific and artistic creativity organized by her in 2018, in which a relatively large number of students participate, relative to the demographic characteristics of the institution in which she works - 28. She is also the compiler of the peer-reviewed collection, reflecting the reports of students.

Assoc. Prof. Gerdzhikova also taught Erasmus students in German.

She was the supervisor of four diploma theses of Bachelor's degree students.

She is the research supervisor of a doctoral student who has successfully defended her dissertation.

### ***3.2. Evaluation of the scientific and scientific-applied activity of the candidate***

The candidate presents two independent monographs and one co-authored, in addition to the habilitation monograph. The first is related to an in-depth analysis of the didactic categories of education, learning content, learning knowledge and tasks, teaching and learning, formative and summative assessment of students. In each chapter of the monograph "Conducting and diagnosing classroom learning" the author demonstrates competence to interpret research in the scientific field of pedagogy. In clarifying each of the categories, it follows the logic of the procedural cognitive-constructivist description. In this way it gives impetus to the use of traditional didactic categories in the context of the accelerated development of the methodology of pedagogical sciences.

The monograph, entitled "Theory of Multicultural Education" presents a consistent pedagogical theory of multiculturalism and multicultural education based on a comparative analysis of different theories. An in-depth study of the preparation of students for work in the conditions of the "multicultural school" was carried out: based on the experience of F.R. Germany. The author emphasizes cultural pluralism and performs a functional analysis of its educational benefits.

The articles submitted for the competition by Assoc. Prof. Gerdzhikova are as follows:

11 of them are in journals included in the authoritative scientific database Web of Science, 6 of them present specific empirical results from pedagogical research, 4 of the articles consider the attitudes of teachers from different stages of the educational system to multilingualism, pedagogical approaches and techniques for interaction with bilingual students.

Two of the articles are co-authored, which is evidence of teamwork in pedagogical research (one of them is not reviewed due to the large number of co-authors). The use of tools created by an international group of researchers allows her to establish the specific competence profile of the teacher working in a multicultural educational environment. 5 of the same group of publications are theoretical in nature and address issues important for the practice in our country, such as the need to inspect the school institution, the introduction of the concept of "design" to describe the communication process in learning, self-control of eating behavior and perception of emotions of early adolescence.

The other 2 articles interpret in a pragmatic way the need for mastering digital competencies and the methodological aspects for the emergence of pedagogical anthropology (according to German sources). Two reflect the empirical data from the candidate's individual study, which is part of her work in the international team.

27 articles have been published in peer-reviewed scientific journals. 8 of them are in English and have been published in foreign scientific and scientific-methodical journals. The other articles are in internationally recognized and central editions of the Ministry of Education and Science, such as the journals "Vocational Education", "i-continuing education", "Pedagogy", "Bulgarian Journal of Education", "Strategies of educational and scientific policy" and others. 12 of the articles deal with didactic issues such as teaching evaluation, alternative construction of teaching, the specifics of inclusive education and training, teaching and

textbooks in various subjects. 2 of the articles are related to practical ideas for reforming the Bulgarian school, and 3 reflect the author's efforts to outline the competence profile of the modern Bulgarian teacher.

20 articles have been published in peer-reviewed collective volumes of scientific conferences or those published in honor of established Bulgarian scholars in the field of teaching Bulgarian language, English and reflective pedagogy. In essence, they cover the already mentioned topics and research techniques in other publications. Therefore, here I will highlight the two publications (№ 33 and № 36) related to the initial testing of two instruments for measuring the emotional perceptions of students, created by Assoc. Prof. Gerdzhikova. The idea set out in them is to use them to establish the momentary or procedural self-assessment related to the learning process. Both qualitative research, reflecting the perceptions of 13-year-old students about science and the multimodal analysis of lesson articles from the textbook "Man and Nature", are of interest, too.

In the collective monograph "The Reform of the Network of Schools in Modern Society" three of the four chapters, the introduction and the conclusion are written by Assoc. Prof. Gerdzhikova. The contributing nature of the exhibition is expressed in the author's chosen point of view on compulsory secondary education in England, Germany and Bulgaria, namely - how to differentiate and individualize the intra-school organization of education. The author offers exemplary solutions for achieving this important educational goal in our country in the fourth chapter (p. 138).

The collection brings together 5 studies that trace chronologically the emergence and development of ideas related to didactic problems: preparing students for pedagogical interaction in a "multicultural" environment, theories of the teaching process in secondary education, the nature and classification of learning tasks, multimodal analysis of the textbook and approaches to language learning. The studies do not overlap in content with other publications of the author, containing similar keywords in their titles. They could be successfully used in the education of students of pedagogical specialties as they have an overview character and are written in accessible language.

#### **4. Contributions (scientific, scientific-applied, applied) and citations**

I would systematize the contributions in the habilitation work – the monograph “School as a pedagogical space of restlessness. The emotional experience and effectiveness of management and Organization” - as follows:

##### ***4.1. In theoretical terms:***

- consistently applies a three-level argumentative structure of the considered pedagogical categories: knowledge of ...; knowledge of how...; knowledge of why...; on the basis of this structure the author's concept for the creation of age school pedagogies crystallizes;
- offers a new point of view for studying the pedagogical reality; the exhibition is an attempt to substantiate the leading emotions in the relevant stages of school education as a starting point for the organization of teaching, education and pedagogical counseling and to assess the effectiveness of the individual school;

#### **4.2. Empirically / research-wise:**

- the monograph contains rich information about the organization of education, upbringing and pedagogical counseling in various European schools (German and English), which can serve as incentives for the functioning of innovative schools in our country; it also contains a scientifically based critical analysis of the school development program, as well as tested statistical indicators for determining the effectiveness of school activities (pp.253-265, pp. 73-159).

In the following I will summarize the scientific contributions of Assoc. Prof. Gerdzhikova in the scientific production presented by her on all indicators from the table of the minimum scientific requirements for the scientific position "Professor" in the professional field 1.2. Pedagogy.

- formulation or substantiation of a new theory or hypothesis: this is contained in the habilitation monograph and in the monograph on multicultural education, in which the author substantiates her point of view for defining age pedagogies from the point of view of pedagogical criteria, and in the other monograph - for creating overall pedagogical concept for multicultural education;

- proving with new means of essential new aspects of already existing problems: in the empirical researches for the emotions (in article № 1 under item 6 and in the articles № 14,15,16, 17,18, 23,33,36 under item 6). 7); in the empirical research related to the work of the teacher in a multicultural environment (articles № 8, 9, 10, 11 under item 6 and articles № 21, 22 under item 7): in them the author presents statistically substantiated conclusions about the emotional assessments of 13 -year-old students and the profile of the teacher, working in a multicultural environment;

- substantiates significant new aspects on the topic of training of pedagogical specialists and their acquisition of competencies for work in a multicultural environment (publications № 9, 10, 13, 29, 31, 32, 34, 40, 45 under item 7); on the topic of evaluating the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of the school (articles № 6, 7 under item 6 and articles № 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 12, 19 under item 7); on the topic of the educational content and the interests of the students (articles № 26, 27, 30, 35, 37, 38, 39 under item 7);

- proves the need for diversification of the school network in Bulgaria by presenting a wide range of confirming facts, the result of analysis of scientific articles and normative documents (in the monograph "The reform of the school network in modern society");

- offers ideas and a limited range of empirical facts for the prevention of health and health status and lifestyle of young people of reproductive age (articles № 4 under item 6 and articles № 7, 11, 42, 44 under item 7).

The good foreign language preparation of the candidate, which is proved by the translation from German of the monograph "Anthropology of Education" by Chr. Wolf is evident in her entire scientific work. This gives her the opportunity to carry out comparative pedagogical research and make scientific predictions, as seen in her article "Performative in pedagogical knowledge - a new impetus for its development" (Article № 47 under item 7). In it the author

outlines the new possibilities for structuring and interpreting the theoretical and practical pedagogical knowledge.

The quotations given in Annex № 7 confirm the above.

Associate Professor Gerdzhikova has been cited twice in journals that are part of the prestigious Web of Science database. Two detailed quotations are contained in two monographs. The remaining citations are in national periodicals or in series of various universities in the country.

Among the authors who have quoted Assoc. Prof. Gerdzhikova, one can find the names of established Bulgarian scientists in the field of theory of education and didactics and in teaching methods such as: Prof. Dr. P. D. Petrov (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"), Prof. Dr. G. Hristozova (Burgas Free University), Prof. Dr. L. Milkov (University of National and World Economy), Prof. Dr. R. Milkova (Sofia University "Konstantin Preslavski"), Prof. Sc.D. V. Delibaltova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"); Prof. Dr. D. Gospodinov (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"). Among the names of the cited are colleagues of the candidate from the University of Plovdiv "Paisii Hilendarski" such as Assoc. Prof. Dr. F. Boykova, Dr. P. Dimitrova, Dr. M. Mihaylov.

Completely natural, there are quotes from the doctoral student, who defended her dissertation under the scientific guidance of Assoc. Prof. Nina Gerdzhikova - Evg. Mihaylova.

The quotations are applied only as part of the implementation of indicator E, items 11, 12 and 13 and have not been used in previous procedures of the candidate.

## **5. Assessment of the personal contribution of the candidate.**

From the above it is clear that the candidate has a personal scientific contribution to the published monographs, articles, studies, textbook and workbook. In each of her publications, Assoc. Prof. N. Gerdzhikova manages to find the rational point of view on the topic on which she has chosen to write. The contributions formulated and the empirical data obtained are the result of her personal research efforts and her participation in intra-university and international research networks.

The candidate's works contain original scientific and applied contributions, which have received national recognition insofar as they have been published in central scientific journals (published by Az Buki) and in numerous collective volumes related to scientific life in the country. The monographs are in volume, many times exceeding the legal requirements of 99 pages. Theoretical developments have practical applicability in the field of evaluating the effectiveness of the school and in the innovative organization of education and upbringing. Some of the publications would be a useful addition to the candidate's academic work. The scientific and teaching qualification of Assoc. Prof. Nina Gerdzhikova is undoubted.

## **6. Critical remarks and recommendations**

My recommendations to the candidate are related to the following:

- To deepen his theoretical research in the context of the Anthropology of education in the synthetic field in pedagogy.
- To develop a theoretical and empirical model for the specifics of application of multicultural pedagogical forms of interaction and connect it with transition to intercultural models in Bulgarian education.
- To apply her experience at the level of Master's degree and Doctor's degree in curricula and in other higher education institutions in our country and in the European context (especially in German-speaking countries).

## **7. Personal impressions**

I know the teaching activity of Assoc. Prof. Gerdzhikova from her participation in a project led by me (Training of teachers for the formation of knowledge, skills and competencies to work in an intercultural environment), 2013. As a training leader, I would like to share the inherent responsibility, depth and professional competence of Associate Professor Gerdzhikova in conducting trainings with teachers from central and protected schools at the national level. She worthily presented the school of University of Plovdiv "P. Hilendarski". As a researcher, Assoc. Prof. Gerdzhikova stands out as a reflective and reformist type of researcher. That is why in the period 2013 - 2020 I had the pleasure of collaborating with her as a member initially of the advisory board and later of the editorial board of the Educational and Scientific Policy Strategies journal.

## **CONCLUSION**

The documents and materials presented by Assoc. Prof. Nina Dimitrova Gerdzhikova meet all the requirements of the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation and the respective Regulations of the University of Plovdiv "Paisii Hilendarski".

The candidate in the competition has presented the required number of scientific papers published after the materials used in the defense of educational and scientific degree "Doctor" and in the selection for the academic position "Associate Professor".

The achievements of Assoc.Prof. Nina Dimitrova Gerdzhikova results in teaching and research fully comply with the specific requirements of the Faculty of Pedagogy, adopted in connection with the Rules of the University of Plovdiv for the application of Academic Staff Development Act.

I confidently give my positive assessment and recommend to the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Pedagogy for the election of Assoc. Prof. Sc.D. Nina Dimitrova Gerdzhikova to the academic position of 'Professor' at the University of Plovdiv "Paisii Hilendarski" by professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (Theory of education and didactics).

31.08. 2021, Sofia

Reviewer: .....

Prof. Dr. Irina Koleva

