

## **REVIEW**

**by Prof Vera Tervel Marovska**

professor at the Faculty of Philology

at Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv

of the materials submitted for participation in the competition

to acquisition of the academic position **Associate Professor**

**at Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv**

in filed of higher education: 2. Humanitarian Sciences;

professional field 2.1. Philology (Bulgarian Language - Modern Bulgarian Language)

In the competition for "professor", announced in the State Gazette, No 32 of 09.04.2024 and on the website of Paisiy Hilendarski University of Plovdiv for the needs of the Department of Bulgarian Language at the Faculty of Philology, the only candidate is Chief Assistant Bistra Vasileva Dikova, PhD from Paisiy Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

### **1. General presentation of the received materials**

By order No. PD–21–1383 dated 25.06.2024 of the Rector of the Paisiy Hilendarski University of Plovdiv, I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury of a competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" at the University of Plovdiv in the field of higher education 2.1 Humanitarian Sciences; professional field 2.1. Philology (Bulgarian language - Modern Bulgarian language), announced for the needs of the Department of Bulgarian Language, the Faculty of Philology at the University of Plovdiv.

In the announced competition, the only candidate is Ch. Assist. Bistra Vasileva Dikova, PhD, from the same department.

The set of materials presented by Sn. Assist. Bistra Vasileva Dikova, PhD (administrative documents and scientific works) on paper and electronic media is in accordance with the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations on the Development of the Academic Staff of the University. All necessary documents with full text content are available. The material package includes:

- application form to the Rector of UP for admission to participate in the competition;
- Europass CV;
- list of scientific works;
- scientific works submitted for the competition for associate professor;
- list of citations;

- certificate of compliance with the minimum national requirements;
- annotations of the publications submitted for the competition for associate professor;
- self-assessment of contributions;
- declaration of originality and authenticity;
- certificate of work experience;
- reference for educational employment.

The candidate Bistra Vasileva Dikova, PhD, has submitted a research work corresponding to the number of points required for the position of associate professor according to the criteria of the National Center for Information and Documentation. The subject of review are 9 scientific works other than the doctoral dissertation from the period after 2014. Among them are 3 monographs (1. *Transitive uses of verb forms* (comparison between the Bulgarian and Czech languages). Plovdiv: University Press "Paisiy Hilendarski", 2024, 226 p. ISBN 978-619-202-963-0; 2. *Phonetics. Phonology. Speech culture*. Plovdiv: UP "Paisiy Hilendarski", 2024, 122 pp. ISBN 978-619-202-966-1; 3. *Content beyond form. Linguistic analysis of the literary text*. Plovdiv: UP "Paisiy Hilendarski", 2024, 234 pp. ISBN 978-619-202-956-2), 6 research articles; one review, 9 citations.

Bistra Dikova is the co-author of 14 scientific and applied publications "Language Culture Tests".

## **2. Brief biographical information about the candidate.**

Bistra Vasileva Dikova is born on 02.09.1962. She completes her secondary education in Plovdiv in 1980. From 1980 to 1984, she studies Slavic philology at the Paisiy Hilendarski University of Plovdiv and graduated with a Master's degree as a specialist in Czech language and literature and Bulgarian language and literature. In 2014, she acquires the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in field 2. Humanities, professional field 2.1. Philology.

In 1984 and 1985, she teaches Bulgarian language and literature in the village of Tsaratsovo, Plovdiv region. From 1985 to 1988, she works as librarian at the "Ivan Vazov" National Library in Plovdiv.

From 1987 to 1995, she was a philologist specialist at the Department of Bulgarian Language at the Faculty of Philology at the PU. In 1995, she became an assistant in the department. She was promoted to Senior Assistant in 2000 and to Chief Assistant in 2005.

She specialized in Brno (Czech Republic) and Bratislava (Slovakia).

She speaks Czech, Slovak, Russian and English.

## **3. General characteristics of the applicant's work.**

Bistra V. Dikova teaches lectures on phonetics, lexicology and stylistics of the modern Bulgarian language in the Bulgarian philology major and in all hybrid majors with a Bulgarian language component at the Faculty of Philology of the Plovdiv University. She also gave lectures on lexicology

and stylistics at the branch of the PU in Kardzhali (and for several years also at the branch of the PU in Smolyan). Her teaching load is more than 550 hours per year.

No less important for the potential of the candidate for the academic post of Associate Professor, is her overall participation in the processes at the Faculty of Philology.

Chief Assistant B. Dikova is a respected teacher and actively supports the students' creative activities and their participation in the scientific forums specialized for them. She is not only effectively involved in the guidance of the students in the preparation of their assignments and diploma theses, but also have significant contribution in the successful graduation and defense the doctoral theses of doctoral students from our faculty<sup>1</sup>. Relying on her experience in teaching, research and administrative competence, she is a reliable mentor and advisor for her students on issues of relevance to them in the aforementioned areas.

Bistra Dikova actively participates in the scientific organizational processes in the faculty - conferences and symposia, thematically organized round tables and discussions, in research groups during the implementation of certain scientific projects. She is also involved in the editorial teams preparing the honorary jubilee editions of her coworkers from the faculty.

She has been a long-term participant in the Accreditation Commission of the Faculty of Philology, as well as in the organization and conduct of campaigns for admission of new students (by preparing options and issuing application publications for the preparation of candidate students).

#### **Evaluation of the candidate's scientific and scientific-applied work:**

Bistra Dikova has presented a total of 43 publications. Of these, 28 are authored by her (3 monographs, 1 dissertation, 1 author's abstract of a dissertation for obtaining the scientific and educational degree "doctor", 22 articles and 1 review), 2 are with one co-author, 1 with two co-authors and 12 with three and more co-authors; 42 were published in Bulgaria and 2 - abroad. The quantitative parameters for holding the academic position Associate Professor are met in all groups of indicators - a total of 455 out of the required 400 points<sup>2</sup>.

In the competition for the academic position Associate Professor, Bistra V. Dikova participates with a package of 9 independent publications published in the period 2016-2024: 3 monographs, 5

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Among them is Dr. P. Lianguzov, a former student of ours majoring in Slavic philology, who successfully completed his studies at the Bulgarian Cultural Institute in Warsaw.

<sup>2</sup> 50 points in group A (for a dissertation for the award of an educational and scientific degree "doctor"), 100 points in group B (for a habilitation thesis - monograph), 225 points in group D (100 points for a published monograph that has not been presented as the main habilitation thesis, 75 points for a published book based on a defended dissertation work for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" and 50 points for articles and reports published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or in edited scientific works, i.e. . with 25 points more than the required minimum), as well as 80 points in group D (45 points for citations in monographs, 10 points for citations in a collective monograph with scientific review and 25 points for citations in non-refereed journals with scientific review, i.e. . with 30 points more than the required minimum).

articles (1 report in international conference abroad and 4 reports in scientific works of university) and 1 review.

In the competition for Associate Professor Bistra Dikova presents as her main habilitation thesis the monograph *Content beyond form. Linguistic analysis of the literary text* (Plovdiv: UP "Paisiy Hilendarski", 2024, 234 p. ISBN 978-619-202-956-2). In essence, we can refer it to the less frequently appearing theoretical developments with a marked pragmatic character, and its didactic focus is expressed in the emphasis on the skill to understand and interpret the written word works, especially the expressive-artistic samples, which has been much commented on recently. The overall theoretical concept of the research, presented in its first part (conditionally speaking, because it takes up about two thirds of the volume of the research - it covers about 180 pp.), is shown in detail, practically applied in the samples of the so-called linguistic analysis of the artistic works *Temptation* by Elin Pelin, *Bulgarians of Old Times* by L. Karavelov and *Gnoseology* by M. Basheva. This is an undeniably relevant decision, since the stylistic effect of the use of any linguistic structure is visible and proven as an expression in the concrete text, and is not simply described theoretically and, therefore, hypothetically. The connotative potential is differentiated according to the linguistic structural status of the phenomena described in five sections - phonetic, graphic, lexical, morphological and syntactic, and each of them includes the signs with connotative potential, or the connotators formed by the corresponding anomalous mechanisms. The last section is devoted to tropes: metaphors (personification, synesthesia, antonomasia, allegory, symbol), metonymies (synecdoche, periphrasis), irony, quantification tropes (hyperbole and meiosis, litota). The content of the text does not imply the conduct of a discussion, the imposition or refutation of certain theses and classifications, but rather represents one of the possible "static" pictures of the connotations existing in the language, marks of artistry, while arguments and counterarguments are concentrated in the adequate interpretation, presented in the linguistic-philosophical analyses. The value of the monograph is expressed in the skillful and functionally effective combination of theory and practice, proving the truth and didactic meaning of both.

The practical meaning of the complexity of the taught theory is convincingly proven in the second book with which B. Dikova participated in the *Phonetics. Phonology. Speech culture* (Plovdiv: UP "Paisiy Hilendarski", 2024, 122 pages. ISBN 978-619-202-966-1). At the same time, it is also a good example of the ability to emphasize the main and important by highlighting it among the less important and secondary. After showing the two points of view, on the basis of which phonetics and phonology are differentiated and defined as areas of knowledge, the author pays attention to the history of writing and the spelling principles underlying the system of modern Bulgarian spelling. The rest of the theoretical discussions in the book are devoted to the composition of the phoneme system and sound laws. After each theoretical section, the applicability of the facts explained in it in the analysis of speech samples is shown through a series of practical-applied tasks and guidelines for self-preparation.

The third monograph - *Transitive Uses of Verb Forms* (comparison between the Bulgarian and Czech languages) (Plovdiv: UP "Paisiy Hilendarski", 2024, 226 pages. ISBN 978-619-202-963-0; 2), with which B. Dikova participates in the competition for Associate Professor, is related to the research project at the basis of her doctoral thesis. It has two major and undeniably contributing tasks. On the one hand, to check whether the connotative mechanisms – of adding, dropping, displacing parts of the linguistic structure or using one means of expression instead of another, as a result of which an expressive-evaluative phenomenon is formed, are also characteristic of the Czech language, as well as for Bulgarian. On the other hand – to check whether these connotative reconstructions are of the same type and, therefore, have a universal character, and the reason for them is both in the system-structural organization of signs, called natural language, and in certain psycho-physiological processes characteristic of speech activity at all. This study also shows the significant theoretical-practical competence of its author, as a result of which she was able to realize it. It covers the entire verbal morphology, which in Bulgarian is distinguished by the presence of numerous grammatical categories, and the absence of some of them in the Czech language further complicates their comparison, as it gives a lexical-phraseological character to the expression in some grammatical meanings, which means – intensive involvement of the context and increase of the necessary textual volume of the empirical units. For all its complexity, however, a satisfying fact is its monographic layout and printing, since without them its popularizing is problematic.

The articles enclosed with the documents are thematically oriented to the field of phonology, grammar of the Bulgarian language; to lexical features and trends in modern word formation. The citations are proof of the interest and appreciation of B. Dikova's scientific achievements and contributions.

#### **4. Evaluation of the candidate's personal contribution.**

The scientific contributions of the candidate B. Dikova are expressed in the explanation of the phenomenon of transposition and its definition, despite the variety of existing scientific opinions about it. Of scientific interest is the concretization and analysis of traditionally differently explained forms and constructions such as those of the present tense, perfect in function of admirative and dubitative; the attempt to distinguish between tropes and figures, cliché and pattern, etc.

The candidate's personal assessment of her own contributions to the discussions of particular linguistic phenomena is adequate.

Most of the contributing texts presented by B. Dikova are her personal work. Only 2-3 of the scientific texts are co-authored, as well as all with practical-applied nature.

I have not found unspecified borrowings and direct or indirect interpretation of other's ideas and texts without the necessary citation.

## **5. Critical remarks and recommendations**

This review is not intended to raise discussions and express disagreements, criticisms and recommendations regarding the scientific work of a particular candidate. For a person like me who works in areas close to B. Dikova, it is natural to have both arguments in support of her theses and counterarguments to some of them. The main purpose of this review is to confirm or deny the qualities of the candidate, due to which she has the reason to take up the academic position of Associate Professor. What has been said so far is a confirmation that Bistra Dikova, has the necessary competence, teaching experience and scientific authority to be nominated as Associate Professor at Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

I have no critical remarks or recommendations regarding her scientific, administrative, teaching and scientific organizational performance. I wish her good health to continue realizing them at the necessary pace.

## **6. Personal impressions**

I know Bistra Dikova from her student years, when she was among the first students of Slavic philology (with a Czech language profile) at our university. They had the reputation of being an elite student body distinguished by ambition, responsibility and intelligence. Subsequently, although not immediately after graduation, B. Dikova developed as a person with lasting interests in linguistics and the teaching of the Bulgarian and Czech languages; as a benevolent and responsible colleague. Her professional growth smoothly passes through all stages of her career path, and I heartily congratulate her on what she has achieved.

## **CONCLUSION**

The documents and materials presented by Chief Assistant Bistra Dikova, PhD, meet all the requirements of the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA), the Regulations for the Implementation of the DASRBA and the relevant Regulations of Paisiy Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

The candidate in the competition has submitted a sufficient number of scientific works published after the materials used in the defense of the Doctoral degree. Her works include original scientific and applied contributions that have received recognition, a representative part of which has been published in prestigious scientific journals and collections. The theoretical developments have practical applicability, and some of them are directly link to academic work. The scientific and teaching qualifications of Bistra V. Dikova is unquestionable.

The results achieved by her in her educational and research work fully correspond to the minimum national requirements and to the additional requirements of the Faculty of Philology, adopted in connection with the Regulations of the University for the implementation of DASRBA.

Having reviewed the materials and scientific works presented in the competition, after evaluating their significance and the scientific and scientific-applied contributions contained in them, I find it reasonable to give my **positive assessment and to recommend to the Scientific Jury to prepare a proposal report to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Philology for the academic position Associate Professor at PU "Paisiy Hilendarski" in the field of higher education 2. Humanities; professional field 2.1. Philology (Bulgarian language - Modern Bulgarian language) to be awarded to the candidate Bistra Vasileva Dikova.**

September 2024

Plovdiv

Reviewer: .....

*(Prof. Vera Marovska)*