

OPINION

by Associate Professor Sylvia Atanasova Velikova, PhD

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regarding the selection procedure for the academic rank ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, announced by Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen in State Gazette, issue 102 dated 07 December 2021, in the area of higher education 2. Humanities; professional field 2.1. Philology (Germanic languages – Modern German)

The opinion is submitted in compliance with Order No RD-16-011/01.02.2022 of the Rector of Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen.

The only candidate in the announced selection procedure is Assistant Professor Aylya Redzheb Iliyazova, full-time lecturer at Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen, Faculty of Humanities, Department of German Studies. The documents submitted by Assistant Professor Iliyazova meet the requirements of the Regulations of the University of Shumen and of the *Law for the development of academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria*. In 2006, Dr Aylya Iliyazova graduated from the University of Shumen and obtained a master's degree in German Studies and a professional qualification *teacher of German language and literature*. In 2014, she was awarded the educational and scientific degree PhD (*Germanic Languages - Modern German*) at the Department of German Studies and Foreign Language Teaching, Faculty of Humanities, Shumen University. Her dissertation focuses on *Value orientations in German and Bulgarian phraseology*. The methodological basis of the study is a “synchronic onomasiological analysis” based on a comparative study of German and Bulgarian phraseology, revealing certain value orientations characteristic of German-speaking and Bulgarian cultural communities (Iliyazova 2019: 6).

Dr Iliyazova has participated in 18 professional development events for advancing her academic and teaching skills. Her involvement in projects is impressive – she has participated in 3 national and 7 university projects. Dr Iliyazova has attended 3 international and 8 national conferences, seminars and working groups, and participated in the annual conferences of the *Society of German Studies in Bulgaria* and the *German Teachers' Association in Bulgaria*. Dr Iliyazova's academic and professional commitment is evident through her membership in *the Society of German Studies in Bulgaria* and *the German Teachers' Association in Bulgaria*. In addition, she actively participates in the administrative and organizational activities at the University of Shumen: since 2020, as a member of the General Assembly of the Faculty of Humanities; since 2020, as a member of the *Commission for awarding, recognizing and transferring of credits at the Faculty of Humanities*; since 2021, as a member of the *Commission for verification of the compliance with the regulatory requirements and decisions of the Methodological Council in organizing and implementing the practical training of students with a pedagogical profile* .

For the purposes of the selection procedure, Assistant Professor Iliyazova has submitted a published monograph titled *The Different Horizon. The German cognitive-linguistic model* (2021). The scientific editor of the presented monograph is Prof. Dr. Dimitar Popov, and the work has been reviewed by Prof. Dr. Sc. Snezhana Boycheva and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Daniela Kirova. The study impresses with its interdisciplinary nature. To prove her working hypothesis, the author draws on theories and cognitive models from the spectrum of the following disciplinary fields – cognitive linguistics, linguistic pragmatics (pragmalinguistics), lexicology, semasiology, communicative-cognitive pragmatics and cognitive psychology. In her research, Dr Iliyazova convincingly proves her working hypothesis, namely that in the German-speaking cultural space “people tend to believe that they think primarily rationally and this tendency is linguistically manifested in lexical units, the use of which encodes cognitive

references for communicative purposes. For this reason, the lexical system of the language is dominated by lexical representations and their semantic features shape the profile of the characteristic *rationality* (of thinking), while the semantic markers pointing to the characteristic *intuitiveness* (of thinking) are fewer in number (the study also addresses the synonymous relations)” (Iliyazova 2021: 131). Also, from comparative lexical-semantic perspective, equivalent relations in the system and structure of the Bulgarian language are traced. The monograph is undoubtedly a significant study, with contributions in the field of linguistics, culture, psycholinguistics and foreign language teaching.

The academic publications of Assistant Professor Aylya Redzheb Iliyazova include the monographic work titled *Value Orientations in German and Bulgarian Phraseology* (Shumen: Bishop Konstantin Preslavski University Press, 2019, 275 p.), published on the basis of her doctoral dissertation. Her 12 articles submitted for the selection procedure reveal her in-depth and consistent academic research. The publications are divided into three thematic areas: language and thought, communicative and cognitive pragmatics, foreign language learning and teaching. Dr Iliyazova’s scientific contributions are also concentrated in these areas.

The main monographic work proposed for the selection procedure could serve as a starting point for future research in the field of linguistics and culture, and contrastive research of lexical conceptual structures in German and Bulgarian. The relevance of her research to the theory and practice of foreign language learning is also obvious.

In her study on *Linguistic intelligence and lexical units in the discussion in a German-speaking academic environment*, from a cognitive perspective, Dr Iliyazova reveals some lexical-semantic projections of selected lexical units in German as part of the structure of means of expression in the discussion as a form of oral communication.

The articles highlight and address important research perspectives – transformations of the concept *collaboration* in the German cognitive-linguistic continuum; a productive model for realizing the *creative potential* of people; the concept *intellectual reflection* in the dynamics of the communicative environment; *self-directed learning* as a sign of intellectual human activity; the *group activity* in the course of the *game process* and the effectiveness of team work in a dynamic game environment; *collaborative learning in a digital environment*.

The research impact of Dr Iliyazova's publications can be estimated through their citation (a total number of 10 citations) nationally and internationally.

From the submitted documentation for the selection procedure it is evident that Dr Iliyazova has the necessary teaching experience to acquire the academic position of *Associate Professor*. She teaches various courses within *Bachelor's degree* and *Master's degree programmes* – *Key competencies in the academic field, Practical German; Methodology of early foreign language teaching and learning; Classroom observation; teaching practice*.

Considering all of the above, I recommend that Assistant Professor Ayla Redzheb Iliyazova, PhD be awarded the academic rank *ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR* at Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen in the area of higher education 2. *Humanities*; professional field 2.1. *Philology* (Germanic languages – Modern German).

March 12, 2022

Veliko Tarnovo



(Assoc. Prof. Sylvia Velikova, PhD)