

REVIEW
REGARDING THE COMPETITION FOR THE ACADEMIC POSITION
OF "PROFESSOR"

in Higher Education Area 2: Humanities, Professional Field 2.1: Philology,
Specialization: "English Language"
(English for Medical Purposes),
full-time position at the Department of Western and Classical Languages
within the Department of Foreign Language Training, Communications, and
Sports, Medical University – Varna,
announced in the *State Gazette*, Issue No. 50/June 2026

REVIEWER: PROF. DR. VIOLETKA GORANOVA-TACHEVA, PhD

External member of the scientific jury appointed by Order No. R-109-
278/30.07.2026 of the Rector of Medical University – Varna.

The competition for the position of "Professor of English for Medical Purposes" within Higher Education Area 2. Humanities and Professional Field 2.1 Philology was announced in the *State Gazette* (Issue No. 50/June 2026) to meet the needs of the Department of Western and Classical Languages at the Department of Foreign Language Training, Communications, and Sports of the Medical University "Prof. Dr. P. Stoyanov" in Varna. The competition is subject to specific conditions: the requirement under Article 137, paragraph 1, Item 6 of the Regulations for Academic Staff Development (PRAS) does not apply, and the scientometric indicator "E" for Area 2. Humanities must be 100 points (excluding Items 15 and 16).

Assoc. Prof. Ilina Tsvetanova Doykova, PhD, participated in the competition as the only candidate. The documents submitted for the competition were prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its application, as well as the Regulations on the Development of the Academic Staff at MU-Varna, dated 09.02.2026.

Ilina Tsvetanova Doykova was born on February 22, 1967. In 1992, she obtained a Master's degree in Bulgarian and English from the Faculty of Philology at St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo, qualifying as a teacher of English and Bulgarian. She began her professional career in 1994 as an assistant lecturer in English for Specific Purposes at the College of Tourism of the University of Economics – Varna, and from 2008 to 2011, she taught English for Specific Purposes at the University of Applied Sciences in Hamburg, Germany. Germany.

From 2011 to 2014, she subsequently worked for one academic year at the Technical University of Varna as a lecturer in English and at the Varna University of Management as Academic Director. In 2015, she won a competition for a position as a Bulgarian language instructor, followed by one for English in 2016 at the Medical University of Varna; there, she qualified as an Associate Professor of Specialized English in 2018 and became Head of the Department of Western and Classical Languages, and since 2022, she has served as Director of the Department of Foreign Language Training, Communication, and Sports.

Ilina Doykova further developed her academic expertise by successfully defending her doctoral dissertation in 2016, titled "Adjective Complementation with BE in English and its Bulgarian Translation Equivalents" and obtaining the educational and scientific degree of Doctor in Germanic Languages (Modern English) from „Konstantin Preslavsky“ University of Shumen.

Assoc. Prof. Doykova's academic experience is enriched by 13 additional specializations, programs, and courses in Bulgaria and abroad, as well as by her work as a compiler, author, and examiner of language tests for various purposes (such as medical entrance exams, language proficiency certification, and doctoral qualifying exams).

2. Characteristics of the candidate's scientific and methodological activities

2.1. General description of the submitted materials

Assoc. Prof. Ilina Doykova, PhD, is participating in the competition for the academic position of "Professor" with 39 new publications produced since attaining the rank of "Associate Professor." These include one monograph, one book based on her dissertation, 30 articles (4 in refereed publications and 26 in non-refereed publications), 5 textbooks, and 2 multi-authored monographs. The candidate is the sole author of 28 of the submitted publications, the first author of 8, and the second author of three. These facts demonstrate both Assoc. Prof. Doykova's research potential and her capacity for academic collaboration. Ilina Doykova has presented the results of her research at 41 national and international scientific forums.

2.2. Key scientific, applied scientific and teaching contributions

2.2.A. Scientific and applied scientific activity

Assoc. Prof. Ilina Doykova's body of work comprises 39 publications, with her primary research interests focusing on academic written and oral communication in medical education, applied linguistics, contrastive linguistics, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), corpus linguistics, and scientific translation involving specialized English.

The scientometric indicators presented for the academic position of "Professor" (Field 2: Humanities) are substantiated by the official academic report on the publications, citations, and research profiles of Assoc. Prof. Ilina Doykova, issued by the Library of the Medical University of Varna (No. 381/18.06.2026).

Indicator	Content	Required number of points	Points achieved
A	A 1.	50	50
B	B 3.	100	100
G	G 5. – G11.	200	375
D	D 12. – D 14.	120	125
E	E 15. – E 22.	100	190
Total points			840

The key achievements in the scientific publications can be summarized in the following areas:

- ***Applied linguistics: Academic communication and university pedagogy in medical higher education***

In this regard, the habilitation work of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilina Doykova deserves special attention. The monograph ***Academic Teaching in English: Language and Pedagogy in Higher Medical Education*** comprises a total of 200 pages, consisting of 148 pages of main text, 2 pages of appendices, and 15 pages listing the sources used (16 sources in Cyrillic and 204 in Latin script). The theoretical concepts are illustrated with a wide variety of examples, didactic models, tables, and diagrams. The work is identified by the international standard number ISBN 978-619-221-593-4 and was published in Bulgarian by the Medical University – Varna Press in 2026; however, no details regarding format or print run are provided. The monograph underwent a detailed review by two reviewers, in accordance with the requirements of the Regulations on the Academic Staff Development of Medical University – Varna.

In the spirit of modern pragmatic linguistics, the author focuses her research on the topical issue of English-medium instruction in the most sought-after field of study: medicine. Today, every university in Bulgaria offers programs taught in English - not only because such programmes generate substantial institutional revenue, but also because of the considerable international visibility associated with educating international students from diverse countries. English-medium instruction has become an imperative, creating a pressing need to effectively address the associated linguistic challenges. The "easy" solution of using artificial intelligence

or literally appropriating specific academic material creates far greater difficulties than an institutional, principled approach and the individual mastery of the structural and linguistic nuances characteristic of modern English-language instruction. The author examines and analyzes precisely these issues, drawing on her experience as a qualified lecturer in English for Academic Purposes at the Medical University of Varna.

A careful reading of the monograph reveals that it is the product of a sustained and in-depth interest in the theoretical and pragmatic aspects of English-medium academic teaching in medical degree programmes. The comparative analysis and the authentic examples provided demonstrate the author's aim to address the characteristics, factors, and criteria defining these emerging pedagogical phenomena – viewed as a modern form of academic instruction in medicine – which constitutes the work's primary contribution.

The research's **applied research** approach defines specific contributions, namely: a theoretical systematization of the conceptual framework; an empirical description of actual academic English-medium instruction (EMI) discourse within the Bulgarian context; and the development of a methodological model for institutionalizing high-quality English-language instruction.

The monograph presents, across 12 chapters, an interdisciplinary model for the academic teaching of medicine, dental medicine, and pharmacy in English.

The first five chapters examine the historical, pedagogical, methodological, and empirical foundations of the work, covering the terminological and methodological framework, the profile of the university EAP (English for Academic Purposes) instructor, learning and teaching styles, the specifics of public speaking, time and space management, and the visualization of materials. An in-depth analysis of these factors and criteria ensures the reliability and significance of the scientific conclusions and recommendations presented in the subsequent parts of the monograph.

Chapter 6, "Linguistic Means and Techniques in English-Language Academic Lectures," stands out for its significant methodological value, offering practical recommendations on linguistic strategies for structuring content, maintaining audience attention, presenting arguments and persuasion, highlighting importance and contrast, and addressing the role of questions, narrative, and the specificities of the video lecture format. The specific strategies presented for academic teaching in an online environment enrich the range of approaches to English-medium lectures.

Assoc. Prof. Doykova pays special attention to the specifics of foreign language training within interactive teaching formats in Chapter 7 ("Small-Group Teaching")

and Chapter 8 ("The Language of Small-Group Teaching: Seminars and Practical Exercises"). Spontaneous interactive communication in a foreign language within a clinical setting requires a specific type of linguistic discourse. Consequently, the study analyzes high-frequency verbs, typical collocations, and standardized linguistic structures characteristic of discussion sessions, problem-based learning, and clinical training – all established pedagogical approaches in the practical education of medical students.

Of great importance to medical educators teaching in English are the systematized components of effective academic speech and the emphasis placed on the communicative criterion of intelligibility – the primary goal of oral academic communication – as presented in Chapter 10, "Components of Effective Academic Speech." The author analyzes the fundamental phonetic and prosodic characteristics of oral speech and demonstrates their significance as key elements of effective academic communication. She proposes specific strategies for developing speech fluency, vocal expressiveness, and instructional rhetoric to optimize English-language teaching by refining speaking skills.

The analysis presented in Chapter 11 – "Lexical and Grammatical Characteristics of the Academic Style" – is exceptionally interesting and useful; it examines the academic register as a functional variety of speech by systematizing key grammatical, lexical, and discursive features. Discussions regarding specific linguistic concepts – such as the use of active and passive voice, impersonal constructions, inversion, syntactic compression, and nominalization – help non-philologists navigate the subject matter effectively in a teaching context. Fixed expressions, noun clustering, hedging (via modal verbs and adverbs of probability), linguistic devices for emphasizing significance, repetition, and textual cohesive devices are all examined as tools for enhancing clarity, coherence, and pedagogical effectiveness in academic instruction.

Appendices 1 and 2 to the book present best practices for structuring lectures, managing seminars, providing feedback, and planning and self-assessing English-medium medical lectures, as well as an in-depth linguistic and discourse analysis of an academic medical lecture.

The scientific, applied-scientific, and methodological value of the monograph lies in the development of models, strategies, and tools designed to enhance the effectiveness of teaching medical specialties in English at the university level.

The monograph meets the requirements for a habilitation thesis in terms of content and scope, as well as significance and practical applicability regarding the training

and self-study of medical professionals for modern, contemporary instruction in medicine in English to linguistically diverse and heterogeneous audiences.

♦ The author employs a similar range of issues and scientific approach in the fields of *contrastive linguistics and medical terminology*. Publications G.7: 2, 5, 9, 10, 13 and Add. 9 identify functional translation equivalents and transformation patterns involved in translation into Bulgarian, while clarifying manifestations of linguistic asymmetry, changes in predicate structure, aspectuality, explicitness, and the semantic organization of the utterance. The systematization of specialized terminology into thematic bilingual glossaries – comprising terminological units, translation equivalents, and collocation patterns within specific medical fields – offers significant practical value.

♦ *Academic writing, scientific style, and the development of academic language competence* are the focus of eight other publications (G.7: 2, 5, 12; Suppl.: 1, 3, 5, 6, 7) dedicated to the diverse and under-researched topic of academic medical discourse. The analysis covers not only the terminological and lexico-syntactic characteristics of English as used by Bulgarians in writing and speaking but also addresses the specificities of various medical specialties. A particular contribution of the author is the identification of typical linguistic and communicative challenges faced by university lecturers regarding the organization of academic discourse, academic phraseology, terminological precision, and oral communication. The identified best practices can serve as recommendations for enhancing and refining professional scientific communication – an area that has not previously been a focus of medical education.

♦ Assoc. Prof. Doykova demonstrates a natural scholarly interest in *corpus-based genre analysis within the study of medical academic and clinical communication*. The combination of qualitative and quantitative analytical methods alongside the investigation of medical discourse using specialized corpus linguistics software tools (WordSmith Tools, Wmatrix, AntConc, Sketch Engine, BNCweb, CLAWS POS Tagger, and WordNet) leads to evidence-based conclusions regarding the optimization of specific communicative skills in medical practice, as presented in seven key publications (G.7:1, 8, 9, 10, 12, 15, 16; Add. 2, 8, 10).

♦ Another broad area of research involves a serious and in-depth *analysis of issues in contemporary English for Medical Purposes* (EMP) instruction, spanning ten publications (G.6: 3; G.7: 1, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 11, 14). These works focus on the productive mastery of medical English, offering a consistent analysis and

proposing concrete solutions and developments. The research findings are reflected in the author's *Professional Communication in English* series, which includes textbooks for the fields of Medicine, Pharmacy, Midwifery, Medical Optics, and Medical Cosmetology. The author's scholarly arguments and practical teaching materials advocate for a communicative presentation of the language – grounded in the communicative approach – that avoids excessive theorizing or over-emphasis on grammar. For the first time, the systematic use of authentic medical discourse is established as a fundamental principle for designing course content and developing professional communicative competence. Methodological solutions are proposed to integrate specialized terminology, phraseology, authentic clinical scenarios, and communicative tasks into a unified system for developing the four language skills.

♦ *The study of the didactic and methodological aspects of teaching and assessing English for Medical Purposes* represents a significant contribution to the candidate's work. Assoc. Prof. Doykova is actively engaged in the field of modern electronic resources for academic purposes, yielding tangible results: the development of an original testing system comprising proprietary tests and the creation of test banks for English for Medical Purposes. A substantial contribution to English-language medical education lies in the lexical, grammatical, and terminological units extracted from specialized medical corpora; these serve as the foundation for developing authentic test tasks tailored to the curriculum, the professional context, and levels of language proficiency.

♦ The academic rank of "Professor" requires recognition and scholarly authority, which, within the scientific community, are demonstrated through impact factor and citation metrics. Assoc. Prof. I. Doykova presents evidence of 17 citations – a significant achievement for an author publishing in the field of linguistics. This citation activity adds another 125 points to the candidate's academic profile.

2.2.B. Teaching Activity

Assoc. Prof. Ilina Doykova has over 24 years of teaching experience, the last 11 of which have been spent at the Medical University "Prof. Dr. P. Stoyanov." She serves as an author, lecturer, and examiner within the Bachelor's and Master's degree programs across the university's Faculties of Medicine, Dental Medicine, and Public Health. Since 2018, Assoc. Prof. Doykova has maintained a full teaching workload, ranging from 170 to 270 hours annually. Between 2018 and 2026, she developed, piloted, and introduced seven new and updated curricula and six lecture courses into the academic system of the Medical University of Varna. The diversity and scope of the courses she conducts demonstrate her academic potential. Further testament to her academic standing is her role since 2025 as

Head of the Center for Medical Pedagogy and Communication within the Career Development Department of the Medical University of Varna.

3. Personal Impressions

I have known Ilina Doykova for 11 years as a proactive, diligent, and conscientious educator, a reliable English language editor and consultant, an enthusiastic organizer of academic forums, and a dependable collaborator across all academic units. As Director of the Department of Foreign Language Training, Communication, and Sports, Assoc. Prof. Doykova is distinguished by a modern managerial approach and foresight, as well as a strong sense of responsibility and discipline. Through her personal example, she consistently upholds high academic standards and has earned the well-deserved respect of both colleagues and students. Her collegiality and tolerance foster a positive atmosphere amidst the pressures of daily academic life and contribute significantly to the high standing of language training within the academic community.

4. Conclusion

Assoc. Prof. Ilina Tsvetanova Doykova, PhD, is an accomplished scholar in English studies with a solid academic background, tangible achievements in the field of teaching English as a foreign language for academic and medical purposes, and is a dedicated member of the academic community. Her research, publications, and expert work are timely, essential, and valuable to the Medical University of Varna.

The volume and quality of her research output, her 24 years of teaching experience, and her active engagement in all aspects of the University's operations fully comply with the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its application, and the internal regulations governing the activities, academic staff development, and educational processes at the Medical University of Varna.

This provides me with every justification to recommend to the esteemed Scientific Jury and the Academic Council of the Medical University that Assoc. Prof. Ilina Tsvetanova Doykova, PhD, to be elected to the academic position of "Professor" in Professional Field 2.1 Philology, specializing in "English Language" (English for Medical Purposes).

Reviewer: Prof. Violetka Goranova-Tacheva, PhD.

20.09.2026 г.

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