

Reviewer's opinion

by **Assoc. Prof. Irina Nikolova Ivanova, PhD**

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Field of Higher Education 1. Pedagogical Sciences, Professional Field 1.3.

Pedagogy of Teaching ... (Methodology of Teaching English)

regarding the competition for the academic position of **Professor** in Field of Higher Education 2. Humanities, Professional Field 2.1. Philology, Specialization **English for Medical Purposes**, announced in State Gazette No. 50 of 2 June 2026

Candidate: **Assoc. Prof. Ilina Tsvetanova Doykova, PhD**

Medical University – Varna “Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov,” Department of Western and Classical Languages, Department of Foreign Language Training, Communication and Sport

1. Information on the competition procedure

The competition procedure has been conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Regulations on the Terms and Procedure for the Acquisition of Academic Degrees and for Holding Academic Positions at Medical University – Varna “Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov.” In my opinion, no procedural violations have occurred.

The candidate meets the minimum national requirements for holding the academic position of Professor under Article 2b, Paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), as well as the requirements of the Regulations on the Terms and Procedure for the Acquisition of Academic Degrees and for Holding Academic Positions at Medical University – Varna.

2. Information about the candidate

The sole candidate in the competition is Assoc. Prof. Ilina Tsvetanova Doykova, PhD. She graduated from St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo with a degree in Bulgarian and English Language and a qualification as a teacher of English and Bulgarian. In 2016, she obtained a PhD in Germanic Languages (Modern English) from Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen.

The candidate has an impressive professional career, a substantial part of which is directly related to teaching, management, and expert activities in academic environments both in Bulgaria and abroad. Prior to joining Medical University – Varna, Ilina Doykova worked at the College of Tourism – Varna, the College of Tourism at the University of Economics – Varna, the Bulgarian Maritime Training and Qualification Centre, the University of Applied Sciences in Hamburg, the Technical University of Varna, and the University of Management – Varna. Her professional development and qualifications include specializations and training courses both in Bulgaria and at prestigious universities in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Greece, the Czech Republic, Austria, Switzerland, and the United States.

Assoc. Prof. Doykova's research interests focus on the linguistic characteristics, teaching and assessment of English for Specific and Academic Purposes, academic communication, corpus linguistics, and teaching competencies in academic settings.

Throughout her professional career, Ilina Doykova has taught classes, organized training and examination procedures for students, doctoral students, and academic staff, conducted research, participated in projects and academic forums, developed curricula, textbooks and teaching materials, and carried out expert activities. Since 2010, she has been a licensed examiner with the European

Consortium for the Certification of Knowledge of Modern Languages in English, German, and Bulgarian.

3. Description of the candidate's scholarly work

Ilina Doykova is participating in the competition for Professor with one sole-authored monograph, one book based on her doctoral dissertation, four articles published in scholarly journals indexed and abstracted in the internationally recognized databases Scopus and Web of Science, sixteen articles in non-indexed peer-reviewed journals, two chapters in edited monographs, and five university textbooks.

The publications submitted cover several areas of research, including:

- academic communication in the context of teaching English for Medical Purposes;
- comparative studies of translation equivalence, cross-linguistic transformations, and bilingual medical terminology;
- corpus-based genre analysis of medical academic and professional communication;
- academic writing, scientific style, and the development of academic language competence;
- methodology of teaching English for Medical Purposes;
- assessment of communicative competence in English for Medical Purposes.

The main habilitation work submitted for the professorship procedure is the 2026 monograph *Academic Teaching through English: Language and Pedagogy in Higher Medical Education*. Throughout the book, the author convincingly argues that the conscious and strategic use of language as a means of organizing knowledge,

managing interaction, and creating an inclusive environment is a fundamental prerequisite for high-quality instruction in specialized foreign languages within the context of higher education.

The conceptualization of the language of instruction as a mediator that transforms the way material is presented, the role of the teacher, and students' participation in the learning process are innovative. Rather than being merely an instrument for transmitting ready-made content, English is conceptualized as a tool for reformatting the logic, degree of explicitness, and pace of material delivery in teaching.

Particularly valuable are the author's observations and empirically grounded conclusions concerning differences in the way of teaching between lecturers who are native speakers of English and lecturers for whom English is a second/foreign language. These differences relate to the explicitness/ implicitness of presentation, reliance on visual scaffolding, and the rhetorical organization of discourse.

The monograph has a clear and logical structure in which the terminological and methodological framework of the study is systematically clarified. It outlines the professional competencies and preparation of university teachers of English for Academic or Specific Purposes and their relationship to forms of instruction and learning and teaching styles. Following this broader framework, the focus then narrows to an examination of linguistic means and techniques used in academic lectures, the components of effective academic speech, and the lexical and grammatical characteristics of academic style, considered in close connection with the assessment of teachers' professional skills.

One of the benefits of the author's argumentation is the positioning of the local challenges of the described type of instruction within the context of the global dominance of English as a medium of instruction, as well as the author's appeal for effectiveness, quality, and sustainability in education.

I appreciate the introduction of the term "Academic Teaching in English" (ATE) as a Bulgarian equivalent of the concept English-Medium Instruction (EMI) and the conceptualization of this adapted practice as an interdisciplinary teaching model which, in the author's words, "integrates language competence, subject matter, and pedagogical design adapted to the specifics of the English-language academic environment."

The candidate's publications in journals indexed in the world's leading citation databases WoS and Scopus address the assessment of learners' communicative competence through a system of electronic tests aligned with the course content, professional context, and language proficiency levels according to the CEFR. The application of artificial intelligence in the creation of tasks in English for Medical Purposes is examined, and the need for expert pedagogical judgment is argued in order to ensure authenticity, professional relevance, and methodological validity. The student portfolio is considered a valid instrument for summative assessment that measures language competence, develops reflective thinking, and encourages autonomous learning.

The remaining publications submitted for the competition address various aspects of teaching English in the context of medical education. These include studies devoted to the development of individual language skills, research into medical students' expectations and attitudes, activity-based learning, curriculum

evaluation, linguistic accuracy and validation of medical vocabulary, corpus-based research, and other topics.

4. Candidate's contributions to research in the field

The contributions to research of candidate's scholarly output can be organized into several distinct yet interconnected areas concerning the linguistic characteristics and pedagogical aspects of teaching English for Medical Purposes, which also corresponds to the academic specialization in which the academic position of Professor is being awarded.

In the field of university education, the principal contribution is the development and scholarly substantiation of an interdisciplinary model of Academic Teaching in English, which integrates the linguistic, pedagogical, and institutional aspects of English-medium educational programmes within a unified conceptual framework. A comprehensive profile of the linguistic and communicative competence of university teachers in medical education is presented, taking into account international standards for Academic Teaching in English. In addition to the theoretical description, the worksheets containing practical models and language strategies for engaging students' attention in the planning and delivery of lectures and seminars are particularly useful for teaching practice.

Other contributions to research in the relevant fields are the conceptual framework for electronic assessment and the strategy for continuing professional development based on university pedagogy, mentoring, microteaching, and reflective practice.

In the field of linguistics, a particularly significant contribution to research is made by the extensive comparative studies focusing on translation equivalence,

mechanisms of cross-linguistic transformation, and bilingual medical terminology. The results of these studies are applicable to specialized translation, bilingual lexicography, and the teaching of English for Medical Purposes. The validity of the results is ensured through the use of specialized software tools in the field of corpus linguistics. The studies of clinical communication also have a contributory nature, with the medical consultation presented as an independent communicative genre. An important place in author's work is occupied by research into academic English, academic writing, scientific style, and the development of academic language competence.

Assoc. Prof. Doykova is a distinguished scholar whose research have been cited by a number of Bulgarian and international scholars. For the purposes of the competition the candidate has submitted two citations in internationally recognized databases, four citations in monographs, and eleven citations in non-indexed publications.

Overall, the scientometric indicators presented for appointment to the academic position of Professor exceed the minimum requirements.

5. Conclusion

In view of the merits of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Iлина Doykova's candidacy, the contributions of her scholarly work to research, and her active teaching and expert activities, **I firmly believe that she should be appointed to the academic position of Professor** in Field of Higher Education 2. Humanities, Professional Field 2.1. Philology, Specialization **English for Medical Purposes**.

14.09.2026

Reviewer:

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/Assoc. prof. Irina Nikolova Ivanova, PhD