

EXAMINER'S ASSESSMENT

by prof. Rumyana Balinova Todorova, PhD, lecturer in English at the English Studies Department, Faculty of Humanities, *Konstantin Preslavsky* University of Shumen, regarding the selection procedure for the academic position of **Professor** in the area of: 1. Pedagogical Sciences, professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of Education in..., speciality "Pedagogy of Teaching Specialized German for Medical Purposes (and Electronic Education)". The procedure has been announced in the *State Gazette*, issue 62 dated 6 August 2019.

Candidate: assoc. prof. Ivan Stoyanov Merdzhanov, PhD

By order No P-109-325/07.10.2019 of the Rector of *Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov* Medical University – Varna I was appointed as member of the academic jury, announced in the *State Gazette*, issue 62 dated 6 August 2019 regarding the selection procedure for the academic position of **Professor** in the area of: 1. Pedagogical Sciences, professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of Education in..., speciality "Pedagogy of Teaching Specialized German for Medical Purposes (and Electronic Education)" at the Department of Foreign and Classical Languages, *Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov* Medical University – Varna.

One candidate has applied and it is assoc. prof. dr. Ivan Stoyanov Merdzhanov. In 1987 he graduated from *St. Cyril and St. Methodius* University of Veliko Tarnovo and got an MA degree in German Studies with a qualification in German Studies and teacher in German. In 2013 he got a PhD degree in 1.3. Pedagogy of Education in... (Methodology of Education in German) at *St. Kliment Ohridski* University of Sofia with his PhD thesis "Didactic and Methodological Aspects of Designing and Application of Internet-based Educational Environment for Teaching Specialized (German) Language for Students of Medicine". In 2019 on the basis of his PhD thesis the candidate published a monograph *Electronic Education and Specialized German Language. Didactic and Methodological Aspects in the Application of Electronic Platform for Education of Specialized (German) Language in the Field of Medicine*. At present he is the director of Department of Foreign Language Teaching, Communications and Sport at the Medical University. He has attended qualification courses in Austria and Germany. In 2014 he was appointed the academic position of an associate professor in Methodology of Teaching (German). Before his employment as a senior lecturer in German in the present Department of Foreign Language Teaching, Communications and Sport at the Medical University – Varna in 1992, he had worked as a senior lecturer in German in the Department of Foreign Languages at *D. A. Tsenov* Academy of Economics – Svishtov.

Assoc. professor Merdzhanov's CV is directly connected with his teaching and academic activities and with the projects he participated in (2 of them – national and 5 – international), listed and presented in his autobiographical data, which speaks for his good preparation in the field of German Studies, and more specifically – in the field of methods of reaching German. He teaches specialized German to students of medicine, dental medicine, pharmacy, nurses, midwives and health management. After his associate professorship he has presented papers in a number of national and international conferences (17), most of which are published. Most of his publications, however, are on the basis of the papers presented. In the list of publications for NACID there are two books. One of them is presented as a monograph *E-Campus: Contemporary Forms for*

Electronic Education in an Academic Environment (2013). The other one was published in 2018 *Contemporary Challenges to Higher Education in the Field of Medicine (Distance and Electronic Learning)*.

Assoc. professor Ivan Merdzhanov's habilitation thesis for his professorship is *E-exams Dimensions. Electronic Testing in the Context of Digitalization of Higher Education*, consisting of 166 pages is a major contribution in the field of teaching a foreign language, more specifically specialized German for medical purposes. We can definitely state that one of the candidate's contributions is the presentation of strategies for designing of electronic tests, as well as his paying attention to the didactic aspects and principles of this type of texts as part of education in general, which has not got due attention in the Bulgarian educational system. In this respect, we can definitely state that the monograph is in unison with the latest tendencies in the pedagogical education. It is good that the habilitation work is written in Bulgarian as it can reach more recipients in this way irrespective of the academic field they work in. The aim of the book is as its author points out is for it to fill in the deficit of knowledge and skills as regards the didactics of the academic teaching and testing with the help of the new technologies. Chapter 1 deals with the meaning of digitalization for modernization of the learning process at higher schools as well as with the examination didactics as a discipline on its own. It pays attention to the correct formulation of the teaching aims and to the selection of appropriate indicators for its achievement. The place of the electronic test is pointed out as well that of the digital competence of the teachers and the learners in the contemporary digital world. Higher schools are presented through digital campuses which allow access to information of a number of services. Electronic testing is directed to the process of conducting and didactic application, related to documenting of results and feedback between teachers and students. The types of electronic tests and formats are pointed out as well. Chapter 2 compares the traditional and the electronic exams and emphasizes the positive features of the latter as regards the real behaviour and the necessary competences on part of the examinees in simulated situations and for a limited period of time. Due attention is paid to various opinions on the issue in question. Chapter 3 draws a distinction between exam didactics and didactics of electronic testing with its principles and criteria. The latter is discussed as a separate discipline within the confines of the former. Chapter 4 puts an emphasis on the design and the construct of the different types of electronic tests (diagnostic, formative and summative) and the competences students acquire and develop. The specificities of the most often used activities are presented. The researcher's knowledgeability is well demonstrated by a number of tables (7), schemes, graphs, pictures (34), etc. as well by the relatively large number of Bulgarian (11) and foreign (145) references. The information is quite detailed and exhaustive, profound and competent as well as well presented.

I would like to make a few recommendations:

It would have been better if the greater part of the examples had been in the field of the teaching of specialized German.

In my mind, the examiners' reports of the monograph should not appear at the beginning of the book. Some parts of the reports can be pointed out in the preface.

As for the other publications in the selection procedure for the academic position of professor, they are definitely oriented towards electronic education, the use of digital technologies in teaching, mostly specialized German to students of medicine and towards the pedagogical aspects in designing electronic tests. Most of the publications are first presented in various national and international conferences, either written by him or in co-authorship. They are characterized

with an excellent command of the academic discourse and use of academic terminology. Their number is presented in the list of publications and it is enough for the selection procedure. They represent theoretical and application issues, related to the teaching of specialized German. For the purposes of the selection procedure the candidate has submitted 2 monographs - one entitled *Dimensions of e-exams. Electronic Testing in the Context of Digitalization of Higher Education*, and another one: *Challenges in medical higher education*, with Marinela Grudeva as a co-author. There is 1 article (together with Ilina Doykova) in a peer-reviewed indexed scientific journal and 2 articles in edited collective volumes. Dr. Merdzhhanov has also submitted a book on e-learning and using electronic platforms in teaching specialized German, published on the basis of his doctoral dissertation.

Ivan Merdzhhanov has also written 3 course books in specialized German for students of medicine.

The candidate's contributions are related to the preparations of the medical students and the modern challenges in the higher education in medicine as well as to their electronic testing in various disciplines. The rest of the contributions are duly listed in the documentation. I would also like to mention the fact that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ivan Merdzhhanov's activity in different spheres is quite amazing.

The citations mentioned are 21, 16 of which are presented in the list of the minimal requirements of the NACID, but unfortunately there are no citations in the world data bases.

In conclusion, I declare that, on the basis of the above mentioned contributions and qualities of assoc. prof. Dr. Ivan Stoyanov Merdzhhanov, and after I got acquainted with all the documentation, the list of his publications and the very publications as well as his academic and professional contributions presented by the candidate, his personal qualities, all of these fulfil the minimal requirements of the *Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria* presented in article 26, paragraphs 2 and 3, and its accompanying regulations. That is the reason why I recommend to the Academic Selection Committee to vote positively for awarding the **academic rank PROFESSOR to Ivan Stoyanov Merdzhhanov in the area of: 1. Pedagogical Sciences, professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of Education in..., speciality "Pedagogy of Teaching Specialized German for Medical Purposes (and Electronic Education)" at the Department of Foreign and Classical Languages, Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov Medical University – Varna.**

Dec. 09, 2019

Prepared by:

(Prof. Dr. R. Todorova)