

## REVIEW

by Prof. Milena Yordanova, PhD

for the materials submitted for participation

in competition for the academic position of “Professor”

at the Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”

By Order No. RD 38-664 of 06.12.2024 of the Rector of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury of the competition for the academic position of “Professor” at the Sofia University, announced in the State Gazette No. 88 of 18 October 2024. 1.3. (Methodology of foreign language teaching in digital environment – English and Turkish). The competition procedure was announced by the Department of Methodology of Foreign Language Teaching, Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology.

A single candidate has submitted documents for participation in this competition, namely Prof. Danail Kirilov Danov, DSc, lecturer at the Department of Preschool and Media Pedagogy at the Faculty of Educational Studies and the Arts, Sofia University.

The set of materials submitted by Prof. Danail Danov for the current competition has been prepared in accordance with all existing rules and regulations. The documents are well formatted and arranged, offering also the information required in regard to this procedure.

To participate in the competition, the applicant Prof. Danov has submitted a total of 13 scientific works, which are distributed as follows: 2 authored monographs, one of which is based on a successfully defended dissertation for the award of the degree of Doctor of Sciences; 2 publications in collective monographs, 2 articles in scientific journals, refereed and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information; 7 articles published in non-refereed journals with scientific peer review, or published in edited collective volumes. The scientific works in question have not been submitted for the educational and qualification degree “Doctor”, the scientific degree of “Doctor of Science” or in the competition for the academic position of “Associate Professor”.

Prof. D. Danov graduated from the Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology of Sofia University with a degree in Turkic Studies and a degree in English Philology. He is pursuing his MA in Regional Studies at SOAS, University of London (UK). He defended his PhD dissertation on the topic "New Technologies and Internet Learning as an Alternative to Traditional Teaching Methods" and his dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Science is on the topic "Media Literacy: genesis, re-thinking the experience, challenges and perspectives".

The entire professional activity of Danail Danov is related to (new) media, digital literacy, pedagogy, organization of the educational process, training of specialists in the field of education, etc. His academic career is entirely tied to Sofia University, where he successively got the academic positions of "Senior Assistant Professor", "Associate Professor" and "Professor".

The candidate demonstrates a wide range of activities related to teaching work. Prof. Danov lectures and conducts exercises in Bulgarian and English in numerous pedagogical and methodological disciplines in various bachelor's, master's and doctoral programs of Sofia University. He has prepared curricula for a significant number of disciplines, ensuring training in professional areas 1.2. Pedagogy and 1.3. Pedagogy of education in ... From the documents provided and the specifics of the disciplines taught by Prof. Danov, it is clear that he regularly updates the teaching content, despite his large classroom workload. At the same time, Prof. Danail Danov has supervised a number of master's and doctoral students. In the period 2021–2024 alone, four doctoral students successfully defended their dissertations under his supervision. Danail Danov is regularly invited as a lecturer not only at various universities in the country, but also at foreign universities located on six continents.

The monograph "Fundamentals of Media Pedagogy: A Guide to the World of Digital Culture and Its Tools" (2023) is presented as a habilitation thesis under this competition. The book edition is 168 pages long. The content of the book consists of an introduction, seven chapters and five appendices. In his monograph, the author addresses important issues with regard to media literacy, which is a necessary element of modern life. In this regard, according to D. Danov, media literacy should be considered as a new educational approach in which critical thinking and new technologies are in symbiosis. Modern foreign language teaching in



different educational contexts and age groups successfully applies the means of media pedagogy to achieve high results. The habilitation work is the result of many years of scientific and practical activity and offers working models for the application of digital media tools, given their rapidly growing number among users of different ages. With its clearly structured content, in-depth review of the issues and the academic but accessible style of the author, I assess the study as an extremely valuable and useful reading not only for students, but also for teachers and parents. In his study, Prof. D. Danov touches in detail on both the positive and negative elements of the use of digital media and manages to offer a balanced approach in which the advocates of both theses can assess the real situation and find a way to reconcile their positions. The application of positive practices presented in the monograph categorically emphasizes the serious benefit of the controlled use of digital media, which are increasingly entering our everyday lives. Aspects of social media, personal data protection, cyberbullying problems, specifics of online games and online relationships are presented in an informative, structured, and comprehensive manner. The presence of an interactive website “European Safer Internet Initiative”, the content of which is aimed not only at students and parents, but also at all those who are interested in this issue, is necessary and extremely valuable with its theoretical and practical potential.

The book “Media Literacy – Rethinking Experience” (2020) is published on the basis of a defended dissertation for the award of the scientific degree “Doctor of Science”. In this situation, the scientific contributions in the text have been discussed and highlighted in view of the relevant procedure, therefore I will not repeat them here.

The remaining publications, submitted as materials under this procedure, reinforce the overall positive impression of the candidate's scientific and practical-applied activities and fully correspond to the profile of the announced competition. Danail Danov examines various aspects of media pedagogy and media literacy, refracting them through the prism of various strategies and initiatives in order to reach original theoretical and practical conclusions.

I would like to explicitly note that according to the publications submitted for the competition, and in view of the overall scientific production, Danail Danov's scientific interests extend to a wide range of aspects in the field of linguistic and media dimensions of

communicative competence, media literacy, media communication, media pedagogy, new information and communication technologies (as an alternative to traditional teaching aids) as a modern imperative in the professional competence of pedagogical specialists; inclusive education in the work of foreign language teachers; digitalization and education; intercultural communication and multiculturalism; bilingualism, etc.

D. Danov's philological training allows him to participate as a translator independently or in a team of specialized literature. Good linguistic training and professional expertise make him a sought editor of scientific publications.

The comprehensive review of the production submitted for review by Prof. Danail Kirilov Danov creates the image of a purposeful researcher who competently complements a number of practical and applied aspects of digital literacy and media pedagogy. The colleague's publication activity has been carried out in Bulgarian and English in various established periodicals (including those indexed in Scopus / Web of Science) and scientific collections, a significant part of which abroad. Due to the lack of a presented division protocol for co-authored publications, it should be assumed for the purpose of preparing this review that the contribution is divided equally between his co-authors and Prof. Danov.

Indicative of the high quality of Prof. Danov's scientific works is the impressive number of citations in the country and abroad. For participation in this competition alone, 23 citations have been provided since 2021, which have been noted by the candidate. Their number and the points calculated from them significantly exceed the minimum required parameters for holding the academic position of "Professor". Evidence of the seriousness and thoroughness of the candidate's research is that 5 of the mentioned citations are in refereed and indexed periodicals in world-renowned databases of scientific information.

The works with which Prof. Danail Danov, participated in this "Professor" competition are his contribution to the theoretical study of media pedagogy and media literacy. There is no doubt that the originality of the ideas, theses and generalizations in the publication activity belong to the author. As a member of the scientific jury, at the time of the submission of the review, no signals of any unlawful use of scientific publications by the candidate have been received by me.



The candidate's project activity has serious indicators. Since 2020, Prof. Danov has participated as an expert, trainer and/or national coordinator in 5 international projects and as a member/leader in several university projects.

I know Prof. Danail Danov personally and over the years he has proven himself to be a thorough specialist and authoritative colleague. He has worked throughout his academic career on topics related to the theoretical and practical aspects of media literacy and new media in education. I have had the opportunity to attend the presentation of some reports at scientific forums and lectures on various topics, which is why I take the liberty of stating that Danail Danov is an interesting presenter who has always left me with the impression of a purposeful researcher, familiar with the subject matter and innovations in the relevant scientific field.

I declare that among the materials submitted for the competition, I have no joint publications with the candidate.

The documents and materials provided by Prof. Danail Kirilov Danov, meet all the requirements of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ADSRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of the ADSRB and the Regulations on the Terms and Procedure for Acquiring Scientific Degrees and Holding Academic Positions at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

The candidate in the competition has presented a sufficient number of scientific works published after the materials used in the defense of the educational and qualification degree "Doctor", the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" and in the acquisition of the academic position of "Associate Professor". The candidate's works contain original scientific and applied contributions that have received appropriate recognition. Proof of the high scientific value of Prof. Danov's publications is their inclusion in periodicals and collections printed in international academic publishing houses. His theoretical developments have a definite theoretical and practical applicability, some of which are directly oriented towards academic work. The scientific and teaching qualifications of my colleague D. Danov are unquestionable.

The results achieved by Prof. Danail Danov in academic and research activities fully comply with the minimum national requirements in the Regulations on the conditions and

procedure for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

After reviewing the materials and scientific papers presented in the competition, analyzing their significance and the scientific, practical and applied contributions contained therein, I find it reasonable to give my positive assessment and recommend to the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to the Scientific Council of the Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology for the election of Prof. Danail Kirilov Danov to the academic position of "Professor" at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in the field of higher education: 1. Pedagogical Sciences, professional field: 1.3. Pedagogy of teaching in ... (Methodology of teaching a foreign language in a digital environment – English and Turkish).

01/24/2025

Reviewer:



/Prof. Dr. Milena Yordanova/