

OPINION

By: *Ljudmila Tsankova Ivanova, Professor Doctor, Veliko Turnovo University St. Cyril and St. Methodius*

Regarding: The application of the following candidate for the academic position of **ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR** according to the Bulgarian legislation at the American University in Bulgaria in Area of Higher Education 2. *Humanities* in Professional Field 2.1 *Philology*. The procedure has been announced in the State Gazette issue 73 dated 8 September 2017.

Candidate: *Dr. Diana Stantcheva*

I present the following evaluation in my capacity as a member of the Academic Jury for the procedure indicated above. This evaluation is based on the *Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act*, the Rules for its implementation, the internal AUBG rules, regulations, and policies, including the *Habilitation Procedure* and the advertisement on the AUBG website regarding the procedure.

Evaluation of the Candidate

I. Basis for Evaluation

This evaluation is based on the following documents submitted by the candidate:

Curriculum Vitae; copies of publications; list of citations; self-assessment of the research and teaching activities; evaluation results; student evaluation results.

II. Eligibility

*Please fill it out the enclosed **AUBG Academic Position Requirements** (Enclosure 1) and state your opinion with regard to the Candidate's eligibility.*

The candidacy of Dr. Diana Stantcheva is in compliance with the AUBG requirements for appointment to Associate Professor position, as well as with the requirements of the *Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act*.

In 2002 the candidate acquired the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" (Ph. D.) from the Humboldt University, Berlin, with the high mark of "magna cum laude" on the problems of phraseology, and this initial direction of her scholarly research leaves a permanent mark on her scholarly development in the years to follow. She has been working at AUBG since 2005, where she takes various positions and actively participates in the life of the institution.

Her scholarly activity results in publications in German, English, and Bulgarian language in specialized editions abroad and in Bulgaria (organized in the presented CV in groups: 2 books, 4 individually authored articles and 1 co-authored article in refereed journals, 4 individually authored and 1 co-authored article in refereed books, 9 individually authored and 2 co-authored conference papers published in conference proceedings and 1 conference paper in print, 1 encyclopedia entry, 3 book reviews; there is also information about conference papers delivered at national and international academic events, as well as about two awards of first prize at translation contests from German to Bulgarian and from Bulgarian to German language.) The 18 publications from the period 2004 – 2017 presented for habilitation do not repeat the contents of the doctoral work.

The teaching experience of Dr. Stantcheva also falls within the requirements for the Associate Professor position: she has worked at the Humboldt University; together with Prof. Dillmann she is working on a project for online connected courses (Denison University, USA, and AUBG). Her teaching experience with student-

centered teaching approach is evidenced by the positive student evaluations of teaching, peer reviews of her teaching from colleagues, her participation in scholarly projects jointly with students.

The requirement regarding a positive evaluation from the university is fully adhered to (see the March 2011 Memo included in the habilitation dossier, March 2016 Memo with very high grades for the three evaluation areas: teaching, research, and service to the University, as well as the positive results from the online student evaluations of teaching.)

Excellent command of English is a precondition for the joint education conducted together with Prof. G. Dillmann at Denison University, USA.

As a conclusion, I can explicitly state that the primary and the additional requirements for appointment to the academic position of Associate Professor are adhered to.

III. Areas of Scholarly Interests of the Candidate. Evaluation of the Contributions of the Candidate.

1. The publications presented, reflecting the scholarly interests of the candidate, illustrate an impressive integration of research objects, which makes it difficult to outline “clear” thematic spheres: in the area of lexicography the analyses of mono- and bilingual dictionaries are conducted not only from synchronic but also from diachronic point of view. With this emphasis in her research, Dr. D. Stantcheva is an integral part of the contemporary scholarly context (consider for instance the intensive interest in researching lexicographic sources, related also to the establishment of the new scholarly field “dictionary usage”). Her studies of the bilingual dictionary by Geo Milev represent a contribution to the history of lexicography in Bulgaria, and the publication of the results in Bulgarian language definitely contributes to it. Points in common with the problems of lexicography and lexicology are found in the research devoted to the terminology and to the terminology resources of EU, to the EU language policy, and with this emphasis Dr. Stantcheva responds to the needs of the contemporary society. In the area of the lexicographic research, a second emphasis of Dr. D. Stantcheva’s scholarly activity stands out: phraseology (including research of the availability of phraseological units in dictionaries, with terminological phrases). Moreover, this outstanding fragment of scholarly interest is also characterized by multiple layers: it is related to the gender problematics, with linguistic analysis at various levels, with visualization of phraseological units, and these topics, on their part, project into the third major area of scholarly interest – teaching German as a foreign language. This third emphasis is not only closely related to the other ones, but also possesses its own relative independence (consider for example publications regarding contemporary instruction methods, such as synchronous and asynchronous digital pedagogy, the usage of new technologies in foreign language teaching).

My assessment of the scholarly and applied results and contributions is as follows:

- Contributions to the area of methodology of scholarly research:
 - Application of synchronic and diachronic research methods (in the areas of lexicography, phraseology);
 - Corpus linguistics;
 - Comparative linguistics.
- Contributions to the area of phraseology research (with emphasis on the visualization of phraseological units, on the gender problematics, by which the understanding of this, otherwise often discussed language area, is enhanced;
- Contributions to the area of methodology and didactics of foreign language teaching (including development of the approach for synchronous and asynchronous digital pedagogy, and popularizing of the potential of this contemporary method).

The value of the achieved scholarly results is evidenced by the number of citations of the publications in refereed editions in Bulgaria and abroad (127 citations in Bulgarian and international editions, according to List

of Citations until November 2016), which is evidence about the visibility of Dr. D. Stantcheva, and about her noticeable presence in the Bulgarian and international scholarly exchange. Contribution to this visibility is also the membership of the candidate in professional Bulgarian and international organizations (European Society of Phraseology (EUOPHRAS); European Association for Lexicography (EURALEX); International Association for Germanic Studies, and Bulgarian Association of Germanists).

The applicability of the research results is evidenced also by the results from and the assessment of the teaching activities, as well as the inclusion of students in joint scholarly projects. The selected topical emphases of the scholarly activities match the disciplines taught at AUBG, which makes it possible to enrich first-hand not only the declarative knowledge of the students, but also allows to stimulate the student participation in joint projects, and this combination is one of the wonderful privileges of the university scholar and professor.

Another eloquent testimony to Dr. D. Stantcheva's commitment to the scholarly area is the impressive number of participations in international and Bulgarian scholarly fora, as well as her participation in one university and 7 international projects (as reflected in the autobiography), which are closely related to the scholarly interests and teaching activities.

2. On the basis of the information included in Enclosure 2 it is obvious that there is coherence between the emphasis of the scholarly research of the candidate and the teaching experience required for the announced position of Associate Professor.

IV. Evaluation of the Candidate's teaching

1. Please include short evaluation according to the Additional Indicators related to teaching, with emphasis on teaching in recognized liberal arts institutions and student-centered approach.
2. Please indicate your opinion with regard to the correspondence between the overall teaching experience of the Candidate and the requirements of the current procedure.

1. Dr. Diana Stantcheva was evaluated three times during the time she has been an AUBG professor (in 2008, 2011 and 2016). The evaluation of her teaching is excellent in all three instances.

Dr. D. Stantcheva teaches an impressive variety of disciplines with practical, theoretical, and methodical and didactic orientation.

Enclosure № 8, which reflects the student evaluations of Dr. D. Stantcheva's teaching (2013-2017) demonstrates convincingly a committed and competent university professor.

Enclosure № 9 contains two peer reviews from Dr. D. Stantcheva's classes – one by Prof. Kr. Bozhinova and one by Prof. T. Ivanova, which contain detailed and exceptionally positive assessment of the pedagogical skills for work with students, establishing a positive and stimulating work environment.

2. The teaching experience of Dr. D. Stantcheva fully corresponds to the requirements for the procedure. The emphasis on "German as a foreign language (oral and written communication)" is complemented by teaching disciplines such as *Perspectives on German-speaking Cultures*, comparative grammar (where the latter discipline includes comparison of German with English, Bulgarian, and Russian), application of information and communication technologies in foreign language teaching and new forms of foreign language acquisition; lexicology [,] lexicography, phraseology. I would like to emphasize, as an important characteristic of the teaching activity, the close connection between scholarly interests of the candidate and the courses taught. They are present, even if not as an individual discipline, in the contents of the instructional materials (for example in the list of courses taught the topic "Language and Gender" is not explicitly present but could be found in the contents of disciplines such as *Phraseology*, *Lexicography*, *German as a Foreign Language*).

V. Major critical notes and recommendations

I wish Dr. D. Stantcheva to continue her successful scholarly development and teaching activities enhancement. I recommend that the results of the research in the area of methodology of teaching German as a foreign language and in the area of phraseology be systematized in individual monographs and university textbooks.

VI. Conclusion:

On the basis of the submitted documentation that I examined I am fully convinced that the application of Dr. D. Stantcheva is in compliance with the Habilitation Law and with the AUBG requirements for the current procedure. The candidate demonstrates originality in scholarly research, commitment to and experience in teaching, integration of her scholarly interests into her teaching and working with students, dependability in carrying out administrative responsibilities.

I propose to the respected Jury to grant Dr. D. Stantcheva the academic position of “Associate Professor” in area of higher education 2. “Humanities” in professional field 2.1 “Philology” at the American University in Bulgaria in accordance with the *Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act* and the internal AUBG policies.

Signature and date:

By signing here I also declare that writing this review does not represent conflict of interest.