

# **OPINION**

**by Prof. Dr. Dimitar Iliev Balkanski**

**"Bishop Konstantin Preslavski" Secondary School**

**Regarding:** the materials submitted for participation in a competition for the academic position of "professor" in: field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional direction 1.3. Pedagogy of training in... (Methodology of fine art training).

## **Contest details**

In the competition for "professor" published in the State Gazette no. 24/25.03. 2022 for the needs of Thrace University, Associate Professor Dr. Ani Dimova Zlateva, who is the only candidate, applied. The candidate has submitted all the necessary documents for participation in the competition, a sufficient number of scientific works published after the materials used in the defense of the ONS "doctor" and the academic position "associate professor" and, in the sense of ZRASRB, has the right to participate in it. In a statement of credibility, he declares that the presented information is reliable and has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the RSARB and PRASTrU. All scientific works presented in the competition for the academic position of "professor" are her author's works and in no way infringes on the copyrights of others. The literature used has been cited correctly in all places where it has been mentioned.

## **Applicant data**

In 1995, Associate Professor Dr. Ani Zlateva completed her higher education at VTU "Saints Cyril and Methodius", FII, majoring in "Pedagogy of fine arts", Diploma - series A95/ VTU, No. 00413, with qualification - teacher in Fine Art and Aesthetics - Specialist in Sculpture. During the period 1995 - 1996, he was a designer at IC "Domino" - St. Zagora, and in 1996-2002 he was a freelance artist - Designing and making stained glass windows. Since 2006, he has been the main assistant, and in 2013 he was awarded the academic position of "associate professor" at the PF of Thrace University, Stara Zagora.

Assoc. Dr. Ani Zlateva defends a dissertation in the field of the scientific specialty "Methodology of Fine Art Education", SNS in Pedagogy at VAK; Field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, Professional direction 1.3. Pedagogy of training in..., in 2006 and received a Ph.D. Topic of the dissertation: "Stereotypical images in the drawings of children of primary school age".

Prof. Dr. Ani Zlateva's professional scientific interests are in the field of pedagogy, theory and methodology of fine art training, art therapy. Possesses digital skills - mastery of an office package (word processing and presentation software), knowledge of graphic programs for creating and processing images, skills in designing and creating interior design. He has certificates from training seminars,

from round tables, from scientific forums on a national and international level. Participates in the editorial boards of scientific publications at home and abroad. She was a member of a scientific jury for the preparation of an opinion for awarding the ONS "Doctor". She participated in numerous intra-university, national and international projects in the country and abroad. Performs various expert activities for state, municipal and public institutions dedicated to problems of art education.

### **Description of scientific works**

From the attached documents and materials, it is clear that the research activity presented by Associate Professor Dr. Ani Zlateva meets the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of ZRASRB and the relevant Regulations of Thrace University. Stara Zagora. The candidate in the competition fulfills the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b, paras. 2 and 3 of ZRASRB for occupying the academic position "professor". The quantitative scientometric indicators of the presented materials meet and exceed the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

In the competition for "Professor" Assoc. Dr. Ani Zlateva participated with 20 scientific publications, which were presented after acquiring the academic position of "Associate Professor" and concern the following scientific areas of research and analysis: Monograph - 3, (2 independent and 1 chapter from a monograph); Textbooks – 6, in collective; Articles – 11, published in collections and yearbooks in the country and abroad.

All works in the list of scientific and applied production, presented by Assoc. Dr. Ani Zlateva, were published and were created in the period 2013 - 2022. They are directly related to the subject of the announced competition for "professor" in the scientific specialty - Methodology of training in fine arts and testify to strong publication activity of the candidate.

I believe that the monograph "Interactive Art Activities in an Informal Environment", Academic Publishing House of Thrace University, page 282, 2022, ISBN: 978-954-338-193-7, deserves special attention as the main habilitation work.

The monograph examines the peculiarities of the organization and conduct of interactive art activities in an informal environment. The scientific work explains: the origin and concept of non-formal education, as well as the practices and approaches applicable to this type of education.

Historically, the implementation of various forms of non-formal education in Bulgaria is presented, with the main focus being on the community center activity. The method of using non-formal education in a museum and gallery environment and the main role that museum pedagogy has in its implementation are clarified. Emphasis is placed on non-formal education in the study of visual arts and the development of fine arts activities in an informal environment in Bulgaria.

Attention is paid to interactive forms of pedagogical interaction and their use in visual arts activities. Learning in an electronic environment and the different forms of application of informal learning in this environment are presented. Different forms of interactive art activities in a popular urban environment are

described and the results obtained as a result of their implementation are analyzed. Experience from the implementation of interactive activities and their pedagogical aspects of communication with visual art in a museum environment is shared. A comparative analysis of the results of interactive informal art activities in a real, electronic and hybrid environment is proposed, and relevant conclusions are drawn in the conclusion.

The monographic work *How to read children's drawings*, Malta, is extremely useful for the pedagogical practice of visual activities in kindergarten and for students of pedagogical specialties. University of Malta. Center for Resilience & Socio-Emotional Health. ISBN: 978-99957-890-5-3 (electronic), (2019). ISBN: 978-99957-890-4-6 (paperback).

The monograph examines the features of the pictorial process and its role in determining the stages in the development of children's drawing. Certain stages are presented, according to various researchers of children's drawings - Vygotsky, Goodenough, Reid, Golomb, Malchiodi, etc.

The monographic work presents some of the most frequently used drawing methods in modern pedagogical and psychological practice. Some of the basic principles in the diagnosis of children's drawings and diagnostic drawing tests are shown. It is clarified how children's drawings reveal two important dimensions of their development: their intellectual and psychological-emotional development.

The author examines popular drawing tests - Draw-a-Person-Test (DAP), based on the Goodenough Methodology, determining the degree of intellectual development of a child based on a drawing of a human figure; Draw-a-Person-Test (DAP), based on the Machover methodology, assessing the psychological and emotional state of the child's personality. Some of the methods for assessing children's family and social relationships that can be explored using Burns and Kaufman's (1970), Kinetic Family Drawing Technique (KFD) and Prout and Phillips' (1974), Kinetic School Drawing (KSD) Technique. A wealth of illustrative material is appended from children's drawings of human figures showing various developmental features that reveal differences in the depiction of the human figure.

Particularly necessary for the professional-methodical training of teachers in pedagogical specialties and future teachers is the presented chapter from a collective monograph: Ani Zlateva and the team. "Competence approach in teaching students of pedagogical specialties". Academic Publishing House of Thrace University, Stara Zagora (2021). ISBN: 978-954-314-104-3.

It systematizes the theoretical foundations building the structure of the competence approach in teaching students of pedagogical specialties, which is a modern trend in the educational process in a university environment.

For participation in the "professor" competition, 6 textbooks used in the school network are also presented (1. Ani Zlateva, Olga Hristova, *My Fairytale Path to Fine Art*. An informative book for 3. preparatory group in kindergarten and at school. Bulvest 2000 .; 2. Ani Zlateva, Olga Hristova, *My fairy-tale path to fine art*. Informative book for 4. preparatory group in kindergarten and at school. Bulvest 2000.; 3. Ani Zlateva and team. *My fairy-tale paths*. Methodical guide for 3 .

preparatory group, Bulvest 2000.; 4. Ani Zlateva and collective. My fairy-tale paths. Methodical guide for 4. preparatory group, Bulvest 2000.; 5. Ani Zlateva and collective. My fairy-tale paths. Book for the teacher for 3. preparatory group . Bulvest 2000.; 6. Ani Zlateva and team. My fairy-tale paths. Book for the teacher for the 3rd preparatory group. Bulvest 2000.). These textbooks help to support and increase the professional-pedagogical training of the children's teacher in the "Fine Art" field of study.

The presented articles (11 nos. - 4 nos. published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information and 7 nos. published in refereed journals with scientific review and in edited collective volumes) for the competition for "professor" from the scientific production of Assoc. Dr. Ani Zlateva include topics revealing problems of art education and highlight new aspects of preschool, school and higher education in this field. They are especially necessary and important for the future professional-pedagogical work of students, for teachers and professors from primary and higher schools.

More specifically, the topics that the candidate explores in his articles are aimed at: *the principles of design learning in an informal environment; formation of social competences in the training of visual activities in kindergarten; the pedagogical aspects of interactive communication with fine art in a museum environment; art classes as a form of prevention of dropping out of school; discovery and training of gifted children and students in art; art as a means of developing the creative potential of children and students with specific learning difficulties; children's perception of works of art in a museum environment; building visual perceptions in students-pedagogues unprepared for communication with the visual arts; the specifics of the drawings of talented children; trainings for parents and teachers of gifted and talented children; development of the artistic competences of students from pedagogical specialties in the conditions of informal education.*

The author's scientific publications are aimed at and help involve students in the educational process of fine art in kindergarten and primary school, teach them to apply innovative ideas and methods, tailored to the capabilities and interests of adolescents.

### **Scientific contributions**

Assoc. Dr. Ani Zlateva synthesizes her scientific and applied production, precisely and precisely bringing out specific scientific contributions, which I fully share. The presented scientific production has a markedly scientific-theoretical and practical-applied character, and the following contributions can be highlighted in it:

1. The new directions in the educational sphere, inspired by the changing lifestyle and society's demands for prepared individuals in the field of artistic education and upbringing, are reported. In accordance with the specifics of the educational process in fine arts, the pedagogical theory and practice is enriched with the clarification of theoretical, didactic and methodical problems related to the education of children, students and students;

(Contributions from the main habilitation thesis, the monograph "Interactive Art Activities in an Informal Environment")

2. Basic principles, practices and approaches of learning in an informal environment are presented and explored, which imply the inclusion of interactive activities with art and reflect modern educational and cultural trends in education. Various forms of non-formal education in museum and gallery environments and the role of museum pedagogy for their application in activities and communication with fine arts in non-formal environment in Bulgaria have been investigated. After a comprehensive historical review of various forms of non-formal education in Bulgaria, the activity of community centers and extracurricular and extracurricular activities in historical terms is emphasized;

3. Different interactive forms of pedagogical interaction (problem-based learning, cooperative learning, experiential learning, active learning, exploratory learning and learning through play) have been theoretically studied and analyzed in visual arts classes and their application, as well as in a face-to-face form of learning , as well as when learning in an electronic environment. Various forms of non-formal learning are presented in electronic and online environments, but direct presence and contact with art, with prepared lecturers and educators in natural environments - galleries and museums, remains the main form of communication and interaction with art;

4. The possibilities and advantages of art activities for creating visual models and performing visual activities in an informal environment are clarified. Interactive art activities in a popular urban environment are described, and the results obtained as a result of their implementation are analyzed. Experience from the implementation of interactive activities and their pedagogical aspects of communication with visual art in a museum environment is shared. A comparative analysis of the results of interactive informal art classes in real, electronic and hybrid environments is presented, for effective, motivating and attractive learning;

5. The use of forms of interactive pedagogical interaction in art classes in an informal environment provokes an increased interest in children and students for creative expressions and the need to communicate with different forms of art in galleries and museums. Various forms of interactive art activities contribute to popularizing art among adolescents and turning them into art connoisseurs;

(Scientific contributions from "How to read children's drawings, Malta. University of Malta. Center for Resilience & Socio-Emotional Health")

6. The features and importance of the pictorial process are analyzed, and the most important indicators that characterize it are determined. Its indisputable role in determining the stages in the development of children's drawing is highlighted. Getting to know the characteristics of the individual stages provides solid knowledge

of the methods of evaluating children's development through children's visual activity;

7. Certain stages are studied, according to various researchers of children's creativity - Vygotsky, Goodinough, Reid, Golomb, Malhodi, etc., accompanied by children's drawings from the author's many years of pedagogical experience. For more than 20 years, many children's drawings have been collected, analyzed and systematized during children's art classes;

8. Some of the most frequently used drawing methods in modern pedagogical and psychological practice are presented. Some of the basic principles in the diagnosis of children's drawings and diagnostic drawing tests are outlined. The role of children's drawings for their intellectual and psychological-emotional development is clarified. Some of the methods for assessing family and social relationships of children, which can be studied using the methodology of Burns and Kaufman (1970), and that of Prout and Phillips' (1974);

(Contributions to the presented scientific articles)

9. The specialized scientific literature is enriched by the author's research on the importance of the development of visual skills in children in an informal environment with the application of the principles of design, learning and the implementation of integrative connections with various scientific disciplines - Pedagogy, Art, History, Archeology, etc. .n. Analyzed interpreted visual prototypes for children achieved with the means of design thinking of historically significant artifacts selected from the collection of the History Museum in Stara Zagora;

10. Extensive research has been carried out related to the early detection of gifted children in the field of fine arts. A number of indicators have been determined (way of building the form and details in the images, with the reflection of the space and with the compositional solutions in the drawing), by which gifted and talented children with visual and creative abilities can be identified already at an early stage of their development ;

11. The necessity of researching good practices for the role of art in the learning process for children with specific learning difficulties in the various educational fields, which contribute to the activation of their visual perceptions and the formation of visual-spatial and pictorial memory, has been studied;

12. The results of the author's scientific production can be used for research purposes by various specialists - students and teachers, authors of textbooks, experts in the field of art education, having scientific interests aimed at the modern development of art education.

## Teaching job

Associate Professor Dr. Ani Zlateva conducts lecture courses with students from the following majors: OCS "Bachelor" - PUP, PNUP, POIIGD, NUP IKG. He participates in the updating and development of new curricula in various disciplines in the PF of TrU. She was the supervisor of 6 graduates who successfully defended their diplomas. He participated in the national project "Student Practices" - Phase 2 as an academic mentor.

As a confirmation of the active research activity of Associate Professor Dr. Ani Zlateva in the specialized press after acquiring the academic position of "associate professor", numerous citations were noticed in: scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information (7 issues ), monographs and collective volumes with scientific review (9 issues), non-refereed journals with scientific review (12 issues).

Associate Professor Dr. Ani Zlateva has a rich artistic and creative output. He has participated in many sculpture projects and festivals in the country (Burgas) and abroad (Netherlands, Finland, Turkey, Italy), in national and regional exhibitions. He is a member of the group of Stara Zagora artists and the Representation of SBH - Stara Zagora.

## Conclusion

Given the indisputable qualities of the scientific production, which includes topics and defines new aspects in education, expanding the range of problems in the education of fine arts in kindergarten, primary and higher school, I strongly recommend to the respected scientific jury to give a positive assessment to the application, offering Associate Professor Dr. Ani Dimova Zlateva to be awarded the academic position of "professor" in: field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional direction 1.3. Pedagogy of training in ... (Methodology of fine art training) for the needs of Thrace University, Stara Zagora.

03.09. 2022

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Prepared the opinion: .....

**/Prof. Dr. Dimitar Balkanski/**