

HABILITATION BOARD DECISION ON THE NOMINATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Masaryk University	
Faculty	Faculty of Education
Procedure field	Didactics of Foreign Language
Applicant	Dr. rer. pol. Mgr. Michaela Kováčová
Applicant's home unit, institution	Faculty of Arts at Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice
Habilitation thesis	Stellung der Filmarbeit im DaF-Unterricht in der Sekundarstufe II in der Slowakei

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Faculty of Arts, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra

Evaluation of the applicant's scholarly qualifications

Michaela Kováčová focuses her scientific work on five areas:

- 1) Intercultural contacts and acquisition of intercultural competence mainly in the context of foreign language acquisition
- 2) Media in German language teaching
- 3) Determinants of German language teaching and the development of German studies
- 4) History of the German minority in Slovakia and its print culture
- 5) Linguistics (textual analysis and lexicology)

Ad 1)

Her scientific activity in this field is interdisciplinary and interconnects the knowledge of foreign language didactics, cultural anthropology, intercultural communication as a science and partly also social history and is closely related to her educational path and pedagogical activity. Methods of teaching intercultural competence and their effectiveness were the content of her dissertation *Komparative Evaluation kulturspezifischer didaktischer und erfahrungsorientierter interkultureller Trainings (Comparative Evaluation of of Culture-Specific Cognitive and Experiential Intercultural Trainings)* which was later published in a modified form as a monograph by Peter Lang. The Research in this area was supported by the German Academic Exchange Service DAAD by awarding a scholarship at the Friedrich Schiller University of Jena.

The complete results of this research were presented by the candidate at the global conference *Aiming for "The Third Place"*, specifically focused on the development and evaluation of intercultural competence, which took place on 29-31 January 2010 in Tucson (USA). In addition to the forms of intercultural and language learning in formal education, she also conducted quantitative and qualitative research on the acquisition of language and culture directly in the environment of the host country during student mobility.

Ad 2)

Since 2010 Michaela Kováčová has been focusing her attention on the use of new media in the teaching of the German language, in the training of teachers and their further education. Thanks to the Goethe Institute's programme, she has acquired fundamental knowledge and skills in this area and has become a lecturer in the teacher training programme *Schule im Wandel/The Changing School*, which was implemented in cooperation with the Methodical Pedagogical Centre Bratislava.

She has devoted another study to the use of blogs both for training the production of journalistic texts for reflection and documentation of learning processes in didactics. It was applied research linked to the candidate's pedagogical practice.

During the pandemic, the importance of digital media in education has increased even more. Michaela Kováčová initiated a nationwide questionnaire survey of distance electronic foreign language teaching at higher education institutions in Slovakia. The research was oriented both on selected quantitative (lesson length, length of real teaching time) and qualitative aspects (activities, social forms, materials, multimedia, interactivity, achievement of objectives, use of existing and creation of new materials) and, of course, on the development of language skills and other components.

In addition to new media, Michaela Kováčová also focuses on the use of film in foreign language education as a medium for the development of language skills, intercultural competence and media competence as a compulsory interdisciplinary topic in school curricula. She was a member of the research team of the KEGA project *Forstering of Culture and Arts in the Study Programme "German Language and Literature" through blended-learning*. The most important result of this project is the monograph, *Neue Wege im DaF-Unterricht: Bildende Kunst – Spielfilm – digitale Medien (New ways in teaching German as a foreign language: visual arts – movie – digital media)* where the authors presented fundamental theoretical knowledge that supports the use of artistic artefacts, film and digital media in foreign language education as well as model practices applicable in the teaching process linked to commonly taught topics.

Ad 3)

As a member of the Slovak Association of Teachers of German and Germanists, Michaela Kováčová is interested in the aspects that influence the teaching of German. In particular, she has analysed the development and preferences in the choice of textbooks since the 1980s to the 2010s, the attitudes of parents of primary school pupils towards the teaching of German as a foreign language and their support of their children in learning German as well as the construction of German studies in Slovakia and the employment of graduates.

Currently she participates in the teacher training and further education projects *Innovations in Pedagogical Practice* at UPJŠ aimed at targeted development of competences of future teachers and the nationwide project sponsored by the Central Office of Methodological and Pedagogical Centres and the State Pedagogical Institute Professional Development of Teachers (TEACHERS).

Ad 4)

This area of scientific work is related both to the research focus of the applicant's university and to her educational path. The main topics at the Department of German Studies at the UPJŠ Faculty of Arts are research on literary and journalistic production of German female authors from the territory of Slovakia and research of historical press. In the project *Forgotten*

texts, forgotten literature. German female authors from the territory of today's Slovakia (18th–21st century), Michaela Kováčová researched the social and cultural conditions of the females authors' work on the basis of archival materials and, naturally, secondary literature. She focused on the cultural identity of various German islands in Slovakia, the higher education of girls, the role of German press, publishing houses and theatres in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Ad 5)

Applied research in the field of textual analysis is carried by Michaela Kováčová in the research of the historical press, relying to the elaborated system of the DIMEAN methodology (Warnke/Spitzmüller 2008). Text-linguistically oriented comparative research was also carried out on the theses of German students of German Studies, Slovak students of German Studies and Slovak students of Slovak Studies. She compared the works in each sub-corpus in terms of preference for nominal and verbal style, terminological saturation, syntax, use of forms to achieve cohesion and coherence of the text, and type of thematic progression.

The candidate's rather broad scholarly scope allows her to perceive didactic, linguistic or socio-historical problems in a broader interdisciplinary context.

The applicant's published scientific and professional results can be summarized as follows:

- 17 original research articles published in peer-reviewed journals, including 2 articles listed in Scopus database
- 3 scholarly book publications written in German language (1 of them in sole authorship)
- 7 chapters in scholarly book publications
- 12 articles in proceedings
- 1 textbook + 8 textbook texts or textbook chapters
- 2 invited lectures in Slovakia
- 2 editorships of scholarly book publications + 1 editorship of single-topic scholarly journal issue
- more than 30 conference presentations
- 12 reviews for journals or publishers

The applicant's publications have a total of 55 references published not only in the Slovak or Czech Republics, but also in German and other foreign countries - 42 citations (including 4 in WoS/Scopus databases) and 13 other references.

She was a co-investigator of 2 scholarly projects and 6 education or development projects. The applicant's recognition by international experts can be demonstrated by collaboration with foreign institutions: International University Institute Zittau, Institute for German Studies and FZ DiMoS University of Regensburg, Department of German Language and Literary Studies of University of Miskolc, Hungary.

Conclusion: The applicant's scholarly capabilities **meet** the requirements expected of applicants participating in a habilitation procedure in the field of Didactics of Foreign Language.

Evaluation of the applicant's pedagogical experience

Michaela Kováčová has a rich teaching experience. She taught 10 years (from 2003 to 2013) as an assistant lecturer and assistant professor at the Department of Germanic Studies of the Faculty of Arts and Letters of the Catholic University in Ružomberok. She taught lectures concerning lexicology and stylistics of German language in both Bachelor's and Master's type of studies, and special Master's type of studies lectures such as Didactics of German as

foreign language and literature, History of German movies, History and culture of German-speaking countries, Intercultural communication, Language skills and German area studies.

In 2011, she took up the position of Assistant Professor at the Department of Germanic Studies of the Faculty of Arts of Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice, where she provides teaching in the interdisciplinary Bachelor's degree programme German Language and Literature in combination and also in the continuing teacher education programme. In the first instance, she was mainly involved in linguistic disciplines, morphology and applied linguistics, and since 2020 she has taken over the teaching of compulsory didactic subjects at the department and also works as a practice methodologist.

Michaela Kováčová has supervised a total of 20 successfully defended bachelor theses and 19 successfully defended master theses. She has been a member of state examination boards at both Catholic University in Ružomberok and Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice, and was a member of doctoral committee of the programme European Cultural Studies at Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica in 2017.

She applied the knowledge of her research in the conceptualisation of curricula for the subject Intercultural Communication and its teaching as a compulsory elective subject at the Catholic University in Ružomberok and later as a compulsory subject at the Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice. The courses are intended for future German language teachers and their aim is to impart knowledge of intercultural communication so that graduates can ensure the integration of an intercultural approach into foreign language teaching. The result of several years of pedagogical and research work is the textbook *Intercultural Communication: Applications for Selected German and Slovak Contexts*. The textbook is used by teachers at the University of Prešov in addition to UPJŠ.

The applicant's published pedagogical works can be summarized as follows:

- 1 textbook
- 8 textbook texts or textbook chapters
- 33 popular science texts and activities
- 1 educational text

Conclusion: The applicant's pedagogical capabilities **meet** the requirements expected of applicants participating in a habilitation procedure in the field of Didactics of Foreign Language.

Habilitation thesis evaluation

The subject of the submitted habilitation thesis is in line with modern approaches to foreign language teaching, while focusing on the use of film art in foreign language teaching. The research goal is clearly defined in the thesis, which is to explore the didactic potential of the film (anchored in the broader context of audio-visual media) when including it in the teaching of German as a foreign language in Slovakia. The scope of the work itself (280 pages of text, more than 20 pages of bibliography) indicates that the author approached the solution of the research project comprehensively, which is also evidenced by the text's own content. This approach is certainly commendable, but it also hides certain dangers in that some aspects/areas/concepts may lack a more exact and deeper theoretical excursion or, on the contrary, run into less relevant details.

The structure of the work is logical, the order of the chapters is in accordance with the objectives of the work. The first three chapters serve the theoretical anchoring of the investigated issue. In the first of them, the author presents a closer definition of film as a specific type of art, which is certainly a very interesting and well-worked part, but the question arises to what extent everything is relevant to the didactic topic of the field. The content of the

second chapter can be considered quite relevant, in which the author traces the "path" of film into school teaching from the perspective of not only pedagogy, but also current educational documents of the Slovak Republic, where she anchors film production in the context of media education. The key chapter in the theoretical part can be considered the third chapter "Potenzial von Spielfilmen unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von DaF" ("Potential of feature films with special consideration of German as a foreign language"). On a general level, here we find relevant contents that are correlated with empirical research, but their processing raises certain critical comments (e.g. the structure of the sub-chapters, a somewhat superficial explanation of some concepts/aspects or the author's debatable conclusions). Practically oriented chapter 4 offers topics and didactic procedures for working with film in teaching, which can also be considered not only stimulating and inspiring, but also a basis for professional discussion.

In the empirical part, we find four complementary studies, which together resonate with the main goal of the research and provide answers to appropriately formulated research questions. Quite logically, the author chooses a mixed design and uses numerous and relevant methods of data collection and analysis. It is possible to perceive the absence of a more comprehensive summary of the empirical part as a minor deficit, although it should be emphasized that it appears in the final summary.

With regard to the work with sources and compliance with citation standards, the work does not show any fundamental flaws, but in some cases a more careful approach to this formal aspect of the given scientific work would be needed. This is, for example more consistent indication of page numbers for citations or paraphrasing, which is – especially in the theoretical part – somewhat non-standard and needs to be paid particular attention to before possible publication of the work.

The linguistic aspect of the work must be appreciated, which is at an excellent level and the style fully corresponds to the standards of academic writing.

Despite a number of critical remarks (see also the reviews of the opponents), M. Kováčová's habilitation thesis represents a contribution to foreign language didactics and its research, not only with its current topic, but also with its methodological approach. It reflects interdisciplinarity, complexity and connection with the current state of knowledge in the given field in an international context, as well as a close connection to educational practice, for which research results bring new stimuli.

Conclusion: The applicant's habilitation thesis **meets** the requirements expected of habilitation theses in the field of Didactics of Foreign Language.

Secret ballot results

Number of board members	5
Number of votes cast	5
Number of votes in favour	5

Board decision

Based on the outcome of the secret vote and following an evaluation of the applicant's scholarly or artistic qualifications, pedagogical experience and habilitation thesis, the board hereby submits a proposal to the scientific board of the Faculty of Education of Masaryk University to

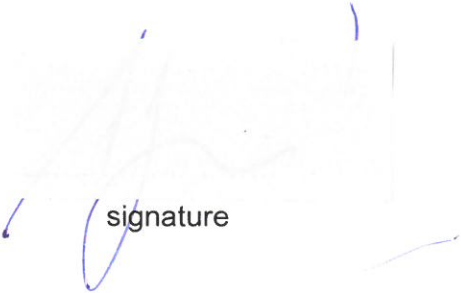


appoint the applicant associate professor of Didactics of Foreign Language.

terminate the procedure.

Date: Brno, October 18, 2022

prof. PhDr. Věra Janíková, Ph.D.



signature