

First Language School in Varna

Bulgarian transcript:

Милена: Казвам се Милена Докова. От Варна съм, това е най-големият град във Североизточна България. Завършила съм Първа езикова гимназия и днес на рождения си ден дори съм с моята класна и моята много добра приятелка от класа ми [има предвид интервюиращия, който е извън кадър]. В момента уча международни отношения като първа специалност и втора специалност - право във Софийския университет в София.

Палва Цонкова: Ами, приятно ми е, здравейте на всички. Аз се казвам Палва Цонкова Иванова и съм учителка по английски. Над 30 години преподавам английски в Първа езикова гимназия и от там познавам тези две прекрасни и умни момичета, с които съм в момента на една маса в едно прекрасно кафене в слънчева Варна, привечер.

И училището е най-доброто във България, със много... приемът е изключително труден, защото се явяват деца, които са отлично подготвени и допълнително се готвят, и са от специални семейства, от високо образование семейства, които искат да бъдат... да постигнат най-доброто в живота. А сега вече откакто България от 89-та година е демокрация, наистина всеки може да пътува накъдето иска и където да следва, и да направи... да постигне мечтите си в живота.

English translation:

Milena: My name is Milena Dokova. I am from Varna – that is the biggest city in Northeastern Bulgaria. [For high school] I have graduated from the First Language School and today, on my birthday, I am with my teacher¹ and my very good friend from my class [the interviewer, who is off-camera]. Currently, I am pursuing a double major in international relations and law at the Sofia University in Sofia.

Pavla Tsonkova: Well, nice to meet you, hello everyone. My name is Pavla Tsonkova Ivanova, and I am an English teacher. I have been teaching English for over 30 years now at the First Language School, and that is how I know these two wonderful and smart girls that I am with right now, [sitting] at a table in this wonderful café in sunny Varna, just before sunset.

¹ Класен ор класна (lit. trans. “class teacher” is a teacher who is, in addition to teaching a subject, responsible for a class of 20-25 people. They usually serve as advisors, manage attendance issues, organize excursions, etc.

The school is the best in Bulgaria with a lot of... Enrollment is extremely competitive² because children with excellent [middle school] preparation and additional preparation³ apply. They are from special families – highly educated families – and want to be... to achieve the best in life. And since Bulgaria has been a democracy since 1989, everyone can actually travel wherever they want, and go to school wherever they want, and do... achieve their dreams in life.

About CultureTalk: CultureTalk is produced by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and housed on the LangMedia Website. The project provides students of language and culture with samples of people talking about their lives in the languages they use every day. The participants in CultureTalk interviews and discussions are of many different ages and walks of life. They are free to express themselves as they wish. The ideas and opinions presented here are those of the participants. Inclusion in CultureTalk does not represent endorsement of these ideas or opinions by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages, Five Colleges, Incorporated, or any of its member institutions: Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

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² *Труден*: Lit. trans. “difficult.”

³ Preparation outside of school (like tutoring and private lessons) is very common among Bulgarian students applying to high school. The “additional preparation” that the interviewee is talking about usually happens throughout the academic year before high school.