R E V I E W

by Prof. Snezhina Lyubozarova Dimitrova, PhD

Department of English and American Studies, Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”

member of the Academic Jury appointed by Order № РД 38-172/20.04.2023 of the Rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

 with regard to the selection procedure for the academic position of PROFESSORin the Area of Higher Education 2. Humanities, professional field 2.1. Philology (Cognitive linguistics – text and discourse analysis /English language/) at the Department of English and American Studies, Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", announced in the *State Gazette*, issue 24 / 17.03.2023

From the documentation provided to the members of the scientific jury it is clear that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nelly Todorova Tincheva – Georgieva - the only candidate in the competition for the academic position of "professor" in the area of higher education 2. Humanities, professional field 2.1. Philology (Cognitive linguistics – text and discourse analysis (English language)) has submitted all necessary documents and materials for participation in the competition. The documentation is in full compliance with the requirements of the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation and the Regulations on the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

 Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nelly Tincheva – Georgieva fully meets the minimum national requirements under Article 2b of the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria for occupying the academic position of "professor", as well as the corresponding additional requirements formulated in Part 3, Section V of the Regulations on the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

Information about the candidate

The professional career of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nelly Tincheva – Georgieva at the Department of English and American Studies of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” began back in 1995, immediately after she successfully defended her MA thesis entitled “*Gender, speech and cultural myths*”. In 2006, she obtained her PhD after the defense of a doctoral dissertation on the topic of “*The SOURCE-PATH-GOAL image schema in political speeches*”. I am mentioning this in order to emphasize the fact that the candidate’s interest in text and discourse analysis dates back to the time when she was a student, and to demonstrate her lasting scientific interest in the area of cognitive linguistics. During the period 1995 - 2015, the candidate successively held the positions of assistant professor, senior assistant professor and principal assistant professor at the Department of English and American Studies. After defending her doctoral dissertation, she was appointed associate professor in the same department. She has taught courses on text linguistics, discourse analysis, analytical approaches to the text, political discourse, analytical grammar, all of which fully correspond to the scientific field of the current competition.

Alongside her teaching activities, Assoc. Prof. Tincheva was on the team of as many as 10 scientific projects. She was involved in the organization of and was a participant in numerous scientific conferences and seminars at home and abroad. Assoc. Prof. Tincheva was also the head of the "Linguistics" section at the Department of English and American Studies, a member of the board of the Bulgarian Society for British Studies, a member of ICLA (the International Cognitive Linguistics Association) and of the Bulgarian Sociolinguistic Society, as well as a reviewer of books and papers for a number of scientific journals, three of which are referenced in SCOPUS and one - in the Web of Science. This involvement of Assoc. Prof. Tincheva in the life of the academic community in this country and abroad testifies both to her lasting interest and to her high professional reputation amongst colleagues in her research field.

Evaluation of the candidate’s academic research publications

For participation in the current competition, Associate Professor Nelly Tincheva - Georgieva has submitted 26 publications which can generally be divided into 3 main groups, corresponding to the groups of indicators in the Reference for the implementation of the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position of professor under Article 2b of the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

The first group of publications includes the monograph entitled "*Language gaffes (Linguistic, discursive and cognitive aspects of 'language bloopers'*), Sofia: Polis Publishers, 2019. The main goal of the research presented in the monograph is to provide evidence in support of the author's claim that language bloopers should not be dismissed as random errors, but should instead be treated as the result of the functioning of an intricate complex of linguistic, cognitive, communicative and socio-cultural factors. Therefore, instead of being neglected, language gaffes fully deserve to become the object of more systematic linguistic investigation.

The monograph explores two main groups of language gaffes, namely, unintentional (genuine) language blunders and language games that replicate real instances of language misuse. The results of the author's first study provide evidence to substantiate the need to divide linguistic blunders into the two above-mentioned categories. I would recommend that these results be presented a little more thoroughly, commenting on whether differences between the respondents in terms of factors such as gender, education, etc. have had any (statistically significant) influence on their responses.

The experimental design of the second study uses the characteristics "wrong" and "funny" from the first study, adding to them "ease of understanding" in order to analyze the reception of linguistic bloopers in political discourse. The parameters "(un)acceptable" and "(not) funny" stand out as playing a major role in the perception of language blunders by English-speaking Bulgarians. The validity of the differentiation of type C and type L gaffes is confirmed, and they are correlated with prototypical slots for political discourse texts as well as non-prototypical slots.

Experiment 3 presents interesting conclusions regarding the time needed by respondents to process and correct linguistic errors. Gaffes involving the incorrect use of a particular lexical item are processed most quickly, while those in which there is a-typical cognitive structuring take the longest amount of time to be processed. Blunders in which there is an incorrect use of a given lexical unit are corrected most successfully, along with gaffes characterized by ambiguous but grammatically correct syntax.

The fourth study presented in the monograph aims to test the applicability of the scalar approach to the analysis of linguistic blunders proposed by the author, demonstrating that there is no clear-cut division between type C and type L, but rather the two types represent the two ends of a continuum.

The fifth study described in Assoc. Prof. Tincheva's monograph is devoted to an analysis of selected bloopers found in D. Trump’s speeches (“Trumpisms”) and a comparison with her analysis of blunders of J. Bush (“Bushisms”). In conclusion, the study of the empirical data described in the monograph calls into question labels such as "funny linguistic errors" and demonstrates that the concept of "funny" is used to characterize acceptable but also highly peripheral uses of linguistic rules. The frequency of this kind of language use in social status-oriented discourse types, and the absence of fundamental cognitive differences between intentional and unintentional linguistic blunders is demonstrated.

The problem of language bloopers is also investigated in the article "*Language gaffes and language games as "mistakes" and "jokes*" (original title: *„Езиковите гафове и езиковите игри като „грешки“ и „смешки“*), which is thematically related to the monograph discussed above. The author’s findings show that language errors and language games that imitate them are not sufficiently distinct in order for the two to be treated as separate cognitive and discursive phenomena.

Political discourse is the object of investigation in 8 of the research papers presented by Assoc. Prof. Tincheva in the current competition. All studies take a cognitive approach towards the object of analysis, and some of them also analyze the role and place of conceptual metaphors in political discourse. The topic of discursive and textual worlds is central to 5 of the publications presented by Assoc. Prof. Tincheva. With the help of proto-typology, text structure and text functions have been investigated in another 5 of the publications presented by the sole participant in the present competition. Three of the publications deal with the topic of figurativeness, showing that in order to arrive at an adequate explanation of the structuring of a text in cognitive terms, it is necessary to take into account, in addition to the metaphorical conceptualization, the overlap between textual and discourse worlds (or the lack of such overlap) as well.

Having analyzed the significance and the contributions of the scientific output of Associate Professor Nelly Tincheva - Georgieva presented for participation in the current competition, I assess very highly her analytical skills and overall expertise in the scientific field of the competition, namely, cognitive linguistics - text and discourse analysis. As further proof of the high level of professional competence of the candidate, I would like to mention the list of citations presented by her - a total of 27 citations, 11 of which are in sources indexed in Scopus and/or Web of Science.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I believe that the candidacy of Associate Professor Nelly Todorova Tincheva - Georgieva fully meets the requirements of the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria. I confidently give my positive assessment of the candidate’s research as demonstrated in the materials and scientific output presented by Assoc. Prof. Tincheva - Georgieva, as well as of her teaching qualities and qualifications. I therefore recommend the esteemed scientific jury to award Assoc. Prof. Nelly Todorova Tincheva - Georgieva the academic position of PROFESSOR at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in the Area of higher education 2. Humanities, professional field 2.1. Philology (Cognitive linguistics – text and discourse analysis /English language/).

15.06.2023 Reviewer: