

REVIEW

FOR COMPETITION FOR ACQUIRING ACADEMIC POSITION ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

in professional field 2.1. Philology (Slavic Languages – Czech language)

for the needs of the Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”,

Faculty of Slavic Studies

(announced in State Gazette No 93/ 26.11.2019

and on the webpage of SU and the Faculty)

This review is prepared by Prof Vera Tervel Marovska, PhD of Plovdiv University “Paisiy Hilendarski”, Faculty of Philology, as a member of the scientific jury in professional field 2.1. Philology (Slavic languages – Czech language); according to Order No ПД – 2/09.01.2020 of the Rector of Sofia University.

The only candidate to participate in the announced competition is Chief Assistant Stiliyan Ivanov Stoychev, PhD, from Sofia University.

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE MATERIALS PRESENTED

1. INFORMATION ABOUT THE APPLICATION

The documents submitted by the applicant comply with the requirements the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ADASRB), the Regulations for the implementation of the ADASRB and the Regulations on the conditions and procedure for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions in SU “Climent Ohridski”.

For participation in the competition the candidate Chief Assistant Stiliyan Ivanov Stoychev, PhD, presented, in accordance with the minimum requirements of the ADASRB, a list of a total of 16 titles, including 2 monographs, 1 studies, 13 scientific articles. The bibliography includes many other publications (scientific articles, projects, references and reviews of scientific papers and other relevant evidence supporting the applicant's achievements).

2. INFORMATION ABOUT THE APPLICANT

Chief Assistant Stiliyan Ivanov Stoychev PhD is born on 24.07.1958 and completed his secondary education in Targovishte in 1976.

For the period 1979-1984 he studied Czech Studies at Charles University in Prague, where in 1985 he acquires PhD degree in the Faculty of Philosophy, a specialist in Czech language and literature and general linguistics.

In the same year he becomes an assistant professor at Sofia University. In 1988, he is promoted to senior assistant, and after another three years – in 1991, he becomes Chief Assistant. He has completed a number of educational and qualification courses at Sofia University: on pedagogical, psychological and methodological training of newly admitted scientific and teaching staff; in English, etc.

Between September 1988 and May 1991, Mr Stoychev is a lecturer in Bulgarian at the Department of General and Slavic Linguistics of the Belarusian State University in Minsk, Belarus (where he teaches Bulgarian language to Belarusians, Russians and Slavic students, as well as numerous elective theoretical courses in linguistics).

St. Stoychev has valuable experience in teaching in secondary schools (from September 1992 to June 1996 he teaches Czech at Secondary School “V. Hanchev” in Sofia; he has participated in the development of foreign language training programs (in particular Czech language); in the preparation and publication of textbooks for the high school course).

From October 1993 to June 1995 he is a part-time lecturer in Czech language at the South-West University "Neofit Rilski" in Blagoevgrad, and from October 1997 to June 1998 - at the Faculty of Philology at Plovdiv University “Paisiy Hilendarski”. He has also taught at New Bulgarian University (1998 – 2003), where he lectured on Czech phonetics and phonology, morphology, syntax and lexicology; he also taught the practical seminars on Czech.

From October 2016 to March 2019 he teaches Czech language also at the Czech Cultural Centre in Sofia.

In 2014, St. Stoychev defended his dissertation at Sofia University and became Doctor of Philology.

The academic activity of Chief Assistant Stoychev is in many directions, making him one of the main supporters and promoters of the Czech cultural and educational traditions, an emissary of the Czech contribution to the European cultural and scientific heritage. St.

Stoychev is currently among the most respected and recognized expert on Czech Studies in Bulgaria; active participant in the development of the curricula for the Bohemian compulsory and elective disciplines. He has given lectures in modern Czech language - phonetics and phonology, lectures and exercises on morphology of the modern Czech language, practical language exercises part 1, 2, 3, 4, exercises in " Czech Pronunciation and Spelling", exercises in " Czech Vocabulary and Phraseology - Parts 1 and 2", exercises in "Comparative grammar in Slavic languages".

3. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE APPLICANT'S SCIENTIFIC WORK AND ACHIEVEMENTS

First of all, I would like to point out the high professionalism of Chief Assistant St. Stoychev and his scientific authority among the members of the academic staff. I am convinced that in his person the Bulgarian linguistics has not only one of the most proficient Czech language teachers at the moment, but also an erudite and methodologically competent researcher. His academic interests are in the most debatable, specific and problematic issues of grammar (in particular verb morphology), and methodologically St. Stoychev is one of the few modern scientists to apply the system-structural research technique consistently and without contradiction. His achievements in the study of the semantic-stylistic diversity of the language are indisputable and are among the most effective practices for elaborating system-semantic criteria in explaining bilingual oppositional and correlative relationships.

The good scientific and experimental base used by the applicant to present his observations and interpretations, quite naturally can serve as a basis for motivated proposals for teaching foreign language in an environment that is different in terms of age and level of language competence.

Immediate proof of the above are the numerous quotations, listed in the enclosed documentation. It is also evident in St. Stoychev's work with different writing teams, developing projects for textbooks and training aids for different trainees. His bibliography includes 6 textbooks, 20 study aids, 3 dictionaries (with writing team) and 12 reviews of scientific papers.

We can definitely conclude that:

a) The scientific works presented in the competition meet the minimum national requirements (under Art. 2b, para 2 and 3 of ADASRB) and the additional requirements of

Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” for the academic position of Assistant Professor in the relevant scientific field and professional field of the competition;

b) the scientific works submitted by the applicant have not been submitted to previous procedures for the acquisition of a scientific title or academic position;

c) the scientific works presented in the competition are original; they do contain legally proven plagiarism.

4. CHARACTERIZATION AND EVALUATION OF THE APPLICANT'S TEACHING ACTIVITY

In my review I have covered in great detail the applicant's professional activity, his participation in the teaching process and in the higher and secondary schools in the country and in the cultural institutes. He also has many years of experience as lecturer abroad. All this is evidence of the high professionalism and responsibility with which he performs his duties. Nobody gets invited to teach, especially a foreign language, unless they have proven to have the necessary qualities. I will spare myself the superlatives for the candidate in this matter, so that I do not repeat myself.

St. Stoychev is not only a popular teacher among his students, but also a respected colleague with scientific, administrative and organizational competences, which are the qualities that testify to the appropriateness of his decision to acquire the academic position Assistant Professor.

5. CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND APPLIED SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CANDIDATE CONTAINED IN THE MATERIALS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE COMPETITION.

I have already mentioned that the scientific interests of Chief Assistant St. Stoychev, PhD, is in the field of the comparative analysis of the verb morphology in Bulgarian and Czech language. And since the two languages are fundamentally different in terms of their paradigmatic parameters, their study implies an analysis of both the lexical-phraseological and syntactic aspects of the compensation procedures in translation. In this regard, the works of St. Stoychev are among the most significant ones that the contemporary Bulgarian linguistics has.

First, with their vast experimental and empirical foundation, without which they could not be realized. The author has specific observations in the field of the lexico-phraseological

empirics, which is evident in his work on the subject. Positive for his growth as a scholar is the fact that on this subject are his initial researches (1986-1997; documents 13-16 in the list of contributions), since they gave him that solid empirical foundation used as basis for his later interpretations of the grammatical system in both languages.

As a second, I will emphasize that St. Stoychev is a serious language theorist. His contributions in this respect range widely, from the knowledge of the existing theoretical studies and the case studies, to rethinking and refining a number of details and variants commonly considered as constant. These thematic texts can be traced in all his special studies, as well as in his article on the adaptation of the postulates of the Prague structuralism by A.V. Bondarko and Ivan. Kutsarov, published in 2017.

Most of the works presented in the competition refer to verb morphology and more specifically to the categories of the perfect and the taxis. They are both old and existing as a fact or an influence in many Indo-European languages. In addition, in the contemporary Bulgarian morphology they are described almost as innovations, since they have long been associated with the category of tense. The taxis, on its part, is functionally related to one of the most discussed name categories - that of *definiteness*. Therefore, the study of these problems – both specific and interrelated – requires a thorough knowledge of the language system and its current and older state, a thorough understanding of the interpretations and analyses that have been made (and they are indeed many), a critical look at both the traditional and the modern contemporary interpretations, insofar as it is logical to expect that from a certain point of view the truth is one. All this is evident in the works of St. Stoychev and convincing enough that leaves no doubt about his scientific expertise and requires thinking about the conclusions that the analysis leads him to.

The two monographs of St. Stoychev are dealing with these morphological categories. Studying the phenomena in a broader functional-semantic plane (due to the lack of morphological expression in the Czech language) rationalize the terms used in the monographs, respectively *relative* (for taxis) and *resultative* (for perfects). The two books have similar compositional and content line: They start with theoretical notes and clarifications and set out the main goals of the study. Then there are critical descriptions of the achievements of the Bulgarian studies so far, and their thoroughness is a testament to the enormous amount of work and time that the author has dedicated to them. The comparative description then follows the morphological and paradigmatic organization of the respective categories and their relation to the other grammaticalized meanings of the Bulgarian verb, and their equivalents in the Czech language are presented in separate sections. Only if a person is

aware of the specifics of the *relative* and the *resultative*, he can realize the enormous amount of work required to outline the possibilities of a language without the corresponding grammaticalizations to compensate for these gaps. St. Stoychev, however, has done it, and I will emphasize that this is only possible for a brilliant language expert. In this sense, the author is a person with competencies that ensure the uniqueness of his research - simply put, what he did in the two monographs could probably only be done by him.

Impressive in his work are the semantic analyses, stylistically grounded, representing the experimentation of a particular approach to the lexical-stylistic semantics, expression and functionality. The diverse focuses as an approach to the observed phenomena require both a complex methodological approach, including the *semasiological method* (i.e. the form-to-content approach) and the *onomasiological method* (i.e. the content-to-form approach), and the *morphemic analysis method* in the discussion of the respective resultative word-forms in the syntagmatic plane, and the method of *opposite-component analysis* in considering the morphological resultative in the paradigmatic plane.

To explain the Czech functional equivalents of the Bulgarian morphological resultative and relative, the author uses *methods of corpus contrastive linguistics* (mainly for working with parallel language corpora) and *the method for establishing a foreign-language functional equivalence* (using it to construct the so-called “fan” of the functional foreign-language equivalents of a unit of the source language). In the attempts to model the functional-semantic fields in the two studied languages are used both the *method of establishing intralinguistic functional equivalence* and the method of *field structuring*.

A particular difficulty in the contrastive studies is the need to present in great detail, in functional-semantic and stylistic aspect, the study phenomenon – in this case the resultative and the relative. Thus, the author relies on his own intuition and ability to read, incl. with emotional evaluation, the messages of the phenomenon in the context of its use, because the cases, which in Bulgarian are expressed uniformly, with morphological form, in the Czech language will have complex, and therefore diverse, linguistic realization.

“The invariant meaning of the so defined resultative creations, states, qualities, and experiences can be defined as ‘*result of action/ state*.’ This is also one of our reasons for preferring the term “*resultive*” to the term “*perfect*” (Stoychev St. Bulgarian morphological resultative and the Czech language or, *on the modern Bulgarian morphological resultative and its functional equivalents in the modern Czech language*. Sofia: Stiluet, 2019, p. 37-38).

Such is the specificity of the contrastive studies, which distinguishes them from the monolingual theoretical descriptions, and at the same gives them conclusions and

qualifications different than the conventional ones. Therefore, I will not be concerned with refuting or expressing disagreement with St. Stoychev, since it is enough that what he proposes has its own logic. And this is indisputably so.

The scientific production of St. Stoychev, PhD, is not only theoretically sound, but also extremely relevant. Currently, in the Bulgarian verb morphology, one of the most actively discussed problems is related to the *evidentiality*. This issue is indirectly reflected in his monographs, but more specifically commented on in his work "Is there a morphological category *evidentiality* of the *action* in the contemporary Bulgarian?" (No. 5 in the list of contributions). It offers a new solution to the question of the importance of the evidential verb forms in the conjugation of the Bulgarian verb, by structuring a separate morphological category – *evidentiality* of the action, with an unmarked grammeme *non-evidential* and two equivalently opposed marked grammemes of *witness* and *distant evidential*. The interpretation is acceptable and logical, and regardless of whether it is accepted or rejected, it represents one of the possible solutions to this controversial issue in contemporary Bulgarian grammar.

6. CRITICAL REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Without making a critical comment, I will allow myself to share the following consideration. The problem researched by St. Stoychev is extremely complex; its explanations require a multilayered analysis and theoretical evidence, all of which make the texts dedicated to it difficult to read and almost unsuitable for linguists specialized in other fields. I wish him to succeed in solving these problems and his future research to have wider audience, because this would generate the discussions that would lead to the truth about the studied phenomena.

7. PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS OF THE APPLICANT

I know Chief Assistant St. Stoychev from numerous work meetings and discussions at various scientific forums, from our personal discussions in connection with the common research problems that concern us. I can whole-heartedly and unreservedly confirm his competence, his literary awareness, his responsibility and his commitment to his scientific activities and the results of them.

8. CONCLUSION ON THE APPLICATION

Having reviewed the materials and scientific works presented in the competition, and based on the analysis of their importance and the scientific and applied-scientific

contributions contained therein, I **confirm** that the scientific achievements meet the requirements of the ADASRB, the Regulations for its implementation and the corresponding Regulations of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” for the acquisition by the candidate of the academic position of Assistant Professor in the scientific and professional field of the competition. The applicant satisfies the minimum national requirements in the professional field and no plagiarism has been found in the scientific papers submitted at the competition.

I give with conviction my **positive** assessment of the application.

II. GENERAL CONCLUSION

On the grounds of the above, I hereby **recommend** to the scientific jury to propose to the competent body of the Faculty of Slavic Studies of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, to award Chief Assistant Stiliyan Ivanov Stoychev, PhD, the academic position of **Associate Professor** in the professional field 2.1. Philology (Slavic languages – Czech language).

Prepared by:.....

(Prof Vera Tervel Marovska, PhD)

08.04.2020.