**SHORT REVIEW**

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Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

of dissertation for the educational and scientific degree "Doctor"

2.1. Philology, General and Comparative Linguistics (Pragmatics of the Text)

**Author of the dissertation**: Henrique Carlos Dores, Doctoral student, Department of Spanish Studies, Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

**Dissertation topic**: Conceptual Metaphors and Pragmatic Context in Political Speeches (in Spanish and Portuguese)

I. **Information about the author of the dissertation and the doctoral program**

Henrique Dores was graduated from the Universidade Lusófona do Porto, Portugal in 2006, BA program of European Studies (Political Science and International Relations). From 2011 until 2013, he attended a postgraduate program of Social and Political Sciences at Vytautos Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania, through which he expanded his knowledge in the field of media communication, philosophical and political theories and methodologies, discourse analysis, etc. From 2017 until 2018, Henrique Dores attended the MA *Semiotics, Language, Advertising*, Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski". He enriched his theoretical knowledge in the fields of semiotics, linguistics, communication theory, as well as in several practical aspects related to the psychology of the virtual world and social media, visual argumentation, the construction of advertising and other campaigns and others. In connection with the present procedure, I will also note some data about the professional experience of Henrique Dores: internship in the International law department of Amnesty International in Lisbon in 2008; journalist in Ramallah for the *Palestine Monitor* in 2013; media writer and analyst from 2018 until 2019.

From February 2020 until January 2024, Henrique Dores was a full-time doctoral student at the Department of Spanish Studies, Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University with scientific supervisor Prof. Milena Popova, PhD. His groundwork was within the doctoral program 2.1. Philology, General and Comparative Linguistics (Pragmatics of Discourse) with a focus on pragmatic analyzes of political discourse. Henrique Dores increased his scientific and professional training by participating in the courses at the Faculty Doctoral School. He has presented the results of his research at one international and two national scientific conferences: International scientific conference *Languages, Cultures, Communications*, organized by the Faculty of Philology of Veliko Tarnovo University; XVIII and XIX scientific conferences of non-habilitated teachers and doctoral students at the Faculty of Classical and New Philology at Sofia University.

The data for the period of Henrique Dores’s doctoral studies show the good scientific preparation of the doctoral student and his developed skills for research and applied activity. The documentation provided shows that all the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Rules for its Implementation and the Rules for the Terms and Conditions for Acquiring Scientific Degrees and Holding Academic Positions in SUs have been observed. The tender documents comply with all regulatory requirements and prove the validity and legality of the procedure.

II. **Review of the dissertation and the abstract**

Henrique Dores's dissertation “Conceptual Metaphors and Pragmatic Context in Political Speeches (in Spanish and Portuguese)” has a total volume of 326 pages. The analytic part of the text includes 295 pages and is structured into an introduction, four chapters and a conclusion. As the second volume to the dissertation, 23 appendices were attached, presenting in text format the analyzed empirical data: thirteen speeches of Spanish presidents and ten speeches of Portuguese prime ministers at their inaugurations. The list of cited 160 bibliographic units (in English, Spanish and Portuguese) shows the in-depth theoretical knowledge of the PhD student in the field of semiotics, communication theory, pragmatics, discourse analysis. It would be good if the data for the records used should be in a separate list of sources, and not in the list of cited scientific publications.

*Actuality of the problem developed in the dissertation work*

The dissertation finds its place in the context of many previous research projects on data from different linguistic and political situations. The analysis of political discourse - regardless of the specific language system in which it is positioned - shows the growing importance of the symbolic nature of communication and the tangible search for personalization and imagery in political messages. In the conditions of variable trust on the part of citizens towards politicians, of contradictory assessments of political ideas and platforms, it is justified to change the theoretical framework and methodology in the analyzes of political discourse. Research programs in the field of political communication are more and more sustainably realized through interdisciplinary methods, allowing analysis of the symbolic function of language, the construction of meanings/senses in messages, the illocutionary and perlocutionary sides of the speech acts used. The stated facts determine the relevance of the developed issue in a scientific-applied sense and its importance for the expansion of theoretical knowledge in an interdisciplinary field between semiotics, the general theory of communication, social and political sciences. The author directs his attention to the potential of conceptual metaphors in the process of communicative interaction in political discourse. He analyzes metaphors as part of linguistic strategies, in the implementation of which communicative intention, motivation and linguistic choice interact in a specific context.

*Presentation of the state of the problem and the literature on the topic of the dissertation*

Henrique Dores is acquainted with the theoretical ideas of modern cognitive sciences, the analysis of various discourse practices, as well as the current concepts in the field of cognitive linguistics, text linguistics and linguistic pragmatics. Proof of this is the thorough literature review done in the first chapter of the dissertation. The author comments on the genesis of the ideas of metaphor’s interpretation in cognitive linguistics, as well as the essence of the theory of conceptual metaphor, the theory of speech acts and its application in the analysis of political discourse, communicative action, P. Grice's statements about the principles of successful communication, the theory of relevance, the theory of politeness as well as the theory of argumentation. This is how the general theoretical framework of the dissertation is outlined, arising from the idea of the presence of an "intersection point" and a dynamic interaction between conceptual metaphor and political discourse (and between pragmatics and rhetoric). In-depth theoretical knowledge in the field of cognitive linguistics and pragmatics (conceptual metaphor theory, speech act theory, theories of political discourse and communication, etc.) is the basis for developing a complex methodology, including methods from rhetoric, pragmatics, discourse analysis, the theory of conceptual metaphor, etc. It is presented and convincingly argued in the second chapter of the text. The methodology applied in the compilation of the research corpus and in the analysis of the empirical data is adequate to the set scientific tasks and allows the formulation of objective conclusions about the role of conceptual metaphors in political communication.

*Brief description of scientific and/or scientific-applied contributions*

The work presented shows the indisputable Henrique Dores’s achievements and contributions in solving a applied scientific problem through methods corresponding to modern theoretical framework of cognitive sciences. The subject of analysis in the dissertation is the political discourse in Spain (from 1982 until 2020) and in Portugal (from 1974 until 2019). Through the conducted corpus research, mainly with qualitative methods, the evolution of political language in both countries is presented and similar patterns in the structure of political speeches and use of conceptual metaphors are outlined. The author's contributions are most clearly stated in the two analytical parts of the dissertation - the third and fourth chapters, in which the data from the two corpora of speeches are analyzed. The persistent use of conceptual metaphors from the semantic fields of *construction*, *journey*, and *conflict* has been established. Regardless of the time context, they predominate in the speeches of statesmen across the political spectrum in both countries. The inclusion of new semantic fields is observed in changes in the political context in which the speech is delivered. (For Spanish, for example, such are *Terrorism is an enemy/plague; Life is a competition; Taxes are a burden*; for Portuguese: *Politics is a play, Poverty is a contagious disease*.) These observations demonstrate the strong influence of context on the linguistic devices used. The conceptual metaphor *Politics is religion* has opposite connotations in the two analyzed corpora. The interpretation of political messages through metaphors related to moral values is more clearly stated in the speeches of Portuguese politicians. Data from the Spanish corpus show a stronger management of group and institutional knowledge and a dominance of deliberative rhetoric, whereas those from the Portuguese corpus show a management of knowledge related to culture and national identity and use of epideictic rhetoric.

The dissertation abstract comprehensively and accurately presents the structure of the work, the results from the analysis, as well as scientific contributions of the author.

*Review of publications on dissertation’s topic*

The publications submitted meet the national requirements for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "doctor". Henrique Dores has published four articles on dissertation’s topic. One of them is in a scientific journal, two are in collections of scientific events organized at Sofia University, and one is in a collection of materials from an international scientific conference. All publications are in English.

III. **Conclusion**

Henrique Dores’e dissertation is the first comparative and diachronic study of the use of conceptual metaphors in Spanish and Portuguese political speeches. Evaluating the relevance of the topic of the dissertation “Conceptual Metaphors and Pragmatic Context in Political Speeches (in Spanish and Portuguese)”, the depth of the results achieved, and the conclusions drawn, I propose to the respected Scientific Jury to award Henrique Carlos Dores the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the field of higher education 2. Humanities, professional direction 2.1. Philology, General and comparative linguistics.

17 April 2024 Prof. Yovka Tisheva, PhD