**OPINION**

**for**

**the competition for the academic position "professor" in the scholarly sphere of the Humanities,**

**scholarly field 2.1 "Philology" (Cognitive linguistics - text and discourse analysis (English language)),**

**Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Department of English and American Studies,**

**Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski,**

**announced in the *State Gazette*, no. 24/17/03/2023**

**1/ Competition data**

The announced competition for Professor of Cognitive Linguistics - Text and Discourse Analysis meets all the requirements of the Law and the Regulations, and no procedural violations have been found. The only candidate, Associate Professor Nelly Todorova Tincheva-Georgieva, has submitted all the necessary documents for the competition on time, complying with the requirements of the Law and the Regulations.

**2/ Data about the candidate**

Nelly Tincheva graduated in English philology from Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski with a second major in journalism in 1995, after which she was immediately appointed as an Assistant Professor at the department of English and American Studies at Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski. In 2006, she defended her PhD dissertation entitled *The START-PATH-GOAL Mental Scheme In Political Speeches* as a doctoral student at the same department. From 2005 to 2015, she worked as a Senior Assistant Professor at the Department, and in 2015 she was elected Associate Professor. She is a member of ICLA (International Cognitive Linguistics Association), the Bulgarian Sociolinguistic Society and the Bulgarian Society for British Studies. She is a reviewer in prestigious scientific publishing houses such as De Gruyter Mouton and scholarly journals such as *Heliyon*, *Baltic Journal of English Language*, *Literature and Culture*, *Balkanistica*, *Philologia*, etc., and she has delivered sectional reports at various scientific forums.

**3/ Description of the scholarly works**

The candidate participates in the competition with a habilitation monograph on *Language Gaffes (Linguistic, Discursive and Cognitive Aspects of 'Language Bloopers')*, Sofia, Polis Publ., 2019, 21 articles and studies, two reviews, one university text book on text linguistics and two study guides in English grammar for the students from the BA Program in African Studies.

The presented articles and studies can be grouped into several thematic and genre circles. The majority are related to the thematic area of political discourse - 8 articles. All of them defend the view that political discourse should be discussed from the point of view of its communicative effect and genre conditioning, working with quantitative methods and a non-prescriptive methodology. Here I would like to point out the article "What is in a Political Slogan", which complements the research from Nelly Tincheva's PhD dissertation on the BEGINNING-PATH-GOAL image scheme and traces the prototypical use of certain conceptual elements within the scenario of political slogans.

The second group of articles discusses the construction of Discursive and Textual Worlds, combining for the first time the theories of Textual and Discursive Worlds respectively of de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) and Worth (1999).

These theoretical studies are combined with the practical aspects of teaching and learning in the third group of articles, which deal with textual functions and structures. The theoretical conclusions are supported by an in-depth analysis of the functioning of the "text" in different linguistic situations. In the summary of the works with which Nelly Tincheva participates in this scholarly competition, however, the article "Prototypes in Text-types: Political discourse" (2017) is also included in this group of articles, although it is not included in the list of publications for this competition and is not provided as a text for the jury.

This field of research is closely related to the field of figurativeness, to which belongs at least one of the papers submitted for this competition, “Crossing between Conceptual Metaphor and Text World Theory”. Unfortunately, the other two articles summarized in the submitted resume of articles, namely "Introduction: Figurativity in Human Ecology" and "Figurativity in Language, Mind and Cross-cultural Experience” (2022), are once again not included in the list of publications for the present competition and are not provided as texts for the jury. Nevertheless, that seems one of the important aspects of Tincheva’s work. As she points out in her article "Crossing between Conceptual Metaphor and Text World Theory", "in order to achieve a better explanation of how the structuring of the entire text occurs cognitively, we must also consider the presence or absence of overlap between Textual and Discursive Worlds.”

The variety of approaches and points of view that the articles offer is best illustrated in the habilitation work of Nelly Tincheva, the monograph *Language Gaffes (Linguistic, Discursive and Cognitive Aspects of 'Language Bloopers')* (2017). The main thesis of this work is that linguistic errors should not be treated by researchers as an insignificant or unworthy linguistic phenomenon, but on the contrary, they should be carefully and thoroughly investigated from different perspectives - a linguistic one, which, however, cannot explain the discursive situations in which such errors arise, from the point of view of the discursive-pragmatic aspects of communication and from the cognitive point of view. The analysis follows all three possibilities, paying particular attention to the last one, which is also the least frequently applied in the study of linguistic errors. A division of these errors into unintentional and intentional, which often fall into the category of "jokes," is also made. All conclusions are based on real language situations that have been analyzed on the basis of sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic parameters.

**4/ Scholarly contributions**

Of the areas of scientific research outlined above, I believe that the greatest contribution to the development of cognitive linguistics - analysis of text and discourse, is the publications of Nelly Tincheva, related to the field of construction of Discursive and Textual Worlds, in which theories of the Textual and Discursive worlds are combined for the first time. As she notes, in these studies the theory of worlds is for the first time considered in close connection with Gestalt profiling. This, in my opinion, is a very important scholarly contribution in this field.

Out of the 14 mentioned scholarly contributions of the habilitation monograph, *Language Gaffes (Linguistic, Discursive and Cognitive Aspects of 'Language Bloopers')*, I would note above all the creation of three different typologies of linguistic gaffes, something that, to my knowledge, is done for the first time in the field of linguistics. The fact that this linguistic phenomenon can be classified from a linguistic, from a pragmatic-discursive and from a cognitive point of view, which is defended by Nelly Tincheva, reveals the complex nature of linguistic blunders as a linguistic phenomenon that is bound to a specific social context, and is not just "random mistake'.

Tincheva's scholarly contributions in the field of political discourse are perhaps the most numerous, as she has been working in this field for many years and is one of the pioneers in applying the cognitive principles of prototology to the textual analysis of political texts.

In general, it can be argued that Nelly Tincheva works in areas that are very underrepresented in Bulgarian scholarship but are in the focus of attention of the leading scientists in the world of text linguistics and cognitive studies.

 **5/ Teaching work and project work**

Nelly Tincheva's teaching work is distinguished by innovation, openness to new topics and teaching methods, and a constant search for updating what has been achieved. The courses she teaches are further evidence of her breadth and depth as a scholar.

Nelly Tincheva has also participated in several intra-university projects for updating the content of the courses taught in the BA Program of English Philology as well as in national projects related to the development of communicative competences. Unfortunately, none of the projects mentioned by the applicant appear in the NACID reference list and should not be included in the list for meeting the minimum national requirements. Nevertheless, the candidate meets these requirements, as the points she collects on the other indicators and from the recently defended major doctorate are more than the required minimum.

**6/ Conclusion**

On the basis of all that is stated above, I can say without any doubt that Nelly Tincheva, as the only candidate in the competition for the position of professor of cognitive linguistics - analysis of text and discourse in field 2.1 "Philology", announced by the Department of English and American Studies at the Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski, meets all the necessary requirements for occupying this academic position and I highly recommend her election as Professor of Cognitive Linguistics.

Professor Madeleine Danova, PhD