

OPINION

From Assoc. Prof. Dr. Marinela Paraskova Mladenova, member of the scientific jury in the competition for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in General and Comparative Linguistics (General and Comparative Linguistics - Hungarian and Bulgarian)

Subject: dissertation on the topic: *Typology of Errors In the Hungarian Interlanguage of Bulgarian Native Speakers*

Author: Edina Zsolcsak-Dimitrova, PhD student in an independent form of study at the Department of Classical Philology at the Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ina Georgieva Vishogradska

1. General description of the procedure and of the submitted materials

I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury in the procedure for defending a dissertation on the topic: *Typology of Errors in the Hungarian Interlanguage of Native Bulgarian Speakers* for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in higher education 2. *Human sciences*, in professional field 2.1. Philology, General and Comparative Linguistics (General and Comparative Linguistics - Hungarian and Bulgarian) by the order of the Rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" (№ РД 38-427/23.09.2020).

The set of materials presented by Edina Zsolcsak-Dimitrova fully complies with the requirements of the Regulations for the development of the academic staff of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" and includes the following documents: a CV in European format, an abstract, a dissertation, a reference for compliance with the national minimum requirements for educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in professional field Philology 2.1 and 6 publications related to the dissertation.

2. Short biographical data of the PhD student

Edina Zsolcsak-Dimitrova graduated from the Faculty of Philology of Eotvos Lorand University (ELTE), Budapest, in Hungarian Language and Literature, with a professional qualification of Teacher of Hungarian Language and Literature in Secondary School in 2000 and with a Master's degree in Pedagogy of Teaching Hungarian as a Foreign Language in 2001, with a professional qualification Teacher of Hungarian as a Foreign Language. From November 2008 to August 2011 he was a lecturer in Hungarian as a foreign language at PTE University, Pecs, in the period 2011-2015 he was a lecturer in Hungarian at Veliko Tarnovo University (2011-2013), at Shumen University and at Institute Balassi (Budapest) (2013-2015). Since December 2016 he has been an assistant professor in Hungarian at Sofia University

"St. Kliment Ohridski", at the Department of Classical Philology of the Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology.

3. Relevance of the topic of the dissertation and expediency of the goals and objectives that were set

The presented dissertation is dedicated to a significant and dissertable scientific problem, which has not been the subject of independent and systematic research in Bulgarian and Hungarian applied linguistics. A study of this nature has its place among the relatively few Bulgarian-Hungarian and Hungarian-Bulgarian linguistic studies of a theoretical and applied nature. Based on a rich linguistic material, the author aims to present the main errors at the phonetic, morphosyntactic and lexical levels, found in the Hungarian interlanguage of Bulgarian speakers, outlining their typology. The dissertation focuses on the most common problems, which are based on the influence of the first language (Bulgarian) on the second language (Hungarian), while looking for the reasons for these errors and presents a contrastive analysis of some of the most problematic areas between the two languages to be compared. To achieve this goal, the dissertation formulates six research tasks, which are consistently implemented in different parts of the study.

4. Knowledge of the topic

Edina Zsolcsak-Dimitrova's professional career has been almost entirely related to the teaching of Hungarian as a foreign language for twelve years, which is a prerequisite for excellent knowledge of the issues developed in her dissertation. The doctoral student's interest in the chosen topic is reflected in six independent publications, presenting her as a serious researcher who knows very well both the scientific literature in the field and the object of the study. The bibliography for the dissertation includes 185 titles in Bulgarian, Hungarian and English. The author skillfully handles the scientific tools and is able to synthesize and clearly present different points of view and comments, as well as her own position.

5. Research methodology

The chosen research topic presupposes the application of a complex theoretical and applied approach, including the method of contrastive analysis and the theory of error analysis. These two methods are successfully combined by the Hungarian linguist Budai in his Theory of Contrastive Error Analysis, which the PhD student presents and uses as a basic theoretical framework in the description and analysis of the excerpted material.

6. Characteristics and evaluation of the dissertation

The choice of the topic is motivated at the beginning and convincingly defended during the work. The study has a volume of 239 pages, of which introduction (5-7), three chapters (8-181), conclusions (182-185), closure (186), bibliography (187-203) and appendices (204-239). The structure of the text is very

well thought out, the main part of the dissertation is located in the three main chapters. In the short introduction, the interest of the doctoral student in the considered problems is synthesized and the main goals, methods and tasks of the dissertation are presented.

In the first chapter, entitled **Theoretical Framework: Applied Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition. Intermediate language**, the dissertation presents the main linguistic theories and approaches related to contrastive analysis and error analysis. A good impression is made by the excellent bibliographic awareness of the author, her ability to clearly demonstrate critical thinking, without unnecessary verbosity, commenting on various theoretical concepts and presenting her own point of view, while maintaining the logical unity and consistency of the presentation. As it is most suitable for the purposes of the research, the dissertation accepts Laszlo Budai's Theory of Contrastive Error Analysis, synthesized in this part, and consistently adheres to its framework in the third chapter of the dissertation.

In chapter two, entitled **Peculiarities of the Hungarian Language (with Regard to its Teaching to Bulgarians) and Typological Contrasts with the Bulgarian Language**, Edina Zsolcsak-Dimitrova presents the most essential characteristics of the Hungarian language (from the point of view of Bulgarian speakers) or the so-called "input data", which are taken into account when using the CA, and its typological differences in comparison with Bulgarian. For this purpose, several academic grammars of the Hungarian language, grammars of Hungarian for foreigners, examples from Hungarian and Bulgarian literary sources and their translations, electronic corpora, examples from the living speech, etc. were used. The main orthographic, phonetic and morphosyntactic features of the Hungarian language are successively considered, with an emphasis on its characteristics, which are more difficult for Bulgarians studying Hungarian (the vocal harmony, the clear pronunciation of sounds, the ascending-descending intonation of questions without question words, the so-called triple spatial system, the rections of the verbs, the two types of conjugation, etc.). This review is not an end in itself, the author relies on it in presenting the characteristics of the Hungarian interlanguage and in the error analysis at different levels of the language, discussed in detail in chapter three of the dissertation. This chapter has a fully contributing character, based on a language corpus of written works of Hungarian-speaking Bulgarians, term papers, tests and examples of conversations with Hungarian-speaking students (presented in the appendix to the dissertation), the author analyzes, categorizes and summarizes the main types of errors in the Hungarian interlanguage done by native speakers of Bulgarian. This part reveals to the greatest extent her potential as an excellently prepared teacher and linguist, with a sense of detail and skills for a precise analysis and systematization of facts. A good impression is made by the desire to illustrate the data from the analysis in the form of well-structured tables, accompanied by short comments. Very interesting and valuable from the point of view of applied linguistics are the conclusions of the author, presented at the end of the study, as well as the outlined parameters of some learning strategies and processes in the acquisition of Hungarian by Bulgarians. Edina Zsolcsak's research is completely innovative, for the

first time a corpus of errors has been created, determining the characteristics of the Hungarian interlanguage of Bulgarians, which can be successfully used both in teaching and in the preparation of textbooks and teaching materials for Bulgarians studying Hungarian.

The prepared Abstract (29 pages) gives an accurate idea of the goals and objectives of the study, the applied methodology and the contribution of the dissertation. Attached to it is a list of six publications of the author on the topic of the study. I fully accept the outlined contributions at the end of the abstract, as well as the idea of the dissertation to supplement the collected corpus of errors and use it in further contrastive research.

Conclusion

In the presented dissertation Edina Zsolcsak-Dimitrova reveals her potential as an excellently prepared linguist and demonstrates skills for systematization, analysis and summarization of linguistic facts, combined with broad bibliographic competence. The work is a complete, comprehensive and serious study with an indisputable scientific contribution in the field of Bulgarian-Hungarian applied linguistics and my recommendation is to be prepared for publication.

All this gives me reason to convincingly propose to the esteemed Scientific Jury to award Edina Zsolcsak-Dimitrova the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the field of higher education 2. Human studies, professional field 2.1 Philology, General and Comparative Linguistics (General and Comparative linguistics - Hungarian and Bulgarian language).

Member of the scientific jury:

28.10.2020

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Marinela Mladenova