

## PEER REVIEW

on the dissertation of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Neli Todorova Tincheva-Georgieva  
entitled *A Multi-Process Cognitive Model for Investigating Text and Discourse*

for the degree of Doctor of Science

in field 2.1. Philology, Doctoral Programme in Germanic Languages (Linguistics of Text and  
Discourse Analysis - English)

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### **Details of the competition**

By Order No. ПД-38-120 of 10.03.2023 of the Rector of the Saint Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia, I have been appointed as a member of the jury for the defence of the dissertation of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Neli Todorova Tincheva-Georgieva.

The set of materials submitted by the candidate includes all the necessary documents for the procedure. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Neli Todorova Tincheva-Georgieva has comprehensively and correctly fulfilled the minimum national requirements under Article 2b(2) and (3) of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA)

All requirements of DASRBA, the Regulations on the Implementation of DASRBA, of the Regulations for the Conditions and Procedure for the Acquisition of Scientific Degrees and for the Occupation of Academic Positions at the Saint Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia have been met and fulfilled. Verification with the Anti-Plagiarism System shows that the work of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Neli Todorova Tincheva-Georgieva is original and authored. The abstract (102 pages) correctly reflects the content of the dissertation. Eleven contributions are listed, which clearly and in detail present the added value of the dissertation. Four publications related to the dissertation are described. All four are published in Scopus-indexed journals.

### **Candidate details**

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Neli Todorova Tincheva-Georgieva holds a degree in English Philology from the Saint Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia (1995) and a second degree in Journalism. In 2006 she obtained a Doctor's degree. Since 1995, the candidate has been working in the Department of English and American Studies at the Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology and since 2015 she has held the academic position of Associate Professor. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Neli Todorova Tincheva-Georgieva boasts impressive and active scientific, creative and administrative activity. In addition to being Head of the Linguistics Section, she is a member of a number of scientific societies such as the International Cognitive Linguistics Association. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Neli Todorova Tincheva-Georgieva is involved in a number of scientific and infrastructural projects related to the improvement of the quality of teaching, the elaboration of tests in linguistic disciplines, the relationship between figurative language and thinking, the construction of competence centres, modernization of the university. The candidate has taught or teaches courses related to the linguistics of text, discourse analysis, linguistic debate, and courses in practical English grammar.

### **Description and contributions of the work**

The dissertation is in English and has an impressive 446 pages. It is entitled *A Multi-Process Cognitive Model for Investigating Text and Discourse*. It consists of three parts with a total of nine chapters and references. I would like to emphasize that a brief description of contributions

follows each chapter, which facilitates use of the work for the reader. Also, the proposed models are not only described but invariably verified. The cited publications are more than 120.

The topic of the dissertation is very interesting, but also of a high degree of complexity, since, on the one hand it involves a meta-level of observation of text, discourse and the real world, and on the other hand - encounters and interprets terms and concepts that are either too similar or contradictory and ambiguous. I believe that the candidate has done a brilliant job, managing to isolate the individual cognitive processes within the framework of multiprocessing, and to demonstrate their relevance through an appropriate set of procedures. A very valuable feature of the work is its interdisciplinarity.

The **introduction** presents the object of study, the tasks, approach, and data used. At the core is the problem of how to model and use text and discourse. The researcher has employed a connectionist approach in which phenomena are viewed from all possible sides in their interconnectedness. The theoretical load of the concepts of text and discourse is taken into account, as well as their practical orientation. At the centre of the study is the cognitive basis of text and discourse in its diversity, but also sociolinguistic tools as well as individual qualitative and quantitative methods in accordance with the specific problem under review. I support the position defended by the author that even in times of unprecedented technological progress, knowledge about language is fundamental. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Neli Todorova Tincheva-Georgieva searches for the parameters of cognitive mechanisms involved in the mental processing of text and discourse.

**Part one** of the dissertation focuses on isolating the cognitive mechanisms that can be included in the presented model. The notion of political speech is explored, as well as the structure of text. The multifunctional aspect of this type of speech - text and communication - is highlighted. Fifty speeches by British and American politicians over a range of 80 years are studied. The following cognitive mechanisms are isolated: conceptual metaphor, world-building, overlapping worlds, profiling. A distinct contribution of the author is the addition of the notion of Real World to the two others known in the literature, Text World and Discourse World.

**Part Two** presents the multi-process model of isolated cognitive mechanisms in conjunction with appropriate theoretical approaches - text linguistics and discourse analysis. Following a detailed discussion of the ideas of Halliday and Hasan (1976), and of Beaugrande and Dressler (1981), this part proposes a definition of Text Linguistics as a cognitive product or system of related cognitive processes in which there is an overlap or switch of profiling between Worlds. In the analysis of discourse, the author employs a range of approaches, including pragmatics, applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, and social-cognitive aspects. The comparison between discourse analysis and textual linguistics is particularly valuable, revealing that textual linguistics approaches are more dynamic and use specific processes, while discourse analysis is dominated by statics and activities. In defining discourse analysis, the metaphorization of discourse as a space surrounding the text-product and the conceptual metonymy between elements and socium/text are used.

**Part Three** argues for the need to use the notion of the 'real world' (in the sense of a starting point in cognitive mechanisms and an aid to understanding context) by considering overlap between text and real world, and between text, discourse and real world, also between discourse and real world. The model is applied to two specific topic areas/phenomena - Brexit and Facebook. Here the author works with carefully selected data (datasets) and with the survey method. For Brexit, the author has identified 14 metaphorical conceptualisations, of which the first is divorce. For Facebook, the author employs the survey method, from which the observation is drawn that "people's attitudes towards the use of Facebook for socio-political communication and activity underwent significant fluctuations and changes during the

pandemic period“ (Abstract, pp. 79-80). An important conclusion is that there is a tendency for Bulgarians to perceive the role of Facebook as an activity not only in the virtual world, but also in the real world.

The **Conclusion** correctly presents the summarized contributions of the dissertation. Here I would like to highlight the described aspects of applicability, among which are applied linguistics, multimodal means, visual narratives.

### **Conclusion**

Taking into account the high scientific qualities of the presented dissertation and its significance for the theory and practice of text and discourse, I confidently vote for awarding the degree of Doctor of Science to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Neli Todorova Tincheva-Georgieva in field 2.1. *Philology, Doctoral Programme in Germanic Languages (Linguistics of Text and Discourse Analysis - English)*.

07.05.2023

Author of the Review: