

## REVIEW

for a competition procedure for awarding the academic degree of “habilitated doctor of philosophy” in the field of higher education Humanities, academic field 2.1. Philology, doctor habil’s programme *Germanic Languages (Text Linguistics and Discourse Analysis – English)* for the needs of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Department of English and American Studies

One candidacy has been submitted to the competition, namely that of assoc. prof. Dr. Nelly Todorova Tincheva-Georgieva, who is a full-time staff member at the Department of English and American Studies, Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University *St. Kliment Ohridski*.

After a procedure for checking the candidate’s eligibility, by decision of the respective faculty committee and after the Strike Plagiarism Report, she was admitted for participation in the competition.

1. Data analyzed in relation to the compliance of the application with the minimum and additional requirements for awarding the academic degree of “habilitated doctor of philosophy”

The candidate in the procedure, assoc. prof. Dr. Nelly Tincheva-Georgieva, who is a full-time staff member at the Department of English and American Studies, Faculty of Classical and Modern Languages, has submitted all documents required for awarding the academic degree of “habilitated doctor of philosophy” certifying the compliance of her application with the requirements of the Law about Scientific Degrees and Titles, as well as the Rules of Procedures of the University of Sofia *St. Kliment Ohridski*. The submitted documents confirm the correctness of the aggregated indicators of the scientific data for the research, teaching and expert work of assoc. prof. Dr. Nelly Tincheva-Georgieva, which correspond fully to the minimum national requirements under bl. 2b, para 2 and 3 of the ODARB, as well as to the additional requirements of Sofia University *St. Kliment Ohridski*.

2. Presentation of the candidate

As can be seen from the candidate’s documentation, presented for the procedure, assoc. prof. Dr. Nelly Tincheva-Georgieva, has a rich academic and professional career, which can be defined as a process of a continuous educational and training development and upgrading beginning with

her school education through the BA and MA programmes in the field of English and American studies, as well as a process of connecting her academic career with the practice of teaching English linguistics, more specifically cognitive linguistics and text and discourse analysis to university students. The candidate's professional development is due to her participation in various trainings, internships, study visits of a different duration, thematic orientation, etc.

Nelly Tincheva's academic career started back in 1995 when she graduated from Sofia University *St. Kliment Ohridski* in her MA degree in English Studies, speciality English Studies and a specialization of translation and a second speciality Journalism. During her studies Nelly worked as an interpreter and a translator (1992-1994), and in the period 1994-1995 she was an assistant director in "Sneak Preview Entertainment". Right after her graduation she became a full-time assistant professor at the Department of English and American Studies in the Faculty of Classical and New Philology at Sofia University *St. Kliment Ohridski*, then in 2005 she became a lecturer and in 2015 – senior lecturer, while from November 2015 up till now Nelly Tincheva-Georgieva has been an associate professor at the department. The title of her PhD thesis which she defended quite successfully in 2006 is *The SOURCE-PATH-GOAL image schema in political speeches*. She has a number of qualifications related to her teaching and academic activities pointed out in her CV, which speaks a lot about her preparation in the field of English Studies, more specifically linguistics (English and Bulgarian). Her publications are in the above mentioned field. Part of her professional development is connected with work for preparation and creation of educational materials.

The fact that during 2014-2022 she had courses, some of which interdisciplinary, in the BA and MA programmes to students of English Studies and African Studies is demonstrative enough about her knowledge and skills which she uses in her classes in an appropriate way. The disciplines she has had during the years are as follows: 1) in BA programmes for English Studies students: text linguistics (lectures and seminars), the linguistic debate (lectures, co-teaching), analytical approaches to text (lectures and seminars, co-teaching) (elective), practical grammar I (seminars), practical grammar II (seminars), analytical grammar I and II (seminars), political discourse I and II (seminars, elective), research methods (seminars), English practical grammar (lectures and seminars) in for African Studies students; 2) in MA English Studies programmes: discourse analysis (lectures and seminars), English for academic purposes (work with text)



(lectures and seminars). It becomes obvious from the documents about her teaching experience that most of her courses are related to the topic of the current procedure.

Nelly Tincheva-Georgieva has also participated in 10 projects as a member, 7 of which after the associate professorship (all of them listed in the materials). Some of the projects are connected with the creation of new methods of teaching English and with testing. Her participations in conferences with presentations have all ended with publications. She has also been part of the team having compiled 1 English-Bulgarian and Bulgarian-English dictionary.

Nelly is a reviewer of a couple of national and international journals as well as of book series, some of which in SCOPUS and Web of Science.

Her documentation shows that there is sufficient proof of the fulfilment of the minimum and additional requirements for awarding the academic degree of “habilitated doctor of philosophy”. The candidate’s research, qualification and publication activities are really impressive with their wide academic basis integrating various linguistic theories, paradigms and models with practical application.

The candidate’s academic interests are in the field of general linguistics, cognitive and comparative linguistics, text and discourse analysis, political discourse and a lot more.

For the current procedure Dr. Tincheva-Georgieva has presented a list of publications, which are enough for awarding the academic degree of “habilitated doctor of philosophy” to her according to the requirements of the procedure. Her publications are: a dissertation for the academic degree of “habilitated doctor of philosophy”; 4 publications in SCOPUS – 3 of them in renowned academic journals, 1 of which forthcoming and an international book chapter.

Nelly Tincheva-Georgieva has citations in Web of Science, in SCOPUS and in non-refereed publications with academic reviews: a total of 4 cited publications (monographs and articles), cited in 14 sources – 5 papers in books of proceedings from national and international conferences, monographs and academic journals, most of which refereed in SCOPUS, 2 in Web of Science and 7 in other publications, as pointed out in the respective reference, all of which with the allotted points as regards the indicators in item 112, para 2.

Her dissertation *A Multi-Process Cognitive Model for Investigating Text and Discourse* presented for the procedure is a natural continuation of her previous research in her PhD thesis *The SOURCE-PATH-GOAL image schema in political speeches* and shows her knowledgeability when applying quite successfully the mentioned linguists’ viewpoints in her analysis as well as

presenting her own interpretations. The information is quite detailed and exhaustive as it relies on various language models and on her own ideas about the discussed issues as well as theoretical frameworks, related to text linguistics and discourse analysis. The thesis definitely makes an attempt to find answers to a number of questions presented in multi complex ways. It puts an emphasis on the practical analysis of texts and discourses, as well as on the theories applied to the realization of these analyses and on the theories of the (cognitive) construction of texts and discourses, and finally various interpretations of the terms text and discourse, connected to the accompanying cognitive processes and mechanisms which take place in the mental processing of information, namely scanning, selection, attention, analogy, etc. The numerous definitions of text and discourse are in some cases either contradictory or take different criteria into account as the author rightly suggests. The thesis outlines the concurrent functioning cognitive processes as a basis for human communication by using Lakoff and Johnson's principles (1999) and applies qualitative and quantitative methods in their explanation. The interrelation between "consciousness – mind – body" and their complexity and co-relation to the surrounding reality or the natural world are taken into consideration, or as the author states, the aim is enriching the understanding of "cognitive ecology" (a term suggested by Gibbs in 2022) in action. Various cognitive structures used for rendering of political speeches realized with the help of simple and complex conceptual metaphors and metonyms are presented. One more cognitive construct is introduced, that of the Real World, together with the other two, the Textual and the Discourse World and their overlap in most cases as well as their switch from one into another are taken into account.

The doctoral thesis consists of 9 chapters, broken down into 3 parts. The introductory chapter presents the object of study (political speeches), the applied methods and approaches, as well as the corpus for analysis. The main hypothesis in the dissertation, stated in Chapter 1 is the existence of a number of cognitive mechanisms which function while using concepts such as TEXT and DISCOURSE as well as in the mental unfolding of real texts and discourses. The analysis integrates principles of conceptual figurativeness, Gestalt psychology, text world theory, cognitive text linguistics, pragmatics and sociolinguistics, which leads to a thorough research of the stated issues. It relies on statistical and quantitative data expropriated from real English language speakers, as well as on qualitative methods in the analysis of respondents' (students') statements and of concrete political speeches by British and American politicians for the last 80



years. Two studies (in 2009 and in 2019) are carried out within 10 years' difference, aiming at differentiation between some possible political frames of mind in the various generations. The discursive and the textual world related to the cognitive mechanism of real world structures are outlined and they stay valid in the second study with an emphasis on the contextual parameters over the linguistic ones.

Attention is paid to the integration of the textual and the communicative functions though, to my mind, both are interrelated as the aim of every text is achieving successful communication. However, it is a fact that political actions do not always overlap with communicative acts and in most cases their differentiation is not that easy to identify and quite often practically impossible. The main goal of the study is isolating the cognitive mechanisms which will help the explanation of political speeches' multifunctionality.

It is unusual that every chapter, depending on the nature of the information, applies different methods and approaches for the confirmation of the previously stated hypotheses. However, this is inevitable as the multi-process model consists of a number of interrelated cognitive mechanisms.

The object of the dissertation as defined in Chapter 2, Part 1 is the concept 'political speech' with its multifunctionality in extracting the acting cognitive mechanisms. Chapter 3, Part 1 pays attention to the structure of text and examines the functioning of the enumerated cognitive mechanisms from the previous chapter. Chapters 4 and 5 from Part 2 are related to the clarification of cognitive mechanisms in the fields of text linguistics and discourse analysis. Chapter 3 deals with the concepts of "real world" and "discourse world", necessary for the application of the cognitive mechanisms presented in Chapter 6 and their more concrete manifestations in the analysis of Brexit in Chapter 7, as well as of Facebook as a representative and a separate genre of political speeches in Chapter 8. Emphasis is put on the transition from the textual world and the discourse world to the real world. Chapter 9 summarizes the contributions in the dissertation.

The bibliography is quite exhaustive and contains some of the latest references in the respective field of study.

The Summary of the doctoral thesis presents the content in a concise and clear way. The author has pointed out the contributions of the dissertation in it as well.

As regards her other publications, I am acquainted with some of them as I have participated in conferences in which she has made presentations. Her investigations are always deep and are always supported by a rich evidential material. Nelly has participated in a number of highly specialized national and international conferences and symposia, forums in which a great number of high level specialists usually participate.

A bigger part of assoc. prof. Dr. Tincheva-Georgieva's publications are oriented to the issues of political discourse and the phenomena related to them. The reasons for the appearance of various linguistic uses, cognitive models and schemes as well as situations are presented, for example, the ones related to the prototypes in the said discourse, the genres, the problems of comprehending of information, the situations in different elections, etc. or lack of such as well through different schemes are pointed out. A conclusion is made that the above mentioned processes rely on conceptual metaphor and metaphoric conceptualisations in the analysis of a certain political phenomenon or event. Analyses of different texts which have either a narrative structure, or a textual structure or a rhetorical structure are presented.

This is just a part of the multisided studies of Dr. Tincheva-Georgieva's but it is more than a sufficient proof for her interests and for the depth of her research.

Besides, the publication of 1 dictionary is worth mentioning as it is a time-consuming and serious task. Apart from that she takes part in preparatory courses for admission tests as well as in the tests.

Nelly Tincheva-Georgieva's organizational and administrative activities are of a various nature, connected with the conducting of national and international conferences as well as of seminars. She is the head of the linguistics section at the English and American Studies Department. Apart from that she is a member of the Bulgarian Society for British Studies (BSBS) Board (1995-2013), member of the University English and American Studies Foundation since 1996, member of the Bulgarian Sociolinguistic Society since 2017, member of the International Cognitive Linguistics Association (ICLA) since 2021.

### 3. Assessment of the applicant's quality of his scientific productivity and contributions

The documents presented by the candidate for the procedure on the scientific and applied contributions highlight the most important conceptual and applied aspects of the innovation of her scientific endeavours. What I would like to add is the fact that I appreciate highly assoc. prof.

Tincheva-Georgieva's investigations to explore in depth and adequately apply the existing theoretical prerequisites in the field of linguistics as a whole, comparative research, cognitive linguistics and to more specific grammatical phenomena in English and Bulgarian, which is undoubtedly a contribution to the more general linguistics as well as to its more concrete manifestations. The studied grammatical issues are also applied in the teaching of English.

The candidate's doctoral thesis' contributions are outlined in detail in her dissertation as well as in its Summary. One of the major achievements is that the cognitive studies oriented towards issues of text and discourse are multi aspectual and are based on a theoretical frame which consists of the integration of principles of conceptual figurativeness, Gestalt psychology and the text world theory.

The review of the scientific production and academic work of assoc. prof. Dr. Tincheva-Georgieva's gives me strong reasons to declare that her candidacy fully meets the requirements for the academic degree of "habilitated doctor of philosophy".

#### 4. Remarks

In my opinion, it would have been more appropriate for the dissertation to begin with the theories of text and discourse, then to continue with theories of analysis of these units, after that with the practical analysis of texts and discourses, and finally end up with the theoretical research on the production of text(s) and discourse(s), as this last part is the most complex one for text producers. However, it is the author's right to organize the information in the thesis as she finds appropriate. I do not think that contributions should be pointed out after each chapter in the Summary. They could be called Conclusions, and Chapter 9 could summarize the results under the heading of Summary as is done in the dissertation.

To my mind, items 2 and 3 related to the multi-process cognitive model in the Contributions outlined in the Summary of the Doctoral Thesis could be united.

Chapter 9 summarizes the contributions of the separate chapters as well as of the Doctoral Thesis which should not be the case. It rather summarizes the conclusions made on the basis of the analysis and the respective studies.

The Contributions outlined in the Summary of the Doctoral Thesis should be after the conclusions in the Summary, but I do not think that they should be present in the Doctoral Thesis.



In the Summary of the Doctoral Thesis “van Dijk” is written as „ван Дийк“. To my mind, the correct pronunciation is „ван Дайк“.

## 5. Conclusion

Taking into account both the quantitative scientific minimum requirements for awarding the academic degree of “habilitated doctor of philosophy”, as well as the qualitative analysis of assoc. prof. Dr. Nelly Todorova Tincheva-Georgieva’s scientific production, work and contributions, as well as her personal features and skills, I strongly support her candidacy in this procedure and give my positive assessment about her scientific and applied achievements, as her academic and professional orientation in the field of philological sciences fulfils the requirements of the *Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria* and its accompanying regulations. I recommend to the Academic Selection Committee to vote positively for awarding **the academic degree of “habilitated doctor of philosophy” to assoc. prof. Dr. Nelly Tincheva-Georgievain the area of higher education: 2. Humanities, professional field 2.1. Philology, doctor habil’s programme *Germanic Languages (Text Linguistics and Discourse Analysis – English)* for the needs of the Department of English and American Studies, Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University *St. Kliment Ohridski*.**

May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Signature:



(prof. Romyana Todorova, PhD)