STATEMENT OF OPINION

by Professor Nelly Tincheva, DrSc, member of the scientific jury appointed by Sofia University 'St. Kliment Ohrdski''s Rector's order № РД 38-590/24.10.2023

regarding the scientific work and professional activities of Maria Ivanova Todorova, Ph.D. student, professional field: 2.1. Philology, Translation theory and practice (Translation theory and practice – English), to be awarded the educational and scientific degree of "Doctor"

Topic of the thesis: TRANSLATION PROBLEMS IN DIGITAL SERVICE PRODUCTS FROM ENGLISH INTO BULGARIAN

1.   Information about the candidate

Maria Todorova holds a Bachelor's degree from the Department of English and American Studies, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", and a Master's degree from the master's program in "Translation (in English)" at the Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

Todorova worked as an English teacher at the "Success" language center (2013-2016), as a project organizer at the "Sofita" translation agency (2017-2019), as a freelance translator and localization specialist (2017-present). From November 2019 to November 2023, she held the position of Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", where she taught translation classes.

Overall, the candidate's professional biography proves her lasting interest in the domain of translation, as well as her teaching skills in the field.

2. Fulfillment of the requirements for acquiring the educational and scientific degree

As accompanying documentation on her scientific works, Maria Todorova has presented evidence on 4 research publications (2 of them are in print). Additionally, she has 2 articles, 3 conference participations and 3 book translations ("Find Time" and "Skin" for *Window* Publ. and "The Guardian of Dragons" for *ProBook*), which are not listed for the purposes of the defense procedure.

Beyond doubt, the works of Maria Todorova not only meet all the quantitative requirements specified in the LDAS provisions but significantly exceed them.

3. Evaluation of the thesis

The dissertation presented to us by Maria Todorova examines the processes of localization and, more precisely, the problems in the processes of adaptation that newly-introduced digital products can go through – products which for various reasons may come to be re-contextualized and re-positioned within markets unrelated to their original purpose. I find the topic up-to-date and of considerable potential yield, which in itself is a prerequisite for a useful and significant study.

The interdisciplinary nature of the object of research in Todorova's thesis carries over to the nature of her research itself: the investigation displays a decidedly applied (linguistic) character, which, to me, is of primary importance in any doctoral dissertation. The interdisciplinary nature of the thesis in its turn results in the thesis' contribution to scholarly attempts that bridge the gap between the theory and the practice of translation. The latter, clearly, represents a very long-standing academic issue.

The text of the dissertation is structured superbly; its logical progression is clearly presented and well-supported. In this line of thought, it should be noted that the doctoral student has unambiguously specified the types of translation problems that can occur during localization from English to Bulgarian, and that she has successfully classified those into three main categories: genre-specific, technology-specific and those arising from the specifics of the translation medium. I support this classification and do not find a more detailed description of the research object necessary.

I also approve of the set of research questions formulated in the dissertation: these questions are related to the problems of translation for localization of products for digital services specifically from English to Bulgarian, to the existence of similar universal problems, to translation solutions to these problems, to the formulation of recommendations for increasing the quality of localization from English to Bulgarian, to recommendations for localization-related translation training. Here I would like to underline the yielding potential of future analysis of the above-described factors in relation to machine translation/ artificial intelligence. Nevertheless, I fully accept Todorova's arguments against her including such a topic within the present thesis (she points out that machine translation is still more frequently used only as an aid, and that it is the translator/editor who has the final say in deciding what the final version of a text should look like).

Among the contributions of the dissertation, I would distinguish the typology of translation problems in the localization of products for digital services from English to Bulgarian and the types of errors that these problems lead to. I would also find it interesting if, in the future, Todorova's analyses trace the parallel operation of more than one of the included categories of error as well as discover possible trends in their parallel operation.

Another valuable contribution of the dissertation is the solutions proposed in it concerning the identified translation problems. I also highly appreciate the author's arguments related to developing translator skills in implementing the translation strategies discussed. As the doctoral student notes, it is important for us to enable the translator in "circumventing" the problems which ensue from technological and linguistic contextual specificities.

I also laud the way in which the PhD student has formulated areas and questions with respect to which future research could build upon the present study. Most of all, I would be happy to see the development of Todorova's ideas from this dissertation in the direction of the translator's choice of register. I would also recommend a future systematization of the thesis results in, perhaps, a separate publication targeting representatives of the translation industry and representatives of technology companies.

In conclusion, Todorova's dissertation fully meets the requirements for a successful Ph.D. degree completion in that it offers the reader an independent study that systematically and successfully applies a single methodology.

4.   Conclusion

Based on all the above data and conclusions, **I strongly recommend that Maria Ivanova Todorova be awarded the educational and scientific degree of 'Doctor' in the professional field of 2.1. Philology, Theory and Practice of Translation (Theory and Practice of Translation - English).**

Date 27.11.2023   Signature: …………………………