

REVIEW

by **assoc. prof. Boryan Georgiev Yanev, PhD**

(Faculty of Philology, Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv)

of a dissertation for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree Doctor

in the professional field of: 2.1. Philology

PhD programme: *Bulgarian Language – Lexicology*

Author: **Radoslava Nikolaeva Koleva**

Topic: *“The Linguistic Image of Crime in Bulgarian and Polish”*

Supervisor: **assoc. prof. Nadezhda Mihaylova-Stalyanova, PhD**

1. General introduction to the procedure and the participant

As per order № RD-38-658 from 15.12.2022 by the Rector of Sv. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia (SU) – Sofia, I am appointed as a member of the academic jury for the organization of a procedure for the defense of the above mentioned thesis written by the PhD student Radoslava Koleva at the Bulgarian Language Department of the Faculty of Slavic Philologies of SU.

The set of materials submitted via a digital medium by PhD student Koleva is in accordance with the requirements in the Rules for Development of the Academic Staff of Sofia University and includes all documents necessary for the procedure of thesis defense, and the candidate’s work covers more than the minimum of scientific indexing parameters in relation to the requirements for the acquisition of scientific degrees and academic positions in ZRASRB – Humanitarian Sciences, educational and scientific degree Doctor. Additionally, there are five publications in the field of the set dissertation topic, the last one being submitted for printing – “Lexical Dimensions of the Human-Trafficking Victim in First-Person Accounts (Interviews)”.

Doctoral student Koleva has obtained a Master’s Degree in *Slavistics (Polish and Bulgarian)* from Sofia University in 2014 while during the same period she was an English language lecturer in language school New Leader. After graduation she worked as an office manager

at Inter Business 91 EOOD practicing her language skills in the sphere of social work and humane healthcare. From 2016 she worked as a state official at “The State Agency – Technical Operations” in Sofia. Radostina Koleva has specialized in Poland several times – in Warsaw, Krakow, and Lublin within the Erasmus+ programme and with other scholarship aid.

A particularly positive impression is left by the fact that the candidate has a very high command of the English and German languages in addition to the Polish she studied. Her German language training was received at 91st German Language School “Prof. Konstantin Galabov” and at Second English Language School “Thomas Jefferson”.

2. Assessment of the dissertation

Radoslava Koleva has submitted a thesis on “*The Linguistic Image of Crime in Bulgarian and Polish*” amounting to 231 non-standard computer pages that comprises an introduction, six chapters, a conclusion, appendices, and references. Quite noteworthy is the author’s consideration of bibliography –in the more than 20 pages of works cited one finds 350 sources (successfully referenced in the text), most of them being in Bulgarian and in Polish.

It is here that I must express my satisfaction with the conception and the realization of the research because it is truly original, current and innovative not only because of its comparative nature but also as a whole discussion of a problem approached in a marked cognitive way and from the angle of linguoculturology. This fact makes the PhD student’s work in accordance with the latest trends in humanitarian studies.

The dissertation is an analysis employing the prism of linguoculturology and the idea of subcultural linguistic image and in the focus of research is “human trafficking” in two manifestations of it – with the intentions of sexual and labour exploitation. The research is based on the tradition in Polish linguistics, and the cognitive approach is dependent on the conceptual metaphor theory as discussed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in their work *Metaphors We Live By*. For the purposes of the dissertation, the author has used materials from the media discourse, given accounts of the two types of trafficking (published on YouTube, in the press, and from specialized TV programmes, or pages of foundations and social groups) and from everyday conversational speech (the collection of data for this part of the research was done via a personal survey with target criteria). In other words, the linguistic image of “human trafficking” has been

studied in three different discourses – a legal one, in media speech, and first-person narratives of particular victims. The conclusions this research reaches are largely in accordance with the ones sought in metaphorical models which proves the enduring track in the comprehension of the investigated crime in the speakers of the two target languages in this dissertation.

The introduction is well-structured and meets all expectations for the genre of dissertation. One finds a clear explanation of the aim, scope, tasks, and methods of this research. To increase the significance of the matter under scrutiny, Radoslava Koleva refers to the laws and regulations concerning human trafficking not only at a local level but also in a European context.

What is more, this dissertation has a very solid theoretical base foundation – on the one hand, this is the theory of the linguistic image of the world, and closely connect to it, on the other hand, the conceptual metaphor theory. With great skill PhD student Koleva reflects upon the presentation and analysis of conceptual metaphors through the models of cognitive linguistics in the given excerpt. The author is well-acquainted with the postulates of Polish cognitive linguistics (e.g. Tokarski, Bartmiski, etc.) and incorporates them professionally in the consideration of the set issues.

The rich and encompassing empirical data collected from various sources facilitates the understanding of the conclusions and analyses as completely reliable and representative. Also commendable is the author's idea to conduct personal surveys and summarize first-person accounts of victims.

Additionally, the objectives set in the research plan are fulfilled gradually and progressively as the work unfolds. The juxtaposition of the two linguistic pictures in different manifestations of conceptualization leads plausibly to the understanding that human trafficking as a crime is thought of quite similarly in the figurative and metaphorical speech practices of Poles and Bulgarians. The subjective cognitive perception of the crime and its embodiment into linguistic matter leads to the emergence of clear metaphorical models, some of which, the author skillfully proved, have endurance – especially with regard to their use in media language and free conversational discourse.

The PhD student has used a large variety of linguistic competencies in the analysis of the empirical basis: the examples are set at the level of lexical system relations; topical subordination

to a semantic coefficient; relations following the *hypernymy: hyponymy* scheme; semiotic transnominatation and other.

The conclusions drawn by Koleva at the end of each chapter and the closing of the dissertation are intriguing, important and indicative. One also finds a distinguishing of the particularities of the studied models as subculture realia with their own specific features.

I am truly convinced that the dissertation of Radoslava Koleva contains scientific and applied results that are a contribution to linguistics and, more particularly, to Bulgarian lexicology and linguoculturology. In a future publication of the research, which I encourage, the relevance of the second chapter can be better justified with regard to the concrete tasks and achievements of the research – both in terms of subordination of the wide theoretical basis, and as regards the need for a wider display of information. In addition, I also recommend a higher degree of adherence to the punctuation norm of the contemporary Bulgarian language.

3. Assessment of publications and abstract

The four printed publications in accordance with the topic of this dissertations (the fifth publication has been accepted for printing but has not yet been published) are in specialized philological issues meant for young scholars and PhD students. I hope that R. Koleva will soon give us a sign that she desires to have her work published abroad – in Poland, to say the least.

The abstract submitted complies with the requirements and reflects conscientiously, plausibly, and thoroughly the contents of the PhD dissertation, as well as the main achievements of it.

Radoslava Koleva has the required theoretical knowledge and professional skills to conduct scientific studies on her own which, I believe, is a result to a significant degree of the skillful supervision of assoc. prof. Nadezhda Stalyanova.

4. Conclusion

This dissertation *contains scientific, scientifically-applicable and applicable results that are an original scholarly contribution* and meet the requirements of the Law for the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), the rules for applying the ZRASRB, and the respective regulations of SU.

The presented materials and dissertation results are in compliance with the requirements for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree “Doctor”.

The dissertation shows that Radoslava Koleva has profound theoretical expertise and professional skills in the sphere of Bulgarian lexicology, demonstrating abilities and skills to independently conduct scientific research.

For these reasons, I am convinced to give my *positive assessment* for the conducted research comprising the reviewed above dissertation, abstract, achieved goals and contributions, and *suggest that the honorable academic jury award the educational and scientific degree “doctor”* to Radoslava Nikolaeva Koleva in scientific field 2.1. Philology (Bulgarian Language – Lexicology).

Reviewer:

/Assoc. Prof. Boryan Yanev, PhD/

18.03.2023

Plovdiv