

Doctoral Candidate Evaluation Report

by Assoc. Prof. Katazhina Popova, PhD
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on dissertation work for educational and scientific degree
"Doctor of Philosophy" (PhD)

Area of higher education: 2. Humanities
Professional direction: 2.1. Philology
Doctoral program: Bulgarian language - lexicology"

Author: Radoslava Nikolaeva Koleva

Topic: "The linguistic image of crime in Bulgarian and Polish languages"

Academic supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Nadezhda Mihaylova-Stalyanova, PhD, Department of Bulgarian Language, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

1. General presentation of the procedure and the doctoral student

By order № RD - 38-658/15.12.2022 of the Rector of the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury in the procedure for the defense of the dissertation work on the topic "Linguistic image of crime in the Bulgarian and Polish languages" with author Radoslava Nikolaeva Koleva, PhD student in independent training at the Department of Bulgarian Language with academic supervisor Assoc. Prof. Nadezhda Mihaylova-Stalyanova for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor of Philosophy" (PhD) in the field of higher education 2. Humanities, professional direction 2.1. "Philology", doctoral program "Bulgarian language – lexicology".

In 2014 Radoslava Koleva graduated from Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" with Master degree in Slavic studies (Polish language and literature) as well as in Bulgarian studies, with awarded qualification as a teacher of Bulgarian language and literature. In 2011 she underwent a one-month linguistic practical training at the Maria Skłodowska-Curie University of Lublin. In 2012 she studied 5 months at the University of Warsaw with a scholarship from the Erasmus program and in 2013 - at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. Radoslava Koleva's fluency in the Polish language acquired during her studies and stay in Poland as well as her very good command of the English language came in to good use at her job as an office manager in 2015 in the company "Inter business 91"-Sofia. Since 2016 she has been applying her linguistic skills as a civil servant at the State Agency for Technical Operations /DATO/ in Sofia.

All materials and documents submitted by the doctoral student in relation to her dissertation defense are in full compliance with the current regulatory requirements.

2. Relevance of the topic

The dissertation work of R. Koleva is dedicated to the linguistic image of crime in the Bulgarian and Polish languages. The importance of the proposed topic is underpinned by the fact that there is no study of similar kind, from semantic and confrontational perspective, comparing the two genetically close, but typologically quite distant Slavic languages: the South Slavic Bulgarian language from the Eastern subgroup and the West Slavic Polish language from the Lechite subgroup. The subject is also quite relevant in recent times - crime, unfortunately, is now part of everyday life and has a global reach that affects all countries and continents.

3. Knowledge of the problem

The theoretical review of the scientific literature made by the PhD candidate with respect to the picture of the world, the linguistic picture of the world and the linguistic metaphor is closely related to the topic of the dissertation work. The doctoral student demonstrates a good level of theoretical background with a marked affinity to the Polish linguistic school. The dissertation discusses the term "metaphorical model", often used in comparative analysis of metaphors. Other publications relevant to the issue have also been reviewed. Special attention in the dissertation has been paid to the concept of metaphor of G. Lakoff and M. Johnson who captured the minds of linguists with the suggested notion that the system of concepts is inherently metaphorical. The examples to support this idea have been ingeniously chosen in both Bulgarian and Polish languages.

4. Research methodology

The primary research method chosen by the doctoral candidate, the cognitive method, in the direction of the theory of the conceptual metaphor of G. Lakoff and M. Johnson as well as the theoretical framework of the linguistic picture of the world suggest that the work is placed in the modern and contemporary scientific stream of cognitive linguistics whose proven scientific significance at present is beyond any doubt. The survey method was also used as a supplementary tool. To make her point even more clear and convincing, proper tables and graphs have been included as well.

5. Characteristics and evaluation of the dissertation work

As scientific merits of the dissertation work, I can note the following:

- Relevance of the topic;
- Theoretical review in order to build the research toolkit;
- Application of relevant and cutting-edge research method – the cognitive method;
- Analysis based on metaphorical patterns in order to highlight the similarities and the differences in the linguistic images of crime in the Bulgarian and Polish languages;
- Appropriate illustrative material to support author's thesis;
- Conclusions at the end of each chapter;
- Useful bibliographic references related to the theories of the Lublin school;
- Fluency in the Polish language.

Remarks

- The discussion (in the third chapter) of the "human trafficking" from the point of view of Bulgarian and Polish laws and the inclusion of personal stories (in the sixth chapter) of victims of this heinous crime in Bulgarian and Polish languages feels a bit out of place. In my opinion, these sections do not contribute to revealing the linguistic image of crime, they are supplementary in nature and the most appropriate place for them is in the appendix.
- Having in mind the cognitive approach applied by R. Koleva, the axiologisation which is an important aspect in the cognitive method, has not been given due consideration and the topic of crime provides solid ground for elaboration on axiologisation
- The lexical/semantic fields supporting the linguistic characteristics of the personal stories could have had better theoretical reasoning. There are many interesting theories in this area (E. Kittay, A. Lehrer, A. Wierzbicka) which would add significant value in extracting the most essential semantic features of the lexicon.

6. Publications and participation in scientific events

Five articles have been enclosed to the dissertation, out of which four have been published and one has been accepted for publication (an official confirmation enclosed). All of them are related to the topic of the dissertation work.

7. Abstract

The abstract adequately reflects the structure, the content, the main conclusions, the final conclusion and the contributions of the dissertation work.

8. Recommendations

The dissertation contains punctuation and linguistic errors which I find inappropriate for a work at that level. Further to that, the formatting of the text features different fonts and font colours, there are errors in the spelling of the Polish lexical units. My recommendation is that the entire text be carefully double-checked, edited and proofread.

CONCLUSION

The proposed comparative analysis reveals the linguistic picture of the world of crime at conceptual level as well as outlines the similarities, differences and specifics in the perception and understanding of this all-important social construct, from the perspective of the Bulgarian and Polish linguistic pictures of the world, in relation to human trafficking. The research achieves both scientific as well as applied results and has a contribution to Slavic studies, Slavic comparative linguistics as well as to the field of Bulgarian-Polish linguistic relations.

Based on all above and notwithstanding my remarks, I recommend to the scientific jury to award the educational and scientific degree "Doctor of Philosophy" (PhD) to Radoslava Nikolaeva Koleva in the field of higher education 2. Humanities, professional direction 2.1. "Philology", doctoral program "Bulgarian language – lexicology".

14 March 2023

(Assoc. Prof. Katazhina Popova, PhD)