

REVIEW

by Assoc. Prof. Bilyana Bozhinova Todorova, PhD, Department of Bulgarian language,
Faculty of Philology, South-West University "Neofit Rilski"
of the scientific production of Assoc. Prof. Nadezhda Ivanova Mihaylova-Stalyanova, Ph.D.,
the only candidate in the competition for the academic position "Professor" in the field of
higher education "Humanities", Professional field 2.1. Philology (Bulgarian Language -
Lexicology), announced in SG no. 24/17/03/2023

Compliance of the procedure with legal requirements

The documentation is in order and meets the requirements of the Law on Scientific Degrees and Titles and the Regulations on the Terms and Procedures for Acquiring Scientific Degrees and Holding Academic Positions at Sofia University.

I have been provided with all the necessary documents and materials for the purposes of the competition and they comply with the requirements of the LSDT (ZRASRB) and the Regulations for the Terms and Procedures for Acquiring Scientific Degrees and for Holding Academic Positions at Sofia University. The set of materials submitted by the candidate includes all the required documents for the procedure. I have not found any evidence of plagiarism in the submitted scientific works.

Bio data

The only candidate in the competition Nadezhda Ivanova Mihailova-Stalyanova's graduated from the 35th Russian Language High School, and completed her higher education in Polish Philology with a minor in English Philology at Sofia University. Currently, she is an associate professor at the Department of Bulgarian Language of the Faculty of Slavonic Philologies at Sofia University "Kliment Ohridski". She started working in this department as an assistant professor in 2002. She received her Ph.D. in Bulgarian language in 2002 and she qualified as an associate professor at Sofia University in 2014.

Evaluation of the candidate's professional experience and activities

According to the candidate's CV, she has taught numerous lecture courses at the Faculty of Slavonic Philology - in lexicology of the Bulgarian language, in phonetics and lexicology of the Bulgarian language, in public speaking, in communication and manipulation for Bulgarian philology and Slavonic philology, in Political and Journalistic Speech in the Master's Program in Linguistics, in Teaching Bulgarian as a Foreign Language -

Opportunities and Challenges in the Master's Program in Cross-Border Bulgarian Studies, as well as seminars in Lexicology of the Bulgarian Language and Phonetics of the Bulgarian Language for Bulgarian Philology and Slavic Philologies of the Faculty of Slavonic Philologies. In addition, she is the founder and director of the Centre for Political and Journalistic Speech Analysis.

Nadezhda Stalyanova specialized in the CEERUS program in Poland in 2005 and in the SUMMIT program at Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic in 2023, she has been a guest lecturer in the Erasmus and Erasmus + program in Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary. The candidate has participated in numerous conferences and seminars in Bulgaria and abroad, and has also made numerous media appearances in which she discussed issues related to current problems of the Bulgarian language.

She has presented information on her participation in fifteen projects, she is the leader of the team of 11 of them. Nadezhda Mihaylova-Stalyanova is the editor-in-chief of the scientific journal "Bulgarian Speech" and the editor of four collections on scientific topics. She declares that she is a scientific editor of two monographs and a scientific supervisor of one successfully defended doctoral dissertation and seven defended diploma theses. In addition to the information given in the data, I can confirm that she has been a reviewer of texts published in various scientific journals.

Evaluation of the candidate's scientific production and activity

It is seen from the documentation that Nadezhda Stalyanova fulfils the minimal national requirements under the LSDT (ZRASRB). I would like to make one correction in the documentation provided - one of the citations, which is in the East European Journal of Psycholinguistics and is from 2020, is presented as a journal citation in an unrefereed peer-reviewed journal. However, this journal has been indexed in Scopus since 2019, so it earns the author more points than the listed ones.

The candidate has authored five monographs, three of which are co-authored. Two of them, *Speech in Contemporary Bulgarian Society* and *The Power of Public Speech* (the latter co-authored with Elena Kreychova), are involved in the procedure. I will pay attention to the first of them as it is the main work with which the author participated here. A specific feature of Nadezhda Stalyanova's monographs is that they are not focused on one particular study, but have a broader object of research, they can be likened to a kaleidoscope, within the scope of which fall various issues of contemporary Bulgarian speech. The first part of the monograph (pp. 7 - 42) presents a persistent problem of research interest to the author - language

aggression, and in particular the dimensions of language aggression among school-age children. This chapter is the product of extensive research, which is only partially presented here, as the author indicates on p. 11. The material that has been collected is representative of the social group under study, and I very much hope that it will be explored in detail in the future, because the topic is very important not only for linguists, but for humanities scholars in various fields. On the basis of a survey study with students from different schools, Stalyanova concludes that "the modern Bulgarian student is forced to live and survive in an extremely hostile environment in which he is exposed to aggression from all sides" and accordingly "...the student reacts aggressively in this hostile environment" (p. 42). The author's observations show that verbal aggression is part of the everyday life of modern children in school, and they encounter it mostly on the Internet, but also on the street, at school, in transportation, etc. Although the majority of high school students admit to using aggressive vocabulary, they demonstrate an enviable resilience to insults and aggressive messages, with 40% of respondents stating that others' verbal behavior is unable to affect or hurt them. According to data the young people were most sensitive to insults related to intellectual ability, appearance, and behaviour; they were much less likely to respond to language related to sexual orientation or ethnic/racial discrimination.

The other texts in the book present various observations on the language of political correctness, political speech, phraseologies, their translation and specifics, the relationship between politically correct language and the already established linguistic constructions in speech that represent the linguistic worldview of Bulgarians. Some of them have also been published as articles in various issues. The monograph ends with a conclusion that presents the relationship between the different chapters and the author's motivation for dealing with the current problems of Bulgarian speech. The other monograph, co-authored and written in English, is also devoted to the actual problems of speech. It also deals with issues related to political correctness, aggression, so-called "hate speech" and their representation in the online space and in public speech. It seems to me that it is necessary to present more clearly the contribution of each of the co-authors in the creation of the monograph, which in my opinion deals with issues in which I have a special interest - language on the Internet, the moderation of Internet texts, the rules that are followed by different sites and forums, the difference between freedom of speech and freedom of expression, the difference between speech aggression and hate speech, etc. And in this monograph two parts can be meaningfully separated – the first part deals more with theoretical issues related to public speech, and the second describes individual cases that Nadezhda Stalyanova has presented at scientific forums

and published in some form and which have invariably aroused high interest from the scientific community.

Nadezhda Stalyanova states that since 2014 she has published 29 manuscripts, and all the journal and proceedings publications that are listed in the documentation are 78. The texts mainly concern several areas: phraseology, public speech, new words and meanings, teaching Bulgarian as a foreign language, but there are also those that are related to the contemporary publishing environment, specific linguistic issues, etc.

Important parts of Nadezhda Stalyanova's work are textbooks and dictionaries. She presents a list of seven co-authored university textbooks published between 2018 and 2022 and three dictionaries for Slavic students. In this direction, Stalyanova and her co-authors have carried out an enormous amount of work, which is of great applied importance for Slavic Studies because it focuses on the study of Bulgarian at the higher language levels, where teaching materials are less frequently produced.

The candidate participates in the procedure with the two mentioned monographs, for which she has over 10 reviews in various Bulgarian and Slavic publications in Bulgaria and abroad, 9 articles published in journals which are refereed and indexed in world databases (Web of Science and Scopus), the already mentioned three dictionaries and seven university textbooks as well as 16 articles and papers published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes.

The nine articles, referenced in the world databases, have been published in various Bulgarian journals - Foreign Language Teaching, Bulgarian Language and Literature, Ezikov Svyat – Orbis Linguarum, Balkanistic Forum. Some of them are in English, which allows them to reach the global scientific audience easily. The texts deal with various topics - phraseology, political correctness, problems facing contemporary scientific periodicals, teaching Bulgarian to Slavs, etc. In my opinion, texts 2.4 and 2.7 are very interesting because they deal with issues that go beyond the usual subject matter of Stalyanova's articles. Text 2.4 deals with the status of the Serbo-Croatian language. The article is co-authored with E. Krejčová and P. Krejči and presents the chronology of the transformation of the former Serbo-Croatian language into separate Serbian, Croatian, Montenegrin, and Bosnian linguistic norms. This text is a kind of an evidence that linguistic issues are linked to societal changes and to the policies pursued by the states on whose territory the respective languages are spoken, and reveals some of the mechanisms by which the terms "norm", "language", and "dialect" are blurred and interpreted depending on the situation. Text 2.6, co-authored by N.

Stalyanova and El. Kreychova, presents information about the activities of Ivan Milev, public figure and memoir writer.

The articles (16) in non-indexed issues were published in various proceedings and journals from Bulgaria, Hungary and the Czech Republic. Seven of them are co-authored.

The articles present already mentioned topics such as phraseology (texts 2.3, 3.2, 3.10), public speech (2.5, 2.8, 2.9, 3.1, 3.8, 3.11, 3. 12), lexicology and neology (3.6, 3.9, 3.14), the teaching of Bulgarian as a foreign language (2.2, 3.13, 3.15, 3.3, 3.3), and various other publications, some of which I have already discussed at length. All of them show Nadezhda Stalyanova's sustained interest in synchronic linguistics and especially in actual processes that mainly affect the lexical level of language. What is a distinctive feature of Stalyanova's style is the engaging way of constructing the exposition (oral or written) and the applied value of the texts.

I would also like to draw attention to the various teaching materials for Bulgarian as a foreign language for advanced students, which make it possible to support the education of both foreign students in Bulgaria and students studying Bulgarian at foreign universities. Both the "Practicum in Lexicology (Bulgarian as a Foreign Language for Advanced Students)" and the "Practicum in Bulgarian as a Foreign Language for Advanced Students (Phraseological expressions and Idioms)" and the "Vocabulary Exercises (Bulgarian as a Foreign Language for Advanced Students)" enable students to become familiar with the lexical and phraseological richness of the Bulgarian language, to orient themselves in the systematic relations of the language - to recognize synonyms and their specific meanings, to pay attention to the risk of using paronyms, to learn the meaning of idioms, etc.

The dictionaries presented in the competition are the result of the interaction of small author teams - in co-authorship with Elena Krejchova the two parts of the dictionary of linguistic terms for Slavic students were created, and the team of Elena Krejchova, Olga Soroka and Nadezhda Stalyanova is the author of the "Short Thematic Dictionary of Bulgarian, Czech, Polish and Ukrainian". The latter dictionary is particularly valuable for colleagues who use more than one Slavic language and provides an opportunity to thematically compare Slavic languages from different groups - South Slavic, West Slavic and East Slavic ones.

Conclusion:

It is clear from the above that Assoc. Prof. Nadezhda Mihaylova-Stalyanova is an authoritative scholar who actively works for the promotion of Bulgarian studies and Slavic

studies in Bulgaria and abroad. She is, among other things, a warm-hearted colleague who always treats young colleagues who are starting out in science with kindness and consideration. It seems to me that this is an extremely valuable quality, especially today when fewer and fewer young people pursue an academic career. Her punctuality in terms of deadlines for the activities to which she has committed herself is also worthy of special mention.

All that has been said so far gives me every reason to propose to the esteemed scientific jury to **elect** Associate Professor Mihaylova-Stalyanova to the academic position of "**professor**" in the field of higher education "Humanities" by professional direction 2.1. Philology (Bulgarian Language - Lexicology).

06.07.2023

Signature: