

PEER REVIEW

for the procedure for obtaining the academic position of 'Professor' in the professional field 2. 1. *Philology*

Specialty *Bulgarian language* according to the announcement in the

"State Gazette" No. 29/12.04.2022.

Candidate: Prof. Ruska Sabeva Stancheva, PdD, IBL-BAS

Peer Reviewer: Petya Nacheva Osenova, PhD, professor at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

Particulars of the procedure

By Order No. ПД-09-17/10.06.2022 of the President of IBL-BAS I was appointed as a Member of the Scientific Jury in the selection procedure for obtaining the academic position of 'Professor'.

The set of materials presented by the candidate includes all necessary documents for the selection procedure. I would like to point out that the materials are properly classified and described according to the requirements, which greatly facilitates the work of the jury members.

Assoc. Prof. Ruska Stancheva, PhD has met, and even impressively exceeded, the minimum national requirements under Art.2b, Para.2 and 3 of DASRBA. Therefore, I have three recommendations on the matter: the first one is that, in order to register with NACID, there is no need to claim a number of points that many times exceeds the required ones. These points can be used further in one's academic/scientific growth. Secondly, according to D indicator the minimum is 200 points, and not 300 points. Thirdly, it would be better to change the order of the monographs presented, when entering them into NACID, because the second monograph is actually the one that is related to the procedure for obtaining the position of 'Professor'.

Complied with have been all requirements of DASRBA, of DASRBA Implementation Rules, the Rules of Procedure for the Acquisition of Scientific Degrees and of Holding Academic Positions in the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, and the Rules of Procedure for the Acquisition of Scientific Degrees and occupying academic positions at the Institute of Bulgarian Language "Prof. Lubomir Andreychin".

Particulars of the Candidate

In 1981 Assoc. Prof. Ruska Stancheva, PhD, graduated from the specialty "Slavic Philology with Polish Language" at Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski". In 1990, she obtained the scientific and educational degree of "Doctor of Philology" at the Institute of Bulgarian Language, BAS, and in 2006 she was elected to the scientific position of "Associate Professor" at the same institute. From 1987 to the present, Associate Professor Stancheva has worked in the Section for Modern Bulgarian Language at the IBL, BAS. Her research, project and publication activity has been extremely intensive over the years. Among the most recent projects of great importance for society, I would like to mention the following: Normative Grammar and BERON (Bulgarian language resources online), as well as the project for researching the public attitudes of Bulgarians towards language norms. These projects are related to presenting an up-to-date dictionary and up-to-date grammar from normative perspective of the Bulgarian language, taking into account also the trends in the use of the normative language by speakers of this language nowadays. Presented have been 22 participations in scientific forums, i.e. round tables, seminars and conferences, including with international participation. Prof. Stancheva is the supervisor of three doctoral students, one of whom has already successfully defended her dissertation.

I have known Associate Professor Ruska Stancheva PhD, since as early as 1996, when I was a doctoral student in modern Bulgarian language in the Section for Modern Bulgarian Language. As a colleague she was always responsive to the rest of her collaborators. This is evidenced by the number of publications and joint participations with other members of the college, both from the same institution and outside it. Assoc. Prof. Stancheva is able to work successfully in a team and also successfully lead a team. I am impressed by her great scientific erudition, as well as the serious analytical skills applied by her in conducting her research.

Description of the research publications

The candidate has submitted 41 research publications for the selection procedure, including two independent monographs, 9 studies (of which 2 in indexed editions and 5 in co-authorship) and 30 papers (of which 4 in indexed editions and 7 in co-authorship). This fact in itself also confirms the high scientific activity of Assoc. Prof. Stancheva. I can't imagine why her participation in the creation of Bulgarian language textbooks has not been presented here, since they are also relevant to the procedure for becoming a professor. I appreciate the candidate's decision, but I would like to emphasize that this activity is also to be added to the positive aspects

in the current procedure. Declared have been 59 citations in various publications, papers, monographs, etc. This shows the extensive influence of Assoc. Prof. Stancheva's research. I also have one recommendation, that is, increased should be the number of publications and citations outside the *Bulgarian Language* magazine published by IBL. I believe that the contributions of the candidate would be also extremely valuable for the Bulgarian studies around the world. Therefore, it is good a good idea to realise more publications in other languages, such as Russian, English, Polish.

Scientific contributions

The candidate has submitted two monographs. That's why they are given special emphasis in my review. Prior to that, however, I am going to summarize the contributions of Assoc. Prof. Stancheva made in the other 39 publications presented. The candidate has correctly presented the main areas in which she has contributions. These are: the grammatical heritage, the issues of codification and the problems of modern Bulgarian grammar. All of these entail a scientific and applied contribution. **In the first area**, namely grammatical inheritance, Assoc. Prof. Stancheva has made several contributions. They are as follows: tracking the development of contemporary models of describing the Bulgarian linguistic phenomena, such as Balan's approach (papers 32 and 37); a historical analysis of the codification of various phenomena such as the category of time (paper 11), the reconstruction of individual and collective linguistic attitudes through the method of content analysis in the period between the two world wars (paper 22) and the relationship between normative recommendations and the type of linguistic theory (papers 11, 35). **In the second area**, that is the questions of codification, the candidate has the following contributions: research on the relationship between language attitudes and the process of codification through the theory of literary languages (studies 3, 6, 10 and papers 19, 24 and 25). As a matter of example, interesting are her observations about the prevailing purist sentiments in Bulgarian society (paper 25), its moderate conservatism (paper 19) and the negative attitude towards possible changes in the current codification (paper 24). Another contributing aspect relates to the study of the social and psychological attitude concerning *stated opinion vs. linguistic behavior* in certain grammatical norms (studies 7, 8, 9). In this respect the interesting observation has been made that the imbalance occurs with a norm that legalizes the natural development of the language (the case form *kogo* in interrogative pronouns) and not with the artificial type of norm (full and short article). A further

contribution is the focus on the coercion of the norm in an electronic environment relevant to the type of communication and the attitude of linguistic loyalty (study 5 and paper 21). Last but not least in this area is the proof of the positive role of school in the formation of language attitudes, *language loyalty, awareness of the norm and pride* (papers 12 and 13). **In the third area**, namely, the problems of modern Bulgarian grammar, the following contributions are to be outlined: in a comparative plan, studied has been the syntactic implementation of arguments of the predicate (paper 38 and 39); discussed have been some theoretical tenets related to the definition of the normative type of grammar, as well as the way it is presented as a form and a content, including from the perspective of the existence of doublets and the typology of errors, (papers 15, 23, 27 and 28). A concrete linguistic modeling of given phenomena is proposed in terms of morphology (study 4 and papers 14 and 20) and syntax (papers 16, 17, 18, 26). So far, immediately obvious is the ability of Assoc. Prof. Stancheva to utilise, in an extremely mature and balanced way, methods, such as language modeling and statistical and content analysis; to apply the appropriate theoretical apparatus in order to reach important generalizations with wide application in the education and normative culture of Bulgarians.

The monograph "The Codification Practice of the First Bulgarian Scientific Grammar" (BAS Publishing House "Prof. M. Drinov", 2021, 147 pages) enumerates about 90 titles. This is a work of fundamental importance both for tracing the history of Bulgarian grammar and codification activity, and for increasing the explanatory effect of the tenets in the contemporary codification of the Bulgarian language. The monograph consists of an introduction, two chapters and a summary. **Chapter one** examines six projects for writing a scientific grammar of the Bulgarian language in the period 1936-1944. Explained have been the reasons for the appearance of a large number of grammars in a short period of time. These are as follows: development of the symbolic function of the standard languages in Europe between the two world wars and shift to a predominance of the synchronic view of languages compared to the diachronic one that had dominated until then. In this way, the publication of six grammars brings to the fore the role of the Bulgarian normative language as a necessary factor for social development. A significant contribution of the monograph is the focus on the use of different theoretical approaches to the description of language and on the scientific debates as to which approach is more appropriate (e.g. the discussion of Al. T.-Balan and St. Mladenov as opponents). The presented grammars represent two approaches to Bulgarian grammar, namely, the historical one and the functional

synchronic one. Summarized have been the innovative ideas contained in "New Bulgarian Grammar" by Al. T.-Balan, such as the distinction between language and speech in Saussurean sense.

Chapter two examines the solutions provided by the authors of the six grammars in the field of the nominal system. The comparative method is used throughout the book, but the first part relies more closely on inferences based on circumstantial evidence whereas the second part depends on the theory of literary languages. A valuable connection has been established with the principles of codification in our time, where clear scientific criteria are already being applied. Important conclusions have been drawn about processes, such as the influence of the literary language on dialects, the intellectualization of language, and the maintenance of the language norm through grammars.

The monograph "Codification in the context of language attitudes" (BAS Publishing House "Prof. M. Drinov", 2021, 237 pages) is also a book of great public importance. It cites about 90 titles like the preceding monograph. The book consists of six chapters. It presents an in-depth analysis of the results of a study of the attitudes of the Bulgarians towards the modern codification rules of the literary norm. As a theoretical starting point, the author once again adopts the theory of literary languages. It should be pointed out that this monograph, as well as all publications of Associate Professor Stancheva and her colleagues on the project for studying the attitudes of the Bulgarians, fill a big gap in estimating the opinion of the native speakers of the current norm. Another important issue to be emphasized is that the monograph uses a theoretical model developed by the author herself in collaboration with her colleagues. This model combines the roles of codification and language attitudes in accordance with the symbolic function of language. Used has been direct research method, the questions of the survey falling into three main groups: a) what are the functions of the Bulgarian language today; b) obligation of the written book norms and c) states of the current codification. **Chapter one** presents the theoretical framework of the study. The author discusses language variation and language attitudes in relation to language norm. A list of linguistic attitudes and a rationale for the chosen quantitative method has been provided. **Chapter two** is devoted to information concerning the data collected: what goals were set, what the hypotheses are, how the data were collected and how they were processed; the content of the survey and the types of variables in the type of sociological research have been presented. Chapters

three through five describe the results and the conclusions drawn from them. All results have been presented graphically as well.

In my opinion, **Chapter Four** is the most interesting one which discusses the obligation of normative rules. Important are the aspects of measuring the tolerance of the respondents towards the mistakes made by others and also on the written versus oral speech axis. It is evident from the results that the majority of respondents are more demanding concerning themselves and less demanding concerning the mistakes of others. Here, I think, yet another type of measurement will be relevant to make, if possible, in future work, namely on the social networks and forums in terms of how many error notes are published and in what way the note has been made. **Chapter six** summarizes the findings of the study. Valuable is the feedback from native speakers. It has been established that, in general, Bulgarians have a positive attitude towards the written literary language. Important information has been given on the relationship between different language attitudes and the functions of language. Established has been the high obligatory nature of the norm and the fact that the current codification is balanced. Of great value are also the critical notes: that the rule representation metalanguage is rather complex and that there is a lack of reliable references on the Internet. It turns out that living standards and education have the greatest influence on the demographic characteristics determining attitudes. As an outstanding feature, I consider the fact that the author correctly outlines the positive and negative tendencies of the types of attitudes in relation to the existing codification, as well as the fact that she suggests measures to overcome the negative ones.

Conclusion

Having acquainted myself with the materials and scientific works of the candidate presented for the selection procedure, and having appreciated their significance and contributions, I confidently give my positive assessment and recommend that the Scientific Jury should appoint Associate Professor Ruska Stancheva at the academic position of "Professor" in professional field 2.1. Philology, scientific specialty "Bulgarian language" for the needs of the Modern Bulgarian Language Section of the Institute of the Bulgarian Language at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

July 22th, 2022

Peer Reviewer: