

REVIEW

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

**Author of the dissertation: Lora Ognyanova Zheleva, part-time doctoral student in the
Department of Modern Bulgarian Language of the Institute for Bulgarian Language
"Prof. L. Andreychin"**

**Topic of the dissertation: "Semantic structure of nouns formed with the suffix -ик in
the Bulgarian language" Reviewer: Associate Professor Dr. Tsvetanka Avramova, Sofia
University "St. Kliment Ohridski"**

The topic of the dissertation is relevant for at least two reasons. First, because nouns formed with the suffix *-ик* have not, as far as I know, been the subject of independent word-formation research. Second, because for the first time in the analysis of an extensive group of derived words in the Bulgarian language (over 700) there is a consecutive application of the theory of predicate-argument structures (PAS) from semantic syntax, developed by the Polish linguist St. Karolak and used in the study of syntactic structures in the Polish language.

What is used as a model of the study is the 9th volume of the "Bulgarian-Polish Comparative Grammar" (BPCG) by V. Maldzhieva (2009), in which the main types of predicate-argument structures of derived words in the Bulgarian and Polish language are outlined, and word-formation categories are defined in accordance with them. To a lesser extent, the dissertation is based on the word-formation section in the first volume of "Gramatyka włączonego języka polskiego" (Polish Grammar 1984; 2nd ed., 1998) by R. Grzegorchykowa and J. Puzynina, in which the analysis of derivatives is also based on the PAS model of semantic syntax, although this has not been done consistently.

Doctoral student Lora Zheleva is clearly aware that a strict adherence to her chosen theoretical model will reveal both its advantages and disadvantages (see page 8). To this I would add that following a given model carries the risk that its weaknesses (if any) will be reflected in the dissertation.

The dissertation, with a volume of 312 standard pages, consists of: an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, a declaration of originality, a bibliography, sources and several appendices.

In the introduction, the object, the subject, the goals, the tasks and the method of the research are defined, and a working hypothesis is formulated, which must be verified in the course of analysis; the terminological apparatus is also presented in alphabetical order, which makes it easier for the reader. *The object of research* is the "semantic structure of the derived word", and *the subject of the study* – "the semantic structure of the derived nouns in the Bulgarian language, formed with the suffix -ук" (p. 9). The work sets two main goals: "to achieve new knowledge about the derivatives with -ук by correlating their content and formal structure" and "to enrich the ideas about the ways of forming derived words and of naming with them", which are realised by completing 4 tasks (see pages 9–10 for them).

The first chapter (pp. 15–70) examines different approaches to the study of word formation in linguistics from the beginning of the 19th century to today: the young grammarians, in structuralism (Saussure, the Prague School, Bloomfield), the transformational-generative grammar (Chomsky, Lees et al.), on the onomasiological theory of M. Dokulil (1962) and the Polish School of Semantic Syntax from the 1970s, created within the framework of structuralism. The conducted review shows the doctoral student's good awareness and knowledge of the main schools and approaches to the analysis of derived words in European and American linguistics. However, it would be good if it were supplemented with other studies applying the onomasiological approach – e.g. the two volumes "Языковая номинация. Общие вопросы" (Language nomination. General questions; 1977) and "Языковая номинация. Виды наименований" (Language nomination. Types of names; 1977).

Further on in the first chapter follows a detailed and analytical presentation of word formation in the six first scientific grammars of the Bulgarian literary language: „Българска граматика“ (Bulgarian Grammar) by Petar Kalkandzhiev, published in 1938, „Българска граматика“ (Bulgarian Grammar) by Nikola Kostov, published in 1939, „Граматика на българския език“ (Grammar of the Bulgarian language) by Stefan Mladenov and Stefan Popvasilev, published in 1939, „Нова българска граматика“ (New Bulgarian Grammar) by Alexander Teodorov-Balan, published in 1940, „Българска граматика“ (Bulgarian Grammar)

by Dimitar Popov, published in 1941, and “Основна българска граматика” (Basic Bulgarian Grammar) by Lyubomir Andreychin, published in 1944. The doctoral student also presents basic works on Bulgarian word formation from the second half of the 20th century (by S. Stoyanov, Y. Maslov, V. Murdarov, V. Radeva et al.). At the end of the chapter, the main points of the predicate-argument theory and the idea of isomorphism between the sentence and the derived word are described.

The second chapter (pp. 71–108) offers a semantic and formal characterisation of the derived words from the point of view of the PAS theory, on the basis of which word-formation categories are determined for nouns formed with the formant *-ук*. The delineated categories formulated according to the 9th volume of the BPCG are the subject of research in the third, most voluminous chapter (pp. 109–194). As a result of the analysis, it was established that the derived nouns with the suffix *-ук* in the Bulgarian language have all the argumentative word-formation categories formulated in the 9th volume of the BPCG: Agent, Experiencer, Patient, Result, Instrument, Matter, Object, Part, Dysponent, Beneficent, and out of the 15 predicate word-formation categories in the BPCG of the considered derivatives, only 5 categories are inherent in the Bulgarian language: Place, Negation, Similitude, Relations and Intensity. It is indicated that most derivatives with the suffix *-ук* fall into the argument word-formation category of Agent; the number of nouns in the argument word-formation categories of Object and Experiencer, and in the predicate word-formation categories of Place and Relationships is also large.

At the end of the third chapter, a classification of the studied derivatives by thematic groups (name classes) is presented, based on the classification in the Polish Grammar and BPCG. It has been established that the most names of persons are realised in the derivatives of *-ук*; the names of objects and places are also numerous, the names of animals, plants, etc. are fewer.

At the end of the third chapter (pp. 188–194) the “formal expressions of derivation” are briefly presented: the suffix *-ук* and its variants, but also prefixes, confixes, etc., and attention is also paid to various qualitative and quantitative alternations, accompanying the derivation process.

I will allow myself a few comments concerning the word-formation side of the study.

It is noteworthy that in many places in the thesis there are mentions of “multiple derivation” and “multiple motivation”, and the two terms have apparently been used

synonymously. It should be noted, however, that in Slavic derivational studies the term "multiple derivation" is not used – with very few exceptions (e.g. in some works of E. A. Zemskaya, which, however, are not cited in the dissertation). Therefore, the reference to the Word Formation Dictionary of the Contemporary Bulgarian Language published in 1999 is hardly sufficient – especially considering that its authors are not word formation specialists. As for the reference to "Gramatyka współczesnego języka polskiego" (1998: 385–387), it is not accurate, as the grammar does not mention multiple derivation, but "wielomotywacyjność" (p. 386), which may be translated as "multiplicity of motivation". This clarification is important, since the terms *motivation* and *derivation* name different sides of the same phenomenon, without completely overlapping – as, however, is indicated in the dissertation itself.

In presenting the word-formative meaning and its relation to the lexical meaning of the derived words, I would recommend the studies of E. S. Kubryakova – especially "Типы языковых значений: семантика производного слова" (1981).

The dissertation repeatedly emphasises the advantages of the approach "from content to form", respectively, of the PAS theory and the opportunities it provides for the analysis of derivatives. The effort to avoid some of the shortcomings of word-formation research, in which form is the leading factor (and to which detailed and analytical attention is paid in the first chapter), however, leads to a certain underestimation of the formal side. As a result, there are inaccuracies in determining the producing base and the word-formative formant in the structure of some derivatives.

Not being a specialist in semantic syntax, I have reservations about the statement that the argument word-formation category of Agent also includes nouns derived from adjectives such as: *виновник* with paraphrase 'one who is guilty', *праведник* 'one who is righteous', *бездарник* 'one who is untalented', *безнравственик* 'one who is immoral', *двуличник* 'one who is hypocritical', *палавник* 'one who is naughty', *смеешник* 'one who is funny', etc. (pp. 112, 210 – 214).

Word-formative paraphrases of some nouns are controversial, for example, these of: *богоугодник* 'one who is a crawler to God' (instead of 'one who is crawling to God'), *досадник* 'one who annoys' (instead of 'one who is annoying'), *богохулник* 'one who is a blasphemer of God' (instead of 'one who blasphemes'), *мъченик* 'one who suffers' (instead of 'one who is

tormented, tortured'), *киноисторик* 'one who works in the field of cinema history' (instead of 'one who works with film history'), etc. (pp. 118, 120, 210).

The absence of the word-formation category of *nomina attributiva* (names of attribute bearers) in the BPCG model (unlike Polish Grammar 1984/1998!), followed in the dissertation, leads to the fact that the nouns which in "traditional" derivational studies, including those based on the onomasiological theory, are referred to this category and which I think are of the same type, here are scattered in different categories: Agent (see the examples above), Experiencer (eg: *безбожник* 'one who is godless', *клетник* 'one who is miserable'), Object (*самотник* 'one who is lonely', *покойник* 'one who is deceased', *старик* 'one who is old' (pp. 94, 132, 218, 224, 232) and others.

In fact, the very definition of the Object argument and hence of the word-formation category of Object in the studies referred to by the doctoral student (Koritkovska 2011: 28–29; Maldzhieva 2009: 48–49), in my opinion, is quite controversial. According to the researchers cited, this argument position can be distinguished by negation – establishing that it cannot be assigned the values of other argument positions (p. 94). And this inevitably leads and has led to the classification of nouns from different genders in the Object category.

The underestimation of the formal side is also evident in the inclusion in the dissertation of dozens of nouns in which *-ик* is not a word-formative device (this is also indicated in the dissertation), i.e. the suffix in them stands out only at the morpheme level, without fulfilling the function of a word-formative formant. This concerns nouns formed, according to the doctoral student, through composition (pure or accompanied by suffixation), e.g.: *себепоклонник* (self-worshiper), *вероотстъпник* (apostate), *седемхилядник* (seven-thousander), etc. (p. 191) or by prefixation (*донаборник*, *спътник*, *съученик*, *свръхпроводник*, etc. (p. 164–165, 176, 191). *-Ик* has no function as an independent word-formative device and as a constituent part of a confix; as related to a confix are considered, for example, the nouns: *безсребърник* (*без-сребър-ник*), *нашийник* (*на-ший-ник*), *неверник* (*не-вер-ник*), *сродник* (*с-род-ник*), etc. (p. 191; see also the examples on pp. 173–174, etc.).

A more precise analysis of the word-formative relations and the word-formative structure of the derived nouns would lead to a more reasoned determination of the variants of the *-ик* suffix in the study (p. 190). In connection with this, I would like to ask what justifies the assumption, for example, that in the noun *лигавник* (bib) *-ав-* is an extension to the base

(*лиг-а – лиг-ав-ник*, p. 117, 191), and that in *стигматик* the morpheme *-ам-* is considered part of the suffix (*стигм-атик*, p. 190)?

Nouns in which *-ук* is not a word-formative device should not be included in a dissertation, the topic of which is "Semantic structure of nouns **formed with the suffix *-ук*** in the Bulgarian language", i.e. it should only consider nouns in which *-ук* fulfills the function of a word-formative formant. The inclusion of derivatives formed in a different way than by suffixation has inevitably affected the results of the analysis, and hence the conclusions drawn.

The critical remarks made do not diminish the value of the dissertation work, but aim for a more careful approach in the future when applying a theory from one level of language (in this case: the syntactic level) to another level (the lexical level, especially the one of derived words), and taking into account the specificity of this level. Some of the stated shortcomings of the work are actually obtained as a result of the theoretical model followed, and not of inability of the doctoral student to analyse. On the contrary, I think that in her work, Lora Zheleva has shown a good awareness of the topic under consideration; she has demonstrated analytical thinking and the ability to apply a complex and insufficiently well-known in our country syntactic theory to specific lexical material. The application of the PAS theory to a large group of derivatives in the Bulgarian language is a contribution and has been done for the first time in our country. Therefore, the dissertation work can serve as a basis for further studies of word formation from the perspective of the PAS theory.

In connection with the defense procedure, a total of 4 publications on the topic of the dissertation have been presented in Bulgarian scientific publications, one of which is referenced and indexed in global databases (CEEOL). The attached reference shows that the doctoral student fulfills the national minimum requirements under Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 and the requirements under Art. 2b, para. 5 of the Act on Development *of the* Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria. The abstract accurately reflects the main points and scientific contributions of the dissertation.

Based on everything mentioned so far, I propose to the respected scientific jury to award Lora Ognyanova Zheleva the educational and scientific degree "doctor".