

STATEMENT

by Prof. Svetla Peneva Koeva, PhD,

Institute for Bulgarian Language "Prof. L. Andreychin" at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
of the dissertation for the awarding of educational and scientific degree of *Doctor* in the field of
higher education: 2. The Humanities, Professional area: 2.1. Philology (Bulgarian language)

Author of the dissertation: **Lora Ognyanova Zheleva**

Topic of the dissertation: **"Semantic structure of nouns derived with the suffix *-ik* in Bulgarian"**

1. General overview of the procedure and all the materials submitted for reviewing

I have been appointed as a member of the scientific committee in relation to the procedure for the defense of the dissertation „Semantic structure of nouns derived with the suffix *-ik* in Bulgarian“, written by Lora Ognyanova Zheleva at the Department of Bulgarian at the Department for Modern Bulgarian Language of Sofia University "Prof. Lyubomir Andreychin" of the educational and scientific degree of *Doctor* in the field of higher education: 2. The Humanities, Professional area: 2.1. Philology (Bulgarian language).

The pack of materials Lora Zheleva has presented for assessment is in full compliance with the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the relevant regulations and comprises the following documents: curriculum vitae; a copy of a diploma for the "master's" degree; the text of the dissertation; an abstract (summary) of the dissertation; a list of the applicant's publications relating to the topic of the dissertation and copies of the publications; reference to the fulfillment of the national minimum requirements; documents related to training and preliminary discussion.

2. Short biodata

Lora Ognyanova Zheleva holds a master's degree in Slavic studies (Czech language and literature) and Bulgarian studies (teacher of Bulgarian language and literature) at the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" from 2015. She is a part-time doctoral student at the Institute of Bulgarian Language "Prof. Lyubomir Andreychin" from October 1, 2016 to November 10, 2020. She was on a four-month specialization at Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic, as part of the Erasmus+ doctoral program. From 2015 until now, he has been working at the Institute of Bulgarian Language „Prof. Lyubomir Andreychin" initially as an assistant and later as a philologist. She has participated in the development of a number of scientific projects of the Department of Modern Bulgarian Language at the Institute of Bulgarian Language "Prof. Lyubomir Andreychin", as well as in the project with a wide response in the public "The written word remains. Write correctly!"

3. Relevance and significance of the topic and adequacy of the aims and objectives

The dissertation "Semantic structure of nouns derived with the suffix *-ik* in Bulgarian" provides a versatile and in-depth study in the field of semantics of word formation. The relevance of the work is determined not only by the fact that the semantics of the word formation of derived nouns with the suffix *-ik* has not been thoroughly studied in the Bulgarian language, but also by the complex presentation of the problem, which is studied both at the level of word-forming semantics, as well as lexical semantics.

The research's main goals – "to achieve new knowledge about the derivatives of *-ik* by correlating their semantic and formal structure and to enrich the ideas about the ways of forming derived words and of naming with them" (p. 9) – were met convincingly.

4. Knowledge of the problem

The author is well-versed in the subject. The bibliography in the dissertation is extensive and competently chosen. Lora Zheleva demonstrates an excellent understanding of the history of modern linguistics, allowing her to refer only to the schools, authors, and views relevant to the proposed analysis. Although the author is extremely precise when citing, some minor suggestions can be made: it is preferable to cite the specific author in question, for example, T. Boyadzhiev rather than Boyadzhiev, Kutsarov, Penchev 1999; the popular name "Academic Grammar" can be replaced by the actual name of the grammar; and it is not logical to present the Bulgarian wordnet citing a publication dealing with its further extension.

5. Methodology of the research

In the considered work (p. 20), an analytical method is used, but other methods are also observed: comparison and description, both in the presentation of an overview of existing linguistic studies and in the presentation of the semantics of word formation for the selected group of derived nouns.

6. Description and evaluation of the dissertation

A dissertation can be characterized as a serious scientific study. It is useful that the theoretical apparatus is presented at the beginning of the dissertation. As this is a widely used terminology that is applied in a non-traditional context, it is good to refer to the original source whose definitions are accepted or to indicate how the definitions are modified from a given original source (which is done on pp. 84 – 86).

In the approach used, attention is directed toward the semantic structure of the derived word, which is considered a conceptual structure. The approaches to word formation in general are briefly presented, and an in-depth overview of the study of the word formation system of the Bulgarian language with a focus on derived nouns is provided. Similarities and differences with other approaches that analyze word-formative meaning based on the semantic structure of the derived word are clearly outlined.

Five principles are established: a) description proceeds from content to form; b) isomorphism between the formal and semantic structure of the sentence and the derived word; c) description is carried out through semantic decomposition; d) description is synchronous; and e) only literary words are considered. The merit of the dissertation is that the formulated principles are followed consistently, and it is very difficult to find possible contradictions, for example, the dialect word *gaštnik* – 'a strap or string with which someone ties his trousers' (p. 220).

According to the second principle (p. 70), the semantic structure of the derived word is similar to the semantic structure of the sentence as a conceptual structure – predicate-argument structure. The analysis approach is undoubtedly fruitful, but we would recommend avoiding the direct analogy between predicate-argument structure as a theoretical construct explaining the semantics of a sentence and word-formative "predicate-argument structure". Only if the generating word is a verb or its derivatives, and it is stated which of the arguments can be realized (but not exclusively) through the derived word (*substitute substitutes someone*), do we have grounds for analogy. The attempt to make a direct connection between the semantics of sentences and the semantics of derived words raises additional questions, such as why a word base and a formant can appear both as predicates and as arguments; how the unexpressed word-forming predicates correspond to the predicates in the sentence; and why only word-forming predicates expressed with a formant are semantically classified (similarly to arguments). It's no coincidence that the author employs terms like ar-

gument and predicate word-formation categories to emphasize the distinction in the semantic analysis of derived words. In the dissertation, the semantic classification of derived nouns with the suffix *-ik* is carried out on the basis of the types of word-forming predicates and arguments expressed by the formant. The following argument word-formation categories are employed: Agent, Patient, Experiencer, Result, Instrument, Matter, Object, Part, Disponent, and Beneficient, and the respective predicate word-formation categories are: Place, Negation, Similarity, Relationship, and Intensity. Derived nouns are divided into two groups in each word-forming category: those with an expressed word-forming predicate and those without. The method employed allows for a consistent and unambiguous presentation of the semantic structure of derived nouns with the suffix *-ik* from the standpoint of word formation.

The dissertation concludes with four very useful appendices that illustrate word-formation categories, name classes, formal expressions of derivation, and producing words.

7. Contributions of the dissertation to science

The dissertation provides a thorough examination of the semantics of word formation for Bulgarian nouns ending in *-ik*. The work is notable for its thoroughness, clarity, and comprehensiveness, as well as its contributing character. The author's main contribution is a description of semantic word-formation categories, based on which she proposes a systematic word-formation analysis of over 700 derived nouns formed with the suffix *-ik*.

8. Assessment of the publications related to the topic of the dissertation

Lora Zheleva has four articles related to the dissertation, which reflect different stages and aspects of the author's research work on the issue under consideration.

9. Personal participation of the applicant in the reviewed scientific works

The dissertation under review is a result of an individual work and authorship.

10. Abstract of the dissertation

The abstract fully reflects the content of the dissertation, the results achieved, and the contributions of the author. It consists of 106 pages and actually includes a large part of the dissertation.

CONCLUSION

The dissertation of Lora Zheleva contains essential observations, analyses, and summaries, which represent a contribution both to semantic research and to the field of word formation. The presented dissertation meets the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and related regulations.

In conclusion, with deep conviction, I confidently give my positive assessment of the conducted scientific research, presented in the dissertation „Semantic structure of nouns derived with the suffix *-ik* in Bulgarian“, as well as for the achieved results and contributions, and I propose to the honorable scientific jury to award the educational and scientific degree „Doctor“ to Lora Ognyanova Zheleva in the field of higher education: 2. The Humanities, Professional area: 2.1. Philology (Bulgarian language)