

**STATEMENT OF OPINION**  
by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Petya Ivanova Nestorova  
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of a dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree **Doctor**  
in the field of higher education **2. Humanities**  
professional field **2.1. Philology**

**Author:** *Malina Georgieva Stoycheva*

**Topic:** *Techniques for expanding simple groups with a noun in their composition*

**Scientific supervisor:** *Prof. Dr. Ruska Stancheva – Institute for Bulgarian Language “Prof. L. Andreychin”*

Syntax is a scientific area in which there are still many unresolved questions. The noun phrase has been the subject of research for a long time and continues to attract interest to this day. It is also relevant at the moment because it can be developed from a different theoretical point of view and according to different criteria for detecting a main and subordinate constituent, and hence with a different representation of its formal structure.

In her dissertation, Malina Stoycheva presents the techniques for expanding simple syntactic groups with a noun (as a head or a complement), choosing to work with the theoretical framework of dependency grammar.

The chosen methodology is suitable for the implementation of all the set tasks. The comparative and analytical methods are used in all three chapters of the dissertation, the PhD student presents the competition and differences between constituent grammar, the dependency approach and traditional theoretical statements in the application of criteria for a head or a complement in the studied noun phrases, as well as in their formal description. This is observed in the theoretical part and in the practical work on the topic.

The dissertation contains the classic introduction, three chapters and a conclusion. Already in the table of contents, Malina Stoycheva clearly shows her ability to structure the text very well. The breakdowns into sections and paragraphs are exhaustively informative and gradually unfold her ideas. This speaks of clarity, understanding and good scientific preparation.

The introduction contains the necessary information about the structure of the dissertation, the terminology used, object, goals, tasks and methodology of the study.

The PhD student clearly states that the purpose of her scientific work is to study “possible techniques for expanding simple syntactic groups with a noun within the framework of modern models of dependency grammar in view of real uses, examples of which are extracted from the Bulgarian National Corpus”. She includes all phrases with a noun head, as well as cases in which the noun is a complement, or as she defines it – a modifier, in the phrase with a head word of another part of speech. To achieve this goal, Malina Stoycheva formulates six main tasks for implementation. Of utmost

importance for the accurate delineation of the object of study is the scientific distinction made between a phrase of two nouns and a compound lexical unit consisting of two nouns.

In the first chapter, the PhD student shows excellent knowledge of the theoretical research on the topic in the scientific literature (historically and in modern terms), which is evidenced by the many monographs and articles on the topic cited and used in the study – 76 in total. Malina Stoycheva presents a wide range of opinions on the issue of the structure of the noun phrase, citing linguists in our country and abroad who have written on this issue. It is particularly impressive that the PhD student is familiar with the work of linguists from various theoretical schools (which are currently popular in Bulgaria and in which linguists of ours work), as she thoroughly presents and compares the differences in their ideas and in the theoretical apparatus they use.

The choice of dependent grammar as a theoretical basis is justified, since it allows for the formalization of the structure and a clearer presentation of all possible positions of the noun and its complements in the studied phrases. The main task is to build a theoretical model of the Bulgarian noun phrase. For this purpose, in the second chapter, the PhD student analytically presents the main theoretical framework of the dependency theory, as well as the theoretical research of international and Bulgarian linguists, in order to answer the question of the potential structural properties of expanded groups with a noun in their composition in the Bulgarian language.

The third chapter shows the research activity and the practical results that the PhD student has achieved. The studied groups, their prepositional, postpositional complements, as well as the complements between the main and subordinate members, are fully commented on.

The PhD student demonstrates her ability to structure scientific information, analyze it and present it in an appropriately hierarchical manner. She examines the theoretical and empirical material with understanding and skill. Malina Stoycheva clearly expresses her opinion and argues each of her positions. She demonstrates independent thinking and mastery of terminology.

The dissertation has many merits: an excellently developed structure with logical methodological and scientific consistency; mastered scientific language and expression, which is accessible and at the same time professionally sound; clear, correct and precise explanation of the specialized terminology used. The text contains all the necessary parts in which the PhD student demonstrates skills for analytically derived results and conclusions. It is very impressive that Malina Stoycheva presents and analytically comments on the theoretical developments on her topic, comprehensively outlining the scientific framework, and in the third part she also demonstrates her ability to analyze the excerpted material through the chosen scientific framework.

The contributions of the work are correctly formulated by the PhD student. The dissertation is contributing both in scientific and practical terms. The goals and tasks have been achieved and excellently fulfilled in the presented research.

There are three publications on the topic and they meet the requirements of the procedure. They were published in the journal of Bulgarian Language. All three address issues that later appear in

separate parts of the dissertation as research and results. Here the PhD student shows her ability to fit the scientific research into the microfield of the article, where she again demonstrates very good scientific expression.

The abstract summarizes the main text of the dissertation and accurately reflects its parts.

I would recommend that the PhD student, when she decides to publish the text, should not omit the fact that possessive clitics require the article morpheme, though there are exceptions. Nouns with semantics of kinship ties do not take an article, despite the presence of a possessive clitic – *sestra mi*, *mayka mi*, *bashta ni*, etc. It would also be good for Malina Stoycheva to share how many excerpted examples she has worked with and on which she builds her conclusions.

In conclusion, I want to say that the dissertation *contains scientific and applied scientific results which represent an original contribution to science.*

The dissertation shows that the PhD student Malina Stoycheva **possesses** in-depth theoretical knowledge and professional skills and **demonstrates** qualities and skills for independently conducting scientific research.

Due to the given statement of opinion, I confidently give my *positive assessment* of the conducted research presented by the dissertation, the abstract, the achieved results and contributions, and *I suggest that the esteemed scientific jury should award the educational and scientific degree of Doctor* to Malina Stoycheva in the field of higher education **2. Humanities**, professional field **2.1. Philology**.

20.05.2026

Statement of opinion prepared by: .....

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Petya Nestorova