

PEER REVIEW

By Petya Nacheva Osenova, PhD, professor at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

of the materials presented for the selection procedure
for obtaining the academic position of **'Professor'**
at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski"

in the field of higher education 2. Humanities

professional field 2. 1. Philology

(Bulgarian Language, Modern Bulgarian Language (Lexicology))

In the selection procedure for obtaining the academic position of 'Professor' announced in **State Gazette no.57, dated 26.06.2020**, and on the website of the Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" for the needs of the Department of Bulgarian Language at the Faculty of Philology, participated as a candidate has Vanya Ivanova Zidarova, PhD in Philology, from the University of Plovdiv "Paisii Hilendarski".

1. General overview of the submitted materials

By Order No.P33-4140 / 25.08.2020 of the Rector of the Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" (PU) I was appointed as a Member of the Scientific Jury in the selection procedure for obtaining the academic position of **'Professor' at PU** in the field of higher education 2. Humanities, Professional field 2. 1. Philology (Bulgarian language, Modern Bulgarian language (Lexicology)), **announced for the needs** of the Department of Bulgarian Language at the Faculty of Philology.

The **only candidate** in this selection procedure is Mrs. Vanya Ivanova Zidarova, PhD in Philology, from the University of Plovdiv "Paisii Hilendarski".

The set of materials on paper presented by Assoc. Prof. Ph.D. Vanya Ivanova Zidarova is in accordance with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of PU and contains all necessary documents.

The candidate, Assoc. Prof. Ph.D. Vanya Ivanova Zidarova, has submitted a total of 63 scientific papers, of which: 2 monographs, 2 textbooks and 2 manuals, as well as 57 papers. Accepted for review are 57 scientific works (1 monograph, 4 textbooks (2 textbooks and 2 manuals) and 52 papers). Not accepted for review have been 6 scientific papers related to a previous procedure concerning the dissertation of the candidate for acquiring the scientific degree of *Doctor of Sciences*. The

distribution of the publications of Assoc. Prof. Zidarova, respectively in the country and abroad, is as follows: 11 papers published abroad and 41 papers published in Bulgaria

The Reference concerning the implementation of the minimum national requirements has revealed that the candidate fully meets these in relation to the position of 'Professor'. I would like to highlight that the indicators in the sections concerning publications (group D) and citations (group E) are several times higher than the required minimum. I'd like to suggest a small correction concerning the publications (numbers 5 and 6) placed under indicator D6. In my opinion, they must be placed under indicator D7. The same can be said about almost all citations placed under indicator E12, which should be moved under indicator E14. The journals *Bulgarian Language*, *Proglas* and *Comparative Linguistics* are not currently indexed in Web of Science or Scopus. Citations in textbooks are not to be accepted in NACID as well.

2. Brief personal information about the candidate

Assoc. Prof. Zidarova has a degree in Bulgarian Philology graduating from the University of Plovdiv "P. Hilendarski", in 1982. From 1983 to 1986 she was a doctoral student at Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski". Her she made a career in the profession at PU "P. Hilendarski", where, in 2000, she obtained the position of 'Associate Professor'. In 2019, the candidate was awarded the degree of 'Doctor of Science'. Assoc. Prof. Zidarova has an extensive teaching and research experience. She gives lectures on Modern Bulgarian Language, Slavic Languages, Old Bulgarian Language, Methods of Teaching Bulgarian Language and literature. She has been a guest lecturer in Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic; she participated in a teaching mobility under the Erasmus Program in a number of countries, namely, Italy, Greece, the Czech Republic, Poland, Germany, Belgium and others. The candidate has also been active in the administration of the educational process. She has participated in commissions for attestation, accreditation and international cooperation; she has been a coordinator of the Erasmus program and a member of the Faculty Council at the Faculty of Philology. She has participated in projects on human resources development and evaluation activities at the National Science Foundation and has contributed to foreign humanitarian magazines.

3. General characteristic of candidate's activities

Assoc. Prof. Zidarova is a lecturer with many years of experience. She has demonstrated a very wide range of teaching activities. The candidate has published 4 textbooks for students, i.e. 2 textbooks (theoretical course in Bulgarian and lexicology) and 2 manuals (in lexicology and phonology). She is currently training a doctoral student in lexicology (since 2018). She has developed a number of lecture courses: two theoretical courses in the Master's Program "Current Bulgarian Studies" and 3 in elective or optional disciplines. She is teaching 3 main courses: in Phonetics, Lexicology and Bul-

garian Language Grammar. It is noteworthy that Assoc. Prof. Zidarova is giving lectures not only in purely philological specialties, such as Bulgarian and English Philology, Slavic Studies, but she is also teaching in the hybrids disciplines, such as Bulgarian Language and History, Linguistics and Information Technologies, Bulgarian Language and Civic Education.

Evaluation of the candidate's research and applied research activities

To the remarks made by me at the beginning of the Peer Review concerning the publications submitted for the procedure, I would like to add the following: these are independent and author's own works; the majority are published in collections ensuing from research conferences or in anniversary collections, but there are also publications in major Bulgarian and international journals, such as the *Balkan Studies Forum*, *Comparative Linguistics*, *Bulgarian Language*, *Proglas*, *Poznanskie Studia Slawistyczne* and others.

The number, quality and topics of the presented scientific publications show Assoc. Prof. Zidarova as an extremely prolific and serious researcher. Her pedagogically oriented publications (2 textbooks and 2 manuals), the developed 5 lecture courses, as well as the 3 main lecture courses taught by her are a proof of the intensity of the candidate's teaching activity.

Contributions (science, applied science, applied) and citations

Assoc. Prof. Zidarova's scientific contributions related to the procedure are mainly in the field of lexicology, however, not as an isolated language level, but in close connection with grammar. In a nutshell, and as I see them, these contributions are as follow: A) description of the new lexical phenomena and tendencies in the Bulgarian language (monograph, papers 13, 14, 17, 25, 26, 27, 28, 34, 35, 36, 37, 42, 43, 46, 51); B) new aspects in the relationship between vocabulary and grammar (monograph, papers 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 19, 21, 23, 30, 31, 32, 45); C) in-depth study of phenomena related to lexical semantics (monograph, papers 2, 29, 33, 53, 54, 57); D) clarification of grammatical and lexical aspects of determination with a focus on the expression of uncertainty (papers 7, 49, 50, 52, 55, 56); E) an in-depth description of the parts of speech (including reclassification) with a focus on particles and pronouns (papers 6, 11, 12, 18, 20, 22, 24, 38, 47). The publications subsumed in group A) include general descriptions of the new lexical processes, as well as a wide range of individual topics: the introduction of foreign words, the adaptation of borrowings, abbreviations, universals, the emergence of neologisms and occasionalisms, the processes of terminology and terminologisation. The publications from group B) are focused on the lexicalization of the diminutives, the lexical economy, the grammatical features of the headlines in the press, the word-formation models. The publications from group C) describe the processes of semantic derivation as a basic modern mechanism for vocabulary enrichment, the meaning of different concepts, the

semantic perception of historicisms and archaisms. The publications from group D) present different problems of determination from a lexical point of view in connection with reference, expression of uncertainty, typology. Group (E) publications offer a new perspective on the parts of speech, including on separate semantic groups of nouns and verbs.

It is noteworthy that Assoc. Prof. Zidarova has a lot of citations (by over 60 citing sources) both in monographs and in collections and magazines. This is evidence that the candidate's research is extremely well accepted by the Bulgarian scientific community and therefore contributes to the development of modern scientific ideas.

The applied contributions of the candidate consist in the development of 2 textbooks and 2 manuals for students. The textbooks introduce the Bulgarian lexicology to Bulgarians and the Bulgarian grammar to non-Bulgarians. It should be noted that the preparation of textbooks for professionals and for non-specialists requires different approaches and different skills. Assoc. Prof. Zidarova has done an excellent job with the introduction of appropriate terminology and with striking the right balance with the theoretical weight. The manuals are in phonology and lexicology for Bulgarians. They present a rich set of texts with the corresponding tasks to these.

Since the candidate has presented the monograph *Dynamics and Innovations in the Lexical System of the Bulgarian Language* for the selection procedure for 'Professor', I will focus greater attention to it. The book contains 228 pages. The sources used – dictionaries and sites – are over 20. The cited bibliographic units are over 130. The monograph is conditionally divided into 9 parts. The text traces the development of the lexical system of the Bulgarian language after the changes in 1989. This review is made through a critical analysis of the mechanisms causing lexical changes, which I have briefly presented below. A valuable feature is the presence of a diachronic view of the phenomena. The author's theses are illustrated with extensive material drawn from dictionaries and texts from other relevant sources. The author's conclusion is that, over the last three decades, processes that are evolutionary in nature have led to a revolutionary change in the lexical system. Assoc. Prof. Zidarova has the knack of perfectly combining scientific style with comprehensible writing. Thus, her texts are accessible to both the scientific community and to all who are interested in Bulgarian grammar.

The chapter *Vocabulary as a system and structure* is intended as a kind of introduction. It is here, that the basic theoretical apparatus is introduced, as well as the peculiarities of the lexical level. I agree with the author that the basic unit is not the lexeme, but the meaning, as it is really more complicated to analyze, but it is also more reliable (p. 9). The second part *Dynamics of the lexical system* describes the types of extra- and intra-linguistic changes in the lexemes, as well as the

tendencies in the changes from a qualitative and quantitative point of view. Examples are given for widening, narrowing, changing the meaning in diachronic terms. In my opinion, it is extremely valuable to observe that lexical semantics is a variable and that language seeks to expand its nominative possibilities through lexical economy (pp. 33-34). The directions of lexical changes after 1989 are summarized. Following are chapters that describe specific processes. The first such chapter is *Archaization and Revitalization*, which reflects the dynamics between active and passive vocabulary. A valuable observation is that the frequency of use of a word depends mainly on the denotation, but also on the availability of alternatives (synonyms) (p. 42). As contributions shall be considered the inquiries into words, such as 'pioner', 'brigadir', 'komsomolets', etc. which examine the perception of these words by different generations. There follows the chapter *Lexicalization*. Special attention has been drawn to the diminutives, which, through desemantization of the diminutiveness, have become ordinary lexemes. The author also considers the lexicalization of abbreviations in which the semantics are preserved. She finds arguments in favour of her hypotheses in dictionaries and concludes that such lexicalized abbreviations are relatively few. Next there comes the chapter *Uni-verbization*. The author considers the lexical aspects of this mechanism of language economy. Her observations on the different concepts of this phenomenon (in the narrow or broad sense, with more or less limitations) are contributing. Assoc. Prof. Zidarova advocates for a broader understanding of this concept which can be reached from "poly-verbal to mono-verbal unit" by various means (p. 89). Important is her remark that, though mainly conversational in nature, univerbs are part of the development of the lexical system. In the chapter *Terminologization and Determinologization* the processes of terminologisation of commonly used vocabulary and the transition of terms in this vocabulary are considered in detail. The observations on determinologization where the semantics of the term may or may not change are of contributory nature. According to the author, this process involves only a change of meaning (p. 108). The most detailed part of the monograph is the chapter *Neologization*, because it examines the most active processes in the lexical system at the moment, namely, semantic and lexical derivation. Neologization is defined as a new word, or new meaning missing in dictionaries, which is perceived as a novelty and has a low frequency (pp. 114-115). Identified are the problems in defining the concept itself, the reasons for the appearance of neologisms and the ways of their appearance. Discussed is the problem of choosing a foreign synonym as more prestigious, which is often due to a fashion in language and not to a rational approach on the part of the speakers (e.g. 'kreativen' vs. 'tvorcheski'). The main parameters of the semantic derivation are described as a secondary nominative process, which is extremely productive. On the bases of 26 arbitrarily selected lexemes, the author shows the ways in which this process runs. I find very interesting the observation that, as a process, semantic derivation is based mainly on metaphor and not so

much on metonymy (p. 135), as well as the observations concerning the difficulty in distinguishing the new nomination from the figurative use. There follows a description of the principles of lexical derivation, i.e. the emergence of new lexemes. Identified are the typical areas of use; their word-forming possibilities – mainly affixation and composition, but also abbreviation. In this chapter, of contributive character is the discussion on the problems of the morpheme structure of words with foreign morphemes (pp. 149-150). There follows the chapter *Internationalization*. Described are the reasons for the introduction of foreign vocabulary in our language, as well as the ways of their adaptation, and the main thematic areas and languages the influences come from (Greek, Latin, Turkish, French, etc. – in the past, and English in the present). The last chapter is entitled *Innovations in lexical practice*. It summarizes the author's observations and identifies the trends in the lexical composition of the words reflected in the media as the fastest medium. The peculiarities of the new communication strategies are indicated. These include: choosing a shorter word instead of a more appropriate one; the provocativeness of language along with its informativeness; the introduction of an expressive dictionary suitable for everyday life and conversational style; the increase of occasionalisms; the spelling of the names of institutions, establishments, and broadcasts in Latin alphabet.

4. Evaluation of the personal contribution of the candidate (s)

All publications submitted for peer reviewed reflect the personal contribution of Assoc. Prof. Zidarova. On the one hand, the publications are authored exclusively by her. On the other hand, the opinions of the college have correctly been noted everywhere, after which her opinion on the given scientific issue has been stated clearly and unambiguously. The description of the contributions is correct and fully corresponds to the presented research output.

5. Critical comments and recommendations

I would suggest some refinement in places in the report intended for NACID (mentioned above in the review), which in no way affect the fact that Assoc. Prof. Zidarova meets and exceeds the scientometric requirements.

6. Personal impressions

I am acquainted with the achievements of Assoc. Prof. Zidarova and have known her as a prominent lexicologist and excellent grammarian since her doctoral years. Her works are contributing and in-depth. The first one I read was on the status of the form 'edin' in the Bulgarian language. Later, I have had the honor to share with her the panel at the annual Conferences for students and doctoral students at Plovdiv University. Assoc. Prof. Zidarova is a colleague with significant scientific output, with abilities for excellent argumentation of her theses, as well as extensive knowledge in the field of Bulgarian grammar.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials presented by Assoc. Prof. Zidarova meet all requirements of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA), the Regulations for application of DASRBA and the respective Regulations of the University of Plovdiv "Paisii Hilendarski".

The candidate in the selection procedure has submitted a sufficient number of scientific papers published after the materials used in the defense of the scientific degree of 'Doctor of Philology' and the academic position of 'Associate Professor'. Her theoretical developments have practical applicability, as some of them are directly oriented to the educational work. The scientific and teaching qualification of Assoc. Prof. Zidarova is undoubted.

The results achieved by the candidate in her teaching and research activities fully comply with the specific requirements of the Faculty of Philology adopted in connection with the PU Regulations for application of DASRBA.

Having acquainted myself with the materials and scientific works presented in this selection procedure, and having analyzed their significance and the research and applied research contributions thereof, I deem it reasonable to give them positive evaluation and recommend to the Scientific Jury to prepare a Proposal to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Philology for the election of Assoc. Prof. Zidarova to the academic position of 'Professor' at the University of Plovdiv "P. Hilendarski", in professional field 2.1 Philology (Bulgarian language, Contemporary Bulgarian Language (Lexicology)).

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Peer Reviewer: Professor Petya Osenova, PhD
(academic position degree name surname)