

REVIEW REPORT

by Associate Prof. PhD Boryan Georgiev Yanev
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Regarding a PhD thesis for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree of '**Doctor**'

In the higher education area 2. *Humanitarian Sciences*

Professional Area 2.1 *Philology*

PhD program *Germanic Languages: English Language*

Author: *KORNELIA BORISLAVOVA CHOROLEEVA*

Subject: *Formation of Lexical Blends in English and Bulgarian*

Supervisor: *Assoc. Prof. PhD Snezha Todorova Tsoneva-Mathewson, Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv*

Overview of the presented documents

By order № P-33-4897/08.10.2020 of the Rector of Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv, I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury participating in the defense procedure of a doctoral thesis on the subject “Formation of Lexical Blends in English and Bulgarian”.

The author of the PhD thesis is Kornelia Borislavova Choroleeva, an independent doctoral candidate at the English Philology Department of Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

The set of documents submitted by Kornelia Choroleeva in a printed and an electronic form is in accordance with the requirements in the Rules for Development of the Academic Staff of Plovdiv University and comprises all necessary administrative documents, including a PhD thesis, doctoral dissertation abstract, publications (7 on the subject of the dissertation), reference forms, etc.

I am extremely impressed by the attached by the candidate reference form concerning the corrections made to the PhD thesis following the preliminary discussion of the text as a result of the recommendations of the scientific jury.

Brief autobiographical data concerning the doctoral candidate

The candidate Kornelia Choroleeva is a senior lecturer at *the Department of foreign languages, physical education, and sports* at the University of Food Technologies - Plovdiv. She teaches general and specialized English in the sphere of food science to UFT students majoring in the Technological, Economics, and Technical Faculty. She is also engaged in translation at the UFT as well as for other institutions prior to her UFT employment. She has been a part-time English teacher at the Medical University of Plovdiv and at Plovdiv University. She has two MA degrees – from Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” (obtained in 1999) where she majored in *English Philology* (specializing in the translation of legal, economics, scientific, engineering, socio-political texts, and fiction), and from Central European University in Warsaw, Poland (obtained in 2001) where she majored in *Society and Politics*.

Characteristics and evaluation of the PhD thesis

Having in mind that the candidate does not come from a philology-oriented department, I would like to point out her high linguistic potential which the dissertation demonstrates. It is worth mentioning here that Kornelia Choroleeva possesses very good communicative and organizational skills as a result of many initiatives in which she has participated at both the UFT and Plovdiv University as well as in popular science events. The doctoral candidate is recognizable in the English-speaking philology scientific fora in Bulgaria and abroad. Her scientific activity is extremely satisfactory as regards the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree of ‘doctor’ and, although it is focused on word formation issues, it includes various key aspects of linguistics (e.g.: sublingual problems and scientific methods for that matter), which shows that Choroleeva is a knowledgeable English philologist.

Since I participated actively in the preliminary defense at the extended English Philology Department meeting and discussed with the candidate many details concerning her dissertation, whose final version she corrected extremely well, I would like to omit the very details regarding the structure and contents of the PhD thesis to be publicly defended.

The dissertation is devoted to blend nouns in English and Bulgarian. Therefore, the author analyzes 1833 English constructions and 361 Bulgarian ones. She manages to deal excellently with the problem of the disputable belonging of some shortened constructions to lexical blending and to well substantiate her views on the matter. The empiric material is clearly sub-

divided into groups corresponding to nouns denoting people, concepts of time, phytonyms and zoonyms, realia from the material and the immaterial world, as well as realia related to the sphere of physical and psychical activity. The candidate's bibliographical knowledge is impressive: she uses 250 sources which are well integrated into the research process.

The theoretical and methodological basis of the study are grounded in key research in the sphere of word formation, language contact theory, cognitive linguistics, Conceptual Integration Theory, and construction grammar.

From a theoretical standpoint, the candidate well enough determines the place of lexical blending in linguistics and creates an analytical tool which entirely benefits her own scientific decisions.

Kornelia Choroleeva skillfully analyzes, from a diachronic and a synchronic aspect, the linguistic approaches concerning the analysis of lexical blends as psycholinguistic and cognitive phenomena possessing idiosyncratic morphemic, phonetic, and semantic characteristics by emphasizing their specificities in the marginalization process of grammatical and hypotactic rules. Precisely in this respect, I find one of the greatest merits of the doctoral candidate being her own contribution. This contribution relies on the adequate interpretation of the cognitive prerequisites for the appearance of lexical blends which are based to a large extent on Conceptual Integration Theory, Frame Semantics, and Conceptual Metaphor and Conceptual Metonymy Theory, the latter being especially interesting as regards the way it is applied in the dissertation, i.e. via single-scope networks, double-scope networks, and megablends.

Choroleeva's model visualizing the conceptual integrated networks is also a scientific approach with a peculiar practical significance. On the other hand, the undeniable fact, that different meanings are attributable to different types of conceptual integration, results in a cumulative analytical model where very often a given conceptual entity is linked to another such entity in order to serve as a reference point in the conceptual transfer. This model demonstrates categorically the relevance of the observations and their undeniable integration into the scientific model.

In its totality, the candidate's analysis has many advantages. It not only brings to the fore the influence of English on Bulgarian, lexical interference processes (including morphemic elements), but it also gives information as to the representativeness of the features in the network of all the categories of words under study.

The candidate not only analyzes in depth the empiric material and includes scientific approaches of various types in its demonstration. She also gives very reasonable recommendations in order to correct the analysis of lexical blends both with respect to their word formation characteristics and as regards their functioning as linguo-cultural phenomena.

Scientific contribution and significance of the dissertation in science and practice

The above-mentioned advantages of the presented PhD thesis delineate its significant scientific and scientifically applicable contribution to English-Bulgarian contrastive linguistics. Choroleeva is not satisfied to directly posit a linguistic question, labor-consuming from an analytical point of view, but she also formulates and substantiates hypotheses by means of which she proves the essence and the up-to-date character of the material under study using novel analytical instruments. Choroleeva's research possesses the necessary qualities to be integrated in practice and gives prerequisites for a serious theoretical basis which can be used in future studies in the boundless expanses of word formation.

Assessment of the publications on the subject of the PhD thesis

The number and quality of the presented publications exceed the expectations and the requirements for acquiring the educational and scientific degree of 'doctor'. The contribution and the results obtained which are formulated in these publications are the author's own merit. Naturally, the publications can be found as specific problems in the PhD thesis, which means that the author's interest in the topic is persistent and has solid research foundations.

Kornelia Choroleeva presents seven publications on the subject of the PhD thesis, one of which is co-authored (*FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH ON TELESCOPIC WORD FORMATION FROM THE LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURIES*, in the Scientific Works of the Union of Scientists – Plovdiv, Series A, Public sciences, art and culture, vol. V, ISSN 1311-9400 (Print); 2019, pp. 45-49), but from the content it becomes clear that the leading author is K. Choroleeva.

Apart from the fact that most of the articles are published in the renowned scientific works of Plovdiv University (Philology volumes) as well as in those of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria, I would like to suggest broadening of publication activity, especially in foreign journals and journals with international scientific indexing.

Doctoral dissertation abstract

The doctoral dissertation abstract falls within the required page limit and adequately reflect the contents of the thesis by referring to the major observations and conclusions from the research. The abstract clearly shows the structure of the dissertation and the scientific contribution of the study, which are formulated in such a way that it is evident how Choroleeva adequately evaluates her own work.

Critiques and recommendations

I do not have any substantial critical remarks as regards the final version of the dissertation presented for review. Of course, each dissertation can be improved via recommendations because there is no dissertation which can satisfy everybody's expectations. We should not forget that doctoral students, especially due to their scientific curiosity and their attempts at presenting a perfect text, always try to be maximally informative and are reluctant to part from a word in their thesis because it is the product of long-term studies, thinking, and reading...

Since Kornelia Choroleeva asked me for assistance, I gave her some recommendations as to the structure of the dissertation, the inclusion of certain components in the introductory part, and the shortening of some paragraphs and she took them into account. I am still reluctant to accept the term "lexeme" in some parts of the thesis as well as the usage of the term "suffixoid". Some terms, which were mentioned by other colleagues during the preliminary defense meeting, I regard as not very acceptable (e.g.: *splinter*, *overlap*, *intercalation*, etc.) but having in mind their long-established application in word formation studies I may accept them, especially relative to the fact that the candidate uses them well, without deeming it necessary to seek their contemporary counterparts.

Conclusion

The PhD thesis contains scientific and scientifically applicable results which constitute an original contribution to science and observe all requirements of the Law for the development of academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), the Rules for applying ZRASRB and the corresponding Rules of Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

Everything said up to now in the present review report convinces me to positively evaluate the conducted research presented by the PhD thesis, the doctoral dissertation abstract, the obtained results and scientific contribution, having in mind my own personal impressions from the candidate as well (as a result of consultation, participation in her preliminary defense, etc.).

Therefore, I encourage the honorable members of the scientific jury to award the educational and scientific degree of ‘doctor’ to Kornelia Borislavova Choroleeva in the higher education area 2. *Humanitarian sciences*, professional area 2.1. *Philology*, PhD program *Germanic languages: English language*.

October 11th 2020

Reviewer:

/Assoc. Prof. PhD Boryan Georgiev Yanev/