

## REVIEW

by Dr. Petya Nacheva Osenova, Professor at the St. Kl. Ohridski University of Sofia  
of the materials submitted for participation in the competition  
for the academic position of '**professor**'  
**at the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv**  
in higher education field: 2. Humanities  
professional field: 2. 1. Philology  
(Bulgarian Language (Contemporary Bulgarian Language))

Associate Professor Konstantin Ivanov Kutsarov from the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv participated as candidate in the competition for the academic position of 'Professor', promulgated in State Gazette, issue 96/17.11.2023 and on the website of the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv for the needs of the Department of *Bulgarian Language* at the Faculty of Philology.

### 1. General presentation of materials

By means of Order No. ПД-21-384 of 16.02.2024 of the Rector of the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv, I was appointed as member of the scientific jury of the competition for the academic position of 'Professor' at the University of Plovdiv in higher education field 2. Humanities, professional field 2.1. Philology (Bulgarian Language (Contemporary Bulgarian Language)), announced for the needs of the Department of *Bulgarian Language* at the Faculty of Philology.

Only **one candidate** submitted documents for participation in the announced competition:

Assoc. Prof. Konstantin Ivanov Kutsarov, Doctor of Philology

The set of materials submitted by Assoc. Prof. Konstantin Ivanov Kutsarov, Doctor of Philology, complies with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the University of Plovdiv and includes all necessary documents.

The candidate submitted a list of the following publications: 4 monographs, 13 applied science publications, 2 thesis abstracts, 45 publications in Bulgaria and abroad, one review.

In the competition Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov participated with the following publications: 3 monographs and 3 articles.

Four scientific works (1 monograph and 3 articles) were accepted for review. Two monographs related to previous procedures for the candidate's defence of *PhD* and *Doctor of Sciences* dissertations were not reviewed.

A reference to the minimum national requirements reveals that the candidate fully meets all requirements for the post of professor.

## **2. Brief biographical data**

Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov graduated in Bulgarian philology in 1993 at the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv. In 2000 he was awarded the degree of Doctor of Philology (Modern Bulgarian Language - Morphology). In 2010 he was appointed Associate Professor of Modern Bulgarian Language at the Department of Bulgarian Language. In 2019 he obtained the scientific degree of Doctor of Sciences in Philology.

Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov also has extensive administrative experience. From 2015 to 2019, he held the position of Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Philology, and since 2019 he is the Dean of the same Faculty. In addition, he heads the Department of Bulgarian Language since 2023.

The candidate teaches courses related to the modern Bulgarian language.

## **3. General description of the candidate's activities**

In addition to being an excellent scholar and administrator, Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov is a lecturer with many years of experience. It is noteworthy that the candidate also has professional experience in the field of testology - he has authored or co-authored a number of textbooks on language culture and Bulgarian language, as well as a textbook on Bulgarian language for foreign doctors.

The quality and topics of the reviewed scientific publications demonstrate that Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov is an extremely productive and serious scholar. His pedagogically oriented publications, mentioned above, are proof of the candidate's educational activity in the field of Bulgarian language for students and prospective students.

The scientific contributions of Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov's related to the procedure are mainly focused on morphology, but not as an isolated linguistic level, but in close connection with grammar.

In summary, and from my point of view, the contributions of the reviewed publications are as follows: a) theoretical analysis of a little studied phenomenon in the Bulgarian language, namely the vocative. The candidate introduces the category of ‘Appellativity’ within which the vocative operates. After the loss of the case system of names in the Bulgarian language, the vocative has remained somewhat marginalized in the field of morphological and morphosyntactic phenomena in the Bulgarian language. Therefore, I consider this contribution to be extremely valuable for Bulgarian linguistic science (the monograph); b) revision of the doctrine of the parts of speech (the three attached articles). Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov has long focused his attention on problematic issues in morphology and has always offered his own original and well-argued approach. Thus, in these works he has revised the class of numerals, applying a similar approach to that for pronouns. As a result, this class is divided into three subtypes according to their function: numerals, nouns and adjectives. In his article on Scherba's conception of word classes in Russian, the candidate presents basic starting points for the application of a new approach. Although he considers the criteria set out in Scherba's works to be appropriate, Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov does not spare his critical remarks on their inconsistent application. Related to this article is the last publication, submitted for the procedure, namely on the representation of parts of speech (word classes) in the Academic Grammar of the Russian Language of 1982. The candidate focuses especially on the approaches adopted in this grammar, which differ from traditional views. This shows the flexibility of Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov's approach to the modelling of linguistic phenomena – a very important quality for a researcher in the modern world of rapidly developing sciences, languages and information technologies.

Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov has presented 13 citations of his works, which are quite sufficient and even exceed the citation indicators in NACID for the post of professor. This shows that the candidate's scientific works are extremely well accepted by the Bulgarian scientific community and therefore contribute to the development of modern scientific ideas.

Since, as part of the procedure, the candidate has presented the monograph *Kutsarov, Konstantin: Theoretical Aspects of the Vocative Form. The morphological category of appellativity. Plovdiv: Paisii Hilendarski University Press, 2024, p. 137. ISBN 978-619-202-931-9*, I will pay more detailed attention to it.

The book consists of an introduction, four chapters, conclusion, bibliography and list of excerpted sources. The bibliography includes over 70 titles and the excerpted sources are in the excess of 25. In the **Introduction** the candidate presents his motivation for choosing the topic

as well as the tasks he has set himself. The aim of the thesis is to present the vocative as an independent morphological category and as a non-case grammeme. The author has also briefly summarized the contents of the individual chapters.

**Chapter One**, "The Vocative Forms in the Old and Middle Bulgarian Language Period", traces the development of these forms in the above periods. Here Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov confirms his position that nouns are not marked with vocativity, but there is, instead, a certain neutralization in place, where the less marked form (nominative, common form) is used instead of the more marked one (vocative) within the same morphological category. The tendencies towards analyticism from the Old Bulgarian period to the Middle Bulgarian period are reflected, and the peculiarities of the vocative are discussed. The author concludes that the vocative forms are preserved to some extent, but that their function and form are subject to change. A very important finding is that the vocative forms follow their own line of development, which is not synchronous with the decay of the case system. That is why Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov believes that "grammaticalized vocativity is not part of the nature of the grammatical category of case" (p. 16). The author also makes the interesting assumption that because of the use of the vowels O, E, and U in the vocative neuter gender, there are no special endings for this category.

**Chapter Two**, "Presentation of Bulgarian Vocative Forms in Grammars from the Revival Period," continues with the diachronic look into the conjugative form in Bulgarian. The presentation of the plural forms in the grammars of N. Rilski, Y. Venelin, N. Bozveli and E. Vaskidovich, Hr. Pavlovich, Iv. Bogorov, E. Riggs, Y. Gruev, T. Hrulev, G. Mirkovich, D. Manchov, S. Radulov, D. Voynikov, Iv. Momchilov, N. Parvanov, etc. is discussed in detail. The candidate finds evidence of the distinctness of the vocative form from the case in some of these grammars, while others apply the traditional approach in which the vocative form is a case form.

**Chapter Three**, "Vocative Forms in New Bulgarian Systematic Grammars and in Some Monographic Studies," goes on to present, by way of critical analysis, the views on vocative forms in more recent times. Among the works reviewed are those of P. Kalkandzhiev, St. Mladenov, St. Popvasilev, N. Kostov, A. Teodorov-Balan, D. Popov, L. Andreychin, K. Popov, K. Mirchev, Iv. Duridanov, Iv. Lekov, St. Stoyanov, Sv. Ivanchev, Y. Maslov, R. Nitsolova, P. Pashov, St. Georgiev, Hr. Parvev, M. Yanakiev, I. Garavalova, Iv. Kutsarov, etc. For example, K. Popov considers the vocative form as a means of address, not as a syntactic form (p. 85).

**Chapter Four** “Categorial status of the vocative form. The morphological category of appellativity” contains Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov’s theories on the vocative forms in the Bulgarian language. At first glance, it seems that the monograph comprises three chapters with a literature review and only one theoretical chapter, but in fact the candidate presents a critical analysis in all chapters of the book, presenting arguments in favour of his view or lack thereof. Moreover, throughout the text, the analysis of the vocative is closely related to the categories of declension and case, in order to distinguish the vocative from the case.

In this chapter, Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov draws the following conclusions: the vocative continues to be a functioning grammeme in modern Bulgarian; the vocative has a non-case character and should therefore be removed from the category of case.

The candidate repeatedly stresses that it is I. Garavalova that first distinguishes the vocative as a separate grammatical category (p. 112). Building on existing notions, he proposes introduction of a category of ‘appellativity’ in which two grammemes – non-vocativity and vocativity – are to be formally and semantically contrasted. The second grammeme is marked. The similarity of Appellativity with the Imperative is noted, taking into account the role of Bulgarian linguists who have registered this proximity (such as Kr. Chakurova, for example). Thus, the vocative is presented as a purely morphological category, not a syntactically oriented one, as is the case with the case form. At the same time, the candidate also comments on the syntactic behaviour of the vocative within the sentence, especially in relation to imperative, desiderative and hortatory clauses. Although the strong reduction of the vocative is duly noted, Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov describes modern forms, giving also their competing common forms. A very important remark is that “one should not equate the non-vocative grammeme with the nominative grammeme (nominative case)”, since these are grammemes of two different categories. The relations of this category to other categories such as number, definiteness/ indefiniteness have also been examined. The category is analysed for both nouns and adjectives.

The **Conclusion** summarizes the candidate's theories presented in more detail in the monograph. The author concludes that, although the vocative is a living category, it is quite reduced formally due to the specifics of its diachronic development. Interestingly, the vocativity has always been considered together with cases, and therefore has often been regarded as part of this category.

#### **4. Evaluation of the candidate's personal contribution**

All publications submitted for review reflect the personal contribution of Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov. The submitted publications are solely and exclusively authored by the candidate. The inventory of contributions is correct and fully corresponds to the submitted scientific output.

#### **4. Critical observations and recommendations**

My recommendations are rather in the direction of the future work of the candidate. It would be interesting to explore the category of Appellativity in a contrastive context with the same category in other languages. Also, the observations made could be extended to the syntactic and pragmatic behaviour of the vocative. In my 2002 co-authored article “Bulgarian Vocative within HPSG framework<sup>1</sup>”, I have tried to delineate the relationship between the vocative and the sentence. I then demonstrate that the vocative is a syntactic and pragmatic adjunct that either has only an appellative function to the whole utterance, or additionally has referential relations with parts of the sentence - subject, attribute, etc. But the question is left open as to the modelling of general forms with a vocative function. I think that the research of Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov contributes to the illumination of the vocative at all linguistic levels in their interrelation.

#### **6. Personal impressions**

I know Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov as an excellent morphologist and grammarian with clear positions on a number of linguistic issues. His work is contributory and thorough. I also know him as an excellent administrator and lecturer at the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv. We have sat on the jury in the linguistics section of the Annual Conference for undergraduate and postgraduate students in Plovdiv. Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov invariably applies his professional attitude to science, teaching and administration.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The documents and materials presented by Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov meet all the requirements of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA), the Rules for the Implementation of DASRBA and the relevant Regulations of the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

The candidate in the competition has submitted a sufficient number of scientific works for the academic position of “Professor”. His theoretical works have practical applicability and some

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/2588381\\_Bulgarian\\_Vocative\\_within\\_HPSG\\_framework#fullTextFileContent](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/2588381_Bulgarian_Vocative_within_HPSG_framework#fullTextFileContent)

of them are directly oriented to academic work. The scientific and teaching qualifications of Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov are unquestionable.

The achievements of the candidate in his teaching and research activities fully comply with the specific requirements of the Faculty of Philology, adopted as part of the Regulations of the PU in application of DASRBA.

Following examination of the materials and scientific works presented in the competition, analysis of their significance and of the scientific, scientific-applied and applied contributions contained in them, I believe I am justified in giving my positive assessment and recommending to the Scientific Jury to elect Assoc. Prof. Kutsarov to the academic position of ‘Professor’ at the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv in professional field 2.1 Philology (Bulgarian Language (Contemporary Bulgarian Language)).

09.04.2024

Reviewed by: Prof. Petya Osenova, PhD  
(academic position, name and surname)