

REVIEW

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for a dissertation for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree “**doctor**”

in the field of higher education 2. *Humanities*

Professional direction 2.1. *Philology*

doctoral program *Modern Bulgarian Language*

Author: *Diana Georgieva Markova*

Topic: “Semantics and pragmatics of the so-called present passive participle in modern Bulgarian”

Research supervisor: *Prof. Dr. Krasimira Chakarova, University of Plovdiv “P. Hilendarski”*

1. General description of the presented materials

By order No. RD-21-681 dated 25.03.2024 of the Rector of Plovdiv University “Paisiy Hilendarski” (PU), I was appointed as a member of the scientific committee responsible for the external defense procedure of the doctoral dissertation “Semantics and pragmatics of the so-called present passive participle in the modern Bulgarian language” for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree “doctor” in the field of higher education 2. Humanities, professional direction 2.1. *Philology*, doctoral program “Modern Bulgarian Language”. The author of the dissertation is Diana Georgieva Markova – a full-time doctoral (PhD) student at the Department of the Bulgarian Language of PU, with scientific supervisor Prof. Dr. Krasimira Chakarova from Plovdiv University “Paisiy Hilendarski”.

The submitted documents presented by Diana Markova are in accordance with Art. 36 (1) of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of PU, and include the following:

- request to the Rector of PU to authorize the procedure for the defense of a dissertation work;
- CV in European format;
- protocol from the Departmental Council’s meeting reporting the readiness to open the procedure and preliminary discussion of the dissertation and opinion from the scientific supervisor;
- dissertation;
- abstract;
- list of scientific publications on the topic of the dissertation;
- copies of the scientific publications;
- declaration of originality and authenticity of the attached documents.
- certificate of fulfillment of the minimum national requirements;
- statement by Prof. T. Rabovyanova ;
- six certificates.

The doctoral student has attached 1 monograph (dissertation) and 5 articles.

2. Brief biographical data of the PhD student

Diana Markova graduated from the “Ivan Vazov” Language High School in the city of Plovdiv in 2014. In 2018, she graduated with a bachelor's degree in “Bulgarian Philology” from PU, and in 2019 she obtained a master's degree in the Current Bulgarian Studies Program at the same university. From 01.03.2020 to 01.03.2023 she was a full-time doctoral (PhD) student in the Department of Bulgarian Language at PU. She was proofreader and editor at Hermes Publishing House for one year, then she was teacher at “Educational Technologies” - Plovdiv. In the period September 2021 – April 2023, she was a part-time lecturer in Bulgarian as a foreign language at the Medical University – Plovdiv. From 04.03.2023 until today, she is a full-time lecturer in Bulgarian as a foreign language at the Medical University in Plovdiv. She led seminars on the morphology of Modern Bulgarian for students majoring in “Bulgarian and Russian”.

3. Topicality and relevance of the dissertation and appropriateness of the set goals and tasks

Although the subject of the dissertation – the so-called present passive participle, has been discussed more than once in Bulgarian linguistics, I think that the topic of its semantics and pragmatic aspects is suitable for a dissertation – there are differences in the opinions of the various authors, there is a modern dynamic in this linguistic unit, and a separate dissertation work has not been devoted to its problems so far. In addition, this linguistic item continues to be relevant, since the diversity of opinions gives rise to a discussion that has not stopped in Bulgarian linguistics. I believe that it is appropriate to write a dissertation on this topic, as it will cover all aspects of the semantics, formation and pragmatic aspects of the so-called present active participle in the Bulgarian language.

The goals and tasks are completely expedient and give the doctoral (PhD) student the opportunity to thoroughly and comprehensively develop the subject of the dissertation. These goals and objectives are clearly stated in the dissertation and have been achieved.

4. Demonstrated knowledge

In her dissertation, Diana Markova has shown excellent knowledge of the issues related to the present active participle from the Old Bulgarian period to the present day. In my opinion, a necessary part of the dissertation is the theoretical review of studies on the grammatical status, forms and uses of the etymological present passive participle from the National Revival period to the present day. Such a chapter should present the theoretical studies up to now which serve as the basis for the development of the author's own solutions. The excellent knowledge of previous research, adequate citation and comparison of different points of view are evident in the dissertation. The author knows in detail a wide range of modern studies related to the subject of the dissertation. D. Markova not only presents them, but also expressing critical evaluation in the argumentation of her own opinion.

5. Research methodology

Already in the introductory part of her dissertation, Diana Markova indicates the research methods she uses in her study: method of theoretical generalization, method of description and explanation, comparative-historical method, contrastive method, excerption method and statistical method. In my opinion, this is a very good combination of methods, which has allowed the doctoral (PhD) student to thoroughly and comprehensively investigate the present passive participle from Old Bulgarian to the modern Bulgarian language.

6. Characterization and evaluation of the dissertation

The mandatory elements of a dissertation, presenting the object and topic of the research and its goals, tasks and methods, are available and sufficiently developed in the work of Diana Markova. A more detailed presentation of the empirical material, analyzed by the author, would have been an improvement. The style of the work is suitable for scientific linguistic research. The different parts of the dissertation are very well structured, the necessary connections between them have been made.

In my opinion the doctoral student has made the completely justified decision to start the dissertation with a chapter on the Bulgarian participial system, because in Old Bulgarian the present passive participle was a systemic linguistic unit, as distinct from, in my view, the situation in Present-Day Bulgarian. Important parts of this First Chapter are the clarification of the meaning, formation, use and development of the Old Bulgarian present passive participle. I also find the part that traces the place of the present passive participle throughout the National Revival period to be essential. With this chapter, the dissertation is enriched with yet another aspect – the diachronic one. An excellent knowledge of publications on the present passive participle in diachronic and synchronic aspects is demonstrated, without neglecting the author's own perspective.

I share Markova's view that the deverbatives in *-m/-em* and the adjectives in *-telen* are not the same word-formation patterns. I do not support the author's view that these are participial forms, since they do not have a systematic character and are not formed from every transitive verb (with some semantic restrictions). What is important for me, however, is the fact that Markova offers arguments to defend her position. And this is essential in a scientific work – the author clarifies her opinion and offers the necessary arguments in support of it.

I consider the Third Chapter to be central in the dissertation because it is dedicated to the formal-semantic and functional features of the deverbatives in *-m/-em* today. I approve of the choice of the author to use the term *deverbatives in -m/-em* instead of the term *present passive participle*, because, apart from the remnants of the older state of our language, when the present passive participle was a systematic linguistic element, today these forms represent, in my view, a word-formative (derivational) phenomenon that is limited mostly to legal, medical and economic discourse. Another term that the author uses as a synonym is *verb formations formed with the suffix -m*, but it is rather descriptive and therefore inconvenient. D. Markova correctly indicates the main semantic features of the so-called present passive participle when it is a systemic element – *passivity* and *modality*. The dissertation works with 1774 deverbatives in *-m*, which is a significant database, the likes of which I have not known so far.

The formation of the so-called present passive participle in the various conjugations is explored in detail, and this is the most thorough analysis I have seen so far. A number of graphs are presented that illustrate and compare the different formation patterns. Attention has been paid to the aspect characteristic of the verb from which the present passive participle is formed. D. Markova offers comments on her statistical data for imperfective forms, perfective forms and iteratives with a predominance of the latter group. The author has also indicated some regularities and tendencies in these formations. The positive or negative polarity characteristic of these deverbatives is also taken into account, because there is a considerable number of negative forms. Attention was also paid to the formation of abstract nouns from the so-called present active participles. After the detailed examination of the form-formation, Markova proceeds to clarify the semantic characteristics of the present passive participle. It is correctly stated that these forms contain the semantic features of *passivity* and *possibility* (1668 – 94%) or *passivity* only (52 – 3%), but the question is to what extent the forms are grammaticalized and have acquired a systematic character. The cases in which *passivity* is not expressed are not ignored either, the author classifies them as exceptions, e.g. *(not)dependent*, *(not)rustable*, etc. I accept the semantic criterion classification of deverbatives of *-m/-em*.

In her argumentation, D. Markova introduces several criteria for distinguishing the present passive participles from all deverbatives with the suffix *-m/-em* including adjectives. I accept the generalization formula of the meaning of these deverbatives as valid because it contains both *passivity* and *possibility*. As to the criteria for distinguishing the present passive participles from adjectives with the same formative structure, neither the definite article nor the degree of comparison category can be accepted. They are not reliable criteria: our research with Ass. Prof. St. Fetvadzhieva has shown numerous cases of comparatives of various types of participles, including past imperfect ones. The author is well acquainted with the subtleties in these uses. D. Markova's comments on the comparison of present passive participles with other types of participles also seem important from my point of view, because in this way arguments are provided for the author's view that these forms are participles and not adjectives after all. The cases of replacement of the so-called present passive participle with the reflexive form of the present active participle or with the past passive participle of an iterative verb are also important.

I think that the dissertation is enriched by the comparative aspect with English, which is a good decision on the part of the author and her scientific supervisor. Another contribution is the list compiled by the author of the so-called present passive participles from the *Official Spelling Dictionary of the Bulgarian language. Verbs*, because such a list is offered for the first time.

The author is familiar with Angel Angelov's work *The Language of Themis* and special attention is paid to the so-called present passive participle in legal texts. This enriches the author's and Dikova's observations about deverbatives in legal texts with the addition of yet another perspective. The claim about the influence of the English word-formation model with *-able* is commented on in greater depth. I am not convinced that the increasing use of the so-called present passive participles in legal texts, especially in legislative ones, is the result of a direct influence of the English language, it is more likely due to compliance with international standards. In her dissertation, D. Markova has made a comparison between forms in *-able/-ible* in English literary

texts, and their translation into Bulgarian. In only 38% of the cases the translation of these English forms is with the so-called present passive participle. This fact, in my opinion, indicates that it cannot be stated with certainty that there is an influence of English on Bulgarian, at least as far as literary texts are concerned. The author of the dissertation has also supplied the results of the reverse translation – from Bulgarian into English, and these results indicate that a large part of the Bulgarian so-called present passive participles correspond to English forms with *-able/-ible*. This proves functional equivalence, as D. Murkova correctly points out, but not cross-linguistic influence.

An essential part of Chapter III, which directly realizes some of the objectives of the dissertation work, is the one which deals with the functions in the sentence of the so-called present active participles: modifier (attributive function both in pre-position and parenthetical), and as subject complement (in my view the latter use proves that this is not a participial form), also adverbial use, and substantivized uses.

Significant for the realization of the tasks of the dissertation are the analyses of uses in various functional styles of Present-Day Bulgarian, which prove the thesis that the so-called present passive participles are not only found as terms or terminological phrases in legal, medical and economic texts, but that they are used in all functional styles. I found the examples from the so-called secondary orality (informal texts similar to oral speech that are written in the Internet) particularly interesting.

The fourth chapter, dedicated to the pragmatic features of the so-called present passive participles, is also an inseparable part of the realization of the goals of the dissertation work, because this aspect is also part of the topic of the dissertation as stated in its title. I consider the survey, which aims to present the linguistic attitudes of native speakers of Present-Day Bulgarian to the present passive participle, to be particularly important. In our linguistic research, the emphasis is almost always on the speaker. In fact the recipient is no less important, because it is for him/her that the speaker creates the utterance. This part of the dissertation fits into a new field of sociolinguistics and linguistics in general, which I named perceptual (socio)linguistics and to which I have devoted two monographs. It is interesting that not in all cases the preferences of the respondents are towards sentences with the so-called present passive participle, e.g. for *Вчера си взех телефон със сменяема батерия*, slightly more respondents preferred *Вчера си взех телефон с батерия, която може да се сменя*. And this is a proof that the economy principle in linguistic is not always in force. Also important are the questions that seek whether, according to native speakers, there is a difference between the semantics of the so-called present active participle and past passive participle. According to the survey results this difference is a fact. I would like to emphasize the importance of the questions in which a semantic difference between the so-called present passive participle and the reflexive forms of the present active participle is sought. Again, there is a preponderance of respondents who find a difference in meaning, although the percentage is not as high as in the comparison with the past participle. A felicitous discovery by the author (and her scientific supervisor) are the sentences with a positive form and negation of the negative form (*са обратими – не са необратими - they are reversible - not irreversible*). A total of 65% of the respondents found these uses to be identical, and 35% found a difference in

meaning. The comments on this question are comprehensive and well-grounded. There are also four questions which are devoted to a comparison between the deverbatives in *-m/-em* and the deverbal adjectives with the formants *-telen* and *-liv*, in order to verify the thesis of M. Choroleeva, Iv. Gugulanova and H. Walter, that deverbatives with *-m/-em* belong to the same word-forming type as the verbal adjectives with the formants *-telen*, *-liv*, *-iv*, *-chiv*, *-av*. As already pointed out, the author does not support this thesis. A very high percentage of respondents found a difference in the semantics of deverbatives with *-m/-em* and the adjectives in question, and this supports the opinion of the doctoral (PhD) student. Based on the results of the survey and their thorough analysis, D. Markova offers her reasonable conclusions.

The conclusion correctly represents the achievements of the dissertation and states the most important conclusions reached by Diana Murkova in her study of the diachronic and synchronic aspects of the so-called present passive participle.

7. Contributions and significance of the dissertation for the advancement of science and its application in practice

- The semantics, word-formation and pragmatic aspects of the so-called present passive participle are presented in a dissertation for the first time.

- The combination of the diachronic and the synchronic approach has enabled a comprehensive study of the development of the so-called present passive participle in the Bulgarian language.

- Connections are established and the differences in the meaning, formation and the uses of the Old Bulgarian present passive participle and the so-called present passive participle in Present-Day Bulgarian are examined in detail. The National Revival period has received its due attention.

- The author's own theoretical position about the grammatical status of the present passive participle in Present-Day Bulgarian is presented and defended with the necessary argumentation.

- The dissertation offers what to the best of my knowledge is the most detailed study of the formation of the deverbatives it examines in Modern Bulgarian. Generalizations have been reached and regularities established related to the verb aspect of the so-called present passive participles.

- Criteria for distinguishing the present passive participles from all deverbatives with the suffix *-m/-em*, including adjectives, are proposed and applied in the dissertation.

- The comparison between the Bulgarian present passive participles and the English formations with the suffix *-able* is another original contribution of the author.

- In my opinion, the dissertation contains the most detailed study of the functional features of the so-called present passive participle. Its uses in all functional styles are proved and analyzed.

- The study of the pragmatic features of the so-called present active participles is also one of the contributions of the author.

- The comments from the survey showing the attitudes of native speakers of Present-Day Bulgarian towards the present passive participle are also among the contributions of this study.

8. Evaluation of publications on the dissertation work

The author has five publications on the subject of the dissertation. They are devoted to central topics in the dissertation: the formants of the so-called present passive participle in Present-Day Bulgarian; the main periods in the study of this participle in the Bulgarian linguistic tradition from the National Revival period to the middle of the 20th century; the scientific studies of this participle after the spelling reform from 1945 to the present day; the historical development of the present passive participle; functional-semantic parallels between the English adjectives in *-able -ible* and the so-called present passive participles in Present-Day Bulgarian. The publications have appeared in prestigious edited collections of articles and periodicals, which gave a wider circle of scholars and young researchers the opportunity to become familiar with Diana Markova's views on the so-called present passive participle.

9. Personal participation of the doctoral student

I believe that the dissertation is Diana Markova's original work. The contributions and results offered in the dissertation are her personal achievement. I would like to emphasize the excellent cooperation between the Ph.D. student and her supervisor, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Krasimira Chakarova, who very appropriately guided D. Markova in her research.

10. Abstract

In my opinion, the abstract adequately presents the content, results and achievements of the dissertation work. Its quality is excellent. It completely meets the requirements of the relevant regulations.

11. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no further recommendations.

12. Personal impressions

I have known Diana Markova as a student in the master's program "Current Bulgarian Studies" at PU where I taught the course in sociolinguistics. During the course and at the final examinations D. Markova made an impression on me with her profound linguistic knowledge, the ability to conduct sociolinguistic research, to make comments on the results and draw conclusions. I have also listened to her presentations at conferences, where I was impressed by the clarity of her own scientific theses, their argumentation and skillful summaries. I think that Diana Markova is a fully formed young scientist.

13. Recommendations for future use of the dissertation's contributions and results

I would recommend that D. Markova should use the results of her work in teaching Bulgarian as a foreign language. In her work with foreign learners of Bulgarian, the comparisons of the so-called present passive participle in the Bulgarian language and the English adjectives in *-able* would be especially useful.

CONCLUSION

The dissertation *contains theoretical and applied results, which represent an original contribution to science* and **meet all the** requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of ZRASRB and the relevant Regulations of PU “Paisiy Hilendarski”.

The dissertation shows that the doctoral (PhD) student Diana Georgieva Markova **has** in-depth theoretical knowledge and professional skills in the scientific field 2.1. Philology, **demonstrating** qualities and skills for independently conducting scientific research.

Due to the above, I confidently give my *positive assessment* of the conducted research, presented in the above-reviewed dissertation, abstract, the achieved results and contributions, and *offer to the honorable scientific committee to award the educational and scientific degree “doctor”* to Diana Georgieva Markova in the field of higher education: 2. Humanities, professional direction 2.1. *Philology*, doctoral program “Modern Bulgarian Language”.

30.04.2024

Reviewer:

(signature)

Prof. Krasimira Slavcheva Aleksova D. Sc.