

REVIEW

by Prof. Dr. Ruska Sabeva Stancheva, Bulgarian Language Institute of the BAS
on a dissertation for the award of ONS „doctor“ in: field of higher education
2. Humanities Professional direction 2.1 Philology: doctoral program „Bulgarian language“ – Syntax

Author: Finka Ivanova Sirakova

Topic: “Phrases with and without a preposition in Bulgarian – linguistic aspects”

Scientific supervisor: Prof. Dr. Yovka Tisheva, Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohrid“

1. General description of the presented materials

By order № PD-38-459 of 19.07. 2024 of the Rector of Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski“ (SU) I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury for providing a procedure for the defense of a dissertation on the following topic “Phrases with and without a preposition in Bulgarian - linguistic aspects” for the acquisition of educational and scientific degree “doctor” in the field of higher education 2. Humanities, Professional direction 2.1 Philology: doctoral program “Bulgarian language” – Syntax. The author of the dissertation work is Finka Ivanova Sirakova – doctoral student in full-time study at the department “Bulgarian language” with supervisor Prof. Dr. Yovka Tisheva from Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”

The set of materials on paper and electronic media presented by Finka Ivanova Sirakova includes the following documents:

- Full text of the dissertation work in a volume of 155 pages with the following structure: introduction, three chapters, conclusion, contributions, bibliography and annexes
- Auto reference in Bulgarian and English
- List of posts and links to them – total 3 (three)
- Current CV on the European model (CV)
- Opinion of 27.06.2024 by Prof. Dr. Yovka Velikova Tisheva in connection with the procedure for preventing plagiarism in dissertation works
- Order № RD-38-459/19.07.2024 to approve the composition of the scientific jury.

From the review of all the mentioned documents, I concluded that they fully comply with the requirements and are according to the rules of the procedure.

2. Brief biographical data about the doctoral student

Doctoral student Finka Ivanova Sirakova graduated successively:

- Master's program „Tourism” at University „Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov”, Burgas city
- Master's program „Bulgarian philology” (translator-editor) at SU „St. Kl. Ohrid“
- Doctorate in professional direction 2.1. Philology, doctoral program „Bulgarian language” – syntax.

Finka Ivanova Sirakova has three publications, as well as teaching and translation work from and into German and Modern Greek, which speaks to her interests in academic work.

3. Actuality of the topic and expediency of the set goals and objectives

The topic of the dissertation is well selected to meet the need to supplement with new knowledge the subject area syntax of the modern Bulgarian – and in particular the knowledge of the competition between phrases with and without a preposition. The author's efforts are aimed at studying the structure of these constructions and at establishing regularities of their use in today's Bulgarian language.

The author states as the aim of her research her intention to present different linguistic aspects of the competing between phrases with and without a preposition (see p. 5 of the autorephere). The emphasis of the work is placed on the analysis of subordination relations a) between the main and subordinate members of the constructions and b) between the ingredients of complex main and subordinate parts. In connection with the stated goal is the research hypothesis of the author. It is concluded in the assumption that certain prerequisites are necessary for the shortening of the propositional component of the composition of the propositional phrase when converting the propositional model into a non-propositional one.

The doctoral student's approach to analyzes is purely descriptive, since the tasks she sets for herself are not related to establishing deviations from the norm, but to highlighting the conditions under which the competition between prepositional and non-prepositional phrases takes place. At the same time, however, the results of the researched material can serve, in my opinion, as a good starting point for the application of the prescriptive approach followed in the codification, insofar as a number of data are involved in the work and for the evaluation of the considered innovation from a normative point of view. That is why I believe that the problem of the dissertation is particularly relevant, and the goals and objectives set to achieve them are in sync.

4. Knowledge of the problem

The text of the dissertation proves that Finka Sirakova has very good knowledge of the problem in Bulgarian linguistics. In her work, various aspects of the description of the prepositional and non-prepositional phrases advocated in Bulgarian linguistic literature since the middle of the last century are highlighted and presented in detail. The competition between prepositional and non-prepositional constructions within the individual phrases: nominal (NP), verb (VP), prepositional (PP), adjective (AP) and adverbial (AdvP) has been analyzed very carefully. A certain merit of work is the attempt to summarize and place in a systematic syntactic framework the observations of the phenomenon under consideration made by a number of Bulgarian authors in the last 50 years, in order to look for a regularity that could explain the competitive realizations of the newer non-preposition model. It is a merit of the work to expand the observations on the replacement of prepositional with non-prepositional constructions in the verbal phrase, except in Bulgarian and in German and modern Greek, in order to highlight both the general and the specifics of the phenomenon in the three languages, and the contexts in which it is observed are outlined very carefully.

5. Research methodology

In line with modern searches in linguistic research, the dissertation seeks to cover the topic through an interdisciplinary approach. Therefore, it also uses a number of approaches indicated by the author of p. 6 - 7 of the dissertation work, among which it is worth highlighting the transformational, structural-typological, distributive and contextual methods. Their successful combination allows to fully cover the empirical material attracted by the author. The applied methods ensure the realization of the set goals, as well as the fulfillment of the tasks that Finka Sirakova has set for herself.

6. Characterization and evaluation of the dissertation work

Finka Sirakova has structured the analyzes in her work into three chapters that follow the problems affected in her. As the dissertation genre suggests, the actual part of the work begins with a review of the theoretical sources on the matter, with a clarification of concepts, with the specifics in defining the concepts with which it is worked. It is noteworthy that the author chose to build her theoretical part only on the review of studies by Bulgarian authors. In my opinion, if the dissertation student decided to publish her work, her work would undoubtedly benefit if she placed the theoretical review in the first chapter in a theoretical context broader than Bulgarian. In my opinion, the work would benefit from this and given the fact that later in chapter 3, material was also attracted for the spread of innovation, shifting propositional from propositional constructions in other languages (German and Modern Greek). That is why I think that expanding the theoretical context would ensure a better balance and connectivity between the individual chapters of the work, while also enriching the bibliography.

The next two chapters (second and third) deal in detail with the selected issues. The second chapter, entitled „Propositional and non-propositional constructions“, is focused on prepositional constructions in the Bulgarian language. The emphasis in it is placed on clarifying the essence of prepositions as a grammatical class of lexemes with a connecting function and their specificity as markers of case relations. A detailed structural characterization of the prepositions is also made, with a special place being devoted to the constituent prepositions, insofar as in the following 3. chapter the dropping of a posterior simple preposition from a compound preposition is analyzed.

The third chapter of the thesis „Trends in the transformation of propositional constructions into propositional“ is predictably the most far-reaching. In it, a detailed analysis of the described innovation is made, mainly within the noun and to a lesser extent the verb phrase.

The observations in this chapter are indicative of Finka Sirakova's analysis skills, of her ability to work with diverse and rich material, of her pursuit of generalizations. The most detailed analysis is the transformation prepositional – prepositional phrase in part III. 1 Prepositional and non-prepositional constructions with a main part of a verb noun. The author quite rightly comes to a number of conclusions regarding the studied transformations: they are typical of institutional texts; they are carried out only if the verbal noun is on -no and that is not articulated; the quantitative criterion is not relevant for omitting the preposition of; in the studied written texts, when using the considered competitive constructions, the prepositional word combinations prevail in a ratio of 1:5.

At the beginning of part II.2 Proposed and unpredicted constructions in the verbal phrase, the author declared that she would consider only prepositional expressions, which were circumstantial explanations. I would briefly recommend that she justify this decision of hers. I think it is necessary to briefly state the reasons why it does not consider one of the vivid manifestations of the innovation elimination of the preposition from a prepositional phrase, such as the omission of the dative preposition of when doubling the complement in the sentence – phenomenon, also well described in the literature of recent decades. In my opinion, the dissertation would benefit if observations on this phenomenon were included as well. They would allow the dissertation to draw a parallel with the cases studied by her along the lines of similarity and difference and would further seal the analyzes made.

Finka Sirakova's observations on the verbal phrase with a subordinate circumstantial explanation allow her to draw important conclusions about the manifestations of transformation as a syntactic technique. The author

points out that the elimination of the preposition, leading to the transformation of the prepositional into a non-prepositional construction, takes place under certain conditions.

I consider particularly apt and contributory part III.3 Trends in the use of prepositional constructions in verbal phrase in German and Modern Greek. From the observations made about the two languages, it can be concluded that the studied innovation in Bulgarian is hardly the result of a poor language culture, but is rather the result of a restructuring taking place within the grammatical system of a number of European languages.

In Part III.4, the author gives a detailed overview of the cases of dropping the preposition within composite prepositions with an adverb and a noun in their composition, pointing out that the phenomenon is observed in cases where the preposition is placed. Based on the observations made, Finka Sirakova comes to the conclusion that dropping the set pretext does not create a communicative conflict. It seems to me that it is necessary, however, to refine its other conclusion – that the final preposition is optional when a noun follows after it. From the cited material, it is evident that the phenomenon is mostly observed in nouns that are nominalized predicates (eg reduction, highlighting, generalization, acquisition, application, need, and sub).

In the last two parts of chapter 3, a summary review of the literature on the functioning of the adjective and adverb in the composition of prepositional and non-prepositional constructions is made.

7. Contributions and relevance of development to science and practice

The undoubted contributions of the dissertation can be attributed to:

- The systematic study of the innovation transformation of prepositional into prepositional constructions in the Bulgarian language.
- The enrichment of knowledge about the grammatical characteristics of supports with explained prepositional constructions.
- The systematization and verification of the conditions for dropping the preposition of.
- Comparisons between data on the studied phenomenon from languages different typologically.
- The enrichment of knowledge about current processes and trends in signifying grammatical information through analytical means (constructions).

8. Assessment of publications on the dissertation work

The publications on the dissertation are sufficient in number and are in publications that will allow the registration of the doctoral student in NACID.

9. Personal participation of the doctoral student

As stated in the entire review, the doctoral student has a clear desire to fully cover the sources, possesses analytical abilities and manages to creatively approach the selected issues. Throughout the dissertation, citations and references are correct.

10. Auto-referral

The abstract correctly conveys the content of the dissertation and can serve as a representative of the main theses and conclusions in it.

11. Critical remarks and recommendations

Apart from the already indicated addition of the theoretical part, I have no other recommendations. The dissertation follows its logic and it is appropriate to comply with this and not with our views on the matter. I have provided some separate purely editorial notes to the author.

12. Personal impressions

I have no personal impressions of the doctoral student.

13. Recommendations for future use of dissertation contributions and results

The results and contributions of the study can serve as a starting point for further research by the author in relation to the use of prepositions, as well as in the field of other transformations characteristic of today's Bulgarian language.

14. CONCLUSION

I believe that the dissertation work "Phrases with and without a preposition in Bulgarian – linguistic aspects", written by Finka Ivanova Sirakova contains scientific and scientific-applied results that represent author's contribution and meet all the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), as well as the Regulations for the Implementation of ZRASRB. The dissertation shows that the doctoral student Finka Ivanova Sirakova has in-depth knowledge and skills in scientific specialty 2.1 Philology "Bulgarian language" (Syntax), demonstrating qualities and skills for independent scientific research. In view of the above, I confidently give my positive assessment of the conducted research, presented by the thesis, self-referral, achieved results and contributions reviewed above, and I propose to the honorable scientific jury to award the educational and scientific degree "doctor" to Finka Sirakova in the field of higher education: 2. Humanities, professional direction 2.1 Philology, doctoral program "Bulgarian language" – Syntax.

Reviewer:

(Prof. Dr. Ruska Stancheva)

10.10. 2024