REVIEW

by prof. Dr. Rumyana Balinova Todorova,
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academic field 2.1. Philology

for awarding the academic degree of "habilitated doctor of philosophy",
Department of Foreign Languages and Cultures,
for the needs of New Bulgarian University,
in the field of higher education 2. Humanities,
academic field 2.1. Philology,
doctor habil's programme Theory and Practice of Translation,
candidate: assoc. prof. Dr. Boris Anatolievich Naimushin,
Department of Foreign Languages and Cultures, NBU

1. Data analyzed in relation to the compliance of the application with the minimum and additional requirements for awarding the academic degree of "habilitated doctor of philosophy"

The candidate in the procedure, assoc. prof. Dr. Boris Anatolievich Naimushin, has submitted all documents required for awarding the academic degree of "habilitated doctor of philosophy" certifying the compliance of his application with the requirements of the Law about Scientific Degrees and Titles, as well as the Rules of Procedures of the New Bulgarian University. The submitted documents confirm the correctness of the aggregated indicators of the academic data for his research, teaching and expert work, which correspond to the minimum national requirements under bl. 2b, para 2 and 3 of the ODARB, as well as to the additional requirements of the NBU.

2. Presentation of the candidate

As can be seen from the documentation presented for the procedure, assoc. prof. Dr. Boris Naimushin, has a rich academic and professional career, which can be defined as a process of a continuous educational and training development and upgrading, beginning with his education in the MA programme in the field of Bulgarian Studies with second major English Studies at SU (1984-1989), his PhD degree (1997), the MA programme in Hebraic Studies (2002), the MA programme in Conference Interpreting at the School in Interpreting at the Faculty of Translation and Interpretation of the University of Geneva (Switzerland), related to methods of teaching interpreting (2009), up to his present-day position of an associate professor in Theory and Practice

of Translation (since 2009 until now) at the Department of Foreign Languages and Cultures, New Bulgarian University. All this is a process of connecting his academic career with the teaching practice in the field of theory and practice of translation to university students. The candidate's professional development is due to his participation in various trainings, study visits to foreign universities as well as conducting different courses and lectures there.

All those years he has had classes related to the theory and practice of translation, and he is also a very active interpreter. He was an academic consultant of two PhD students, who had defended their theses successfully. All this speaks a lot about his good preparation in the field of English Studies, more specifically linguistics, theory of translation, cultural studies, etc. Some of his publications are in the above-mentioned fields. The candidate's academic interests are in the field of theory and practice of translation, text linguistics, consecutive and simultaneous interpreting, general and comparative linguistics, sociolinguistics, cultural studies and a lot more directly related to his teaching and academic activities.

Assoc. prof. Dr. Naimushin has publications in national and international journals listed in his documentation. He is the editor-in-chief of the NBU *Journal of English Studies*. He is also a member of the Union of Translators in Bulgaria and of the European Society for Translation Studies.

The candidate's research and publication activities are really impressive. For the current procedure assoc. prof. Dr. Boris Naimushin has presented a list of publications, which are enough for awarding the academic degree of "habilitated doctor of philosophy" to him according to the requirements of the procedure. His publications are as follows: on the topic of his dissertation – 5 in national and international academic editions, refereed and indexed in world famous data bases, in non-refereed academic editions with academic reviewing – 7, in co-authorship – 5, a PhD thesis for acquiring the academic and educational degree of "doctor of philosophy", defended successfully, papers presented at conferences – 11, and a short lecture course.

Boris Naimushin has 18 citations pointed out in the respective reference, 5 – in national and international academic editions, refereed and indexed in world famous data bases, 2 – in books of collected papers with academic reviewing, 5 – in non-refereed academic editions with academic reviewing, pointed out in the documentation.

His dissertation *Tendences and Personalities in the Diplomatic Interpreting in Bulgaria for the Period 1944-1974 and Some Juxtapositions with the USSR, USA, Romania, Hungary and Cuba*

(in Bulgarian), presented for the procedure is created by him personally and does not repeat in any way the topic and the content of his PhD thesis. It is a natural continuation of some of his previous studies on various topics and aspects of translation. It shows his knowledgeability when applying quite successfully some of the researchers' viewpoints in his analysis as well as presenting his own interpretations. The information is quite detailed and exhaustive as it relies on the applicability of his knowledge about the discussed issues and the used literature in depth. The thesis definitely makes an attempt to find answers to a number of questions presented in more than one way.

The main text consists of 292 pages, while his dissertation is 314, which includes a list of archive materials from the State Archive in different towns and the academic contributions of his dissertation. The contents shows that the exposition of the information is structured in a clear and logical way. The thesis consists of 7 chapters, author's preface, acknowledgements, conclusions, references, contributions and list of state archive's materials.

The number of references is quite impressive – 341 titles in English, Bulgarian, Russian, French, Spanish, Romanian and Hungarian as well as 87 state archive's units.

The study is quite interesting and the first of its kind, so it enriches the investigations in the field of translation and interpreting in Bulgaria for a 30-year period (1944-1974). The information is presented in a systematic way, richly illustrated with the help of various academic, media and memoir sources, periodicals and many more from different nationalities. Up to now, there is no such an entire and thorough study about the development of the diplomatic translation and interpretation during the Cold War period. It outlines the aims and the tasks of the study, boundaries, etc. An interesting moment is the mentioning of artificial intelligence and the reason for its use. The theoretical prerequisites from different researchers' references are quoted correctly and adequately. The object of attention is mainly archive materials for a period of 30 years (1944-1974), memoir literature, periodicals, academic papers in history of translation and interpreting, and a lot more.

The research is first of its kind as it traces diplomatic translation and interpreting from a historical perspective during the Cold War period through historical, prosopographic, microhistorical and translation-oriented approaches and for that reason it is one of its contributions. Because of the nature of the period, the Bulgarian translators and interpreters are undoubtedly influenced by the Soviet schools, but the analysis shows that the Bulgarian model has its specificities as well. The Bulgarian interpreters do not only participate in the respective events as technical mediators with

ancillary functions but they also play a vital part in realizing the international dialogue between the institutions throughout the whole world. For that reason, they have to possess political, linguistic and professional competences for the successful coping of the respective situations during negotiations and other communications of a similar nature.

The professional biographies of a great number of diplomats, interpreters and translators, having taken part in the international events in Bulgaria during the study period are reconstructed. The mechanisms for their preparation, selection and professional realization are clarified.

The role of the international brigadier movement as a medium for forming of linguistic and intercultural competences as well as for selecting future interpreters and specialists in international relations is explored.

An interesting phenomenon is the Bulgarian model of diplomatic interpreting during the 1960s and 1970s in which university lecturers, journalists and literary translators are recruited to the activities of the state organizations.

Another contribution of the dissertation has to do with the fact that diplomatic translation is not only a linguistic activity but a special form of cultural and political mediation which influences international communication and diplomatic practices.

The research is interdisciplinary and is at the crossroads of translation theory, historical and diplomatic fields of knowledge. A critical analysis to documentary and memoir sources is also applied.

The Introduction dwells upon the specificities of the dissertation and the reasons for such a study based on previous publications, the information being enriched by additional sources as regards its significance and actuality. A crucial fact is mentioned, namely that the role of the interpreter always remains in the background and that his/her personality is ignored to a great extent. The originality of the research pointed out as one of the reasons for that is that the professional biographies of renowned Bulgarian diplomats and interpreters having participated in the international events in Bulgaria are reconstructed.

Chapter One contains an overview of the academic literature, the normative documents, the memoir sources and the archive materials related to the history, theory and practice of diplomatic interpreting of the present days. Attention is paid to the development of the studies on diplomatic interpreting as a specific form of interlingual mediation in the international relations and on two basic models of interpreting mediation –„shared"/neutral and „attached/affiliated" interpreter,

typical for the diplomatic practice. The diplomatic interpreter should possess high linguistic competence and be familiar with the political, cultural and protocol context. The survey of the literature shows that diplomatic interpreting still remains a poorly investigated area.

Chapter Two looks upon the terminological and methodological bases of the research of diplomatic interpreting in Bulgaria during the analyzed period. The concept of "diplomatic interpreting" is defined; the characteristic features of diplomatic interpreting in comparison with conference interpreting are analyzed and special attention is paid to the direction of interpreting as well as to the differentiation between "diplomatic interpreter" and "diplomat-interpreter". A historical-descriptive approach is used and a comparative-historical one in presenting information. Other approaches that are applied are micro-historical, prosopographic, oral historical, etc. Another interesting approach is the historical-anthropological one and the reasons for its application are pointed out. The author's subjectivity in memoir literature, which at moments distorts the information, is also mentioned. Examples in this respect are provided in the dissertation.

Chapter Three discusses the role of foreign brigadiers and of the Bulgarian brigadier- interpreters in the international youth brigadier movement in Bulgaria in the period 1946-1949. It turns out that the brigadier-interpreters are part of an important but nearly unexplored stage from the history of diplomatic interpreting and translation in Bulgaria. The organization of the interpreting activity of the brigadier-translators is reconstructed on the basis of rich archive materials from the Central State Archive, memoir evidence, published memories and biographical sources, at the same time comparing it with the ones in the USSR and Yugoslavia.

Chapter Four analyzes the collected memoir, media, academic and archive materials from the beginning of the diplomatic interpreting in Bulgaria after 1944 in comparison with the one in the Soviet Union. The historical context in Bulgaria during the 1930s up to the 1960s is presented. In contrast to the one in the USSR where diplomatic interpreting at the highest level is almost entirely monopolized by diplomats and foreign ministry staff, in Bulgaria it is a more flexible nature. University lecturers, editors in foreign language media and journalists with high linguistic preparation are co-opted. The place of interpreters in the history of the Bulgarian diplomacy and international relations during the second half of the 20th century is outlined.

Chapter Five explores the role of interpreters and language mediators during the 15th session of the General Assembly of UNO in 1960. The aim is identifying the interpreters accompanying the delegations of Bulgaria, the USSR, Romania, Hungary and Cuba as well as reconstructing their

participation in the official and unofficial contacts among the political leaders. A unique case in the diplomatic practice is the use of Ladino as a medium of rendering information by one of the Bulgarian interpreters.

As a whole, the author is obviously well acquainted with the academic literature on the discussed issues as he uses the references quite appropriately and to the point and because of the fact that he is a long-time conference and diplomatic interpreter which enables him to see things from the inside and at first hand.

An interesting fact mentioned in one of the materials is to what extent the practice of interpreting brought about the development of the diplomatic relations and negotiations, in other words, interpretation is viewed as a basic instrument for foreign policy.

The conclusion summarizes the results. It emphasizes the fact that "diplomatic interpreting has to be discussed not only as a linguistic activity, but also as a specific form of cultural and political mediation influencing international communication and diplomatic practice". Suggestions for future research are mentioned.

The clear and correct referencing and citing of the materials used is worth noting. The candidate has a very good preliminary informational preparation and is well acquainted with the political situation of the respective period.

3. Assessment of the applicant's quality of his scientific productivity and contributions

The documents presented by the candidate for the procedure on the academic and applied contributions highlight the most important conceptual and applied aspects of the innovation of his academic endeavours. What I would like to add is the fact that I appreciate highly assoc. prof. Naimushin's investigations to explore in depth and adequately apply the existing theoretical prerequisites to the field of linguistics, comparative research, theory of translation and to concrete manifestations of the history of the discussed events, which is undoubtedly a contribution to the more general linguistics and can also be applied in the teaching of English.

The candidate's doctoral thesis' contributions are outlined in detail in the dissertation and in the Summary of the dissertation. They are in the field of methodology, history of diplomatic interpreting, empirical studies and many others. One of the major contributions is that for the first time the professional biographies of renowned diplomats and interpreters having participated in the international events in Bulgaria are reconstructed. An interesting phenomenon

is the Bulgarian model of diplomatic interpreting during the 60s and the 70s of the 20th century, in which university lecturers, journalists and literary translators are recruited for the workings of state organizations. Another contribution is the conclusion that diplomatic interpreting is not only a linguistic activity but a special form of cultural and political cooperation which influences international communication and diplomatic practice. The brigadier-interpreters are also a new phenomenon which is hardly investigated as a stage in the history of interpreting and diplomatic interpreting in Bulgaria during the analyzed period. There are no studies in this field and the investigation definitely fills a vacuum in this respect.

As regards his other publications, which he has presented, they are quite exhaustive and always supported by a rich evidential material. They are relevant to the topic, the aims and objectives of the research.

The Summary of the doctoral thesis presents the content in a concise and clear way, the contributions of the dissertation, his publications and 1 short course as well as the citations.

The candidate has taken into consideration some of the suggestions made during the departmental discussion and has added some new data to the existing information.

The review of the academic production and academic work of assoc. prof. Dr. Boris Naimushin's gives me strong reasons to declare that his candidacy fully meets the requirements for the academic degree of "habilitated doctor of philosophy".

4. Recommendations

To my mind, it is unnecessary for the structure and the content of the dissertation to be described in a separate subchapter as part of the Introduction. This is not a book.

Each chapter begins with annotation which is not needed. These are not articles.

I do not think the contributions should be listed in the dissertation. They should only be present in the Summary as is done by the author.

There is no mention of the fact that the translations are the author's.

5. Conclusion

Taking into account both the quantitative scientific minimum requirements for awarding the academic degree of "habilitated doctor of philosophy" and the qualitative analysis of assoc. prof. Dr. Boris Naimushin's academic production, work and contributions, as well as his personal

features and skills, I strongly support his candidacy in this procedure and give my positive assessment about his academic and applied achievements, as his academic and professional orientation in the field of philological sciences fulfils the requirements of the *Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria* and its accompanying regulations. So, I recommend to the Academic Selection Committee to vote positively for awarding **the academic degree of "habilitated doctor of philosophy" to assoc. prof. Dr. Boris Anatolievich Naimushin in the area of higher education: 2. Humanities, professional field 2.1. Philology, doctor habil's programme "Theory and Practice of Translation" for the needs of the Department of Foreign Languages and Cultures, New Bulgarian University.**

Sept. 28th, 2026

Signature:

(prof. Rumyana Todorova, PhD)