

SHORT REVIEW

Written by full Prof. Ivanka Mavrodieva-Georgieva, D.Sc.,
Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski“
in connection with the competition for the award
of the academic position of associate professor in stage speech in
the National Academy for Theater and Film Arts (NATFA) “Krastyo Sarafov”

An Information about the competition

Concerning the competition for an associate professor of stage speech, promulgated in SG issue 52 / 09.06. 2020, field of higher education 8. Arts, professional field 8.4. Theatrical and film art, scientific specialty “Theater studies and theatrical art the legal provisions and the procedure have been observed.” Assist. PhD Todor Ivanov Dimitrov participates in the competition as the candidate.

An information about the candidate

The candidate Todor Dimitrov graduated a bachelor's degree at the National Academy of Theater and Film Arts “Krastyo Sarafov” in 2011. He has been specialised in “Traditional Chinese Opera, Chinese Language and Chinese Culture” at the Shanghai Theater Academy in China. He graduated with a master's degree in “Performing Arts Management” in 2012. Todor Dimitrov was a PhD student at the National Academy of Theater and Film Arts “Krastyo Sarafov” in the specialty “Theater Studies and Theater Arts” from 2014 to 2017. He defended a dissertation on the topic: “Thought processes - primary energy of stage speech”. The candidate specialised in various programs at the University of London, Royal Central School of Speech and Drama – in 2018. His experience outside the scientific field is related to advertising, he worked as a public relations specialist, a backup at the Bulgarian National Radio, etc., it is a wide spectrum of professional activities. He is the assistant and a chief assistant in the Department “Stage Speech” at the Faculty of Performing Arts since 2014 and he learns subjects “Speech Technique”, “Artistic Speech”. Todor Dimitrov actively participates in the academic and organizational life of the department and NATFA; he has various responsibilities and activities, including compiling an e-collection, organising scientific forums, research projects and more. I selected facts from the biography of Todor Dimitrov as evidences and proofs concerning my conclusion about the professional growth

of the candidate and for his gradual improvement as a lecturer and member of academic communities.

Scientific and applied elements of the book and materials

The following publications and documents are presented by the candidate: 1 monograph/habilitation thesis, list of articles and reports in scientific journals, CV, contributions, certificates, diplomas, curricula and others; the information about the citations includes a total of 16.

The monograph “Terminological foundations of stage speech” (Todor Dimitrov-Mechkarski) was published in 2019 by Farago Publishing House and it has a volume of 286 pages. The text was published after scientific reviews written by Prof. Ivanka Bencheva and Assoc. Prof. Valeria Kardashevska, the editor is Vanya Baeva. The text includes an introduction written by Prof. Atanas Atanasov as well as additional reviews and evaluations about the book are given in the end of the text too (pp. 278-285). The book includes the preface, introduction, three chapters/parts, a conclusion, a bibliography. The book has a clear composition and it synthesises the teaching experience of the author on a theoretical and methodological level.

The book is structured in an interesting way. The theoretical framework is given in the first part; the second one is dedicated to a glossary of terms in contemporary stage speech is presented. The third one is the list of terms. The bibliography includes 84 titles: 70 are in Bulgarian, 14 - in English.

The author quotes and presents achievements in the scientific tradition in the stage speech. Todor Dimitrov presents the authors who write and teach on the same academic field: Diana Borisova, Elisaveta Sotirova, Mara Georgieva, Ivanka Bencheva, Veselina Raeva, Dilyana Micheva, Ralitsa Kovacheva-Bezhan, Maya Goranova. The author refers to scientists from different fields in the dictionary, including Todor Boyadzhiev and Dimitar Tilkov (phonetics), Ivan Maximov, Zlatko Pavlov, Angel Angelov, Katerina Ilkova, Boris Mihailov, Tsvetanka Tsenova and others.

There is a coverage between the title stated in the introduction to the design of the text. The theoretical part updates the categorical-conceptual apparatus, but also the text persuasively presents the author's position. The book is a successful attempt of a new conceptualisation as well as it presents the boundaries and new manifestations both in practice and in the teaching of the stage speech. The range of presented theoretical knowledge is quite

wide (linguistics, neurolinguistics, phonetics, speech therapy, neurology, psychophysiology, orthoepy, etc.). Todor Dimitrov shows and arranges arguments proving the statement that the stage speech is a multidisciplinary scientific field. The author describes thematic topics and subjects of stage speech (pp. 17-18). I emphasise these proves and descriptions as an advantage of the text. Other positive aspects of the book are the language and style, the text is readable, at the same time it presents rich and well systematised information about the stage speech.

The presentation of the terms is done correctly from the point of view of lexicography. The definitions are presented clearly and correctly. Where it is necessary terms are described in details, for examples the variants of the correct pronunciation are given clearly and methodically accurately and examples are given in the table, pp. 46-47. Variants are given strictly, correct pronunciation and wrong pronunciation are described too and there is a systematisation by criteria, without reaching a dry taxonomy. This way of presentation is applied where appropriate and again the author derives clear criteria: correlative feature softness-hardness in consonants: soft-hard; sound-soundless - p. 220. Where possible, the author gives the etymology of the term from ancient Greek, Latin and others languages and this is proof of scientific precision, p. 221 - tachylalia, p. 222 - hard palate, p. 224 - timbre, etc. The definitions of the terms have different volume and scope. For example, for the text about the timbre covers 4 pages (from 224 to 228) and this is reasonable in view of the specifics of the term. The author thoroughly derives the features and establishes the theoretical parameters, including timbre, modulation; there are references to the main tone. Terminological matrices are created, among which tempo - temporitum; accent and types of accents; tropes, tongue figures, hyperbole; breathing and types of breathing, hearing and types of hearing; phonetics, phoneme, phonetic environment; voice-speech training, voice-speech characteristic; speech apparatus - speech circuit - speech communication, etc. Todor Dimitrov brings out the specifics and changes in basic subjects at the terminological level, for example, what is the technique of speech, stage speech, artistic speech; and this is a contribution to the book.

Summarising, I declare that the author Todor Dimitrov presents systematically and at a high scientific level terms, definitions and theories, examples and references to previous scientific knowledge, which shows that the text is useful in theoretical and methodological terms of teachers from NATFA, but also training speakers, speakers, journalists, communication specialists.

Contributions

I present the following contributions on theoretical and methodological levels in the monograph:

- updating and clarifies the categorical-conceptual apparatus, deriving concepts from several scientific fields: linguistics, phonetics, theory of literature, neurolinguistics, phonetics, speech therapy, neurology, psychophysiology, etc.;

- rethinking part of the terminology on theoretical and methodological levels with the objectives of training of students from NATFA;

- deriving and substantiating an author's position from a scientific point of view on the need to integrate knowledge and experience in order to educate students.

Critical remarks and recommendations

Could be possible (in a future editing and revision) to point out the connections between the terms in the direction of terminological matrices and this will be an additional convenience for the readers.

Conclusion

Doctor Todor Dimitrov has teaching, research and organisational experience, publishing and project activities; he was the supervisor of master's theses, he participates in workshops. The candidate covers the requirements for awarding the academic position of “associate professor” (the stage speech). The candidate for associate professor Todor Dimitrov shows sustainable professional development as a lecturer at NATFA. The author of the monograph “Terminological foundations of stage speech” presents skills for systematisation of existing scientific knowledge, derivation and justification of the need for a comprehensive model of student education, the establishment of “Stage speech” as a scientific discipline in the system of modern scientific knowledge.

In conclusion, I recommend to the members of the distinguished scientific jury to vote “for”/”Yes” the award of the academic position of “Associate Professor” on “Stage speech” to Assist. Prof. Todor Ivanov Dimitrov, PhD.

Sofia

5th October 2020.

Sign by the member of the jury:

Prof. Ivanka Mavrodieva, D. Sc., PhD