

REVIEW

By Prof. Irena Georgieva Vasileva, Dr. phil. habil, New Bulgarian University, Field of Study 2.1. Philology, regarding the award of the academic degree of “Doctor” in Field of Study 2.1. Philology to candidate Lina Miloshevska.

Title of the dissertation: "A Study of Anglicisms in Journalistic Corpora in North Macedonia through Corpus Analysis Tools"

submitted for the award of the educational and scientific degree **Doctor** in Professional Field **2.1 Philology**, Doctoral Programme **General and Comparative Linguistics**

1. General Assessment of the Dissertation

The dissertation submitted by Lina Miloshevska addresses an important and timely topic within contemporary linguistics, namely the influence of English lexical borrowing on the Macedonian language as reflected in journalistic discourse. Situated at the intersection of contact linguistics, corpus linguistics, sociolinguistics and lexical studies, the dissertation investigates the diachronic development of anglicisms in Macedonian through a purpose-built corpus comprising journalistic texts published in the weekly magazine *Kapital* in the years 2000 and 2020.

The subject of the dissertation is relevant both theoretically and practically. English has become the dominant international language in the domains of economics, technology, media and popular culture, and its influence on European languages continues to stimulate extensive scholarly discussion. While numerous corpus-based investigations have been conducted for major European languages, comparable research on Macedonian remains relatively limited. Consequently, the dissertation addresses an identifiable gap in the existing literature by providing a comprehensive quantitative and qualitative investigation of English lexical borrowing over a twenty-year period.

The dissertation consists of four chapters preceded by an introduction and followed by conclusions, appendices and a comprehensive bibliography. The overall structure is logical and corresponds to internationally accepted standards for doctoral dissertations in linguistics. The progression from theoretical considerations through methodological design to empirical analysis and interpretation is coherent and facilitates the reader's understanding of the research process.

The dissertation demonstrates substantial independent research, considerable technical competence in corpus compilation and analysis, and familiarity with both international and Macedonian scholarship.

2. Evaluation of the Research Problem, Objectives and Scientific Relevance

The research problem is clearly formulated and convincingly justified. The candidate identifies the absence of large-scale diachronic corpus studies of anglicisms in Macedonian journalistic discourse and argues persuasively that existing studies have predominantly employed descriptive or synchronic approaches.

The principal objective - to investigate quantitatively and qualitatively the development of anglicisms in Macedonian journalistic language between 2000 and 2020 - is clearly stated and consistently pursued throughout the dissertation.

The specific research tasks are logically derived from the overall objective and correspond well to the methodological procedures employed. The dissertation successfully combines corpus compilation, lexical identification, quantitative analysis and qualitative interpretation within a unified analytical framework.

The scientific relevance of the topic is beyond dispute. The increasing penetration of English into national languages has become one of the central issues in contemporary contact linguistics, while corpus linguistic approaches have significantly expanded the methodological possibilities for investigating lexical change. By applying these approaches to Macedonian, the dissertation contributes valuable empirical evidence to a



comparatively under-researched linguistic context.

3. Assessment of the Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework demonstrates extensive familiarity with the relevant literature on language contact, lexical borrowing, corpus linguistics, semantic change and lexical innovation. The dissertation draws upon a broad range of international scholarship, including classical studies by Haugen, Hock and Joseph, Görlach and Myers-Scotton, as well as more recent contributions by Onysko, Schmid, Pulcini and others. Equally valuable is the systematic presentation of previous Macedonian research, which successfully situates the dissertation within the national scholarly tradition. Particularly commendable is the integration of theories of semantic change with contemporary approaches to lexical conventionalization, institutionalization and lexicalization. These concepts provide an appropriate conceptual basis for interpreting the empirical findings.

Nevertheless, the theoretical discussion is predominantly descriptive. Although numerous theoretical approaches are presented, comparatively little critical discussion is devoted to their respective strengths, limitations or applicability to the present research. Alternative theoretical perspectives, including usage-based linguistics, cognitive approaches to lexical borrowing, language ideology, or sociocultural models of globalization, receive relatively limited attention. Consequently, the theoretical framework occasionally functions more as a comprehensive literature survey than as a critical synthesis leading directly to the analytical framework adopted in the dissertation.

A further issue concerns the conceptualization of lexical integration. The dissertation tends to treat frequency as the principal indicator of integration. While corpus frequency undoubtedly provides valuable evidence, lexical integration is a multidimensional process involving structural adaptation, speaker perception, communicative convention, institutional acceptance and psycholinguistic entrenchment. A more explicit discussion of these dimensions would strengthen the theoretical basis of the study.

4. Evaluation of the Methodology

From a methodological perspective, the dissertation represents one of its strongest aspects. The construction of a specialized diachronic corpus containing more than 2.2 million tokens constitutes a significant scholarly achievement. The decision to compile two corpora from the same publication ensures genre consistency and minimizes variation resulting from editorial differences. The procedures for corpus preparation, preprocessing, encoding, normalization and annotation are described in sufficient detail to allow replication of the research.

The use of AntConc, TagAnt and MATLAB is appropriate for the objectives of the investigation. The combination of automated corpus analysis with manual verification substantially enhances the reliability of the dataset. The identification criteria for anglicisms are generally well defined. The explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria contribute to methodological transparency and facilitate subsequent interpretation of the findings. The dissertation also demonstrates awareness of the challenges posed by unequal corpus size and appropriately employs normalized frequencies rather than raw frequencies when comparing the two corpora.

Nevertheless, several methodological issues deserve further consideration. First, the exclusive reliance on a single journalistic publication inevitably limits the representativeness of the findings. *Kapital* is primarily a business and economic magazine whose linguistic profile cannot necessarily be regarded as representative of Macedonian journalistic discourse as a whole. Consequently, the conclusions should be interpreted primarily with reference to this specific register.

Second, the selection of only two chronological points provides a useful comparison but does not fully capture the dynamics of lexical change over the intervening twenty-year period. The inclusion of intermediate corpora would have enabled a more nuanced analysis of the evolution of borrowing patterns.

Third, the dissertation would benefit from a more extensive application of inferential statistical procedures.



Although normalized frequencies constitute an appropriate basis for comparison, the inclusion of statistical significance testing (for example log-likelihood or chi-square tests) would provide additional support for the observed differences.

Finally, since the identification of anglicisms involves manual judgement, the methodological reliability would be further strengthened through the inclusion of inter-annotator agreement or other measures of coding reliability. These observations, however, do not diminish the overall methodological quality of the investigation.

5. Evaluation of the Empirical Analysis

The empirical chapters constitute the principal scientific contribution of the dissertation. The quantitative analysis convincingly demonstrates a substantial increase in the frequency of anglicisms between 2000 and 2020. The distinction between type frequency, token frequency, normalized frequency and distributional analysis reflects a sound understanding of corpus linguistic methodology.

The discussion of lexical productivity, semantic change, contextual reframing and orthographic adaptation considerably enriches the quantitative findings by situating them within broader linguistic processes.

Particularly valuable is the analysis of semantic narrowing, contextual specialization and lexical productivity, which illustrates that borrowed vocabulary undergoes systematic adaptation within the recipient language rather than simple lexical transfer. The investigation of orthographic variation and mixed-script compounds represents another noteworthy contribution, illustrating contemporary tendencies in Macedonian journalistic language under conditions of globalization.

The interpretation of discourse change—from post-socialist economic transition towards digitalization, globalization and pandemic-related communication—is plausible and supported by the corpus evidence.

However, certain interpretations occasionally extend beyond what the empirical data can conclusively demonstrate. For example, the classification of particular lexical items as institutionalized or lexicalized relies primarily on corpus frequency and dictionary inclusion. Although these are important indicators, they do not in themselves provide sufficient evidence regarding speakers' cognitive representations or sociolinguistic acceptance.

Similarly, several broader sociocultural interpretations would benefit from more cautious formulation. Corpus evidence can demonstrate linguistic patterns but cannot independently establish causal explanations for language change. Overall, however, the analytical procedures are carefully executed and the conclusions remain generally well supported by the empirical evidence.

6. Scientific Contributions

The dissertation contains several original scientific contributions.

The first and perhaps most significant contribution is the compilation of a large-scale purpose-built diachronic corpus of Macedonian journalistic language suitable for investigating lexical borrowing.

Secondly, the dissertation provides the first systematic quantitative measurement of the proportion, frequency and distribution of anglicisms in Macedonian journalistic discourse across two decades.

Thirdly, the study integrates quantitative corpus analysis with qualitative investigation of semantic change, contextual variation, lexical productivity and orthographic adaptation.

The manually verified database of more than four thousand anglicisms constitutes an important resource for future linguistic research.

The dissertation also provides useful empirical evidence for lexicography, language planning and future corpus-based investigations of Macedonian.

At the same time, it should be noted that several conclusions confirm tendencies previously documented in studies of other European languages. The originality therefore lies primarily in extending these observations to Macedonian through systematic empirical analysis rather than proposing fundamentally new theoretical explanations.



7. Critical Remarks

Alongside its considerable merits, the dissertation exhibits several shortcomings that should be addressed in future publications. The literature review, although extensive, remains predominantly descriptive and would benefit from greater critical engagement with competing theoretical perspectives. The corpus design, while methodologically justified, limits the generalizability of the findings because only one journalistic publication has been analysed. The empirical analysis relies predominantly on descriptive statistics and would be strengthened by a broader application of inferential statistical procedures.

Some concepts, particularly conventionalization, institutionalization and lexicalization, require more precise operationalization in order to distinguish clearly between corpus-based indicators and broader sociolinguistic processes. The dissertation also contains a degree of repetition, especially in the introductory chapters where the research aims, significance and methodological procedures are restated on several occasions.

Finally, certain formulations occasionally appear stronger than warranted by the empirical evidence. Expressions such as "the study demonstrates" or "confirms" could in some instances be replaced by more cautious formulations reflecting the limitations inherent in corpus-based research. These observations, however, concern matters of refinement rather than fundamental weaknesses.

8. Conclusion

The dissertation submitted by Lina Miloshevska represents a substantial, carefully executed and scientifically valuable piece of independent research. The study addresses an important linguistic problem using contemporary corpus-linguistic methodology and provides a significant body of original empirical evidence concerning the development of English lexical borrowing in Macedonian journalistic discourse. The candidate demonstrates comprehensive knowledge of the relevant literature, sound methodological competence, the ability to compile and analyse large corpora, and the capacity to interpret empirical findings within an appropriate theoretical framework.

Despite certain theoretical and methodological limitations, which are characteristic of research of this scope and do not detract from its overall scientific merit, the dissertation makes a meaningful contribution to Macedonian linguistics, contact linguistics and corpus-based studies of lexical borrowing. The research satisfies the generally accepted criteria for doctoral dissertations in the field of linguistics and constitutes an original scientific contribution.

9. Evaluation of the publications related to the dissertation

The articles related to the dissertation reflect the work done on it and have been published in highly reputable journals and collections of articles.

In conclusion, in view of the scientific merits of the dissertation, the originality of the research, the methodological competence demonstrated by the candidate, and the significance of the obtained results, I consider that the dissertation **fully meets the requirements for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in Professional Field 2.1 Philology, Doctoral Programme General and Comparative Linguistics.**

I therefore recommend to the distinguished members of the Scientific Jury that they **vote positively for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" to Lina Miloshevska.**

Date: 17.07.2026

Signature: Irena Vassileva