

## SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

### **Book review:**

**Mikhail Videnov, *Identifikatsiya po ezika v'z osnova na s'vremennata b'lgarska rech* (Identification by language on the basis of contemporary Bulgarian). Sofia: Feneya 2007, 286 pp.**

Mikhail Videnov is one of the leading Bulgarian professors in modern Bulgarian sociolinguistics. During the last 10 years, Videnov published a number of very important books for Bulgarian sociolinguistics, such as: *Sotsiolingvisticheskiyat marker* [The sociolinguistic marker] (1998); *Uvod v sotsiolingvistikata* [Introduction to sociolinguistics] (2000); *B'lgarskata ezikova politika* [Bulgarian language policy] 2003; *Diglosiyata s ogleed na b'lgarskata ezikova situatsiya* [Diglossia: With a special view to the Bulgarian language situation] (2005). All the works of Videnov over the last 30 years are focused on building the bases of sociolinguistics in Bulgaria and with his outstanding work and contribution, today it is possible to speak of the existence of the Bulgarian school of sociolinguistics. Moreover, M. Videnov has also contributed to European sociolinguistics with his publications in Europe and as a guest lecturer at several European universities.

The newest book of Mikhail Videnov *Identifikatsiya po ezika v'z osnova na s'vremennata b'lgarska rech* [Identification by language on the basis of contemporary Bulgarian] (2007) presents a very interesting approach to the identification of speakers of different Bulgarian dialects, or identification of different ethnic backgrounds of speakers of the Bulgarian language. The target groups of the book are linguists, students in linguistics and professionals, for example, the police.

The first chapter of the book presents the language situation in Bulgaria. Here, the author discusses phenomena like “language situation” and “speech situation” referring to Labov’s (1966) and Ferguson’s (1970) publications. Videnov describes the language situation in some parts of Bulgaria where Bulgarians speak a par-

ticular dialect. Special attention is paid to ethnic minorities (Turks and Roma) and their use of different varieties of Bulgarian which may be called “pidginize Bulgarian”.

The second chapter informs more deeply about the existing different forms of present-day standard Bulgarian. This chapter deals with the forms of East Bulgarian vs West Bulgarian dialects, analyzing the different ways of pronunciation. Here, the author presents the Bulgarian dialectical atlas as a tool for territorial identification of dialectical speakers. Particular attention is paid to different types of slang (argots and jargons). The author demonstrates a deep knowledge of Bulgarian dialects and their specific features. All the detailed information given in the chapter aims to help policemen and people who work in the police force, to identify speakers by their dialects.

The third chapter of the book is the most interesting one, as it presents the different sociolinguistic markers that speakers use. Videnov divides the markers into several categories: birthplace and residence, age, educational status, profession, sex. Furthermore, the author shows how a speaker can use different marker strategies in a speech situation. Videnov presents the different techniques of how a speaker can be identified by analyzing the written or spoken language.

In his preface, Mikhail Videnov states that the book establishes the bases of a new linguistic area, namely, that of lingua-criminalistics, and the book is the first successful attempt in this respect.

The appendix includes a short dictionary of linguistic terms.

The book of M. Videnov gives a new look at Bulgarian sociolinguistics. It shows the possibilities of contemporary linguistics and sociolinguistics in new areas yet unexplored. It can be used by philology students and by linguists alike.

## References

- Ferguson, C. (1970). *The role of Arabic in Ethiopia. A sociolinguistic perspective*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Labov, W. (1966). *The social stratification of English in the New York City*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

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