

REVIEW

by Prof. Diana Dimitrova Yankova, New Bulgarian University, 2.1. Philology, for acquiring the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in professional field 1.3. Methods of Teaching Modern Languages (English) by applicant Gabriela Nedelkoska.

The aim of Gabriela Nedelkoska's dissertation **VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES USED BY UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN AN ESP CONTEXT** is to investigate the individual differences of foreign language learners in the strategies they use for vocabulary acquisition. The hypotheses of the study are well formulated, namely, that the factors that significantly influence vocabulary learning strategies are: gender, level of proficiency in the foreign language, learning style, personal characteristics, etc.; another hypothesis is that there exists a positive relation between the choice and recourse to a variety of strategies and the volume of vocabulary acquired; also that the context of learning determines the choice of strategies, and these will understandably be different in general and specialized foreign language learning.

Both quantitative and qualitative research methods are applied in the analysis. The corpus consists of questionnaires, interviews and vocabulary tests conducted with 296 Macedonian students. Vocabulary size was collected using the Vocabulary Size Test 14000, which measures the total vocabulary size of the students by containing 140 multiple-choice items divided into 14 sections with 10 words as representative at each level of 1000 words. Students' learning styles, attitudes toward learning, and choice of learning strategies are determined by the most common type of assessment, a written survey in which students answer questions revealing their personal learning style inclinations, and the effectiveness of each strategy is verified by a specially designed experiment. To account for personality factors, the HEXACO personality structure model is used, with personality characteristics organized into six dimensions using Ashton and Lee's (2001, 2007) model. There is consistency between the chosen research



methodology and the stated aim and objectives of the thesis.

The main conclusions reached by G. Nedelkoska can be summarized as follows. First, gender differences significantly influence learners' preferences for strategies. Female students use a variety of strategies more frequently than male students, especially metacognitive strategies, determination strategies, cognitive strategies, and memorization strategies. Second, the number of languages used by male students predominantly influences avoidance strategies - learners, who speak fewer languages tend to use more avoidance strategies. Language proficiency level as a third factor appears to be important in the use of metacognitive and cognitive strategies. A high degree of correlation was found between learning style and preferred strategies as a fourth factor, and as a fifth factor, personality type directly influences the choice of strategies. However, vocabulary learning beliefs have no influence on strategy choice.

The dissertation is well structured, with logical coherence, written in clear and academic English, and generally the requirements of the genre are observed. It contributes to the methodology of English language teaching and the results of the analysis can be successfully applied in practice. I would recommend that when the dissertation is published, the theoretical part is updated with authors from the last for instance 5 years to make it comprehensive and up-to-date. The work will also benefit from showing more clearly the relationship between the sources cited and their specific relevance to the issues discussed in the dissertation. It is also appropriate to indicate at the end of the dissertation directions for future research that may be a continuation of the theme developed in the dissertation, which is lacking in Nedelkoska's work. The abstract faithfully reflects the structure and content of the dissertation, but here the contributions of the research are lacking.

Gabriela Nedelkoska also presents other articles on the subject, as well as on other topics related to language learning, such as cultural aspects of language learning, cross-linguistic influence, etc., and has presented papers at specialized academic conferences.

Conclusion:

All recommendations and critical comments are intended to contribute to a better analysis and do not detract from the work of the doctoral student in processing the research material and the



results achieved. My assessment of the research is high and I believe it is a serious work that meets the requirements of Art. 27 of the Law for the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria. Therefore, I accord positive assessment of the dissertation by Gabriela Nedelkoska and recommend that she be awarded the degree of Doctor of Education and Science in professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of Education in...., scientific specialty Methodology of Teaching Modern Languages (English).

Date 18.02.2023

Signed: