

Review of Mariia Popova's
dissertation titled
"The maintenance of the Russian language in the post-Soviet states: The activity of Russia"

Mariia Popova's dissertation addresses the issue of the status and legal situation of the Russian language in the post-Soviet state as well as the related macro-sociolinguistic issues. The dissertation is grounded in up-to-date sociolinguistic literature and an extensive range of works, reflecting a thorough understanding of the relevant literature as well as of the issues involved, from both the insider's perspective, that of a native of Russia and a native speaker of Russian, and the outsider's perspective, that of the researcher.

The topic of the dissertation is up-to-date, and in her work the author offers novel analysis and results. The paper has all the necessary parts and is structured clearly. The argumentation of the paper is clear. The paper is written in good academic English, which is sophisticated and clear throughout. The text is much more readable than it was before, which is a considerable improvement. The paper has been considerably improved in its formatting since the version submitted for the in-house ("mock") defense, making it a well-argued and solid piece of work, definitely deserving the awarding of the doctorate to its author.

The dissertation has been restructured and now follows the more conventional and usual format in its chapters. The author fixed discrepancies in the table of contents, page numbering, number formats (use of commas and full stops), use of quotes (although a handful of lower quotation marks [.,] remained), and several inaccuracies of phrasing that the present reviewer commented on in the previous version of the dissertation. Unfortunately, some shortcomings were not remedied: the "date of access" is not given in the references for online sources (even though this is a requirement and standard procedure nowadays), and some discrepancies remain in the formatting of the (otherwise very impressive) list of references.

All in all, the author has clearly done a lot of work to begin with, and made lots of improvements on the dissertation. The present reviewer, therefore, recommends that the author be awarded her PhD degree.

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