

## PROF. RANKO BUGARSKI, PH. D.: A MEMORIAL TRIBUTE

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It is with great sadness that I write this text to commemorate the passing of professor Ranko Bugarski, one of the two honorary members of the Serbian Association for the Study of English (SASE) and one of the pre-eminent scholars in the Serbian Anglicist, philological and academic community in general. Professor Bugarski left us on August 13<sup>th</sup> 2024, but will remain in the memory and writings of his colleagues, students, and fellow academics for evermore.

Ranko Bugarski was really an exceptional linguist, researcher, lecturer, author and thinker by all standards, well-respected and well-liked whenever and wherever he had a chance to interact or confer with others. A refined, composed erudite personality that was dedicated to spreading not only knowledge and understanding of language phenomena, but also tolerance among speakers and speech communities, he never tired of his enlightening mission till the end of his days.

Professor Bugarski was born in 1933 in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and graduated in 1957 at the Faculty of Philosophy of Sarajevo University. The Ph. D. title was conferred on him at the University of Belgrade in 1969, and he remained a professor at the Faculty of Philology at the same university till his retirement in 2000. But before that moment and for many years to follow, professor Bugarski made a long and highly fruitful career rendering him perhaps the best-known linguist of the region and one of the most prolific authors in the domain of his research which encompassed general, applied and contrastive linguistics, sociolinguistics, translation studies and terminology. He published a substantial body of work in the form of scientific papers and 26 books, among which *Jezik i lingvistika* [Language and Linguistics] (1972), *Jezik u društvu* [Language in Society] (1986), *Uvod u opštu lingvistiku* [Introduction to general linguistics] (1989), *Jezici* [Languages] (1993), *Jezik i identitet* [Language and identity] (2010), *Srpske slivenice: monografija sa rečnikom* [Serbian lexical blends: A monograph and dictionary] (2019), to name but a few.

Some other most notable lifetime achievements of professor Bugarski as a lecturer include his status of a Fulbright scholar at the University of Chicago, a visiting professor at Northeastern Illinois State College, Chicago and a guest lecturer at 24 other universities in Europe, the US and Australia. Furthermore, due to the

excellence of his authorship and during his tenure, Professor Bugarski was invited as a plenary or keynote speaker at numerous domestic and international conferences and designated a member of the academic board of international conferences at the University of London and universities in the US. His invaluable engagement as a translator or editor of seminal books resulted in his introducing the most influential linguists and their work to the professional and wider public in the Western Balkans, as well as presenting the important features of the dominant and groundbreaking theories within generative and cognitive linguistics, psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics.

In my celebratory message to professor Bugarski on the occasion of his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday last January, I expressed my hope that he would continue to be of enormous support to the advancement of our English academic community and keep on providing the pointers toward the roads worth taking. In an answer, he kindly considered the words acknowledging the significant value of his scientific and pedagogical work, but primarily the enormous thankfulness by the generations of his students and mentees, as the best birthday present of all.

Ranko Bugarski's pioneering role in establishing the foundation, enriching the repository and extending the boundaries of linguistic studies in the region was also manifest in his position of a co-founder and first president of the Yugoslav Association of Applied Linguistics. His rank of an academician of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts in Salzburg, Austria and a corresponding member of the Council of Europe Expert on Regional or Minority Languages in Strasbourg, France, could be counted among some other superlative attainments. Finally, professor Bugarski was Honorary President of the Serbian branch of The English-Speaking Union, a position of which he was particularly proud.

So far, professor Bugarski has been honoured with three festschrifts in Belgrade and Novi Sad, and one published by John Benjamins Publishing, as well as with honorary presidency and memberships in four major associations in the country and abroad.

Those who were more closely acquainted with his qualities of a splendid conversationalist would readily confirm that professor Bugarski almost never failed to take advantage of an opportunity to amuse the auditorium with his first-rate witticisms, anecdotes and clever quips which he liked to share but also to hear from others. That's how and that's when, following any serious professional discussion, some of the ideas for future research would be born on the part of his younger colleagues and perhaps even his own.

His insightful mind, his quiet, modest character pillared by dignified grace and outlined by academic rigour, his belief in the power of sound argument, his uncanny ability to bring closer to the readers and students alike any intricate matters in language and linguistics with considerable ease and clarity will be sadly missed by all individuals who had the privilege of knowing professor Bugarski.

I sincerely believe that most of us can only feel humbled and grateful in front of the legacy professor Bugarski has built, a legacy as permanent as it is huge, and

which will be to the benefit not only to the academic community within the scope of his superb intellectual activity, but also to the entire nation, its educational tradition and cultural heritage as a whole.

In Niš, September 25<sup>th</sup> 2024

Vladimir Ž. Jovanović

