

Your Magnificence Rector Professor Melnychuk,
Honorabiles,
Spectabiles,
Distinguished Guests,
Dear Colleagues and Students.

Let me begin by expressing my sincerest gratitude for awarding me this outstanding degree of Doctor Honoris Causa. From my very first visit of Chernivtsi this University became my second academic home, so it is a great honour and at the same time immense pleasure for me to receive this award from this University, its Faculty of Foreign Languages and the Department of English.

I am very proud of this degree and I have realized that we in this part of Europe share much more than is usually expected and acknowledged. Our common histories have been marked by changing rulers, shifting borders, altering political and social systems. But what has remained tenacious is our mutual respect, admiration of achievements and professional and personal relationships based on trust, help and esteem.

These values were there when in November 2011 the delegation of the International Office of this University came to my P. J. Šafárik University in Košice with proposals for the extension of the existing cooperation between our Institutes of Geography established in 2006. They were the first official foreign guests I received as a vice-rector having been in office only for two months but it appears that it was a crucial visit for me – both professionally and personally. After that visit I have had an ample of opportunities to admire the effort, work and achievements of colleagues working here under the guidance of wise, kind and always sensible and sharing Rector Professor Melnychuk and with the constant support I was receiving from my Košice Rector Professor Mirossay who taught me much about patience, modesty, respect for people and to appreciate our common Austro-Hungarian cultural background not only in university traditions.

Since 2011 after having signed the Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation, with Dr. Serhij Lukanjuk and his colleagues in the International Office we have managed to establish regular exchanges of staff and students of our English Departments, the Faculties of Law and Faculties of Sciences so staff members and students regularly benefit not only from Erasmus+ mobilities but they also use funding of the National Scholarship Programme in Slovakia thanks to which at the moment one of the students of English Philology is spending one semester in my Košice English Department.

Colleagues in Sciences, Law and Foreign Languages began in 2012 attending conferences organized by both universities which gave them a chance to know one another, to exchange ideas for joint activities and to share their best research practice. Through international activities supervised by the Vice-Rector Professor Petro Fochuk I learnt how varied the cooperation in pedagogy and research is here, that staff and students of English participate in whole-Ukrainian British Council projects, students of economy thanks to teamwork of Professor Jan Sandal and Professor Olexander Saenko enjoy the innovative methodologies in the study of international relations, and last year Professor Iryna Petriuk's team in the Department of Psychology joint Košice project on student migration to extend our cooperation to yet another field.

Cooperation of our English Departments, the one closest to my professional Anglicist interest has been from its very beginning in 2012 led by the head and the heart of Professor Nadezhda Yesypenko. It has already harvested its first sweet fruits not only in the regular exchanges of staff and students, participation in international conferences organised by both our departments, but also in the establishment of the first ever double masters degree scheme in English philology functioning at Ukrainian and Slovak Universities. Currently one of my

Košice master degree students performs her one semester of English Philology at the Faculty of Foreign Languages, we are impatiently preparing the first double degree diplomas for her and expecting the first students of the Faculty of Foreign Languages of Professor Iryna Osovska to join the Košice English department.

Professor Nadezhda Yesypenko's research achievements brought her to the editorial board of the Košice SKASE Journal of Theoretical Linguistics which is indexed in SCOPUS. She became a member of the international research team of linguists from 43 countries of the world led by Professor Stekauer and Professor Kortvelyessy - morphologists of my Košice department. Our common plans for future activities have already been outlined – we have started working on the extension of double degree scheme to the PhD level and have explored the possibility to establish the foreign languages testing centre that we have in Košice English Department also here in Chernivtsi – for the benefit of students, staff and links of academia to the market economy.

And I am very happy that interdisciplinarity found its practical implementation in the joint venture of Professor Sergej Nezhurbida, Maria Diachuk, students of the English Department and another doctor honoris causa of this University Professor Manfred Rehbinder resulting in the Eugen Ehrlich Bibliographic Index published recently by Vernon Press in the USA. This piece of personalised Chernivtsi University history has been read now on at least three continents, as far as we know from the publisher. This vastly challenging but at the same time immeasurably enriching experience altered my most recent research perspectives that have been always linked to cultural and communication studies. In my investigation of contemporary representation of food in media, the study of our common Austro-Hungarian cultural heritage through the personality and work of the former rector of Franz Joseph University in Chernivtsi has made me search for more contextualised answers to the study of the meaning of food. Food defines us and our identities are defined by food. The way we choose and share food at special occasions shows who we are and how we treat people around us. And this is where the values we share in this region were, are and hopefully remain. In food we share with our guests we show our respect, admiration, our trust and esteem.

143 years ago, when on the 4th October the Franz Joseph University in Chernivtsi was officially inaugurated on the occasion of the celebration of 100 years of the affiliation of Bukovina to the Austrian monarchy, the 6 o'clock evening gala dinner at the Town Hall was attended by 240 invited guests. The publication that provides the official record of all festivities in detail describes the atmosphere of the banquet in elegantly decorated hall, guests dressed for the gala occasion and being served specially selected menu of Queen Margot's puree soup with pasta, appetizer of the Starlet of Dniester with mayonnaise, main courses of beef fillet with béchamel, partridge salami, capons ragout with truffles, pheasants with salad, vegetables and compote, followed by sweet desserts of crème brûlée, hazelnut cake, ice-creams and sorbets, selection of cheeses accompanied by coffee and liqueurs.

I am sure all guests there felt very similar respect, admiration, trust and esteem as I feel today, here in this fantastic marble hall, receiving the honorary degree in the presence of my Chernivtsi University colleagues and my family – my husband and son. I am grateful to those who prepared and ornamented this ceremony to honour this University and to honour me, which will remain unforgettable for me for ever. I am still not completely persuaded that I deserve this honour. Whatever I have done has only been fulfilment of my own and our common duties and ideas and throughout the years of our intensive cooperation I have experienced wonderful time working with you all. And in upholding this honour I am going to continue in all our existing and planned activities to deserve the honour in the years to come. Thank you. Дякую.