

# ÉVÉNEMENTS

## REVIEW

**ANCA URSA AND NORA MĂRCEAN, *LIMBA ROMÂNĂ MEDICALĂ. ROMÂNĂ PENTRU OBIECTIVE SPECIFICE [ROMANIAN MEDICAL LANGUAGE. ROMANIAN FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES]*, CLUJ-NAPOCA, EDITURA LIMES, 2018, 276 p.**

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Over the last few years, in addition to the general textbooks for learning Romanian as a foreign language (RLS/RFL), structured in accordance with the standards of the European Reference Framework for Foreign Languages, on the Romanian book market started to appear works related to teaching and learning specialized languages in RLS, especially in the medical field, many of them managing to meet high standards in terms of content and editing. This perspective has also been adopted by the two teaching staff members Anca Ursa and Nora Marcean of “Iuliu Hațieganu” University of Medicine and Pharmacy in Cluj-Napoca, in their book, *Romanian Medical Language. Romanian for specific purposes*.

The authors assert that the book was in the beginning a “coursebook for internal use only” having as target audience, first of all, international medical students and foreign physicians interested in “learning the medical



terminology in Romanian” (Ursa, Marcean, 2018: 11). Consequently, the content is adapted to this category of students, and the textbook can be successfully used by all foreigners interested in acquiring the medical language, but who already have strong Romanian language skills and are at a level of linguistic competence of B1 +/ B2; otherwise, the foreigners’ attempt to study the material proposed for learning would be doomed to failure.

The material is very well structured in 12 learning units created in agreement with CEFRL, each unit having five working levels (vocabulary and grammar, listening, speaking, reading and writing) followed by the transcription of the audio materials, the answer key to exercises and a selective bibliography. At the beginning of each lesson, under the title of the unit, the morphological and lexical items that the authors intended to address in the lesson are also mentioned.

Thus, at the structural level, each lesson comprises: a first part consisting of exercises or texts that are meant to support the theme announced in the title; the second part, dedicated to grammar notions that aim at updating knowledge through the “do you remember?” section or teaching-learning of the new morphology issues specific to the B1-B2 competence level; and the third part, which closes the unit, including the essential vocabulary, a table with the terms encountered in the unit, with their English and French translation.

The contents are inspired from common hospital communication situations, especially from physician-patient dialogues, being very well chosen and giving the impression of absolute authenticity. Moreover, the authors themselves testify in the Preface of the textbook that, in the spirit of teaching materials authenticity, they participated in the practical semiology courses for medical students, which inspired them to choose the learning themes of this volume.

In the first five lessons, the authors say, the patient’s path in the hospital is followed: hospitalization (*At the hospital. Spaces and people*), anamnesis, clinical and paraclinical examinations (*Paraclinical and diagnostic investigations*), treatment recommendations, and in the next six units 10 different medical specialties (cardiology, pneumology, gastroenterology, nephrology, rheumatology, orthopedics, ENT, dermatology, allergy, neurology, psychiatry) are included so that the last unit discusses some aspects of inter-culturalism (*The Romanian Patient:*

*Intercultural issues*), “inevitable in the process of immersion in the Romanian clinical context” (Ursa, Marcean, 2018: 11).

The medical content is introduced and practised particularly through communication skills (oral and written), but linguistic comprehensiveness is not neglected; thus, the authors have selected grammatical aspects such as: personal pronouns in the accusative and dative cases, verbs with reflexive pronouns in the dative case, prepositions and prepositional phrases in the genitive case, the interrogative and relative pronouns, but also the possessive and demonstrative pronouns, “articolul genitival”, the verb in the “condițional optativ” mood, “supin” and gerund verbs/moods, the passive voice, etc. All these notions included in the grammar section are presented very clearly and concisely, so that the textbook succeeds in avoiding overloading with metalingual elements, which the medical student does not need, because his/her purpose is to acquire the specialty terminology in order to use it appropriately for specific purposes and not to conduct a grammatical analysis. And in this sense, the authors’ and implicitly the work’s merit lies in the fact that, through very diverse and exhaustive contextual situations in which they place the non-native speaker, the authors succeed in training the oral and written communication competence supported by a developed linguistic ability.

Taking into account the topic, the book is useful for foreign students especially at the stage when they enter the hospital and work effectively with the patients under the guidance of Romanian doctors, the authors preferring the oral skills, the receptive ones and the production of texts (on medical topics such as: haemorrhage, gastritis, stroke or cerebrovascular accident, medical report, clinical observation sheet, medical advice, etc.), thus attempting to train the foreign students from the linguistic point of view, for their work as future physicians. In view of the varied contexts in which the trainee is placed and the variety of medical aspects (documents, clinical and paraclinical investigations, etc.) discussed, one can notice that the notions of human anatomy and physiology sporadically found in certain learning units (U6: anatomy of the heart, U8: the bone system) are dealt with at a subsidiary level. Therefore, we can notice that anatomical terms are mainly exploited in exercises (e.g., in U7: “match the images below with the organ series” for the digestive tract or excretory apparatus, etc.) without being explained before, at least in the present edition of the paper, in the form of theoretical information transmission, the student being put in the position of not being able to solve some exercises (we refer to the ones relating to choosing the correct answer,

finding the correct term for the given definitions, etc.) if s/he no longer remembers the notions of anatomy. Thus, taking into account the fact that the textbook follows the specialized curriculum of the third year of clinical studies for foreign students, and that at this level it is assumed that they have already acquired the basic notions of medical terminology, we believe that updating this knowledge before the terms are presented in exercises would be appropriate.

Another plus point of the textbook is undoubtedly given by the variety of exercises: from lexical exercises (antonimy, synonymy, definition, explanation, association), grammatical (substitution, transformation, joining, choice) to audio and composition exercises.

We have also been glad to notice the idea that each exercise was marked with a very suggestive symbol so that the learner can predict the competence assessed in that section. However, it must be mentioned, as a small imperfection, inherent in these types of materials, that some exercises, although having a clear requirement, are still ambiguous in terms of ways for solving them.

Also, speaking of a fairly comprehensive volume, with very rich information and abundant and highly specialized terminology with a high degree of abstraction, we consider that studying the whole book might pose problems to those foreign students who, although theoretically, have already been for three years in Romania, but have failed to develop the necessary skills in order to understand and produce oral texts/messages in RLS at a minimum level of B1-B2. With all these small drawbacks, which in no way affect the merit of the book, we need to notice that the publication of this textbook enriches and adds value to the contributions to medical terminology through RLS, and in the end, last but not least, we would like to appreciate both the graphic quality of the textbook with its very suggestive and sometimes funny pictures and photos, and the professional recording of the audio exercises.