

Ileana Oana Macari, *English Morpho-syntax. A view from Romanian*,
Casa Editorială „Demiurg”, Iași, 2021, 229 p.

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In observing its own line of promoting achievements of academic and higher-education research, the *Demiurg* Publishing House in Iași has recently published a new book, *English Morpho-syntax. A view from Romanian*, by Ileana Oana Macari, a prominent Anglicist of the Faculty of Letters at the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași. As the author announces in the opening paragraph of the preface, she wrote it for the Romanian readership and, consequently, the book builds its perspective on English morpho-syntax based on “the prior knowledge any Romanian school graduate has acquired about the grammar of their native language.” The list of acknowledgements reflects the author’s indebtedness to predecessors belonging both to the field of pedagogical grammar and to theoretical and applied linguistics. It is worth mentioning that Ileana Oana Macari also thanks the students she has taught for having learned from them how to teach Morpho-syntax better, which is indicative of the value she sets on her teaching experience and its relevance for her research.

The material of the volume is distributed as follows: the preface is followed by an introductory chapter (1.) and by four main chapters (2. *Linguistic units*, 3. *Clause functional categories and functions*, 4. *The Phrase*, 5. *Word Classes*), plus a final list of references. The very lexical compound morpho-syntax (with a hyphen) indicates awareness of the fact that language “levels” are interrelated and function concurrently, although they are traditionally analyzed separately. That is why the grammatical features the author chose to analyze obviously have double implications that are most concisely expressed by the title of one subchapter of the book, namely the one dealing with *forms and functions* (2.1.). From that standpoint, the author’s theoretical basis has much to do with what is generally known as functional linguistics. Also, there are implications of

contact linguistics in the book: by turning to account principles of the so-called bilingual method and instead of going along the outdated line of “target language immersion” and the “English-only” policy (that is, “no reference to L1, and no translation”), Ileana Oana Macari has chosen the line suggested by the earlier (but revisited and validated by recent research) comparative/contrastive method. In fact, the reader is invited to become aware of systemic differences as well as similarities between the L1 and the L2, thus getting a clearer idea about how language in general functions as a system of communication by verbal signs.

One important intention of the author is to point not only to errors due to structural differences between the L1 and the L2, but also to the negative effects of terminological “false friends”, since a number of terms to be found in English and Romanian grammar books are similar in form, but quite different in meaning. For instance, Eng. *phrase* (as used in combinations such as *noun phrase*, *verb phrase*, etc.) has nothing to do with Rom. *frază*. For the latter, English grammarians use *sentence*, which actually corresponds to both Rom. *frază* and Rom. *propoziție*; as for the latter, it certainly is not translatable by Eng. *proposition* (from the verb *to propound*), but to Eng. *clause*; and so on. The author’s preventive attitude in the field of virtual terminological errors is manifest not only in the text proper, but also in the abundant set of explanatory footnotes (see, for instance, f.n. 26, on *părți de propoziție*, or f.n. 28, on *grupul predicatului*).

As already suggested above, the sources used by the author represent several interrelated fields, as manifest in the final list of references. First of all, there is a whole series of grammatical works, published in either English or Romanian (Alexander 1988, Biber et al. 2002, Bulgăr 1995, Coteanu 1982,

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Crystal 1996, Iliescu 2007, Leech 1992, Huddleston & Pullum 2005, etc.). Another series consists of learners' grammars (Close 1992, Bachman & Palmer 1996, Greenbaum & Quirk 1990, Ur 1999, Williams 2005, etc.). Last but not least, a series of works are post-2000 achievements in linguistics proper (Akmajian et al. 2001, Brinton & Brinton 2010, Denham & Lobeck 2010, Mair 2012, Meyer 2009, Trask 2005, etc.). Also notably, the same list of references includes two pages of internet sources that represent the above-mentioned domains.

Although – after the subchapter on the prepo-

sition – the text proper ends rather abruptly, with no general conclusions, the author's keen arguments and illustrative examples manage to do what was promised in the Preface: to present English morpho-syntax in a top-down approach that consistently and, why not, effectively builds a bridge between what the Romanian reader knows about their L1 grammar and what they need to learn about the English counterpart. In the near future, this instrument may prove to be useful for those who may not simply want to acquire English, but also to understand it as a functional system.