

TESTS IN SPECIALIZED LATIN FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES

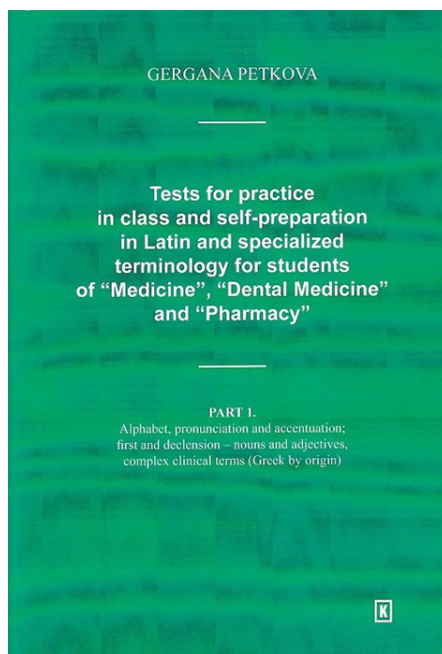
Petkova, G., 2021. Tests for practice in class and self-preparation in Latin and specialized terminology for students of “Medicine”, “Dental medicine”, and “Pharmacy”. Part 1. Alphabet, pronunciation and accentuation; first and second declension – nouns and adjectives, complex clinical terms (Greek by origin). Plovdiv: Koala Press Publishing, ISBN 978-619-7536-94-2.

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Due to the COVID-19 pandemic that broke out at the beginning of 2020, the 2020/2021 academic year was initially transformed into an online and later into a hybrid form of education at the Department of Languages and Specialized Training, Medical University of Plovdiv (Bulgaria). The situation has remained unchanged during the present 2021/2022 academic year.

The new form of education proved to be an advantage especially for the theoretical subjects because they were taught entirely online, keeping students safe and saving them time and cost. The hard decision to impose such a fundamental change was taken by the authorities of the university because of the numerous foreign students coming not only from different European countries but also from further destinations like, for example, the United States of America, Australia, and New Zealand, where the number of patients infected with the new virus was permanently higher than the average or the “acceptable” level.



That atypical situation, in which alternative resources and platforms for educational purposes were needed, led to modifications of the traditional teaching methods and educational methodology. The first-year academic subject of Latin is basic at the Medical University and it plays the role of a tool for an interdisciplinary connection between other specialized subjects. Online education requires that students spend more time on self-preparation although the duration of the classes is not shortened. The lack of reliable electronic resources for the theoretical courses resulted in difficulties for students to memorize the new terminology units and master the learning material. These are some of the reasons why it is of paramount importance to provide new textbooks and books with additional exercises and practice tests. The more students practice solving problems, the more they increase their ability to transfer the practiced skills to new and more complex problems.

In this context, two original books with practice tests in Latin were introduced at the Department of Languages and Specialized Training (DLST) at the Medical University of Plovdiv, designed for first-year students, by the author Senior Lecturer, Dr. Gergana Petkova.

The first one is aimed at all the students majoring in Medicine, Dental Medicine, and Pharmacy, who are taught Latin via Bulgarian – Tests for practice in class and self-preparation in Latin and specialized terminology for students of “*Medicine*”, “*Dental medicine*” and “*Pharmacy*”. Part 1. Alphabet, pronunciation and accentuation; first and second declension – nouns and adjectives, complex clinical terms (Greek by origin). The second book is intended for students from the English language program (Tests for practice in class and self-preparation in Latin and specialized terminology for students of “*Medicine*”, “*Dental Medicine*” and “*Pharmacy*”. Part 1. Alphabet, pronunciation and accentuation; first and second declension – nouns and adjectives, complex clinical terms (Greek by origin).

The practice tests provide students with an opportunity to self-check their knowledge and level of improvement in the specialized theoretical subject of Latin. For this purpose, multiple-choice questions are employed with 4 answer options, except for the True or False test items, where the answer options are two.

The number of the tests included in each of the two practice books is three, one for every separate specialty designated in the book titles. Each test consists of 100 closed questions with only one correct answer, which allows students to easily calculate their final grade by themselves.

All the questions in the practice tests are divided thematically and typologically in the following groups:

- General grammatical and terminological knowledge check (40 questions);
- Verifying if specific information is true or false (10 questions);
- Checking students’ knowledge about the morphological and structural construction of an expression used in anatomy, in clinics, or as a diagnose (10 questions);

– Examining students’ general knowledge about the Greek term-elements used for compound clinical terms formation; about cases of pairs of synonyms (terms similar in meaning in a given context) and antonyms (terms with the opposite meaning in a specific context) (30 questions);

– Checking students’ ability to form a clinical term by a certain definition or vice versa – to define the meaning of a given clinical term (10 questions).

The tests start with easier questions which become more complex with every next group of questions described above. The test items are constructed based on Bloom’s taxonomy, which describes the main levels in the cognitive domain that are hierarchically arranged on the principle “from simple to complex”. In effect this means that learning at the higher levels depends on having attained prerequisite knowledge and skills at the lower levels so this approach enables measurability of students’ knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The types of questions encompass choosing the correct option in examples of various grammatical rules, selecting the part of a phrase that contains a mistake, choosing the correct grammatical form in context, True/False items to agree or disagree with statements related to the use of Greek term-elements, selecting the correct definitions of terms and diagnoses, etc.

The answer keys provide detailed explanations in such a way as to help students to realize effortlessly what gaps they may have in memorizing terminology units and grammatical rules and correct them.

As a conclusion, I would warmly recommend the two presented books with practice tests in Latin for medical purposes for revision, upgrading, and improving the learning process in the other academic subjects, too.

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