

The Noun: a Romanian – German Contrastive Approach

Alina Nicoleta Pădurean, *Substantivul, abordare contrastivă româno-germană (The Noun: a Romanian – German Contrastive Approach)*. Arad, Gutenberg Univers, 2013. ISBN: 978-606-675-023-3, 194 pages

The Noun: a Romanian – German Contrastive Approach written by Alina Nicoleta Pădurean is maybe one of the most comprehensive analyses of the Romanian and German noun so far. In more than 200 pages, the author refers to the most important aspects of the noun in the two previously mentioned languages. Based on the well-known work *Kontrastive Grammatik deutsch-rumänisch* published in Mannheim, the present work aims not only to identify the differences between the two analysed languages, but also to establish the similarities, because the author considers that a proper understanding of both from the beginning, considerably eases the understanding of the mental structures of the target language and also the manner the entities are organized at a macro structural level. She took into consideration throughout her work the concept of correlation between typology and contrastive analysis by structuring the analytic approach on two levels: the *macrostructural* and the *microstructural* which implies a differentiated research methodology: the *paradigmatic type* for the first level and the *syntagmatic type* for the second.

The book is structured in 5 chapters with an Introduction, Conclusion and Annexes. In the first chapter, the author refers to contrastive studies, giving a definition and a scientific insight into the studies of contrastive analysis, in general and Romanian – German contrastive studies, in particular.

Another aspect worth mentioning is that the author compares the Romanian noun as presented by the traditional grammar and mentions the differences that occur in the New Grammar of the Romanian Language. The second chapter is dedicated to this analysis as it is considered relevant for the contrastive study of Romanian and German. The New Grammar supports the contrastive studies, as the terminology is adapted to the grammar of other languages enabling researchers to use the same vocabulary when studying the linguistic phenomenon.

In the third chapter, the author presents contrastively the Romanian and German noun, its definition and classification. The theoretical aspects are supported by examples selected from literary works in Romanian and German, thus giving an original aspect to the research. She referred to proper nouns and common nouns in both languages. The author structured her research in three parts throughout her work: the approach to the Romanian noun, the approach to the German noun and the contrastive analysis. The third aspect, namely the contrastive analysis, identifies the similarities and the differences between the two languages, pointing out what learners should be aware of, when learning German as a foreign language.

The fourth chapter deals with the declination and the gender. Like in the previous chapter, the author tried to present the theoretical aspects with the support of literary examples and also to identify the similarities and the differences between German and Romanian. The last chapter presents the grammatical category of number in both languages.

The author structured the bibliographical resources very clearly, namely the bibliography used for contrastive studies, the one used for the Romanian noun and the one for the German noun.

Alina Pădurean tried to capture the similarities between the two languages belonging to two different language families. Surprisingly, there are many similarities between German and Romanian at all levels, even in the case of gender, which is considered a controversial category. The author also tried to identify solutions for various problems that researchers might face but mostly to support learners during the learning process.

Theoretical aspects were always accompanied by concrete examples found in literary works. It is true that textbooks and learning materials use authentic texts instead of literary pieces of writing. One might ask the question of relevance for the use of such examples. The book is also intended for translators, for the language in translation studies and the language that we find in literary writings is the same. It does not change; it is not fancy or fashionable; the grammar is correct, and the structures are carefully selected. The author thought about the practical relevance of her work for a longer period of time. The spoken language will suffer certain changes whereas the literary works remain the same. She found a very interesting solution to point out the changes that occurred in the language structures. Thus, she selected a book written in the 19th century by

Theodor Fontane and one by Herta Müller thus comparing the German of the 19th century to the German of the 21st century. For Romanian exemplifications, Alina Pădurean selected G. Călinescu and Camil Petrescu, but also the contemporary Gabriel Liiceanu.

We believe that the book written by Alina Nicoleta Pădurean is a very useful tool for teachers of German as a foreign language, as well as for learners, researchers and also translators who want to identify the best solutions for their work.

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