

REVIEWS

Györfy, Mária. *English for Doctors.* Authentic Consulting – Room Activities for Doctors, Dentists, Students and Nurses with complementary recorded material. Havlíčkův Brod: Triton, 2001, 226 p.

For most doctors whose first language is not English communication with colleagues at international conferences or when working abroad does not pose a great problem, as the medical language used is fairly universal. However, when faced English-speaking patients in the consulting room different vocabulary is required.
(Györfy, “Introduction”)

In my opinion, these two sentences distinctly express the motivation Mária Györfy had for collecting authentic materials recorded in consulting rooms all over Great Britain and the United States. Her aim was to help doctors and medical students who wish to work in English speaking countries and thanks to her elaboration they may now enjoy a book which helps in developing communicative skills between physicians and their patients.

Doctor-patient interaction is an important process, especially in those cases where the diagnosis and the following treatment is based mostly on the information acquired from such interaction. Moreover, if we take into consideration those examples of patient experiences issued in the American Academy on Physician and Patient, the relationship between a doctor and a person who relies on him/her sometimes emerges as a question of death or life.

Although getting acquainted with the process of this kind of interaction can become very problematic due to its difficulty, it is necessary to master at least the basic rules which play part in doctor-patient communication. If we follow A National Curriculum For Medical Students in the United States, it is clear that more and more medical schools, universities and other institutions have realized the importance of understanding the process when a physician is interviewing his/her patient. Mária Györfy's *English for Doctors* contributes to such understanding.

It is not only a collection of recordings, but rather a textbook accompanied by a large number of various exercises. The book is divided into 13 units, each of them based on a different medical speciality: Internal Medicine, Medications, Obstetrics and Gyn(a)ecology, P(a)ediatrics, Urology, Ear, Nose and Throat, Orthop(a)edics, Surgery, Dermatology, Genitourinary Infections, Ophthalmology, Neurology and Dentistry. All these branches deal with topics such as history-taking, physical examination, treatment, patients' complaints and doctors' advices.

The topics mentioned above are introduced through dialogues available either in British or American English, sometimes in both. This fact is quite important since the two varieties of the English language often use different medical terminology. It also helps students whose native tongue is other than English in mastering both pronunciations. Pronunciation Guide to Medical Terminology is included for the same reason.

As for the exercises, they always consist of three parts. First of all, there is a pre-listening activity which may be checked after listening. Then the main dialogue of the unit follows. Finally, a section on doctor's role is provided. These exercises are especially aimed at checking the listener's

comprehension and studying new expressions and useful phrases. Other language skills (eg. writing doctor's referral) are also developed. Possible mistakes can be corrected after consulting Answer Key at the end of the book.

What is important to stress is the fact that not only medical students and doctors but linguists as well may profit from this interesting book. The large corpus of about one hundred tapescripts of D-P dialogues, which is accompanied by four cassettes, forms a great source for anglicists interested in the introduced field of study. Their analyses may bring a deeper insight into the flow of language used between doctors and patients, and as a result, a new, revised version of this book could be created.

There are many features of the D-P communication we may examine as linguists. For example, it would be very interesting to study the role of questions and answers in D-P interaction. Another feature we could focus on is the politeness and its language manifestation in this kind of conversation. The structure of the corpus offers to compare the British English and American English versions of the same dialogues. Another comparison may be aimed at the different medical specialities, etc.

Undoubtedly, Mária Györffy has prepared a very useful book. Students of the Medical University of Pécs, Hungary, have already been benefiting from it for eight years and, hopefully, Czech students of medicine and linguists-anglicists will experience the same joy.

Miroslav Černý

Prem Poddar. *Violent Civilities: English, India, Culture.* Aarhus: Aarhus UP, 2002, 214 p.

In his widely-researched work Prem Poddar addresses the issues of discourse formation in colonial as well as post-colonial India and the role of English studies in this process. Poddar points out the "epistemic continuities" of colonial and nationalist discourses and calls for a new critical awareness about the teaching of English in contemporary India.

In an attempt to put this demand into practice, Poddar offers a detailed survey of how the introduction of the English language, English literary studies and, more generally, Western secular education was employed in India in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Poddar subscribes to Gauri Viswanathan's thesis that the introduction of the above was operative in "maintaining and consolidating British supremacy in India" and providing the colonial rulers with an "effective strategy of containment". English literature was thus instrumental in supplying the "sanction of higher motives" to a process of economic exploitation and imperial domination. The chapter "Englishing India" covers the individual stages of this process. The author finds little difference between the original Orientalist approach toward education (as represented by the policies of the Governor-General Warren Hastings) and the Anglicist approach that took its place in the nineteenth century, for, in his view, "through both projects, strategies and tactics oriented toward the consolidation of power and the continuation of the colonial enterprise were manifest".

One of the major themes of the book is the survival of the dominance of English literary culture in Indian education even after the collapse of imperial rule: echoing Chandra Chatterjee's notion of colonial nationalism as a derivative discourse, Poddar reminds us of the complicity between the earlier imperial discourses and the ensuing nationalist ones, for the "construction of nationalist intellectuals occurred primarily through the repressive and discursive state apparatuses of the empire". Thus he convincingly demonstrates how "the developmental discourses actually sustain colonial, anglicist and orientalist regimes, even as they set out to oppose them".

A critique of the *Haksar Commission Report* (1990), a document on government policy toward cultural institutions, forms the core of the chapter entitled "'The State of Culture' National Imaginings". Poddar starts this part with a historical and contextual inquiry into the term culture and comments somewhat sketchily on the various uses of the concept by thinkers such as Mathew