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MEDICAL TERMINOLOGY IN MODERN SERBIA – MORE THAN ONE AND A HALF CENTURY LONG JOURNEY (1841 – 1872 – 2022)
VELIKA GODIŠNJICA MEDICINSKE TERMINOLOGIJE U SAVREMENOJ SRBIJI – PUT DUG 1,5 VEK I VIŠE (1841-1872-2022 GODINE)

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Summary
Introduction. Linguistic expressions in a certain country, used in new or less developed sciences and professions, are commonly associated with difficulties due to the mother-tongue poverty. This also applies to the medical terminology. In modern Serbia, despite an eight-century-long hospital tradition, an institutional approach to the medical terminology was first established 180 years ago by the Society of Serbian Letters, founded in 1841, lasting until 1885. It was continued 30 years later by the Serbian Medical Society, founded in 1872. Society of Serbian Letters. The work of the Society of Serbian Letters on the Serbian language and terminology was very short, because Vuk Karadžić, among others, pointed out that the Society did not have the capacity to provide accurate and reliable terminology, which was not possible at the time. The work of Dr. Jovan Stejić and his translations of the books Macrobiotics and Anthropology are significant for medical terminology. Serbian Medical Society. Precisely set goals related to medical terminology and the preservation of the Serbian language in medicine were an integral part of the first Constitution of the Serbian Medical Society. However, during the continuous, 150-year-long work of the Society and the beginning of medical terminology standardization, for reasons still not explored, medical terminology has disappeared from its highest legal act, including the current Statute.

Conclusion. Not even 180 years since the first short-term and 150 years since the long-term process of institutional approach to medical terminology was enough to develop and standardize medical terminology in modern Serbia. In order not to leave it to the arbitrariness of individuals, medical terminology must be a national strategy, such as, for example, the terminology of 33 professions in the Republic of Croatia called Croatian Professional Nomenclature.

Key words: Terminology as Topic; History of Medicine; Physicians; Famous Persons; Societies, Medical

Introduction
The evolution of the medical profession and science, as well as of all other scientific and professional disciplines, is inevitably associated with the evolution of language of the environment in which they are applied. This especially applies to environments in which they are new or have been less de-
developed compared to other areas/countries. It is the same with medicine in Serbia. Although it has a very long tradition, starting with the founding of the first hospitals in Hilandar and Studenica by Saint Sava in 1198 and 1207, respectively, slavery under the Turks lasting about 3.5 centuries, necessarily led not only to stagnation, but also to regression of medicine. In contrast, countries of Europe, many of which were physically defended and protected from the Turkish invasion by the Serbs, experienced no delays in their development. That is why it is not surprising that, in the 18th and 19th centuries, the citizens of Serbia mostly studied medical science in the countries of Western Europe. Upon returning to the country, newly graduated doctors, due to the lack of appropriate medical terms in the Serbian language, encountered difficulties or even impossibility of expressing themselves in Serbian language in their profession, either in communication with each other, or in communication with the largest number of patients who, just like today, mostly had no medical education. Thus, there was a need to introduce a large number of previously unknown terms into the Serbian language, to come up with completely new words - terms denoting certain concepts in science. This implied the formation of scientific terminology.

And the number of new words directly depended on the development of the native language at that time.

In Serbia, the need for establishing and improving medical terminology was expressed by medical professionals in the 19th century. These activities took place within the framework of appropriate scientific and professional societies, primarily the Society of Serbian Letters (SSL) and the Serbian Medical Society (SMS). Their members were medical doctors educated outside of Serbia, because such education was not possible in Serbia. To date, this process, with its ups and downs, has neither been completed, nor can it be expected, precisely because of the nature of language and the nature of medicine itself as a scientific field.

Development of medical terminology in modern Serbia
Institutional approach began 180 years ago (1841 - 2022): Society of Serbian Letters

With the founding of the Lyceum in Kragujevac in 1838, which was moved to Belgrade in 1841, it turned out that there were linguistic inconsistencies in teaching. In order to achieve, among other things, “dissemination of science in Serbian language, as well as education and improvement of language” [1], including the creation of professional terminology, that were necessary due to rapid development of the society and science in general, the SSL, i.e. literacy in the broadest sense of the word, was founded under the patronage of Prince Mihailo Obrenović in 1841, and lasted until 1845. The members of the Society were learned and important people of that time in the fields of science and literature, including Jovan Sterija Popović, Jernej Kopitar, Petar II Petrović Njegoš, Šava Popović Tekelija. The first institutional approach to the creation of terminology in general, including medical terminology, was established by this Society.

One of the founders and the member of the SSL, its secretary and vice-president was Jovan Stejić (1803, Arad, Austria-Hungary – 1853, Belgrade), a medical doctor, writer, and educator (Figure 1). He was educated thanks to the help of Sava Tekelija and Jevrem Obrenović. He started studies of medicine in Pest (Austria-Hungary) and finished in Vienna in 1829, after which he came to the Principality of Serbia [2]. Dr. Stejić held respectable and important positions in the social and political life of the Principality of Serbia. He contributed a lot to the development of civil healthcare.

Dr. Jovan Stejić actively participated in the work of the SSL. He had a notable role in the reform of the Serbian language and orthography and its development and standardization at a time when the modern Serbian literary language was at its very beginning. Although he was in favor of them to a large extent, he did not always agree with Vuk Karadžić on the issues of language reform that he implemented. And “in his writings he advocated a middle way in the development of the Serbian literary language, especially in terms of its orthography.
... When it comes to newly created words, Stejić was prone to purist understanding, but also allowed the use of foreign words, but selectively”. He advocated a language “known to the priest and the judge, the merchant and the craftsman, the farmer and the servant” [3].

He worked on the creation of terminology, including medical terminology. “He is considered the founder of medical literature and medical terminology in this area” [2]. He came across medical terminology at a very young age, during his studies, translating from German into Serbian the book “Macrobiotics - the Science of Prolonging Human Life” (1826), whose author was the Berlin professor of the Faculty of Medicine, Johann Peter Huferland. “It was the first medical book in Serbian language in the Principality of Serbia” [4]. In the translation, he had to introduce some new and “changed” words, which did not lose their significance in relation to the text he was translating.

Later on, Dr. Stejić gave new medical terms in the translation of the book “Anthropology or Science of Man” (1850) by an unknown author, on the cover of which he wrote that he adapted it to Serbian rather than translated it. In an analysis of this book, it was determined that out of 245 terms in the field of anatomy, as many as 210 were domestic and a number of words were of foreign origin, Latin, Greek, Slavicisms and a few Turkishisms, which he opposed. Today, 105 of those terms are still in use [5].

The systematic work of the SSL on developing a terminology system in general, including medical terminology, was interrupted in 1845, mostly under the influence of Vuk Karadžić, a member of this Society. “Vuk criticized this experiment (creation of terminology in the SSL, author’s note) both in writing and orally, stating that the main reason was that the participants did not know their native language well. An individual would also be allowed to propose new words, said Vuk, so others would accept or reject them; but the SSL is an authority, and it must not propose mistakes” [6]. This action clearly showed the understanding and attitudes towards terminology: it was not a matter of an individual, but it had to be approached in an organized manner. Also, it should be done by experts with exceptionally good education and knowledge. Therefore, their work would give no reasons for any doubt. Unfortunately, such conditions did not exist at the time of the beginning of the work of the SSL, but also many years later, so the creation of terminology was left to the good will of individuals. Dr. Jovan Stejić was among them. This was the case until the founding of the SMS in 1872.

Institutional approach continued 150 years ago (1872 - 2022): Serbian Medical Association

In 1872, the conditions were met for the establishment of the SMS. It was founded on April 22, 1872, by 15 doctors, five of whom were Serbs, three Czechs, two Poles, three Germans, one Greek and one Slovak. One of the aforementioned founders and initiator was Dr. Vladan (Hippocrates) Đorđević (1844, Belgrade - 1930, Baden, Austria), a military surgeon, founder of the military medical service and the Red Cross Society in Serbia, minister, ambassador, and writer. At the very first meeting of the SMS, Dr. Đorđević was presenting a case of a patient he was treating, and tried to find the appropriate term for the Latin term nodus, which was then named in the Serbian language for the first time as “gromuljica”. Much earlier, Milan Jovanović-Batut (1847, Sremska Mitrovica - 1940, Belgrade), while still a medical student in Vienna, asked himself a question, for which he had no answer at the time, namely what was the word for scapula (Latin) in Serbian. He devoted his entire life to collecting materials for medical terminology. In 1886, his book “Materials for Medical Terminology” (Figure 2) was published, as the first of its kind in our country [7]. Unfortunately, although he collected 60,000 words, and this number is not definitive, he never translated them into a medical dictionary [8]. However,
Prof. Aleksandar Kostić, our famous histologist, managed to publish “Multilingual Medical Dictionary”, perhaps his most famous work [9]. The first edition is from 1956. Professor Kostić worked persistently and systematically on our medical terminology.

At the meetings of SMS, since the beginning of its work, the members realized that there were no corresponding word in Serbian language for many medical terms they learned during their studies. The SMS Constitution is an excellent indicator that the issue of medical terminology has been approached extremely seriously. In the first paragraph, under point a, it is stated that SMS “takes care of the development of Serbian scientific terminology in medicine and its disciplines” (Figure 3) [10].

At the suggestion of the president of the SMS, Aćim Medović, the conclusions of the fourth meeting of the SMS (September 16, 1872), formulated in three points, were printed in the Serbian Archives of Medicine, journal established at the first meeting of the SMS. The first issue of the journal was published in 1874. Among other things, the journal published professional presentations from SMS meetings and conclusions reached at SMS meetings on issues of importance for the medical profession, health and well-being of people in Serbia, including medical terminology. Some of the conclusions from the fourth meeting were as follows [11]:

a) The Society uses terms used by the people, and if they have not yet been collected, it collects them from the people for its own needs and progress;

b) The newly coined terms should not to be submitted for publication, until they are formally accepted within the limits of the freedom of expression, and

c) Instead of other folk terms, until the society learns the place of newly coined terms, which are not adopted, Greek and Latin terms should be used, as the greatest scholars in other nations do”.

The basic task of the SMS in terms of medical terminology was also confirmed in the amended First Constitution from 1873, which was formulated in point 3 of Article 1:

“To (SMS - author’s note) take care of Serbian terminology in medical science and its disciplines according to the laws of science and idiomatic Serbian language and above all by collecting and critically adopting words that exist in the Serbian nation” [12].

In the creation of medical terminology, SSL and SMS preferred Serbian to foreign words. They were searched for, if they were not already in practice. Yet, there were always individuals or groups who intensively advocated internationalism and/or foreign words. If something is a historical legacy of SMS, it is certainly the clearly expressed awareness and foresight of the first generation of doctors, founders and members of SMS, about the need and importance of the development of medical terminology. The proposed terms could be used only after they were adopted by the SMS. It was expected that a professional approach to the creation and development of medical terminology, one of the basic achievements of the SMS set at the very beginning of its work, would be a continual and permanent responsibility of the SMS. How successful was it?

Medical terminology in Modern Serbia

Today, the SMS does not have a Constitution, but it does have a Statute, and the last one was adopted on December 28, 2018. In Article 4, the first paragraph is entitled “Goals and Tasks of the Society” [13]. The beginning of the first sentence reads: “The objectives of the Society are to preserve the historical heritage of Serbian healthcare and to take care of IT...”. There is no mention of medical terminology in the Goals, or in other parts of the Statute, although it is a historical heritage. Do these relentless facts indicate that the terminology in the amendment to the first Constitution of the SMS has become absolutely outdated?

It has not yet been investigated when medical terminology, as a task of the SMS, disappeared from its basic legal act or why. This may have been the result of an assessment that:

- The process of creating medical terminology in our country has already been completed and there is no need for an institution such as SMS to further take care of it;

- Medical terminology is an unimportant part of medicine and there is no need for SMS to deal with terminology;

Figure 3. First Constitution of the Serbian Medical Society (July 25, 1872)
Slika 3. Prvi Ustav Srpskog lekarskog društva (25. 7. 1872.)
Another institution took over the care of medical terminology from the SMS and it will continue to work on it, etc.

Radivoje Pavlović (1893, Chip, south of Budapest, Austria-Hungary - 1938, Belgrade), the first Serbian professor of pharmacology at the Faculty of Medicine in Belgrade (Figure 4), could have helped us understand the current situation. With his extraordinary medical, general and musical education, knowledge of many foreign languages, including Hungarian, Latin and ancient Greek, and his completely developed attitude to the state of medical terminology in our country, with scientific precision, clearly, reliably and uniquely he explained many important aspects on this topic in his unique work “On Medical Terminology” from 1928. He wrote: “...the development of our medical literature brought the creation of new words ... new words must be created for new terms”. He continues: “Medical terminology in no language will be elaborated and can never be elaborated, arranged and definite in all details, as long as a language is alive.” In order for this process of creating new words to be as successful as possible, there must be some rules and “certain instructions must be created on the main issues, there must be a platform”.

The Republic of Croatia is a good example of how to take care about the native language today and it may be a guide to others. Along with several state institutions, in 2007 it launched a national program for the creation of professional terminology in Croatian language, whose acronym is STRUNA (Croatian Professional Nomenclature), which is financed by the state [15]. “STRUNA is a terminological database of Croatian professional terminology in which the terminology of various professions is systematically collected, created, processed and interpreted in order to build and harmonize terminology in Croatian language.” Medical science is one of the 33 professions covered by the STRUNA program.

If the concept of institutional approach is replaced by an individual approach and the development of medical terminology is left to individuals, there will be inconceivable consequences, both due to the creation of inappropriate new words in the Serbian language, and due to uncritical and incorrect adoption of foreign words. Professor Pavlović points out where the danger may come from: “Semi-literate intellectuals, so numerous in their professions, do not learn well their mother tongue during schooling, and become susceptible to the influence of grammar, syntax and stylistics of foreign languages, especially if they stay abroad for a long time. This is where countless errors of all kinds originate from, not only in journalistic, popular and professional literature, but even in fiction” [14].

Although the medical profession, for the most part, has for a very long time resisted accepting, perception or trends in terms of unreserved acceptance of foreign terms [16], in recent decades, however, mostly wrongly, foreign words, regardless of whether they are Greek, Latin, English or from some other language, have violently invaded our medical terminology. They are often introduced into the Serbian language by the process of “Serbization”, incorrect and inaccurate translations. There are many studies that clearly show how improperly this is done [17].

Adoption of foreign words has its good sides, because the language is enriched, but there are also bad sides, because they squeeze out native words, as well as the obligation of the society to create appropriate terms in the Serbian language if they do not already exist, which impoverishes the language. Proponents of using foreign words, including internationalism, are not only medical doctors, but also experts in the Serbian language. This is especially emphasized in the case of the so-called obscene words, selected according to their own standards: “In modern medical terminology, international terms are also mandatory, in order to avoid obscene words” [18]. Since the meaning of a foreign and native word must not differ, the only question is: why is a foreign word not obscene, but the Serbian is?

**Conclusion**

Newly formed words, which are often incorrectly, unprofessionally coined and classified as medical terms, are very dangerous for future gen-
erations, because, in the absence of criticism, these terms are imposed as the only correct and acceptable solution, and young people, almost as a rule, in these cases trust the authorities because they encounter these terms for the first time. Thus, the avalanche of bad medical terms is becoming more and more established. It will be like that until the creation of terminology in general, not only medical, is established by the state, as its national interest in nurturing and preserving the Serbian language and, consequently, clear principles of terminology creation are established. Also, from the point of view of the current state of this important field of medical science, the statement of Dr. Batut from 1886 must be genuinely analyzed: “At this moment, our medical terminology is so incomplete ....” [7]. Experts, in the true sense of the word, with different professional education, not only linguists or medical doctors, should continue working on medical terminology, which was systematically started more than 1.5 centuries ago, and it is a great anniversary today. The last 180 years were not enough for Serbia to establish a standardized medical terminology, rather, it has not been done even to a significant extent.

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