

The *Department of Romanian language, culture and civilization* of the Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University was founded in 1974. Thousands of students from all over the world have studied Romanian here, some in order to be able to enrol in a Romanian university, others as part of their academic training in an Erasmus mobility or other exchange programmes.

We offer several types of courses in general Romanian:

- an intensive course (25 academic hours/week), called the *preparatory year*, that runs from October till June and aims at taking the students to a B2 level.
- a four hour/week course offered mostly to students who study in our University as part of an exchange programme. The groups are divided according to their level of Romanian (A1 to B2) and are assessed at the end of each semester;
- intensive language courses as part of the two Summer Schools organized by our university: *International Summer Courses of Romanian Language and Civilization* and *Summer School of Romanian Language and Central and Eastern European Civilization* (in collaboration with Arizona State University).

Apart from General Romanian, we offer other types of courses:

- specialized language courses (for Medicine, Humanities and Art, Economics and Technology, Architecture and Engineering) for the students enrolled in the *preparatory year*;
- a course in Romanian culture and civilization for the preparatory year students;
- a course in Romanian language, culture and civilization for advanced students (four hours/week);
- training programmes for teachers and academics involved in teaching Romanian as a foreign language at university level;
- training programmes for primary and secondary school teachers of Romanian as a native and non-native language (the department has trained so far over 4000 Romanian teachers as part of two major European projects: **POSDRU/157/1.3/S/133900, EVRO**, „Perfecționarea cadrelor didactice care predau limba română în învățământul preuniversitar în evaluarea competențelor de comunicare ale elevilor”/Training primary and secondary school teachers of Romanian Language to assess language skills and competences and **POSDRU/87/1.3/S/63909**, RLNM, „Perfecționarea cadrelor didactice din învățământul preuniversitar care predau limba română minorităților naționale”./Training primary and secondary school teachers that teach Romanian as a non-native language);
- a master programme module in teaching and assessing RFL, unique in the country.

The *Department of Romanian language, culture and civilization* (DRLCC) offers high quality language services and has recently been accredited by Eaquls (Evaluation and Accreditation of Quality Language Services), an international organization that certifies excellence in language education. According to the report provided by the Eaquls inspection team, our department meets the quality standards for all the twelve categories considered (management, teaching, course design, assessment, academic resource, learning environment, client services, quality assurance, staff development, employment terms, internal and external communication) and it exceeds quality standards for 7 out of the 12 categories mentioned above (Eaquls awarded our department points of excellence “due to the considered approach to achieving, maintaining, and extending an ethos and delivery of high quality” and “as a result of the close attention to course planning and delivery by academic management, and the highly developed system of lesson observation.”).

Here is an excerpt from the report:

“The inspectors gained an impression of motivated and engaged teaching, positive classroom dynamics, and clear evidence of learning progress. Students in their focus group were complimentary about their classes and teachers.”

Apart from good quality teaching, our department has developed and implemented a suite of standardised tests in Romanian as a Foreign Language (for the levels A1, A2, B1, B2). Soon after that, the Department of Romanian Language, Culture and Civilization, together with the Romanian Cultural Institute have created the BBU-RCI Consortium for Testing Romanian as a

Foreign Language and submitted a suite of examinations to the ALTE (The Association of Language Testers in Europe) audit. With the full support of the ALTE Secretariat and the inspiring guidance of our esteemed auditor, Henk Kuijper, we successfully passed the ALTE audit and became full ALTE members. Our examinations, linked to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), are administered for the levels A1, A2, B1 and B2, the last one being a high stake examination, which facilitates admission in universities in Romania for foreign students. All four examinations test both oral and written receptive and productive abilities, including, as well, a component of elements of communication construction (grammar and vocabulary). According to the ALTE report,

„The test team has managed to develop examinations of good quality. The combination of qualitative and quantitative procedures to reach good quality and the way procedures and results are documented are a good example for small scale examinations. The examinations are based on the communicative language approach. During the development of the examination, relevant sources were used for setting up the content and format of the examinations. The now existing subtests reflect the communicative language testing approach in a proper way. The choices made are well substantiated and documented.”

While the DRLCC offers good quality teaching and assessment to our students, our small team have also managed to develop and publish extensive research papers (such as books, MA and PhD thesis) as well as a large number of articles and research papers in the field of Romanian as a foreign language (RFL) and second language acquisition. In some ways, we have been pioneers in building a solid theoretical ground for learning and teaching RFL.

Our department is recognised at a national and international level as one of the best centres for teaching, assessing, teacher training and research in RFL.

Web page: www.romaniandepartment.com