

## EDITORIAL

The current volume contains a selection of the papers presented at the Annual Conference of The Department of Modern Languages and Business Communication, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, the 8th International Conference “Synergies in Communication”, organised in Bucharest on 31 October - 1 November 2019 plus one paper submitted separately for peer-review. The panels covered by this edition are: (1) Synergies in business communication, education and research; (2) Interdependencies: quality assurance, academics’ professional development & internationalization of higher education; (3) Education for active citizenship through gender studies and (inter)cultural communication; and (4) East and west within interdisciplinary frames. The edition taking place in 2019 brings forward diverse contributions: seven articles presented at the first panel, six at the second, while the third grouping includes four texts and the last panel has three papers, raising to twenty papers in total. In what regards their choice of linguistic expression, authors used English, French, German and Romanian, most of the texts being written in English. We present selected papers following the panels of the conference.

**Rodica Stanciu-Capotă, Cornelia Pătru and Alina-Maria Mardari** open the set of contributions of the first panel, examining the options of a multilingual education provided by the same institution (Bucharest University of Economic Studies). They focus on 1<sup>st</sup> year undergraduates, looking at their experiences while relating them to earlier forms of learning. The authors show that further studies could look at ways to work within each group as well as enhancing motivation and autonomous learning.

A secondary line of thinking connects languages and one’s personal development. **Viorela-Valentina Dima and Nicoleta-Adina Panait** explore in their article, “Writing for One’s Personal and Professional Development”, seminar activities used for the Applied Modern Languages study programme for third year students at the Bucharest University of Economic Studies. Inspecting curricula for 58 disciplines for the years 2017-2020, the two authors present data regarding student choices, evaluation tools, as well as writing skills, including feedback received by students and provided to their own peers.

Opening the analysis between the author and the critic, **Mihai Șerban** takes the cultural journey into the direction of André Gide’s literature, defining it as a way towards self-discovery. The technique of *mise-en-abyme* supports the authorial effort to relive and reframe trauma, while Jean Starobinski’s critical perspective highlights both openings as well as difficult choices when interpreting a literary text. The role of the artist turns into the scope of the article entitled “Mistuirea/renașterea artistului în actul poetic”. In this joint paper, **Raluca Nicoleta Șerban and Mihai Șerban** discuss the role of the ego in the context of critical reception. According to the two, fluctuating psychological journeys are key ingredients in the way an artist projects his/her protagonists or those employed by the critic in his/her analysis.

Turning their attention to the Russian cultural space, **Zinaida-Tamara Fedot and Agripina Amos** focus on the specificity of Daniil Harms’s contribution in terms of an anticanon one. Presenting aspects from Harm’s biography in the context of literary circles active during his lifetime, the authors examine in what way language gave expression to particular emotions or

psychological shades, indicating that his writing could be looked at as announcing postmodernism, while remaining a model for his particular poetics.

**Alina Mardari**'s paper, "Anglizismen in der Alltagskommunikation Jugendlicher" closes the series of the first section. She scrutinizes the Anglo-American loans mostly used by teenagers, indicative for higher diverse and cosmopolitan layers in today's linguistic practice. For her, communication relies on more intense interaction compared to several years ago, proving the impact of globalisation on young generations.

The second panel covers articles focusing on quality assurance, academics' professional development & internationalization of higher education. In her paper entitled "Effective teachers as visionary leaders", **Mihaela Pricope** presents positive practices known as rituals analysed by Robin Sharma in his study (2003). The sense of belonging, communication, team work and adaptability are at the core of such a role, being seconded by creativity and innovation. For her, such elements work out when the teacher is open to build positive relationships with students, which results in an improved classroom environment.

Broadening the scope of linguistic analysis, **Violeta Negrea** assesses the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) at academic level in the Faculty of Finance, Insurance, Banks and Stocks Exchange. For her, there are substantial differences in terms of self-evaluation for years 2016-17, 2018-19 and 2018-19. In her opinion, academics need to use self-evaluation in order to provide achievable plans and outcomes.

Such an approach goes deeper in the analysis provided by three additional contributions. Firstly, **Monica-Lucreția Luca-Husti** examines language and academic performance for 415 high-school students, taking into consideration their experience of English, French and Italian. According to Luca-Husti, various European resources provide the required framework for plurilingualism. The author adopted a comparative approach regarding curricula and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and her findings demonstrate significant differences and openings concerning students' career choices.

**Olivia-Cristina Rusu** looks at how assessment works in relation with the business environment. Rusu examines various types of feedback, delivery as well as its role in supporting learner's motivation, or power distance (provider-recipient). According to Rusu, this needs to be part of a wider dialogue carried out between tutors and learners.

In their article entitled "The excitement of studying business English: a Romanian perspective", **Mihaela Arsene** and **Marina-Luminița Militaru** inspect the quality of the learning process provided at their university, highlighting the range and impact of learning experiences based on qualitative research. Their paper focuses on student testimonials, relying on the perspective provided by 16 groups of undergraduate students. For the two authors, it is the consensual freedom and the creative approaches used by tutors which sustain a flexible and open learning environment.

Closing this extensive series while exploring how ESP and teaching practice work together, **Nicoleta-Adina Panait** discusses the benefits of conversational approaches employed for one-to-one learning practice. Her case study presents disadvantages and disadvantages for both tutor and learner. In order to overcome the less effective aspects, the author lists techniques meant to support progress, based on her teaching experience.

Taking into consideration language and performance, the third panel examines education for active citizenship through gender studies and (inter)cultural communication. In her article, **Ruxandra Constantinescu-Ștefănel** explores her findings on business magazines such as "Capital" in the French versus the Romanian editions from October 2018 to April 2019. The

author examines both text and visuals, observing the aim of the editors as well as the technique of the discourse, occasionally shaped in the format of a story, as well as subjective touches and targeted space. A final synthetic overview captures most significant aspects.

Shifting from teaching practice to art consumption examined in the context of life satisfaction, **Iuliana Coman** and **Niculae Mihaiță** present their findings based on an experimental study of 120 individuals located in southern Romania. According to the two researchers, the cinema is most appreciated by respondents, while psychological factors appear to influence the local population in their choices; on the other hand, demographic factors such as gender and income have a lower impact on life satisfaction.

**Florina Mohanu, Raluca Dana Căplescu and Viorela-Valentina Dima** examine the activity of the Russian Cultural Centre active in the Bucharest University of Economic Studies for 10 years, taking into consideration the priority of internationalisation, multilingualism and multiculturalism. The authors indicate that activities are closely connected to the local business environment, providing suggestive data collected from 920 participants. Closing this section, **Valentina Robu** connects current ESP approaches to the legal field, surveying specific teaching resources published in 2006, 2009 and 2011. In her paper, Robu includes an overview of objectives and vocabulary and inspects the range of skills which each textbook develops, suggesting relevant self-study options.

The fourth thematic grouping include connections between the highly diverse and flexible linguistic and cultural areas of the West and the East. **Jia-Lih Yang** opens the approach of linguistic interactions working in between the French and the Mandarin space. Examining data collected from business meetings, Yang discusses relationships and power status, references and the use of personal pronouns, as well as the organisation of one's discourse.

Turning the focus towards the literary territory, **Eliza-Maria Biță** engages in a comparative approach of two authors: Salman Rushdie and Panait Istrati. Biță suggests that expectations followed by disillusionment appears to feed the works of the two writers. Cultural references employed by both writers sustain or deviate the understanding of actions undertaken by key protagonists: wandering, personal relationships or violent acts indicate that characters are often strong-willed yet flexible in restricting circumstances.

Closing the last section with a paper dedicated to the Bard, **Maria Dărăbanț** revisits the historical play "Julius Caesar". Her paper, submitted directly to the editorial board, discusses the concept of leadership, presenting the traits of the Roman ruler: courage, the ability to attract followers, resolution, conflict management, and managing opportunities. Relying on text analysis, Dărăbanț discusses nuances for both male and female characters typical or perhaps occasional only for the period under discussion, broadening thus the scope of her analysis.

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