

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 9th International Conference “Synergies in Communication”, organised in Bucharest on 28-29 October 2021 as an online academic event. The present edition contains 20 papers out of which five papers were submitted separately for peer review (“Discrimination against young learners. With D from damage, distorted hopes, and disengagement with school. A Romanian perspective” by **Mihaela Arsene**, “Emotional Intelligence and Communication Skills in the Teaching-Learning Process” by **Claudia- Raluca Stamatescu**, “Japanese Proverbs Between Equivalence and Comparative Translation from Japanese and English into Romanian. An Analysis from the Semantic and Pragmatic Point of View” by **Oana-Florina Avornicesei**, “Ecocriticism Is the Flagship to Humanity: Revisiting and Decoding *Abhijnanashakuntalam* and *Aranyak*” by **Biswajit Das** and “Women in Gendered Enclosure: a Comparative Study of Indira Goswami’s *Datal Hatir Une Khowa Howda (The Moth-Eaten Howdah of A Tusker)* and Easterine Iralu’s *A Terrible Matriarchy*” by **Kabita Deka** and **Debajyoti Biswas**. The panels covered by this edition are: (1) *Synergies in business communication, education and research*, (2) *Academic and digital literacies in the new educational and research environment. Revisiting quality in higher education*, (3) *Education for active citizenship through gender studies and (inter)cultural communication* and (4) *East meets West across borders and boundaries*. The edition taking place in 2021 brings forward diverse contributions: seven articles presented at the first panel, four at both the second and the third panel, and five at the last panel, raising to twenty papers in total. Regarding choice of linguistic expression, authors used English, French and Romanian, most of the texts being written in English.

Viorela-Valentina Dima and **Florina Mohanu** open the set of contributions of the first panel, *Synergies in business communication, education and research*, with the paper “Encouraging student research. A view from a bachelor’s programme in Applied Modern Languages in Romania”. The authors conducted an extensive and well-articulated quantitative and qualitative corpus analysis unfolded during 2014-2021 with students at Applied Modern Languages, Faculty of International Business and Economics, Bucharest University of Economic Studies - ASE, Romania. This data focused on the Annual Student Conference research between 2014-2021, Bachelor’s thesis research between 2016-2021, as well as the possible correlations between student research and the opportunities for continuing education and professional careers used by graduates from the classes of 2016-2021. **Liliana Alic** authored an article where she discusses two comparable corpuses, scientific articles and book reviews. In order to highlight specific features of both types of texts the author uses a comparative analysis based on cognitive theory, mainly the prototype theory and that of family resemblance, and the corpus linguistic methodology. **Oana-Maria Puiu (Niță)** investigates the use of person deixis (i.e., first person singular deictic pronominals, first person plural deictic pronominals and second person deictic pronominals) in the institutional discourse of the World Health Organization (WHO) related to the Covid-19 pandemic, in a timeframe of one hundred thirty days (from 1st of June 2021 to 13th of October 2021). **Isabella-Alice Matieș-Verbuncu (Stoian)** attempts to grasp the relevance of globalisation and its fundamental and introspective role in the process of modern translation, while **Mihaela Marieta Damian** aims at investigating, from a cognitive linguistic perspective and from a Descriptive Translation standpoint, the transfer in meaning of conceptual properties assigned to the visual metaphor of ‘light’ in Anthony Doerr original English version of the novel *All the light we cannot see* (2014), respectively the Romanian version of the same novel, translated by Iulia Gorzo (2019). **Mihaela Arsene** presents in her paper real-life instances of discrimination against children in the pre-school and elementary school system in Romania and their long- term consequences as concerns learner demotivation and disengagement with school. **Mihai Șerban** provides an in-depth perspective and argues that an effective class of Romanian as a foreign language (RFL) depends on the rigorous presentation of

the language system that governs it and the ability to encourage students' spontaneous reactions in the target language, RFL.

The second panel of this year's edition, *Academic and digital literacies in the new educational and research environment. Revisiting quality in higher education* includes contributions related to approaches to teaching writing, teaching in the pandemic context, medical translations and last but not least the role of emotional intelligence and communication skills in the teaching-learning process. **Alina-Roxana Dulgheru (Goldan)** investigates the relevance of introducing genre-based approaches to teaching writing. In her research, the author tries to find answers to two fundamental questions: 1. To what extent are learners aware of genre differences when exposed to genre exemplars that are relevant for their age group and proficiency level? and 2. How can teachers facilitate students' improvement of their academic writing skills through genre-based approaches to teaching and learning? **Bogdan Gabriel Georgescu's** article "English language teaching performance analysis in pandemic context – online vs. onsite" evaluates the perception of students regarding the formation of language skills (English, more specifically) via communication platforms, as a support for the teaching-learning activity. **Mihai Robert Rusu and Titela Vilceanu's** article discusses the complexity of medical translation shedding light on the challenges faced by a translator when dealing with a vast range of medical texts, documents and formats, non-standardised terminology, or lack of relevant resources such as multilingual medical databases. This section closes with **Claudia-Raluca Stamatescu's** theoretical paper on the challenges of emotional intelligence and good communication skills in the teaching-learning process in the online environment.

Shifting to *Education for active citizenship through gender studies and (inter)cultural communication*, the third panel starts with **Mihaela Chapelan's** article "Le tournant interculturel dans la traduction", which discusses the importance of interculturality for both practical and theoretical aspects of translation. Her dilemma with respect to the field of translation is whether it is appropriate to speak of an actual intercultural turn, or merely of a shift in what scholars call the *cultural turn*. **Oana Gări Neguț** turns her attention to literature in her article entitled "Magic and society: Harry Potter's effect on reading through the empowerment of learners and of educators". She concludes that Harry Potter books are a good resource for educators in promoting active citizenship skills to young readers. In his article "Critical discourse analysis of Donald Trump's political speech via Twitter", **Shaan Najem Abdullah Shammari** examines what discourse strategies were employed by Donald Trump during his 2016 election campaign to promote himself in a positive light, as well as the tactics used by Trump to raise his own profile by sullyng the reputation of the opposition party. As the author mentions in his paper, the most notable example of this phenomenon is Trump's generalization of the term "fake news". This is a term Trump has been using to describe media outlets that criticized him or with which he disagreed.

The fourth section opens up towards two highly diverse territories, this series of papers being presented in the panel entitled *East Meets West across Borders and Boundaries*. **Iulia Elena Cîndea Giță** inspects in what way "culturemes" stand for cultural carriers in Chinese contemporary novels. In order to complete this, she relies on five translation strategies: zero translation; zero translation followed by direct explanation in the text; cultural adaptation; cultural translation and zero translation followed by direct explanation in the text and a footnote. She examines both simple, as well as collective *culturemes* or historical versus contemporary ones, be they cultural, social or purely linguistic. **Roxana Rîbu** expands the results of research connected to China as she looks at the role of the cultural mediator. In her opinion, such a role transgresses the boundaries of a mere translator, the mediator being an active interface between two cultures. Differences between China and Romania therefore require a systematic and thorough mission for the individuals working to reduce cultural distances.

Keeping the focus on the Far East, **Oana Avornicesei** examines the specificity of Japanese to Romanian translation of proverbs populating diverse narratives, which she seconds by providing the English version

as well. Relying on a semantic and pragmatic perspective, she opens her contribution towards a wider understanding of paremiological instances while observing typical variations in terms of style and structure.

Still researching the Asian space, the following paper “Ecocriticism is the flagship to humanity: revisiting and decoding *Abhijnanasakuntalam* and *Aranyak*” by **Biswajit Das** invites the reader into the depths of the South Asian cultural area. More specifically, the article introduces an ecocritical approach to literature that highlights the relation between environment and humanity, as represented in the literature of the classical period in the Indian and Bengali traditions. The author analyses Kalidasa’s magnum opus *Abhijnanasakuntalam* and Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay’s novel *Aranyak* foregrounding manners in which ecocritical concerns such as bioethical norms, biodiversity, ecospirituality, had been voiced in these creations long before the invention of the theoretical term “Ecocriticism” in the 20th century. Maintaining the focus on the Indian space, **Kabita Deka** and **Debajyoti Biswas**’s paper “Women in gendered enclosure: a comparative study of Indira Goswami’s *Datal Hatir Une Khowa Howdah (The Moth-Eaten Howdah Of A Tusker)* and Easterine Iralu’s *A Terrible Matriarchy*” blends gender and literary studies into a comparative analysis of two writers’ representation of women characters in their novels. Although the socio-cultural context of the novels varies from each other, the paper argues that the characters depicted in the fictions are connected through the sense of deprivation and oppression that women have to undergo in a patriarchal society. Iralu’s *A Terrible Matriarchy* and Goswami’s *The Moth-Eaten Howdah of a Tusker* underscore that neither religion nor modernity can offer a solution to the existing structures of domination and discrimination unless the women resist and break these structures from within.

The present volume covers authentic and diverse perspectives and topics relevant for our times, ranging from linguistic concerns — challenges in specialized translation, novel aspects in education in the pandemic context, the role of communication in teaching—to equally inspiring literary and cultural studies approaches — literature and education, critical discourse analysis, interculturality, translation in literature, translation and/as cultural mediation, ecocriticism, gender studies. The conference has gathered a plethora of academic voices, eager to engage in further debate and build interdisciplinary dialogue in the near future.

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