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**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 7<sup>th</sup> International Conference “**Synergies in Communication**”, organised in Bucharest on 22-23 November 2018. The present edition also contains three papers submitted separately for peer-review (**Mihaela Arsene**, “BUSINESS ENGLISH AND POLITICAL CORRECTNESS IN UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION. A ROMANIAN CASE STUDY”, as well as those authored by **Gergana Nacheva** and **Olivia Rusu**). The panels covered by this edition are: (1) Synergies in business communication, education and research; and (2) Interdependences: quality assurance, academics’ professional development & internationalization of higher education; (3) Education through (inter)cultural studies; (4) East and West within interdisciplinary frames; and, finally, (5) Colloque Panaït Istrati. The current volume includes numerous contributions: three articles presented at the first panel, two at the second, eight at the third, three at the fourth and one paper in panel five, raising to seventeen papers in total. In what regards their choice of linguistic expression, authors used English, French, German, Romanian and Spanish, most of the texts being written in English.

**Anca Pecican** opens the set of contributions of the first panel, *Synergies in business communication, education and research*, with the paper “ANÁLISIS DE NECESIDADES EN ESTUDIANTES DE E / LE EN LA UNIVERSIDAD DE ESTUDIOS ECONÓMICOS DE BUCAREST: MOTIVACIONES Y EXPECTATIVAS CURRICULARES” discussing the results of a language needs analysis conducted on Romanian undergraduates who choose to study Spanish for beginner level (A1\*) as an optional discipline at the Bucharest University of Economic Studies. The analysis aims to identify students’ purposes of choosing the mentioned course as well as their perception on the contents that should be included in the syllabus. The second contribution to this panel belongs to **Mihaela Arsene**; it focuses on students’ perceptions of English as the pre-eminent global communication tool in business while also considering their awareness of and response to EU language policies. At the same time, **Arsene** aims to establish whether these policies actually materialize in increased language proficiency. The same author introduces the third contribution to this panel, “BUSINESS ENGLISH AND POLITICAL CORRECTNESS IN UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION. A ROMANIAN CASE STUDY” that raises the issue of political correctness in relation with language teaching. The article documents an undergraduate initiative meant to sensitize business students to the complexity and the benefits of a PC behaviour. The author claims that despite the active learning approach employed and the careful design of the PC training, the results documented by means of a case study and supplemented by interviews and a focus group were inconsistent over time.

The second panel of this year's edition, *Interdependences: quality assurance, academics' professional development & internationalization of higher education*, includes contributions from thematic areas related to quality assurance, academics' professional development & internationalization of higher education. The first article of this section is written by **Olivia Rusu** and it represents a pedagogical perspective that aims to account for the complex roles and challenges involved in a teaching career. The author argues that the teachers have to be always up-to-date with all the information about one's discipline, to be able to pass on good and verified information, to constantly watch one's own performance and always ask objective-related questions. The paper discusses manners in which teachers have to adapt teaching and learning activities to the present-day requirements and realities, to be on the same page with the contemporary stage of progress in language teaching. **Violeta Negrea's** article "TRAPS TO THE APPLIED LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION: THE FUNCTIONAL ILLITERATENESS" suggests the reconsideration of the applied English teaching activity for the Romanian fresh students in Economics which is hampered by the recent widespread phenomenon of functional illiterateness of the high school graduates. The critical quantitative and qualitative analysis of the misused language samples raise questions on the students' capacity to communicate accurately and transfer professional knowledge and understanding from one language into another.

Shifting to *Education through (inter)cultural studies*, the third panel starts with **Monica Toma's** paper that discusses the importance of teaching interculturality at the level of higher education. Her article explores some of the ways in which students may be developed into English speakers who are able to comprehend and make use of interculturality. Apart from discussing theoretical notions related to intercultural competence and communication, the author presents concrete examples of teaching activities meant to enhance students' intercultural awareness: role plays, drama activities, simulation games, case studies, discussions, etc. Switching from learners to prominent academics, **Elena-Carmen Bobocescu** focuses in her paper on a major contributor, Professor Leon Levitchi. Her paper, entitled "IN MEMORIAM LEON LEVITCHI: A LIFE OF EXCELLENCE", commemorates the birth centenary of this major Romanian cultural personality, the former professor at the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures, University of Bucharest who directed and contributed to the development of the Department of English during the difficult years of the communist regime. Opening the section to literature, **Alexandra Costache-Babcinschi's** article, "IMAGES DE L'EST ET DE L'OUEST DANS «ARTHUR OF LITTLE BRITAIN»", analyses the medieval romance aiming to establish how history and fantasy, dream counties and geographical discoveries come together. Another research direction aims to explain whether Arthur, a hero of both the West and the East identifies himself, in a coherent or rather contradictory way. Continuing along theoretical lines, **Mihai Șerban's** "AUTOFICTIUNEA ÎN LITERATURĂ" aims to define the concept of self-fictionalization (French: l'autofiction), discussing how it was understood starting with Serge Doubrovsky and Vincent Colonna to Gérard Genette, Jean Delay, Dominique Fernandez and Philippe Lejeune. The next contribution by **Raluca Șerban and Mihai Șerban's** represents an applied approach, a continuation of the previous paper, as the two authors apply the concept of self-fictionalization, exploring its potential in the field of literature and literary studies. The analysis aims to take this concept beyond the boundaries of its domain of origin, psychoanalysis, applying it to the analysis of the American postmodern author, John Barth. Shifting to the Russian linguistic space, **Zinaida-Tamara Fedot's** paper "ANGLICISMELE DIN TERMINOLOGIA ECONOMICĂ RUSĂ – MODALITĂȚI DE ADAPTARE" (Anglicisms in Russian economic terminology – means of adaptation) aims to present various ways to adjust loanwords from English to Russian, in the case of economic terminology. The author provides examples for the most frequent categories of loanwords adapted to the specificity of Russian. The paper also focuses on a few difficulties encountered when adapting English terminology to Russian; it also considers some specific elements regarding the phonetic, graphic, morphological lexical and semantic adaptation of these loanwords in Russian economic language. **Alina Mardari** closes this section and shifts the focus to German sociolinguistics. Mardari thinks that youth language is an integral part of

any language and reflects the specificity of modern and exciting life of adolescents, while English language is undoubtedly a vital tool for teenagers to communicate. Considering these aspects, the article discusses the relevance of anglicisms in youth language in the context of language change and variation in today's world, showing a sociolinguistic perspective of the usage of anglicisms among young people. Remaining in the German cultural space, **Lora-Dagmar Constantinescu's** article "DER MOHR HAT SEINE ARBEIT GETAN." DER SCHWARZHÄUTIGE ALS WERBEFIGUR", presents two possible advertising "incidents" of consumer products in recent years in Germany or Austria. Most likely unintentionally, advertising with racist overtones nevertheless provokes uproar and indignation in the public. Her paper sets out to investigate the possible causes/mechanisms of advertising "incidents", starting from the Figure of the Moor (or generally the dark- and black-skinned) in everyday culture, and especially in advertising.

The fourth panel of this year's edition covers contributions focusing on *East and West within interdisciplinary frames*. **Jillian Curr** introduces a first topic in her article "DYSTOPIAN FUTURES: NEW CITY-SCRAPES, where she discusses Mohsin Hamid's dystopian novel *Exit West* (2017). According to Curr, time and space collapse into the emergence of failed cities where social disorder is rife. This paper investigates implications of constant displacement, resurgent nationalism and the status of those who exist on the periphery of the 'liquid modernity'. Moving to the South Asian space and the world of cinema, **Minouti Naik** explores a less prominent phenomenon of contemporary India, namely films directed by women such as Tanuja Chandra, Meghna Gulzar and Gauri Shinde. Her paper analyses their work for the uniqueness of their themes and the characters they have sketched, and attempts to find out, what has led to their films being etched deeply into the consciousness of their audience. The discussion considers the manner in which these artistic creations reflect social contexts and gender dynamics in India. Closing this panel, the next paper takes the reader to the Chinese cultural territory, as **Yan Zhimin** analyses several poems by Li Qingzhao, a Chinese writer and poetess. After experiencing social and personal life transformations, Li Qingzhao poured her own unique emotional experience into her creations and expressed her happiness and sadness from various periods of her life. This article aims to interpret Qingzhao's poems by emphasizing the special emotional experience of a woman who was beyond the limitations of her times.

Panel five, *Colloque Panait Istrati*, dedicated to the Romanian author Panait Istrati, includes one article by **Gergana Nacheva** and it discusses the writer's book *The Confessions of a Loser* through the modern historical, political and ideological paradigms of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The paper analyses the function of the intellectuals in both Western and Eastern societies, their utopian visions, clashes, delusions and disappointments, their support for Bolshevism and Stalinism in totalitarian Russia in the 20s and 30s of the last century. Her paper thus closes this year's mixed series in which cultural contributions complement linguistic or methodological perspectives.

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