

OVERVIEW*

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This second issue of *DIALOGOS* - the biannual journal of the Foreign Languages Departments of the Academy of Economic Studies, Bucharest - is devoted to linguistics and the teaching of languages. Designed as a forum where all those engaged in foreign language teaching can share and confront their views and reflections on the teaching/learning process and on its underlying theoretical bases, this issue aims at widening, diversifying and up-dating both the teaching contents and the methods which contribute to the promotion of learning.

In view of the specific type of activity carried out by our departments, the series on *Linguistics and Foreign Language Teaching* provides an opportunity for theoretical and practical considerations on the teaching/learning of languages, as well as for a wider exchange of ideas. At the same time, the current issue aims to present an inventory of our colleagues' work - including theoretical volumes, textbooks, methodological works, selections of texts and workbooks - and other recent publications in the field.

Linguistics and Foreign Language Teaching is open to any theoretical and/or practical contribution which meets its aims, not only by the members of our language departments, but also by colleagues representing other universities in the country.

1. The theme of this first volume (the first in a series of three) - **Business Discourse** - is twice justified.

1.1 First there is a theoretical rationale, stemming from the evolution of linguistic thinking and of new trends in language teaching methodology, which have been characterised for the last two decades or so by the rise of the functional and communicative approaches. The various changes that have occurred in the field of linguistics, viz. the movement from code linguistics to discourse linguistics and, consequently, the switch in linguistic analysis from the level of the language system to the area of discursive activities, i.e. of linguistic interaction in a particular communicative context, have had a profound influence on both linguistic research, and language teaching.

The classification of social activities into fields of experience dominated by a certain type of linguistic interaction leads to the division of discursive activities into types and sub-types or into **genres and types of discourse**. The opening towards the extralinguistic field refers to the integration into discourse analysis of "un maximum d'éléments susceptible d'expliquer les mécanismes de la communication textuelle à travers ses contextes, ses situations, ses implicites, d'où l'importance accordée à la pragmatique, aux savoirs des interlocuteurs, aux intentions décelable et aux interprétations possibles." [Pottier, in 2, p.3]

On the other hand, the **interdependence** between the communicative context and the genre/discourse type has been reflected - in the didactic field - in the introduction of specialised discourses as a particular teaching/learning objective and in the diversification of classroom techniques that have been implemented to this aim. A language is no longer taught/learned as an end in itself, but for definite purposes, according to specific needs.

Under these circumstances, discourse analysis has acquired a new, truly didactic dimension, one might say. It has ceased to be merely a form of linguistic description recording the traces left by discursive activities at different levels of linguistic structuring of written/spoken texts, to become "un instrument destiné à mettre en évidence le fonctionnement d'un certain type de texte" (genre) [1, ff.] related to a communicative event and meant to determine the matrix/pattern of that particular genre, defined by its belonging to a certain communicative event. This has led to the development of new teaching strategies, designed to ensure the recognition, comprehension and production of different discourse types, related to the different genres.

1.2 There is a second justification, which discourse from our activity as teachers in universities for business and economics. The contents of the specialised education offered to our students, the characteristics of the socio-professional activity in which they will be engaged and the social environment into which they will be integrated after graduation pose significant methodological constraints on our work. All of these, coupled with the peculiarities of the linguistic activities mediating socio-professional relations, as well as the inter-professional relationships between the members of a certain social group explain our decision for approaches of a communicative type.

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2. Based on these considerations, this issue has been organised into three main sections dealing with:

- (1) constituent aspects of the economic discourse as a form of linguistic activity;
- (2) peculiarities of linguistic structuring manifested at different levels: semantic, lexical, morphological, syntactical, logical;
- (3) strategies and techniques suitable for teaching the different sub-types of economic discourse.

The volume also includes a final section devoted to reflections on major writings and to new publications related to the areas covered by the preceding sections.

2.1 The first section, **Economic discourse and types of verbal interaction**, comprises four articles which deal, in turn, with a certain type of verbal interaction in an economic context. The article by Ruxandra Constantinescu-Ștefănel, "Remarques sur la négociation commerciale face-à-face", is based on a wider study on the topic. Turning to account the latest theoretical developments on types of verbal interaction, the structure of the conversation, speech acts and argumentation, the study offers a sequential analysis of this type of interaction, based on rich illustration, which reveals the intricacies of conversational sequences and the type of illocutionary acts specific to face-to-face negotiation. This analysis advocates the idea that no didactic activity can ever take place successfully without a sound theoretical basis, which is all the more so in the case of simulation, the most "spontaneous" of teaching/learning techniques.

If Ruxandra Constantinescu-Ștefănel deals with oral communication in the specialised language, Corina Lascu Cilianu focuses on a certain type of written specialised discourse – business correspondence – i.e. on indirect verbal interaction. Her article "Interaction verbale en différé: la lettre de rappel" is devoted to the analysis of certain varieties of reminders, which establishes first of all the parameters of the situation calling for this type of interaction. The author specifies next the speech acts of a directive type achieved by each variety of letter. Finally, a pattern is suggested for the reminder letter, in effect a pattern of the way in which this type of indirect interaction is achieved. Resorting to the concept of textual paraphrase, the author presents the way in which the emergence of conflict in the professional relations between supplier and client affects the choice of the speech acts to be accomplished and, at the same time, necessarily, the choice of the linguistic exponents of these acts. Her analysis is an illustration of the interdependence between the social and the linguistic sides of every human activity.

Micaela Gulea's article, "Motivations et interactions verbales – une approche psycholinguistique", is circumscribed, as the author states from the start, to the field of intercultural communication. Once again, the article is an excerpt from a study devoted to "l'apprentissage du roumain par les Français travaillant en Roumanie". The psycholinguistic principles put forward by Prof. Tatiana Slama-Cazacu in her works on foreign language learning ensure the theoretical basis of this "essentially psycholinguistic" approach. Using the results of a questionnaire administered to 50 respondents, the author considers some of the subjective and objective variables to be taken into account when it comes to the reasons which motivate the French in learning Romanian. This refers, in our opinion, to learning motivation factors of a second degree, so to speak, as in a first degree they represent reasons which justify language-mediated interactions. This is the reason why the article has been included in this section.

In my article, "Le discours économique: interaction verbale avec un interlocuteur absent", I start from theoretical considerations on the characteristics of verbal interactions in order to demonstrate the interactional character of the economic discourse, although the absence of an interlocutor, in certain cases, may appear to deny it this status.

This section attempts to reveal, among other things, the fact that the contents of a linguistic activity (of a verbal interaction) is determined by the contents of the social activity which it mediates and that the social activity itself can be mediated by several types of linguistic activities (of verbal interactions).

2.2 The second section – **Economic discourse and linguistic structuring** – is devoted to the (possible) structural peculiarities of economic discourse(s) at various levels: semantic, lexical, morphological, syntactic, or logical. The articles deal with these peculiarities starting from the highest level of abstraction – the semantic level – to the syntactic connections, and ending with the level of logical connections which sustain in effect this entire 'scaffolding' of structural levels and intricacies.

We owe the article opening this section – "Métaphore et discours économique" – to Prof. Teodora Cristea, who offers an interesting subject of reflection. The metaphor is discovered at two levels – the lexical level, where it has a denominating function in the constitution of the specialised terminology, and the text level, where the designating metaphor is an important parametre in interpreting the text. After a series of theoretical considerations, necessary for the theoretical foundation of the article and for our own guidance in the linguistic domain, Prof. Teodora Cristea deals in detail with "la métaphor d'orientation spatiale" occurring in the economic discourse, and then discusses types of co-occurring units which create complex metaphorical units. These are "unités partiellement motivées où l'un des termes constitutifs conserve son sens primaire" and "unités non-compositionnelles qui ont un sens différent du sens de chaque constituant pris séparément." If, at the level of lexis we speak of a denominative

metaphor, at text level we speak of designative metaphor. At this level the role of the metaphor "est de rendre plus accessible des notions abstraites, en jouant non seulement sur l'intelligible, mais aussi, et surtout, le sensible." The frequency of metaphors depends on the type of text: thus, the popular science text resorts to metaphors more often. Apart from its theoretical basis, Prof. Cristea's article offers the reader rich suggestions concerning different kinds of lexical approach to a specialised text in the language classroom.

The bulk of the second section of *DIALOGOS 2* is made up to a large extent of articles devoted to a lexical, terminological approach, one of the major areas of investigation in the study of specialised languages. Laura Mureşan's article – "Is Synonymy a Linguistic Reality in Economics English?" – suggests an approach to synonymy in specialised languages whose theoretical foundation lies not only in studies on synonymy, but above all in the communicative approach which has characterised the last twenty years or so. Specialised language is no longer simply an inventory of specialised terms, but a means of communication, under the influence of contextual parameters. Synonymy occurs not only at lexical level but also at sentence level. The author introduces the concept of "intertextual synonymy", defined as "the relationship of equivalence of meaning established by the reader/audience between/among words, phrases, structures in and through their interaction with oral or written discourses." Starting from this definition several examples of synonymy and of its role in the written economic discourse are discussed.

In her article entitled "Comportamento morfo-sintattico degli anglismi nella lingua italiana contemporanea", Mariana Săndulescu deals with the integration of foreign words (English, in this case) into the lexical inventory of Italian. It refers in particular to attributing specific genders to words belonging to a language which does not have this category. The author discusses the criteria underlying the choice of gender of neologisms of English origin: natural gender, semantic analogy, homophony and suffixal analogy.

The changes that have marked the Russian society in the last years have had an impact on the evolution of the Russian language, particularly on its lexis. This concerns the development of the business vocabulary by borrowing notably from American English and by the polysemantisation of existing lexical units. The article contributed by Florina Mohanu – "Business Russian and current trends at lexical level" – deals with such aspects, emphasising once again the nature of the relationship between the language system and the context of its actualisation: it is the need of representing a certain contextual reality that determines the system's dynamics.

Following this article, Ion Jurconi's contribution – "Linguistic competence and the professionalism of business people" – widens the perspective on communicative activities and reinforces the interactional approach to economic Russian. The article deals with the interdependence between economic activity (business activity, in this case) and the linguistic competence of those involved in it, whose result is, in this instance, a form of written communication, namely drawing up specialised documents.

Due to a happy coincidence, the case study presented by Ileana Busuioc in her article "Le langage du commerce électronique" is the meeting point of two orientations which mark the contents of the articles included in this section of our journal. On the one hand, there are the characteristics, as well as the problems encountered at the lexical level of specialised languages, and on the other, their phraseological peculiarities. The article deals, therefore, with the terminology and the phraseology of electronic commerce, attempting to illustrate the problems raised in the system of a language by the creation of a new field of experience, that of e-commerce. In a French-Romanian contrastive approach, the author describes the situation in the two languages as concerns the creation of the terminology and the make-up of phraseological structures. In what concerns the terminology, the article highlights the official activity of French institutions designed "à régulariser" the existence of a terminology of the field under study, in contrast to Romania, where "chaque fournisseur de service est libre de créer sa propre terminologie." Borrowings and metaphorical neologisms are mentioned among the means used to create the suitable terminological inventory. In the syntagmatic formation of terms, the author distinguishes three levels, which are described briefly: collocations, syntactic restrictions and discourse stereotypes.

Alexander Hollinger's article "A Classification of Collocations with Special Reference to Business English" presents an inventory of collocation types to be found particularly in Business English. From a theoretical point of view, his inventory is sustained by distributionalism and by the position expressed in this respect by Prof. Dumitru Chiţoran.

In his second article "Complex Verbs Used in Economic Contexts", the same author tries to identify how semantic contents may select the lexical units, namely how English complex verbs are selected according to different topics in specialised communication and what semantic changes affect them in such circumstances.

Going further along the path we have been trying to cover in this section from the highest level of abstraction represented by the metaphor to the level of sentence combination, we reach – through Lora Constantinescu's article "Argumentationsstrukturen in Der Werbung" – the fundamental level of any discourse, i.e. the logical connection, as it is manifested in the discourse of advertising: namely an economic discourse dominated by the

illocutionary act of "asking to buy" and its perlocutionary effects. The specific of the publicity discourse arises from the particular type of interaction between the figurative words and the network of logical judgements contained in the corresponding linguistic structure. The author offers us a point of view on a few argumentative examples identified in German and Romanian advertising texts of the 90ties, where one can find syllogism, polysyllogism or other types of syllogisms.

2.3 The third section of this volume, *Economic discourse and foreign language teaching*, is meant to provide the necessary conclusion of the first two previous sections as well as to give an answer to our question as teachers, namely "How could the issues discussed so far be useful in our daily work?" Obviously there is more than one answer to be found.

This section is opened by Carmen Ardelean's article entitled "Difficulties Arising in Teaching English Communicatively". Without promoting the communicative approach as the key approach in structuring this volume, we have taken into consideration its interaction level as an appropriate and enriching theoretical perspective for the description of the economic discourse. This kind of approach also proves to be useful for the general methodology of languages, including the methodology of specialised discourse.

Therefore, this article pleads for English teaching/learning in a communicative perspective, namely for a reversal of the relationship language (grammar) learning/communication learning. The traditional approach views communication competence as a consequence of the acquisition of linguistic competence. But, if the message and consequently the sending/receiving of information is the only purpose of any verbal interaction together with the establishment of interpersonal relationships and the acquisition of a particular linguistic behaviour, it is necessary to reverse the traditional hierarchy so that learning "grammar" is not an end in itself anymore but a necessary tool to the acquisition of the communicative competence.

The general points made in the above mentioned article succeed in getting down to specifics in the articles which form this third section, giving details, in a communicative perspective, of the various aspects of teaching economic discourse/discourses.

Adriana Chiriacescu's article "Message Presentation" reveals the complexity of teaching/learning communication. Starting from a definite communicative situation – speaking in front of a non-specialised audience – the author demonstrates that learning a language is only one stage, among others, of the complex assembly, which is the acquisition of communicative competence. In order to reach it, namely in order to equip students with a true communicative competence, it is necessary to provide various types of training, namely: a psychological type of training in order to provide students with a particular attitude which allows them to overcome their emotional embarrassment; a behavioural type of training meant to encourage students to adopt a particular behaviour and a particular rapport with the audience, in accordance with the kind of presentation they are making; training in the way in which a speech should be prepared. All these represent important stages in teaching/learning oral communication.

Imparting with us a personal teaching experiment, Georgeta Ghiga's article, "From 'Speaking to Learn' to 'Learning to Speak'", establishes the stages of a communicative approach to specialised language teaching, namely: precise identification of the students' learning needs, assessment of the organisational constraints imposed by the conditions in which the teaching act is performed, assessment of previous experiences of the two parties involved – the students' learning experience and the teacher's experience in foreign language teaching. Once these have been identified, it is the teacher's task to implement the most appropriate strategies and techniques for the purpose of his/her activity: acquisition of communicative competence within a professional situation.

Following the same trend in imparting teaching experience, Adriana Chiriacescu and Cristina Prepiceanu present in their article "Simulation in Designing Business Writing Activities" the simulation of a written communication situation: business correspondence. They insist on the importance of the preparatory stage for the development and success of such an activity, which is characterized by the exact description of the situation and the distribution of precise tasks to be accomplished.

Maria-Antoaneta Livezeanu's article, "Readversion. Some Cohesion and Coherence Problems in 'Hypertext Discourse'", introduces us to the world of the Internet and its language. The description of a new type of discourse – "the readversion" – born of the full exploitation of a huge mass of information contained by the Internet, provides an invitation to stimulate reflection on discourse activity. The author's invitation concerns retrospective views on discourse activity in general, namely on how it has been viewed and performed for centuries, as well as prospective views on the wealth of interpersonal communication and of the changes which this new type of discourse activity is to promote at the theoretical level of discourse approach.

In her article "Effektive Gestaltung von Text- und Bildinformation in Fachtexten", Voichița Ghenghea deals with the complex relationship existing between the contents of a specialized text and images of all kinds (pictures, drawings, diagrams, etc.) that accompany it. A first proved hypothesis is that the type of text influences decisively the frequency of appearances of some figurative representations, according to the degree of specialization and abstraction of the text. Although this article does not contain references to economic texts, the author's proposals

are useful both for the methodological approach and any descriptive approach if we remember that economic texts are often accompanied by a great deal of graphic images.

2.4 A reader who is interested in the various aspects and different points of view or the various suggestions expressed in the articles mentioned so far will find further useful key points in studying economic discourse in the last section, entitled *Miscellanea*.

Reflections... collects points of view inspired by the reading of some reference works in the analysis of verbal interaction or in other activities centred on discourse analysis.

Maria-Antoaneta Livezeanu presents a summary of the lecture delivered by Dominique Maingueneau at the University of Osaka: "Tendances françaises en analyse du discours". Thus, we learn about some of this French linguist's points of view on discourse analysis, namely:

- definitions of discourse analysis: they generally start from the study object and the appropriate technique of study, while, according to Maingueneau, "l'analyse de discours est l'analyse de l'articulation du texte et du lieu social dans lequel il est produit";
- the impact of various and numerous factors on discourse analysis (scientific, cultural, institutional and other factors analysed by different researchers);
- characteristics of discourse analysis developed in France: high interest for discourse "constraints" in opposition with spontaneous oral interactions, for the language material, as well as for linguistic utterance theories and for the priority of interdiscourse.

One can also find a short list of reference titles for the discourse analysis domain.

"Lectures linguistiques et conséquences méthodologiques" by Ruxandra Constantinescu-Ștefănel explains how theoretical knowledge provided by Catherine Kerbrat-Orecchioni's works with respect to the structure and function particularities of the verbal interactions – among which conversation is a key topic – could determine the conception, building and application of the business negotiation simulation. The author describes step by step the way in which the theoretical principles and action lines contained in the above mentioned works have enabled her to establish the stages of a simulated business negotiation, from its initial defining point to its achievement. Therefore we have here a good example, which pleads for the idea that a theoretical basis is indispensable for any teaching activity.

"The essential contribution of Alexandru Hallunga to the Translation of Adam Smith in Romania" by Octavian Oprică deals with the Romanian translation of Adam Smith's book "The Wealth of Nations". This translation offers the author both an opportunity to highly appreciate the importance of this book for Romanian specialists in economics and to make suggestions for a contrastive approach to the translation, able to provide solutions to the problem of finding equivalent specialised terms in the two languages.

Proposals for reading... deals with a few suggestions for further reading able to enrich the knowledge of specialised language teaching professionals.

Tania Măgureanu presents "Market Leader", a new business English course for professionals and students in the economic field. Organised in three volumes, each following "the systematic development of reading skills", the course is accompanied by a book on "Business Grammar and Usage" offering the students "the basic structures, functions and skills they need in business at intermediate levels and above".

Pierre Lerat's book "Les langues spécialisées" has drawn our attention as the author attempts to promote a new point of view in studying specialised languages. Integrated into the communicative approach, this study has to establish the particularities issued from the reference domain of these specialised languages and from the particular enunciation conditions of their functioning.

A last reading proposal refers to the LAL Collection, initiated by CREDIF to help teachers, students and researchers who work in the linguistic field and in foreign language teaching. Over the years this collection has been providing them with great deals of reference books for the fields taken into consideration, the majority of which represent indispensable tools for any theoretical reasoning and any daily exercise.

For your information... contains a list – compiled by our colleagues Ruxandra Constantinescu-Ștefănel and Tania Măgureanu – of publications belonging to the members of the Modern Languages Departments of the Academy of Economic Studies. These works, which include theoretical writings, course books, activity books, guides or dictionaries, reveal our colleagues' commitment to studying language sciences and improving specialised language teaching.

3. Before we conclude this necessary, though rather long, presentation, on behalf of the two editorial boards, we have the honour to express our gratitude to Professor Ion Gh. Roșca, Vice-Rector of the Academy of Economic Studies, who warmly embraced and supported the project of the publication of DIALOGOS and to whom we owe the full financial support for this publication within the project CNFIS-38 Dezvoltarea și Personalizarea Colegiului Universitar Economic (Development and Personalization of Economic University Education) – whose Coordinator he is.

Our gratitude is also devoted to Professor Teodora Cristea for her continuous encouragement and moral support. We also kindly thank our colleagues who have responded to our invitation to publish in this issue and whose contributions are indispensable to this work. Our special thanks are also owed to Mrs. Liliana Matei, chief editor of the Academy of Economic Studies Editorial Office and her editing team for their help in putting the articles together. And of course, we thank in advance our readers, whose remarks, suggestions or proposals would be most welcome and useful for our further issues.