

UNIVERSITATEA BABEȘ-BOLYAI, FACULTATEA DE LITERE

HABILITATION THESIS

Interdisciplinarity and Transdisciplinarity

From Applied Linguistics to Discourse and Translation Studies

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Summary

The present habilitation thesis seeks to convey a coherent synopsis of my academic, research, authorship and managerial career which has spanned more than two decades. My scholarly achievements should serve as an indication of my ability to conduct research in the interdisciplinary area of *applied linguistics, applied discourse and translation studies*. In view of this purpose, the thesis is organised according to three sections: (1) Academic, scientific, authorial and management accomplishments, (2) Future research projects, (3) Bibliography. Thus, it also provides some insights into my future research projects and commitments in the domains in which I have already taught and published.

I am persuaded that the published works will unveil the intertextual character of all confluent streams that flow through them. In this respect, I regard my thesis as an attempt to prove the interferences and confluences inherent to my teaching, research and authorial activities.

My research grew from my academic teaching and my teaching-related inquiries. As such it has pursued the following paths: (1) applied linguistics and English as a Foreign Language, (2) applied discourse studies, (3) translation practice and translation studies, (4) communication studies (business communication and English for Business), (5) Vocational Education and Training, and other subjects. Hence the present habilitation paper is devised around the aforementioned areas and details my professional achievements.

My academic career started in 1992 when I joined the Human Geography Department of the Faculty of Geography, Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca as an assistant professor. I taught English for tourism purposes, a discipline which accounts for my lasting engagement in ESP and EFL research. My expertise in teaching *English for Tourism* qualified me as an authority in the field, contributed to my publishing three course books (*English for International Tourism*, 1999; *English for Tourism Agents*, 2006; *English for Tourism Managers*, 2006) and a number of articles. These accomplishments conferred me the status of a methodological advisor for younger teachers and the merit of having created the school of EFL in Cluj.

In 1995 I moved to the Applied Modern Languages Department (AMLD) of the Faculty of Letters of the same university, where in the position of assistant professor I taught the following courses: *American civilization and culture* and practical courses on: *Communication techniques, Business writing, Specialized languages and specialized translations (ESP)*. During 1997-2003 I held the position of lecturer and from 2003 until now I have been appointed to a position of associate professor, while my teaching focused on very much the same disciplines.

I took my doctorate in Educational Sciences with a dissertation on *Interpersonal Communication- An Efficient Method for the Acquisition of English* in 2002. The thesis represented an experiment-based research, which, in spite of the apparent limitation of the approached domain, integrated both applied linguistic theory and most of my experience acquired in EFL, communication studies, conversation analysis and interactional discourse.

Throughout my professional career I benefited from several research scholarships completed at European universities: University of Limerick (Republic of Ireland, 2005), University of Southern Odense (Denmark, 2000), University of Limerick (Republic of Ireland, 1998), University of Chichester, Bognor Regis (UK, 1997). I enjoyed further training opportunities, such as Courses for Examiners organized by the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (2004), postgraduate refresher courses in English Teaching Methodology with special reference to ESP/EFL, British Council, (1995), etc.

The most outstanding scholarly event of my academic career was the Fulbright US Department of State scholarship in *American Politics and Political Thought* I was awarded in 2007. The attended courses were organised by the University of Massachusetts, Civic Initiative on behalf of the US Department of State. The participation in the Fulbright programme has bestowed on me the quality of a standing member of the Department of State Alumni and of the Civic Initiative Group of the University of Massachusetts.

I have published extensively on all the subjects I have taught. Thus, the published books cover the following areas of research: (1) applied linguistics and applied discourse analysis ('Rethinking Applied Linguistics. From Applied Linguistics to Applied Discourse Studies', 2017 and 9 articles), text linguistics ('Text Linguistics', 2008), applied linguistics and EFL-EFL teaching (3 course books: 1999, 2006a, 2006b, and 13 articles), translation studies ('The Translation of Literary and Non-literary Texts', 2013, the translation of 2 books from German into Romanian: a hermeneutical translation- Rudolf Otto, 'Despre numinos' (*Das Numinose betreffend*), Editura Dacia, 1996, republished by Editura Humanitas, 2005 and Editura Limes, 2015, and Hans Bergel's novel 'Der Tanz in Ketten' (1994). My involvement in teaching writing skills and business communication was reflected in 2 books on writing: 'A Guidebook to Professional Writing' (2006), 'On Writing' (2016) and 2 chapters in the joint department volume 'Oral and Written Communication', M. Toader (Ed.), 2000. My teaching American political thought and democratic institutions resulted in a course book 'American Political Institutions' (2002). The number of articles published in various international and national reviews exceeds 70 items.

One of my most remarkable research achievements is my latest book 'Rethinking Applied Linguistics. From Applied Linguistics to Applied Discourse Studies' (2017) which reveals a complex perspective on the development of applied linguistics from a narrow and limited discipline to what it has become in the 21st century. This achievement is matched by the skilled translation of the two books and the articles on translation included in the book 'The Translation of Literary, Non-literary and Religious Texts' (2013).

I have had a dynamic and representative participation in a plethora of conferences and scientific events (51) both in Europe and in Romania as a presenter, convener, and a key note speaker. My presentations at conferences spoke about my research and teaching. Beside these qualities, I also distinguished myself as the organizer of 16 international conferences and meetings.

During 2001-2015 I coordinated 16 European projects within the Leonardo da Vinci project framework, of which 15 projects were designed and submitted by myself. The projects, whose financial contribution rose to more than 700,000.00 Euro, sought to provide the Babes-Bolyai University undergraduates with opportunities to attend linguistic and vocational training in European institutions and companies.

I co-edited three volumes which reported on the research findings of European training projects in the fields of vocational and linguistic education ('Useful Concepts and Good Practices for Vocational Training in Tourism, 2011; Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training, 2014; 'Educația și învățământul vocațional în Europa și implementarea acestora în România', 2006)

The cornerstone achievement that brought me the reputation of a good manager was the project by which I designed and created the *Centre for Tourism Training* of the Babeș-Bolyai University (2004-6, RO/03/B/F/PP 175050), which became the first vocational training centre for tourism in Cluj-Napoca. The project received a 375,500.00 Euro budget. Between 2004 and present I have been the Director of the Centre and have managed all its teaching, research and management activities.

Given my acknowledged management skills I was also appointed Director of the *Centre for Technology Transfer* and of the *Office for Collaboration with the Economic Environment and the Alumni Association* for a short period during 2005 and 2008.

The same qualities granted me two competition-based European staff mobilities: a Study Visit CEDEFOP-EC programme (2012), Helsinki, Finland, and *Go Easy! CY-2013-091-003*, in Limassol, Cyprus, 2013, both focused on educational management.

My multiple activities can be broadly circumscribed to an integrated approach to *applied linguistics, discourse and translation studies*, consequently, the present *habilitation paper* is organized in line with them into the following sections: (1) teaching, (2) research, (3) authorial activity and the (4) coordination of EU education projects.

The 'Teaching' section outlines my efforts to use the most adequate teaching methods for the courses and to keep abreast of educational and discipline-bound knowledge. The section starts with my dedication to teaching English for Tourism (EFT), my recognition as an experienced advisor for the younger generation of EFT teachers and the 'founder of the Cluj school for EFT'. This quality came as a reward for my teaching merits (1.1.2.), the 3 books I published (1.1.3.), the numerous articles () and the creation of the 'Centre for Tourism Training'. All these achievements are covered by the heading 'Contributions to the development of teaching English for Tourism'.

The section further insists on my other teaching commitments, amongst which teaching applied linguistics and discourse studies hold a major place. My concerns in these areas were focused on researching and finding the most suitable ways to teach the complex concepts of *text*,

discourse and *genre*. Subsequently, to these concepts I added an introduction in applied linguistics. These efforts conducted to drawing up a general syllabus that accommodated my findings and met the students' needs, which reconciled traditional perspectives and more recent approaches.

Translation studies, more specifically specialised translations, rank third in the range of taught courses and have thus received due prominence in my teaching career. From the teaching point of view, the practical course I am teaching is subsequent to a full year course on 'Translation theories', hence my main objective is to form and develop translation competences and skills. With this end in view, I conceived a two-semester course syllabus which covers the translation of texts belonging to different areas, such as: administration, education, culture, entertainment, media, politics, nature, tourism, business, commerce, finances, investments, and law and legislation. My purpose was to give the students plenty of opportunities to translate texts belonging to as many and diverse areas as possible. The source texts and their peculiarities provide the students with a challenging experience in translating while the emerging discussions involve related language, translation and terminology issues, complemented by explanations regarding discourse, genre and text.

My approach to teaching communication studies (oral and written communication, business communication, international trade) is a complex, interdisciplinary one which draws on knowledge of oral and written texts, on professional and institutional/ organisational discourse, on conversation analysis and social interactional theories. Apart from the underlying theoretical framework of the course, it was designed to include all relevant forms of oral and written communication that students will need in their future professional careers. In this respect, the course resonates with the research carried out in the field of 'academy-to-work' transition of students.

The 'Research accomplishments' section is devised to highlight the research that inspired both my teaching and my authorial activities. Henceforth, it provides accounts of the theories, concepts and trends that govern the areas I engaged in (applied linguistics, discourse, translation and communication studies). The applied linguistics subsection opens up with my Phd thesis ('Interpersonal communication- an efficient method for the acquisition of the English language') discussed along the parameters that constitute its research skeleton. The thesis mirrors the endeavour to link teaching to modern linguistic theories and sociolinguistics, social interaction, interactional analysis. The research background to the thesis had been mainly informed by research in applied linguistics, by language teaching and language pedagogy, the notions of language acquisition, Littlewood's (1981) dichotomy *acquisition- learning* a foreign language, Hymes (1972), Stern (1983), Widdowson (1983), by language teaching theories and models, such as those formulated by Halliday, McIntosh and Stevens (1964), Mackey (1965), Corder (1973), Allen and Corder (1973-77) and Spolsky (1980). Approaches and trends to teaching methods developed in the 1970s and 1980s, views on teaching objectives and curricula design (Allen, Candlin, Corder, Wilkins and representatives of the Council of Europe including Trim, and Trim et al., 1980) and the EC documents promoted over more than two decades were reflected in the thesis. Another strand that impacted on my thesis came from trends in modern linguistic theory starting with Bloomfield and American structuralism, Firth, Halliday, Hjelmslev, Chomsky and

continuing with the Neo-Firthian theorists Halliday, McIntosh and Stevens, while other streams of thought that had a bear on my paper were sociolinguistics (language varieties, style, register, codes, code-switching), language pedagogy with its description of language varieties specific for particular groups of learners along with classroom interactions (Mehan, 1979, 1991; Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975; Barnes and Todd, 1977) and the social psychology of second language learning (Gardner, 1985).

The subsection deals with the research that made its way into two of my books ('Text Linguistics', 2008 and 'Rethinking Applied Linguistics. From Applied Linguistics to Applied Discourse Studies', 2017). The first book rests on research conducted in the field of *text*, *text linguistics* and *discourse*. The sections of the book, ranging from the definition of text, cohesion, coherence, classification of texts, text organization, intertextuality, interaction among author-text-audience(reader), text quality, genre and register theories related to text, were inspired by famous linguists and their works published in the 1990s and in the first decade of the 21st century. The second book, rests on a comprehensive research in the areas of applied linguistics and applied discourse studies in an attempt 'to provide an integrative approach to them both, one which would explain the evolution of applied linguistics from a relatively narrow area of study to a broad and complex web of related disciplines', would 'highlight the relationship between applied linguistics and applied discourse studies and show how the relationship between the two has evolved' (2017:2). The book sheds light on how applied linguistics has expanded and grew to include such areas as translation studies. The introduction to the volume promises to 'review some influential approaches, concepts, tools or devices that applied linguistics and discourse studies operate with'. Last but not least, the book illuminates 'the way in which both applied linguistics and discourse studies can be taught to teachers and students' (Idem.).

The stream on 'Discourse studies' reveals the aspects that were influential in some of my articles ('Discourse Awareness: Raising the translators' awareness of discourse-relevant issues'; 'Rhetorical Intertextuality in Obama's "Victory Speech": "Change Has Come To America"'; 'A Rhetorical and Comparative Study of the Victory Speeches of Barack Obama and Mircea Geoană'.

The research stream on 'Translation studies' radiates into several directions: the translation of books, hermeneutics and its translation, the translation of religious texts, the life and work of Rudolf Otto, the language of religion, translatology and schools of translation, the translation of literature in communist Romania, etc. Regardless of the heterogenous and eclectic range of topics, they all investigated areas less introspected by researchers, hence, most of the research was based on primary sources and my translation experience. The resulting studies were assembled in the book 'The Translation of Literary, Non-literary and Religious Texts' (2013).

The subsection on 'Business communication' reflects the involvement in research in the area of communication studies and English for business purposes (EFB), mainly focused on communication-specific references, language-related knowledge, discourse materials, organizational communication, organizational management, marketing, advertising, etc. (Cornelissen, J. 2008; Eadie, William F., 2009; Hartmut Hübner, 2007; Heyhoe, George F. and Grady, Helen, (eds), 2009; King, Janice M., 2006; Littlejohn, S. W., 2002; Littlejohn, S.W. and Foss, K.A., 2008; Rothwell, J. Dan, 2004; Sven Windahl, Signitzer, B, Olson, Jeanne T., 2008; Weinstein, S., 2009) and many internet sources recommended for the practical activities.

The 'Authorship' subsection is centred on the books that resulted from my two-decade teaching and research. It presents my writings according to the same order, highlighting the threefold perspective that brings together in an integral approach applied linguistics, applied discourse and translation studies. The section also provides outlooks on the other published writings in the fields of communication studies, education and European educational policy.

Three briefly presented writings would stand for the 'Books' stream ('Text Linguistics', 'Guidebook to Professional Writing' and 'On writing') while some articles are reviewed under the 'Articles on discourse studies' stream. Due to the greater relevance of the volumes, in addition to their succinct presentation they also include a 'Scientific merits' overview. Nevertheless, the common linguistic thread that runs through the writings collects its veins from the complex web of applied linguistics, text, discourse, genre studies, interactional linguistics, discursive interactions, teaching writing, rhetorics, sociology, communication studies, anthropology, translation studies, etc.

The stream on 'Translation' features my representative works: a book ('The Translation of Literary, Non-literary and Religious Texts', 2013), two translations (The translations of R. Otto's 'The Numinous', 2015, 2005, 1996; 'Dansul in lanturi', 1995) and a number of articles ('The avatars of a hermeneutical translation. An empirical approach to the translation of Rudolf Otto's "The Numinous"', 2013; 'The translator's journey from professional/translational reality to empathy- the translation of Hans Bergel's communist outgrown narrative texts).

Section 2 previews the research projects envisaged and proposed for a medium- and long-term perspective. The first subsection comprises four projects, which can be grouped under one comprehensive project and which are the outcomes of the previous teaching, research and authorial accomplishments. They all fall under the designation of *professional communication and discourse*, and, beside seeking to complementing the previous work, they are also intended to broaden the investigative spectrum and provide a deeper insight into the proposed areas. The four projects are: 'Community discourse identity', 'Professional communication', 'The formation of professional communication competence', 'Discursive training for international trade professionals. Writing for international trade purposes'. The second subsection titled 'Translation studies' is broken down into two comprehensive projects: (1) Translations in communist and post-communist Romania and (2) The development of academic research on translatology and translation at the University of Cluj.

Last but not least, Section 3 supplements the two sections with the bibliography researched for the authorial achievements and a bibliography suggested for the forthcoming projects.