

## BOOK REVIEW

### THOUGHTS ON 'REDEFINING THE ROLE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN THE FUTURE SOCIETY: SCIENCE, EDUCATION, CULTURE, AND ECONOMY'

**Giulia Suciu**

*Department of English, Faculty of Letters, University of Oradea, Oradea, Romania*

[gsuciu@uoradea.ro](mailto:gsuciu@uoradea.ro)



#### Reviewed work:

Reconfigurarea rolului limbilor străine în societatea viitorului : știință, educație, cultură, economie / Redefining the role of foreign languages in the future society : science, education, culture, and economy

**Coord:** Monica-Ariana Sim

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A recent release (December 2024), the result of research conducted by instructors of applied foreign languages from the University of Oradea, the volume *Reconfiguring the Role of Foreign Languages in the Society of the Future – Science, Education, Culture, Economy*, presents a collection of valuable research-based chapters that explore the intersection between foreign language teaching and the digital transformation shaping our world. It addresses pressing topics such as the integration of digital tools, the use of innovative teaching methods, and the importance of multilingualism in business, education, and cultural exchanges.

The volume follows a straightforward structure. It begins with acknowledgements and continues with the table of contents. Then the 218 pages of the volume develop, with chapters that approach the main theme of the volume.

The first chapter, *Teaching Business English in The Era of Digitalisation* by Cristina Abrudan focuses on digitalisation and examines the way in which this process is transforming the teaching of business English. Abrudan explores the potential of digital tools and platforms to engage students in authentic business contexts, ensuring that learners acquire language skills and the competencies needed to navigate today's global business environment. By integrating e-learning

tools, simulations, and virtual meetings, the chapter highlights the shift toward a more interactive, practical approach to business language education.

"The new educational paradigm is the one which prepares the workforce for the challenging future, being achieved through the introduction of new concepts such as digital tools, which help develop new competences, as well as blended learning, which combines the advantages of face-to-face learning and distance learning. In higher education, digitalization is about using the technology, more exactly the digital tools to facilitate new learning experiences and new opportunities for the learning and teaching processes." (p.19)

The following innovative chapter written by Simona-Veronica Abrudan-Caciora explores the growing trend of using games in education, especially in foreign language acquisition and is called *The Perspective of Thirty Duolingo Users on the Function of Mobile Technology and Gamification in the Process of Learning a Foreign Language*. The author presents convincing evidence on how mobile apps and game-based learning platforms improve language retention and student motivation. The chapter offers an in-depth analysis of various mobile apps and digital games, demonstrating how they create immersive learning environments and foster student engagement through interactive and competitive elements.

"Elements of games are present in most applications dedicated to foreign language learning. Gamified learning experiences rely on the integration of motivational elements commonly found in games: points, rewards that reflect performance, immediate feedback, competition, and the possibility to track peers' results on a leaderboard. It seems that gamification stimulates a more active engagement in the task and the learning group context while it allows for repetition, a more thorough study of words, topics, and rules, at the learner's own pace and availability." (p.31)

"*Preparing Students for the Business Environment Using Digital Tools and Learning Foreign Languages. Case Study: Flipsnack*" is the third chapter by Rodica Bogdan; it focuses on integrating digital tools into preparing students for the professional environment, using Flipsnack as a case study. The author illustrates how this digital is effectively used to simulate real business scenarios while supporting foreign language learning. The author highlights the importance of equipping students with both linguistic and digital competencies, thus preparing them to thrive in an increasingly digitalized business environment.

"Among the many areas where Flipsnack excels as a digital publishing tool, one particularly noteworthy domain is education. The platform provides comprehensive and effective digital tools and specialized plans for students, teachers, and universities. Notable academic institutions, including *Harvard University, Stanford University, the University of Washington, and Cambridge University Press*, have integrated Flipsnack into their digital

infrastructure. These institutions use the platform for internal communication with students and faculty, program and campus promotion, and digital publication of educational materials including courses, books, and assessments." (p.44)

Felicia Constantin presents the chapter "*Outils modernes pour faciliter l'accès aux langues étrangères et l'auto-apprentissage: Les extensions de navigateur web (Add-ons)/ Modern Tools for Stimulating Personal Multilingualism: Web Extensions*" exploring the way in which modern browser extensions and digital tools can stimulate personal multilingualism. Through practical examples of browser extensions that facilitate foreign language learning, the researcher shows how individuals can enhance their language skills independently, outside the traditional classroom setting. Her work is particularly relevant in an era where self-directed learning is becoming increasingly common, and she convincingly argues for the role of digital tools in promoting global multilingualism.

"Les extensions peuvent être abordées dans n'importe quelle perspective didactique. Tout élément compris dans Le Cadre Européen Commun de Référence pour les Langues est représenté, sous une forme ou une autre, dans ces outils, qu'il s'agisse des aspects qui concernent les compétences de l'apprenant/utilisateur, les opérations d'enseignement et d'apprentissage des langues, les tâches et leur rôle dans l'enseignement et l'apprentissage des langues, la diversification linguistique et le curriculum, l'évaluation (CECRL, 2001), les échelles de descripteurs du CECR et les activités langagières communicatives et stratégiques (réception, production, interaction et médiation), la compétence plurilingue et pluriculturelle, ou bien les compétences langagières communicatives (linguistique, sociolinguistique, pragmatique) (CECRL, 2021)." (p.61)

In the fifth chapter - *Use of Moodle Platform in Higher Education Foreign Language Teaching, Learning, and Testing* - the author Ioana Horea examines the use of the Moodle platform in higher education as a tool for teaching, learning, and testing foreign languages. The chapter provides a comprehensive assessment of Moodle's features, such as its ability to host interactive courses, facilitate real-time assessments, and support asynchronous learning. Ioana Horea demonstrates how the platform fosters both collaborative and individualized learning experiences, making Moodle an essential tool for modern language teaching in universities.

"Moodle online tests prove particularly time effective in terms of correcting responses and offering feedback, facilitating these operations to be performed automatically and instantly, making the work of the instructor much easier in time, once the computer is instructed what to do. Thus, what might seem a painstaking endeavour, a difficult task and a nuisance for a language teacher, i.e. "programming" an IT device, can be made even fun in the

process, as creativity is of help and it smoothens the aridity of the necessary technicalities.” (p.98)

The following research “*Improving Cross-Cultural Business Communication: The Role Of Digital Tools In Second Language Acquisition*” by Anamaria Mirabela Pop addresses the role of digital tools in improving cross-cultural communication in a business context. The author discusses how second language acquisition, supported by digital tools, is essential for effective communication in globalized environments. She presents specific tools and applications that help learners improve their intercultural communication skills, thus equipping them to navigate cultural nuances in business transactions and negotiations.

”Digital technologies for second language acquisition (SLA) have transformed language learning by introducing new techniques that address a wide range of learning styles, circumstances, and needs. These tools, which range from language learning apps to AI-powered platforms, virtual reality (VR), and collaborative digital environments, are gaining popularity for their role in improving business communication. Business contexts require specialized competencies, such as command of formal language, comprehension of industry-specific jargon, and cultural fluency – all of which digital solutions have been tailored to meet.” (p.102)

In “*La communication multilingue à l’ère numérique – Les avis en ligne/ Multilingual Communication in The Digital Age – Online Reviews*”, the author Andra Teodora Catarig investigates the impact of multilingual communication online, focusing on how online reviews (les avis en ligne) contribute to the digital discourse in multiple languages. This chapter explores the multilingual landscape of the internet, showing how users from various linguistic backgrounds contribute to online platforms and shape global consumer perceptions. It also discusses the challenges and opportunities presented by this multilingual digital environment, offering perspectives on the future of online communication.

“Quand ils déposent un avis en ligne, les touristes mettent en discours leurs expériences, leurs émotions et s’engagent dans un processus d’évaluation de leurs partenaires (les hôteliers) et de leurs structures d’hébergement. Le fait d’avoir passé du temps dans la structure évaluée, leur profil et leurs arguments les transforment en « experts », dont les futurs touristes tiendront compte lors de la réservation. D’autre part, les hôteliers mettent en œuvre des stratégies visant à maintenir une bonne réputation de leur unité d’hébergement, en répondant, surtout quand il y a des messages négatifs, aux problèmes soulevés par les clients.” (p. 117)

The following chapter entitled “*EU Und Die Fremdsprachen/ EU and Foreign Languages*” written by Adina Sacară-Onița discusses the European Union's initiatives and policies aimed at promoting foreign language learning among its member states. Adina Sacară-Onița examines the EU's role in fostering a

multilingual society and the importance of foreign languages in the economic, political, and cultural spheres of the Union. The chapter provides a detailed overview of various EU-funded language learning programs and their essential role in preparing citizens for the challenges of the globalized workforce.

”Die Sprache ist das Unterscheidungsmerkmal jeder Nation. Mit dem Beitritt zur Europäischen Union, die eine sprachliche und kulturelle Vielfalt repräsentiert, wird die Kommunikation innerhalb dieser Gemeinschaft zu einer Herausforderung. Wenn man bedenkt, dass in der Europäischen Union nicht weniger als 40 Sprachen gesprochen werden, kommt man zu dem Schluss, dass sich die Mitglieder dieser Gemeinschaft nur durch das Erlernen von Fremdsprachen gegenseitig verstehen können. Die Notwendigkeit, eine Fremdsprache zu beherrschen, ist die Voraussetzung für die Freizügigkeit innerhalb der Europäischen Union, insbesondere wenn man in einer anderen Region der Union arbeiten möchte. Aus diesem Grund unterstützt die Europäische Union das Erlernen, den Erhalt und die Verbreitung der europäischen Sprachen.” (p. 137)

Monica Ariana Sim approaches the issue of the evolution of the teaching profession in the chapter *”The Teaching Profession in the Light of the Changing Landscape of Educational Technology – Opportunities and Challenges”* offering a detailed examination of how educational technology is transforming the teaching profession, particularly in the field of language education. The chapter discusses both the opportunities and challenges brought about by the integration of technology into the classroom. The author reflects on the changing role of teachers in a technology-driven environment, emphasizing the need for educators to adapt to new tools and methodologies while maintaining a student-centered approach.

”Teaching can be seen as both a science and an art thus proving the complexity of the profession. To support the former assumption, teaching involves the application of learned strategies, and pedagogical theories derived from cognitive science and educational psychology that future teachers thoroughly study during their academic years. As a result, teaching relies on empirical data and proven methods to enhance learning, making it a science rooted in research and theory (Hattie, 2009). However, teaching is not just about following a set of rules; it also requires creativity, empathy, and intuition which all support the second assumption in discussion and align more with the concept of art.” (p. 160)

Evaluations, examinations, assessment aspects are approached by Amalia Sturza in her chapter *”Cumulative Assessment Versus Final Examination As A Means Of Improving Students’ Academic Performancel”*. The researcher compares the effectiveness of cumulative assessment with traditional final exams in foreign language education. Through case studies and empirical data, she explores how

continuous assessment methods can improve student outcomes by providing constant feedback and encouraging sustained effort. The chapter highlights the benefits of adopting a more holistic approach to assessment, which can lead to better academic performance and deeper language retention.

”The evolution of assessment methods is a testament to how higher education adapts to the complexities of an evolving world. The implications of these changes ripple far beyond the hallowed halls of universities. Employers seek candidates equipped not just with theoretical knowledge but the practical application and critical thinking that these new assessment methods foster. In ensuring our assessment strategies align with the needs of 21st-century industry, higher education plays the role of a responsive innovator.” (p.183)

The last chapter by Anamaria Supuran entitled *”Recipe For Language Acquisition: New And Innovative Tools Empowering English Instruction In Food Science”* presents an interesting intersection between language education and the field of food science. It explores how innovative digital tools can enhance English language teaching for students in food sciences, offering creative strategies for integrating language learning into specialized content areas. This interdisciplinary approach makes language learning more relevant and equips students with both linguistic and technical skills necessary for their professional fields.

”The use of mobile applications, such as those included in the present study, for learning English vocabulary related to food science has several benefits, such as providing engaging everyday food-related vocabulary. Some applications’ *video tutorials*, which focus mainly on recipe collections, are beneficial for visual learners. They provide clear and engaging instructions, support students in associating food terminology with actions, and reinforce comprehension and vocabulary retention.” (p.213)

Together, these chapters offer a visionary analysis of how language education is being reshaped by digital tools and methodologies. The volume provides valuable contributions for educators, researchers, and practitioners interested in the future of foreign language learning in a world increasingly defined by technological innovation. This collective work is an essential read for anyone wishing to understand the changing dynamics of language teaching in the digital age.