

**EDITORIAL**

This issue of the Journal of the Department of Germanic Languages and Business Communication of The Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies - *Synergy* (no 1/2009) – includes three sections dealing with various aspects of education in general and more specifically with teaching foreign languages.

In the section entitled **Considerations on Educational Issues**, Mariana Nicolae explores the role of leadership in Romania today, especially in the area of business academic studies. Carmela Franzese from the University of Naples, Italy presents an extremely interesting study on the advantages of peer education as a horizontal means of communication and interpersonal relationship which can lead to the valorisation of life skills, accompanying the traditional formal educational model.

The section **Considerations on ESP Teaching and Evaluation** includes three articles dealing with aspects of language teaching. Georgeta Ghiga suggests ways of using student produced materials in teaching practice, while Cristina Prelipceanu proposes a more interesting way for both students and teachers of teaching business letter writing through classroom simulations. Mariana Săndulescu looks into means of managing specialist information in the area of journalism and media studies.

A very consistent section is dedicated in this issue to **Cultural and Literary Studies**, with all the articles treating one way or another issues of culture and globalisation in contemporary society. Thus, Valentina Robu explores the necessity of teaching intercultural competence together with language, also a strategic priority on the agenda of the European Union for promoting diversity, regional identity and social cohesion. Adriana Chiriacescu is preoccupied with the new understanding that the terms “national culture” has acquired today and the tensions and contradictions that phenomena such as devolution, regionalism or nationalism bring along. The same interest in cultural aspects when teaching/learning a foreign language (in this case, German) is shown in the article by Lora Constantinescu. As the learners could have different perceptions of cultural elements, they should be offered means and opportunities for insights into these very cultural matters. Monica Condruz-Băcescu discusses the challenges facing Romania in the times of globalisation and the means through which the Romanians crossing the borders of

their country become cultural mediators. Also interested in the way globalisation influences contemporary society, Mădălina Alamă takes into consideration the impact of the mass-media constructed *body ideal* on feminine readers of European countries. Roxana Marinescu reads some English-language novels by authors of South-Asian origin from the perspective of racist and xenophobic attitudes, explores their causes and analyses the response they receive. Roxana Bîrsanu presents a rather unknown face of Ezra Pound, that of innovator in the field of translations and his effort to present American readership a different literary experience, while at the same time trying to revitalize home literature by infusion with foreign and even exotic elements, and Ștefan Colibaba analyses Raymond Carver's minimalist short fiction.

We invite you to read this issue of *Synergy* hoping that the articles proposed by our contributors will be interesting, challenging and entertaining.

Roxana Marinescu