

FOREWORD

The fourth issue of *Concordia Discors vs. Discordia Concors* invites the reader to forge deeper into the network of controversies that emerged around the concept of intertextuality.

Since the foundation stage (richly described in the Foreword of the previous issue), the term came to be confiscated by different groups of scholars, eager to take advantage of the manifold possibilities that it seemed to open before them. It is, therefore, not surprising, that it has received many different and often contradictory interpretations and definitions.

According to their understanding of this new and controversial critical concept, Heinrich F. Plett distinguished among three groups of scholars: the progressives, the traditionalists and the anti-intertextualists. As if trying to live by their creed, the representatives of the first group “do not tire of quoting, paraphrasing and interpreting the writings of Bakhtin, Barthes, Kristeva, Derrida and other authorities. The ideas they propagate consist of an elaborate mixture of

Marxism and Freudianism, semiotics and philosophy”(Plett, 1991: 4). Apart from addressing an elitist readership, they fail to develop a coherent and comprehensible method of textual analysis. The second group, mainly conventional literary scholars, turn ‘intertextuality’ into a tool that helps make their research fields more approachable and improves their methodological perspectives. The uncritical employment of the term, however, says Plett, turned intertextuality into a vogue-word, meant to make the user appear up-to-date. The reaction of the group of anti-intertextualists comes only natural, but the result is that “intertextuality is put through the critical mills, accused of being incomprehensible on the one hand, and old wine in new bottles on the other”(Plett, 1991:5), as texts were always under the influence of previous writings. Trying to shed some light on the confusing terminology, with special reference to the concepts of *influence* and *intertextuality*, Linda Hutcheon stresses the potential relationship of complementarity between the two terms: “Critical fashion being what it is today, it is natural that some of us will want to be post-structurally *a la mode* while others of us will want, no less fiercely, to keep to the familiar and comfortable theoretical garb of the humanist discourse. Yet, perhaps we need to step back for a moment in order to investigate the very need of the emperor’s new - and old - clothes. Maybe the two apparels are not negations or even

duplications of each other. Maybe each dresses and addresses another part of the ‘emperor of signs’”(Hutcheon, 1986:230).

Intertextuality was generally regarded as a conceptual category associated with literary exegetic phenomena. However, to further prove its versatility, in 1981, the term made a crossover from the field of literary and cultural studies to applied linguistics, as De Beaugrande and Dressler identified it among the constitutive principles of textual communication:

The seventh standard of textuality is to be called intertextuality and concerns the factors which make the utilization of one text dependent upon knowledge of one or more previously encountered texts (...). Intertextuality is, in a general fashion, responsible for the evolution of TEXT TYPES as classes of texts with typical patterns of characteristics. Within a particular type, reliance on intertextuality may be more or less prominent. In types like parodies, critical reviews, rebuttals, or reports, the text producer must consult the prior text continually, and text receivers will usually need some familiarity with the latter (De Beaugrande and Dressler; no page).

Invested with taxonomic power over the texts under scrutiny, intertextuality rises to a higher level of

generality, a chapter's endnote sending the reader to Kristeva's 'narrower use of the term'.

Difficult to pin down, *intertextuality* still offers its generous umbrella to many a research field that celebrates notions of plurality, interdependence and interconnectedness. That is one of the reasons why, reiterating an old, well-known logo "Once is not enough. Recycle", the present volume continues the journey into the theoretical intricacies and the forever multiplying valencies of the concept of intertextuality

The Comparative Literature Section of this volume brings to the fore two of Genette's subtypes of transtextuality: metatextuality, and paratextuality. In her article, entitled *Approche métatextuelle du discours dramatique ionescien – le dialogue avec la tradition littéraire* [A Metatextual Approach to Eugen Ionescu's Dramatic Discourse – The Dialogue with the Literary Tradition], **Adina Lazăr** focuses upon the way in which playwrights belonging to the Theatre of the Absurd in general, and Eugene Ionescu in particular, meddle with our perception of traditional theatrical performance, burdening the reader with the task of ultimately creating meaning out of seemingly nonsensical texts. In Linda Hutcheon's words, „they openly turn to their readers as the active co-creators of their text” (Hutcheon, 1986: 232). Adina Lazăr underlines the

metatextuality of Ionescu's plays that comment upon previous dramatic texts, constantly subverting theatrical conventions. At the same time, Ionescu's metatextual comment, deeply embedded in the very act of creation of the dramatic text, self-reflexively constitutes the first critical commentary of his own text production.

Alina Hromyk deals with yet another conceptual 'sibling' of intertextuality. Her article *Les stratégies discursives du paratexte des récit du vie littéraires: la transtextualité du biographique* [Discourse Strategies of the Paratext of Literary Life Stories: The Transtextuality of the Biographical Element] examines the discourse strategies of the paratext and the way in which these shape the biographical discourse and influence the relationship biographee/biographant. Alina Hromyk analyses the complex liaisons between the authors of the biofiction, the biographical subjects and their fictitious counterparts against Genette's theories of the paratext, focusing mainly upon the literary function of titles and genre indicators. Relying on a large number of examples from contemporary French literature, the author of the article stresses the importance of the paratext as a borderline area that brings together the writer, the publisher and the reader. The ultimate goal of paratextual elements in biofictions is to

communicate to the reader the main intention of the author, the telling of a life story. Thus, the historic time is reshaped, turning into the human, personal time of the biographee, the biographer and the reader.

In the Contrastive Linguistics section, **Mirela Aioane** (*I piccoli annunci. Aspetti linguistici* [Classified Advertising. Linguistic Aspects]) sets out to explore the structurally simplified language of classified advertising in Italian. The principle of linguistic economy is activated by pecuniary reasons, as the cost of an advertisement depends on the number of words it consists of. Linguistic reduction is, therefore, the direct consequence, a large amount of information being condensed in the smallest space possible and such practice alters language at both the lexical and the morphosyntactic levels. Making use of a wealth of examples, Maria Aioane shows the impact of classified advertising on the Italian language and also the persuasive and, at times, frustrating effect upon its receivers. The next article in this section, *Marques discursives des „États du Moi” dans la communication didactique* [Discourse Markers of the Ego States in Didactic Communication] takes us from the 'constricted' world of the language of classified advertising to the almost unlimited world of the human psyche. According to

Eric Berne, an Ego State can be pragmatically defined as „a system of feelings which motivates a related set of behaviour patterns” (Berne, 1961:17). Using Berne’s system of transactional analysis, **Angelica Hobjilă** deals with communication between preschool children and preschool teachers. The three primary Ego States, Parent, Adult and Child, are all present in the process of didactic communication. The article aims to identify the discourse markers that signal the manifestation of the three Ego states in school children during their interaction with the teachers. The contrastive analysis is based on a corpus that resulted from a series of activities performed in both Romania and France.

The Cross-Cultural Strategies section is covered, in the present volume, by **Magdalena Ciubăncan**’s exotic article *Decorative English in Japan*. The author distinguishes between the so-called *decorative or ornamental English* used in Japanese advertisements and announcements and the *wasei-eigo*, ’made-in-Japan’English. The article questions the general belief that feeds on the fundamental differences between the Japanese culture and Western culture, according to which ornamental English is only meant to accessorize the message, having little or no communicative function. The author reconsiders the notion of functionality and interprets decorative

English in terms of Jakobson's emotive function of language, endowing either the verbal message, or the product, as a whole, with expressive nuances.

The Translation Strategies Section harbours an impressive article, *Translation as the Unfolding of an Intertextual Evocative Relation: Functions of 'Interpolated Sequences' in Ion Barbu's Richard III*, authored by **Emma Tămâianu-Morita**. Ion Barbu's unfinished version of Shakespeare's play breaks away from the traditional translation processes and relies upon textual strategies derived from a general principle that the author of the article has termed 'homologic' translation. The translator's source is, in this case, the process of creation that led to the constitution of the original text. To understand the interpretation strategies of Barbu's text would then mean to transgress the limits of the individual text and to reach the higher unit it forms with the original and with Barbu's poetic work as a whole. Interpolation, as a textual strategy, has a threefold motivation: to enhance the semiotic expression of the text, to restore fragments perceived as 'absent' or 'missing' from the original and to typologically steer the text closer to the poet-translator's own poetic discourse.

Ciprian Popa's review of the volume *Lexico-Morphological Idiosyncrasies of Romanian as compared with European Romance and Germanic Languages. Similarities and Contrasts II. The Noun* reveals an outstanding contrastive study of a number of Romance and Germanic languages, tackling their history and tracing them back to their common ancestors, Latin and West Germanic. The elements placed under the contrastive lens are the grammatical categories of number and gender. The researchers create the synoptic profile of the lexico-morphological identity of the Romanian language against the two above-mentioned linguistic contexts.

After such complex and brain racking linguistic analyses, **Cristina Scarlat's** interview with the director Alain Lecucq, entitled *Vişniec, Cioran, Eliade, Lecucq – Mansarde à Paris avec vue sur la mort – entretien avec le metteur en scène Alain Lecucq, Papierthéâtre, Frances* [Vişniec, Cioran, Eliade, Lecucq – *A Paris Loft with a View on Death*- Interview with Alain Lecucq, Toy Theatre, France] takes the reader on a final thought-provoking intertextual journey. Placing the French director last in an imaginary genealogical line after three writers of Romanian origin, the author partly reveals the network of signs that define Lecucq's theatrical vision. Once again, the borderline between fiction and reality is trespassed in

Matei Vişniec's play, where an old and frail Emil Cioran is the main character. With Lecucq's approach a shift in the semiotic system also occurs, since in the toy theatre Cioran is literally a paper head, a clip from an old photograph. Once again, it is the receiver's task to give meaning to the dramatic, text'.

A brief conclusion to such an enterprise will be that discourses do not occur in isolation, they contradict, support, cite, parasitize, satirize, criticize others, and that intertextuality foregrounds essential notions for decoding literature and understanding culture in general. As you may find this humble approach too biased, too one-sided or too feeble to gain a foothold, I invite you to read the articles in this volume, reminding you that „most discussions of intertextuality proper have ultimately ended up centering upon the reader” (Hutcheon, 1986: 232)

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