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CONCEPTUAL OUTLINE



Digest

I am a senior Lecturer at the Banat's USAMVBT "King Michael I of Romania" from Timisoara, Romania, where I teach English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP for Natural & Life Sciences). My PhD in Philology (Cultural studies) is a semiotic and deconstructive analysis of "American dream" mythology (2008). Later, my fields of interest have expanded to include metaphor and conceptual analysis, ecolinguistics, ESP (the language of Life/Natural sciences), the ecology of language learning/teaching, holistic learning, eco-semiotics, biosemiotics, and expanding learning communities. I have published several papers on these topics, as well as four textbooks for tertiary-level students of ESP (*English for Genetic Engineers*, 2009, *English for Agricultural Engineers*, 2016, *Ecological English*, 2021 (in print)).

Key words:

Ecological English / communication / eco-semiotics / biosemiotics / ecolinguistics / conceptual metaphor in Natural/Life Sciences / the meaning of Nature / ESP (English for Life

Description

I have been an academic lecturer of EFL and ESP at the Banat's USAMVBT University of Agriculture & Natural Sciences from Timisoara, Romania since 2009. My research focuses on semiotic analyses of nature, communication and interaction within natural ecosystems and holistic systems, the semiotics of education, conceptual metaphor related to (students') perceptions of nature and communication at all levels throughout nature. My current research includes topics concerning digital environments, challenges to the embodied interaction called "languaging" (cf. Maturana & Varela) that goes on between participants in any language learning or communicative process.

[Topic] **The semiotics of language learning & ecological communication / Field: ecolinguistics, eco-semiotics**

From an expanded perspective based on ecolinguistics and biosemiotics, language is seen as far more than a (neuro)cognitive process or a system of material forms and structures. Language learning communities are seen as self-organising ecosystems, where educators support a sustainable environment in the ESP class (English for the Natural & Life Sciences). We are also interested in developing models of ecological communication and collaborative interaction and enhancing interpersonal and other “soft skills”.

Key findings:

- English learning / teaching and communication are studied as multimodal life processes on a holistic and a organismic level.
- Students develop their socio-affective competences while learning to communicate in an “ecological” manner. Thus, language learning goes beyond the mere purpose of improving formal linguistic skills. It supports EQ development and the essential grounding of social interaction competences.
- The new digital environments of online learning sometimes challenge the fully present, embodied, and active participation. Students often remain “in hiding”, without a voice / face. We are conducting surveys, interviews, and qualitative, empirical-based analysis in the English online class to see reasons for this emerging crisis and to find ways to support a more ecological environment in virtual education.

Issue further elaborated in:

- Dragoescu Urlica, Alina-Andreea, Stefanović S. 2018. ‘Ecolinguistic Qualities of the Optimal English Language Experience’. *International Journal for Quality Research* 12(2):537–546; DOI – 10.18421/IJQR12.02-14.
- Dragoescu Urlica, A. A. 2018. The Ecology of Language as an Optimal Learning Model. *Quaestus* 13 (VII): 201-210.
- Dragoescu Urlica, A. A.; Coroama-Dorneanu, L.; Kamberi, L.; Bogusławska-Tafelska, M. 2019. Complexity and Self-Organization in English Language Teaching/Learning Systems. *Quaestus* 138-148.
- Dragoescu Urlica, A. A.; Coroama-Dorneanu, L.; Kamberi, L.; Malenko, N. 2019. Sustainable Learning and Material Development in ESP-English for the Life Sciences. *International Journal for Quality Research* 13(3) 753–760. DOI – 10.24874/IJQR13.03-16.
- Bogusławska-Tafelska, M.; Dragoescu Urlica, A. A.; Malenko, N. 2020. Achieving Quality in Interpersonal Communication: A 'Newparadigmatic' Model of Education Against Narcissism. *International Journal for Quality Research* 14 (2).
- Dragoescu Urlica, A. A.; Coroama-Dorneanu, L.; Kamberi, L. 2018. Extending the Collaborative Potential of English Teaching and Learning. *RJAS* 50 (4), 147-152.