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HABILITATION THESIS

SUMMARY

**Title: FROM COGNITIVE LINGUISTICS TO TRANSLATION
STUDIES THROUGH ENGLISH GRAMMAR**

Domain: Humanities

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The habilitation thesis tries to offer the summary of my achievements covering a period from 2004 to 2020.

The first milestone in my academic career was my admission as an assistant lecturer to Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania in 2004, teaching English and preparing non-philologist student for their language exams, as there was no specific department dealing with linguistics.

The next important event was my admission to MA studies (*British Cultural Studies*, “Babeş-Bolyai” University Cluj-Napoca, 2004–2005), followed by preparations to start a new study programme (*Translation and Interpretation*) coordinated by Professor Olga Murvai. This was brought to fruition in 2008, and I became the coordinator of this programme for several years, including its first accreditation in 2014.

In the meantime I was accepted for doctoral studies at “Babeş-Bolyai” University (2005–2009), during which I was focusing on prepositions and verbal prefixes (*over, above, across, through, prin, peste, át, keresztül, fölött*) in three languages (English, Romanian and Hungarian) from the perspective of Cognitive Linguistics under the guidance of Professor Ştefan Oltean.

The pressure of responsibility while running the Department of Applied Linguistics and the study programme was so high that I have started to look for the latest trends in the field, which directed me towards the combination of translation and technology. Thus, I became the first person in Romania to obtain the *memoQ Certified Trainer* diploma in 2009, and the University Agreement with the Kilgray Company to have all the licenses needed for the study programme, including both teachers and students. At present, the overall value of this agreement is €102,400.

There were two milestones in my scientific preoccupations that I consider highly relevant. First, a research project on *Translating Modality in Hungarian, English and Romanian* (The Institute for Scientific Research, Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, 2009–2012, project coordinator, total value of contract €10,600), during which I was focusing on the efficiency of both translating various modal verbs from English into Romanian and Hungarian, and creating a possible term base of the renditions to re-use them with the help of various translation software. The second highly important research project was *Creating a legal term base in electronic format for computer-assisted translation*, within the framework of Operational Sectoral Programme Human Resources Development (POSDRU/159/1.5/S/133652, “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University, Iaşi, 2014–2015), during which I was working on creating an English–Romanian, Romanian–English legal term base, but the project has also drawn my attention on the importance

of quality assurance, and the importance of human translators in the post-editing phase of a dictionary.

The structure of the thesis reveals that section **B-i** contains four parts, reflecting my contribution to the research and education of three major areas (Cognitive Linguistics, English Morphosyntax and Translation Studies). Section **B-ii** offers a brief overview of my aspirations and more or less crystallized ideas for further research possibilities, while section **B-iii** contains the bibliography used to support my research activity detailed in the previous sections.

As my personality has been constantly looking for the internal logic of things, structuring section **B-i** seems very logical to me. My scientific career is deeply intertwined with my doctoral research, so **part one** offers details within Cognitive Linguistics, underlining the importance of the theoretical framework, methods, resources as well as personal contribution, by examining Romanian (*prin, peste*) and Hungarian (*át, keresztül, fölött*) cases and comparing them with the English (*over, above, across, through*). Studying these prepositions and verbal prefixes from the point of view of Cognitive Linguistics and their subsequent categorizing constitutes the original part of the research, demonstrating that linguistic universals are stronger than individual variations. It is also true that concrete cases precede metaphorical ones, and in my cases the nature of *obstacle* is highly important, triggering the proper preposition. The vision of *time* is also interesting, as it may be perceived as long (Ro. *peste*) or difficult (Ro. *prin*), and while creating specific *over* or *through*-cases, objects may or may not come into contact with the perceived surface. The study was published in 2010, and some of the missing parts were completed with subsequent articles (e.g. Ro. *deasupra*), and the present thesis offered me a more distanced view, driving me towards further cases, specifically the antonyms of *over* (*under*, Ro. *sub*, Hu. *alatt*), and more detailed comparison of shades of meanings (*through* and *throughout*, *beyond* and *over*, Ro. *asupra* and *deasupra*).

Part two describes my preoccupation connected to English Morphosyntax, realising that English grammar books are rather similar, describing the language, without offering specific explanations from the perspective of Romanian and Hungarian. They typically lack a logical, unified view of tenses, and constructions stemming from verb forms coinciding with tense forms is rather problematic. Thus, I have tried to offer a hopefully more logical view by numbering the tenses and completely quitting their translations, considering their translated names unsuitable in Romanian or Hungarian. From the Romanian perspective it is easy to state that *Past Simple* is *trecutul simplu* but then we have to explain that conditional constructions containing *Past Simple* will result in the *optative-conditional*. As such, it is worth re-thinking the forms and functions of the English auxiliary verbs, and also the importance of modal (auxiliary) verbs. My ideas are expressed in two published volumes and a series of articles.

Part three may be best characterised as being interdisciplinary, as *translation* is connected to *English grammar* (3.1., most notably by dealing with translation possibilities of modal verbs in English, Romanian and Hungarian), *culture and communication* (3.2., military culture, translating realia), *technology* (3.3.) and *audiovisual translations* (3.4.). Chapter 3.5. unifies the previous ones, as it focuses on quality assurance, which is the watershed between professional and amateur translators. I also argue that technological and management competences must be among the translator's skills in order to be and remain competitive on the market of translation, raising the issues of translator status and deficiencies of codes of ethics for translators.

The last part lists educational and extracurricular activities, mentioning my editorial and peer-reviewer work, as well as membership to journals and academic communities.

Section **B-ii** contains the major research lines based on the previous ones, so highly probable areas for further preoccupations are the following:

1. Cognitive Linguistics, focusing on completing a network of prepositions by comparing English, Romanian and Hungarian cases;
2. English Morphosyntax, further research on nouns, adjectives, adverbs, articles, numerals, and prepositions, as well as the syntax of the compound and complex sentences, completed with translations activities and multiple-choice tests;
3. Translation Studies, including the profile and status of the translator taking part in large projects, where translation is an ancillary, profit-generating product of the entertainment industry (dubbing and subtitling).

Finally, continuous self-improvement and collaboration with various university centres from home and abroad is desired.

Naturally, there were further important events which must have had considerable impact upon my academic life, but meditating upon their relevance, I tend to believe that it is these highlighted events that predominantly shaped the chapters and subchapters of the present thesis, although my special relationship with education (both colleagues and students) stems from a much earlier experience, being a graduate of “Mihai Eminescu” Pedagogical High School in Târgu Mureş (1990–1995). I can only hope that the atmosphere and attitude of my former teachers has had such a positive influence upon shaping my teaching skills that my present-day students can still benefit from it.

The content of the habilitation thesis reveals that at certain points it comes very difficult to separate teaching activities for research interests. This may be explained by the fact that while in the heat of educational activities (explaining tenses or modal verbs) ideas come into being, which must be supported by serious research. In my case, trying to teach English has directed me towards Cognitive Linguistics, then the combination of English Grammar and Translation Studies cast a light upon the importance of technology revolutionising the entire translation industry.