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**Linguistic Biography.**  
**Generic and cultural approach**

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**Keywords:** Linguistic biography, sequential analysis, narrative genre, narrative interview, meta-epilinguistic sequence, culture shock, Romanian as a foreign language, componential statistics.

## Argument

In the work entitled *Linguistic Biography. A generic and cultural approach*, we propose a multi-level analysis of the linguistic biography (LB) and its classification within the narrative-discursive genres, as a specific genre of the narrative. The relevance of the thesis lies in the fact that BL has not been approached from a narrative point of view, being rather used in the field of didactics, as an assessment method, or in the field of sociology, in the study of migration. Thus, representing a still unexplored field, we aim to bring a new perspective on this concept, from the angle of discourse analysis, on the basis of 92 oral and written texts, where we tried to identify the narrative peculiarities in general and the specificity of the BL genre.

In this approach, the paper will be composed of six chapters: *I. Linguistic Biography (BL). Types of approaches*, *II. Corpus*, *III. Sequential analysis - Methodology*, *IV. Discourse-generic approach*, *V. Cultural approach* and *VI. Sequential analysis of a corpus for Romanian language*. In this thesis, we will analyse BL from two points of view: generic and cultural. In the linguistic approach, we will follow the generic features of these texts, and in the cultural approach we will approach a cultural shock analysis.

In the first chapter, *Linguistic Biography (BL). Types of Approaches*, we will discuss the concept of BL, from the perspective of the two fields of research, didactics and sociology, where the phenomenon has already been studied. In doing so, we will draw on the theories of several scholars who have debated the problem of BL in order to gain a broad overview of the concept discussed. Then, we will approach the concept of BL from the point of view of genres, more specifically narrative, in order to demonstrate that the texts belonging to this category are predominantly narrative.

Chapter two, entitled *Corpus*, will include a description of the corpus, where we will relate and show, through a graph, both the demographic factors underlying its formation and the motivation for its choice. We will also describe how the texts were collected, providing an explanation of what the narrative interview is as a method of inquiry and what it entails.

In chapter three, focused around sequential analysis as a methodology, we will explain and illustrate, through an example, how the proposed analysis will be carried out, arguing also the necessity of this type of approach.

Chapter four, *The Discursive-generic approach to BL*, starts from the narrative description to the presentation of the constituent sequences of the texts. In this approach, addressed in the first sub-chapter, we will carry out a characterization of the narrative sequence, where we will expose some linguists' theories about the narrative and. Following the synthesis of these theories, we will decide on the model of analysis we will apply to our corpus. In the second sub-chapter, we will present other narrative-biographical genres, accompanied by examples that we consider representative of linguistic biographies.

Chapter V, *Cultural Approach*, will focus on the inter-communicative aspects drawn from the corpus for Romanian language, with two sub-chapters. In the first, we will present some theoretical aspects, accompanied by examples taken from the corpus. These include the concepts of interlanguage and linguistic interference. In the second, we will analyse comments containing cultural information from the BLs that have been proposed for analysis. This involves placing each text in one of the stages of culture shock. The chapter will focus on one of the approaches to BL that we propose, namely the cultural one.

The last chapter, *Sequential analysis of a corpus for Romanian language*, aims at analysing the texts that form the corpus for Romanian language in two sub-chapters; in the first, we will follow the structure of the oral BL, and in the second, we will turn our attention to the written ones. For this, we will select a part of the texts that make up the corpus (the rest will be placed at the end of the paper, in the Appendices section) and we will operate the same model of sequential analysis accompanied by the graphs related to each text, based on the quantification of the words in the sequences, together with the necessary explanations.

In the next part of the paper, *Conclusions*, we will reiterate the essential elements of our work and present the final results based on the analysis of the whole corpus, not only the texts used in Chapter VI, *Sequential analysis of a corpus for Romanian language*, using also the texts containing information on other languages, not only Romanian. These data will be plotted in a graph to show which sequence is predominant in the BL, thus demonstrating its character. The conclusions will be followed by the Bibliography, where we will note the sources used, both to realise the theoretical part of the thesis and to collect some texts added to our corpus.

The *Appendices* section, the last part of the research, contains forty-nine texts, out of a total of ninety-two, to which we have applied the same model of sequential analysis. Thus, each of the texts was divided into sequences, we quantified the number of words and, based on it, we made a graph.

## **I. Linguistic Biography (BL). Types of approaches**

The first chapter presents approaches to the concept of linguistic biography from three perspectives: narrative, sociolinguistic and didactic. By outlining it as a predominantly theoretical chapter, we aimed to present the most important theories in defining the concept of BL.

### **I.1. Sociolinguistic approach**

Sociolinguistics is one of the fields in which BL is dealt with and defined, as it is important in the study of the phenomenon of multilingualism and migration. One of the researchers who address the issue of linguistic biographies is Brohy (1992). The survey conducted between 1983 and 1986 on the language practices of twenty bilingual/multilingual couples and families in and around Freiburg (Germany) aimed to complement and differentiate the answers to the closed questions of three questionnaires (sociolinguistic

practices and identities, skills or attitudes). Quantitative research was used in order to obtain as many relevant responses as possible.

Another researcher who has addressed the topic of linguistic biographies is Anna Verschik, in her study *Linguistic biographies of Yiddish speakers in Estonia* (2002), based on observations of a community of Jews living in Estonia. Part of the study is also devoted to mother tongue, which cannot be ignored when dealing with multilingual communities. Yiddish is a language used by the Jewish people of central and eastern Europe before the Holocaust. Its origin is a dialect of German, with words from Hebrew and other languages spoken in Europe. The number of Yiddish speakers in European countries varied, but all Baltic states had cultural and educational autonomy for minorities, thus providing conditions for the preservation of the national identity of Jews through the use of Yiddish and Hebrew. The author mentions that the term mother tongue cannot be used for the speakers of the community chosen by her in the study cited above. Anna Verschik characterises mother tongue on the basis of four criteria:

#### 1. Origin

According to the author, the mother tongue is the first language learned,

#### 2. Identification

This criterion is divided into internal and external. With regard to the first sub-criterion, the author attributes it to the language with which each individual identifies, while the second refers to the frequency with which the individual uses the language.

#### 3. Language skills

According to this criterion, the mother tongue is the language an individual knows best.

#### 4. Functions

Mother tongue is defined as the language the speaker uses most frequently.

At the end of the study, the author provides two examples of language biographies, identifying in each the first language learned, self-identification, the choice of another language and the speaker's attitude towards that language.

Another study, using the interview method, is by Jiri Nekvapil, *Language biographies and the analysis of language situations: on the life of the German community in the Czech Republic* (2003), where the author discusses the language biographies of people of German origin in the Czech Republic. According to Nekvapil (2003), a language biography is an account in which the subject of the narrative is/are the language(s) learnt throughout life and the way in which it/they are used by the person under investigation, whom the linguist calls the narrator.

Another source consulted by us belongs to Kristian Novak (2012) and is based on a corpus of published and unpublished written texts by members of the illiberal movement. These texts were written in the Croatian dialect, the literary language of Stokavian (a dialect of the Serbo-Croatian pluricentric

language), German and Latin. The aim of this work is to observe the dynamics of linguistic developments and German-Croatian multilingualism in the first half of the 19th century and the shift from Kajkavian (Serbo-Croatian dialect) to Szekavian.

## **I.2. Didactic approach**

From a didactic point of view, BL manifests itself mainly as a linguistic autobiography, as a person discusses his or her learning journey. From a didactic point of view, BL is an important tool for the development of communicative competence and lends itself to a dual use. Firstly, for learners, it is an opportunity for reflective feedback, self-assessment of language level and, at the same time, awareness of language mistakes, and can lead to their correction. Secondly, for the teacher, they are a tool for understanding the needs of each student, improving teaching methods and, at the same time, helping to adapt methods and activities to the students' educational needs. Last but not least, they are a way of observing how students use the language repertoire.

The linguistic biography has a narrative character which also includes descriptions, arguments and explanations, as the learner recounts his/her experiences and stages in the learning process, justifying decisions or describing contexts. Biographies are about the development of competence in spoken languages, which is why they can only be done for multilinguals.

The relevance of biographies is embedded in the field of education, an approach which provides knowledge about learning through the experience of acquiring new knowledge (through the use of texts or writing workshops, for example). This initiative joins the epistemological orientation of constructivist and socio-historical learning. Linguistic biography is treated as a school for the training system, and activities focus on linguistic diversity. It is used as teaching material, allowing the recognition of bi-multilingualism of a large number of pupils in the school environment.

In order to use BL during language lessons, Raphaël Baroni and Chiara Bemporad (2011) propose several activities, such as the rendering of written texts, debate and the use of a forum where pupils/students are encouraged to tell about their learning journey.

## **I.3. Discourse-generic approach in discourse analysis. Gender category in AD**

Wang explains that all gender theories formulated up to the time of his study have much in common, with considerable overlap, even though they address different issues and sometimes from different theoretical standpoints (2007). In support of his idea, he lists some existing paradigms of analysis:

1. Genres are communicative acts characterised by a set of communicative purposes identified and mutually understood by members of the professional or academic community in which they recurrently appear.
2. Genres are highly structured and conventionalised constructs with constraints on the contributions allowed not only in terms of the intentions the speaker wishes to express and the form the discourse

takes, but also in terms of the lexical-grammatical resources that can be used to provide formal discursive values.

3. Genres create a distinction between old and new members of the community, in that the former are attributed with more varied knowledge and understanding of genres than the latter.
4. The fourth theory explains that although genres are considered conventionalized constructs, community members can exploit linguistic resources in order to express not only "private" intentions but also "socially recognized communicative purposes" (Wang 2007: 39).
5. The following theory focuses on the idea that genres are a reflection of disciplinary and organisational cultures, and in doing so focuses on the social actions embedded in disciplinary, professional and institutional practices.
6. All genres have their own integrity, which is often identified with reference to a combination of textual, discursive and contextual factors.

All six of these ideas are relevant to different studies, and in oral discourse analysis they can be applied depending on the purpose of the analysis.

For a relevant analysis of BL genre in our study, it is necessary to take into account both linguistic structures and the context of discourse utterance, so we cannot restrict genre to a set of features applicable to all texts, but a holistic approach is recommended in order to also understand the meaning created in the text through different linguistic marks. What we can notice in this theory is that, most of the time, the term genre and text overlap.

Genre is therefore an entity that encompasses all texts with the same characteristics. We can speak of a genre as a BL, provided we analyse a corpus of texts that have the same sequential structure, have a narrator who narrates events of the acquisition of one/one language. In order to categorise a text as belonging to a particular genre, it is necessary to look at all the textual levels, in order to observe its linguistic structures. For example, linguistic marks at the micro-level provide clues not only to the formal or informal register, but also to the type of sequences (meso-level). We will mainly consider these levels in order to draw out the particularities of BL as a narrative genre distinct from others.

## **II. Corpus**

In creating the corpus, we opted for the following types of texts:

1. Corpus for the Romanian language, comprising 85 audio recordings and written texts. For these texts, we have defined three sub-genres:
  - A dialogic linguistic biography, including 66 interviews, 55 conducted with preparatory year students, 6 with university teachers, 4 taken from [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and one text taken from a radio broadcast. Our interviews were carried out by recording the participants with a telephone or tape recorder and asking them a set of questions about learning Romanian as a foreign language.



- Monologued language biography, comprising a total of 12 recordings, of which 3 were taken from the www.youtube.com platform, and the remaining 9 are recordings of students who were asked to relate how they learned Romanian in an audio recording.
- Written linguistic biography, comprising a total of 7 texts, namely 6 questionnaires, of which 3 texts come from university professors or lecturers, 3 come from German students, and one text is written by philologist Laurent Duminy and taken by us from the volume *Romanian as a foreign language - between method and cultural impact* (2008). The questionnaires we made are based on the same questions as the oral ones (interviews), with the exception that the answers were requested in writing.

2. Corpus for other languages (French, English, Spanish and Portuguese), 7 in number, comprising both recordings and written texts, following the same division into three sub-genres:

- Dialogued linguistic biography, comprising a number of 2 interviews covering Portuguese (1 interview) and Italian (1 interview), carried out by us using the same method applied to the interviews for Romanian language.
- Monologued linguistic biography, including 3 texts taken from www.youtube.com. Of these texts, two are BL texts created for French and one for English.
- Written linguistic biography, including 2 texts on Spanish, created by us, based on the set of questions used in the interviews.

Most of the corpus is collected from foreign students enrolled in the preparatory year at two universities, Babeş-Bolyai University and the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, but also from various personalities, Romanian and Romanianists such as Rudolf Windisch, Bruno Mazzoni and, last but not least, from a French lecturer, a teacher at the Faculty of Letters of Babeş-Bolyai University. We opted for this variety of texts in order to observe, through a sequential analysis, characteristic structures of linguistic biography as a specific narrative genre.

After recording, the oral interviews were transcribed using the sign /, to mark ascending intonation, and \, for descending intonation. Because of the pandemic situation, some of the students were not in Romania at the time of the interviews, some of the interviews were recorded as monologues. They received the questions in an emailed document and were asked to record their answers without reading the question. In contrast, others were carried out at the university with students, recording both the question asked and the students' answers.

### **III. Methodology - sequential analysis**

Chapter III of our paper presents the methodology of corpus analysis, specifically sequential analysis can pertinently distinguish the BL structure from other narrative genres, especially as autobiographical.

We identify sequences according to linguistic marks specific to each sequence type. Thus, for the delineation of narrative sequences, we will look in particular at past tense event verbs (imperfect, more than perfect, compound perfect), place/time adverbs and structures indicating place (names of cities, countries) or time. In the descriptive sequence, we will see that nouns and adjectives predominate. Argumentative sequences, as evaluative subcategories of descriptions, have been identified on the basis of the speaker's personal evaluations and connectors such as "because", "because", which introduce justifications of these opinions. The metalinguistic sequences have as a referent the foreign language learnt, constituting as a description of it with aspects of morphology, lexis, syntax or as an overview of the whole language system. We also use a dichotomy of meta-type sequences: metalinguistic and epilinguistic. We will call metalinguistic sequences those parts of speech in which the specialist speaker describes the language he/she has learned, and epilinguistic sequences refer to non-specialists' descriptions of a language.

#### **IV. The discourse-generic approach to BL**

Chapter IV approaches BL from a discursive and macro-narrative perspective, in order to observe the linguistic features of linguistic biographies. In doing so, we begin by presenting the narrative sequence from the perspective of several scholars whose theories are cornerstones in the analysis of narrative genres, such as Labov and Waletzky or Jean-Michel Adam. The next step is to expose some of the more commonly used narrative-biographical genres. After this review, we want to present the sequential features of BL, based on the linguistic analysis of each sequence of texts: the narrative sequence, the epi-/metalinguistic sequence, the descriptive sequence and the argumentative sequence. The last part of this chapter will focus on the two subtypes of linguistic biographies: monologue and dialogical (already mentioned in Chapter II) and on the sequential analysis of BL for languages other than Romanian. To this end, we will select one of the interviews from the corpus, the rest will be found in the Appendices section, and we will carry out the analysis starting from the hypothesis that BL represents a narrative genre. In the analysis, we started by segmenting the texts, assigning each sequence a colour (orange - narrative sequence, red - argumentative/explanatory sequence, blue - descriptive sequence, pink - the meta-/epilinguistic sequence and the green BL - the cultural sequence). We opted for this system as we also performed a calculation based on the total number of words in the interview/monologue. The resulting figures will be plotted in a chart that aims to account for the sequential configuration and to highlight the predominant sequence.

##### **IV. 1. Narrative sequence - general structure**

In the general description of the narrative sequence, we will start from a theoretical basis that we have taken as a reference, namely that proposed by Jean-Michel Adam. The choice for the theories developed by him are the synthesis definitions he proposes in the literature. The first notion to which we will turn is the prototype of the narrative sequence, in order to observe whether the texts we have retained follow this general scheme.

The narrative genre can also appear in the structures of oral discourse, when it is a matter of recounting past experiences. W. Labov raises the issue of such situations in his article *Some Further Steps in Narrative Analysis* (1997). Labov and Waletzky (1987) have shown that the effort to understand narrative is subject to a formal framework, particularly in the basic definition of narrative as a choice of a specific linguistic technique for reporting past events. The framework developed by Labov and Waletzky for oral narratives of personal experience has proven useful in addressing a wide variety of narrative situations and types, including oral memoirs, traditional folk tales, avant-garde novels, therapeutic interviews, and, most importantly, narratives of everyday life. Labov sees narrative as a speech act consisting of a beginning, a middle and an end. (Labov 1997: 395).

The narrative sequence as seen by Labov and Waletzky (1968) includes elements also taken up by Jean-Michel Adam, but with different names: orientation, complication, evaluation, resolution and coda. In the orienting sentence, information about the communicative situation, characters, place and time of the action is expressed. The second sentence, the complication, represents the course of the action, and the third sentence, the evaluation, contains the narrator's views on the story. By resolution, Labov and Waletzky mean the conclusion or conclusion of the narrative sequence. The coda is the point at which the verb tense changes, moving from the past tense of the narration of events to the present tense through which the narration is exited. It can be seen that both William Labov and Jean-Michel Adam delimit the narrative sequence at similar moments.

#### **IV. 2. Narrative-biographical genres**

In order to distinguish the specificity of the BL from other narrative genres, in this subchapter we will describe some narrative-biographical genres, grouped into written and oral. In doing so, we will start by defining some types belonging to each typology and give an example of each. The first category we will mention is that of written biographies, which includes genres such as *literary biography*, *autobiography*, *memoirs*, *'recollections'* and *CVs*. Oral biographies, on the other hand, are mainly discourses such as: *oral history*/*'life story'* (*récit de vie*), *narrative interview* (*entretien narratif*).

Each of the types mentioned will be presented, not only from a theoretical point of view, but we will also give an example.

#### **IV. 3. Linguistic Biography. Compositional-generic peculiarities**

In this subchapter, we will try to show the specifics of the linguistic biography, presenting its components. We will proceed according to the structuring of genres into three levels: macro, meso and micro (Moirand 2003), in order to delimit, in the texts collected in the corpus, the sequences (at the meso level) constitutive of the generic (macro) level of the genre. We delimited the sequences on the basis of the linguistic marks (micro level) specific to each one. Thus, for the delimitation of the narrative, we have taken into account verbs of event in cause-effect relation (in past tenses, but also in present tenses), adverbs of

time. To delimit the descriptive, we followed and marked nouns accompanied by verbs of state (past tense) and adjectives. For the argumentative, the keys to analysis were evaluative and justificatory linguistic marks, and for the epi-/metalinguistic sequence, we considered descriptions of the language in the speaker's personal view. The last sequence, the cultural one, contains personal opinions about the people living in the country of the language under consideration and elements of its civilization. Starting from the premise that no text is sequentially homogeneous, we have tried to identify the components that appear predominantly in the linguistic biography, delimiting them mainly by their specific linguistic elements.

## **V. Cultural approach**

Chapter V of the paper presents a cultural analysis of the corpus for the Romanian language, and is divided into two subchapters, the first of which is of a theoretical nature, while the second is concerned with the analysis of the stages of culture shock, based on the cultural sequence drawn from our corpus for the Romanian language.

### **V.1. Intercommunicative and intercultural aspects.**

#### **V.1.1. Interlanguage (IL)**

Interlimba appears as an intermediate language situated between the pragmatization stage of the language, in which communication is achieved through the use of isolated words, and the stage of grammaticalized sentence formation, using syntax. The phenomenon of interlanguage occurs at the beginner and intermediate levels, A1-B1, representing a form of hybrid language created for the purpose of conveying information but which is not grammatically correct. It is in this phase of interlanguage that most system-based creations appear, but which are deviations from the norm.

#### **V.1.2. Linguistic interference**

Any form in which the speaker uses linguistic phenomena taken from one language with which he or she feels more familiar in another is called linguistic transfer. The purpose of the phenomenon is to communicate and convey the message, and in the absence of appropriate background, the speaker resorts to this form of communication. Often, linguistic interference occurs very naturally and is not noticed by the speaker as 'intrusion' into the target language. Language interference, also called language transfer, occurs in bilinguals and refers to the application of linguistic concepts from the L1 to the target language. (Weinreich, 1953) Linguistic transfer can occur in all aspects of the language, lexicon, grammar, word pronunciation or spelling rules. As a fairly widespread phenomenon, it is studied in several fields of research, such as sociolinguistics, psychology and linguistics.

### **V.2. Culture shock: a fragmented imagology**

One factor accompanying Romanian language learning is the cultural differences between Romania and the countries from which students come. This phenomenon is referred to in the literature as culture shock and manifests itself after individuals have lived in the host country for some time.

Culture shock is an experience that occurs when a person changes residence and moves to another country. One of the researchers who has studied this phenomenon is Kalervo Oberg (1960, 2009), according to whom culture shock develops four stages:

1. *honeymoon.*
2. *negotiation.*
3. *adjustment.*
4. *adjustment.*

### **V.2.1. Culture shock analysis for the Romanian language corpus**

After segmenting the texts and using the theoretical concepts proposed by Kalervo Oberg (1960), we placed linguistic BLs according to the following elements.

#### **1. Stage I - "honeymoon"**

In this stage, we placed 26 BLs including interviews 3, 4, 6, 30, 37 together with monologues 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 77.

#### **2. Stage II - negotiation**

In this stage, we placed those who had spent almost a year in Romania and who managed to have direct contact with people, traditions and customs. These texts are as follows: interviews 11, 49 and 54, which can be found in the *Appendices* section.

#### **3. Between stage II and III**

The boundaries between the stages cannot be precisely defined, as far as culture shock is concerned, since adaptation and acceptance of a new culture are psychological processes that cannot be rigidly delimited, and there is an intermediate stage. To this end, we have placed five texts in this intermediate stage, of which: interviews 31 and 61, found in the body of the paper, and 18, 21 and 34 in the appendices.

#### **4. In stage III - adjustment**

Stage III, called adjustment, is the period in which a person begins to accept the new culture and create new habits. As far as our corpus is concerned, we have placed seven texts here, including interview 41, placed in the body of the paper, and interviews 12, 19, 22, 42, 46 and 52.

#### **5. Between stages III and IV**

Another intermediate stage proposed by us is the period between the adjustment and adaptation stages, where we placed eleven BLs. These include: interviews 16, 39, 68, 79, questionnaire 80, placed in the corpus, and interviews 9, 10, 13, 15, 17 and 20.

#### **6. Stage IV - adaptation**

In the last stage, adaptation, we placed 28 interviews, using the same criteria as in the other stages, namely we based our interviews on the time factor, but also on the information provided by the

respondents. These included interviews 8, 14, 27, 28, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 63, monologues 74, 75, 76, 81 and 83.

## **VI. Sequential corpus analysis for Romanian language**

### **VI.1. Oral linguistic biography**

The first category of BLs analysed comprises oral texts recorded and transcribed by us. In this approach, we classify linguistic biographies into dialogic, present in the first subcategory, and monologic, in the second.

#### **VI.1.1. Dialogic BL**

##### **VI.1.1.1. Interviews with specialists**

In the first part of the sub-chapter, we will analyse those texts containing the metalinguistic sequence, belonging to teachers of Romance and Romanian languages. The interviews will be analysed according to the model used for students, as can be seen in the following model.

##### **VI.1.1.2. Interviews with students**

The interviews proposed to the students contain targeted questions, concerning their place of origin and/or residence, the language(s) spoken in their families, other known languages, the way, motivation and period of their learning, the students' opinion on the Romanian language, situations in which it is used and the perception of the Romanian mentality/culture. As an example of analysis, we selected an interview:

<b>Interviul 3</b>	
<b>Ocupație:</b> Student	<b>Biografie lingvistică:</b> limbă română
<b>Țară:</b> Turkmenistan	<b>Limbă de contact :</b> nu este cazul
<b>Autor interviu:</b> Maria Simina-Suciu	<b>Durată interviu:</b> 3 min 15 sec
<b>Autor transcriere:</b> Maria Simina-Suciu	<b>Dimensiune transcriere:</b> 1.5 pag

**Î:** de unde sunteți /

**R:** sunt din Turkmenistan \

**Î:** unde ați crescut /

**R:** am crescut în provincie dashoguz din turkmenistan \

**Î:** care este limba pe care o vorbiți acasă /

**R:** acasă familie mie și cu mine vorbit turk turkmen și rusă \

**Î:** ce alte limbi cunoașteți /

**R:** știu engleză / rusă / \

Î: cum și unde ați învățat limbile pe care le cunoașteți /

R: am stud \ **am studiat** limbă engleză / rusă / și rusă / prin participare la centre de limbi specială \ **am învățat** să citesc cărți pe cont propriU \

Î: de ce ați învățat limba română /

R: pe E / pentru că vreau să călătoresc în mai multe locuri din românia și vreau să studiez cultură locurile respect \

Î: de când ați început să învățați limba română /

R: **învăț** limbă românie din 8 octombriE / 2020 \

Î: cum vi se pare limba română / ce fel de dificultăți ați întâmpinat învățând limba română (de înțelegere gramatică scriere vorbire) / explicați

R: *nu mie* *vost foarte greu* să *înțelegi limbă românie* / dar am avut dificultate în gramatică / scrie / și vorbie / mai ales *a fost dificil* să vorbim \

Î: considerați că dacă locuiți în românia/ dacă ați locui în românia v-ar ajuta să învățați mai ușor limba română / de ce /

R: desigur \ da \ dacă aş trai în românie aş învăț repede limbă românie vorbit cu oa oamie de acolo \

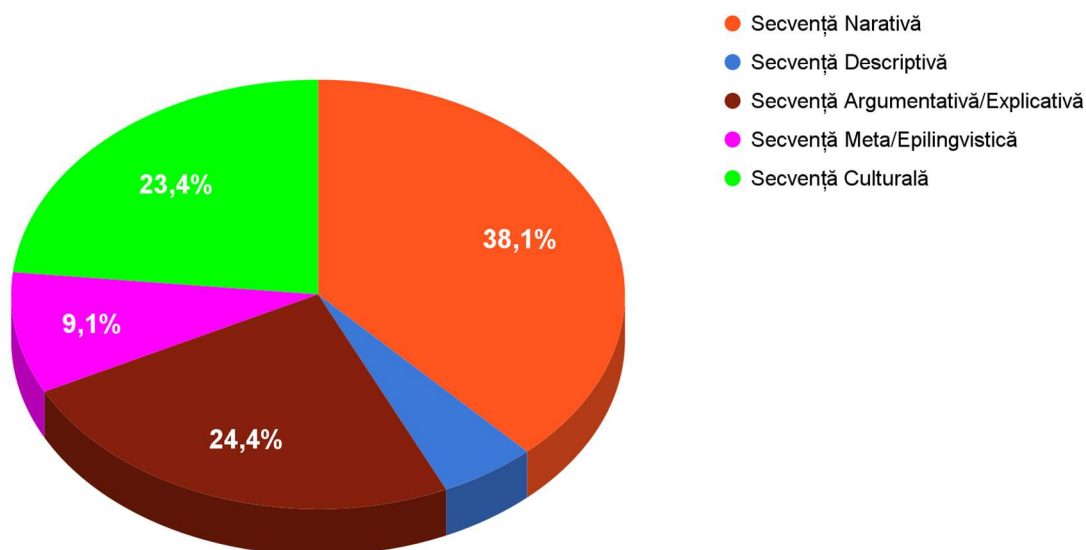
Î: în ce situații comunicați în limba română /

R: în prezent **studiem** online limbă românie vorbim limbă românie atunci când aaa **schimbam** întrebare și răspunsuri cu profesoare noștri pe o temă nouă \

Î: cum vi se pare mentalitatea românilor / (modul în care gândesc, cultură)

R: cultură românească este o valoare materiale / și spirituale / produs in românie românia are o cultură unică care este un produs al georfie sale uniche și evoluție stale istorice \ în plus modul lor de gândire le-au oferit o mare oportunitate de a lasă o amprentă asupra istorie \ aş dori să studiez în detaliu istorie și cultură românie

### Analiză Secvențială - Interviu 3



Secvență Narativă 38,1%, reprezentând 75 de cuvinte din 197 de cuvinte.

Secvență Descriptivă 5,1%, reprezentând 10 cuvinte din 197 de cuvinte.

Secvență Argumentativ/Explicativ 24,4%, reprezentând 48 de cuvinte din 197 de cuvinte.

Secvență Meta/Epilingvistică 9,1%, reprezentând 18 de cuvinte din 197 de cuvinte.

Secvență Culturală 23,4%, reprezentând 46 de cuvinte din 197 de cuvinte.

Thus, the narrative sequence is marked by verbs in the present tense and perfect compound, such as "I grew up", "spoke" (speak) "learn", "study", and the time frame is established by the phrase "in the present", the evaluation immediately followed by justifying examples. For the descriptive sequence, we have marked syntagmatic groups containing the adjectives "difficult" and "hard" accompanied by the verb "to be": "not very hard for me", "it was difficult" As for the explanatory-argumentative sequence, we have separated the causative "because", specific to the A1 language level, and the explanatory "of course" of the opinion expressed in the previous question. In this sequence, we identified expressions specific to interlanguage through the misuse of the past perfect tense of the verb to be ("to have been"), due to the short study time, around four months of online study. Another factor influencing the degree of Romanian language acquisition was the reduced exposure to Romanian language, as students were not physically present in Romania. The size and complexity of the descriptive sequence correlates with the speaker's language level in that at beginner levels adjectives are not used as much as at higher levels. For the epilinguistic sequence, we marked part of the general response: 'I had difficulty in grammar, writing and speaking', and the short answer is also explained by the speaker's language level. We note, for this text, that the descriptive sequence is combined with epilinguistic. Note that we will consider this sequence as



epilinguistic because the speaker is not specialised, but only initiated into metalanguage through language courses.

The meso-level organisation of the text shows, according to the graph, that the narrative sequence is predominant, followed by the cultural one, marked with green in our text.

In terms of culture shock, discussed in the previous chapter, we note that the speaker is placed in the first stage, the "honeymoon" stage, because of the reduced contact with Romanian culture, mediated only through Romanian language classes.

## **VI.2. Written linguistic biography**

For this part of the paper, the texts were collected from university teachers and students who learned Romanian language, using the questionnaire method and where we applied the same set of questions as for the interviews. The method of analysis was the same, the texts were segmented into sequences and the number of words in each sequence was quantified in order to see which one was predominant.

### **VI.2.1. Questionnaires with specialists**

Questionnaires with experts were collected, via email, from university professors and lecturers in the Czech Republic and Japan. For the analysis, we apply the same methodology as for the interviews, based on the set of questions used above.

### **VI.2.2. Questionnaires with students**

The last part of this sub-chapter is devoted to the students' answers to our proposed questionnaire, analysed according to the model used previously, together with the plotting of the resulting data in graphs.

### **VI.2.3. Analysis of the use of the BL constituent sequences**

Following the steps of the sequential analysis, as discussed above, we made another series of charts, using the normal distribution calculation formulae, in order to track the frequency of use of each type of sequence (narrative, descriptive, argumentative/explanatory, meta-/epilinguistic and cultural) across the entire corpus for the Romanian language. The data taken for the calculation of the normal distribution are found in the graphs for each text, whether oral or written. In this sense, the average percentages of the sequences are as follows:

- Narrative sequence: 43.14%, being the majority;
- Descriptive sequence: 8.42%;
- Argumentative/explanatory sequence: 21.8%;
- Meta/epilinguistic sequence: 11.92%;
- Cultural sequence: 8.42%.

## Conclusions

In our paper, we aimed to bring a new approach to the concept of linguistic biography from the perspective of discourse analysis, trying to define BL as a narrative genre, based on a corpus of ninety-two texts, written and oral. Drawing on existing research in didactics and sociology, we analysed BL from a discourse analysis perspective, demonstrating that they are predominantly narrative texts.

In terms of discourse-generic analysis and the categorisation of BLs into narrative genres, we opted to segment the texts into discursive sequences based on the linguistic marks that define them. In this respect, we followed the description of genres proposed by S. Moirand on three levels of textualization: micro (linguistic marks), meso or median, for the prototypical sequential units (narrative, descriptive, argumentative, meta-/epilinguistic, cultural) constituting the macro (generic) level. For better visibility, we have highlighted each sequence using a different colour, thus making them easier to observe, and facilitating the quantification of the related words. After this process, we generated a diagram, based on the previously obtained data, in order to observe the weight of each textual component. Through the chosen methodology, we were able to demonstrate that, in the whole corpus of BL, the narrative sequence is the dominant and, therefore, defining one for the BL genre.

After carrying out the analysis, we can affirm that BL represents a narrative genre distinct from other narrative-biographical genres by the presence of epi/metalinguistic sequences. Although in our research they reach a percentage of only 8.8%, the normal distribution diagram in Chapter VI shows that the majority of texts, more than 83% of them, contain descriptions of one or more languages, with a frequency ranging from 5% to 42.5%.