Giuliana Garzone, Maurizio Gotti, eds., *Discourse, Communication and the Enterprise. Genres and Trends* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2011), 451 pp., ISBN 978-3034306201

Reviewed by **Maria Cristina Aiezza**

In recent years, the study of business discourse has become increasingly popular among researchers of English for Specific Purposes. Definable as "social action in business contexts" (Francesca Bargiela-Chiappini, Catherine Nickerson, and Brigitte Plankenet, *Business Discourse*, 2007, 3), it has been investigated in a variety of areas within discourse studies, such as conversation analysis, genre studies, pragmatics, ethnography and cross-cultural studies. The enterprise, or organisation – whatever its nature – has been defined in the end as a system based on the interaction between social actors, as being at the centre of a stream of information, and thus created, managed and maintained through communication (see Alberto Pastore and Maria Vernuccio, *Impresa e comunicazione*, Milano: Apogeo, 2008). The multidimensional domain of corporate communication studies has been approached from several perspectives, such as sociology, marketing, administrative disciplines as well as linguistics and discourse studies.

Discourse, Communication and the Enterprise. Genres and Trends reflects many of the current developments and contributes significantly to the research in the area of language use in the world of business and organisations.

The volume is part of Peter Lang's *Linguistic Insights*. The series, edited by Maurizio Gotti and featuring an international scientific board, represents a point of reference for researchers of specialised languages and discourses. It gathers monographs and collected papers presenting studies in theoretical and applied linguistics with a special focus on language and communication in a wide range of specialist discourses, analysed from a plurality of methodological approaches, from both a synchronic and a diachronic point of view and always promoting a multidisciplinary perspective. Several volumes and contributions in the series have been devoted to the subject of business discourse, often focusing on aspects such as intercultural communication, variation in business genres, identity representation and promotional trends.

The present volume under review is a selection of articles from the Fifth *Discourse, Communication and the Enterprise* Conference, held in Milan in 2009. Throughout the collection, emphasis is given to the constant changes affecting the business environment and thus communication. As stressed in the text, one of the crucial factors contributing to the shaping of contemporary business discourse is represented by new technologies, which have led both to the reformulation of traditional genres and to the exploration of the resulting innovative ways of interaction. Organisations can now take advantage of the possibilities provided by the electronic age to attract a larger public, promoting corporate reputation and identity and to try and develop integrated, consistent, communication, by

coordinating their messages through the use of the multiple new and traditional tools and media available. One of the most original features of this volume is the large section devoted to the emerging genre and to the corresponding developing research field of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) reporting – both in the Western and in the Eastern world – a practice used partly to pass environmental, social and governance information and partly to build and maintain a positive corporate image. The globalisation of markets is another process with a decisive influence on corporate operations and communication, which has led several contributors to focus on the interplay of standardising tendencies and local cultures and languages.

After an introduction by the editors, the volume presents twenty papers divided into five sections. The opening part, "General Issues in Research and Practice", discuss general and methodological aspects, while the other four, ranging from internal to external business communication, examine specific domains of language use: "Corporate Communication as Professional Discourse"; "Corporate Reporting and Social Responsibility"; "Corporate Communication and the Media"; "Advertising and Promotion".

In the first article, "Discursive Changes in Corporate and Institutional Communication", Maurizio Gotti reflects upon the changes produced by globalisation and technological innovations in corporate communication, focusing on the need to harmonise global trends and local cultures in promotional texts. He then traces the evolution of the genre of business letters, to conclude with the exploitation of the computer mediated environment for virtual business communication, for the diffusion of annual reports and for disputes and transactions.

Still in the opening section, in her paper entitled "Seeing the Woods for Trees: A Research Agenda with a New Focus", Mirjalisa Charles delineates the development of the relationship between discourse and organisations and of its conceptualisation in academic studies alongside the internationalisation of companies and the growing importance of information as an instrument of power. Emphasising the role of discourse and communication in creating and shaping companies, she proposes a new proactive, flexible and multidisciplinary research agenda.

While most research in the field has addressed communication with the outside world, the first three studies of the following section look at texts used within the firm itself. Sylvain Dieltjens and Priscilla Heynderickx's paper, "Instructive Discourse in Internal Business Communication: Comprehensibility and Target Group Orientation", examine both written and audio-visual instructive texts addressed to factory workers. They identify problematic linguistic and visual elements that can jeopardise the communication process and, by applying readability indices and conducting a survey with members of the target audience, show how the texts could be adapted to the receivers' decoding competence to improve their understanding.

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Martin Warren's research reflects the growing interest in studies of business discourse in the Asian communities. In "Realisations of Intertextuality, Interdiscursivity and Hybridisation in the Discourse of Professionals", he studies all the discourses encountered in a working week by six professionals based in Hong Kong. He analyses the discourse flows concentrating on the references to prior and predicted discourses and on the combination of features of different genres and identifies the most typical linguistic patterns signalling these phenomena.

Multilingualism is the focus of Oliver Engelhardt's chapter, "Management of Multilingualism in Multinational Companies of German Origin in the Czech Republic", which investigates the language management of a German multinational firm in the Czech Republic, where local employees work together with delegates from the parent company. He applies Language Management Theory to the language rule establishing the right of the majority to speak its language in meetings and shows that, even it is not fully implemented, a language policy can raise awareness of multilingualism among the employees.

In her article "Companies' Websites as Vehicles for Expressing Corporate Identity: A Case Study on the Use of English as a Lingua Franca" Franca Poppi examines the use of ELF in the 'about' pages of the websites of six European energy companies. Applying a qualitative analysis, she highlights some recurring tendencies: deviations from the norm, common lexical choices and the influence of the country of origin.

The next section of the book deals with the current studies on ethical issues in corporate reporting. In the first paper "Metadiscourse on the Move: The CEO's Letter Revisited", Paul Gillaerts and Freek Van de Velde study the Chief Executive Officer's letter in the annual reports of a Belgian bank. They combine the framework of genre and metadiscourse and link textual features to the context of the economic performance of the company, revealing that in good times the bank is more self-affirming, while in bad times it stresses the coherence of the text and tries to gain more credibility.

In "Social and Environmental Reports: A Short-Term Diachronic Perspective on an Emerging Genre", Paola Catenaccio carries out an investigation of the discourse/genre interplay in Corporate Social Responsibility reports issued between 2000 and 2007 by some European and North American companies. The article makes a significant contribution to the literature on this developing genre, redefining a move structure, noticing a growing standardisation, while also pointing to a high flexibility in the arrangement of textual and discursive conventions.

"Doing Well by Doing Good: A Comparative Analysis of Nokia's and Ericsonn's Corporate Responsibility Reports" by Donatella Malavasi presents a comparative corpus study of the CSR reports issued by the two telecommunications equipment industries. The keyword analysis and the examination of the concordances of some emblematic words reveal the different strategies adopted in the companies' self-presentations, showing some divergences in the priority given to environmental and social issues and to abstract and factual expressions.

The next studies in the volume reflect the increasing concern of emerging economies to improve their CSR performance and communication. In his contribution, "Virtue and Eloquence: CSR Reporting in China", Giorgio Strafella reports some of the results of his research conducted in China. He examines the Chinese versions of the Social Responsibility reports issued by companies from a range of industrial sectors in 2007 and 2008, studying their structural and rhetorical features, the dominant reporting strategies and the arguments used for legitimation, while connecting these elements to the local traditional ethics and to the on-going process of industrial reform in the country.

The two following chapters deal with texts presenting Russian companies' ethical values and performance. In her article, "'Our Mission and Our Values': An Approach to Russian Banks' Communication Strategies", Paola Cotta Ramusino studies the genre of mission statement, expression of a company's identity and credo. She examines the rhetoric and discursive strategies deployed in the Russian versions of the statements published on 26 banks' websites and identifies different approaches to the genre, also highlighting the mix of global and local features, with culture-specific elements exploited to appeal to pathos.

The extremely sensitive area of environmental responsibility and sustainability for an energy company is explored in "Gazprom Environmental Report: Peculiarities of an Emerging Genre" by Liana Goletiani. She analyses the Russian versions of the gas giant's reports from a sociolinguistic perspective, revealing both the impact of globalisation on linguistic choices and key areas covered and the role of Russian administrative, political and environmental discourse in the definition of the genre.

The first two papers in the fourth section concentrate on the way corporate messages are reported in the media. Geert Jacobs and Els Tobback's investigation "Saving Opel: Discursive Perspectives on News Management" focus on a single fieldwork study of the media coverage of the 2009 take-over battle for the German car-maker Opel in a French-language Belgian broadcasting corporation. With an ethnographic approach, they show some of the principles guiding the journalist's choices in the process of news report production, such as the preference for news angles that are close to the audience.

Chiara Degano's "Business and National Identity: The Press Coverage of Fiat's Bids for Chrysler and Opel" examines the reporting of the news in US mainstream and business newspapers. Taking into account context, style, structure and content of the articles, she shows the hybridisation between financial and society-related news.

In the last chapter of the section, "Food for Thought: The Discursive Rehearsal of the Milan Expo 2012", Maria Cristina Paganoni studies a more diversified set of documents of the media campaign promoting the event in 2008 and 2009. She carries out an analysis of the linguistic and rhetorical features of the English versions, noticing the hybridisation of pedagogic discourse with business oriented strategies and competitive urban branding in the arguments supporting the choice of the host city.

The final section is devoted to the analysis of the communicative practices used to reach external audiences, promoting the company's image and advertising its products. The opening chapter of this part, "Genre Variation in Tobacco Advertising" by Giuliana Garzone, gives an extensive overview of the evolution of tobacco print advertisements form the 1920s to the late 1990s, noticing radical changes in the semiotic and discursive strategies employed, associated with the market and societal transformations and with scientific advancement.

A profound change in the promotional approaches is also the focus of Francesca Santulli's "Tourist Brochures as a Means to Convey Corporate Image: The Analysis of a Case Study in a Rhetorical Perspective". She analyses diachronically the Italian versions of the brochures by the tour operator Valtur, focusing on the covers and CEO's letters and showing the rhetorical and semiotic strategies deployed for the re-shaping of the company image, evolving towards a more client-oriented approach.

In her contribution, "Illocution and Perlocution in Advertising: Advising, Promising, Persuading", Barbara Berti studies a sample of advertisements appeared in British magazines and newspapers in 2009 in the framework of Speech Act Theory. She considers ads as performing a perlocutionary act to achieve persuasion by means of two illocutionary acts, advising and promising, often realised implicitly.

Brand management is the focus of Christopher M. Schmidt's paper "The Impact of Globalization on Holistic Brand Communication Strategy Online and Offline: The Cognitive Dimension". He applies an interdisciplinary framework, combining cognitive theory of image schemata and intercultural theory to the study of communication management to show how a holistic brand profile is conveyed in different texts and media by the international company Hitachi.

The last paper, "Advertising ELT Materials on the Web: What Identity for Local Teachers?", by Andrea Nava and Luciana Pedrazzini, investigate how global publishers specialising in English language teaching material construct the identity of the EFL teachers in their corporate global and country-specific websites. They study the glocalisation strategies focusing on the structure, composition and accessibility of the websites, suggesting that the non-native teachers appear to be conceived as less linguistically proficient, autonomous and resourceful.

Overall, the volume provides extremely useful insights to researchers interested in new trends and specific dimensions of corporate communication. As reported, the papers collected in *Discourse, Communication and the Enterprise. Genres and Trends* examine a variety of genres, interactions, and discursive formations with theoretical considerations and case studies from a range of geographical areas and languages. The individual articles present clear scientific and socio-cultural backgrounds for the studies conducted and the qualitative and quantitative analyses are rich in vivid examples of instances of actual communication. The volume delves, indeed, into many forms, contexts, messages and media in the panorama of the corporate communication system, thus contributing to shedding light on the crucial role of language and discourse and their many faces in an enterprise's life.

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