# *ENTREPRENEUR DISCOURSE AND ENGLISH COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE IN THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA*

**Suzana Carmen CISMAȘ**[*]

***Abstract*:** *The European Research Area (ERA) has the potential of becoming the driver for EU future prosperity and viability. Research and innovation have never before been so important for remaining internationally competitive, for facilitating growth and for tackling societal challenges. In this context, entrepreneurship implementing research results and innovations will become a way of life, and not many are prepared for it. Foreign languages communication competence is vital: it secures access to financing, progress initiatives, and global interactions with clients, potential markets, or new business partners. In this framework, academic education should cultivate not only business people, but also proficient communicators.*

***Keywords*:** *entrepreneur discourse, communication competence, ERA*

## Introduction

With its share of almost one third of the global knowledge production, Europe is able to secure its future viability as a continent of ideas and play a leading role in science, research and technology. However, the global science and innovation race is becoming increasingly difficult. Important scientific and technological centres and innovation capacities are expanding dynamically mainly in Asia. Apart from dramatic competition, this development also means new opportunities for cooperation that should be seized as a matter of mutual interest. To face the challenge, ERC (the European Research Council) has set the following imperative guidelines, to make sure the EU capitalises on the available research outcomes.

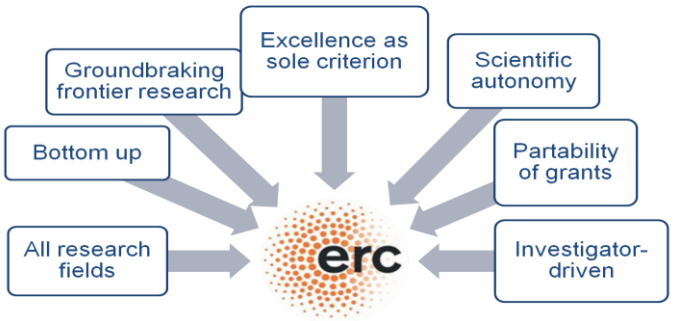



Fig. 1. ERC criteria for research grants to be implemented in economy cf. www.europa.eu

[*] University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, MIEADR, Bucharest, suzanacismas@yahoo.com



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**Entrepreneur communication for accessing ERA facilities**

Against this background, Europe needs a common research area that is efficient and open, and can attract the brightest international talents, and where the national science systems of the member states can cooperate more effectively with one another and establish stronger external networks.

This calls for a research and innovation policy on the part of EU countries which skilfully connects national activities with European and international actions. Optimum effectiveness and coherence could only be ensured if politics, science and industry work as partners at national and European levels.

After all, alongside publicly funded science, it is companies in particular, with their considerable financial investments in research and development, and with their commitment to translating ideas and research results into new products, services and processes, that play a decisive role in securing EU's position on the global markets by innovations and by creating and maintaining employment in Europe.

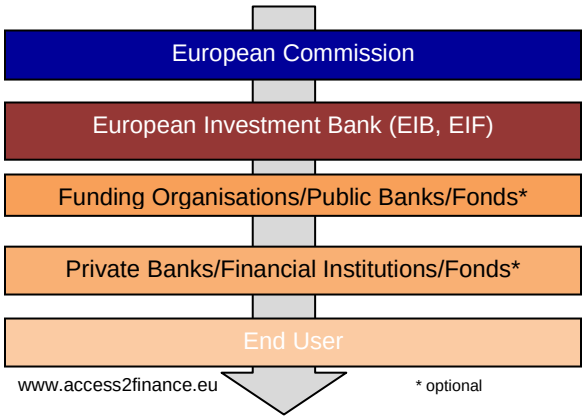



Fig. 2. How the money reaches the end user, cf www.access2finance.eu

Entrepreneurs communicate to get funds and know-how in the area of future and emerging technologies, so as to:

- Foster scientific collaboration across disciplines on visionary, high-risk ideas, thus uncovering radically new technology areas
- Implement science-driven and revolutionary research for societal change
- Determine interdisciplinary and collaborative dialogues
- Use new R&I eco-systems, path-finding for Europe's technological future
- Complement activities in other parts of Horizon 2020 – exploiting synergies.

SMEs are instruments assisting this process; their main characteristics are:

- De facto EU innovators
- From start-up innovative SMEs, they develop, grow and internationalize
- Single company support is possible initially
- Highly innovative products, processes, services getting 70% EU funding



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What should be funded?

- New products, processes, services or new market applications
- Innovative, ground-breaking, disruptive, close-to-market products/services/ideas
- Clear market potential
- Competitiveness and growth facilitators for the company
- Containing European added value

SMEs marketing strategy requires communication competence for the following actions:

- Conference
- Lobbying
- Visiting Researcher
- Clusters / Companies
- Workshops
- Open Days
- Fairs
- Webpage
- Brokerage Events
- International Organisation & Groups

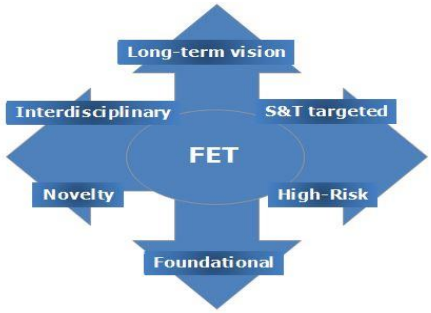
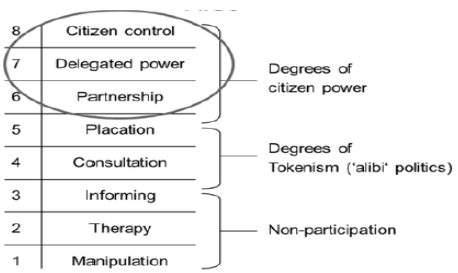
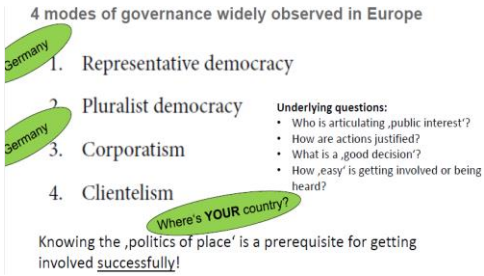



Fig.3. Actions in SME strategies to approach the stakeholders; communication features.

Entrepreneur discourse and English communication competence are intertwined in ERA:

- Dedicated to networking activities for European researchers,
- Trans-continental coordination of nationally funded research activities.
- Support networking activities of researchers in large scale pan-European networks
- Networking instrument for researchers, engineers or scholars, to jointly develop their own ideas and new initiatives in a field/topic of common interest or across scientific disciplines.
- Inclusiveness: a chance for smaller players to collaborate with the stronger ones
- Strategy to attract ITC researchers & stakeholders; science & technology driven concepts, thus open to all fields of implementation
- Leadership and participation on basis of mutual benefit.
- Focus on excellence.






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Fig. 4. Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation vs. the four modes of governance in Europe
cf. Healey 1997, p.26

**Business discourse and entrepreneur communication in governance issues**

The most important instrument at European level is the new EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation Horizon 2020, which provides funding of about 77 billion euros over the period 2014 to 2020, as a central element of the European Research Area. Activities are being funded along the entire innovation chain – from basic and frontier research to application-oriented research to the preparation of market-ready products and services. As the world's largest, integrated research and innovation programme, Horizon 2020 gives innovations an additional boost and enables more cooperation and exchange across national borders. National measures are being efficiently linked with European initiatives.

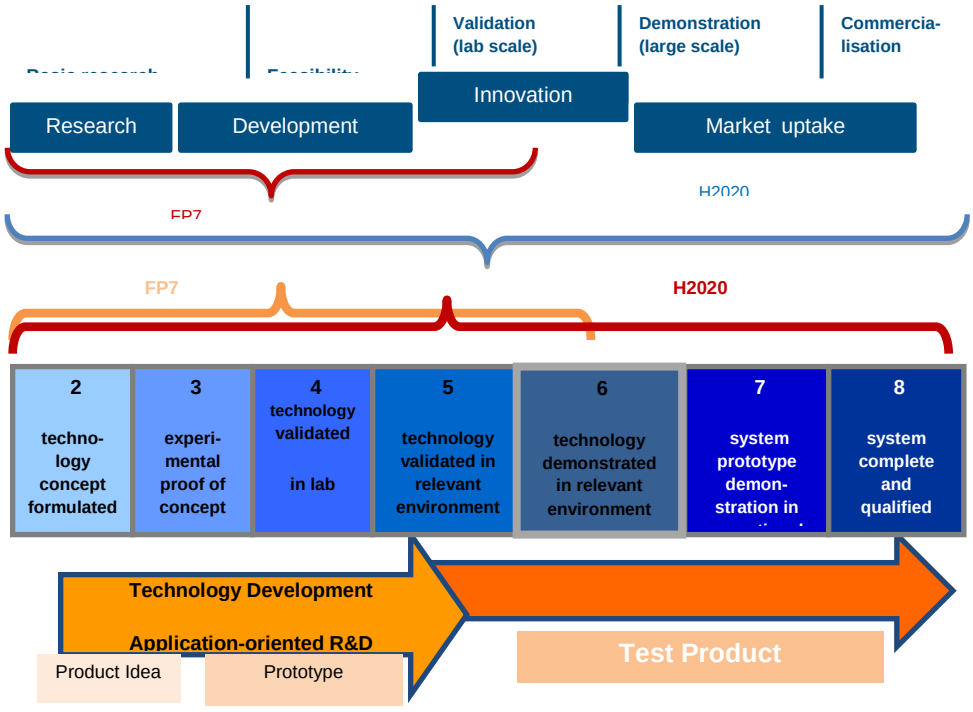



Fig. 5. The innovation chain and the technology readiness level, cf. EU Bureau of BMBF

Governments see the further development of the European Research Area as an important driver for strengthening Europe's scientific performance as a whole and expanding its innovative capacity to meet the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy. Key



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measures must be taken at national level so that the European Research Area, like the Single Market, can become a perceptible reality for the people of Europe.

The realization of the European Research Area became a declared EU goal that is anchored in primary law and a mandatory task for all concerned, particularly the Member States, with the enforcement of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009. This joint objective was endorsed at highest political levels with the target of completing the European Research Area by 2014. The European Commission and the Member States identified the following fields of action for a strong European Research Area (ERA Priorities):

1) More effective national research systems
2) Optimal transnational cooperation and competition
3) An open labour market for researchers
4) Gender equality and gender mainstreaming in research
5) Optimal circulation, access to and transfer of scientific knowledge
6) Strengthening the international dimension of the European Research Area

They are implemented by entrepreneur initiatives consortia as illustrated in the next figure:

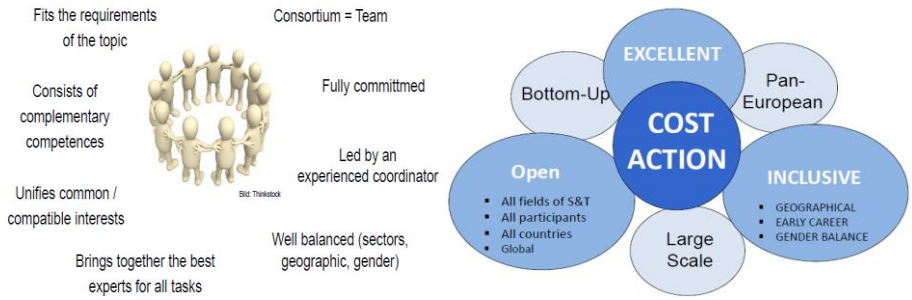



Fig. 5. Entrepreneur initiatives consortia and attributes of communication within them

A binding and transparent procedure is in place and it is used to regularly assess the status of implementation of the individual priorities. Consistent progress has been made in recent years. The European Research Area has been placed on a sound basis and achieved in principle, but still requires further development. Member states are determined to secure this position and to make relevant contributions to actively promote ERA at national and European levels in cooperation with various stakeholders with concrete measures. Special budget lines are effective incentive mechanisms to Europeanize research funding programs.

Guidelines for further shaping the European Research Area include the following:

1) Considerable economic progress as well as scientific and technological capacities will be drivers for further enhancing an excellence-based ERA serving as an international beacon. It focuses particularly on intelligent integration of national, bilateral and European research and innovation policies which is complemented by stronger involvement of stakeholders in corresponding European programmes and initiatives.

2) The European Research Area is based on the diversity and respective strengths of the national research and innovation systems of the member states. It is therefore primarily their responsibility to make substantial progress in accomplishing ERA on the



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basis of self-commitments and concrete strategies for action, thereby taking into account the different national starting positions. This includes the possibility of implementing feasible measures and cooperation based on the principle of variable geometry – that is to say, on a voluntary basis involving flexible groups or formats for stronger cooperation – in order, for example, to increase openness & interoperability among different funding mechanisms. Governments consider harmonizing legal measures at European level, but it might be detrimental to the diversity of the research systems and cultures in Europe, which encourages competition for outstanding scientific performance and excellence. Additional regulations could generate additional bureaucracy and might limit the scope, which is essential for development science.

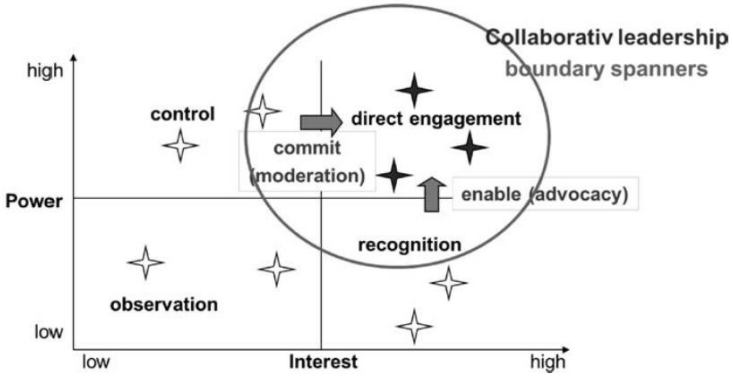


Fig. 6. Entrepreneur communication in the Power versus Interest Grid, cf. Healey 1997, p.85

3) The European Research Area must become more effective as a whole by optimum use of national and regional diversity with regard to research and innovation systems as well as through different funding and cooperation instruments. The fusion of excellence-driven research and innovation funding under Horizon 2020 and funding opportunities under the Structural Funds is especially important in this respect. This combination of measures encourages weaker member states to catch up and reduce the innovation gap within Europe.

4) It is also important to strengthen the international dimension of ERA with regard to third countries so as to make the best possible use of opportunities for cooperation – particularly in tackling global societal challenges. Only thus can Europe make progress in asserting its key position in research and innovation within a changing world, where countries like China, India, South Korea and Brazil show increasing influence. Internationalization of Science and Research will reach new standards in science cooperation and networking worldwide.

**Conclusions**

The European Research Area (ERA) has the potential of becoming the driver for EU future prosperity and viability. Research and innovation have never before been so important for remaining internationally competitive, for facilitating growth and for dealing with society challenges. In this context, entrepreneurship implementing research results and



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innovations becomes a way of life, and not many are prepared for it. Foreign languages communication competence is vital: it secures access to finance, progress initiatives, and global interactions with clients, potential markets, or new business partners. In this context, academic education should cultivate not only business people, but also proficient communicators.

When we speak about the academia, we should not overlook university rankings which depend on successful entrepreneurship communication benchmarks. Such criteria assess university performance in the fields of research, teaching, employability, internationalisation, according to six performance indicators: academic reputation (40%), citations per faculty (20%), student-to-faculty ratio (20%), employer reputation (10%), international faculty ratio (5%), and international student ratio (5%). Four of the indicators are based on measurable data, while the remaining two (academic reputation and employer reputation) are based on global surveys - one of academics, and another of employers. Further criteria, connected to actual economy data in employability vs. job markets and in emergent business may include: measuring student experience, knowledge transfer, international outlook, research income compared to research productivity, international collaboration, research income earned from industry against the number of academic staff employed.

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