

# **THE ROMANIAN PARLIAMENTARY DISCOURSE: TRADITION AND MODERNITY. A PRAGMA-RHETORICAL APPROACH**

## **1. GENERAL DATA**

*The Romanian Parliamentary Discourse: Tradition and Modernity. A Pragma-Rhetorical Approach* is an exploratory research project, included in the program *IDEAS* (code 2136/2008) and sponsored by the National Council for Scientific Research in the Higher Education System (in Romanian: CNCSIS). Directed by Liliana Ionescu-Ruxăndoiu, the research team includes five specialists, four linguists: Andra Vasilescu, Ariadna Ștefănescu, Melania Roibu, Mihaela-Viorica Constantinescu, and a historian: Silviu Hariton. The team is in a permanent contact with two young political scientists: Irina Ionescu and Todor Arpad. The project started in 2009 and will be finished in 2011.

The project is dealing with the description and analysis of the evolution of the Romanian parliamentary discourse (PD) as an institutional discourse genre, from its beginnings up to the present, from an interdisciplinary perspective. Its guidelines are given by an assumption largely accepted by specialists in complementary fields (communication, PR, sociology, political sciences): politics is, almost exclusively, the domain of discourse practices in institutional settings (Chilton, Schäffner 2002: 3).

The investigation of the political discourse in general, and of the parliamentary discourse – as a subtype of the former –, is of major interest among European specialists, deeply concerned with accommodating traditions and various political discourse styles across the European Union.

A historical research of the national parliamentary discourse can result in a deeper understanding of the diversity of parliamentary practices across Europe. Moreover, it can highlight the role of the local socio-historical factors, ideologies, collective mentalities, and social psychology in building a tradition of institutional culture.

## **2. PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

**2.0.** The main objectives of the project are to highlight the complex phenomena that underlie the constitutive process of the Romanian PD and reveal the specific

patterns of the Romanian parliamentary interaction, taking into account the main acquisitions of the conceptualism, contextualism, pragma-dialectics and pragma-rhetorical analysis.

As an interdisciplinary approach of a particular discursive form, the project has content, methodological, and practical objectives.

**2.1.** Within a modern theoretical framework, the content objectives are in accordance with the current trends in the field: an integrated study of the complex relationships between discourse and society as a pathway to an in depth understanding of collective mentalities; accurate predictions on the communicative behavior of different groups in specific communicative settings. Specifically, the project has three content objectives:

(a) to examine the complex relationships between discourse, socio-political events and ideology;

(b) to identify and characterize the main stages in the evolution of the Romanian PD;

(c) to describe the institutionalizing process of the Romanian PD.

Scientific standards will be met through a close collaboration of the linguists, with specialists in history and political sciences. The task of the historian will be: to set up the main stages in the evolution of the Romanian parliamentary discourse; to select the most relevant events for each historical period; to make quantitative and qualitative analyses; to capture the way the socio-political events are reflected in discourse. Political scientists will be consulted in order to cast light upon the way social events are filtered by ideology and mapped onto discourse. The task of the linguists will be to integrate the socio-political contextual observations in the frame of the pragma-rhetorical analysis of discourse. More exactly, the linguist will deal with: aspects concerning the general structure of the parliamentary discourses (the construction and legitimating of meaning; topic management; the distinctive features of the speech acts, the observation and violation of communicative maxims; (im)politeness strategies), as well as with particular aspects which derive from the institutional goals of the parliamentary discourse (strategies of agreement and disagreement, strategies of reaching consensus, argumentative strategies, strategies of manipulation, rhetorical devices for expressing logos, ethos, pathos).

The pragma-rhetorical analysis will focus on aspects regarding the macro- and microstructural discourse levels. As far as the macrostructural level is concerned, relevant aspects are: observing or violating institutional rules, principles and constraints; discourse orientation towards agreement or disagreement, conceived as a scalar dimension along an argumentative continuum; conflict management; emotional and rational patterns of thinking; types of arguments and argumentative strategies; monological and/or dialogical discursive resources; the mechanisms of turn taking; other types of macro-acts specific to the discourse

genre under consideration. On the microstructural level, discourse controlling techniques, key-words, clichés, metadiscursive sequences, modalization, connectives, (im)politeness strategies, strategic use of parenthetical structures will be examined.

**2.2.** One of the tasks of the project is to implement a principle based methodological framework for the analysis of the parliamentary discourse that might also be applied to other types of political discourses, performed in different socio-cultural contexts. Our concern for a principled based methodology derives from the observation of the eclectic character of some analyses of the Romanian political discourses.

The study of the political discourse should be based on a flexible, interdisciplinary, and multi-layered methodology. Its main challenge is to integrate different approaches of the multifarious aspects of this type of discourse in a coherent system. Our model, which integrates a comprehensive international bibliography, might serve as a basis for further researches in related fields.

An issue of special interest is compiling and classifying a corpus, which should enable us to provide a relevant image of the average parliamentary discourse at different stages in its history.

**2.3.** The project is designed as a scientific research which also involves practical aims: to offer some valid standards for an efficient parliamentary communication. An overview of the history of the Romanian parliamentary discourse will be the basis for better understanding its present day forms of manifestation. The theoretical investigation will come with a set of explicative rules and descriptive patterns, offering some practical solutions or recommendations for all those engaged in this kind of communication (politicians, diplomats, (euro) parliamentarians, TV hosts, journalists, translators, etc.).

**2.4.** The research activity proper will be complemented with an integrative work, as well as with an activity of dissemination of partial and final results. Accordingly, a workshop with the participation of specialists from different fields (political sciences, history, communication, linguistics) will take place this year and an international colloquium on the topic *European Parliamentary Discourses: Interdisciplinary Approaches* will be organized next year.

### 3. METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

The research project is situated within the general theoretical paradigm of functionalism, largely represented in language sciences at present. Specifically, the research relates to corpus linguistics based on modern information technologies, which enable a higher degree of scientific objectivity in collecting and interpreting data. Our research implements too a new perspective on diachronic studies, i.e. the change of focus from the language as a system to its actualization in discourse.

The micro- and macro-structure of the PD will be correlated with the perception of the historical events, the ideology of the political parties, the relevant aspects of collective mentalities and the social psychology of the time. Accordingly, several theoretical hypotheses concerning the relationship between event, ideology and discourse will be tested. The presentation of personal and ethnic identity, as well as a typology of the discursive ethos are also important topics of our research. At the same time, an overview of the cultural features and norms of the Romanian PD will be construed.

In Romanian linguistics, this type of research is completely new. It accommodates the traditional research of the cultural national values (by investigating the speeches of some famous representatives in the Romanian Parliament: M. Kogălniceanu, I.C. Brătianu, P.P. Carp, Take Ionescu, N. Iorga, N. Filipescu, N. Titulescu etc.) with the a modern theoretical framework.

Our research is based on recent developments and widely acknowledged methodologies in the field:

- the interactional perspective on discourse, as shaped in the already classical works of E. Goffman (1959, 1974, 1981) and in the model proposed by C. Kerbrat-Orecchioni (1990, 1992, 1994, 2005);

- the analysis of the political discourse as a social practice, i.e. an exchange of ideas and opinions in a public space populated by actors who resort to certain strategies and obey the rules imposed by the communicative setting (cf. Chilton, Schäffner 2002; Charaudeau 2005, with respect to the methodology; Trognon, Larrue, 1994, as guidelines for the analysis);

- critical discourse analysis (CDA), based on a dialectical approach of the relationship between discourse and society (van Dijk 1997, 1998; Wodak, Meyer 2001; Fairclough 2002;), a method which is largely used in social sciences;

- the new directions in argumentation studies (cf. van Eemeren, Grootendorst 2004; Walton 2006; Amossy 2006);

- the theoretical investigations and the case studies on the parliamentary discourse (Ilie 1996-2006; Burkhardt, Böke 2000; Burkhardt 2003; Bayley 2004);

- some Romanian theoretical works (Sălăvăstru 1999; Beciu 2002), as well as case studies on the Romanian political discourse (Lindenbauer 2003; Metzeltin, Lindenbauer, Wochele 2005).

Both quantitative and qualitative methods will be used. The quantitative methods deal with the lexical structure of texts: key-words, frequency of their occurrences, hapax legomena, contextual occurrences, comparisons between discourse structures in different subperiods. The programs used are: Wordsmith tools (a program distributed on the web by Oxford University Press at <http://www.lexically.net/wordsmith/>) and Concordancier created at the Institute of Linguistics “Iorgu Iordan-Al. Rosetti” of the Romanian Academy. The quantitative methods use also the suggestions offered by the conceptualism of the German school of Reinhard Koselleck (Begriffsgeschichte), and by the contextualism of the

Cambridge school (Q. Skinner, J. G. A. Pocock). As for the qualitative methods, a general interactional perspective is adopted; the project provides a new and extended pragma-rhetorical model, using elements from the critical discourse analysis (CDA) and the pragma-dialectical argumentation theory (van Eemeren, Grootendorst). The diachronic perspective is introduced in order to establish the main directions and tendencies that are manifest in the evolution of the parliamentary discourse, as well as in the process of building a tradition of the Romanian parliamentary discourse.

#### 4. SHORT PRESENTATION OF THE PAPERS IN THIS ISSUE

Two articles tackle the topic of linguistic impoliteness and rudeness, which was dealt with at the International Conference of the Linguistic Politeness Research Group held in Lancaster, last summer (30 June-2 July). They were presented as papers at this conference.

Liliana Ionescu-Ruxăndoiu examines some strategies of the *in absentia* impoliteness using the data provided by the parliamentary session where the proposal of President Trajan Băsescu's suspension from office was debated.

Melania Roibu and Mihaela N. Constantinescu describe the main marks of the verbal aggressiveness in several parliamentary debates ranging from 1866 until nowadays. The focus of the paper is represented by the rhetorical devices and the insults.

Andra Vasilescu presents three case studies (parliamentary discourses given by T. Maiorescu and N. Iorga). The author aims at establishing possible correlations between stancetaking, metastance and persuasion. She identifies the presence of some culturally shared values.

Ariadna Ștefănescu's paper deals with the denominations of the concept of "Unirea Principatelor" (the bringing together of the Romanian Principalities) which covers several semantics areas (wish, feeling, interest, and sacred). The author discusses some conceptual metaphors that account for the romanticism of M. Kogălniceanu's parliamentary discourses. The speaker's attitude reveals an optimism sprung from a *wishful thinking* argumentative move, which is typical of the rhetorical tradition of that time.

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# SPEECH ACTS AND RHETORICAL PRACTICES IN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION TIME

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**Abstract.** By tradition, parliament has developed into a prototypically institutional *locus* devoted to verbal confrontation between politicians representing opposite political parties who present arguments supporting the *pros* and *cons* of issues under discussion. For parliamentarians who participate in the political decision-making process by interacting and debating, *speaking is acting*. In Question Time sessions parliamentary acting consists in question-response sequences that display exchanges of challenging, accusatory, but also countering, defensive and ironical, remarks between Opposition MPs and Government MPs. An examination of the speech acts performed during Question Time can provide revealing insights into the confrontational nature of the relationships between opposition MPs and government MPs, as well as into their multifunctional and shifting rhetorical strategies. The present analysis focuses on the multiple functions of the speech acts performed by MPs, which can be used and misused in unpredictable ways, in various degrees and for different purposes.

Le Parlement, comme son nom l'indique, n'est rien de plus que le lieu de la parole. [...] L'institution parlementaire combine *le parler avec, le parler au nom de, le parler pour*. (Marc Abélès, Un ethnologue à l'Assemblée, 2000 : 266).

## INTRODUCTION

In keeping with parliamentary codes of conduct and institutionalised rhetorical conventions, the behaviour and interaction patterns of Members of Parliament (= MPs) are primarily conditioned by their belonging to parliament, irrespective of their party allegiance. Moreover, by attending and participating in parliamentary debating sessions, as well as in committee debating meetings, MPs are bound to develop a sense of togetherness, of acknowledging overall common interests, and sharing concerns and goals. In many respects, MPs belong to a close-knit community of political actors, whose behaviour and discourse practices are supposed to follow parliamentary codes and rules, while at the same time they are expected to break these very codes and rules in order to defend their own ideas and to attack their political opponents' ideas.

By tradition, parliament has developed into a prototypically institutional *locus* devoted to verbal confrontation between politicians representing opposite political parties who present arguments supporting the *pros* and *cons* of issues under discussion. It is fully justified to regard parliamentary politics as a ‘politics of dissensus’, as suggested by Palonen (2009: 82), since “the parliamentary procedure is built on the rhetorical assumption that a proper judgement of any proposal can only be made if it is confronted with opposing views”. In order to cope with open adversarial confrontations on a regular basis, parliaments have acquired a highly structured functional complexity due to the emergence of increasingly conventionalised norms and procedural standards, patterns of debating and decision-making routines. As has been pointed out by Ilie (2006a: 190), parliamentary discourse belongs to the genre of political discourse, which involves “complying with and/or circumventing a number of specific rules and constraints”. As parliamentary proceedings have undergone gradual ritualisation through regulation of the collective behaviour and encounters of MPs the form and structure of their dialogic interactions also display a high degree of institutionalisation.

Parliamentary debates do not only reflect political, social and cultural situations in an ever changing world, they also contribute to shaping these very situations. Consequently, parliaments have generally been regarded as democratically constituted fora for political deliberation, problem solving and decision making. All these activities are primarily carried out by means of discussions, consultations and disputes. A distinguishing characteristic of parliaments as institutions is that parliamentary work essentially consists in speaking (monologic communication) and debating (dialogic communication). Not surprisingly, parliamentary government was described as “government by speaking” by Macaulay (1857) and “government by discussion” by Bagehot (1872).

Parliamentarians are supposed to constantly try to improve their rhetorical skills in an attempt to find the best ways to verbalise their opinions, beliefs and convictions. This applies in particular to discussions about matters of vital national importance, when crucial political decisions have to be made. Parliamentarians are therefore supposed to be able to act and to interact with each other in effective and goal-oriented ways. The sense of togetherness is reinforced by the activities carried out within varying types of groups: *parliamentary groups* (which consist of MPs of the same political party), *all-party parliamentary groups* (which can usually include members of both houses/chambers in bicameral parliaments), *associate parliamentary groups* (which are similar to all-party parliamentary groups except that they are made up of not only MPs, but can also include members from outside Parliament). However, groups do not represent a single or homogeneous category. For example, the following types of groups are very different from each other: an



orchestra, members of a steering board, football fans in the stadium, a family reunion, a.s.o. The differences depend, among other things, on the various criteria used to classify groups and their constituents: in terms of professional goals and relationships, of shared hobbies, of kinship relations, etc. that unite the members of the group.

One such distinction was made by Harré (1997), who identified three main categories of groups:

(i) *taxonomic groups*: for example the cinema audience members older than 16; members of this group only share a particular characteristic, they do not have 'internal' relations in the sense that if one drops out, it will not affect the others;

(ii) *crowds*: for example, the crowd entering a stadium: members share a common goal, but do not have beliefs about each other given that common goal, or rights and obligations;

(iii) *structured groups*: for example, a family: members are physically related; or a football team: members are related by sharing a common purpose. An example of the former is a family, of the latter a team playing soccer; in such groups members share a common goal, they have beliefs about each other, and they have rights and obligations. The members of structured groups are internally related, i.e., the loss of one of the members will affect the others.

In terms of Harré's classification, parliamentary groups would fall into the category of structured groups, since MPs as insiders to parliamentary institutions share a great deal of institutional *savoir faire* and experience, as well as a significant number of intentions and goals. Moreover, they share an awareness about the deliberate use of norm-regulated rhetorical practices. However, there is a certain vagueness in the description of selection criteria for membership in structured groups. A more useful and appropriate categorisation is provided by the cognitive anthropologists Lave and Wenger (1991), who coined the term "community of practice" (CoP). On their view a CoP can evolve naturally because of the members' common interest in a particular domain or area, or it can be created specifically with the goal of gaining knowledge related to their field. Discourse and behaviour patterns, as well as power relations, are produced and reproduced in such communities of practice according to the members' dynamic role shifts, interpersonal positionings, political configurations, a.s.o.

A community of practice is not merely a club of friends or a network of connections between people. It has an identity defined by a shared domain of interest. Members engage in joint activities and discussions, share information and build relationships. Membership therefore implies a commitment to the domain, and therefore a shared competence that distinguishes members from other people.

In parliament, communities of practice can be described as aggregates of people who come together around mutual engagement in some common endeavour. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations – in short, practice – emerge in the course of their joint activity around that endeavour.

## PARLIAMENTARY SPEAKING IS ACTING

Parliamentary discourse can be looked upon as rhetorically constituted in the sense that it is called for by various rhetorical situations (Bitzer 1968) as an instrument of political reflection, as an instance of deliberation and as a mode of action. It is used as a tool for jointly reasoning about possible alternatives, for negotiating future solutions, and for jointly acting to reach commonly agreed goals. Above all, due to its dialogic nature and goal orientation, *parliamentary discourse* counts as *parliamentary action*. For parliamentarians who participate in the political decision-making process by interacting and debating, *speaking is acting*.

The theory that best captures the notion of performing actions through speaking is the *theory of speech acts* outlined by Austin (1962), according to whom verbalised human interaction is construed as the performance of particular acts carrying various kinds of intentionality. The main tenet of this theory, as proposed by Austin, is a consideration of the social and linguistic contexts of language use, which had been neglected in earlier syntactically and semantically oriented linguistic and philosophical studies. His theoretical approach was an attempt to bridge the gap between philosophical approaches (which overlook the role and importance of context in human communication) and sociological approaches (which take into account the context in which communication occurs).

Austin claims that many utterances used in human interaction (things people say) are equivalent to actions. For example, when someone says: "I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth" or "I now pronounce you husband and wife", the respective utterance creates a new social or psychological reality.

To name the ship is to say (in the appropriate circumstances) the words "I name". When I say, before the registrar or altar, "I do", I am not reporting on a marriage, I am indulging in it (Austin, 1955: 6).

In the former case – an act of baptising a ship –, the outcome of the utterance is that the ship gets a name, whereas in the latter case – an act of proclaiming a couple officially married –, the outcome consists in the fact that the man and woman in question have changed their civil status becoming husband and wife, respectively. However, the appropriate conditions must be in place if the utterances are to be effective and the outcomes to be reached: in the former case the person performing the ship naming must be authorised, the ceremony must take place at a particular time, in front of an audience; in the latter case, there must be an authorised person (a registrar official, a priest) carrying out the ceremony in an authorised place (registrar's office, church), a.s.o. Hence, if the circumstances are appropriate, the speech acts of 'baptising a ship' and of 'proclaiming a couple officially married' can be said to have been performed felicitously. '*Felicitous*' is Austin's term for statements that successfully enact what they say. In these situations to say something is to do something. Austin contrasts *performative* utterances like the ones above with *constative* utterances, such as "The food is tasty" or "I visited Paris last week", which do merely describe or report something.

Consequently, the analysis of utterances functioning as speech acts does not amount to simply examining the issuing of an utterance in a speech situation, but the *performance of a speech act*. The structure and functions of speech acts have to be analysed at both micro- and macro-level, since there is a close interdependence between the two analytical levels. At the micro-level, performing a speech act in an institutional setting such as the parliament involves the use of ritualised forms of address (Ilie 2005a, 2010), recurring key words (Ilie 1999a, 2007), recycled clichés (1999b, 2000), counter-clichés (Ilie 2006b), particular questioning and answering patterns (Ilie 2003, 2005b), to name but a few. At the same time, it is important to keep in mind that speech acts are not performed or evaluated separately, as self-standing units. Rather, they occur in sequences and are performed by speakers engaged in globally structured speech activities, such as debating, chatting, lecturing, explaining, problem-solving, preaching, a.s.o. This is particularly noticeable in dialogic interactions like parliamentary debates. In such cases the appropriateness of the speech acts embedded in interaction sequences needs to be evaluated at the macro-level, with reference to broader frames of action and goals than those implicit in the act itself.

Austin drew a threefold distinction between different kinds of speech acts: *locutionary acts*, *illocutionary acts* and *perlocutionary acts*. According to him a locutionary act is simply *the act of saying something*. Hence, any utterance would practically qualify as a locutionary act. An illocutionary act is *an act performed in saying something*. It is its real, intended meaning which is what the speaker really means. For example, when Mary says to John, who is crossing the street: “Watch out!”, she is actually doing something at the same time, namely she is sending a warning to him. A perlocutionary act is *an act performed by saying something*. It is a speech act which gets someone to do or realise something following on from the illocutionary act. In our example, John starts looking around before crossing the street. The perlocutionary act is expected to have an effect on the feelings, thoughts or actions of the speaker or the listener. Rhetorically speaking, it seeks to change minds.

### **SPEECH ACTS IN PARLIAMENTARY INTERACTION**

A systematic comparison made by Ilie (2003) between parliamentary subgenres and corresponding subgenres of theatre performances shows how parliamentary dialogue contributes to revealing frames of mind and beliefs, as well as exposing instances of doublespeak and incompatible or inconsistent lines of action. MPs are not expected to have a straightforward dialogue with each other, i.e. to be engaged in a genuine reasoning process or truth finding discussion. They are fully aware of the fact that they cannot realistically hope to persuade political opponents of the justifiability of their ideas and beliefs. Instead MPs get engaged in a theatre-like dialogic game between adversarial positions in a spirit of competitiveness

and agonistic behaviour. To a large extent, the MPs' interaction in parliament is a competition for power and leadership roles, but also for fame and popularity.

One of the prototypical subgenres of parliamentary interaction consists in a particular type of questioning, which is known as 'Question Time' in the U.K. Parliament, 'Question Period' in the Canadian Parliament, 'Frågestund' in the Swedish Riksdag, 'Questions au Gouvernement' in the French Parliament, 'Heure des questions' in the Belgian Parliament, to name but a few. Question Time is a specific session devoted to questioning the foremost representatives of the Government, namely the Prime Minister and/or Government Ministers, by their fellow MPs. Government members are held accountable for their political intentions, statements and actions by fellow MPs. The order in which the questions are asked is previously established by a process of random selection. Question Time becomes particularly confrontational when the questioning is carried out by members of the Opposition. A number of histrionic and agonistic features can be identified in the rhetorical strategies used by MPs during Question Time.

The question-response sequences represent the default adjacency pairs in Question Time sessions. They often display exchanges of challenging, accusatory, but also countering, defensive and ironical, remarks between Opposition MPs and Government MPs, as well as friendly and cooperative questions from MPs belonging to the Government party. Particularly confrontational is the line of questioning carried out by members of the Opposition. An examination of the speech acts performed during Question Time can provide important insights into the confrontational nature of the relationships between opposition MPs and government MPs, as well as of their multifunctional and shifting rhetorical strategies. For the purpose of illustration, the analysis focuses on significant speech act events recorded during the Question Time session in the U.K. Parliament on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2010.

The following excerpt consists of an exchange between David Cameron, leader of the Conservative Opposition party at that time, and Gordon Brown, the Prime Minister at that time.

(1)

Mr. David Cameron (Witney) (Con): [...] *Will he* [the Prime Minister] *start by admitting* that when British forces were sent into Helmand, they did not have sufficient helicopters to protect themselves and get the job done?

The Prime Minister (Mr. Gordon Brown, Lab): *I do not accept* that in any operation to which we sent troops our commanding officers gave wrong advice; they told us that they were properly equipped. [...]

(Hansard Debates, 7 April 2010: Column 961)

The Conservative opposition leader's sentence "Will he start by admitting ..." addressed to the Prime Minister Brown counts as a locutionary act, as it basically consists in uttering the very words. At the same time, the utterance is an

illocutionary act since it is conveyed by Cameron in the form of a question which serves to challenge, embarrass, accuse and irritate the Prime Minister. The latter's reaction provides evidence that Cameron's question had the intended effect, since it succeeds in triggering a perlocutionary act from Gordon Brown in the form of a strong refutation and direct denial. Obviously, Brown's statement can hardly be regarded as a proper answer, just as Cameron's utterance can hardly be regarded as an information-eliciting question. What Cameron is actually doing is to challenge Brown by calling into question his past actions and decisions. In order to avoid losing face, Brown reacts by refuting the presuppositions underlying Cameron's blatant accusations.

While it is theoretically possible, as well as necessary, to discuss the distinction between locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts, it is nevertheless impossible to separate them in reality, since all speech act events consist of varying sorts of combinations of these three categories. In theory, an illocutionary act becomes felicitous when it succeeds in triggering (in the hearer) the perlocutionary effect intended by the speaker. However, example (1) instantiates one of the common situations where the nature and scope of the perlocutionary act do not necessarily coincide with the intentions that underlie the speaker's illocutionary act. This unpredictability with regard to perlocutionary acts applies to both conventional and non-conventional speech acts. Thus, Cameron's utterance is deliberately framed as a *loaded or complex question* addressed to a government representative on behalf of the opposition. This type of question is used to limit a respondent's options in answering it (Walton 1981). Moreover, it is often fallacious in the sense that it combines several presuppositions, which amounts to combining several questions into one, i.e. the fallacy of many questions. The classic case is "Have you stopped abusing your spouse?" No matter which of the two direct answers the respondent gives, s/he concedes engaging in spousal abuse at some time or other.

By treating the negative assumptions about the Prime Minister's past action as commonly accepted, Cameron manages to imply the presumed answer to a question that was never asked. He rhetorically builds up not a simple, but a complex/loaded question, which amounts to a fallacy of many questions. Thus his question in extract (1) – "Will he [the Prime Minister] start by admitting that when British forces were sent into Helmand, they did not have sufficient helicopters to protect themselves and get the job done?" – contains in fact one question and an embedded statement, whose content is implicitly presented as already accepted by the interlocutor – the Prime Minister:

(i) **QUESTION:**

*Will he start by admitting [X]?*

presupposes that [X] has already been established in agreement with the Prime Minister. However, in reality this is not the case. Instead Cameron should have first asked the following question in order to establish the Prime Minister's standpoint on the respective issue:

**(ii) QUESTION – not asked:**

*Did British forces have sufficient helicopters to protect themselves and get the job done when they were sent into Helmand?*

What Cameron does by means of his speech act is to implicitly attribute the following answer to the Prime Minister:

**(iii) ANSWER – implied:**

*No, when British forces were sent into Helmand, they did not have sufficient helicopters to protect themselves and get the job done.*

This implicit attribution strategy is a rhetorical mechanism that is frequently used by MPs in loaded questions addressed to the Prime Ministers and other ministers during Question Time sessions. The leader of the Opposition party, who is entitled to ask several successive questions, often takes advantage of this privilege to rephrase and ask again the same question if the respective minister fails to provide a satisfactory answer (which obviously happens more often than not).

(2) Mr. David Cameron (Witney) (Con): That answer sums up this premiership. The Prime Minister takes no responsibility and always blames somebody else. *Why can he [the Prime Minister] not just admit something that everybody knows to be true – that there were not enough helicopters? [...]*

The Prime Minister (Mr. Gordon Brown, Lab): We have increased the number of helicopters in Afghanistan. We have increased the flying time by more than 100 per cent. *I think that the right hon. Gentleman should recognise that the Merlins were adapted, and are now in Afghanistan. He should also recognise that the Chinooks were also adapted, so that they, too, can be in Afghanistan. He should recognise that we have other helicopters in Afghanistan that are working, and we are part of an international operation in Afghanistan, where we share equipment with our coalition partners. I have to say to him that the amount of money spent in Afghanistan now is £5 billion a year; that is 1,000 extra vehicles, and twice the number of flying time hours for our helicopters. I think that he should accept that our troops, for the operations that they are asked to undertake, have been given the equipment that they need. That is the right position.*

(Hansard Debates, 7 April 2010: Column 961)

As illustrated in extract (2), the exchange between Cameron and Brown keeps unfolding in the same vein, but with significant changes in the types of speech acts performed by each of the two MPs. The parliamentary confrontation game is largely ritualistic and role-related, but can take unpredictable forms depending on the rhetorical skills and power balance between the interlocutors. Not surprisingly, after receiving Brown's response in (1), Cameron is dissatisfied, since his illocutionary act has not managed to trigger the intended perlocutionary effect. Consequently, he decides to continue his political attacks by resorting to a questioning speech act that involves an accusation, thus echoing the preceding one in excerpt (1): "*Why can he [the Prime Minister] not just admit something that*

*everybody knows to be true – that there were not enough helicopters?*” This time Cameron uses a classical type of loaded question, i.e. a wh-question. Particularly why-questions occur frequently in such speech acts, which contain embedded claims for which there is no evidence. In this particular case the speaker’s illocutionary act includes implicit answers to two questions – (v) and (vi) – that have never been asked:

(iv) **QUESTION – asked:**

*Why can he not just admit X?*

(v) **QUESTION – not asked:**

*Is it true that there were not enough helicopters?*

**ANSWER – implied:**

*Yes, it is.*

(vi) **QUESTION – not asked:**

*Does everybody know to be true that there were not enough helicopters?*

**ANSWER – implied:**

*Yes, they do.*

The implicit answers are collapsed in one explicitly conveyed claim:

(vii) **CLAIM – overgeneralisation:**

*Everybody knows to be true – that there were not enough helicopters.*

Cameron’s claim in (vii) is a speech act of overgeneralisation – “*Everybody knows*” – in the sense that its validity can hardly be verified and/or proved. Nevertheless, like other rhetorical generalisations, this is a strategy used to emphasise and give strength to the speaker’s argumentative stance. In spite of his efforts, Cameron fails to induce the expected perlocutionary effect from the Prime Minister Brown. The latter’s speech acts mark a rhetorically relevant change of style, by actually adopting his opponent’s strategies. Far from becoming overpowered by Cameron’s forcefully accusatory speech acts, Brown counter-attacks his opponent by borrowing his strategies. For example, one such strategy is the use of the rhetorical three-part list:

(a) I think that the right hon. Gentleman *should recognise X*

(b) He *should also recognise Y*

(c) He *should recognise Z*

Brown finishes his turn by using the same speech act verb as in (1) – “accept” –, but this time its purpose is not to refute an accusation, but rather to challenge Cameron to change his standpoint: “I think that *he should accept X*”.

In the process of dialogic interaction conventional uses of speech acts acquire dynamic instantiations in the sense that one and the same convention, for instance, can be used and misused in endless ways, in various degrees and for different purposes by individual MPs. Moreover, meaning cannot be fully pre-determined by conventions, it emerges to a large extent in terms of how it is expressed, conveyed and perceived in each context-specific use of language.

A systematic examination of the functions and effects of the speech acts performed by MPs shows that parliamentary discourse counts as parliamentary action. For parliamentarians who participate on a regular basis in the political decision-making process by interacting and debating, *speaking is acting*.

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# STRAIGHTFORWARD VS. MITIGATED IMPOLITENESS IN THE ROMANIAN PARLIAMENTARY DISCOURSE. THE CASE OF *IN ABSENTIA* IMPOLITENESS\*

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**Abstract.** The paper examines some impoliteness forms in the parliamentary session debating the proposal of President T. Băsescu's suspension from office. The analysis aims at discussing some theoretical aspects concerning the definition and the main strategies of *in absentia* impoliteness in an institutional setting. Two main sets of distinctions, operating at different levels, are proposed: (1) straightforward vs. mitigated impoliteness, expressing the general manner of approaching the target of attacks, as reflected in the speaker's choice of the grammatical person; (2) on record vs. off record impoliteness, having in view speaker's strategies of doing FTAs. Accordingly, *in absentia* impoliteness belongs mainly to the mitigated type, on record and off record strategies appearing quite often interwoven in the same discursive sequence.

**Keywords:** politeness, impoliteness, on record / off record strategies, *in absentia* impoliteness.

## 1. PRELIMINARY REMARKS

This paper examines impoliteness forms in a very special type of parliamentary debate. It is focused on the joint session of the two Chambers of the Romanian Parliament debating the proposal of President Trajan Băsescu's suspension from office (April 19, 2007). The proposal, signed by 200 members of Parliament (MPs), was initiated by the Social Democratic Party, the main opposition party at that time. As most of the MPs voted in favour of this proposal (322 vs. 108), the President was suspended from office for 30 days. Still, he came back to office after a referendum characterized by a high rate of absenteeism (participation of less than 45%).

\* Paper presented at the *Linguistic Impoliteness and Rudeness II (LIAR II)*. *The 2009 International Conference of the Linguistic Politeness Research Group*, Lancaster University, U.K., 30 June – 2 July 2009.

This work was supported by CNCSIS-UEFISCU, project PN II – IDEI, code 2136/2008.

This analysis will provide the opportunity of tackling some theoretical aspects concerning the definition and the strategies of impoliteness (especially *in absentia* impoliteness) in institutional settings.

## 2. THE COMMUNICATIVE CONTEXT

Even if parliament is typically a confrontational setting, the case under consideration could be positioned in an area where cooperation is completely excluded and conflict is continuously kept alive.

One can speak of an open dispute, engaging two groups of MPs: President's detractors (the members of all the parliamentary parties except the Democratic Party) and President's defenders (the members of the Democratic Party, his former political party, as in Romania the President is obliged to resign from his party after the elections).

The targets of their attacks are of a different nature: an individual (the President) vs. a group (the initiators and supporters of President's suspension from office). In the first case, the attacks are performed *in absentia* – as the President did not participate in the parliamentary session –, having as a focus a great diversity of vulnerable aspects of his public as well as private personality. In the second case, the attacks are global, in spite of the differences in the political affiliation of those who were against the President. Collateral targets could also be identified: persons associated either with the President or with his opponents, whose names are mentioned by some speakers.

In spite of the formal differences between the speeches, the competing claims stated by the representatives of the two camps are completely predictable, as pre-determined by their party membership. The possibility to negotiate opinions and to produce a change in the result of the final vote using strong arguments is excluded.

Speakers' immediate goals: to score points in the debate and accordingly to challenge the pretended authority of the adversaries, are closely connected with their major long term persuasive goals directed to the visible and invisible audience whose voting decision in the forthcoming referendum and elections should be influenced. Given the above sketched situation, where disagreement is programmatic not only as a communicative attitude of the participants, but also as a constitutive feature of the considered discursive genre, impoliteness appears as an important means to these ends. It has a double effect: projecting a negative image of the target and indirectly – depending on the speaker's communicative ability – a positive self-image or group-image.

The format of the parliamentary debate under consideration assigns the President's opponents the initiative role and the President's supporters the reactive role.

### 3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1. In the following, impoliteness will not be viewed as a secondary phenomenon in relation to politeness, or as “a parasite of politeness” (Culpeper 1996: 355). Considering impoliteness as politeness with a changed sign (minus vs. plus) does not properly reflect the communicative reality, as politeness and impoliteness strategies frequently coexist within the same discourse (see, for example, Harris, 2001: 462–466). Between the most polite and the most impolite forms of verbal behaviour there is a large spectrum of possibilities which are actualized in interaction (see Kienpointner 1997: 257). Regarding impolite behaviour, there are important differences in the degree of attacking someone’s face between reproaches, accusations, criticism or insults, as well as between insinuations, allusions, ironies, sarcasm, as possible strategic devices.

The gradual nature of both politeness and impoliteness phenomena is closely connected with the cooperative or confrontational (often competitive) communicative relationships between the interlocutors. The continuum politeness – impoliteness reflects the continuum cooperation – conflict. Each form of interaction (genre) is characterised by a particular balance between the cooperative and the conflictive component, which is mainly motivated by external factors (the particular configuration of the communicative situation), but also by internal factors (such as the constitutive rules of the considered genre). Accordingly, even if usually impoliteness represents a reactive behaviour, it can also be inherent, inscribed in the genre performing norms, as in the case of the parliamentary debate.

2. Concerning the possibilities of expressing impoliteness, the only operating distinction seems to be that between the on record / off record (super)strategies. Brown and Levinson (1987) define positive and negative politeness as involving on record strategies for doing FTAs accompanied by redressive actions. As impoliteness excludes any redressive action, negative and positive politeness can no longer be distinguished from the bald on record strategies. On the one hand, the strategies of positive and negative impoliteness, as described by Culpeper (1996: 357-358), involve a reversal of distance between interlocutors in the original definition of the two politeness forms: positive impoliteness artificially creates distance, whereas negative impoliteness reduces distance where it would be necessary. Positive and negative politeness turn into their opposites. On the other hand, negative impoliteness strategies: frighten, ridicule, belittle the other, invade the other’s space, associate the other with a negative aspect, put the other’s indebtedness on record, etc., affect not only someone’s negative face wants, but also his / her positive face wants. As Spencer-Oatey puts it: it is “no help in unpacking the complex face claims that people make in real-life situations” (2007: 646).

3. To establish an absolute hierarchy of the on record and off record impoliteness strategies based on their efficiency is almost impossible, as such a hierarchy is dependent on the communicative situation, the specific of the discursive genre included.

Speaker's evaluation of the degree of politeness or impoliteness of his/ her own verbal behaviour does not necessarily coincide with its evaluation by the addressee. Addressee's reaction should also be taken into account as it is determined not only by certain features of his / her temperament and personality, but also by his / her way of interpreting and perceiving the other's discourse.

4. The distinction proposed by Spencer-Oatey (2007) between a person's identity (his/her self-concept) and a person's face (his/her image held by the others) seems useful for an appropriate understanding of the *in absentia* impoliteness. In the author's opinion, unlike identity, face is necessarily associated with affective sensitivity, leading to individuals' emotional reactions to the others' evaluations. This happens because self-presentation operates in two distinct modes: a foreground and a background modes. Through the process of communicative interaction, people want to bring forward their positively evaluated attributes and to keep in the backstage the negatively evaluated ones. Face threat, loss (or even gain) involves a mismatch between an attribute claimed or denied by a person and the way it is perceived by the others, as displayed in their discourse.

Impoliteness is closely connected with these possible clashing evaluations. It can represent either an initiative or a reactive behaviour. As an initiative behaviour, impoliteness – at least in some institutional settings – is always intentional, determined by individual or group reasons (interests, opinions, beliefs, ideologies, etc.). A deliberate face attack aims at unveiling someone's true identity by a reversal of status and hierarchy between his / her front stage and backstage attributes, claiming the latter and keeping silence on the former. What is unveiled depends on the communicative situation, and – as Spencer-Oatey states – does not always conform to what is socially sanctioned. This seems particularly true in the case of a community of practice (Mills 2009), like the parliament, where the hierarchy of the sensitively affective attributes is very much different from the one in the ordinary contexts.

As a reactive behaviour, impoliteness can be either deliberate or the result of a lack of self-control (due to a person's temperament or to a low degree of education, in connection with his / her social status).

In the parliamentary debate under consideration, reactions do not belong to the person who is the target of evaluations, but to his partisans, who are an intermediate instance.

#### 4. FORMAL AND SEMANTIC ASPECTS OF THE *IN ABSENTIA* IMPOLITENESS

*In absentia* impoliteness is based on structural patterns involving the reference to the target of the attacks in the III<sup>rd</sup> person. II<sup>nd</sup> person forms, typical of the *in praesentia* impoliteness, where the target is directly addressed, appear only as markers of a rhetorical device, as in following example:

(1) *Honourable Mr. President, Trajan Băsescu*, let me submit some figures to your attention.

The use of III<sup>rd</sup> person forms has a “mitigating” effect: saying something *about* someone has a different impact on the addressee and the audience than saying the same things directly addressing him / her (cf. *You, stupid cow!* vs. *She is a stupid cow.*). The target is more or less (depending on the syntactic structure of the utterance) moved away from the focus of the attacks.

Accordingly, one can distinguish between a straightforward and a mitigated impolitenesses, using the criterion of the formal aspects of the utterances (namely the presence or absence of the II<sup>nd</sup> person pronouns and verbs). *In absentia* impoliteness is mainly of the mitigated type (in the above defined sense).

The distinction between the on record and off record impoliteness (both for the straightforward and the mitigated types), based on the criterion of the directness and indirectness of doing the FTAs, is also valid.

(A) *On record strategies* of doing FTAs convey a negative evaluation of the target person, damaging mainly his / her positive face wants. They are either *ascriptive* (attributive), when qualifying nominals (adjectives or nouns) are used to characterize an individual, both as a public and as a private person, or *descriptive*, when an individual’s actions are characterized using verbs with an evaluative semantic component.

Ascriptive strategic uses involve two basic syntactic patterns:

(a) *X is (was) +Aj*

(b) *X is (was)/represents + N (+Aj)*

which are discursively actualized in several variants with different degrees of complexity.

For the simplest variants, see the following examples:

- (2) Seeing how *irritable* and *aggressive* he was, I told him [...]
- (3) Mr. Băsescu is *a politically finished man*.
- (4) Trajan Băsescu represents *a failed political project*.

Negative terms can appear in more complex structures:

- in antithesis with their positively connoted counterparts:

- (5) Trajan Băsescu, instead of being *the catalyst* of the sound energies of the nation is, unfortunately, *the anticoagulant* of positive and sound energies of the nation.

- accumulated as successive corrections:

- (6) This is not a *president player*, but a *president offender*. He is not an *active* president, but a *negative* one. He is not an *atypical* president, but an *abnormal* one.

- in parallel constructions with intensifying effects:

- (7) All were *stupid*, so that he could seem *the smartest*, all were *mean*, so that he could seem *the most earnest*, all were *thieves*, so that he could seem *the judge*.

Antithesis, sometimes associated with parallelism, is also a possible structure in the case of descriptive strategies based on the use of verbs with a negatively evaluating semantic content:

- (8) He *did not criticize*, he *demonized*, he *did not correct*, he *destroyed*, he *did not build*, he *devastated*.

The (b) pattern (including a N) has usually the form of a definition:

- (9) He is a *drag* to Romania.  
 (10) **I think** that Trajan Băsescu [...] was the last *shiver of a long illness*, at the same time feudal, communist and transitional.

Including a verb of existence which equivalates their two component parts, these definitions look very much like gnomic formulae. Still, they lack objectivity and are disputable.

The presence of metaphoric equivalents, as well as of prefaces with epistemic modal verbs (as in example 10) are discursive marks of the subjectivity.

Considering examples (9, 10), should we speak of on record impoliteness strategies, having in view the directness of the FTAs provided by the verb of existence, or of off record strategies, having in view the presence of metaphors?

What we would like to bring forward is the idea of a gradual transition between these two basic types of strategies.

(B) *Off record strategies* are based on the violation of one or more maxims of the cooperative principle (which generates implicatures) or on exploiting the presuppositions. They take the discursive form of the basic semantic and syntactic figures of speech, usually occurring in various combinations in the same unit of the discourse.

Irony is one of the most frequent figures, very often in its extreme version: sarcasm. It results from a ludic attitude of the speaker, who plays with meanings, words, expressions or quotations, decontextualizing them and placing them afterwards in unexpected contexts.

Ironic metaphors are quite frequent. In many cases, there is a core metaphor, which determines all the other lexical choices, so that the whole sentence should be read in a figurative key. One can speak of “spun-metaphors” (fr. *métaphores filées*).

- (11) it is astonishing that *a former long cruise sailor*, [...] such a *sea-dog gets drunk with plain water*.
- (12) everyone understood that the president’s *hat* was too big for Mr. Bănescu and *fell on his eyes*.
- (13) Unfortunately, we are living in the *king’s shadow*. These shadows have not yet vanished. From recent memory, *King Carol’s shadow*, *King Nicolae’s shadow* and now *King Trajan’s* [...]. In the *king’s shadow* it is growing something that Mr. Bănescu takes as the people, it *is growing a vegetation* of [...] king’s clowns.
- (14) At the beginning of his presidency, he declared that he *would gamble* everything on one card: the constitution; he *gambled* on the Constitution... he danced on it with his feet (15) his reign was nothing else but a long commemoration of the dead with *poisoned doughnuts*.

Examples (14) and (15) also involve word plays. In (14), the original word (*a juca*) is polysemic, meaning “to gamble”, “to dance” and “to play a game”, and in (15), the double meaning of the Romanian equivalent of *doughnut* (*gogoasă*): “doughnut” and “big lie” is exploited.

If most of the ironic remarks have as a target the President’s official status and his policy, his characteristics and behaviour as a private person is the object of ironic hints:

- (16) When you speak for yourself, you are always right, said Balzac. For Mr. Bănescu’s correct information I specify that Balzac is *neither a brandy nor a whiskey brand*, but a great European writer and moralist.
- (17) Foreign policy is not conceived *at the pub*, nor is diplomacy performed *in a bathing suit*.

It is worth mentioning the preterition (see Ionescu-Ruxăndoiu 2009), as a form of upgrading the criticism offering unpleasant details about a certain issue, in spite of the explicitly declared intention of skipping the embarrassing issue:

- (18) *I put to one side* that the rate of penalty – that is of being penally charged – is of 100 % at the Presidency, as we have a single person and several penal charges.
- (19) *I shall not review* the deceptions, the schemes, the insults, the demagogic sayings, the instigations of the 28 months of the presidential mandate. There are as many as the leaves and the grass.

Especially the last example brings forward the role of the so-called informational presuppositions (Sbisà 1999), which are characterized by a reversal of places between the given and the new information, as intensifiers of the criticism.

## 5. FINAL REMARKS

- The specificity of the setting (its institutional nature, as well as the fact that the target of the attacks is not co-present) and the constitutive rules of the parliamentary debate as a genre are major factors influencing the strategic and accordingly the linguistic choices in the case of *in absentia* impoliteness.

- *In absentia* impoliteness is not straightforward, as the II<sup>nd</sup> person appears only as a rhetorical device, but mitigated. *On record* and *off record* strategies do not appear as mutually exclusive, but quite often interwoven in the same discursive sequence.

- *In absentia* impoliteness takes mainly the form of reproaches, accusations and criticism – sometimes performed in an allusive manner – and not the aggravating form of insults. In my opinion, avoiding insults seems to be connected with the fact that the target person is deprived of the possibility to react, but at the same time, with the speaker's goal of projecting a positive self-image (insulting an absent person in a public institution setting would be evaluated as an unfair behaviour).

- Considering M. Kienpointner's concept of non-cooperative motivated rudeness (1997), the parliamentary debate dealt with appears as relevant not only to the strategic rudeness in public institutions, but also to the inter-group rudeness. The relationship between the two duelling groups is based on a difference in power. The powerful group is represented by the President's opponents, who lead the attack, whereas the President's supporters adopt the defensive position of a powerless group. The only person who is obliged to remain silent is the President himself.

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# VERBAL AGGRESSIVENESS IN THE ROMANIAN PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE. PAST AND PRESENT<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract.** The paper intends to present, from a pragma-rhetorical point of view, the main marks of the verbal aggressiveness, as revealed in the parliamentary debates, with reference to certain rhetorical and argumentative choices. The data are represented by several Romanian parliamentary debates, ranging from 1866 until nowadays. The present approach questions the difference in the verbal aggressiveness, by comparing the early Romanian parliamentary debates and the present-day ones. It is true that, throughout the parliamentary interaction, the indirectness softens the verbal attacks of the MPs, but the degree of indirectness is highly variable. The paper focuses on the rhetorical devices and on insults, the latter directed either at the adversary's person or at his/her discourse. The comments point out some frequent cases of fallacies. In the authors' opinion, impoliteness, sometimes rudeness, in the debates, could be revealed by studying the way other MPs and other debates are evaluated and staged.

**Keywords:** verbal aggressiveness, on/off record strategies, rhetorical/ argumentative choices, fallacies.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

It is worth mentioning, from the very beginning, that the cover term *aggressiveness*, as used in the title of this article, refers to all sorts of inappropriate (non)verbal behaviour, in order to designate (scalar) notions like: **impoliteness** (behaviour that does not conform to the politeness rules), **rudeness** (non-justified impoliteness, beyond the shared institutional "habits") and **verbal aggressiveness** *stricto sensu* (FTAs intentionally exacerbated, 'boosted', or maximised – Bousfield 2007: 2187).

Consequently, by *aggressiveness* we understand communicative strategies meant to attack face by performing intentional FTAs, with a conflictive potential, provoking social conflict and disharmony (Culpeper et al. 2003: 1546; Bousfield 2007: 2186). In interpreting the face attack, the term *face* is understood in a broad

<sup>1</sup> The first version of this article was presented as a paper at the *Linguistic Impoliteness and Rudeness II (LIAR II). The 2009 International Conference of the Linguistic Politeness Research Group*, Lancaster University, UK, 30 June – 2 July 2009. This work was supported by CNCSIS-UEFISCU, project number PN II – IDEI code 2136/2008.

sense, following Spencer-Oatey (2007: 644)<sup>2</sup> and Ilie (2001, 2004). Thus, a face attack involves a multiple vulnerability (Ilie 2004: 50), “individual” and “institutional”, including, for each category, different subordinate roles (Ilie 2001: 247–248).

In the ongoing interaction, the participants construe a “face threat/ loss / gain” whenever there is a discrepancy (“mismatch”) between a characteristic claimed (or denied) – the *Ego* perspective, and a characteristic perceived as being attributed by the others – the *Alter* perspective. We agree with Spencer-Oatey in that the affectively sensitive multiple self-aspects (attributes) vary, have a dynamic in interaction, being context dependent (Spencer-Oatey 2007: 644–647).

Conceiving *face* as a continuum, an FTA could provoke an attack both on the positive and the negative poles of the face. That is why we gave up the distinction between positive and negative impoliteness, which often co-occur, preserving, however, the distinction between *on record* and *off record* strategies. Within this framework, we have tried to observe how the rhetorical and argumentative choices work together and sometimes overlap, in order to create a linguistic landscape marked by inappropriateness in relation to the institutional context.

The corpus we used is represented by Romanian parliamentary debates, from the end of the XIXth century and the interwar period; it also includes some more recent debates, from 2006 and 2007. Nevertheless, throughout the whole period taken into account, the Parliament is seen as “a highly competitive institutional setting” (Ilie 2004: 53), involving an “adversarial and confrontational political process” (Harris 2001: 451; cf. also Ilie 2001: 259), which explains the frequency of the face attacks.

Within the rhetorical field, we have chosen to speak about wordplays, metaphorical projections, syllepsis, and idioms. As far as the argumentative choices are concerned, we have restricted our investigation to the address forms and insults.

## 2. RHETORICAL CHOICES

### 2.1. Wordplays:

- (1) A.C. Cuza: You (II, sg: d-ta) are so generous. I could call you (II, pl.) Mr. Călinescu ‘charmant’ (‘charming’). (...)  
 A.Călinescu: Mr. Cuza has always been *sweet*.  
 A.C. Cuza: But without tasting from your *sugar*. (1931)

The previous example contains a *paronomasia*, which involves the first name of an MP, Armand Călinescu. In the code switching, the first name sounds like the

<sup>2</sup> “in cognitive terms, face and identity are similar in that both relate to the notion of ‘self’-image (including individual, relational and collective construals of self), and both comprise multiple self-aspects or attributes”.

French adjective *charmant*. The adjective has the meaning of ‘charming, graceful, lovely’, but the context indicates an ironical use, via *antiphrasis*. Cuza seems to enter the game of creativity, developing the frame and using the opponent’s evaluation as a starting point. He thus combines *metonymically sweet* and *sugar* (the cause – effect pattern).

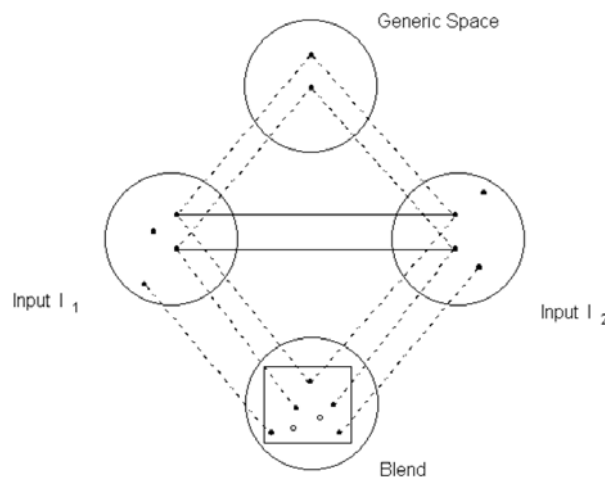
This wordplay, *Armand/ charmant*, seems to have had a great impact upon the MPs, as proved by the fact that it was re-used by another MP, in another situation. This is an interesting case of *intertextuality*, a strategy which falls under the scope of the metadiscursive commentaries in absentia, emphasizing the common conversational history and the power of interdiscourse.

- (2) C. Argetoianu: I got used to listening to you as ‘Charmant’ (‘charming’) Călinescu! (Hilarity). Now I’m listening to you as ‘Marchand’ (‘merchant/ tradesman’). (1935)

The adjective *charmant*, placed in front of the noun, activates the meaning of ‘disagreeable’ (but it is used ironically in both examples). In a subtle metathesis (resulting in an *anagram*), it is replaced by another French word, a common noun, *marchand* – ‘merchant/ tradesman’.

## 2.2. Metaphorical projections

The first category is represented by the *metaphorical chains*, combining words from the same semantic field – the image of the country as a ‘flock’ lead by a ‘shepherd’ (see ex. 3). The second category is represented by the *blended metaphors* used for framing the target’s portrait. We could explain the metaphorical projections resorting to the mental space theory and the blended metaphors (Fauconnier’s frame). The blended metaphor makes use of either the public or the private roles.



### 2.2.1. Public roles

#### 2.2.1.1. Political characters (dictatorial personalities):

For the 19<sup>th</sup> century debates, the reference is chosen from the oriental political space (the Ottoman Empire) – the vizier (I<sub>1</sub>). It is worth mentioning that the debate illustrated by ex. 3 took place shortly after the Independence War against the Ottoman Empire:

- (3) I.C. Brătianu (PL): (...) then, any foreigner, trusting the words of hon. Mr. Kostaki, will say – as another gentleman said it yesterday – that in this country there are a flock and a shepherd and the shepherd is the one who's leading, that is, the government. Is this Romania, Mr. M. Kostaki? Or have you made this picture out of mischievousness...?

M. Kostaki (PC): What I wanted to say was that this country was lead by the vizierate. (1879)

In the metaphorical frame used as an *ad personam* fallacy, there is a blending between the attitude of Brătianu (the Prime Minister – I<sub>2</sub>) and the Ottoman political practices (ex. 3).

One can observe that both participants use metaphorical frames. Brătianu resorts to a quotation belonging to another speaker (metadiscourse with external source) and uses the latter's allegory of political government (evaluating it negatively – metadiscourse with autonomous connotation): the country as *a flock*, and the governmental majority, as the *shepherd*. He thus criticizes the *Alter* perspective, according to which the head of the government would be the absolute master, in charge with taking all the decisions, while the rest of the citizens would be nothing but an amorphous mass (implicit metonymy *citizen – sheep*). The prime minister criticizes this lexical choice and elicits a response from one of the leaders of the opposition, to whom he attributes the same perspective – implying that his perspective is an insult to the citizens, in the first place, and a manifestation of a negative feature, too (*mischievous* represents another evaluative term, but this time it refers to the person, not to the statement). The representative of the opposition reacts to this attack and implies that his perspective is directed at the person of the interlocutor (the prime minister) – he is the one imposing an absolute regime, as the Ottoman vizier<sup>3</sup> used to do. It is obvious that the fallacious arguments used by Brătianu – *ad personam*, *ad verecundiam* (Kostaki as an authority), manipulating the presuppositions (evaluating the person) receive a counter-reaction with an *ad personam* fallacy – so this is a congruent response.

<sup>3</sup> Turkish medieval rank which is the equivalent of a prime minister nowadays.

For the present-day Parliament – the  $I_1$  is represented by different well-known dictatorial personalities, from Romania's history (whose most famous and frequent example is Nicolae Ceaușescu) and from Europe's history (from Stalin to Lukashenko). The  $I_2$  is represented by the president's actions in the internal and foreign policy. The blended space offers the image of Traian Băsescu as a dictator. The direct attacks (on record) combine with off record attacks:

- (4) Sergiu Andon (PC): The foreign policy is not supposed to be made in pubs, diplomacy is not supposed to be practised in bathing costume. The MPs of the Conservative Party will vote accordingly, defending the Constitution and defying the dictator's outbursts. (Applause). (2007)

In other cases, the speaker resorts to off record strategies (metaphorical framing), exclusively:

- (5) Crin Antonescu (PNL): The great man, sung by the country's bards, from Boc to Berceanu, will come with the others' records again... We will say that Romania wants to come out from the shadow of the King. (Applause from the parliamentary groups of PNL, PSD, PRM, PC). The shadow of King Charles, from the recent history, the shadow of King Nicholas, the shadow of King Trajan, now, each with his Helen, each with his people...each with his lies./ In the shadow of the King grows something that Mr. Băsescu *takes for* people, that is, a vegetation of bocs, bercens, bourens<sup>4</sup>, jesters of the King. (2007)
- (6) Cozmin Gușă (independent): When I resigned from the Democrat Party I expressed my regret that instead of a Romanian **Atatürk**, we've ended up by placing at Cotroceni a president that evokes **Lukashenko** (2007)

In our opinion, Crin Antonescu's metaphorical framing is extremely interesting because it involves a multiple analysis in the field of mock politeness. The irony, an off-record strategy, is achieved via antiphrasis (*great man, bards*). Firstly, the lexical choice of the hyperonym is meaningful, in itself: *Vodă*<sup>5</sup> is a title used in the Middle Ages to refer to the rulers of the Romanian Principalities. The selection of this title (whose use is restricted to a certain historical period) activates negative connotations in the syntagmatic use – *the shadow of the King*. The title connotes a dictatorial regime, and functions as an *ad personam* fallacy (multiple vulnerability; individual construal of self for TB).

<sup>4</sup> Common nouns converted from former proper nouns which designate some well-known political supporters of Trajan Basescu: (Emil) Boc, (Radu) Berceanu, (Cristian) Boureanu.

<sup>5</sup> Romanian medieval rank, which is the equivalent of a ruler/ king; *vodă* < sl. (*voje*)*voda*.

Secondly, the title is used in combination with the names of some well-known Romanian dictators of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – Charles and Ceaușescu, and then TB's name appears in the same combination. The MP pushes forward the comparisons, using the *petitio principii* fallacy: *each with his Helen, each with his people, each with his lies*. This fallacy, along with the *ad personam* fallacy, implies extramarital liaisons (multiple vulnerability; relational construal of self for TB); if the referent of the first occurrence of *Helen* (another wordplay based on antonomasia) is Elena Lupescu, mistress and then wife of King Charles II, the referent of the second one – Elena Ceaușescu, the wife of Nicolae Ceaușescu, the third one implies an immoral liaison between TB and his former councillor (present minister) – Elena Udrea. Thirdly, the MP uses a wordplay mechanism, antonomasia, in order to transform the proper names of some TB's supporters (E. Boc, R. Berceanu, C. Boureanu) in common nouns – *bocs, bercens, bourens* (the plural form), which he reformulates by means of two hyperonyms – *vegetation* and *jesters*.

The example conveys the idea of nonfactivity, via the lexical meaning of the VP *takes for* (implying that what the president conceives as people, is not exactly people). The fact that their referents are not people (endowed with full attributes, such as the freedom of choice, action and/ or thought) is also emphasized by their metaphorical projection onto a lower level, that is, the transposition into the vegetal world, as suggested by the derogatory use of the noun *vegetation*. This is another form of the *ad personam* fallacy, associating TB with a group of negatively evaluated politicians (multiple vulnerability; collective construal of self, in-group association).

On the other hand, the connections made by Cozmin Gușă (6) – with Atatürk and Lukashenko, illustrate another interesting wordplay based on antonomasia and make use of two referents from the “oriental” space – Turkey and Ukraine, one from the beginning, and the other one from the end of the XXth century, placed in an anticlimax structure.

#### 2.2.1.2. Social dimension

The social roles are usually conceived as a sum of two subordinate roles, the first one representing the former profession and the second one, the temporary political position of the target. The effect of blending is more apparent if there is a clash between the two subordinate roles. This is the case in the following example.

- (6) C.V. Tudor: I'm speaking about the polls made at the end of March by three of the specialized institutes, so it is amazing that a former sailor (...) should boast about the fact that, in some occasions, he used to drink even two or three bottles of whisky a day and, in other situations, told the press, full of pride, how he used to go to brothels in the harbours of the world, so it is

amazing, then, how such a sea wolf could get his hopes up<sup>6</sup> and make illusions that the Romanians have a crush on him, rush to just touch him, like the holly relics, to take pictures of him and, certainly, attach him to icons. (...). (2007)

The two input spaces contain information about what a sailor's behaviour is supposed to be in a general mental representation (overtly expressed by Corneliu Vadim Tudor, identified with I<sub>1</sub>), and what a president is supposed to do, how he should behave as a public person. By mentioning the former profession of TB's – captain in the commercial Romanian navy during the communist period, the blended metaphor offers the image of a president who behaves like a sailor/ ship captain (I<sub>2</sub>).

### 2.2.2. *Private roles*

On the other hand, when speaking about some characteristics of the private roles, as addicts to alcoholic drinks (in the case of TB and Leonida Lari), there are on record attacks in some non-authorized interventions (see insults below):

- (7) C.V. Tudor (from the audience): And what about Băsescu? What has he been? Blue-eyed<sup>7</sup> Băsescu! Blue-eyed Băsescu! (...). Give him vodka! Give him whisky! Water is harmful! Water is harmful! (MP Marius Iriza brings a bottle of champagne and puts it on a small table, next to the tribune). (2006)

The verbal rudeness in the beginning of the turn has a non-verbal complement. We consider this to be more than relative impoliteness because the force of the attack is disproportionate in relation to a possible triggering event.

### 2.3. *Syllepsis (ambiguization via polysemy)*

Some of the evaluative terms used are polysemic and activate simultaneously two different meanings in the same context. The following example is taken from the 19<sup>th</sup> century debates, illustrating an interpersonal duelling, although both MPs belong to the same party:

- (8) I.C.Brătianu: I'm asking Mr. Kogălniceanu if (...) he ever took advantage of a favourable situation from the history, so that to make a foreign country more open...  
M. Kogălniceanu: This is finesse.

<sup>6</sup> Literally, 'to get drunk on plain water'.

<sup>7</sup> Slang for the people who used to work for the former Romanian Secret Police (Securitatea).



I. C. Brătianu: It is not finesse and if it were, I've learned it from you.  
 M. Kogălniceanu: Not from me, because I don't have such finesse. (1882)

The reactions emphasize the fact that *finesse* has two different meanings activated in the context: 'delicacy, diplomacy' // 'cunningness'. In evaluating Brătianu's statements, Kogălniceanu uses *finesse* in a metacommunicative comment. Brătianu interprets the evaluation in a negative sense – 'cunning, astute' and, after rejecting it, he uses the same term, attributing it, as a quality, to the interlocutor. In his turn, the interlocutor rejects the quality attributed. This is another case of congruent responses within the field of mock politeness.

## 2.4. Idioms

There are several examples of this category: *a se îmbăta cu apă rece* (literal translation: 'to get drunk on plain water' // non-literal translation: 'to get one's hope up; to delude oneself'), *e apă de foc și are 42 de grade* (literal translation: 'it is fire-like water and it's got 42 degrees' // non-literal translation: 'it is alcohol'), *Băsescu securistu'* (literal translation: 'worker of the former Romanian Secret Police (Securitatea)' // non-literal translation: 'Blue-eyed Băsescu').

## 3. ARGUMENTATIVE CHOICES

### 3.1. Address forms (politeness pronouns and qualifiers)

The politeness pronouns account for various degrees of politeness. Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, *dumneata* and, later in the century, *dumneavoastră* were the polite forms in the second person, irrespective of the degrees of politeness. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, their co-occurrence made it possible to distinguish between different degrees of politeness: *dumneavoastră* is more polite than *dumneata*; likewise, for the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, *dânsul*, despite being a personal pronoun, is considered more polite than *el*, but less polite than *dumnealui*, the same as the latter is less polite than *Domnia Lui/Sa*. Sometimes, the more polite a form, the more ironical it is (*dumnealui* → *dumneasa* → *Domnia Sa*), as proved by the example below, where the highest form of politeness in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person combines with antiphrasis.

- (9) C.V. Tudor: Wasn't that Mr. Băsescu dancing 'geamparaua'<sup>8</sup>, on his knees, (...) while the gipsy dancers would wave their colourful and baggy skirts over his (Domniei Sale) intelligent head, of course while the country was under waters?... (2007)

<sup>8</sup> A Romanian folk dance.

The use of qualifiers is another means to express different degrees of (im)politeness, showing the speaker's attitude towards the interlocutor(s). Sometimes, as it is the case in the example below, two labels are used together, given that they both bear negative connotations and share the same level of language (the familiar register): *bă*<sup>9</sup>, *bețivule* (*you, drunkard*).

- (10) C.V. Tudor: We are going to condemn *you, drunkard!* It's you we are condemning! (2006)

In the previous example, the attack reveals itself as a form of verbal aggressiveness – the utterances have an amplifying effect by the direct address form in the second person singular, the qualifier, the repetition (almost a chiasmus) and the shift in the word order.

### 3.2. Insults

Generally, insults represent an 'all inclusive' strategy, placed at the meeting point of the rhetorical choices (taboo words, metaphors) and the argumentative choices (they are mainly based on fallacies and are caused by another insult or offending situation). The first example we are listing here combines taboo words (*liar, ignorant, illiterate, drunkard, poofs*), with a slang metaphor (*blue-eyed Bănescu*), an *ad personam* fallacy and an instance of non-verbal impoliteness.

- (11) C.V. Tudor (from the audience): And what about Bănescu? What has he been? Blue-eyed Bănescu! Blue-eyed Bănescu! (...). Give him vodka! Give him whisky! Water is harmful! Water is harmful! (MP Marius Iriza brings a bottle of champagne and puts it on a small table, next to the tribune). (...) *Boo! Liar! Ignorant! Illiterate!* (boos, rumours, protests within the parliamentary groups of the PRM). (...). We are going to condemn you, *drunkard!*

T. Bănescu: The difficulty comes from the systematic hiding (...) of the information regarding the situation of many of those victims. The persecution of the ethnic, religious, cultural and sexual minorities... (boos, rumours, protests within the parliamentary groups of the PRM).

C.V. Tudor (from the audience): *Down with the poofs! Down with the poofs! Down with the poofs!* (Rumours, protests). (2006)

The second example (12) strengthens the idea of Traian Bănescu's addiction to alcohol, by reference to his idols, which he shares with an MP, Leonida Lari. The polysemy of the noun *idols* is quickly solved by a metalinguistic comment,

<sup>9</sup> Shortened from *băiat* 'boy' or *bărbat* 'man'.

pointing at the secondary meaning (*When I say that, I mean the two idols named Johnny Walker and Jack Daniels.*), which is further explained by means of an euphemism (*it is fire-like water and it's got 42 degrees*). In the case of “fire-like water”<sup>10</sup>, one can observe another wordplay based on polysemy and a cultural allusion, too.

- (12) (...) We actually did understand the attitude of the lady in question, more specifically, that they are brought together by a shared love for their idols. *When I say that, I mean the two idols named Johnny Walker and Jack Daniels.*

Bogdan Olteanu: Come to an end, please.

Daniela Buruiană-Aprodu: I'll finish now, the last statement, Mr. Chairman. Dear colleagues, it isn't worth spoiling this special day, when Romania is going to meet normality. We consider that we needn't waste our time on nothing, on certain *streetwalkers by profession, but we remind our distinguished lady that soap and water have been invented for her, too, even though it is fire-like water and it's got 42 degrees.* (2007)

When the target of the insult shifts to Leonida Lari, she is identified by the use of an antiphrasis (*distinguished lady*) and a taboo metaphor (*streetwalker by profession*)<sup>11</sup>. The attack is extremely violent and an argument in support of our affirmation is the reaction of the Chairman of the assembly, apologizing to the lady in question on behalf of the Romanian Parliament.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

There are some cases where the MPs involve themselves in direct verbal confrontations; in the old Parliament one can observe their tendency to enter verbal duelling, using the second person plural or singular, in response to non-authorized interventions, which results in entertaining the dialogue. In the present-day Parliament, there are some direct address forms, in the second person plural (rarely, singular), but the tendency is to overlook the non-authorized interventions; the Chairman has a very important role in controlling the MPs' interactions (“dominant third party intervention” – Vuchinich 1990, *apud* Bousfield 2007: 2215).

<sup>10</sup> *Apa de foc* appears in the Romanian translations of Karl May's books.

<sup>11</sup> Slang metaphor initially used to designate a prostitute, who goes through a certain ‘itinerary’ in order to pick up clients (in Romanian, *traseistă* is derived from *traseu* ‘itinerary’); quite recently, the word entered the political informal language, and refers to a person who moves frequently from one political party to another, usually in order to pursue personal interests, rather than out of any political idiosyncrasies. All in all, the slang metaphor *streetwalker by profession* could be equated with *political prostitute*.

There is a delicate equilibrium from directness to indirectness, but we consider that the latter is more offending and conveys a more aggressive attack (indirectness and the ludic ethos are rewarded by the audience with laughter and applause – as manifestations of a positive evaluation of the style and of the content). The ludic ethos appears throughout the vast majority of the debates, from both the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The wordplays favour the semantic level, cultivating the ambiguity generated by polysemy and, rarely, by homophony and metathesis.

In framing the target's portrait, the first common feature is the constant use of the *ad personam* fallacy, usually oriented to his/her *public role* – the analogy with past and present dictatorial personalities (dictatorship being a reality which activates negative connotations within a democratic culture). Nevertheless, in the present-day Parliament we have observed a frequency of the *ad personam* fallacy, causing the personal/individual vulnerability within some characteristics of the private roles (as addicts). By comparison with the debates in the old Parliament, the aggressiveness of the attacks in the present-day parliamentary debates seems more apparent: attacks on the private role of the MPs, as well as the use of the taboo words, are rare in the old Parliament, but frequent nowadays.

Another common feature is that the same verbal exchange may contain various strategies, either *off record*, with different sub-strategies (such as wordplays and mock politeness), or a combination of *on record* and *off record* strategies.

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# METASTANCE IN THE ROMANIAN PARLIAMENTARY DISCOURSE: CASE STUDIES<sup>1</sup>

ANDRA VASILESCU

**Abstract.** The article presents three case studies on the Romanian traditional Parliamentary Discourse (one discourse given by Titu Maiorescu, 1877 and two discourses given by Nicolae Iorga, 1908, 1919, respectively) and aims at identifying correlations between stancetaking, metastance and persuasion. The analysis revealed objective metastance based on logic in Maiorescu's discourse vs. subjective metastance based on ethos and pathos in Iorga's discourses. Beyond differences in metastance and persuasion, some culturally shared values were traced in the three samples. Metastance activities in Parliament are consistent with the intense face work activities in Romanian every day conversations.

**Keywords:** Parliamentary discourse, Romanian traditional Parliamentary discourse, stancetaking, metastance, persuasion, case studies (Titu Maiorescu, Nicolae Iorga).

The present study is part of a larger research<sup>2</sup> that aims at revealing specific aspects of stancetaking in the traditional Romanian Parliamentary discourse<sup>3</sup>. The theoretical framework is provided by Englebretson (2007) and Bayley (2004); also, it integrates the concept of metastance as defined in Driscoll (1983).

<sup>1</sup> This work was supported by CNCSIS-UEFISCU, project number PN II – IDEI code 2136/2008.

<sup>2</sup> The research on stancetaking in the Parliamentary discourse is being developed in the frame of the CNCSIS Research Grant 2136/2009–2011.

<sup>3</sup> I call *traditional Romanian Parliamentary discourse* discourses held in the „Old Parliament” between 1866 (when the Constitution defined and regulated Parliamentary activities in accordance with the European Parliaments) and 1938 (when the Royal Dictatorship of Carol II drastically diminished the role and attributions of the Parliament). In 1948 the Parliament was reorganized as the Great National Assembly, whose formal activities were controlled by the Communist Party. After the Revolution in December 1989, the Constitution in 1991 reestablished the „New Parliament”, representing the post-communist, pluralist, democratic regime.

The discourses under analysis were given in the Romanian Parliament by Titu Maiorescu<sup>4</sup> (*Discourse no.77*, 1887) and Nicolae Iorga<sup>5</sup> (*To defend myself*, 1908; *A personal matter*, 1919). The case studies identify types of metastance as outcomes of specific correlations between stance enactment and persuasion.

## 1. THE PARLIAMENTARY DISCOURSE

The Parliament is an institution governed by principles and rules generated within the constitutional frame of a state, according to its political system and culture. Beyond all differences, the Parliament is, everywhere in the world, an institution dedicated to speech, shaped as a sequence of monologues, interconnected by contextuality and intertextuality, aimed at promoting personal and group agenda and inviting deliberations of the Assembly. Speaking in Parliament means adopting a communicative conduct consistent with a mental pattern which is part of the context itself, marked as a set of discursive prototypical, nonexclusive features that become manifest on different linguistic levels (phonetic, grammatical, lexical, discursive). The Parliamentary discourse has a global purpose (“to make politics”) and several local purposes (to criticize, to interpellate, to debate, etc.). The interactants’ roles are multilayered and interconnected: communicative roles (speaker – listener), interactional roles (promoter - opponent), ideological roles (reflecting the political affiliation of each speaker/listener). This special type of linguistic activity, institutionalized as the most formal variety of the political language, has outcomes in the real world (Bayley 2004).

The Parliamentary discourse pertains to the deliberative genre: the speaker delivers a speech in front of an Assembly in order to persuade it in favor of a future decision on public affairs. Indexing relations of solidarity and power between Self and Others, the speaker constructs ideology that might underlie decision making

<sup>4</sup> Titu Maiorescu (1840–1917): Romanian literary critic, professor, lawyer, esthetician, philosopher, essay writer, and politician. Founder of the literary circle “Junimea”, where the most representative writers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century read their literary works; co-founder of the Romanian Academy. He held important academic, public and political positions at very young ages: university professor at the age of 22, dean and rector at the age of 23 (University of Iași), academician at the age of 27, deputy in the Romanian Parliament at the age of 30, minister of Public Instruction at the age of 34. In politics he was a conservative; president of the Conservative Party (1913–1914). Deputy and senator in the Romanian Parliament. He held several public positions: minister of Public Instruction (1874-1976; 1889; 1889-1891), Minister of agriculture, industry, and commerce (1888), Minister of public affairs (1889–1891), Minister of justice (1900–1901), Minister of foreign affairs (1910–1913), Prime minister (1912–1914).

<sup>5</sup> Nicolae Iorga (1871–1940): Romanian historian, literary critic, playwright, poet, university professor and politician. Member of the Romanian Academy. He authored 1003 volumes, 12755 articles, 4863 review articles. In politics he was the co-founder of the National Democratic Party; 1931–1932, Prime minister and Minister of education. Elected, several times, member of the Romanian Parliament.

(Ochs 1992; Hodge and Kress 1988: 123; Fairclough 2003; Ilie 2004). Ideology, understood as a shared system of values and beliefs, is articulated through acts of stancetaking, among others.

## 2. STANCETAKING

During verbal interactions humans evaluate the world and their interlocutors, express emotions, beliefs, and desires, claim or disavow authority, align or disalign with others. These complex activities accomplished through language have been labeled “stancetaking”, and are assumed to motivate linguistic options and shape interactional structures at different levels. Stancetaking has been addressed from a variety of interrelated fields like linguistics, psychology, sociology and anthropology, emerging as a domain of cross-disciplinary research.

### 2.1. Updates

Phenomena of projecting self in discourse have been defined and investigated in various frameworks. Benveniste (1966: 258) noticed that “language is deeply marked by the expression of *subjectivity*” and Kerbrat-Orecchioni (1980) devoted a study to the mechanisms of what she called “L'énonciation de la *subjectivité* dans le langage”. From a cognitive perspective Langacker (1985) stated the inherent role of *subjectivity* in construing a scene and profiling various aspects of it. Lyons (1994: 13) focused on “*self-expression* in the use of language”. Thompson and Hunston (2000: 5) used *evaluation* as a cover term for the writer’s attitudes, viewpoint, feelings about the propositions (s)he is talking about.

A term that encompasses a wide range of phenomena related to the projection of the self in discourse is “stancetaking”. Biber and Finegan (1989: 92) point out the subjective and evaluative nature of stance, reflecting “attitudes, feelings, judgments, or commitment concerning the propositional content of a message”. Alike, Biber et al. (1999: 966) refer to stance as “personal feelings, attitudes, value judgments or assessments”. A comprehensive definition is to be found in Du Bois (2007: 163): stance taking is “a public act by a social actor, achieved dialogically through overt communicative means, of simultaneously evaluating objects, positioning subjects (self and others) and aligning with other subjects, with respect to any salient dimension of the socio-cultural field”. Ochs (1996: 420), like Bucholtz and Hall (2005), researched the interplay between stance and the wider social discourses and stereotypes involved in stancetaking activities. Benwell and Stokoe (2006) investigated how stancetaking indexes social identities, and Precht (2003) demonstrated the cross-cultural differences and the historical nature of stancetaking. To sum up: stancetaking is situated, pragmatic, interactional



(dialogic) and emergent in discourse; it indexes culturally meaningful styles and identities and accounts for how particular linguistic choices accomplish particular social and rhetorical actions.

Generic definitions like those mentioned above frame several phenomena, interrelated in various classifications, partly overlapping, partly divergent. Biber and Finegan's classification (1989) includes evaluations (value judgments, assessments, and attitudes), affect (personal feelings) and epistemicity (commitment to the truth value of a statement). Berman et al. (2002: 258) and Berman (2005: 107) present three interrelated dimensions of text-construction: orientation (the relationship between sender, text, recipient), attitude (epistemic, deontic, affective), generality of reference and quantification (specific vs. general, i.e., how relatively general or specific reference is to people, places, and times mentioned in the text – personal, specific vs. generic vs. impersonal). Conrad and Biber (2000, ap. Englebretson 2007: 71) discuss epistemic, attitudinal and style stance, while Johnstone (2007: 51) classifies stances into evidential (certainty), interpersonal (friendliness, intensity, deference, attitude and affiliation) and social (like apologies or identity markers). For Hunston (2007: 32-35), stances are positive or negative, general or particular, with an external or an internal source of authority. Du Bois (2007: 141) describes phenomena of stancetaking by assertion or by inference, discriminates between objective, subjective and intersubjective stance and elaborates the "stance triangle": the evaluating subject 1, the evaluating subject 2 and the object of evaluation. Within the triangle, three stancetaking activities emerge: evaluation (the process whereby a stancetaker orients to the object of stance and characterizes it as having some specific quality or value, either affective or epistemic); positioning (the act of situating a social actor with respect to responsibility for stance and for invoking socio-cultural values); alignment (calibrating, overtly or covertly, the relationship between two stances and, by implication, between two stancetakers). Scheibman (2007: 113) classifies stance into subjective, individual (construed as relevant to a speaker's position in discourse), intersubjective, i.e., interactive (relevant to local discourse activities) and sociocultural (relevant to general beliefs of people as members of communities), respectively. Englebretson (2007: 69 ff) identifies three types of meaning encoded in stance: (i) identity, (ii) epistemicity (evidentiality – the source of knowledge of the current utterance, i.e., words of another, general inference or direct perception; assessment of interactional relevance – the degree of value a speaker places on the utterance, usually regarding its role in the ongoing interaction; affect – the speaker's mental or emotional attitude) and (iii) positioning (positioning self to knowledge, i.e., as an authority, an expert or a novice).

## **2.2. Stancetaking strategies**

Starting from the definitions and classifications above, I advance an integrative perspective on stancetaking, according to the type of information

indexed. The classes presented and defined below will be assumed to be strategies of projecting self in discourse.

(a) According to orientation, stance appears to be:

- Objective: the author does not project self in the text; (s)he records facts, events, dialogues objectively
- Subjective/individual: the author projects self as part of an interactional process that leaves traces in discourse
- Intersubjective: the dialogical dimension of textualization becomes manifest; the author records voices from outside the text

(b) In subjective / individual stance, several strategies of projecting self can be identified:

- Projection of personal identity: the author provides information about himself (ethnicity, class, gender, personal beliefs, tastes and attitudes, etc.)
- Projection of modality: the author provides information about his assessment of the propositional content in terms of epistemic values (i.e., along the continuum true – probable – possible – false; epistemic modality) or deontic values (i.e., along the continuum volition – permission – obligation; deontic modality); in epistemic modality the source of knowledge (evidentiality) may be external (external observers) or internal (direct perceptions of the speaker)
- Projection of evaluations: the author provides information about his commitment to the propositional content or to the source of information evaluated in terms of what is desirable/undesirable, good/bad
- Projection of attitudes: the author provides information about his/her degree of affiliation or non-affiliation with the propositional content or its source (in terms of accepting, denying, doubting, confirming, subscribing, crediting, legitimizing)
- Projection of emotions: the author provides information about his/her emotions concerning the propositional content or his/her interlocutor(s)
- Projection of responsibility: the degree at which the author engages in stancetaking activities: low (stancetaking shared with a source of authority), moderate (personal commitment to a certain degree), high (generalizations)

(c) In intersubjective stance, several strategies of projecting self can be identified:

- Projection of the interactional identity of the interlocutors:
  - evaluations of the interactional relevance of information
  - alignment or disalignment with the interlocutors
  - interpersonal relationships (friendship, deference, distance, domination, etc.)

- social acts consequent to the performance of a speech act (declaratives, excuses, promises, commitments, etc.)
- style (the author's comments upon his/her style of interaction with his/her interlocutors)
- Projection of the socio-cultural identity shared by the interlocutors

### 2.3. Stance and stancetaking markers

Stancetaking activities leave traces in discourse. Devices used by writers/speakers to project self in discourse and thus personalize their contributions are called discourse markers of stance. They are currently classified according to the level on which they occur: lexical markers, syntactic structures, phonological features, discourse patterns (Hunston 2007: 31; Biber 2007: 112; Kärkkäinen 2007: 184).

Lexical markers are words that pertain to different grammatical classes: nouns (*idea, argument, evidence, possibility, comment, proposal, hope, reason, opinion, etc.*), evaluative adjectives (*outrageous, sad, disgraceful, disgusting, annoying, disappointing, joyful, promising, etc.*), pronouns (the use of the 3 grammatical persons, singular and plural), determiners (the use of *this* and *that*, of *my* and *their* etc.) and quantifiers (degree of generalization), verbs (*think, believe, consider, deliberate, add, exemplify, act, intrude, change mind, compromise, disturb, trespass, lean, rely, inform, tell, spy, seem, appear, allow, etc.*), adverbials (*obviously, unfortunately, hopefully, probably, apparently, certainly, surprisingly, frankly, no doubt, truly, predictably, etc.*), connectives (*also, nevertheless, at the same time, though, etc.*). Some of these words can be grouped across categories, according to their inherent meaning: modals (*possible, possibility, possibly*), diminutives, non-factives, etc.

Some syntactic markers are closely related to lexemes that determine specific structures like: subject-clauses (*It is important that, It is obvious that, It is easy to, It is dangerous to, It seems to, It appears that, etc.*), predicative-clauses (*Fact is that, The problem is that, etc.*), attributive clauses with antecedents (*the assumption that, the importance of, the intention that, etc.*), complement clauses (*I suggest that, I think that, I am afraid of, I am annoyed that, I would prefer to, He urged that, They warned that, etc.*), incident clauses and phrases (*I guess, In my opinion, To my mind, As expected, etc.*). Others are the outcome of systemic interactions between syntax and morphology: voice, tense, aspect. Few phenomena are purely syntactic in nature, like cleft and pseudo-cleft constructions (*This is what really matters, He is the one I love, etc.*), tag questions (*He is smart, isn't he?, You are not guilty, are you?, etc.*), negative questions (*Aren't you the manager?, etc.*), topicalization (*As for me, I'm not going to say anything, etc.*), word order.

Discourse patterns sometimes function as stance markers: code switching, repetition of other's utterances, hedging, quoting, adjacency pairs like question-answer, etc.

In addition, in spoken interactions, phonological (intonation, voice quality, speech speed, sound repetition, sound symbolism) and non-verbal stance markers (postures, gestures, facial expressions) occur.

#### **2.4. Stance and metastance in the parliamentary discourse**

In the Parliamentary discourse, stancetaking is a three-fold activity: the speaker takes stance to the topic under negotiation, to the audience - members of the Parliament who are supposed to deliberate, and to the previous / next speakers on the same topic / on related topics. Also, it is part of persuasion: the speaker projects self in discourse in order to construct a competent, trustworthy, powerful professional identity that can influence deliberative and decision making processes. Unlike in everyday conversation, where stancetaking is a trace of the discourse production activities, in the Parliamentary discourse it is an intentional, planned, goals driven activity, a constitutive part of the discourse itself. Since ideology determines decision making, stancetaking functions as a force of political control (Fairclough 2003; Hodge and Kress 1998).

Quite often, as part of their interventions on various topics, or in special discourses ("on personal matters"), the members of the Parliament take stance to Self: they explain and evaluate personal actions and words, correct what they consider misunderstandings of their deeds, words or intentions, reject accusations or criticisms. This is metastance. Metastance, as defined by Driscoll (1983), is the vantage a character gains as (s)he steps back to observe the self and its initial states, the point from which one is able to gain a fuller view of oneself. It is the outcome of interpretations of personal stance and the expression of the ruling conceptions of the individual about him/herself.

Metastance occurs in various forms of communication: in intrapersonal communication (when the person recalls, evaluates, (re)interprets events and plans future activities), in psychotherapy, in literature or in literary journals or it is part of various speech acts that occur in everyday conversations (like boasting, taking pride in oneself, self-criticism, confessions, etc.). In the Parliamentary discourse metastance is part of constructing ideology and interpersonal power.

### **3. CASE STUDIES**

In what follows I will investigate metastance strategies in three Parliamentary speeches delivered at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, respectively, by two famous personalities of the Romanian culture and

politics (see notes 1 and 2), Titu Maiorescu (one discourse) and Nicolae Iorga (two discourses).

The three discourses are “on personal matters” and enact metastance. Yet, they differ in several respects: local purpose, orientation, hierarchy of metastance strategies, textual structures and modes of persuasion, violations of the deliberative genre constraints.

### 3.1. Titu Maiorescu (1887)

Maiorescu’s speech is a response to the minister of justice who, in his discourse, had brought him several accusations. Maiorescu builds the metastance of a professional, objective, law oriented person in a speech whose local and explicit purpose is “to explain and set facts right”, making strict reference to his “political” self (488).

The speaker enacts objective metastance through a problem oriented discourse. He identifies three issues which he focuses in three distinct subparts of his speech: (i) actions taken against a possible conspiracy at Mazar Paşa, (ii) the possibility of joining the Government, (iii) and the accusation of having attacked the king in the magazine whose editor in chief he was.

For reasons of objectivity, Maiorescu adopts an external vantage point. To his audience he takes a cultural stance, claiming the procedural right of each member of the Parliament to talk on personal matters concerning his political activities: “the procedure ought to be followed”, “I have the right to answer”, “minister’s interventions ought to be followed by discussions”, “we all should insist on giving the floor to everybody who had been invoked in another speaker’s discourse”, “we should all listen patiently to a speaker who defends his position because this is part of good Parliamentary practice” (Maiorescu: 487–488). In the framework of culturally shared values (both speaker and hearers are members of the Romanian Parliament), deontic modalization functions as an indirect strategy of dominance and gaining power over the audience. To the issue, Maiorescu takes an epistemic stance and documents the truth value of his assertions in terms of factual information. Firstly, he presents himself as part in the decision of forbidding a public reunion in the open space in deliberative terms, with arguments based on the Constitution. He backs up his speech with a quotation from the Constitution, with an accurate description of events meant to prove that they fell under legal restrictions, with meta comments (“we asked ourselves”) and dubitative questions (“was that garden an open space or not? It had a fence; what was that, a roof, as mentioned by the minister? Under these circumstances, I consider our decision consistent with the law”). Secondly, Maiorescu rejects the minister’s claim that he had declined the invitation of joining the ministerial team; he supports his denial in terms of the outcome of personal rational evaluations previously communicated to the prime minister himself, who can testify for the truth of his assertion, and in

terms of Constitutional procedures – the vote of the Parliament needed. Thirdly, he makes a thorough linguistic analysis in order to reject accusations by proving the malicious grammatical ambiguity in the minister of justice's statement, intended to imply that Maiorescu, who had often advocated in Parliament for the rights of the Romanian press, would have been one of those who had attacked the king in his journal; Maiorescu firmly dissociates his journal from what he honestly admitted to have been exaggerations of some newspapers, making immediate reference to laws which regulate press activities.

In his speech Maiorescu does not take stance explicitly to his opponent; he develops a solid argumentation against the minister's accusations which functions, metonymically and/or antiphrastically, as stancetaking to the minister himself: "I would very much like that all documents issued by the present Government be clearly and honestly based on the official interpretation of a law text, as I did it myself" (Maiorescu: 491); all interpretations "are fallacious" (Maiorescu: 492); "I wish that the minister of justice and his colleagues can make the same political declaration as I can make today for everything that I have ever written" (Maiorescu: 493).

The text of the speech is highly elaborated and follows the classical structure. Each of the three issues addressed is built on: *exordium*, with *captatio* (generally, it is important for a democracy that the minister gets responses from the audience) and *propositio* (the speaker's particular purpose is to establish facts as they truly occurred); *narratio* (objective, brief presentation of events); *argumentatio*, with *probatio* (factual and constitutional proofs; witness and procedural proofs; linguistic and textual proofs of his sound judgment, honest behavior, and ethical conduct, respectively) and *refutatio* (he refutes his opponent views assertively); *peroratio*, with *recapitulatio* (the speaker insists on the factual arguments in his demonstration) and *affectus* (a declaration of his lawful actions, either in a pathetic manner or as a joke). The speech is highly focused: ideas are disposed on a deductive pattern (the problem identified at the beginning of the speech is further detailed); direct speech acts prevail; the speaker explains the relevance of his addressing each of the three topics; each of the three issues is clearly highlighted by discourse markers used as planning strategies (the first issue..., the second issue..., the third issue) or pragmatic connectors (*thus, also, so*, etc.); emphatic syntactic structures are used (argumentative *because* clauses, purpose adverbials and clauses, oppositions expressed as affirmative – negative coordinated sentences, adversative sentences or *although* clauses, *if...than* clauses). The textual progression is dynamic, based on a linear sequence of arguments and stance frequently marked on verbs (*ought to, explain, can, I will not accept it, know, assume*), adverbs (*politically, irrefutably, legally, honestly, officially*), and sometimes participles (*I am forced to...*). Passive constructions used to present objective facts are balanced with active voice first person verbs that indicate the speaker's assuming responsibility. Most speech acts are representatives, and the

speech as a whole functions as a representative macro speech act: “Here is a demonstration of my professionalism as a member of the Parliament”. Dual politeness strategies are at work: on the one hand, Maiorescu uses negative politeness strategies to take stance to the minister by interposing texts and arguments between himself and the person referred to; on the other hand, he resorts to positive politeness strategies to take stance to the audience, by constructing a political space of shared democratic values. The attack strategy of his communicative behavior is supported by a consistent appeal to logic.

With this design, the discourse crosses the border of the deliberative genre to the forensic genre: Maiorescu acts like a lawyer who pleads in front of a professional homogenous public, in a solemn, energetic and dignified style; accusations are rejected by proving the actual state of affairs.

Metastance is indirectly constructed: the speaker does not need to assert his metastance because the speech itself has the power to characterize its author in front of the audience.

### **3.2. Iorga (1908)**

One of Iorga’s speeches “In self defense” follows the “insults” of the prime-minister, who had accused him of having written a text against the national interests of the country and of doing that in a foreign language so that his compatriots might not understand it. In this context, Iorga aims at building the metastance of a historian of international reputation who, in time, has proved both his patriotism, and scientific probity. As the speaker says himself: “I came in front of you to defend my reputation, which is my most precious fortune” (Iorga 1908: 182).

The speaker enacts subjective metastance through a self-centered discourse. He aims at proving his good faith through extensive quotations from his work, directly claiming his authority and expertise in the field. This makes his speech be interrupted several times by the president, who considers it a complaint against the prime-minister, to be kept for the record as such, but irrelevant for the ongoing activities of the Parliament.

Unlike Maiorescu, Iorga takes an internal vantage point. He takes for granted his right to defend his reputation in front of the Parliament; that is why he almost ignores his audience to which he only makes reference, periodically, in routine forms of address with phatic function (“Gentlemen, if you gentlemen allow me”). Moreover, he presumes that the audience is willing to listen to his self-defense speech, and he goes on speaking despite the President’s attempts to interrupt him; it is only when he is on the verge of being taken the right to talk that he asks for the Assembly to be consulted, implying that only the President would be against his continuing the speech (“You want to take my right to speak?”, Iorga 1908: 185). While Maiorescu asserts, at the very beginning of his speech, every Parliament member’s constitutional right to self defense, he being one of them, Iorga claims

his right to speak only to defend his right to speak: he makes a comparison with another deputy, who, under comparable circumstances, has been allowed to talk (Iorga 1908: 182), he mentions that he “owed this answer” (Iorga 1908: 184) or he claims his rights tautologically (“[these digressions] are my right”, Iorga 1908: 185). The subjective, individual stance Iorga takes relies on personal identity credentials, evaluations and emotions. In constructing metastance Iorga invokes his position as a member of the Parliament, his international reputation as a historian and professor, his scientific drive. He supports his points of view with digressive analogies and narratives of the following kind: “accusing me of treason is like accusing a lawyer of making arrangements with both parts, or like accusing a doctor of treating his patients in such a way as to make their illnesses longer or to cause them death” (Iorga: 181–182); he argues that his being a member of the Chamber is in itself a guarantee for morality, or otherwise he wouldn’t have been elected “like Wilson, the French president’s son in law, who is said to have made certain compromises in awarding some decorations, and who was not imprisoned, but could never get a place in the Chamber, because everybody avoided him, and in the end he was forced to leave the political life” (Iorga 1908: 182); he invokes his collaboration with “Lamprecht, one of the greatest historians of the world, who wrote to me and asked me to write a history of the Romanians for the most important European book on universal history” (Iorga 1908: 183). Iorga makes direct evaluations of his works and patriotism: “By doing that, I think, I served my country [...]. I think that the pages I dedicated to Mihai Viteazul show that no one could have better proved his veneration for the past, his love for our great hero than I did in my work. [...] Allow me to read a few words which prove, beyond doubt, my love for our great ancestor”. The speaker voices emotions directly (“I could not stand in front of you if I were dishonest, and you must be convinced that I am a man who loves his country and who deserves to play a role in the life of this country, as a professor and a political man who loves it and respects its past”) and indirectly, reading quite extensive quotations from his work, written in the same pathetic tone, with many figures of speech (metaphors, epithets, comparisons, enumerations, repetitions). The key words, repeated several times throughout the discourse, express the negative emotions of the speaker: *blame, accusation, traitor*.

In taking stance to his opponent, the prime-minister who had accused him, Iorga is conflictive. He rhetorically praises the former (“a venerable man in his eighties, who has the authority of his age [...], an educated man of culture, our best scientist in numismatics, a man who had himself authored very appreciated works in history, a man who enjoys the solid grounded reputation of being in touch with the latest works in the field”, Iorga 1908: 181), but he indirectly casts doubt through an antithesis (“[according to this man] I would be a traitor of my people, driven by bad passions, I would have aimed at denigrating my country, its past and its future”, Iorga 1908: 181) and a speech act that places himself in a position of moral superiority (“I did not take the floor today to compete in harsh words and in



tough words with anybody. I am still young and I respect the elder, and I know that my first duty is to respect a man twice my age, and a man who plays a fairly important part in the contemporary events, so I can forgive the offence he might bring to whoever”, Iorga 1908: 182).

Unlike Maiorescu’s, this text does not have an argumentative structure. It is rather a sequence of opinions on events and persons in the Romanian history, personal convictions and pathetic words backed by quotations from the speaker’s own work, meant to emphasize personal commitment to honesty and loyalty; the factual evidence is “a leaflet he poses on the minister’s desk” (Iorga 1908: 184) meant to impose conclusions. The discourse pattern is inductive: several examples lead to a conclusion, drawn indirectly through an antiphrasis (“These are the words of a calumniator...”, Iorga 1908: 184) and a rhetorical question (“[what do you want me to read] if those words do not exist in my work?”, 184). The textual progression is based on redundancy (the same point is supported by declarations and quotations of the same kind, and ideas are periodically repeated or rephrased). Stance is preferably marked on nouns and adjectives, assertions are hedged by the passive voice or by hypothetical conditionals, superlatives are syntactically intensified through comparisons (“no other more serious accusation than this one could ever exist”, Iorga 1908: 181, 182; “there can be no other solid proof than the one I brought here”, Iorga 1908: 182). As a whole, the discourse stands for an expressive macro speech act: the speaker voices his frustration when faced with an unfair accusation which he perceives to attack his work and good faith. Politeness strategies are used aggressively: speech acts directed to the negative face of the prime-minister are actually used to dissociate from the interlocutor and to make reproaches; speech acts directed to the positive face of the members of the Parliament, implying shared values of patriotism, put pressure on the audience and tend to violate their space. Iorga’s aggressive defense strategy appeals to pathos.

The discourse crosses the border of the deliberative genre to the epideictic genre: the author praises his own work and moral values bringing them in front of an audience assumed to have ignored them so far.

In such a discourse, metastance is directly constructed: the speaker asserts his merits and resorts to tautological, emotional strategies of persuasion using his own previous words and activities as arguments.

### **3.3. Iorga (1919)**

Another discourse “On a personal matter”, delivered by Iorga in Parliament is the following:

- (1) “I subject to the judgment of the whole Chamber, members of the majority and the minority, as well, if, taking into account my position in the political life, the peaceful way in which I try to chair this Assembly, the respect, I think, younger persons, and even those who are my age or older than me, owe me, if I deserve to be addressed by Mr. Duca, here present, the words: ”You’d better listen to that”. I deplore that in this country, political mores can make human nature go wild to such an extent as a man I once stood by, to whom I’ve been not only fair, but also showed friendship and brotherly love, can now disregard the status of this Assembly to such an extent as to use such words to insult its president. (Prolonged applause)  
I will not allow such incivilities: as I won’t allow them there, I won’t allow them here either!” (Applause.)<sup>6</sup> (Iorga 1919: 7)

The speaker builds the metastance of a civil, intransigent person who defends personal values and status as part of the Parliamentary ones. The discourse is relationship centered: on the one hand, the speaker points to his position in the Romanian Parliament and the common values institutionally shared with the other members; on the other hand, he points to his relationship with Mr. Duca and the latter’s unfair treatment. Accordingly, he takes an ambivalent vantage point: an external vantage point to the Parliamentary etiquette, but an internal vantage point to his relationship to Duca. The text is built on the antithesis between Iorga’s ethical approach and Duca’s unethical attitude, between self-praise and the blame for the opponent, showing a relatively high degree of conflict. The speech is short but prolix, with long sentences, appositive and enumerative structures, lexical and syntactic intensifiers, fuzzy terms. Deontic evaluations prevail. The first paragraph stands for a declarative macro speech act, while the second paragraph stands for a commissive. Speech acts are performed bald on record, no politeness strategies are used. The text starts as deliberative, but after the first lines, shifts to the epideictic genre. In terms of persuasive strategies, the speaker appeals to ethos.

Metastance is directly built on the explicit antithesis between praise of the self and blame of the other.

<sup>6</sup> „Supun judecării întregii Camere și acelor din majoritate și acelor din minoritate, dacă prin situațiunea pe care o ocup în viața politică, dacă, prin liniștea cu care caut să presidez această Adunare, prin respectul care mi se cuvine, cred, de la oamenii mai tineri decât mine și chiar de la aceia cari sânt de o vârstă cu mine, sau mai mare ca mine, dacă merit să mi se adreseze de către d. Duca, aici de față, cuvintele: „Să faci bine să auzi”. Deplor că în această țară moravurile politice pot sălbătici firea omenească într’atâta, încât un om cu care am stat alături și căruia i-am arătat nu numai dreptate, dar prietenie și iubire frățească, să poată coborî până într’atât nivelul Adunării încât să găsească astfel de cuvinte cu care să insulte pe președintele ei. (Aplause prelungite și îndelungate)

Nu permit aceste necuviințe: cum nu le permit acolo, nu le permit nici aici. (Aplause)”

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

In the Parliamentary discourse, along with stancetaking activities, metastance construction occurs and prevails in talks given “on personal matters”. The three case studies revealed two strategies of metastance enactment: an indirect strategy (in Maiorescu’s discourse) and a direct strategy (in the two discourses of Iorga).

In Maiorescu’s discourse, the speaker takes an external vantage point. Metastance is constructed indirectly through a well structured text, based on the rules of classical argumentation and appeal to logic; the discourse is problem oriented, very close to the forensic genre, stands itself for the speaker’s objective metastance. Objectivity of metastance is acquired by intersubjective stance (culturally shared values and procedures shared in the Romanian Parliament and democracy), epistemic modalization and factual evidence, a consensual communicative attitude to the members of the Parliament, an attack strategy, a deductive pattern of the text construction, high degree of focalization, direct speech acts, linear progression of the text, stance marked preferably on the verb phrase (verbs and adverbs), dual politeness strategies. As a whole, the discourse stands for a representative macro speech act.

In Iorga’s first discourse, the speaker takes an internal vantage point. Metastance is constructed directly through a self-centered, highly emotional discourse. Persuasion is based on pathos and figures of speech used rhetorically, implying personal identity credentials, evaluations and emotions. Personal, subjective stance prevails, built especially on the noun phrase (nouns and adjectives). The defensive and conflictive strategy adopted by the speaker is achieved through a redundant textual progression, hedged assertions, and aggressive politeness strategies. As a macro speech act, the text functions as an expressive. It is on the border line between the deliberative and the epideictic genre.

In Iorga’s second discourse, the speaker takes an ambivalent vantage point. Metastance is constructed directly through a relationship-centered, emotional discourse. The speaker induces conflict through an antithesis between praise of the self and blame of the other. The text is prolix, deontic evaluations are preferably marked on noun phrases, intensifiers add emotions to a persuasive strategy that appeals to ethos. The text includes two macro speech acts: a declarative speech act and a commissive one. It is on the border line between the deliberative and the epideictic genre.

A comparison between the two discourses of Iorga point to some common features: an inclination to the epideictic genre, a conflictive drive, a defensive and emotional attitude to the opponent, a preference for subjective stance marked on the noun phrase. This type of Parliamentary metastance discourse is opposite to Maiorescu’s objective, argumentative one.

Despite differences between the two speakers, some culturally shared values can be identified in all the three discourses: honorability and reputation, importance of social status, valorization of old persons perceived as wise. Metastance activities in Parliament are consistent with intense activities of face work in everyday interactions.

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# REMARKS ON THE CONCEPTUAL TROPES OF THE POLITICAL ACT OF UNION IN MIHAIL KOGĂLNICEANU'S SPEECH IN PARLIAMENT<sup>1</sup>

ARIADNA ȘTEFĂNESCU

**Abstract.** The Union of the Romanian Principalities is analyzed in a series of parliamentary speeches delivered by Mihail Kogălniceanu (from October the 7th, 1857 to October 1st, 1859). The discursive use of the conceptual metaphors by which this political concept is often expressed construct a *political gestalt*. The denominational system of the *Union* covers four semantic zones and have an extremely uniform distribution of the lexemes. Following the structural asymmetry between *the source* and *the target* of the most frequent conceptual metaphors, we have noticed two stylistics phenomena: (a) repetitiveness or fluidity of the style (given by the fact that several abstractions were represented by the same *target*, *i.e.* the same iconic element); (b) stylistic variety (produced by the fact that one concept (*source*) is given several iconic representations, *i.e.* it receives several *targets*). The plasticization of the *Union* as a notion in M. Kogălniceanu's discourse is effected by conceptual metaphors and by the occultation of the links within the taxonomical hierarchy in which the concept is accomodated. Thus, this political notion is frequently associated with *stability* and *dignity, via legitimacy*. Moreover, these emotions surround and make flexible this concept. The taxonomic distances between *Union* and these two emotions become inconspicuous. The argumentative movement used to present the political *gestalt* of the Union is that of wishful thinking.

**Keywords:** discourse analysis; stylistics; argumentation; political discourse; cognitive metaphor; emotion; the imagery of the discourse; the active zones of the ideal cognitive model; modification of the concept; wishful thinking.

Mihail Kogălniceanu was one of the main political actors who negotiated, and realized the Union of the Romanian Principalities, a capital event for the modernization of Romanian society.

<sup>1</sup> This work was supported by CNCSIS-UEFISCU, project number PN II – IDEI code 2136/2008.

## THE DISCURSIVE VARIETY OF THE HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL NAMES GIVEN TO THE UNION

I have followed the discursive behaviour of the Union as a political concept and a series of conceptual metaphors appearing in a number of speeches delivered for about two years, preceding and succeeding this Romanian history landmark that the Union represented and covering a period spanning from October the 7th, 1857 to October 1st, 1859, and I have followed them as well in the pages of the *Steaua Dunării* newspaper of October 1st, 1855<sup>2,3</sup>.

From the perspective of the categorization levels generally entailed by concepts – i.e. the superordinate, basic and subordinate strata –, the political and historical notion of the union is situated at the basic level, with *Romania* as its superordinate concept and with several „partial” or specific denominations subordinated to it, such as *the strong desire of the nation*, *the sentiments of Moldavia*, *mission* (appearing as *misie* – a slightly archaic Romanian backward formation from the word *mission*), *creed*, *necessity*, a.s.o.<sup>4</sup> By contrast to the

<sup>2</sup> Bearing the subtitle “political, literary and commercial newspaper”, the *Stéoa Dunării* was set up by Mihail Kogălnicenu, with a view to making public the political ideas of the age, and more particularly the idea of the Union of the Romanian Principalities – so as to help create an extensively common ideological ground.

<sup>3</sup> The Union of the Principalities as a historical and political term is still written with a capital letter today – which reinforces its symbolic power – as it ranges at the top of the socio-political values in Romanian culture and Romanian discourses.

<sup>4</sup> Here is the whole range of terms of this kind pertaining to the subordinate conceptual level in the series of discourses made by M. Kogălniceanu during the period 1857-1859. (The list can sometimes embrace a larger context where the same denominations appear, which is why we consider this wider context relevant): [The gathering of the people] was *inspired by a shared sentiment, a commonly cherished aspiration: the longing to secure our national being* (33); *the prophecy [...] is fulfilled* (33); *what we would aspire to do* (37); *we are bent with a strong will upon being a European society [...]* (38); *the mission („misia” – an archaism!) that we feel has been entrusted to us* (48); *social renewal/change* (51); *we feel called upon to make a reform* (51); *the most ardent aspirations of a wretched country* (51); *the Union of the Principalities* (60); *the Union of the sister kingdoms* (60); *the ardent longing in our hearts* (60); *the need experienced by all the members of our nation* (60); *the ardent desire of a nation eager for its own revival* (67); *the aspirations that we cherish* (84, 85); *ardent aspirations that Moldavia entertains* [spelled out publicly before all Europe] (87); *the country’s truest desire* (93); *the ardent desire that courses in our veins* (93); *our aspirations of the most general interest* (96); *the country’s aspirations projected upon the future organizations of the Romanian Principalities* (102); *the more than difficult mission* [archaism!] (103); *longing inscribed in blood, in our veins* (93); *unimpeachable necessity* (93); *our grand, resuscitating longing* (104); *the resurgence of united and autonomous Romania* (104); *the Union is something natural, lawful, pressingly necessary* (107); *our national desire* (107); *our great, eternal, regenerating desire* (107); *longings cherished by the entire nation* (108); *the only means to ensure the country’s prosperity* (108); *the keenest aspiration of the entire nation* (108); *sentiments that inspire the minds of our brothers living on the other side of the Milcov River* (110); *our ardent longing delayed by ghostly fears* (110); *sentiments entertained by Moldavia* (114); *the eternal longing* (114); *the great longing* (114); *Romania’s revival* (114); *the Union which has become our creed* (116); *Romania’s resurrection* (116); *this great longing of our Romanian nation* (114); *the edifice of our nationality* (116); *honourable mission* [archaism] (119); *great honour* (119); *the*

regular taxonomic hierarchies – which order several items of knowledge and which distribute knowledge at the superordinate, basic and subordinate levels, respectively, by transfers from the generic, hyperonymic meaning, to the referential, and ultimately to the particular meaning, the hyponymic one, (as in the blatantly clear case of *furniture* → *chair* → *kitchen stool*) – the discursive taxonomical hierarchy formed around the Union does not observe this formula. In the chain of terms represented by the sequence [*the Union of the Principalities* → *desire* → *sentiments* → *longing* → *creed*], (constituted on the basis of the list specified in the note three) we can notice the passage from the initial, literal denomination (*the Union of the Principalities*), to denominations which are increasingly metaphorical (*longing, creed*). The system of terms that served for the lexicalization of the *Union* as a concept also constituted in the parliamentary practice is, in the first place, more dynamical, by comparison to a scientific taxonomy proper – and, secondly, it is more controversial than a scientific taxonomy, since it is constrained by the subjectivity and the power relations existing between the orator and the professional politicians. By the standard of *bona fide* taxonomical hierarchies, such as, say, the division of the branches of muscles, which permit ordering knowledge, which are faithful descriptions and essentialized representations of a part and parcel of reality – the discursive taxonomical context of the political concept the *Union*, formed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, represents something slightly different, since it is a signification universe that develops gradually, in an illocutionary manner, by means of several discourse practices. Being illocutionary in nature, i.e. resting upon the creation of things with words in an institutional frame, the discursive taxonomy of the *Union* as a concept following in the steps of Austin's work superimposes itself over an external state of things and tries to model and modify history (the social and historical reality). The relationship between the concept and the denotation is not biunivocal, as in the typical taxonomies, but, owing to the prospective orientation of the central notion that the political Union represents – together with its other denominations – quite often it aims at creating a reality and to influence or model the flow of opinions.

As regards the dynamism of the conceptual paradigm [with *Romania* (at the superordinate level) – *the Union* (at the basic level) – (*the ardent*) *desire* (of the nation) (at the subordinate level)], in time, the paradigm becomes enriched, more

*Union is God's voice* (119); *through the union, our vices are transformed into virtues* (119); *the land of promise* (120); *in Moldavia, the Union is not something connected to enthusiasm, but to judgement and logic* (120); *the great truth* (146); *the crown of the great reforms* (116); *the political religion of the Romanian nation* (146); *the necessity of the Union* (146); *the country's expectations* (148); *the Union of the Principalities under the rule of a foreign prince is now construed as the palace of the Romanian nation* (148); *the new order of things* (147); *we have to observe a law regulating a supreme necessity in our lives* (147); *the political religion of our nation* (150); *the Union was the pressing order of the day* (248); *the political religion of our nation* (249); *sacred religion* (249); *a course of action that brings happiness and strength to a country and enriches it* (249) (cf. Sources).



precisely, its current paradigmatic form is [*Romania – the Small Union and the Big Union* (the basic level) – *the ardent desire of the nation*].

In Mihail Kogălniceanu's discourses, the literal denomination, *the Union* or *the Union of the Romanian Principalities* is in competition with the metaphor (*ardent desire*). The Romance word *deziderat* (*desideratum*), whose circulation is selective and pertains to the scholarly register, as well as, probably, to the register of the political language - is felt to be less metaphorical than *ardent desire*, and since it came into use later<sup>5</sup>, it could not compete with *ardent aspiration*. But it might well be in a position to compete with *ardent desire* in the political language register.

Being derived from the psychological word *a dori* (*to desire*), the noun *dorință* in the phrase *dorință vie* (*ardent desire*) takes upon itself the semantic characteristics of the verb, namely [state open for completion] and [weak possession] (Manea: 71; 73). In the noun, there can be noted certain semantic mutations by comparison to the verbal etymon. On the other hand, in the semantic analysis of psychological verbs, verbs of wishing and emotive verbs are firmly distinguished from each other, and the latter are characterized by the semantic profile [directioned state] and [weak possession]; this distinction may be effaced in the discursive use of the noun *desire*, when the latter comes closer to the semantic zone of emotion. The syntagmatic combinations of the metaphor certify a strong sense of possession, both through the genitival constructions and through the occurrence of the possessive pronoun determiner: *the ardent desire of the nation, cherished longing of our hearts; Moldavia's most ardent/keenest desire; a longing that can be felt coursing in our veins*. Similarly, the [open for completion] sense gains emphasis in the discourse when the utterances which have the *Union* as their semantic centre frequently trigger an expectation implicature: the wish-fulfilment expectation (cf. *the keen aspirations of a wretched nation; the aspirations of a nation that is bent on its own revival, a golden dream* a.s.o.). Consequently, in the investigated discourses, we will meet with such signification values as the idea of strong possession, of intensity, necessity, the expectation implicature, a perspectivist angle in regarding political concepts through a particular time-orientation and through the orientation in respect to others, including the supreme divinity; these are signification values to be met with in the entire denomination sphere of the political concept of the *Union* in the investigated discourses; consequently, they confer to the concept a particular kind of plasticity:

- (intensity) *warming up to the very same sentiments, to a single ardent aspiration; the most ardent aspiration of the entire nation* (Kogălniceanu: 111; 110); *our most intensely cherished aspiration* (Kogălniceanu: 27; 116);

<sup>5</sup> The neologism *deziderat* (*desideratum*) is not attested in N. A. Ursu and Despina Ursu, or in DER. This might imply the fact that the Romanian word *deziderat* was not in use at that time.

- (intensity and orientation in respect to the present tense) *the ardent longing of the day* (Kogălniceanu: 127);
- (predominantly past orientation) *eternal longing* (Kogălniceanu: 104; 116; 114);
- (future orientation) *the promised land; the country's expectations; we have to enforce the commandments of a law spelling a supreme necessity for life* (Kogălniceanu: 27);
- (double orientation, to the past and the future) *prophecy* (Kogălniceanu: 32);
- (orientation in respect to others) *the intense longing of Moldavia [uttered before the whole of Europe]* (Kogălniceanu: 87; 108); *sentiments that inspire the minds of our brothers living on the other side of the Milcov River* (Kogălniceanu: 110).

Given the fact that the contextual presuppositions are numerous and the denominations of this entire political conglomerate are metaphorical as a rule – while also being of the generic type –, the discursive use of the metaphors is such as to fail in expressing in a sufficiently precise way the particular elements of the entire political *gestalt* it refers to<sup>6</sup>. The denominational system of the *Union* as a political concept in the period under study covers four semantic zones, has an extremely uniform distribution of the lexemes and the transfer from one field of signification to another is effected through certain borderline terms constituted by the lexical contribution of both zones:

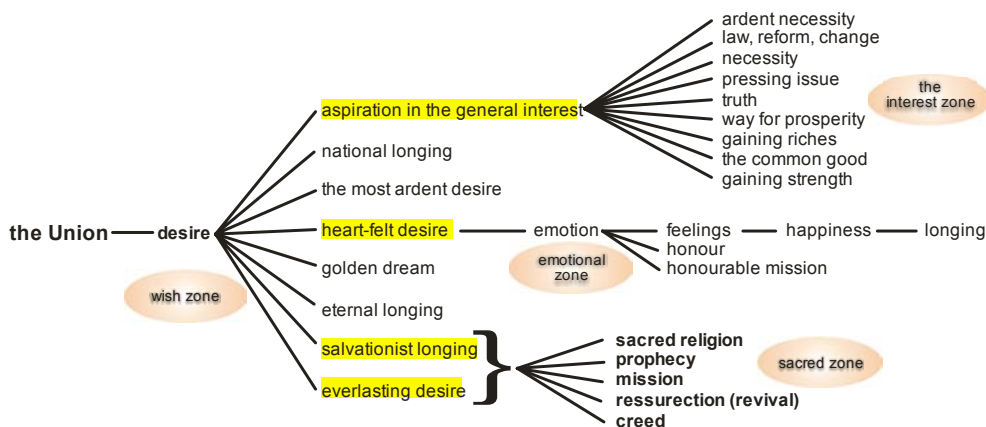


Fig.1

<sup>6</sup> The loose metaphoric use of the concepts is specific to several functional styles, being quite frequent in legalese and in political discourse; it lies, among others, at the root of the controllable ambiguity effects and is responsible for the impression given to unwarned receivers that the sense is fluid or evanescent. Consequently, when pondering in the margin of the political discourse, the unexperienced, though *benevolent*, receiver may easily get the impression that the orator would know better what it's all about!

The generic and at the same time metaphorical denominational system of the *Union* as a political concept advances from the conceptual *zone* of *desire* towards *the interest semantic zone* through the borderline term *aspiration in the general interest* (Kogălniceanu: 95; 223). But the major direction of conceptual development is from the *wish zone* towards *the emotional zone*, through the bridging terms *heart-felt desire*, *the most ardent desire*, *golden dream* (Kogălniceanu: 93; 249); it is from the same central wish-zone that another direction of signification appears: the direction of *the sacred* which makes itself felt through terms whose sense lies at the intersection of the two domains: *eternal longing*, *salvationist longing*, *everlasting desire*.

### CONVERGENCES AND DIVERGENCES AT THE METAPHORICAL EXPRESSION LEVEL

Understood as cognitive processes, conceptual tropes are discreetly reflected in the language and enter our discursive routines. For example, in the case of the metonymy of the *toto pro pars* kind, the trope goes unnoticed. (*He hit me; Is America at war?*)<sup>7</sup> (Kövecses: 100).

Since they are not special stylistic aspects, but mechanisms of thinking, conceptual tropes – frequently appearing as catachreses – are a stable means for making notions more intuitively accessible and they give conventional form to the emotional overtones of the political concept(s) (Ștefănescu, 2010)<sup>8</sup>. In the political discourse, conceptual metaphors represent a means of gaining access to the underlying social and discursive imaginary (Charreaudeau:162), which is, at the same time, a hidden source of inspiration which makes the text unfold, and the cause of the intuitive attraction exerted by the political text upon the receivers.

The studies about the conceptual metaphor have noticed its structural asymmetry. This has to do with the fact that, in accordance with a scenario which matches our physical and cultural experience, the developments of the *target* enrich the cognitive representation of the concept.<sup>9</sup> A text that contained the metaphor of LIFE as being A JOURNEY may develop as follows: *In his life's journey he came upon all sorts of people and met with several snags on the way, but managed to*

<sup>7</sup> In addition, conceptual tropes may represent the only neutral way in which the denoted reality can be expressed (for which, see the need for a special context, a certain relationship with the interlocutor, so as to express the same state of facts *He hit my chest with his fist*).

<sup>8</sup> This is one of the aspects connecting emotion to the conceptual metaphor. The other aspect, which does not concern us here has to do with the conceptual expression of the affect by conceptual metaphors (cf. FURY is a HIGH TEMPERATURE; Lakoff / Johnson).

<sup>9</sup> For example, the cognitive metaphor – LIFE is a JOURNEY – consists of a *source*, which is here an abstract entity (here, *life*), and a *target*, which is the concrete entity (*journey*). Other specific terms of the *scenario* are *setting*, *cognitive model*, *scenario*, *script*, *cultural model*, *gestalt* (cf. Kövecses: 64).

*pass them by. When he got to the end, he was happy and tired.* In the examples we are about to give in what follows, we shall sometimes resort to sketching the development of a conceptual metaphor in M. Kogălniceanu's discourses.

In the parliamentary discourses investigated, we have noticed two complementary situations that have a bearing upon the language of the texts. The first one is a situation in which we could sense a greater variation in the source when there existed convergence in the target; in other words, there were several abstractions represented through the same target, *viz.* by the same iconic element. The convergence of the representations unifies the imagery of the discourse and confers it fluidity, since it introduces in the text a certain amount of repetitiveness in the imagery, though the images may represent different things for each of their occurrences.<sup>10</sup> In the sources examined, the metaphor **THE PERSON** was used for rendering ten concepts more intuitively accessible: COUNTRY (with its lexicalizations *country, principalities, nation, the Romanian people, Romania, the Romanian nationality*), PROPERTY, THE CONGRESS OF PARIS, THE ELECTIVE ASSEMBLY, THE UNION, AUTONOMY, SOCIAL EVIL, IDEAS, CALUMNY, OPINION. By the same token, **EDIFICE** is the palpable representation of several concepts: REFORMS („the innerly reforms”), SOCIAL ORGANIZATION, UNION, NATIONALITY, SOCIETY, and THE FUTURE.

The second situation is one in which there is a great variety of representations of a single concept, in other words, it is a situation with a whole lot of diversity in the target and with convergence in the source. This includes the notion of the *Union*, which is structurally differentiated into several metaphors. The Union means DESIRE and A CROWN, both of these belonging to a PERSON who is situated AT THE END OF A ROAD which represents A JOURNEY<sup>11</sup>; the Union is also A MARRIAGE<sup>12</sup>, A SUBSTANCE<sup>13</sup>, AN EDIFICE<sup>14</sup>, A PARADISE<sup>15</sup>,

<sup>10</sup> A different behaviour of the trope is to be found in the artistic discourse, where the variety of the metaphors presupposes a great number of iconic targets corresponding to the same number of conceptual sources – even if the identification of the “notions that the metaphors stand in for” is not always easy, which creates a searching problem.

<sup>11</sup> The aspiration “towards whose exquisite fulfilment the Convention of August the 7<sup>th</sup> is paving the way” is the Union (Kogălniceanu: 108).

<sup>12</sup> “The boons *begotten* through the union of these two peoples are not to be overlooked” (M. Kogălniceanu, quoting from art. 425, chapt. IX of the code of organic regulations; in *op. cit.*: 28)

<sup>13</sup> “We have voiced the truest aspirations of the country, of which the highest one that is now coursing in our veins... is the Union of the Principalities” (Kogălniceanu: 93).

<sup>14</sup> “that all the foundations of our new edifice have been laid and, verily, on its gable is its name inscribed already” (Kogălniceanu: 110).

<sup>15</sup> “Let us unite Moldavia with the Wallachian Principality, let us put up a big, sturdy fence around a sterile plot of land; o, may this place be fenced in – and then, even though it be not tilled and sowed with seeds, lo and behold! the winds will come this way and the birds of the sky and they shall bring the seed of blossoming trees and flowers on the wing; and soon will there spring here a flower, there, a little tree, at first, then the trees will grow and, in the shade of the undergrowth, we shall smell flowers and we shall have a big, beautiful orchard growing; birds will be heard singing in the trees

GOD’S OWN VOICE; also, it can be compared with A SHEAF OF (tied) STICKS<sup>16</sup>. The more complex the political concept, the more up to date and the greatest its argumentative role, the more it is conceptualized in various ways – in short – the more numerous its representations, the greater its iconic targets. Stylistically speaking, the multitude of representations of a single abstract notion brings a larger iconic variety to the cases of conceptual convergence<sup>17</sup> (cf. fig. 2a,b).

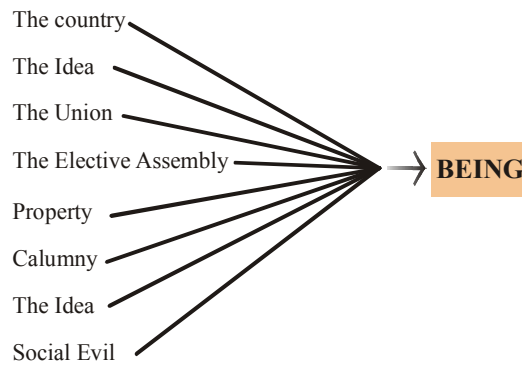


Fig. 2a

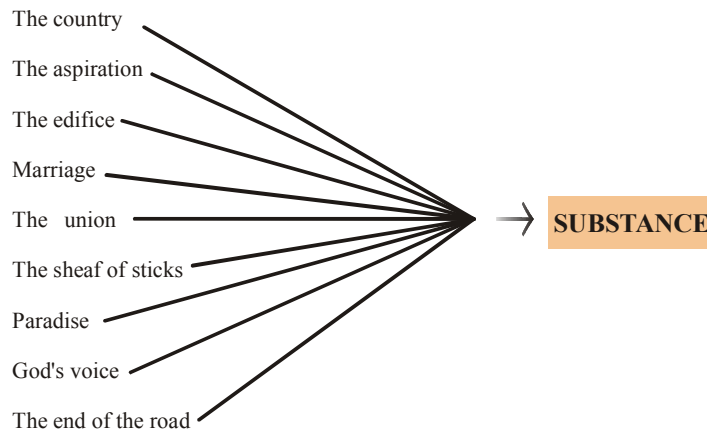


Fig. 2b

and people will make merry under the cool bowers, giving grace to God and to the kings blessings” Kogălniceanu: 34).

<sup>16</sup> “[ Unionists] make firm stay – for they are like to several sticks which, being tied together, cannot be torn easily, as they would be, if they were kept asunder” (Kogălniceanu: 52).

<sup>17</sup> Yet another example is the metaphor of the HIGH TEMPERATURES which apply to concepts from the sphere of emotions, standing for INVOLVEMENT (Kogălniceanu, cf. Sources: 4), REVOLT (Kogălniceanu, cf. Sources: 4), PROTEST (Kogălniceanu, cf. Sources: 4) AND PATRIOTISM (Kogălniceanu, cf. Sources: 4).

The reason why a concept is analogically represented in a complex way, through several cognitive metaphors, is that each iconic representation says something different about the notion, and the entire metaphorical class has a structuring role for the concept. The metaphor of *desire / aspiration* is, for the Union, subordinated to a metaphor that has priority: the metaphor of THE PERSON, thus establishing a coherence link with another central category of the discourses, namely the idea of the country, of the Principalities, of the nation (the country is a human being, it has a strong desire – namely the Union).

The *end of the road* metaphor – an extension of the metaphor of the journey – evokes the beloved person who is there where the traveller is led on his way; it is, therefore, part of a conceptual scenario, possibly one that implies idealized love and which is applied here to the notion of the country, that – as we saw earlier – is metaphorically seen as a being (see fig. 2a). Other occurrences of the metaphor support the idea that this trope is subordinated, rather, to the scenario evoked by the metaphor of the person – which means it pertains to the conceptual imaginary of a country seen as A PERSON – not as an autonomous trope for the historical notion of the Union.

#### THE ACTIVE ZONES OF THE IDEAL COGNITIVE MODEL

The condition for a metaphor being successful is, according to G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, that it should contribute to comprehending one aspect of the concept. Metaphors develop discursively in keeping with the referential components of the target. In the subjacently created representations we should not look for logic but for overall coherence. This creates a universe of signification that is analogous and parallel with the discursive signification in the foreground. Thus, then, is the concept COUNTRY expressed by the metaphor of THE PERSON that has *a heart* which „beats like the heart of a single man craving for rights, for nationality, for the Union”, which „leaps with enthusiasm” at this thought; its desire is for the Union; it is a person „downtrodden by all the peoples”; it has just shed „the agony of past evils” (Kogălniceanu: 32; 33); the Principalities are „two daughters of the same archetypal mother” (Kogălniceanu: 119); and when „at the head of the country” a caimacam was appointed (and here the allusion is to Nicolae Vogoride), this was received as “ a smack that Moldavia had never forgotten” (Kogălniceanu: 119). Similarly, the country „has a sense” that things are not as they should be and „longs” for a radical social transformation, but how this could be brought about „she is unable to tell us” and „she is not ready for reforms” (Kogălniceanu: 51). But the Principalities are „thirsting for legitimacy, stability and national dignity” (Kogălniceanu: 107).

Heart, face, thought, body, malady, begotten (daughters), the sensation of thirst and a whole range of sentiments (longing, enthusiasm, sense of loss, uncertainty, sufferance, humiliation) are some active zones of the person metaphor applied to the *country* as a notion. Thus is it that a certain image of the concept is configured in the discourses – with the dysphoric affect given pride of place. To these is added the metaphor of the tree. The Principalities are „two branches on the same bole” (Kogălniceanu: 119) – which implies the idea of unity. Consequently, the very notion of the Union can hardly have a logical character in this discursive space, since it does not indicate a sum or a logical conjunction, but is constructed as a natural, genetic unity. Those zones are activated in the target which, in view of their trans-discursive correspondence, create the implicature of the urgent satisfaction of expectations, in other words, the implicature of the need to complete the given situation in order to replace the dysphoric range of sentiments by their opposite. The legs, arms, neck, shoulders and womb, in lieu of the head, heart, soul and thinking, hunger instead of thirst – which are zones capable of being activated in the target of this cognitive metaphor – would have had more difficulty in being associated with the range of dysphoric sentiments above mentioned; consequently, it would have been more difficult to become coherent in respect to the semantic logic of the completable state entailed by all this metaphorical representation and in respect to the metaphor of *desire*, the most frequent metaphor in Kogălniceanu’s discourses of this period.

The metaphor of the country oppressed by its wretched state, but entertaining full hopes of regeneration is answered, in an echo, by the Biblical metaphor of the Romanian people resembling Lazarus come back from the dead (Kogălniceanu: 119). The tightness of the analogy even lends to the sequence the status of an allegory<sup>18</sup>.

#### **THE CORRESPONDENCE OF THE METAPHORICAL REPRESENTATIONS CAN BRING ABOUT MODIFICATIONS OF THE CONCEPTS**

Previously, we have spoken about the following aspects:

(a) Related concepts have the tendency to be represented by the same *target* (cf. the REFORMS, the POLITICAL SITUATION, the SOCIETY and the NATIONALITY are an EDIFICE) (Kogălniceanu: 84; 86);

<sup>18</sup> The „Romanian” people is the „new Lazarus”, having lain asleep „for threescore ten years” a prey to „sleep as unfathomably deep as death”. The Treaty of Paris, which is „the new saviour”, summoned him with these words: „Arise and follow me.” and Lazarus rose, shedding the „shrouds away from himself” and emerged as „a young nation, full of life and brimming with futurity” (Kogălniceanu: 33).

(b) the iconic convergences and divergences;

(c) the process of activation of some special zones from the ideal cognitive model. This last phenomenon is responsible for the capacity of metaphors to “echo” each other, in other words to become coherent. For instance, the *political and social wrights* are the *clothes* which had been torn off from a *body*. The *conuntry* is the *person* who suffered this.

During this „camouflaged” syntagmatic assortment, which sometimes covers very large discursive expanses, it is possible to get modifications of concepts. For example, a conceptual approximation obtains between the abstract notion of the Union and the notions of dignity, legitimacy or stability – owing to the fact that they are represented iconically in a similar way, as SUBSTANCES: the Union „has impregnated our national blood” (Kogălniceanu: 93) and the „dignity”, legitimacy and stability can „quench the thirst of our country” (Kogălniceanu: 107). The tendency is to associate them even further, we have full liberty to associate them in view of their mode of representation. In the taxonomical order, we witness the changes appearing in the distances among concepts – resulting in the flexibilization of some concepts – here, the flexibilization of the socio-political *Union* concept. In this way, the Union as a concept originating in an intrinsically logical formation, comes closer, in M. Kogălniceanu's discursive universe, to a moral value: to dignity, and it becomes especially appealing to the imagination. We measure the distances among notions by means of the inferences which can be established between them. *The Union*, the most logical of the concepts, presupposes the idea of conjunction between at least two entities – which has prompted us to consider that it is situated at one of the poles of the cline upon which all the other concepts are placed in gradual succession. On entering a space of historical and political deliberation, the abstract notion of two equal entities uniting suffers a first flexibilization of its abstract sense. This flexibilization is discussed, exhibited and valorized when it is subjected to the ideologization of the concept. From a social and political perspective, the immediately following abstraction after *the Union* is *legitimacy*. A strong inference relationship obtains between the two of them. *Stability* is a direct implication of *legitimacy*, and *dignity* is possibly a weak discourse implicature of *stability*.

**UNION** → (strong inference) **LEGITIMACY** → (inference) **STABILITY** →  
(weak inference *i.e.* implicature) **DIGNITY**

Fig. 3a



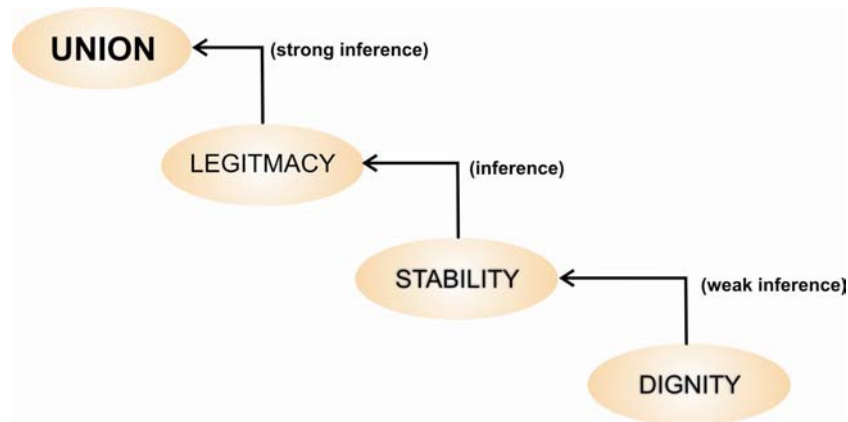


Fig. 3b

The similar metaphorical representation of these four notions, as SUBSTANCES, makes the distances between them become tenuous, and it makes insignificant their taxonomical disposition. In addition, if we take into consideration the fact that the most frequent metaphor for the *Union* is the *desire* one, we can see that the emotional potential of the the concept is huge, and that this abstraction is as it were „watter-logged” with emotion. Thus, the flexibilization and plasticization of the *Union* as a notion in M. Kogălniceanu’s discourse follows variegated paths: it is effected by conceptual metaphors and by the occultation of the links within the taxonomical hierarchy in which the concept is accomodated.

### THE WISHFUL THINKING TYPE OF ARGUMENTATION

Conceptual metaphors are one modality of understanding, representing and making imaginatively accessible or plastic an abstraction about which, in some cases, we cannot talk literally, but only indirectly, through lexicalization, with words that are not *literally* used (Lakoff / Johnson). The question as to whether there are any concepts which we can understand otherwise than analogically, namely without the mechanism of the metaphor, only through experience and direct comprehension, has received a rather negative answer – since it has been shown that any experience is cultural as well (Lakoff / Johnson). Notions such as country, principalities, Union, property a.s.o. are cultural *gestalts* - and we see the cultural level as hierarchically superior to the political; also, the cultural *gestalt* preferably, and for the sake of expressive economy, lends itself to metaphorically conceptual expression. We do not want to say either that the Union of the Principalities which was, for the political elites of that period, the dominant political notion, modern and recent only found analogical expression. On the contrary, it has a richly literal expression – which is the equivalent of the ideology underlying the action. We have already shown above, in a schematic way, what the

*de facto* act of Union presupposed. In an unwavering manner, M. Kogălniceanu calls everybody's attention to the Union and installs it ideologically in several discourses. The political space of the time proves to be very complex: it is both a producer of ideas and symbolic values, and an implementing agency (Charraudeau: 235–237).

In view of the fact that the political *gestalt* of the Union in the course of the year 1857 met many of the conditions imposed, and since it was possible to envisage the fulfillment of the act, the desiderative thought mechanism can be detected under different forms, first of all in the form of the *desire* denomination – where this metaphor has an intensive value, expressing the idea of a state open to its immediate fulfillment. Yet another form, maybe not one of the most important, but quite symptomatic for our discussion here, is that of the *wishful thinking* strategy. As a way of presenting political *gestalts*, the argumentative movement of the *wishful thinking* type is characteristic primarily for a political space bent on imposing ideas; but in our case not all the conditions are certain. Here are a number of *wishful thinking* expressions: „I am fully confident that the executive board has done everything in its power to mediate this issue” (Kogălniceanu: 46); „Therefore, Gentlemen, I believe that I am not deceived in respect to your sentiments if I launch a protest in the name of the whole Assembly” (Kogălniceanu: 47); „I shall retain my faith and hope that my idea will triumph” (Kogălniceanu: 52); „If – in recognition to my efforts for the benefit of my country – history will retain two lines's worth of records in my honour, I am sure it will do me justice in saying that I have never been in rebellion, but that I have always desired, and I am still desirous to secure *order* through *progress*” (Kogălniceanu: 84).

The optimistic view that he projected over the course of events – here regarding the act of Union and its realization and everything connected to it – could almost prompt us to say that he was placing between brackets the time factor in a kind of populist strategy. But this is not the case here. Kogălniceanu's perspective was not restricted to formulations like the one above – but it promoted a political *gestalt* which had been under way for some time and was grounded in an ample, variegated axiological system and in a series of principles that enabled him to build a strategy *whereby he was couching the members of the political class so as to boost* their sense of responsibility; also, he was helping them to develop towards what we could term the strategy of *understanding the adversary*. We can therefore state that in M. Kogălniceanu we have to do with a *wishful thinking formator*.

In what follows, we shall make quick reference to the principles of M. Kogălniceanu's behaviour rooted in desiderata and creeds. Starting from the general idea that politics is the art of addressing an as large audience as applicable, winning its members over and making them adhere to one's own ideas (Charraudeau: 187), the formulations which indicate that the adversary has been fully understood are meant to reassure people: „I can understand the concerns of those who are opposed to the 9th article” (referring to the granting of rights to denizens whose religion is Christian”); (Kogălniceanu: 52); „I can understand, therefore, this gentleman's hostility to me” (Kogălniceanu: 83).

M. Kogălniceanu also resorted to a more complex tactical move than the preceding one, namely to the *responsibilization* of the political class. With this in view, he set out to build a discourse of tradition evoking a golden age in history by contrast to a history of grievances. The topos of the apostolic mission of the political class appears quite frequently. „We feel called upon to make reform.”, just as the Apostles were called by the Saviour to spread faith (Kogălniceanu: 51); „The prophecy is about to come true” (Kogălniceanu: 33), a prophecy that the voyvod Stephen the Great made on his deathbed; „the Union is God’s voice”, and when God wills a nation’s good, he sends the nation „enthousiasmus”; this enthousiasm along with the „energy and prudence of the men of state” will empower us and we shall see „the land of promise”. At the same time, he said, the politicians of the day will be able to give advice to future generations, „though dead” and from their tombs (Kogălniceanu: 120–121).

In addition to the topos of the apostolic mission of the political class, the consensus strategy appears quite strongly marked in his discourses. Sometimes the appeal to agree is made in the name of an underlying argument of the *wishful thinking* type, in which the effect of optimism is due to a mystical certitude which says that „what was not possible for men to achieve, God will be able to achieve” (Kogălniceanu: 423). Political discourse resorts to further things than injunctions meant to secure agreement: it provides examples that lead to the imaginary universe of tradition. The Romanian political and historical imaginary considers that the element which has the strongest cohesive function is sufferance. Tiny identities divide people<sup>19</sup>, and so does the strident pealing of the so-called „belfry patriotism”<sup>20</sup>, but sufferance solders different people’s conscience. In the same register, in the order of the natural elements, waters divide – and see here the Romanian symbolic power of the Milcov or Prut Rivers, for example –; mountains make bridges, have uniting and saving power, they even have the function of „a tabernacle”, just like Noah’s Ark, that gave shelter to our people during the invasions of barbarian tribes (Kogălniceanu, cf. Sources: 5; Boia 145–177). The fact that M. Kogălniceanu demands that the headquarters of the Central Commission – the main instrument of administrative unification – be in Focșani, a locality situated on the Milcov River, is more than emblematic for a political period characterised by profound changes in the political and social domain, but also manifest changes in the conceptual and imaginary domain.

<sup>19</sup> „Gentlemen, let us not permit narrow-minded ideas lead as down a narrow path. The *belfry patriotism* with its strident pealing was responsible for the loss of many a renowned country. Greece fell because its citizens would not unite under its fluttering standard that could recall the glory of ancient Greece. They preferred to stick to their own habit of fighting each other being just Spartans, Athenians or Thebans.” (Kogălniceanu: 53)

<sup>20</sup> This speaks of a political position strictly founded on Orthodoxy and Romanianism, a position conducive to the fear of losing one’s national character should political rights be granted to all the Christian denizens. This term could be seen to have a further historically contextual sense in M. Kogălniceanu’s discourses.

## CONCLUSIONS

Ideology develops the political concept of the Union, and the parliamentary discourse renders it more imaginatively appealing, by creating usual metaphors and reducing the distances among this kind of discourse and the emotional zone. The powerful emotional charging of the central notions – two of which we have referred to here, the idea of the Union of the Principalities and the idea of the country –, the recourse to the imaginary of tradition and to universal values, together with the need of promoting modernity, all these are markers of a Romantic kind of political discourse.

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