THE "GRAMMAR" OF ELOQUENCE IN TAKE IONESCU'S DISCOURSE *PENTRU ROMÂNIA MARE / FOR GREAT ROMANIA*

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Abstract: This research study aims to make an analysis of eloquence based on the interpretation of the discourse Pentru România Mare/For Great Romania, delivered by Take Ionescu in Iaşi, in 1916. This study proves important (and useful) since it combines various means specific to several disciplines: rhetoric, linguistics, communication theory, logic. There are different terms and semantically "dense" formulations characterizing the political discourse. The argumentation is both theoretical and practical, constituting a "stimulus" for the speaker and/or listener who will be able to evaluate a certain type of discourse.

Keywords: *eloquence, utterance, discourse, analysis, peformance*

1. Text "grammar" deals with the study of a text as "a supraphrastic entity with a unitary (formal) syntactic structure and a global meaning"[1]. Together with "grammar", argumentation is part of the environment where we carry out our activity: television, newspapers, the discourse of politicians, of teachers, lawyers, and it involves eloquence, reasoning, discursive "drafts". Their purpose may differ: from information and communication to persuasion, conviction, even manipulation. Meaning and level distinctions between the above-mentioned terms are often hard to establish in discursive practice.

From a logico-rhetorical perspective, Chaïm Perleman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca (in *Traité de l'argumentation*, l'Université libre de Bruxelles, Bruxelles) distinguish between persuasion and conviction. Instead, Phillipe Breton (in *L'Argumentation dans la communication*, Découverte, Paris, 2001, p. 3) considers that *argumentation* and *manipulation* belong to the act of persuading, and the three procedures: *argumentation, manipulation* and *persuasion* represent registers of communication and, impliedly, of any type of discourse (legal, political, etc.).

To be persuasive (the verb *to persuade* means "to give advice to the end", until "the person who is given advice fully accepts it") in a discourse means to advise, eloquently, the recipient to accept a certain theory selected by the sender, in a language complying with the ideas under debate. In the language of political discourse, there is need for certain utterances

[1] DŞL, 2001, p. 245.
„Denumirea de *gramatică* a textului (...) este motivată de originea studiilor consacrate acestui domeniu, care s-au dezvoltat iniţial în cadrul gramaticilor generativ-transformaţionale. La un moment dat al evoluţiei cercetărilor lingvistice de acest tip, s-a observat că atenţia era exclusiv îndreptată asupra descrierii propoziţiei/frazei şi a regulilor de formare a acesteia (componenta sintactică), la care se adăugau aspectele semantice legate tot de generarea propoziţiilor/frazelor corecte (componenta semantică)."/ "The name of text *grammar* (…) is motivated by the origin of the studies devoted to this domain, which were initially developed within transformational-generative grammars. At a certain moment in the evolution of linguistic research of this type, it became obvious that the focus was exclusively on the description of the sentence and its structuring rules (syntactic component), as well as the semantic aspects related to the generation of correct sentences (semantic component)." (DŞL, 2001, p. 245-246)

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which should follow several directions[2] as far as interpretation is concerned. First, the message should be understood by the audience and, depending on wishes/opportunities, the audience should be persuaded in the end[3]. Speaking before an audience has its own rules. Besides talent, the performance of those using the word for the purpose of arguments/pleas involves training, study, repetition and consistency; oratorical talent depends on how it is revealed through various means of expression.

The difference between the progress of technological thought, of its applications, and the progress of mentality involves an ever stronger difference between man as a unique individual and as a member of society. Verbal communication, focused on true/false criteria, turned more and more to metalanguage, by accepting the correct definition, according to which a sentence is more than a presentation of meaning, it also means intuition of an unexpressed judgment[4]. Modern communication, paradoxically, needs pragmatics, close to the artistic side, close to "the emotional energy" of man. The "technique" of spontaneity actually implies complexity: it is known that speech and thought are mutually conditional. Speech becomes identity and a work instrument at the same time, so that there is more and more need for pragmatics, for a training aiming to acquire knowledge of speech performances in more and more domains.

Despite the great number of studies developed on this topic so far[5], text grammar, argumentative syntax and eloquence continue to be important issues of any type of discourse.

2. Legal and political activities (and impliedly, oratorical art) are among the domains where reasoning must be extremely clear, precise and, sometimes, concise. Therefore, certain knowledge of logic is crucial in the intellectual training of an orator. It represents one of the numerous requirements involved by the exercise, at a superior level, of different "manifestations" in the field of law[6]. Knowledge of logic is not enough as such, in order to make an orator/sender reason effectively in various particular situations. Logical knowledge and abilities are just a means of control and optimization of certain activities whose quality also depends on other factors. In the context of a debate, the main purpose is to persuade the audience. The aim of argumentation is the persuasion of the audience[7], so as to obtain its approval.

The research on eloquence developed against the background of the *practical discourse* investigation. Unlike *theoretical discourses* (where the emphasis is on questioning the truth

[2] Cf. Topală, *Sintaxa propozițiilor subordonate din codurile juridice de la 1863-1865*, 2004.
[3] Cf. Pitiriciu, 2012, p. 65-70.
[4] *Sophism* (cf. Gr. *sophisma*) means "ruse", "deception" and denotes a series of logical errors found in the practice of justifying ideas by demonstration or argumentation, whether they are intentional or not. Cf. Cazacu, 2007, p. 89.
[5] Levi, Judith, *Linguistics, Language and Law. A Topical Bibliography*, Evanston, Illinois, 1982; Kevelson, Roberta, "Language and Legal Speech Acts: Decisions" in Di Pietro, Robert (ed.), Linguistics and Professions, 1982, pp. 121-131; Maley, Yon, "The Language of the Law" in Gibbons, John (ed.), *Language and the Law*, Longman, London, pp. 30-41. Robin, Cécile, *La langue du procès*, Clermont-Ferrand: Presses universitaires de Faculté de Droit de Clermont-Ferrand, Paris L.G.D.J., 2000, etc.
[6] There are many other requirements that legal professionals have to meet. To enter this 'elite', one has to be initiated throughout a long and painful process of education, practice and to be endowed by nature with such qualities as intelligence, scientific curiosity, shrewdness and speculative insight. (Badea, 2008, p. 22).
[7] By *audience* one understands either mankind (universal audience), or an interlocutor (in a dialogue), or the subject himself. Cf. Stoianovici, Dima, Marga, 1991, p. 230.

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claim of assertions), the *practical discourse* questions the justness claim of assertions – with regard to order and values[8].

Linguists define an *utterance* in relation to a *sentence*; if a *sentence* is "an abstract linguistic entity, used in different situations", an *utterance* is "the particular expression of a sentence by a determined speaker in a certain place, at a certain moment"[9]. When, in logic, one mentions propositions, we are actually interested in the content of those propositions, namely the ideas expressed by what is called, in grammar, a sentence: declarative or assertive. Although the object of logic differs from that of any linguistic discipline, logic pays attention to certain general aspects of language, theoretically (applications focus on correspondences and discrepancies between the logical form of propositions and their linguistic form). The correct determination of the logical relations between propositions involves considering (too) the relations between the notions expressed by the terms occurring in these propositions, and the rigour and accuracy of reasoning also depend on the clarity of the ideas expressed in premises and conclusions. Thus, certain topics were naturally added to the object of formal logic: typology of terms, logical relations between terms, definition and classification operations, as well as the specification and systematization of terms/notions.

3. A controversial domain concerns the relation between rhetoric and logic, in general, between rhetoric and eloquence, in particular. It is known that orators do their best to persuade the audience in many ways: a) by reasoning (or discourse logic); b) by intuition (sensorial way); c) by emotions (sentimental way). In order to form (and formulate!) convictions by way of reason, the orator makes use of arguments, proofs, filtered by reasoning and based, in general, on fair judgments, namely propositions establishing a relation between two notions. Therefore, eloquence is, to a certain extent, a form of reasoning, since any explanation[10] is also a rationality exercise. Besides argumentation and demonstration (as discursive means of communication, knowledge and action), an explanation plays a distinct role. If something happens, what matters is what happens and, more than that, "why" and "how" it happens. The two performative acts: *conviction* and *persuasion* differ from the perspective of the mechanism by which they are assumed by the recipient, as individual situations, in relation to the act of knowledge. An explanation may be a series of arguments (but it may constitute, sometimes, an indirect means of dispute). This statement can be demonstrated if we illustrate it by an excerpt from the political discourse *For Great Romania*, delivered by Take Ionescu, a lawyer (and a politician) in the Chamber of Deputies, in Iaşi, on 14 December, 1916:

[8] Perelman considers that successful argumentation before the universal audience is close to the rational evidence of demonstration; in this case, persuasion is close to the conviction determined by demonstration. (apud Stoianovici, Dima, Marga, 1991, p. 230)

[9] DŞL, 2001, p. 196.

Cf. „O secvenţă de morfeme este o frază dacă şi numai dacă este gramaticală."/ "A sequence of morphemes forms a sentence if and only if it is grammatical." (Reboul, Moeschler, 2012, p. 55)

[10] *To explain* (< Fr. *explication*, cf. Lat. *explicatio, -onis*) "to make clear", "to clarify", "to make obvious", or "to offer understanding". Often, "explanations are imperfect or unsatisfying, depending on a certain rationality ideal." (Cazacu, 2007, p. 39)

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„Take Ionescu, ministru fără portofoliu: Eu aşa am înţeles: nu are să stânjenească sau nu are să îngreuneze realizarea reformelor? Dar mai întâi: nimeni nu poate să profetizeze că guvernul războiului, guvernul până la încheierea păcii, va fi tot el guvernul reformelor după pace. Ţin însă să se ştie în acest ceas că înainte de război, acum şase sau şapte luni, în comitetul partidului conservator, am examinat cu toţii, în vremea când trăia răposatul Filipescu, care n-a avut norocul nici să trăiască destul ca să vadă victoria şi nici să moară înainte de începutul înfrângerilor, am examinat profunde transformări la cari creaţiunea României Mari trebuie să ne supuie, transformări mult mai numeroase decât reformele agrare şi cele electorale."/ "Take Ionescu, a minister without portfolio: this is what I have understood: won't it prevent reforms or make them more difficult? But first of all: nobody can prophesy that the War Cabinet, the government until the conclusion of peace, will still be the government of reforms after signing peace. But I insist that everybody should know now that before the start of the war, six or seven months ago, in the committee of the Conservative Party, we all examined, when late Filipescu was still alive, and he wasn't lucky enough to live and see the victory, and to die before the beginning of defeats, we all examined the profound changes that the creation of Great Romania must make us undergo, changes which are much greater in number than any agrarian and electoral reform." [11]

In the excerpt above, the orator intended to capture the audience's attention by making use of repetition (nouns: *guvernul/government*, *transformări/changes*, *reforme/reforms*, verbs: *a examina/to examine*, *a trăi/to live*); they resume (and emphasize) the speaker's ideas. The lawyer motivated and explained, in brief, certain things that were transmitted to those interested. For Take Ionescu there is a principle explaining the common sense of a demonstration: the orator must do whatever necessary in order to be understood. He also addresses the audience through questions to which he tries to find answers: "the function of rhetorical questions is to check the recipient's attitude towards the presuppositions of a certain propositional content that the sender wants to impose" [12].

In general, the orator bears in mind a certain (conceptual) representation of the utterance and he wants to transmit it to his interlocutor. The effort to demarcate the end of oratorical art and the beginning of literary art is an illusion, therefore extremely difficult to separate. One can say that the two arts coexist in the political discourse of Take Ionescu, thus increasing the expressivity of argumentation:

„În această comunitate de suferinţe se dospesc legăturile noastre cu aliaţii (*aplauze*), legături cari nu se vor opri în ziua încheierii păcii, ci vor continua şi în urmă, căci tot cu ei va trebui sa trăim în mână şi pe terenul politic şi pe terenul economic şi mai ales pe terenul moral, care e superior tuturor. (*Aplauze prelungite*.)

Atunci, domnilor, ce ne rămâne de făcut?

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[11] *Discursul oratoric românesc. De la începuturi şi până la instaurarea regimului comunist*, 2003, p. 130.

[12] Ştefănescu, 2008, p. 51.

„Întrebarea poate fi pusă sau nu, dar atunci când este aruncată în luptă generează pasiuni şi dispute pe marginea „rezolvării" argumentative a alternativei. Întrucât nu este nici adevărată, nici falsă, întrebarea nu implică o opţiune fermă, o tranşare a problemei într-un sens sau altul."/ "The question may be asked or not, but when it is launched in the battle, it generates passions and disputes regarding the argumentative "solution" of the alternative. Since it is neither true, nor false, the question does not involve a firm option, a solution to the issue in one sense or another." (Ştefănescu, 2008, p. 49)

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> Trebuie să spunem ţării că suferă; trebuie să spunem armatei care a luptat (*aplauze prelungite*), trebuie să spunem tuturor sfântul adevăr, că chiar dacă n-am fi crezut în victorie, noi tot am fi intrat în război. Trebuie să spunem tuturor că nu a pornit hotărârea noastră dintr-o socoteală materială care poate uneori să greşească, ci a pornit din privirea în faţă a unei probleme seculare, din supunerea la instinctul naţiunii care niciodată nu greşeşte. (*Aplauze prelungite şi îndelung repetate*.)"/ "It is in this community of pain and suffering that our relations with the allies are fermenting (*applause*), relations which will not cease when the peace is concluded, they will go on, since we'll have to live with them on the political ground and the economic ground and especially the moral ground, superior to all of them. (*Repeated applause*)
> Then, gentlemen, what do we have to do?
> We have to tell the country that it is suffering; we have to tell the army which fought (*Repeated applause*). We have to tell everybody the holy truth, that even if we hadn't believed in victory, we would have gone to war. We have to tell everybody that our decision didn't arise out of a material reason which might sometimes be wrong, it started with facing a century-old problem, with the submission before the instinct of the nation which is never wrong. (*Long, repeated applause*)"[13].

The oratorical eloquence of Take Ionescu resembles the art of the actor in a theatre[14]. The analysis of this fragment indicates a particular manner of composition: by progressive argumentation, by questions addressed to the audience, he reaches a credible conclusion (*the instinct of the nation is never wrong*). The orator uses "rational proofs", i.e. in order to reveal a truth, he refers to what the members of the audience know as well[15]. Since he possesses and makes use of explicit arguments, by which he can convince those he addresses, the lawyer avoids false arguments. The speech is clear and the order of events is observed, without divagations.

The connection between argument and conclusion also depends on and is imposed by certain linguistic marks; in the latter excerpt above, the linguistic marks are: *căci/since*, *ci/but*, *chiar dacă/even if*. The connectors[16] *ci/but* and *căci/since* indicate the manner in which certain information is expressed and how the pieces of information interfere. The arguments and proofs are so correlated that they contribute to the unity and harmony of the discourse, to the consolidation of the orator's statements, of his thoughts.

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[13] *Discursul oratoric românesc. De la începuturi şi până la instaurarea regimului comunist*, 2003, p. 133.
„Un comentator străin a scris că nu s-a găsit niciodată mai bine împletit idealismul cu realismul, ca în discursul lui Take Ionescu. Politica se împleteşte cu morala, calculul cu sentimentul, istoria trecutului cu perspectivele viitorului (...), fără ca inspiraţia largă şi puternică a oratorului să aibă o şovăire sau slăbiciune. E elocvenţa clasică cea mai desăvârşită şi senină."/ "A foreign commentator wrote that he had never seen a better combination of idealism and realism as reflected in Take Ionescu's discourse. Politics combines with morals, pragmatism with feelings, the history of the past with the perspectives of the future (…), with no hesitation or weakness on the part of the orator, which might influence his great and powerful inspiration. It is the most complete and serene classical eloquence." (Haneş, Solomovici, 2007, p. 149; cf. Xeni, 1933, p. 341)

[14] „Oratorul căuta efectul, repezea gestul şi mărea timbrul vocii. De aceea era mai gustat ca alţii şi faima de orator a lui Take Ionescu a depăşit pe a altora, tot atât de talentaţi."/ "The orator was in search of effect, making haste in his gestures and pitching his voice higher. Therefore he was better 'tasted' and the fame of Take Ionescu as an orator was much greater than the fame of others, equally talented." (Haneş, Solomovici, 2007, p. 148)

[15] Cf. Goia, 2007, p. 113.

[16] The argumentative connector is a morpheme (similar to conjunctions, adverbs, interjections, etc.) which articulates two or more utterances in a unitary argumentative strategy.

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4. Therefore, a good orator must have knowledge in the field of law, as well as logical reasoning, he must be able to understand, interpret and/or deliver a discourse. Eloquence imposes itself through the analytical power of the one who pleads. But the purpose of argumentation as such is persuasion; as a result, arguments should aim to establish credibility and relevancy. From a communicational perspective, a political discourse is a linguistic act that a speaker performs in order to convince his interlocutors (the audience) that a thesis or a statement is true.

Together with reasoning, the art of eloquence, the good organization of the discourse, the logical and gradual presentation of ideas, the correct use of the emotional resources of language contribute to shaping and changing convictions. As a consequence, the logical instruments combine with the rhetorical ones, each of them playing a certain part and performing a certain function in the accomplishment of any type of discourse.

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