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Projections of the self in Romanian political discourse

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Communication in institutional settings is a specific form of dialogic interaction, subject to patterns and restrictions through which active participants may assert their own individuality reflected within discourse. The present paper identifies instances of authorial self in sub-genres of political discourses e.g. Parliament, the Great National Assembly and this type of data is collected through the analysis of three political speeches belonging to former Romanian leaders King Mihai and Nicolae Ceauşescu. I analyze the linguistic components that stand for authorial stance e.g. relational markers, personal pronouns, hedges, attitude markers, emphatics in order to observe the expression of "internal psychological states of an individual speaker"(Krakkainen,2006:700). This form of discourse is used as a strategy of creating a strong cohesive relation with the audiences and, as a direct consequence, improve the communicative effect of the speech. The research demonstrates that stance is an important feature of public communication and may significantly contribute to the rhetorical craftsmanship of a political discourse.

Key-words: *authorial stance, political discourse, rhetoric, genre*

1. Introduction

Throughout time, the development of human societies and practices was influenced by the innate abilities of human beings to communicate through language. Historical recordings and evidence prove that in ancient times, prior to the known existence of archaic cultures, instances of language (verbal and non-verbal) were used for pragmatic purposes such as trading and establishing social circles. As human beings became members of civilizations, bound by socio-cultural norms, people adapted their ways of conduct, habits, ideals, attitudes, norms or values in such a way in which they could be successfully integrated within larger groups. This facilitated the development of social identities, of "shared social constructs, jointly constructed by the members of the collectivity" (Van Dijk, 2010:31).

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The present essay examines such instances of self-expression found within political forms of discourse and the extent in which they are used by the speaker as rhetorical strategies of communication or as forms of asserting one's individuality through verbal interactions. The study is conducted on three Romanian political speeches belonging to different social and cultural backgrounds delivered by King Mihai and President Nicolae Ceauşescu on different occasions in the 20th century. The analysis will focus on the particularities and characteristics that underline the presence of self in political discourses and aims at observing linguistic patterns and strategies used by speakers.

In order to discuss the presence of social self in public speeches the study will make use of a specific structure. The first part of the paper will introduce the setting in which institutional discourse occurs. It is followed by a description of the methodological framework used for the analysis of the speeches, a conceptualization and a historical background of the afore-mentioned discourses. The purpose of the essay is to underline the projections of the self found within political speeches belonging to different socio-cultural contexts.

2. Sub-genres of Political Discourse

In political science, communication in institutional settings is a type of discourse, and can be defined as "written and spoken language as a form of social practice" (Fairclough and Wodack, 1997:66). Girnth (1996:66) uses a more elaborated definition of the term characterizing it as "a complex bundle of simultaneous and sequential interrelated linguistic acts, which manifest themselves within and across the social fields of action very often as text that belong to specific semiotic types that is genre." By all accounts, speeches held within institutional settings are genre-specific types of discourses.

One such instance of interactional communication is found within the Parliament, an institution established for "political deliberation, legislation, problem-solving and decision making" (Ilie, 2010:1). This political structure has the role of safeguarding the democratic processes by allowing representatives to speak on behalf of a party, or a majority; to bring forth and talk openly about different political standpoints or legislations through critical debates, addresses or deliberations. The Parliament is subject to a conventionalized dialogic communication in which the speakers have to respect certain ways of conduct, deliberation processes, procedural routines. Even in this restrictive, context dependent form of communication, instances of self are present throughout political speeches either voluntarily (as rhetorical strategies) used in arguments, debates and legislative procedures or involuntarily as a marker of the speaker's attitude, beliefs, opinions, feelings regarding a particular subject.

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Parliamentary speeches fall under the category of a particular genre of political discourse, a form of context dependent deliberation, restricted by settings and practices, "a norm-regulated interaction which takes place among politically elected representatives for deliberation and decision-making purposes in a specific institutional setting (the Parliament) and which displays recurrent institutionalized communication patterns" (Ilie, 2010:8). These forms of communication identified within this political structure are subject to rules and conventions. As such, Parliamentary speeches are a genre "operationalized discourses and styles" (Fairclough and Wodack, 1997:68), of particular ways of conduct within the field of political science.

Ilie (2010) identifies the existence of a ramification in this area of study by underlining instances of sub-genres found in parliamentary debates i.e. ministerial statements, parliamentary statements or debates all of which are integrative within the afore-mentioned institutional setting.

In the case of this particular study, the parliamentary sessions, as a structure of representative democracy are (as it will be later pointed out in the study) replaced with other administrative structures that accomplish this role in various political structures. These institutions significantly changed during the 20th century due to external political influence and decisions and as a result functioned differently than in the democratic procedures characterized within the contemporary political framework but retained, from a legal standpoint, similar characteristics and functions to the ones allocated to the Romanian Parliament. The next part of the paper will introduce the analytical framework of the study.

3. Methodology

In order to conduct the research I have decided to focus on two types of political discourses, held in institutional settings and pertaining to different political structures. They belong to Nicolae Ceauşescu, Head of State between 29 April 1974-25 December 1989 and leader of the Socialist Republic of Romania. I have decided to analyze two political discourses from the communist period, one held in July 15, 1989 at the 35th annual Communist Party Congress and another publicly delivered on the 24th of November 1989 in the 14th Congress of the Romanian Communist Party. While the two political discourses are constructed with different goals and objectives i.e. the first one being a speech in which the leader criticizes capitalism while the latter is a summarizing of discussions held in Congress; both discourses were delivered within an institutional setting by the same political figure. I have also decided to select another discourse held by the Head of the Royal Family as the former king of Romania (September 6, 1940- December 30 1947). The speech was delivered in Parliament in 2011 by King Mihai as the Head of the Romanian Royal Family.

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In order to establish the analytical framework of my research I used Herriman's (2007) classification of subject-positioning found within types of discourse: the *autobiographical self* i.e. the writer's experience outside the written text and its reflection, *the self of the author* i.e. the evaluation of a text in which the self of the author is expressed by his comments upon other writings and the *discoursal self* created by discourse conventions used by the author as a participant member of a community. The analytical framework suggested by Herriman centers on the idea that authorial stance holds a variety of key-roles in the construction of texts. Establishing one's own social persona, interacting with readers through the propositional information content level and creating a strong authorial presence that denotes trust and professionalism will be further used and analyzed in the public speech forms of writing. I have decided to apply the afore-mentioned categories to my own analysis of political discourses.

I also use Hyland's (1997) classification of stance. The writer categorizes the presence of social self into four groups: hedges, a primary component of stance relates to the authors restrictions to commit to a proposition i.e. the use of linguistic elements to express opinions rather than facts; emphatics is the way an author expresses certainty and has the role to give force to a sentence in its various forms. Another key feature is the use of writer stance to express attitude markers for aspects such as: surprise, obligation, agreement, importance and frustration. The last one used by Hyland deals with relational markers and has the role of invoking reader participation through linguistic elements that relate to the authorial stance.

The previously mentioned analytical frameworks represent the core structures of my study. When tackling Hyland taxonomy of stance further observations must be made. As the writer suggests, the previously mentioned taxonomy does not cover all aspects of stance but arguably the most visible and most recurrent ones. Furthermore the writer emphasized the idea that some categories of stance might overlap such as hedges with the affective means of conveying information as well as the writers' attitudes with relational markers.

3.1. The Authorial Self in the Speeches of Nicolae Ceauşescu

Even without a comprehensive analysis of the discourse, instances of self-expression are identified throughout the speeches. The first discourse was delivered by Nicolae Ceauşescu on July 15th, 1989 at the 35th annual Communist Party Congress. In his speech, the Head of State criticizes capitalism which he sees as an ineffective system that corrupts the world economy favoring the strongest countries and leaving the others in a state of poverty and inequality. Ceauşescu's discourse reflects his values and ideals which can be identified throughout his speech in various linguistic constructions.

The subjectivity of the discourse can be observed in the use of attitude markers through which the leader expresses his personal beliefs in regard to the

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country's wellbeing. Drawn from the analysis of the text, Ceauşescu's attitude towards the situation of developing countries is revealed by an attitude marker in the form of an adjective: "deosebit de gravă" (especially dire). This perspective is also supported by the use of emphatics: „desigur" (undoubtedly), "după cum bine se ştie" (as it is already known). These expressions are used as rhetorical strategies in order to fortify arguments and to express certainty.

Throughout the discourse few relational markers are used. However the speaker manages to include the listeners in the speech itself by the use of situations that involve their participation as active members of a country. Translated in English, the use of a second person pronoun as a relational marker 'we', implying the existence of a united collectivity, is necessary:

(1) a. ***(noi) Am*** *cunoscut-o sute de ani…*
'**We've** known it for hundreds of years'
b. *De aceea* ***am*** *declarat că pentru* ***noi*** *a apus întotdeauna o asemenea cale!*
'That is why **we** have stated that, for **us**, such a path is no longer an option.'

The speaker explicitly addresses its listeners, emphasizing a relationship shared by the leader. The pronoun "we" is used to present the issue addressed in the speech inter-personally (we as a people, as a country, or in our case we as the members of a united working class, as communist principles would dictate). Ceausescu reveals expressed commitment to the truth of the ideas he present; his entire speech is based on apparent reliability, strength and precision.

Humor also reveals the social-self of the speaker. When discussing the possibility of Romania to support capitalism, Ceauşescu uses the metaphor "cînd o face plopul mere sau răchita micşunele" roughly translated as "when pigs will fly" to express his opinions regarding the possibility of abandoning his communist principles. This expression is combined with instances of sarcasm meant to humorously express his visions regarding the values of capitalism:

(2) a. *Genetica modernă a făcut progrese uriaşe.*
'Modern genetics made huge progress.'

An important feature that shapes the social-self of the speaker that is not present in the text is the person marker consisting of first person pronouns. It is important to point out that the Romanian language is a pro-drop language and in some cases certain pronouns may be omitted within a sentence when they can be pragmatically inferred. Due to this particularity, instances of self are identified in various contexts throughout the discourse: "Aş dori să subliniez…" – is translated using the pronoun "**I**" (**I** would like to point out), „am declarat" (**I** have declared), „am spus" (**I** said) .

It is also important to mention the features of another speech held by Nicolae Ceauşescu. This particular public discourse was given on the 24 of November 1989

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in front of the members of the party at the end of the 14th Congress of the Romanian Communist Party. The speech had the role to summarize what has been previously discussed in Congress. Similar to the first speech presented in the essay, a significant number of relational markers can be identified: ”să acționăm în deplină unitate” (to act as one); “poporului nostru” (our people); or in different forms of addressing the audience directly: “Ați ascultat şi cuvântul de încheiere” (you have also listened to the closing arguments)”.

Personal markers are also present throughout the text and are pragmatically inferred in various contexts:

(3) *a. asigurăm întregul partid, întregul popor că vom face totul pentru realizarea (..) programului de dezvoltare economico-socială.*
b. ‘**we** assure the whole party and the whole nation that **we will do** everything in our power to accomplish (..) the socio-economic development project.

Instances of self are identified in the use of emphatics such as “repet ceea ce am spus” (I repeat what I have said) which has the purpose of underlining the previously stated arguments.

3.2. The Authorial Self in the Speech of King Mihai

Finally, the last discourse that has been analyzed belongs to King Mihai of Romania from 2011, and was delivered in front of The Joint Houses of The Parliament. This particular address differs from the rest of the discourses analyzed in the sense that it does not present a political agenda. The speaker is not in a position of authority except that which is provided by his position as Head of the Romanian Royal Family. In his discourse, King Mihai pays homage to the fallen revolutionaries who fought against communism and briefly comments upon the positive and negative aspects of the Romanian economic system and external policies.

Person markers are present at the beginning of the text in the form of first person pronouns:

(4) *a. Sunt mai bine de şaizeci de ani de când m-am adresat ultima oară naţiunii române (...) Am primit cu bucurie şi cu speranţă invitaţia..*
b. ‘Over sixty years have passed since **I** last addressed the Romanian nation (…) **I** accepted this invitation with joy and hope…’

Similar to the Ceauşescu’s speeches, King Mihai makes use of relational markers that identify him as part of the Romanian nation:

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(5) *a. Prima noastră datorie astăzi este să ne amintim de toți cei care au murit"; Nu putem avea viitor fără a respecta trecutul nostru..*
b.'**Our** first concern today is to remember all the people who have died; **We** cannot have a future without respecting **our** past.'

Again, we as a people, as a country; the writer' social self is portrayed as an integrative part of the audience. Instances of subjectivity are also identified in the following phrase:

(6) *a. Regina şi cu mine (...) vom continua să facem ceea ce am făcut întotdeauna.*
b.' **The Queen and I** will continue doing what **we** have always done.'

Attitude markers are revealed in the expression "sunt mâhnit" (I am sad) used by the speaker to express his dissatisfaction in regard to the hardships and problems that the Romanian nation confronts after 22 years under a democratic system.

4. Instances of Self-expression Identified in Discoursive Practices

Before discussing and interpreting data found within the analysis of the political speeches it is important to comment upon the setting in which the discourses took place. Throughout the 20th century, the forms of leadership in Romania modified due to external and internal factors. The participation in the Second World War brought changes in the structures of the country. The rise of the Iron Curtain transformed Romania from a Royal Kingdom to a Socialist Republic until 1989 when it became a democracy. As such, the institutions that gave power to the nation varied significantly.

As previously mentioned in the first sub-chapter, the Parliament is a symbol of a representative government, an institutional setting, context dependent and subject-restrictive in which legal procedures, deliberations, arguments are put forward by different members of the Parliament. Its main role is to safe-guard the legislative procedures and to ensure a well-balanced system of power that protects the interest of its citizens. In contrast, in the communist period, the functions of the Parliament were taken over by Marea Adunare Națională (The Great National Assembly) which played the role of the legislative branch of the Social Republic of Romania. It is important to argue that from a legal standpoint, the Great National Assembly and the Parliament held similar roles and obligations i.e. modifying and

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electing laws, consulting the nation through referendums in regard to problems of significant importance, establishing the administrative organization of the territory, controlling the activity of the President. In reality however, the National Assembly was a rubber stamp i.e. an institution for which the power is only apparent. The leader of the Socialist Republic of Romania enforced both legislative and executive powers. Due to the similarities found between the Parliament and the Great National Assembly it can be argued that the latter is a sub-genre of political discourse one in which the speeches are subject to institutional practices and as such are contextually restricted. Even from the analysis of the text it can be seen that the speakers used certain forms of addressing specific to the institutional setting in which the discourse takes place. In the case of Ceauşescu's speeches the expression "dragi tovarăşi" (fellow comrades) is a specific form of addressing in the Communist period and can be compared with the one used by King Mihai in Parliament "Doamnelor si domnilor senatori şi deputati" (dear ladies and gentlemen). Both of them are institutional forms of addressing used by the speakers before and throughout their discourse.

The analysis of the speeches revealed the presence of self or authorial stance. In the case of Ceauşescu's speeches different linguistic categories that illustrate the speaker's own subjectivity were identified:

Table 1: Aspects of self-expression in Ceauşescu's speech at the 35th annual Communist Party Congress (1989)

Personal pronouns	Relational markers	Emphatics	Attitude markers	Hedges	Aspects of stance	Total Words
6	3	3	1	1	14	331

The analysis revealed that in this particular speech, Ceausescu often makes direct references to himself in order to express his opinion or to credit his actions. The presence of personal pronouns is accompanied by the use of emphatics employed after statements and arguments in order to consolidate his position as a speaker. Throughout his discourse, the former leader of Romania identifies himself within the collectivity suggesting that he is part of the nation i.e. talking about him at the third person plural: we (as a nation). The analysis revealed that approximately 5% of the text may be perceived as the subjective intervention of the author within the discourse.

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The second speech delivered by Ceauşescu in front of the Romanian Communist Party in 1989 revealed similar traits and personal interventions as the previous discourse.

Table 2 : Aspects of self-expression in Ceauşescu's speech at the end of the 14th Congress (1989)

Personal pronouns	Relational markers	Emphatics	Attitude markers	Hedges	Aspects of stance	Total Words
3	6	1	0	0	10	250

The most recurrent instances of self are the use of personal pronouns accompanied by emphatics and relational markers. Out of 250 words 4% represented instances of self-expression identified throughout the text.

Table 3: Aspects of self-expression identified in the speech of King Mihai (2011)

Personal pronouns	Relational markers	Emphatics	Attitude markers	Hedges	Aspects of stance	Total Words
6	9	0	1	0	16	841

In the case of King Mihai's speech the most dominant forms of stance were found in the use of relational markers and personal pronouns. The speaker makes references to himself by talking about his former role as King of Romania and his current role as a protector of the country. Throughout his discourse he describes himself as part of the nation and talks about their collective duty to overcome the economic difficulties and to fight for the improvement of the country. His arguments are not accompanied by emphatics. The speaker uses an attitude marker „sunt mâhnit" (I am sad) to express his own belief in regard to the country's economic problems. Even if the most dominant aspects of stance are similar at both speakers i.e. the use of personal pronouns and relational markers, it is important to point out that in the case of King Mihai's speech, the aspects that revealed the existence of stance represent only 2% of the whole speech while in the case of Ceauşescu's discourses the numbers are significantly higher (5% and 4%).

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5. Discussions

An important problem in analyzing instances of self-expression in political discourses can be identified in the relationship between expressing personal opinions as a form of subjectivity and using them as rhetorical strategies. Booth (1963:124) introduced the concept of the rhetorical self, „a term described as the whole art of writing any subject". Applied to discoursive practices, the sole purpose of using the rhetorical self is to improve the capability of the speakers that use discourses in order to motivate, convince, inform and inspire their audiences in regard to a variety of situations. Throughout the political discourses some instances of self-expression may in fact been employed as rhetorical strategies, as tactics used to draw audiences closer to the speaker or to improve the credibility of the speech. Candlin and Hyland (1999:103-105) however, argue that definitions, features of stance and hedges give the reader, or in our case the listener, the impression that the information conveyed is an opinion that the speaker expresses throughout his discourse. While it is difficult to acknowledge to what extent these categories overlap and are a only a reflection of the author's feeling, beliefs, attitudes or sentiments, it can be argued that rhetorical stance contributes to the art of discourse even if some instances are strategically planned, done voluntarily or appear involuntarily throughout the speech.

A good example of how these categories overlap is found within Ceauşescu's speeches in the expression: "dragi tovarăşi" (fellow comrades). In the political discourse this form of address is accompanied by an adjective: "dragi" (fellow, dear) and might be perceived as a politeness strategy found within a relational marker. However during the communist period "the standard form of address was tovarăş (comrade) and was gradually extended to all areas of social life. (Săftoiu, 2013:55). The expression became a specific form of address within the Great National Assembly or in public speeches gradually losing its other functions. Undoubtedly in political speeches, subjectivity and self-expression can positively or negatively contribute to the rhetoric craftsmanship of a discourse.

6. Conclusions

Despite different cultural and social dimensions in which political discourses take place, instances of self expression can be identified in different dialogical constructs and situations. While it is difficult to establish the extent in which the speakers use stance voluntarily, as rhetorical strategies or unwillingly express their own opinions throughout the discourse it is unquestionable that forms of subjectivity can be

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identified in political speeches. The present research looked at specific linguistic categories used by speakers which expressed their own emotions, beliefs, values or ideals throughout their public address.

The collected data as well as the research upon the topic in question had allowed me to consider the importance of stance in public speeches. I have concluded that stance is an integral part of discourse. Through the excessive use of personal pronouns, found in abundance as relational markers, the sole purpose of a subject is to create a more cohesive relation with the speakers. The consequence of authorial stance is primarily an increased connection between the addresser and the addressee that translates itself into a more reliable trustworthy speech and, as a direct consequence in the increasing credibility of such a discourse.

Authorial stance is a key characteristic of public speeches. The presence of the author is crucial in placing his/her own individuality within a text. This gives it personality, increased credibility and moreover creates a more intimate relationship with the audience. Undoubtedly self-expression represents a key feature in public discourses, one that gives the speaker the possibility of using his charisma and his personal feelings to his advantage as fundamental rhetorical strategies.

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