Sektion 4.3 Rhetorik und Politik / Medienpolitik

Narrative Topics in Media Speech

Economic Crisis and the Story of Catalan Independence

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Nowadays, more and more, the rhetoric conceptual system finds itself overwhelmed by the discursive practices of publicity, polítics, the media and even economics in the West. The discipline has an extensive taxonomy of logic and argumentative resources, but at the peak of the so-called storytelling –well thematized by the popular Christian Salmon, besides other authors-, it is evident that there is still a systematic study of the persuasive resources of the narrative to be developed.

The narrativist hermeneutics have already highlighted the importance of the narrative on the creation of the sense, but in order to understand how it works, from the one hand we will have to review our own tradition on the research of concepts and tools that we can recycle, and on the other hand, we will have to broaden our look towards adjacent disciplines such as psychology, sociology, literary theory, history theory, discurse analysis, philosophy and anthropology, which all have understood –from different perspectives- narrative as a central category in human experience.

In this communication I will tackle a small part of the vast task that we face: I will present a propaedeutic to the narrative topics from a rhetoric point of view. My thesis states that in the same way that we find prejudicial structures shared at length, which are used to support the argumentation in front of a specific audience, there are also thematic patterns – heuristic models, on Cesare Segre’s words- which make a narration more intelligible, credible and effective.

This thesis is supported by two columns: the first one is the tradition of the thematic criticism, developed in the bosom of comparative literature, which offers guidelines for the study of universal clichés, perfectly adaptable to the study of the factitious speech; and the second one is the tradition of the rhetorical criticism, particularly the symbolic convergence theory by Ernest Bormann, which represents a starting point for the study of themes and motives developed in a particular society around an event or a specific historical moment.

Finally, in order to evolve my line of argument, I will take the Catalan media treatment of the economic crisis started on 2008 and its bond with the peak of the independentism speech as a study case and illustration, since it has managed to capture the public opinion and decide the elections in a moment of deep social, economical and political challenges by means of narrative resources.

Tòpica narrativa en el discurs mediàtic

La crisi econòmica i la història de la independència de Catalunya

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Cada cop més, l’aparell conceptual de la retòrica es troba sobrepassat per les pràctiques discursives de la publicitat, la política, el mitjans de comunicació i fins i tot l’economia a Occident. La disciplina compta amb una extensa taxonomia de recursos lògics i argumentatius, però davant l’auge de l’anomenat *storytelling* –ben tematitzat pel popular Christian Salmon, entre altres autors–, es fa evident que encara queda per desenvolupar un estudi sistemàtic dels recursos persuasius de la narració.

L’hermenèutica narrativista ja ha posat de manifest la importància de la narració en la creació del sentit, però per a entendre com funciona, ens caldrà d’una banda revisar la nostra pròpia tradició a la recerca de conceptes i eines que puguem reciclar i, de l’altra, estendre la mirada a disciplines adjacents com la psicologia, la sociologia, la teoria literària, la teoria de la història, l’anàlisi del discurs, la filosofia i l’antropologia, que des de diverses perspectives han entès la narració com una categoria central de l’experiència humana.

En aquesta comunicació abordaré una petita part d’aquesta vasta tasca que tenim per davant: presentaré una propedèutica a la tòpica narrativa des d’un punt de vista retòric. La meva tesi és que així com existeixen estructures prejudicials àmpliament compartides, que serveixen per fonamentar l’argumentació davant d’un públic determinat, així mateix existeixen patrons temàtics –models heurístics, en paraules de Cesare Segre– que fan que una narració sigui més intel·ligible, creïble i efectiva per a la cristal·lització del sentit.

Aquesta tesi se sosté sobre dues columnes: la primera és la tradició de la crítica temàtica, desenvolupada al sí de la literatura comparada, que ofereix pautes per a l’estudi de clixés universals, perfectament adaptables a l’estudi del discurs factici; i la segona, la tradició de la crítica retòrica, en concret la teoria de la convergència simbòlica d’Ernest Bormann, que constitueix un punt de partida per a l’estudi de temes i motius desenvolupats dins d’una societat concreta entorn d’un esdeveniment o d’un moment històric determinat.

Finalment, per a desenvolupar la meva argumentació, prendré com a cas d’estudi i il·lustració el tractament mediàtic català de la crisi econòmica iniciada el 2008 i el seu vincle amb l’auge del discurs independentista, que ha aconseguit acaparar l’opinió pública i decidir unes eleccions en un moment de profunds reptes socials, econòmics i polítics.

**The Rhetoric of Media Debates on Intra-European Migration.**

**The Emergence of a European Public Problem?**

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This explorative study focuses on the rhetorical construction of intra-European migration as a public problem through media discourse. We aim to understand the dynamics of the media debate on this issue in a dialectic between national and European perspectives. How does the media discourse engage the citizen in this debate: through national, European or cosmopolitan stances? Does this citizens’ engagement, as a discursive trait, reflect in media definition of their own role?

Our corpus comprises articles in Romanian, British and French media, published in August 2010, on the topic of migration of Romanians in the EU. At that time, various interconnected events triggered media debates that covered a broad range of issues on migration such as: motivations, causes, responsibilities, policies, and effects. Relying on developments in argumentation theory and critical discourse analysis, we build a framework of analysis that will enable us to reconstruct and evaluate the rhetorical consequences of these media debates. We look for forms of practical reasoning (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012), types of legitimation (van Leeuwen, 2007) and moral framing of arguments (Balabanova & Balch, 2010) against the background of various journalistic practices (Richardson, 2007) and instrumentalisation strategies (Beciu, 2012) in the media from sending and receiving societies. Our previous research (Ciocea & Cârlan, 2012) shows that the journalists’ strategic use of the migration theme falls in line with the traditional view of the social-political victimization of the migrant. By selecting media in sending and receiving countries, we aim to identify strategies for the rhetorical construction of European citizenship, understood as a trait of media discourses’ implied audiences. Consequently, we propose to analyse the way the distance towards the migrant is strategically negociated in the media discourse within the framework of the public problem ensuing from these debates.

**Keywords:** practical argumentation; media deliberative practices; migrants and moral distance; European public sphere

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Retorica dezbaterilor mediatice cu privire la migraţia intra-europeană.

Emergenţa unei probleme publice europene?

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migraţiei intra-europene ca problemă publică. Dorim să înţelegem dinamica dezbaterilor mediatice asupra acestei probleme în dialectica dintre perspectivele naţionale şi europene. Cum îi angajează discursul media pe cetăţeni în această dezbatere: prin perspective naţionale, europene, sau cosmopolite? Se reflectă construcţia discursivă a angajamentului cetăţenilor în practicile de definire a propriului rol de către media?Acest studiu exploratoriu urmăreşte rolul discursului mediatic în construcţia retorică a

Corpusul nostru cuprinde articole din media românească, britanică şi franceză publicate în august 2012, pe subiectul migraţiei românilor în UE. În acel moment, diverse evenimente interconectate au declanşat dezbateri mediatice care au acoperit motivaţia, cauzele, responsabilităţile, politicile şi efectele migraţiei. Cadrul nostru de analiză cuprinde concepte din teoria argumentării şi analiza critică a discursului şi ne permite să reconstruim şi să evaluăm consecinţele retorice ale acestor dezbateri mediatice. Urmărim forme de argumentare practică (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012), tipuri de legitimare (van Leeuwen, 2007) şi cadrajul moral al argumentelor (Balabanova & Balch, 2010) în contextul diverselor practici jurnalistice (Richardson, 2007), precum şi strategii de instrumentalizare a migraţiei (Beciu, 2012) în media din societăţile sursă şi de destinaţie. Cercetările noastre anterioare (Ciocea & Cârlan, 2012) arată că folosirea strategică a temei migraţiei de către jurnalişti este în concordanţă cu perspectiva tradiţională a victimizării socio-politice a migrantului. Includem media din ţările sursă şi de destinaţie pentru a urmări strategiile de construcţie retorică a cetăţeniei europene, înţeleasă ca trăsătură a audienţei implicate prin discursurile media. În consecinţă, ne propunem să analizăm maniera de negociere a distanţei faţă de migranţi în discursul mediatic cu privire la problemele publice construite prin aceste dezbateri.

**Cuvinte cheie:** argumentare practică; practici mediatice deliberative; emigranţi şi distanţă morală; sferă publică europeană

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* Alexandru Cârlan will not be able to attend the conference

**Irina Perianova**

**The Eternal Flame and the Fried Eggs**

There is no denying that just as rhetoric is founded in culture, culture is founded in rhetoric, The significance of symbols and the images they conjure up cannot be overstated. Flags, portraits of national heroes, and national hymns are imbued with an overriding importance for the high-minded - as signifiers of national or socio-cultural identity. At the same time, the incorporation of these symbols into new frames and schemata may re-channel them into an alternative reality, which is perceived in conformity with different laws. Consequently, their interpretation may change drastically. This is especially true due to the emergence of e-agora as a new social phenomenon. And a simple act, such as frying eggs, may come to be re-imagined and re-invented as a different persuasion technique – if the cooking facility is the eternal flame, a long-held tradition in many cultures and religions.. Therefore, the question that I’d like to focus on is whether there *is* such a thing as transculturality in the broad sense of the word with regard to the perception of such an act and other similar acts, often regarded as a desecration of symbols, and what may be the guidelines for proscribing or prescribing it as an in/sensitive provocation. Can a symbol of honour, adulation, admiration or worship be transposed as a symbol of protest through connecting discrete acts? The issue is taking on new global importance in the wake of Pussy Riot trial and subsequent similar-style trials in other countries.

Irina Perianova has a PhD from Moscow Linguistic University. She is currently Associate Professor at the University of National and World Economy in Sofia Bulgaria where she teaches business English and intercultural Communication. Her interdisciplinary research interests are discourse analysis, pragmatics, cultural anthropology, intercultural communication and sociolinguistics. She has more than 60 publications in these areas in different languages. Her book *The Polyphony of Food. Food through the Prism of Maslow’s Pyramid* has recently been published in the UK by Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

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**Credibility is the message: Televising the Iraq War in the U.S. and Germany**

The Iraq War was a “war waged in images”, as David Friend put it in the *Digital Journalist.* As television still played a crucial role at the beginning of the so-called “Operation Iraqi Freedom” in 2003, the paper focusses on the production of credibility in war reporting, especially on the visual rhetoric of TV news. It examines the coverage of three German networks (ARD, RTL, n-tv) and one global news channel (CNN International) from March 20th to 22th, i.e. the first three days of the invasion.

The basic assumption is that the main purpose of TV images is the construction of credibility – and not necessarily the adequate representation of the war. As the footage often came from the same sources, the four networks couldn’t compete for the image of the war, but for the creation of a unique “look” to guarantee their own credibility. To come to grips with this constellation, I understand the editorial staff of each network as a corporate actor or orator that builds a corporate image – which in ancient rhetoric would have been called *ethos* (Aristotle). By using liveness, digital animation, key visuals or simply lots of “talking heads” in the newsroom or right at the frontline, the “news orators” referred in completely different ways to their own competence (*phronesis*), reliability (*arete*), and/or empathy (*eunoia*). On the basis of a few pivotal examples, the paper introduces useful rhetorical tools for analysing the construction of visual credibility in news coverage.

See Ulrich, Anne: Umkaempfte Glaubwuerdigkeit. Visuelle Strategien des Fernsehjournalimus im Irakkrieg 2003. Berlin: Weidler 2012 (neue rhetorik, 9).

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