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**Linguistic Realisations of Identity in Romanian and  
European Parliamentary Discourse**

**Mijloace Lingvistice de Construcție a Identității în  
Discursul Parlamentar Românesc și European**

**ABSTRACT/ REZUMAT**

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## INTRODUCTION

When deciding on a topic for the doctoral studies, I was drawn towards the idea that the intricate and complex nuances of language shape the very way that human beings negotiate their identities in public forms of speaking. As such, I wanted to present the discursive practices of some public figures that often capture the audiences' attention. The result was to conduct a qualitative study on how Romanian politicians, with mandates in both European and national parliaments, actively project their identities in discourse.

The present thesis, *Linguistic Realisations of Identity in Romanian and European Parliamentary discourse*, brings to the fore various linguistic means and strategies that are actively used in parliament, by politicians, to project a plethora of personal and professional identities. A preliminary assumption, when conducting the research, is that members of the Romanian and European parliaments (MPs and MEPs hereafter) use the flexibility of pronominal references to invoke diverse facets of their multi-layered identities, to augment the positive reception of their messages, to discredit their adversaries and to elicit favourable reactions from the intended recipients of their messages. As supported by prior research conducted in this direction (Bramley 2001, Chilton 2004, Fetzer 2008, Wodak 2009), pronominal references constitute mechanisms of persuasion, allowing parliamentarians to highlight their competences, advance personal and group objectives, express their points of view from different angles and add subjectivity to their messages.

The present thesis intended to answer three main questions relating to the topic in question: *How, why, and to what ends* are identities projected in discourse? Consequently, I have proposed a multidisciplinary methodology rooted in fields such as dialogue analysis, discourse analysis, pragmatics, and rhetoric. To underline the importance of context and to observe if MPs and MEPs change their communicative behaviour when approaching various topics in the plenum, I have opted to compare the findings from the two institutions under scrutiny. Because of this, all the politicians chosen for the research held mandates in both parliaments. The purpose behind this was to touch upon contrasts and similarities in how politicians communicate at national and transnational levels. Furthermore, as argued by McNair (1999) all types of political communications are designed with an audience in mind, meaning that politicians purposefully employ various instances of the self to attain specific end-results and to obtain a public image that would positively resonate with a targeted audience.

To narrow down the subject matter, I have decided to look at how identities are projected in discourse by analysing the use of personal pronouns. Although there are additional means of examining the process of identity formation (Wilson 1990, Chilton 2004, Weigand 2010), I have argued that the functions of personal pronouns extend past their features as referential and deictic language units, as they can be purposefully adopted by politicians to potentially achieve distinct outcomes, obtain positive responses from what is being said on stage, advance strategies of persuasion or mark aspects of one's discursive style.

In the last decades, the strategic uses of pronouns in political discourse became a topic of interest in the field of language studies as different perspectives and approaches unveiled the rhetorical and strategic effects of these linguistic units. Some directions in research focused on subjectivity or *stancetaking* (Biber and Finnegan 1988, Du Bois 2007, Vasilescu 2010), *subject positioning* (Tirado and Galvez 2007, Weizman 2008, Epstein 2011), ventriloquizing and voicing (Lauerbach 2006, Cooren 2010, Săftoiu 2015) or *person deixis* (Zupnik 1994, De Finna 1995). Other approaches, centered on different sub-genres of political discourse such as election campaigns (Steffens 2013, Săftoiu and Toader 2018, Kayam 2018), parliamentary discourse (Vuković 2012; Săftoiu 2013; Ştefănescu 2015), political interviews (Bramley 2001), or public speeches (Davis 1997, Bhatia 2006, Håkansson 2012). All these contributions support the claim that pronouns are an integral resource in the study of identity.

The main objectives of the research touch upon three critical aspects. First, personal pronouns were organised into three categories: *self*-referencing remarks (introduced by the pronoun 'I'), *group*-references or inclusive group affiliations (chiefly marked by the pronoun 'we'), and *other*-references or exclusive contextualisations of *other* identities (referenced through second and third-person pronouns). Second, to showcase for the multiple identities projected in discourse, pronouns were classified and systematised in distinct categories that extend beyond the professional roles and political functions of both MPs and MEPs. Accounting for both core and social selves, I have decided to include instances that also account for "ethnicity, gender, taste, attitude and class" (Vasilescu 2010: 369). In other words, when considering the polyvalency of personal pronouns, I argued that there are as many options for the speaker to build his/her public image perception as there are ways to differentiate between individuals or groups. Lastly, in the concluding remarks, I present the findings on the use of pronouns in the Romanian and European parliaments through a comparative and contrastive approach.

The data selected for the practical part of the thesis consisted of 75 extracts taken from different types of parliamentary activity such as written and oral statements, interventions and interpellations, delivered in both political institutions. The transcripts were retrieved from the official website of the institutions in question, available as public information. In the case of the European Parliament, two legislatures were accounted for: (1) Romania's post-accession period (2007-2009) and the following mandate (2009-2014). The corpus on the Romanian Parliament was drawn from the parliamentary sessions conducted in the Senate and Chamber of Deputies (2004-2008, 2008-2012, 2012-2016 [until 2014] legislatures.

I have decided to include the activity of 20 Romanian politicians with mandates in both parliaments during the proposed periods. Initially, 816 fragments were extracted. This was done by identifying the presence of personal pronouns (singular and plural): 'I', 'You' (sg. and pl.), 'He/She', 'We' and their Romanian equivalents: 'Eu', 'Tu', 'El/Ea', 'Noi', 'Voi', 'Ei/Ele', used as keywords to narrow down the corpus. From here, I have selected 75 extracts that I have included in my analysis.

To approach this topic, I have proposed a multidisciplinary perspective. In terms of methodology, I employ various theories from research fields such as dialogue analysis, pragmatics, rhetoric, and sociology. Borrowing some concepts from the field of sociology, I view parliament as a “community of practice” (Lave and Wenger 1991) and account for how MPs and MEPs communicate in the same political environments, characterised by subsequent rigors, norms, and practices. The second direction is rooted in the field of language studies. The multiple layers of identity were examined from pragma-rhetorical and dialogic perspectives. Hence, dialogue analysis accounted for the process of identity formation as a naturally occurring phenomenon perpetuated through the use of language. To describe how identities are created at a linguistic level and to clarify the context in which they are fashioned, I use pragmatics. Lastly, rhetoric offers the possibility of evaluating the potential effects and strategies facilitated by the use of personal pronouns. Various types of micro-analyses were also implemented in the present thesis. To name a few, when analysing the corpus, I have discussed the use of attitude markers, repetitions, word-choice, parenthetical remarks, quotations, and irony. Moreover, from a rhetorical standpoint, I make some considerations on the persuasive use of ethos, pathos, and logos. As shown in the analysis, these persuasive strategies are used by MPs and MEPs to put forward convincing public performances that have the potential of positively resonating with the targeted audience.

It is worth noting that the layout of the thesis represents a personal contribution to studying identity in the field of linguistics. While some theories were influential in determining the methodology of the research, I assume that approaching the topic from different angles provides a broader view on the concept of identity in action (Weigand 2010) as speakers are involved in a continuous process of negotiating their personal and professional *selves*. As previously mentioned, the pragma-rhetorical and dialogical perspectives offer an encompassing view on the process of image building and might constitute a theoretical and analytical basis for further investigations of language use in parliamentary sittings.

To cover the objectives and aims of the research, the thesis was organised into five chapters. The first three constitute the literature review. Here, I establish an outline of identity theories spanned across several disciplines and fields of specialty. It is followed by examining the setting (the EU and RO parliaments) and subsequent discursive features of this political sub-genre. In Chapter 3, I introduced linguistic theories and made some theoretical considerations on personal pronouns. The practical part of the research is reserved for Chapters 4 and 5. Each of these sections is dedicated to analysing discourse (the Romanian Parliament in Chapter 4 and the European Parliament in Chapter V) by using the same analytical methods. The finds were reviewed and addressed in the section reserved for the concluding remarks.

## **CHAPTER 1: THEORIES OF IDENTITY**

### **1.1 Preliminary discussions**

The first chapter of the thesis represents a diachronic investigation of the concept of identity in multiple fields of research such as socio-psychology, anthropology, sociology, rhetoric, pragmatics, discourse analysis, dialogue analysis, and critical discourse analysis. This section

aimed at drawing some theoretical frameworks through which identity was construed in various disciplines. I consider that approaching this subject is impossible without presenting some main directions and perspectives, with a wide public and critical recognition. This offered me the possibility of putting forward my view on the topic, without, however, ignoring well-established theoretical directions presented in the chapter.

## **1.2 An interdisciplinary examination of identity**

When considering the content for the present chapter, I took into consideration the fact that people acquire particular traits from their socio-cultural background(s). Through active participation in societal practices, human beings develop a range of beliefs, ideals, and value systems while sharing similar social, linguistic, cultural, and environmental surroundings. Starting from this, this section presents some theories and frameworks which formulate arguments to support the idea that identity formation is individually, culturally, socially, linguistically, psychologically, and biologically configured.

The literature review also serves as a theoretical basis where identity is mainly discussed as dynamic, negotiable, contextually bound, and multi-layered.

Furthermore, advancing linguistic and non-linguistic perspectives on the process of identity formation was applied to the practical chapters of the thesis, allowing for a better contextualisation of the terminology, methodology, and directions in research proposed for the analysis.

### **1.2.1. The individual *self* and the social *self*. Theoretical directions**

When establishing the literature review, I have considered the following aspect: if identity is a form of conveying meaning in discourse on account of how people choose to represent themselves based on their social understanding of the world, then why do people conduct themselves differently if they communicate in the same environment, with the same intentions and in front of the same audience? The repertoire of discursive choices, though available for all speakers, is used differently and endowed with 'personal touches'. It is difficult to imagine that individuals will deliver a speech without any identifiable differences.

In this subsection, I introduce the concept of the *core (individual or cognitive) self* and the *social self*. On the one hand, to investigate the mental, inherited, or deeply personal intricacies of 'oneness', the *core self* was proposed (most notably in philosophy, psychology, and social psychology). On the other hand, individuality is also viewed as a socially embedded phenomenon. The two concepts were applied to the practical part of the thesis. In what follows, I will briefly mention some theoretical outlines introduced in the chapter and their contributions to the study of identity.

### **1.2.2. Identity as social interaction. Psycho-sociological perspectives**

Cooley's *Looking Glass Self* and Mead *Symbolic Interactionism* shed light on the idea that the cognitive *self* (characterised by mental processes), determines how individuals choose to present themselves when speaking in public. This introduced the idea that the two are interdependent in

the study of identity formation. The psycho-sociological approaches highlight the concept of role-play, as speakers can constantly assess the audience's expectations and adapt accordingly. These theories support the idea that both the *social* and *core* self are interdependent and influence one another in the process of identity formation.

### **1.2.3. Identity as a culturally determined phenomenon. Anthropologic perspectives**

To highlight the importance of culture in shaping identity, I bring to the fore Malinowski's *Phatic Communion Theory* which is based on the idea that interpreting the complex nuances of individuality is determined by experiencing the cultural and social practices of everyday life. This further supports the claim that identity is a culturally embedded process that should be understood by investigating how people chose to interact with one another in everyday interactions.

### **1.2.4 Role-playing and identities 'in action'. A sociological perspective**

Exponential in the study of identity formation was Goffman's work in the field of sociology. In the *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Goffman uses a conceptual metaphor to refer to the public act of speaking as a theatrical performance. The research highlighted the fact that individuals communicate with intent (to forward their objectives), identity is performed through active-role playing, identity is determined by both verbal and non-verbal forms of communication, and that the setting (or where the action takes place) and the audience (to whom the speaker is communicating) determine an individual's decision of enacting various identity roles.

### **1.2.5 Identity studies and postmodernism**

Postmodernist studies on the process of identity formation highlighted the idea that there is no individual self as our sense of individuality derives from our environment, one that is perpetually shaped by hierarchies of power. Foucault's (1988) seminal work, introduced the concept of discourse, underlined the importance of analysing language and power relations, and laid the basis for the development of Critical Discourse Analysis.

### **1.2.6. Identity as structure and agency**

The interrelation between the *core* self and *social* identities was also considered from a twofold perspective: (1) by accounting from the context (in general terms understood as structure) and (2) by acknowledging the deeply personal components of one's self (defined as agency). Giddens (1984, 1991) criticises the postmodern approach to identity, claiming that both the social and the core self hold equal footing in the process of identity formation.

### **1.2.7. On the concept of group identities**

Besides classifying identity as a by-product of language, culture, and society, other directions in research centered on how the core self is determined by group affiliations. Here, I introduced various theories that support this claim.

Lave and Wenger's (1991) *Communities of Practice Theory* postulates that people with shared passions and interests (such as engineers working on projects or soldiers on a battlefield) are



actively involved in a continuous learning process. This introduced the idea that human beings constantly adapt to the practices and activities of their respective group affiliations by sharing skills, knowledge, and abilities.

Sacks' (1995) *Membership Category Theory* puts forward the idea that individuals make sense of the world by assessing and classifying human beings in various social groups. From this perspective, identity is determined by a well-established, socially determined collection of categories. Adding to this, Tajfel and Turner's (1979) *Social Identity Theory* asserts that people purposefully choose to be part of certain groups. Hence, the process of negotiating identity is primarily achieved through in-group and out-group interactions. Discrediting other categories to improve social standing proves that core and social identities fulfil specific functions in the process of identity formation.

### 1.3. Identity formation and the core self

In this subsection, I mention the fact that human beings are biologically gifted with intellectual and psychological traits that make them different from their peers. Here, I briefly discuss the genetically transmitted, inherited, or eminently unique character traits that are unique for each individual and constitute instances of subjectivity, commonplace in public forms of speaking.

#### 1.3.1. Identity and rhetoric

To discuss the persuasive effects of language use in political discourse, I briefly mention the field of rhetoric as it investigates the art of speaking or writing effectively. Prominent in this direction is Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, which centers on the idea that rhetoric entails the means of persuasion available for a speaker at a given time and place. An integral methodological component of the thesis is represented by how MPs and MEPs make appeals to *ethos* (or their moral characters), *pathos* (or the emotions conveyed to the audience), and *logos* (or appeals to logical reasoning).

Here, I also advance the concept of *prior-ethos* (Amossy 2001) referring to the fact that a speaker constantly adapts to his/her pre-established public image perception and actively attempts to improve it, when communicating in front of an audience.

#### 1.4.1 Identities in action. Linguistic perspectives

In this subsection, I have approached identity from fields of specialty which originate in the broad spectrum of language studies. To narrow it down, I mentioned three directions in research through which the concept was discussed, mainly *Discourse Analysis* (DA), *Critical Discourse Analysis* (CDA), and *Pragmatics*. Accounting for identities as multiple, dynamic and contextualized allows for a better understanding of how speakers strategically negotiate their selves to elicit particular reactions and obtain desired outcomes.

##### 1.4.1. On the concept of 'face'

Understanding the dynamics of interpersonal relationships required further examination within the field of pragmatics, particularly regarding the concepts of *politeness* and *impoliteness*.



Brown and Levinson's (1978) *politeness theory* underlines the importance of *saving* and *losing face*. To expand, the researchers identify two types of *face*: *positive* and *negative*. The theory centers on the idea that speakers will use face-saving acts to protect their public image and face-threatening acts to endanger others' self-image. Individuals can purposefully construct their selves by actively and re-actively protecting their 'face'.

#### 1.4.2. Identities and "othering". A CDA approach

The study of identity in Critical Discourse Analysis offered the possibility of assessing and discussing how MPs and MEPs project the identities of others i.e. political adversaries, ideological groups, colleagues, and peers. Influenced by the *Social Identity Theory*, the term *othering* is used to highlight relations of domination and subordination established between individuals and/or groups. In recent years, the concept has become a significant source of interest in political studies.

Applied to political discourse, *othering* puts membership categories in opposition and investigates how this dichotomous relationship is perpetuated through discourse. Issues such as gender studies, racism, migration, ideology were integrated within the field of CDA through the prism of the opposing 'us' vs. 'them' categories.

#### 1.4.3. Identity as *dialogic*

A significant contribution in identity studies is also provided by the *Mixed Game Model Theory* (Weigand, 2010). This approach constitutes a holistic theory of dialogue structured around the premise that language should be viewed as a 'unified whole' and should account for human behaviour and decision-making processes, cultural background, and adaptability to the environment where the action occurs. All of these components are deeply embedded in language and determine how individuals communicate. Consequently, I draw on Weigand's Mixed Game Model and view identity as a product of dialogic interaction, manifesting itself as dynamic, contextually bound, and actively negotiated in parliament.

#### 1.5. On the multidisciplinary study of identity. Concluding remarks

The linguistic and non-linguistic theories of identity presented in Chapter 1 show the complexity of analysing and interpreting identity. This classification underlines the importance of cultural, linguistic, social, biological, and psychological elements in defining individuals as unique or part of a group. The body of research provides evidence to support the claim that identity is ubiquitous; it is part of human genetic and biological code, it is shaped by common ideals, values, and belief systems, it is conveyed through discourse and is determined by the 'why', 'how', 'where' and 'when' of social interactions.

These perspectives allowed me to refine the methodological framework of the thesis and view identity as culturally bound and context-dependent, regulated and affected by the time, place, purpose of the interaction, as well as by the speakers' intentions. Identity is fluid, actively negotiated in public forms of speaking as speakers perform well-defined roles with purposeful intent when speaking in front of an audience.

## CHAPTER 2: FEATURES OF PARLIAMENTARY DISCOURSE

The second theoretical chapter of the thesis aimed at highlighting some institutional and discursive settings of both the Romanian and the European Parliament. To better understand how MPs and MEPs communicate within a political body of governance characterised by well-established rules of conduct, norms, and rigors, the theoretical layout introduces some key aspects such as discursive features of parliamentary discourse (subsection 2.1), the organisational settings of parliament (subsection 2.2), and mentions some discursive constraints and the multi-layered nature of parliamentary discourse (subsection 2.3).

In the first section of the chapter, I borrow from Fetzer's (2013) classification of parliamentary as a multi-faceted environment and mention some of its characteristics.

### 2.1. Political discourse as institutional discourse

Concerning herself with the pragmatic interpretation of political discourse, Fetzer (2013) argues that the institutional nature which predominantly characterises this type of discourse entails "contextual requirements" as it limits the topical options of the speaker, establishes a turn taking-system, and introduces "more neutral discursive styles and discourse identities" (Fetzer 2013: 1). In the European Parliament, for example, political debates are subject to well-established rules of procedure.

By all accounts, the political environments and their subsequent institutional configurations are exponential in understanding the nature of the political discourse on the one hand and the production of political discourse, on the other hand.

#### 2.1.2 Political discourse as public discourse

Parliamentary discourse was also viewed as a type of public discourse as it offers people the option of getting involved in political decision-making directly (through voting and election procedures) or indirectly (as part of the public opinion through which politics is asserted). Hence, a central component of political discourse is provided by how the professional activity of MPs and MEPs is of public interest and available to the population (through different channels of communication).

#### 2.1.3 Political discourse as goal-oriented

While attempting to keep and accede into power or fulfil their job obligations, politicians can also advance their self-interests rather than the ones of the groups or constituencies that they represent. The present subsection highlighted the importance of adapting to the expectations of the audience and using various communicative competences to advance personal and group agendas. As a type of goal-oriented discourse, speakers often adjust their language and rhetoric to fulfill personal and shared objectives. Meeting one's agenda requires an understanding of what others (colleagues, ordinary citizens) expect of him. Hence, this subsection formulates premises to support the idea that adaptability is a key resource in parliamentary communication.

#### **2.1.4 Political discourse as media discourse**

The relationship between politicians and the public sphere is also influenced by the channels through which communication is attained. In line with this, Fetzer (2013) argues that political discourse falls under the category of media discourse. Media can be understood as a vehicle through which politicians address a higher number of people. A broader reach is provided in this sense as opposed to a more limited one found in live, untelevised public performances. On the other hand, media discourse can also be seen as a form of mediated discourse, as third parties such as journalists, bloggers, news anchors, political analysts, all can influence public opinion by discussing, commenting, or assessing diverse aspects from the world of politics and put forward their subjective views on the topic.

### **2.2. Organisational settings in Parliament**

The second subsection introduced some rules of conduct, norms, and practices that can be identified in the two institutions under scrutiny (the European and the Romanian Parliament). I have decided to include this part to provide a better understanding of how the setting (where communication occurs) influences the linguistic means through which Romanian MPs and MEPs get their messages across the table and adapt to subsequent discursive constraints.

#### **2.2.1 The European Parliament**

Here, I started by presenting a brief historical outline on the formation of the European Parliament. Next, I discussed the roles and functions of the EP. Lastly, I mentioned some norms and rules of conduct identified in the institution.

#### **2.2.2. The Romanian Parliament**

A similar structure was used to present the organisational settings of the Romanian Parliament. Both subsections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 revealed that the RP and EP function chiefly as institutions that follow specific procedural rules. At a discursive level, all of these aspects influence communication and can be regarded as types of discursive constraints. This further highlights the idea that speakers constantly need to adapt to pre-established rules and procedures when taking the floor. The linguistic options of the speakers are limited as, in some cases, the duration of the speech is pre-determined, insults and interruptions are not allowed and deviations from the topic under discussion are seldom permitted.

### **2.3. The multi-layered parliamentary discourse**

At local, national, and transnational levels, MPs and MEPs can make or question decisions, voice concerns, advance, promote and defend their views by (1) adapting to the institutional settings and subsequent constraints and by (2) individually weaving their discursive performances, carefully threading each speech sequence to achieve desired outcomes. In this subsection, I mentioned the multi-layered and multi-faceted design of parliamentary discourse.

### 2.3.1. Multi-layered identities

At this point, I turned my attention towards the members of parliament. By all accounts, parliamentarians have different responsibilities in parliament conferred by their job titles. As MPs and MEPs, their main duties are to make decisions and deliberate pressing issues of national and transnational relevance. As members of political groups, they are often involved in the process of promoting the agenda of the in-group(s) to obtain a positive attribution of their respective political affiliation. As individuals, parliamentarians are power-seekers as they attempt to reach personal and professional end-results. Here, I also mention some discursive means that allow politicians to project their identity in discourse as they strive to obtain a positive image perception. Among these, I mentioned rhetorical skills, adaptability (to the audiences' expectations, setting, topic, context), choices and strategies (identified at pragmatic, semantic, and linguistic levels), argumentative skills, non-verbal communication. All these entail linguistic means of projecting identity in political discourse and showcase the importance of both the core and social self in the process of identity formation.

### 2.3.2 The multi-layered audience

Audiences represent a main discursive target with which persuasion is attempted and through which power is obtained. When proposing amendments, voicing concerns, making motions, the speaker must persuade the present *political audience* to follow his/her standpoint by putting forward a convincing discursive performance, intended for this particular reason.

During parliamentary proceedings, non-political participants, i.e., members of the press, ordinary citizens, delegates, etc., can also take part and will assess, interpret and further dissect the speaker's performance on their terms. Aside from the direct participation of both political and non-political audience members, there is also a passive audience with access to political speeches through different media channels.

Understanding how MPs and MEPs need to adapt to the expectations of the audience was considered for the practical part of the analysis (particularly for subsections 4.1.4, 4.2.3, 5.1.3, 5.1.5, and 5.2.2).

### 2.3.3 The multi-layered parliamentary settings

All the aspects approached in the previous subsections of the chapter, support the claim that public speakers need to constantly adapt to their communicative environment. Oftentimes, these presuppose the existence of multiple discursive constraints which limit the linguistic options and strategies available to the public speakers.

Drawing on Ilie's studies (2010), I mention some features of discourse that restrict how parliamentarians get their messages across the table such as professional and legal requirements, temporal frame (or time limits for deliberative practices), topical potential (what is being addressed in parliament) and the interactional frame (how MPs and MEPs strive to establish rapport with the audience).

## **2.4. Pragma-rhetorical features of parliamentary discourse**

The last subsection of the chapter highlighted some pragmatic and rhetorical features of parliamentary discourse.

The rhetorical, deliberative component of parliamentary discourse on the one hand and the pragmatic language use, on the other, provide a better examination of the process of parliamentary discourse by accounting for both the institutional and the communicative natures of its design. From a rhetorical standpoint, I mentioned the deliberative, oratorical nature of parliamentary discourse and the importance of using ethos, pathos, and logos as persuasive strategies. From a pragmatic perspective, I mention some key directions in research such as speech acts, person deixis, the presence of split voices, or strategies of politeness and impoliteness (Ionescu-Ruxăndoiu 2012:11).

## **CHAPTER 3: THE USE OF PRONOUNS IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE**

### **3.1 Introduction: Personal pronouns and their variations**

The last theoretical chapter brings into discussion some linguistic features of personal pronouns and their variations. The objective behind this section is to establish a general overview of different types of pronouns recognized in the English language such as: personal, possessive, reflexive, reciprocal, relative, indefinite, and demonstrative. While personal pronouns are used as the main linguistic resource analyzed in the practical part of the paper, there are instances in which other pronominal references were integrated into the analysis as they contribute to how MPs and MEPs are able to invoke personal and professional identities in discourse.

### **3.2 Pronominal system in English and Romanian. A contrastive view**

When discussing the pronominal systems in English and Romanian I put forward a contrastive view and mentioned the fact that the Romanian language, unlike the English language is a pro-drop language, meaning that the subject can be omitted and inferred from context. This is particularly relevant for the present analysis as in many cases the subject is implicit. As a null-subject language, some Romanian sentences lack an explicit subject. To tackle this issue, when translating the corpus in the practical part of the thesis, some personal pronouns and their variants were added in the source text and marked in square brackets. Among these variants, I mention the presence of honorifics often used as a form of addressing others in parliamentary discourse.

### **3.3 Interdisciplinary studies on personal pronouns**

I also put forward an interdisciplinary analysis of personal pronouns and present some influential theories in the field of identity studies: such as person deixis, stancetaking, subject positioning and multivocality. This theoretical background was particularly useful when analysing the instances of subjectivity identified in the extracts and when presenting instances in which MPs and MEPs switch between self, group, and other references.

### 3.3.1 Person Deixis

Developed in the field of pragmatics (Bühler [1934]; Peirce [1939], Levinson 1983, Yule 1996, Verschueren 1999), person deixis accounts for how the roles of the speaker, addressee, and other participants, i.e., bystanders or hearers, are referenced in dialogue. The term *deixis* provides a useful understanding of the relationship between language and context: who is speaking, what it is about, where and when it is placed (in the string of utterances or in a more geographically or time-bound perspective).

### 3.3.2 Stancetaking in Discourse

Within the framework of political discourse, speakers can present themselves as complex individuals by incorporating instances of subjectivity in their messages. Politicians express a wide plethora of emotions and attitudes, which might influence the degree of popularity that they attain when their actions are viewed and interpreted by outsiders. As discussed in the present thesis, attitudinal stance is a discursive component that can be used strategically by politicians as “a prerequisite needed to influence the opinions and attitudes of others” (Vuković 2014: 37).

### 3.3.3 Subject positioning

Through discourse, speakers can reference *themselves* and *others* by invoking a multiplicity of identities that continuously shift in conversation. This perspective is known as *subject positioning* (Davies and Harré 1990, Weizman 2008). It accounts for how social interaction determines speakers' linguistic choices when taking various positions to what is being addressed on stage, in front of an audience. Through interactions, people purposefully align with various viewpoints and project their identities accordingly.

### 3.3.4. Multivocality

An important contribution to the field of language studies is attributed to Bakhtin's seminal work on *multivocality* or *polyphony of voices* (1981, 1984). Studying the work of Dostoevsky, Bakhtin introduces the concept of *dialogism*, claiming that a main feature of the author's novels is represented by his ability to present the story from multiple perspectives drawn from the outside world. In Bakhtin's view, the story of each character is not revealed by a single, unified auctorial voice. Instead, multiple voices are used to “win the story” (Săftoiu, 2015: 433). These voices do not merge, but rather combine, thus revealing “a plurality of consciousness, with equal rights and each with its own world.” (Bakhtin 1984: 6). This is particularly relevant for the analysis of pronominal interplays (page 98 and 163).

## 3.4. Political discourse and identity formation: Analytical frames

Drawing on the theoretical background introduced in the first section, here, I consider key aspects from the field of political discourse, which add to the idea that identity is discursively negotiated as a multi-faceted and nuanced concept.

When analysing the process of identity formation, two main directions were taken into account. To On the one hand, MPs can choose to *go on the defence*, to protect their political standing and public perception. On the other hand, MPs can *go on the offense* and discredit the image of other

MPs or political groups. As the analysis shows, oftentimes, defence and attack strategies are intrinsically linked as one can be formulated by way of the other. Parliamentarians can choose to invoke their professional affiliation or present themselves as ordinary citizens and use subjectivity to add force to their claims, to paint a picture with powerful rhetorical effects, and to persuade people that they have their best interests at heart.

Furthermore, the practical part of the thesis provides evidence to support the idea that going *on the offense* is often achieved through a contrastive representation of the speaker/in-group in relation to the target of the attack. In many cases, the MP puts forward a dichotomous relation that can simultaneously achieve two outcomes. Through discourse, an MP can discredit the image of others and, at the same time, obtain a positive image perception (as individuals or as members of political factions). These aspects were accounted for when discussing the identity formation processes of MPs and MEPs through the use of pronominal referencing.

#### **CHAPTER 4: PROJECTING IDENTITIES WITHIN THE ROMANIAN PARLIAMENT**

The first practical chapter of the thesis investigates the use of personal pronouns in the Romanian Parliament. For this purpose, 37 fragments belonging to 20 politicians were selected. Different types of parliamentary activity (oral statements, interventions, and interpellations) drawn from the official websites of the Senate and Chamber of Deputies were included in the analysis. The present chapter was structured into 3 parts. The first one looks at how the individual self is projected in discourse (mainly focusing on the use of the pronoun 'I'). The second part discusses group or collective identities (mainly contextualised through 'we'). The last subsection centers on how the identity of other(s) groups or political factions are invoked in discourse (mainly through the use of first-person pronoun singular and plural 'you) and the third-person plural, 'they').

##### **4.1. Projecting the individual self**

The analysis of this section revealed that MPs use self-referencing remarks to project personal and professional identities. Through the pronoun 'I', parliamentarians invoke various facets of their selves to come across as good politicians by showcasing themselves as competent, trustworthy, reliable, knowledgeable, and efficient political figures.

Furthermore, such projected identities might constitute means for positive image building or may be utilised to launch attacks against other political counterparts, underline professional affiliations, or establish bonds with the receivers of the messages.

##### **4.1.1 Underlining personal attributes**

The analysis of the excerpts reveals that, through I-references, MPs come across as honest, intellectually gifted, and knowledgeable individuals. From a rhetorical standpoint, the speakers appeal to ethos as they discursively project the identities of competent and morally sound politicians. MPs use the flexibility of pronouns to underline personal attributes and respond to their prior ethos when building a base of defense, de-construct the image of *others* by linking a list of negative attributes to their name(s) and construct their public image favorably when invoking aspects of their core and social selves.



#### 4.1.2 Underlining professional experience

Apart from personal attributes, MPs also project identities drawn from their professional experience as politicians. When using *self*-referencing remarks, experienced politicians often attest to their competence, influence, and knowledge on a topic or mention their prior achievements and extensive political backgrounds. As shown in the analysis, MPs can enact different identities to underline their professional experience. Speakers use their limited or broad professional background to elicit positive reactions from the audience and to advance different attack strategies. While young politicians associate themselves to a set of new values and principles, experienced politicians mention their prior activities conducted under different job affiliations during their political career and reveal both their experience and influence gained in the process.

#### 4.1.3. Underlining political affiliation

MPs also employ instances of *self*-referencing to speak on behalf of the political groups with which they identify. Speakers make use of *self*-referencing remarks to discuss group affiliation by either presenting the group(s) with which they associate in a positive light or by speaking against political *out-groups*. In other cases, speakers draw aspects from their professional background in the field of politics and bring into question different political practices, highlight their professional experience and political influence. Politicians with broad experience in the field often reference their prior positions occupied in politics to add credibility to their message, to reiterate their position on different policies, or to claim political influence gained in the process.

#### 4.2. Representing the multi-layered audience

Coming across as fair and competent politicians is also attained by establishing favourable sender-receiver relations. In other words, politicians use *self*-references to position themselves favourably with those on the receiving end of a message. As shown here, MPs speak as representatives of their local constituency. This further projects a sense of personal involvement conveyed by the speakers through inclusive 'we' references.

#### 4.1.5. Showcasing other professional identities

The deliberative process of parliamentary sittings presupposes that MPs will discuss diverse aspects of pressing concern and/or oversee personal and group interests. Under this political umbrella, social, cultural, economic, environmental, educational aspects are debated in parliament. In this sense, competence is a critical value that might be expressed discursively. Through *self*-referencing remarks, MPs add value to their claims when putting forward their multi-faceted *selves* and highlight their experience gained through other professions i.e. 'I' as an educator, 'I' as a sociologist, 'I' as a victim.

In many cases, MPs explore the topical potential of the subject approached in the parliament and build their identities according to this. The examples show that approaching an issue from personal and interpersonal viewpoints might allow speakers to appeal to the audience's feelings



as they discard their professional affiliations and present the issue from a seemingly subjective perspective.

#### 4.1.6 Discussion

This part was dedicated to summarising the findings of subsection 4.1.

### 4.2. Projecting collective identities

When using the pronoun 'we', MPs project group identities to mention their political affiliation, ideological beliefs or to positively resonate with audience members. Pronominal interplays allow speakers to achieve multiple discursive effects which can enhance their public image perception of their self or subsequent *in-groups*. At the same time, politicians can *go on the offense* and switch between pronouns to target individuals and/or groups. Oftentimes, this approach falls under the category of unparliamentary language (Ilie 2004) as personal attacks, unsubstantiated claims, and aggressive rhetoric were identified as the main strategic approaches of contextualising *otherness*.

#### 4.2.1. Inclusive 'We' as members of political parties

In some instances, MPs invoke explicit, implicit, and impersonal references to speak on behalf of a political party. Speakers employ various discursive strategies to underline political group attributes and shared moral attributes or invoke collective responses to a pressing issue. The attribution of positive traits to the speaker's political group is often presented in conjunction with a list of anti-qualities used to describe the targeted faction through a dichotomous relationship. MPs also make appeals to logos by urging other parliamentarians to cooperate in parliament. This can be seen as a plea for collective reasoning in the form of fighting for a common cause such as Romania's accession to the European Union.

#### 4.2.2. Inclusive 'We' as larger political coalitions

In other cases, MPs move beyond their role as party members and enhance the group's credibility by mentioning shared political ideology with influential European parties and politicians. Through logical implicatures, speakers aim at solidifying the credibility and influence of their political parties. Mentioning joint political values and group accomplishments can be primarily viewed as an appeal to logos directed towards the multi-layered audience. As shown in the examples, the MPs solidify the party's position by also mentioning transnational achievements of well-established political figures with similar political ideologies.

#### 4.2.3. Representing the multi-layered audience

The pronoun 'we' is also used in the form of inclusive references (implicit or explicit), directed towards the Romanian constituency. Establishing bonds with the audience is achieved through the collective voice of the party, allowing the MP to speak on behalf of the citizens, to convey a feeling of cooperation, to invoke a shared identity trait (e.g. 'We' as Romanians), or to advocate for common causes. In terms of rhetorical functions, this particular approach indicates appeals to pathos and ethos.

#### 4.2.4. Discussions

This part was dedicated to summarising the findings of subsection 4.2.

#### 4.3. Projecting the identities of *others*

In subsection 4.3, I have exemplified various uses of pronominal interplays advanced by speakers when negotiating the identities of other politicians and/or political factions. As the analysis reveals, MPs do not refrain from insults and use different means to obtain a negative predication of the *out-group* and subsequent members. In order to fulfil their objectives, the speakers view *others* through negative personality statements, implications of an enduring negative character or trait, patronising, condescending remarks, and mockery.

##### 4.3.1. Personal attacks through *self*-referencing remarks ('I' vs. 'You')

Here, personal attacks are launched through *self*-referencing remarks. Speaking from their viewpoint, MPs use aggressive rhetoric to achieve a negative image perception of the addressee. While the main strategy is to target the opposition, tarnishing the image of others can also be used as a way of protecting one's prior ethos.

##### 4.3.2. Group attacks through inclusive references ('We' vs. 'They')

Here, attention was shifted towards political factions (often in the form of the opposing political party or the governing party) as MPs use a collective voice to question moral attributes or invoke common cause when speaking on behalf of the Romanian citizens.

##### 4.3.3. Pronominal interplays: Mixed attacks through self and group references ('I'/'You' vs. 'You'/'They')

Politicians also switch between pronominal references to launch multiple attacks in relation to multiple targets. MPs use *self*-referencing remarks to criticise and question their colleagues' decisions and switch to inclusive referencing to present a joint perspective on the topic at hand. The analysis showcases that the pronoun 'I' can be used to question the morals, principles, and competence of the *out-group*, while inclusive referencing is employed to underline the *in-group's* core policies.

##### 4.3.4 Discussion

This part was dedicated to summarising the findings of subsection 4.3.

## CHAPTER 5: Projecting identities within the European Parliament

The second practical chapter of the thesis investigates the use of personal pronouns in the European Parliament. For this purpose, 38 fragments belonging to 20 politicians were selected. Different types of parliamentary activity (oral statements, interventions, and written statements) drawn from the official websites of the European Parliament were included in the analysis. The present chapter was structured into 3 parts. The first one looks at how the individual self is projected in discourse (mainly focusing on the use of the pronoun 'I'). The second part discusses group or collective identities (mainly contextualised through 'we'). The last subsection centers on

how the identity of other(s) groups or political factions are invoked in discourse (mainly through the use of first-person pronoun singular and plural 'you) and the third-person plural, 'they').

### **5.1. Projecting the individual *self***

Following the previous chapter's outline, I have looked at how political representatives project their public image perception by way of personal pronouns.

#### **5.1.1. Underlining political affiliation**

MEPs use self-referencing remarks to attest to their political ideologies and personal attributions. As seen in the excerpts, introducing shared values and doctrines originated from political ideology expands past national party associations. This can further help MEPs promote a common cause and gain support from other colleagues. Indicating shared political values might constitute an appeal to ethos, as parliamentarians frequently draw positive features from a transnational political ideology and appropriate them as their own. By projecting such identities, MEPs might come across as prominent figures in international politics, which can add to his/her positive image perception if the message is aimed towards a general audience.

#### **5.1.2. Overseeing national interests**

The pronoun 'I' is also used by MEPs to promote national interests and political agendas. This is primarily accomplished by showcasing their qualifications and official positions as Romanian MEPs. From this angle, speakers advance pressing national interests within an emotionally laden discourse when asking other parliamentarians for assistance. In some cases, the speaker can separate from his national affiliation and evoke group membership as a European spokesperson. From this outlook, the delegate can present a local problem by generalising it. Conveying the idea that he speaks for a greater good (beyond national interests) might contribute to obtaining positive assessments from *others*.

#### **5.1.3. Representing ethnic, religious, and regional out-groups**

When talking on behalf of an audience, MEP choose to represent vast groups of people. From this position, they can establish rapport with the referenced groups, appeal to other MEPs' logical thinking processes, or tarnish the public image of those considered responsible for perpetuating a discriminative view against the group(s). These are introduced by attack strategies directed against the Romanian politicians or European community members and MEPs. Speakers can also take on the cause of a regional minority through a subjective examination of the issues they are facing and add pathetic effect to their statements.

#### **5.1.4. Showcasing other professional/social identities**

The practical part of the thesis has shown that references to other professional qualifications can be used to augment the credibility of political messages. Adapting to the subject of the parliamentary sitting allows speakers to add new dimensions to their identity. By exploring the topical potential, MEPs can reiterate their point of view by highlighting professional expertise. To underline this, MEPs mention other professional qualifications i.e. 'I' as a law graduate, 'I' as a historian and sociologist, 'I' as a man of culture, 'I' as a mother. Speaking from this perspective,

allows parliamentarians to potentially resonate with other members from the same invoked categories and highlight their knowledge on the topic approached in parliament.

#### **5.1.5. Establishing rapport with the European Community**

The study revealed that MEPs use *self*-referencing remarks to establish rapport with the European Community. Praising their actions, advocating for a common position can be viewed as a strategy of improving the diplomatic relations between Romania and other EU member states.

#### **5.1.6 Discussion**

This part was dedicated to summarising the findings of subsection 5.1.

### **5.2. Projecting collective identities**

Romanian delegates employ group membership to discuss issues from joint ideological viewpoints, underline national and institutional identities, strive to obtain a positive attribution of the *in-group*, or endeavour to protect the interests of other groups (which constitute their multi-layered addressees).

#### **5.2.1. Underlining political ideologies**

Through a collective voice, the speakers can build a credible ethos by underlining transnational political ideologies. When directed towards other MEPs, invoking an ideological identity can draw more European delegates to their cause. This is done by highlighting fundamental political principles aligned with those inscribed in the *in-group's* ideological doctrine. In relation to a broader audience, MEP appeal to ethos as they discursively negotiate the group's firm policies and attributes. In other cases, obtaining a positive image perception might be attempted with smaller factions (such as minority or regional groups).

#### **5.2.2. Establishing bonds with the audience**

Overseeing the interests of the multi-layered audience was also discussed in the present subsection. In the analysis, I have identified instances where the speaker chooses to represent the interests of the European citizens. Bringing forward a wide array of identities can help delegates establish bonds with multiple groups such as Romanian and European citizens, other MEPs, or members of various European Alliances. While attitude markers and logical implicatures can be identified in the excerpts, I would argue that negotiating a credible, authoritative image and appealing to the ethos of the groups mentioned above are the main rhetorical strategies advanced by the speaker.

#### **5.2.3. Invoking national affiliation: 'We' as Romanians**

MEPs also assume the mantle of a Romanian national. From this position, they criticise the actions of other member states (when discussing *Roma* immigration policies) or underline a shared feeling of responsibility directed towards the EU's subsequent members when discussing Romania's accession within the institution. MEPs make promises, praise, criticise, and advance rhetorical questions directed towards the European institution's policies when forwarding interests of national relevance.

#### 5.2.4. Invoking transnational affiliation: 'We' as MEPs

In some instances, MEPs attribute positive qualities to the European Union. Throughout their discourse, they emphasise the authority and influence of the *in-group*, appeal to the solidarity of other MEPs, reiterate common policies, or fortify their argument by eliciting a feeling of fear in the minds of the receivers, should the policies of the EU remain unchanged.

#### 5.2.5. Discussion

This part was dedicated to summarising the findings of subsection 5.2.

### 5.3. Projecting the identity of *others*

The last subsection of the chapter centered on the strategic uses of pronouns in projecting the identity of *others*. Here, I have provided some examples of how MEPs project the image of two opposing sides and take a position in relation to them. In some cases, Romanian delegates chose to go on the offensive and tarnish the image of those invoked in discourse. In other cases, MEPs attempt to establish bonds with others and list positive attributes when projecting their identity in discourse.

#### 5.3.1. Negative attributions of the *out-group(s)*

The study revealed that MEPs direct their rhetorical arsenal towards diverse targets when going *on the offense*. They can highlight ideological beliefs, take a position against a colleague, highlight imminent threats to the stability of the European Community or speak against other countries. The examples under scrutiny showcase various attack strategies launched against different targets. Among the discursive strategies identified in these situations, I mention: launching an attack by making insinuations and mocking remarks against the United States of America, questioning the political values of a European delegate, underlining the negative actions of the *out-group* in changing the status-quo of the European Community, or criticising the policies and actions of another country.

#### 5.3.2. Positive attributions of the *out-group*

Moreover, politicians might strive to negotiate a positive attribution of the *in-groups* and speak on their behalf. Overseeing the interests of smaller communities or regional groups is often directed towards other MEPs which have the power of making political changes that would heed the call of the speaker. Here, I have provided some examples where the speakers involve two sides and choose to speak for the *out-group*. By presenting pressing issues that the group is facing, the speaker can represent its interests. Among the topics approached here to deal with the inclusion of the Roma community, the discriminative attitudes of the Moldavian government towards its citizens, and the problems experienced by the Eastern European working-class. By taking a seemingly emphatic approach, the speakers' actions can positively resonate with the members of the *out-group*. Appeals to ethos are also prevalent as delegates direct their discourse towards other Parliament members, with the power to make changes and improve the livelihood of the *out-groups*.

### 5.3.3. Discussions

This part was dedicated to summarising the findings of subsection 5.3.

#### Conclusions

In the concluding remarks, I have introduced some key findings drawn from the practical part of the paper. Through a comparative and contrastive approach, the uses of self, group, and other referencing identified in the European and Romanian parliament were presented. This part also brings into question some methodological considerations and further directions in research.

The present analysis revealed the following aspects relating to parliamentary discourse: politicians are goal-oriented beings and power-seekers that constantly adapt their discursive practices to achieve personal and/or group objectives; subjectivity and cognitive identity are key features in the process of identity formation; a politician's public image perception is determined by how he/she is perceived by the multi-layered audience; all parliamentary discourse is designed with an audience in mind; the adversarial nature of parliamentary discourse is more common in the RP; the cooperative nature of parliamentary discourse is more common in the EP.

The projection of personal and professional identities in parliamentary discourse substantiates the claim that politicians actively negotiate and re-negotiate their identities. Exploiting the polyvalence of pronouns constitutes a dialogic action game (Weigand 2010), where MPs and MEPs constantly adapt and reinterpret their public image perception. In this constant stream of dialogue, politicians are compelled to put forward convincing performances and advance diverse *self* and *group* attributions to achieve persuasion. From there, those on the receiving end of the message have the power to decide whether the speakers align with their set of values. If negotiating identity can be metaphorically viewed as a plea for one's political prowess, then the audience members will act as judge, jury, and executioners, having the power to determine the future of their political representatives, further perpetuating the persuasive design of parliamentary discourse.

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## Abstract

The present thesis aims at identifying and analysing various linguistic means that allow politicians to project personal and professional identities in political discourse. The data selected for this qualitative study consists of 75 extracts collected from different types of parliamentary activity such as written and oral statements, interventions and interpellations, delivered in the European and Romanian Parliaments. Only Romanian politicians, with mandates in both political institutions, were considered for the research. The thesis starts from the assumption that the active interplay between pronominal references constitutes mechanisms of persuasion that help speakers highlight their competences, advance personal and group goals, express their points of view from different angles and add subjectivity to their messages. The main objectives of the research are to analyse the polyvalence of pronominal identities in parliamentary discourse, their subsequent rhetorical effects and to comparatively and contrastively present the findings in both parliaments. To address these linguistic realisations of identity, the practical part of the thesis was conducted from a multidisciplinary perspective and was rooted in fields such as dialogue analysis, pragmatics, rhetoric, sociology, discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis. The research provides evidence to support the idea that politicians use self and group references to advance personal qualities and professional attributes, establish bonds with the audience, invoke group affiliations, speak on behalf of their multi-layered constituency, or launch attacks against political opponents. Furthermore, politicians actively stride to put forward convincing performances in order to come across as good, competent, trustworthy, and efficient public figures. Using various means of identity construction under different circumstances can have a synergistic effect on a politician's public image perception. As shown in the practical part of the thesis, when speaking in front of an audience, MPs and MEPs actively negotiate and re-negotiate their public image perception. The study might formulate premises for further directions in research as it reveals some discursive practices that are commonplace in the political sphere.

## Rezumat

Lucrarea de față își propune să identifice și să analizeze diverse mijloace lingvistice care le permit politicianilor să proiecteze identități personale și profesionale în discursul politic. Datele selectate pentru acest studiu calitativ constau în 75 de fragmente colectate din diferite tipuri de activitate parlamentară, cum ar fi declarații scrise și orale, intervenții și interpelări, formulate în Parlamentul European și în Parlamentul României. În cadrul cercetării au fost luați în considerare doar politicieni români, cu mandate în ambele instituții politice. Teza pornește de la ipoteza că utilizarea referințelor pronominale constituie mecanisme de persuasiune care îi ajută pe vorbitori să își evidențieze competențele, să promoveze obiective personale și de grup, să își exprime punctele de vedere din diferite perspective și să adauge subiectivitate mesajelor lor. Obiectivele principale ale cercetării sunt analiza polivalenței identităților pronominale în discursul parlamentar, efectele retorice ulterioare ale acestora și prezentarea comparativă și contrastivă a rezultatelor în ambele parlamente. Pentru a aborda aceste realizări lingvistice ale identității, partea practică a tezei a fost realizată dintr-o perspectivă multidisciplinară, înrădăcinată în domenii precum analiza dialogului, pragmatica, retorica, sociologia, analiza discursului și analiza critic discursivă. Cercetarea oferă dovezi în sprijinul ideii că politicienii folosesc referințe de sine și de grup pentru a-și promova calitățile personale și atributele profesionale, pentru a stabili conexiuni cu receptorii mesajelor, pentru a invoca afilieri la anumite grupuri, pentru a vorbi în numele electoratului lor multistratificat sau pentru a lansa atacuri împotriva adversarilor politici. În vederea atingerii acestor scopuri, politicienii se străduiesc în mod activ să obțină prestații convingătoare pentru a proiecta imaginea unor figuri publice competente, demne de încredere și eficiente. Folosirea diferitelor mijloace de construire a identității în diferite circumstanțe poate avea un efect sinergic asupra percepției imaginii publice a unui politician. După cum se evidențiază în partea practică a tezei, atunci când vorbesc în fața unui public, parlamentarii și europarlamentarii negociază și renegociază în mod activ percepția imaginii lor publice. Prezentul studiu poate formula premise pentru direcții viitoare de cercetare, dezvoltând unele practici discursive, des întâlnite în sfera politică.