

STANCE TAKING, GENDER IDENTITY, AND ROMANIAN WOMEN POLITICIANS IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTORAL CAMPAIGNS

<http://doi.org/10.26758/12.1.15>

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Abstract

Objectives This study aims at presenting an updated state-of-the-art review of the most relevant approaches to gender identity, stance taking, and political communication, highlighting the way in which society contributes to constructing gender identity, intersubjectivity, and discourse practices in the electoral communication.

Material and methods. Relevant articles published between 1995 and 2020 on stancetaking, identity, intersubjectivity speech acts were searched in two access platforms to the scientific literature. The main concepts indexing identity markers and intersubjectivity (interactant pronouns, stances, non- figurative and figurative syntagms, speech acts) were preserved. The research shed light through a quantitative and qualitative discourse analysis how speech acts, modalities, grammatical tools and figures of speech were used as a resource for taking a stand, as well as a strategy for the gender identity constructing. The corpus were composed by three categories of addresses delivered by the ex-prime minister Viorica Dăncilă during the 2019 presidential electoral campaign.

Results. The analysis identified at the macro and micro level the construction of the positions, themes and interactive markers in the speeches delivered between August, 2019 and November 22, 2019 in the light of the positioning theory appraisal theory and the concept of conversational history.

Conclusion. The double opening (micro and macro level) allowed us to bridge the intersubjective and gender dimension of positioning with epistemic and emotional aspects, highlighting also differences and similarities with the masculine presidential style.

Keywords: women politicians, electoral communication, gender identity, stancetaking, intersubjectivity.

Introduction

Given that gender has become one of the first "languages of politics", it seems crucial to analyze the presence, roles, responsibilities, as well as the representation of female political figures, their ethos (textual and iconic), as well as the dynamics of the gender divide in discourse and media representations.

The gender perspective (underlying economy, politics and everyday life in general) repositions the roles, expectations and representations of women through new correlations between old and new media, public and private sphere and life etc. These perspective follow Fraser's and

Honneth's (2003) question concerning the legitimacy of women (legitimacy of identity and status) in the public sphere.

In the age of egotism as a "contemporary form of the personalization of power in a context of individualization of the social" (Le Bart, 2013, p. 6), of the perpetual production of self and (in) visibility, the triad women/ politics/ visibility on traditional or digital social media is likely to provide significant interrelationships in the construction of strategic identity.

The response to the "tyranny of visibility" (Aubert & Haroche, 2011) in other words the visibility of Romanian female politicians is based on the appropriation and transformation of the male model, characterized by the professional/political directive overinvestment in discourse.

In the first part the paper presents the theoretical and epistemological foundations supporting the hypothesis concerning the (re) configuration of gender identity in the current era; the second part discusses the empirical results of the discursive analysis of the political campaign for presidency, in which the first Romanian woman prime minister enters.

Women, femininities, women politicians

Goffman (1977) speaks of the *social production of gender as a duality* which imposes a hierarchical relationship between masculine and feminine; this duality is preserved and used to justify social differences, but also to indicate series of valued attributes and depreciated attributes for each sex class. Thus, gender remains not only a means of characterizing the individual, but also a means of characterizing a society.

On the same isotopy- "differential valence" of the sexes, Héritier (2012) "male domination", (Pierre Bourdieu, 1998), "symbolic annihilation of women" Tuchman (2000)-Connell(1987) defined and popularized the notion of *hegemonic masculinity* in the field of Gender Studies. This concept is proving to be very influential in several fields of research including: education, criminology, Media Studies, studies related to health and risky behavior, studies of organizations, psychotherapy, violence prevention and emotional education programs for boys (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005).

Finally, according to the original gramscian meaning of the concept (Gramsci 1971, 1985), the two authors (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) place more emphasis on the dynamics of the concept, to better recognize its internal contradictions and the possibility of moving towards a form of gender democracy. For Connell (1987) there is no hegemonic femininity, but she uses the notion of "emphasized femininity" to designate the submissive femininity, oriented to accommodate desires and interests of man. This type of femininity is consistent with the notion of "female masquerade", launched by Rivière (1929) and also taken up by other researchers.

The Second School of Chicago (Fine, 1995) considers identity the result of a social process of construction and imposition. Goffman (1974) as a brand representative of this School, puts forward a hypersocialized conception of the world, and makes identity the result of collective work, of qualification and disqualification of individuals.

He advances the notion of gender identity defined as the way in which the individual elaborates the feeling of who he/she is, by referring to his/her sexual class, by judging himself/herself according to the ideals of masculinity (or femininity). "(...) It seems that this source of identification is one of the deepest that our society offers us". In Goffman's (1981) view, we are socialized in such a way as to confirm our own assumptions about our nature. Thus, appearance (adornment and posture) reflects cultural gender belonging. After slow but irreversible changes, this study raises the question whether a woman who arrived after a quarter of a century in the power elites, manages to embody a model of *"hegemonic femininity"* (not subordinate to

masculinity) or continues to reiterate the model of "*emphasized femininity*" (traditional, submissive stereotypical femininity).

The theme of *women in Romanian politics* has been addressed and debated in Romanian media and gender research in various contexts and on different occasions, both with reference to their political participation and to their activity in general (Roventă-Frumușani, 2015), and with reference to specific circumstances, such as local, parliamentary, presidential or European elections (Dan & Iorgoveanu, 2013; Kaneva & Ibroscheva, 2014; Cmeciu & Patrut, 2014; Roventă-Frumușani & Irimescu, 2018). Although women have become more active in Romanian politics in recent times, succeeding not only in parliamentary positions, but also in some functions of local power (like the victory of Gabriela Firea in 2016 as general mayor of Bucharest), they remained generally under-represented in politics (Surugiu, 2012); or only visually framed (Kaneva & Ibroscheva, 2014).

Identity and communication

Identity and communication are essential for the constitution and consolidation of individuals, groups and organizations. In the second half of the 20th century, identity becomes the "unifying theme of the social sciences" (Jenkins, 2004) because psychologists and sociologists, philosophers and political scientists have brought their contribution to the analysis of this complex concept. Erikson noticed in 1950 (cited in Gleason, 1983, p. 928) that researcher conceptualized questions of identity when these questions became problematic, in other words when they became strategic for our society. Identity in fact provides the "conceptual link between individual personality and the social and cultural traits which give different groups their distinctiveness" (Gleason, 1983, p. 926).

Goffman (1974) considers that the public appearance of people is subject to a permanent process of figuration: people are transformed into stage figures, or into persons who circulate in the public media space. indexed by proper name, social category of membership (actor, politician, woman, man, etc.)

To this theatrical person-character superposition, researchers added the model of *identity performance*, as a succession of scenic acts (Butler, 1990) and that of identity as a *story* (Ricoeur, 1990) which resonate with the concept of *conversational history* launched by the linguist and semiotician. Golopenția (2018) applied to literary texts in the first place. In her view conversational history is: a) an interaction occurring between or shared by the same set of interlocutors; b) defined as a series, as a dynamic whole with distinct semantic and pragmatic properties; c) constituting a superordinate unit in the pragmatic hierarchy that begins with the act of speaking and progresses beyond conversation (Golopenția, 2018, p. 10).

In line with Golopenția's model, this research proposes to include a series of political or daily speeches under the same label *conversational history* or *interactional history* (Vion, 1992) as an enlarged version of the flow of discourse (oral or written) between the same actors (teacher/ students, boss/ subordinates, doctor/ patient, political actor/ audience).

The presentation and staging (performance) of particular identities is seen less as an expression of the "me", but rather as "a construction that takes into account both the objectives of interactional practices and the constraints of the institutional structures" at stake "when people communicate with each other" (De Fina, Schiffrin, & Bamberg, 2006, p. 9).

At the crossroads of cultural, sexual, ethnic, etc. variables, identity is no longer readable in the behavior of the individual or the feedback of others, but in the "capacity to keep a permanent

story" (Giddens, 1991). Today this story is necessarily twofold: *verbal story telling* in politics, organizational culture, advertising etc. doubled by *visual story telling* (through icons).

In what follows will be analyzed "transportable identities" such as gender, ethnicity, age through the interactional perspective concerned with *how* identity is performed? instead of *what* is identity?.

In recent times, *positioning* has become a central theme of research within the framework of the cognitive, pragmatic, sociolinguistic and interactional paradigm.

Different terms have been proposed to refer to different aspects of standing and taking a stand, including epistemic state, engagement, judgment, assessment, perspective, point of view, voice evidentiality, affect, attitude, subjectivity and inter-subjectivity (Jaffe, 2009, p. 6).

As identity is built in relation with context, status, otherness, this analysis will emphasize the importance of intersubjectivity.

Taking a stand is the expression of an "attitude", of an "evaluation" (Hunston & Thompson, 1999), of a "foot" (Goffman, 1981), a "positioning" (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999; Baert, 2012), "evaluation" (Martin, 2000; Martin & White, 2005) or "judgment" from the speaker's perspective (Englebretson, 2007; Jaffe, 2009). During the past twenty years, the work on positioning or stancetaking taken by sociolinguists, linguistic anthropologists, grammarians, but also philosophers (Baert, 2012) offers a new perspective on a number of characteristics previously considered separately, such as identity, modality, performativity and interaction.

Following the ancient rhetorical tradition- Aristotle, (2014), Du Bois (2007) introduced the visual representation of the Positioning Triangle, in which "the act of positioning [...] creates at the same time three types of consequences of position. [...] namely, the stance taker (1) evaluates an object, (2) positions a subject (usually oneself) and (3) lines up with other subjects" (Du Bois, 2007, p. 163).

Position-taking is considered to be the main discursive mechanism by which social identity is realized, through the change of foot, i.e. alignment with the recipient/audience (Goffman, 1981), since the positioning of the Self is relational, that is simultaneously oriented vis-à-vis the self and the others, and an orientation towards extra-linguistic reality (the physical, social referents and their discursive representations).

In the available literature on stance, a distinction between *epistemic and affective* stance, or between evidentiality/commitment and affect, is often made. An epistemic stance is related to the degree of certainty concerning the object of discussion, while affective stance is related to the emotional feelings about the object of discourse.

The present study attempted to fill a gap in the existing literature in Romania by correlating gender identity, stancetaking and electoral discourse. From here the main objective of the research was the following:

O1: To understand the way in which a woman politician constructs strategically the discursive identity in the presidential electoral race.

Materials and methods

On January 6th, 2018, Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă was nominated as Prime Minister by the Executive Committee of the Social Democratic Party [SDP], party, that won the parliamentary elections in Romania on December 11th, 2016, with approximately 45% of the votes. After the elections, the SDP formed a coalition government with the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats [ALDE]. But in only one year, two governments have been replaced. It is worth mentioning that media coverage did not seriously approach the general issues significant whenever a new prime

minister is appointed, regardless of if a man or a woman, including political, organizational, strategic or economic qualities of the political actor appointed. In reference with Mrs. Dăncilă the news presented the look, dressing code, jewelry and hairdressing and the specific female strategies she managed to have a rising political career (Rodat, 2019).

In opposition with media discourse and framing, we start from the hypothesis that Romanian public sphere is dominated by a male discursive model and the total absence of feminine socio discursive traits (care, empathy, symmetric positioning).

In order to be legitimated, a woman has to emphasize a critical aggressive discourse aiming the acceptance in the high spheres of politics and evidently in electoral races.

Even if researches have emphasized feminine as well as masculine characteristics in women's discourses and public appearances, the media coverage insisted on the trivialization of media representations examining the way women are dressed, looked at as object of a "male gaze" (Dan & Iorgoveanu, 2013). That is why the research focused on important speeches addressed at crucial moments of the electoral campaign (the initial moment- launch of the presidential candidacy; the median step represented by the discourse of October before the first round, and the final moment- the discourse pronounced in front of the audience before the second ballot).

The central research questions were:

RQ1: What are the topics covered primarily in connection with the nomination, appointment and political activity during the electoral campaign of Mrs. Dăncilă as future president?

RQ2: What are the discursive intersubjective and gendered strategies used at these crucial moments?

The method used was the content analysis, which included both the quantitative and thematic approach), and implied the application of the basic principles of content analysis (delimitation of analytical units, working with categories, etc.) in two qualitative methodological processes: the inductive development of categories and their deductive application (Gunter, 2000; Mayring, 2000).

Results

One of the most explicit resources available to the writer/ speaker for engaging the reader/ hearer is the use of *interactive pronouns* (Thompson, 2014, p. 84). The concept of interactive pronouns has been discussed primarily by Kim (2009), who points out that "By using reader-oriented personal pronouns, the writer can evoke the reader's involvement in the textual interaction, i.e. encourage the reader to accept the role of the reader as dialogical participant and, ultimately, reinforce the persuasive force of the text".

In political discourse, the multiple functions of inclusive pronouns are used by speakers/ authors to promote alignment and misalignment (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005).

Interactive pronouns are mainly polarized: *we/our* vs. *them/their*, and actualize the rhetoric of the populist discourse or style. In our corpus, the positioning *I* and *us* vs. *them* and *him* - the opponents, parties as well as the outgoing president) appears quite frequently, in all contexts (from the first introductory, explanatory speech, to the final mobilizing speech as well).

In face to face interaction and more recently in writer/reader interaction (Kim, 2009) it is obvious that the speaker intends on the basis of shared knowledge and common context to change the audience's knowledge, opinions etc.

In the interactional perspective, the use of personal pronouns in oral discourses and written text, particularly the 2nd person *you* and the 1st person *we*, has been considered as an important way of constructing the co- participants in the interaction.

Kim (2009) adopts Thompson and Thetela's view (1995) arguing that personal pronouns are employed as "projected roles" which function as the textual personae of the intended writer and reader; in addition, they maintain that potential readers are encouraged to "converge" with their textual personae. This convergence or construction of similar positioning is carried out in oral discourse extensively by the inclusive pronouns.

There is no doubt that the oral discourse implies real concrete involvement; that's why presidents or future presidents construct this discursive *we* anticipating the solidarity of the nation-vote at the elections.

The *inclusive pronoun* "we" refers to a speaker and his/her addressee or to a group that includes the speaker and other referents, and not the addressee or a group that includes the speaker, the addressee and other referents. In the political discourse the multiple functions of inclusive pronouns are used by speakers/writers to foster alignment and disalignment (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005).

It is worth mentioning that in the inaugural speech as prime minister Viorica Dancila uses all the referential combinations of *we* (the speaker and her party, the speaker and all the MPs and the speaker and the nation as well- infra 1)

1. We are in the centenary year of the Great Union.

Given the dominance of the descriptive dimension (presentation of the economic program: directions, objectives) the third person is prevailing infra 2.

2. This country must be led by those who were elected, not by those who were appointed.

The first person I (included in the form of the verb in Romanian) is correlated mainly with the modal verb *want* marking a strong decision (3) and the verbs *invite*, *propose* marking the desire of collaboration with all political actors (4).

3. I want this model to be applied as quickly as possible in our country too.

4. I propose this dialogue to you.

All the choices (pronominal and verbal) are meant to consolidate a leadership style neutral from the gender point of view and focused on objectives, deadlines, strategies But from this discourse about national and international politics, the government program etc., the media discourse selects only fashion, jewelry, details unable to build a portrait of a true political leader.

At the beginning of the electoral campaign (discourse of 12 October 2019) the dualism is represented by I (the woman engaged in the presidential race) and *him* (the outgoing president) and the pronominal choices mark the focus on the speaker and her gender identity (infra 5).

5. I believe that it is time for a woman to receive the chance to bring the balance between institutions, balance so necessary for the well-being of people. The struggle I am leading is for every Romanian who wants to live in peace, who wants a better life.

The promises of change are correlated with harsh criticisms of the policy of the absence of his counter-candidate (infra 6), which is why the number of personal pronouns of the third person singular exceeds the first person I.

6. Romania's presidency has been for too long an ivory tower where elected officials have hid themselves from the people, it has been a bunker for backstage games.

In fine the last discourse preceding the second round is a *I/you* dialogue (infra 7) and a synthesis of errors of her counter-candidate (dominance of 3rd person attacks infra 8)

7. Dear Romanians, judge those who ask for your vote on the basis of what they have done in recent years. Watch how these candidates have evolved over time.

8. Mr. Iohannis is absent as he was absent during the five years in office at Cotroceni. If he had been here I would have given him three gifts: the tricolor, the constitution that he has trampled, and the Bible.

Table 1

Interactant pronouns at the initial, median and final address of the "conversational history"

Discourse	First discourse	First discourse	Median	Final discourse
Interactant pronouns	Prime minister Investment	Launching in the electoral campaign (24 August 2019)	discourse- before the election day (12 October 2019)	Before the second round (22 November 2019)
We/our (of the narrative)	18 (28%)	15 (22 %)	11(17%)	3 (17%)
Inclusive perspective	18 (28%)	15 (22 %)	11(17%)	3 (17%)
Exclusive perspective				
<i>I vs. You</i> (of the interaction)	5 (8%)	3 (4,5%)	16 (25%)	3 (17%)
I	14 (21%)	23 (35%)	14 (21%)	5(29%)
3 rd person	28 (43%)	20 (30%)	24 (37%)	6 (36%)
Total	65	66	65	17

In the final speech, different uses of us, either as we = I + you, or I as promise are strongly dependent on the context of the speech, and mark strategies of solidarity as well as the emphasis on promise and commitment.

The presence of inclusive *we* consolidates the signification and feeling of community (affect, empathy), characteristic of feminine strategically constructed identity.

The strategic use of the inclusive *we* aligns interlocutors "in a community of shared values" (Martin & White, 2005, p. 95).

The hierarchy of references to interactants (*I vs us vs you*) is suggestively correlated with the distribution of speech acts (see *infra*).

Discussion

In the last decades of the 20th century, a new turn marked the field of language sciences. After the "linguistic turn" of the 60's related to the application of the methodology of structural linguistics in anthropology, semiotics, psychology etc., a new focus appears – context sensitive, called the *pragmatic turn* and based on *language as practice, action, interaction*.

Contextualized processes of meaning construction represent the essence of *language use* (Roventă-Frumușani, 2012) and the concept of *speech act* and performativity is the core of the pragmatic approach to language (*pragma*-gr. action). In the perspective of language philosophy (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969) language theory is a part of *action theory*, and speaking a language means engaging in a complex form of rule-driven behavior. The linguistic unity is no longer the word, but the production of utterances, in other words the speech act (Searle, 1969, p. 28).

Conceived broadly as a field of contextually determined communicative action and interaction, pragmatics provides the explanatory framework for the study of human communication in context through the *principles of conversational strategies* (principle of cooperation, politeness) and of *discourse organization* (speech acts, conversational sequences).

Unlike structuralist linguistics, dominated by the informative, representative function of language, the pragmatic approach insists on the action function of language. Austin (1962) distinguishes in this respect the statements that describe the world-*constatives* and those that perform actions and change the world -*performative* (to perform = to execute). The performative act changes the world and gives an account of "the combined effectiveness of language and society". Any act of language involves a *locutionary dimension* (which is the formation of sentences according to the rules of grammar), an *illocutionary dimension*, related to the "force" or value of the act: request, order, requests, promise, advice, warning, etc., and a *perlocutionary dimension* related to the influence exerted on the audience (unlike institutionalized illocutionary acts, perlocutionary effects are not conventionalized: a promise can rejoice, grieve, leave the audience indifferent). "We need to grasp the total speech act in the total speech situation in order to understand what's been said" (Austin, 1962, p. 147). In this analysis the *total speech act* is represented by the *conversational history* (Golopentia-Eretescu, 2018), based like every narrative on a starting point, complication event and the final (coda)-cf also (Labov & Waletzky, 1967).

In the last lesson of *How to Do Things with Words*, Austin (1962) tentatively singles out five classes of illocutionary acts, using as a starting point a list of explicit performative verbs: *verdictives* (in which a speaker gives a verdict, e.g. acquitting and diagnosing), *exercitives* (in which speakers exercise powers, rights or influence, e.g. excommunicating and resigning), *commissives* (in which speakers commit themselves to courses of action, e.g. promising and betting), *behabitives* (concerning attitudes and social behavior, e.g. apologizing and toasting), and *expositives* (in which speakers clarify how their utterances fit into lines of reasoning, e.g., postulating and defining).

Searle (1976) criticizes Austin's (1962) taxonomy on two central grounds. First, Austin's methodology is unduly lexicographic, assuming that we can learn about the range and limits of illocutionary acts by studying illocutionary verbs in English or other natural languages. However, Searle observes, nothing rules out the possibility of illocutionary acts that are not named by a verb either in a particular language such as Swahili or Bengali, or in any language at all.

For Searle (1976) a speech act consists of a propositional content (p) and an illocutionary force (F): F (p); in his view, a valid act conforms to four conditions of success.

According to four types of conditions (preliminary conditions, propositional content condition, sincerity condition, essential condition), Searle will distinguish (in a categorization similar to the one proposed by Austin): *representative* or assertive acts (assertion, information); *directives* (order, request, question) *commissives* (offer, promise) with illocutionary purpose: accomplishment of a future action by the speaker, *expressives* (congratulations, apology, thanks, complaint) with illocutionary purpose: expression of a psychological state: pleasure/ displeasure,

acceptance/ rejection; *declarations* (declaration, baptism, condemnation) - performative acts in the strongest sense.

The theory of language acts was developed on the basis of Austin's rejection of the descriptive illusion - *descriptive fallacy*, the thesis according to which language describes reality; Austin and Searle, on the other hand, believe that the essential function of language is to act on the world rather than to describe it. For the analyst studying an organization (political party, association, union, administration, enterprise) it will be important to highlight the speech acts characteristic of the organization, because they will "configure certain contours of the identity, missions and actions of the organization" (Krieg -Planque, 2012, p. 77).

Given that institutions are producers of performatives, decree, criticize, denounce, suspend, etc.), speech acts are for them means of action, sometimes even the main means of action for organizations such as the UN, whose communication activity is subsumed to characteristic acts: to warn, to exclude, but also to congratulate (Krieg-Planque, 2012).

In the macro-narrative of the electoral campaign the hierarchy of the speech acts remains more or less similar at the three important moments (initial, median and final); more than 50% representative acts, attacking the opponents (example 6), and presenting the future directions in economy, politics, followed by 19% and 13% commissives implying in equal measure the promises of the candidate as individual and as member of the SDP (example 9 and 10) and 16% directives (implicit and explicit injunctions to vote "with the heart" - example 7). The final discourse is predominantly expressive and affective with a strong solidarity accent; it alternates promises and directives (infra 11 and 12).

9. This is how we will repair the evil done by Iohannis for five years.

10. I will fight with all my strength against them-these men hidden in Cotroceni or in the Palace of the Parliament.

11. I can promise you that I will work much harder than the presidents of the last 30 years have done.

12. Dear Romanians, this Sunday the power is in your hands. I thank everyone and stand by each Romanian. Vote and vote with the heart! Thank you.

Table 2

Discourses and Speech acts

Discourses	First discourse	First	Median	Final
Speech acts	Prime minister	discourse	discourse	discourse
	Investment	Launching in	before the	Before the
		the electoral	election day	second
		campaign (24	(October	round 22
		August 2019)	2019)	November
				2019
Representatives	45 (69%)	37 (78%)	38 (57%)	12 (54,5%)
Directives	4 (6%)	2 (4%)	11 (16,7%)	3 (13,6%)
Commissives	13 (20%)	6 (13%)	13 (19,6%)	3 (13,6%)
Expressives	3 (4,6%)	2 (4 %)	4 (6%)	4 (18,2%)
Declarations				
Total number of acts	65	47	66	22

Identity emerges in interaction through several related indexical processes, including: (a) overt mention of identity categories and labels; (b) implicatures and presuppositions regarding one's own or others' identity position; (c) displayed evaluative and epistemic orientations to ongoing talk, and (d) the use of linguistic structures and systems that are ideologically associated with specific personas and groups (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, p. 594).

Concerning the electoral campaign narrative it should be mentioned that *social identity* indexed by gender, political affiliation, status and *personal identity* (family status, education etc) are working together embedded in the strategic leadership positioning. The linguistic marks indexing this complex identity are first of all the strategic use of interactant pronouns (the I/you dialogue), speech acts and the rhetoric of metaphor meant to emphasize simultaneously gender identity strategically used (maternal metaphors, care, empathy) and leadership positioning.

In addition to micro-level linguistic structures like stance markers and style, we introduced the concept of macro narrative or conversational history able to be indexically tied to identity categories.

Conclusion

In previous research it was shown that stance is (1) public, and is perceivable, interpretable, and available for inspection by others (Englebretson, 2007; Du Bois, 2007); (2) stance is *interactional and relational* - collaboratively constructed and with respect to other stances; (3) stance is *indexical* evoking aspects of the broader sociocultural context (presidential race context and political parties positioning) and of the personal identity (gender identity in our analysis).

It was emphasized that *identities are emergent and dynamic*, situationally negotiated in discourse (Goffman, 1977, 1981), and *gender stereotypes are used strategically* and in ephemeral contingencies of interaction.

However, it is worth noting that one person can be described by different categories (sex, class, status, age) and therefore several identities can be at play simultaneously. Moreover, particular identities are not salient or relevant at all times, but rather several identities are at work in an interactional situation. In this analysis of electoral addresses, the *thematic content* of the speeches is gender neutral (program, investments, national and foreign politics), but the *style* is gender marked (community, solidarity, family values, expressive and commissive speech acts).

Adopting Golopenția's (2018) *conversational history* in new contexts (political monologic speech) it can be concluded that a "conversational history" is possible in different discourse genres, not only in everyday conversations; moreover, identity, ethos, and intersubjectivity interact and construct the writer/speaker-in-the-text, and the reader/hearer-in-the-text, in search of shared knowledge and values, favouring intersubjective engagement.

In line with previous studies, this analysis claims that stance taking, especially in monologic discourses is a form of social action constituted within the *broader scope of language, interaction, and socio-cultural values* (Du Bois, 2007).

The present study contributes to contemporary research on subjectivity, stance and interaction by *anchoring identity in interaction*. By showing that identity is emergent in discourse and does not precede it, it becomes clear that identity is built and functions as an intersubjectively achieved social and cultural event. Further studies might continue along this line, and might also investigate how different types of positioning mark leadership style and contribute to the formation of macro-narratives (conversational histories) about organisations, groups or individuals.

Conflict of interests. The author of this article does not have any conflict of interest

Financing and ethical aspects. The project was not financed from external sources and the author did not obtain an ethical agreement of her institutions.

Acknowledgements

A summary of this paper was presented at the online international conference: “Individual, family, society - contemporary challenges”, fourth edition, 6 to 7 October 2021, Bucharest, Romania and published in the journal *Studii și Cercetări de Antropologie*, No. 7/2021.

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