



Transilvania  
University  
of Brasov

FACULTY OF LETTERS



DN32  
Conference

Discourse Across Cultures

# BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

21-22 March 2025  
Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania

## List of Plenary talks (in alphabetical order)

Răzvan Săftoiu

Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania, razvan.saftoiu@unitbv.ro

### *Linguistic strategies of (im)politeness in political discourse: analysis of Romanian parliamentary motions of no confidence*

In this talk, I will look at the linguistic manifestations of politeness and impoliteness in Romanian parliamentary discourse, during the debates on motions of no confidence (2012- 2020). Drawing on various theories and subsequent developments in the field of (im)politeness studies (Brown and Levinson 1978, 1987; Leech 1983; Culpeper 2005, among others), I discuss how politicians use language to create solidarity or distance and how they sometimes break politeness norms for political gain (credibility, mobilizing supporters, discrediting opponents). The corpus analysis shows that while positive politeness strategies (in-group markers, informal forms of address, expressions of agreement) are occasionally used to signal alignment and cooperation, negative politeness is relatively rare although it is expected in institutional settings like the Parliament. Impoliteness strategies dominate the debates, especially negative impoliteness (direct attacks, insults, accusations, aggressive criticism). Positive impoliteness emerges through direct disagreement, rhetorical questions, inappropriate forms of address, and irony (to highlight opponents' perceived shortcomings). It is interesting to note that even seemingly polite forms are used to convey impolite meanings. This creates a complex interplay between dissimulated politeness and underlying aggressiveness. I will also discuss the speakers' strategic use of stylistic devices (metaphors, comparisons, repetition) and lexical choices that serve as emotional amplifiers in their attempts to delegitimize political opponents.

Keywords: *parliamentary discourse, motion of no confidence, (im)politeness strategies.*

Andrea Szabo

English and American Studies Institute, Pannonia University, Veszprém, Hungary  
szabo.andrea@htk.uni-pannon.hu

### *Discourses of resilience*

The concept of resilience has taken our public discourse by storm in the past few years as it was announced in 2020 to be the compass for European Union policies, which approach the construct from a “multidisciplinary perspective” and a wide “360-degrees” angle. Since then, resilience has been posited as the very foundation of the long-term strategic objectives of the EU, which recognizes that we live at a time when everything seems to be in the process of change and transition, demanding that we too change. In EU policies four interrelated dimensions of resilience have been outlined: the social and economic dimension, the green, the digital, as well as the geopolitical dimensions. On the whole, these altogether cover aspects of the social impact of the green and digital transitions, climate change, the transformation of the personal and public spheres, cybersecurity, and Europe’s global leadership role, among others. A multidisciplinary approach is needed indeed.

Change however is often ushered in by shock and is accompanied by stress that not all respond to in a like manner. Some systems, and some people adapt successfully and flourish, while others do not. Over the past decades we have seen the formation of resilience science, an interdisciplinary field of study spearheaded by Ecology and Psychology, taking its present form in the late 1990s and early 2000s, which seeks to understand why some are more successful than others in adapting to change.

The resilience paradigm is oriented towards understanding complex adaptive systems, rather than relying on the traditional reductive approach typically applied in scientific inquiries. Its major contribution has been, so far, the fact that it has forced science and scientists to re-examine and re-interpret the ‘system’ they study. As a result, scientists have also been forced to re-examine their boundaries, both the boundaries of their field and what they can achieve within those boundaries.

In my talk, I will provide an overview of what resilience is, how the discussions have been framed around it in different disciplines in the past decades, and show why it matters how we talk about human success and failure on the many different levels resilience has been studied: the individual, familial, communal, institutional, regional, national, and global.

**Keywords:** *resilience, EU policies, adaptive systems.*

## List of Contributions (in alphabetical order of the first author)

Mahinur Akşehir

Ceibal Bayar University, Manisa, Türkiye, mahinuraksehir@yahoo.com

*Reessencing the sign: creating alternative realities through counter-discourse as represented in Atwood's "The Penelopiad"*

Slavoj Žižek, basing his arguments on Heidegger's concept of 'wesen der sprache', highlights the 'essencing' quality of language. According to him language has the power to attribute a quality to an object that is indeed external to it. He proposes that when we call the metal 'gold', we automatically attribute our material desires concerning power, wealth and luxury to it, violently ripping it of its real meaning, which is originally just a kind of a metal. This is a solid epitome of the fact that language, by its nature, is far from being an objective and disinterested set of signs. It's rather ideologically encoded through various aspects and it should be decoded from gender-inspired, race-inspired and class-inspired points of view to break its ideological hold on the individuals. This basic tenet of Critical Discourse Analysis will be the basic tool of analysis for this paper which aims to make a gender-inspired comparative analysis of the Homeric epic, *The Odyssey* and its revisionist rewriting *The Penelopiad* by Margaret Atwood.

Atwood, in her brilliant novel, has rewritten the elitist and the hegemonic male discourse of the Homeric epic by subverting it so as to create a more egalitarian and embracing narrative discourse that epitomizes *écriture féminine*, through narrative techniques such as "changing the sentence" and "changing the sequence" that were conceptualised by Rachel DuPlessis in her *Writing Beyond the Ending*. In brief, this paper will be revolving around the possibility of creating a kind of discourse free from the imposition of social hierarchies that are deeply embedded in language through a critical discourse analysis of Atwood's *The Penelopiad* in comparison with Homer's *The Odyssey*.

Reima Al-Jarf

King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabi, reima.al.jarf@gmail

*Metaphorical political slurs in Arab social media discourse*

A metaphorical slur refers to metaphors used as an insinuation or allegation about someone, some group, party or country that is likely to insult them or damage their reputation. Metaphorical slurs refer to personalities, parties, countries, and TV channels that the users oppose or dislike in a derogatory, pejorative, satirical, and/or insulting manner. They can be regarded as pejorative in some social or cultural groups such as a particular Arab country, a particular faith or ethnic group but not in others.

A sample of metaphorical political slurs (MPS) that have been common on Arabic social media since the Arab Spring and current conflicts in the Middle East was collected from Facebook, X, and YouTube. The analysis showed the following types of MPS: (1) *General* MPS referring to: (a) political figures such as *Khissisi* for *President Sisi*; (b) Media (TV channels) as in *Alkhanzeera* (the swine) for *Aljazeera*; (c) countries, states and cities; (d) political and/or opposition parties: *Animal feed of Istanbul* for the Syrian opposition in Istanbul; (2) Religious slurs as *Islamized sheep* for *Muslim Brothers*; and (3) Ethnic and racial slurs as *Satan's Party* and *Lat Idol Party* for Hizbollah in Lebanon.

Structurally, MPS consist of (i) satiric word play (phoneme substitution and interpolation and word substitutions as in *?aahir* (salacious) for *?ahil* (monarch); (ii) combining a general-purpose insult with an ethnicity as in calling Arabs "*a nation of ewes*"; calling Iranians "*fire worshippers*" مجوس; (iii) adding common insulting modifiers to create loaded descriptivism (*history's dump, biggest Satan, tyrant, corrupt*); (iv) animal metaphors as *NATO's dogs, snake's head, America's tail, desert's crab*; (v) object metaphors to dehumanize their opponents as (*Zionist/terrorist Jolani, regime's trumpet*, الشبيحة).

Semantically and pragmatically, metaphorical slurs express demonization, dehumanization, abuse, disparagement, contempt, criticism, hostility and/or disrespect. Further analyses and examples will be given.

Hussain Al Sharoufi

Gulf University of Science and Technology, Kuwait, shuroofi@yahoo.com

*Enhancing English fluency: teaching English through pragmemic discourse*

This study explores integrating pragmatic-discoursal acts and cultural linguistics into English Language Teaching (ELT) to address the limitations of traditional linguistic theories that overlook sociocultural contexts. Over the last half-century, linguistic theories have developed, but their concentration on rule-oriented learning tends to disregard how language is used in real-world contexts. The development of pragmatics alongside cultural linguistics has led to techniques that weave cultural and contextual influences into language education. In a classroom of 30 learners at Gulf University for Science and Technology in Kuwait, this research utilized pragmemes, which are context-specific communicative actions in discourse, along with culturemes, which refer to expressions deeply rooted in culture. Learners evaluated these components alongside their English equivalents, using written assessments and group discussions for analysis. The findings reveal that incorporating these cultural elements enhances students' ability to understand and use English more naturally, fostering awareness of cultural differences and improving their discoursal confluence. This underscores the significance of incorporating cultural frameworks into education to enhance communication skills. As the first step in the methodology, students were presented with an array of cultural schemas originating from both Arabic and English traditions. Cognitive frameworks influenced by culture guide how people perceive and understand various events and behaviours, drawing from a pool of shared cultural insights. The task given to students was to compare these cultural constructs with their English counterparts and take note of any obvious or subtle differences. They were instructed to select the speech act that is most contextually appropriate for given circumstances. Through this task, students gained insight into the multifaceted aspects of pragmatic selections affected by societal expectations. By examining the variations in specific speech acts, such as requests and apologies, across the two languages, students gained a deeper understanding of the influence of cultural standards on language. Context-driven techniques were used in the methodology to provide grammar instruction, which helped students recognize how cultural and situational elements shape language and grammatical structures. By meeting the outlined procedures, learners were prepared to comprehend how their grammatical decisions relate to practical situations in everyday life. Faculty members demonstrated the language used in real-life scenarios to students. Students examined conversations in Arabic and English, exploring how pragmatic aspects such as the audience, purpose, and tone of a message influence grammatical structures.

The aim of this research is to bridge a significant gap in current language instruction methodologies, which will contribute to the existing knowledge. While grammar and structure are still the main focus, it is crucial to incorporate cultural and contextual aspects into teaching methods.

Zahra Al Sharoufi

Université Libre de Brussels, Belgium, alsharoufi.zahra@gmail.com

*The construction of a diamesic competency within foreign speakers of French: a  
sociocultural perspective on language acquisition*

This study investigates how French Language acquisition, which varies from one learner to another, plays a detrimental role on the quality of the learner's oral production. This research focuses on the "Diamesic" variation of French (Belgian or other Francophone variations), as well as "Diaphasic" variations, in some cases. According to the collected qualitative data, this study prefers: a thematic analysis of spoken French variants on real case studies; an investigation on the type of linguistic "input" and its impact on the learner's "output," and an examination of the learners' "linguistic attitudes" regarding the French language spoken in Belgium and in other francophone countries. Thus, the incorporation of a pedagogical analysis is of utmost importance in order to reach the point of interest; the production of a diamesic competency within foreign learners of French – students of the FLE (Français Langue Etrangère) programme.

A necessary tool would be the "Communicative Approach" as a pedagogical theory, to aid the implementation of a francophone pseudo-immersion in a foreign language class through non-traditional pedagogical resources and structures. This study conveys how the communicative approach encourages a faster and more productive output through its recognition of the importance of context and the way in which language is pragmatically linked to situations of communication. By taking into consideration the current socio-cultural situation, especially in Brussels, where multiculturalism and plurilingualism are at their peak, this study also takes into account 'inclusive pedagogy' by adapting language learning according to the students' linguistic level, socio-political context, and cultural/ethnic backgrounds. The art of pedagogical adaptation and cultural immersion are the keys to a productive 'input'.

Apart from a purely pedagogical perspective, this study also analyses the qualitative data produced by foreign speakers of French (chosen interviewees for the sociolinguistic experiment), expressing their linguistic attitudes regarding the French Language. Through the study of this subjective data, a deeper examination could, therefore, be fulfilled. The analysis of cognitive, affective, and behavioural dimensions (with a focus on the Belgian French variant) would enhance the understanding of this discursal phenomenon. These preliminary analyses of the culturally differing students, give access to the type of input that each student had, hence the possibility of a further analysis and comparison of different inputs according to the differing pedagogical implementations throughout the years. By doing so, the already-existing pedagogies would be better understood and developed. This heavily depends on contextual parameters like socio-political history, religion, ethnicity, and social status. Context is, therefore, at the heart of this

study; the way context is analysed both ways, from the teacher's perspective (the analysis of the student's cultural background), and from the student's perspective (the analysis of the cultural elements within the teacher's pseudo immersion in class).

Nigar Babayeva

Baku Slavic University, Baku, Azerbaijan, babayevanigar.bsu@gmail.com

### *Sustainable development of cultural values and the translation process*

The concept of sustainable development is a new theoretical model of civilization's progress that arises from the need to ensure a global balance between social-economic problems and environmental protection in modern society. Although sustainable development primarily focuses on environmental conservation and the efficient use of natural resources, this concept also applies to the humanities. We must continuously transmit our culture, language, and literature to future generations. One of the best and most effective ways of conveying the culture of one nation to another is through translation, especially literary translation. By applying the concept of sustainable development to translation, the paper aims to explore the process of cultural transmission through translation.

A significant group of lexical units reflecting the purely national characteristics of Azerbaijani and English ethnography includes the names of settlements, household tools, clothing, food, and beverages. The emergence of culturally specific linguistic units in these areas is closely linked to the unique lifestyles, historical experiences, and cultural realities of the English and Azerbaijani peoples. In English, the formation of culturally specific terms denoting weapons, boats, foods, drinks, clothing, and other items characteristic of the indigenous peoples' way of life was influenced by the respective countries' natural environments and interaction with native peoples with distinct lifestyles and experiences. Cultural elements such as traditions, ceremonies, festivals, and other public events, with their specific motifs and performance features, have contributed to the creation of culturally marked words in English. Cultural elements common to other European peoples also acquired distinct nuances against the background of the English way of life and experience, becoming uniquely English cultural terms. The cultural identity of the Azerbaijani people is reflected in their clothing, culinary traditions, ethnic worldview, and religious beliefs, all of which are embedded in culturally specific terms in the language. While the primary sources of mythological and religious cultural references in the English language stem from ancient Greek and Roman mythology, Christianity, and the pagan and shamanistic worldviews of indigenous peoples in English-speaking countries, the religious and mythological worldview of the Azerbaijani people is rooted in ancient Turkic beliefs and Islam. Azerbaijani culture is an integral



part of the greater Turkic cultural heritage. Thus, cultural values reflecting the lifestyles of the English and Azerbaijani peoples, living in different geographical regions of the world, are transmitted to one another through translation.

Virgil Borcan

Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania, virgilborcan@yahoo.com

*From Hastings to Montesquieu: Franco-English cultural interferences*

The theme "From Hastings to Montesquieu: Franco-English cultural interferences" explores the cultural, political and intellectual relations between France and England from the Battle of Hastings (1066) to the Enlightenment of Montesquieu (18th century). The direction of influence is biunivocal and manifests itself in numerous areas: the introduction of feudalism on the French model, the influence of the French language on medieval English, architectural and legal transformations inspired by French traditions. I propose to trace the cultural exchanges from the Plantagenets to the Age of Enlightenment, including Eleanor of Aquitaine, Chrétien de Troyes, Geoffrey Chaucer, Erasmus, Thomas More, Rabelais, Montaigne, Shakespeare and Montesquieu. It will be noted that the two cultures form a complex system of communicating vessels.

Elena Buja

Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania, elena.buja@unitbv.ro

*Family relations in the Korean and Romanian rural societies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: a cultural dimensions account*

Family relations are at the core of all societies, shaping the future of any young person. While in most cultures it is the mother-children relationship that has been explored, mothers being closer to their offspring, the father-children relationship has started to be tackled more recently, especially from a psychological or medical perspective.

The aim of the current paper is to study the family relations in two cultures, situated continents apart, i.e. the Korean and the Romanian ones, in an attempt to bring to the surface specific cultural and social aspects related to the power relations between spouses and between fathers and children.

The data employed are two novels, representative of each culture: Marin Preda's (1955) *Moromeţii* (volume I) and Kyung-Sook Shin's (2023) *I Went to My Father*, whereas the theoretical

framework the analysis is based on is a combination of Hofstede's (1984, 1991) cultural dimensions theory, according to which the culture of a particular society may impact the values and behaviours of its members, and Foucault's (1983) theory of power.

I expect that despite shared characteristics of the two cultures (both are collectivistic societies, with a high power distance index, according to Hofstede (1984)), the analysis will reveal some particular characteristics in terms of the driving force in each of the two families considered.

Gabriela Chefneux

Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania, gabriela.chefneux@unitbv.ro

### *Identity in students' narratives*

The paper analyses students' identity as expressed in narratives. The data were collected during an interview conducted with seven undergraduate students who were asked to narrate a memorable experience in their professional life.

The analysis of the answers is based on the constructionist approach to identity, which considers identity as manifested in individuals' social actions, developed in discourse, and fluid (De Fina and Gerogakopoulou 2013, Benwell and Stokoe 2006, Cohen 2010, Widdicombe 2008). The narratives are interpreted as a way of understanding the world and making sense of one's life, the narrators describing and evaluating themselves (Benwell and Stokoe 2006) and emphasizing the values they consider significant.

Ioana Clara Enescu

Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania, ioanaclaraenescu@yahoo.com

### *Discourse and culture in language teaching: a Romanian textbook for Chinese learners*

This paper explores the intersection of language teaching and Chinese cultural values through analyzing the design of a Romanian language textbook for Chinese students. Rooted in the holistic, harmony-oriented worldview of Chinese philosophy (Shi-xu, 2014), contemporary Chinese discourse reflects a distinct cultural and pedagogical framework that influences foreign language teaching methodologies in China. By analyzing the Romanian textbook, this paper demonstrates how a language learning tool can be seen as a discourse on Chinese culture, presenting language acquisition within the context of Chinese educational traditions and cultural norms.

The textbook's structure and pedagogical strategies align with Chinese methods, emphasizing clear explanations, repetition, and systematic learning, which are integral to Chinese education. Additionally, the content is tailored to make Romanian more relatable by incorporating culturally relevant examples and analogies from the Chinese worldview. This approach allows Chinese learners to engage with Romanian culture through the lens of their own cultural background, fostering a cultural filter that shapes their understanding.

Furthermore, the textbook's treatment of Romanian culture encourages students to reflect on their own cultural identity. By comparing Romanian and Chinese traditions, values, and social norms, it prompts learners to engage in cultural self-reflection, enhancing the intercultural learning experience. The textbook not only facilitates language acquisition but also promotes intercultural communication, fostering a deeper understanding of both cultures.

This paper is not only a description of the textbook's design but can also be seen as a tool for Romanian language teachers working with Chinese students. Understanding the link between Chinese discourse and language learning is crucial for enhancing the teacher's intercultural competence. By reflecting on these cultural dynamics, teachers can better navigate the complexities of teaching Romanian in a Chinese context, ultimately improving the effectiveness of their pedagogical approach.

Rabeb Ghanmi

University of Pannonia, Veszprém, Hungary, ghanmi.rabeb@htk.uni-pannon.hu

*Exploring the multilingual mind: metalinguistic abilities and motivation in trilingual learners decoding an unfamiliar language system*

This study investigates the relationship between multilingual awareness and language motivation, through the application of Dörnyei's seven motivational constructs identified in a longitudinal study (Dörnyei et al., 2006) conducted from 1993 to 2004. These motivational components fall within the framework of the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) that was later developed to offer a more self-based understanding of language motivation. Building on prior research highlighting that metalinguistic and crosslinguistic awareness, as meta-emergent properties in multilingual individuals, expedite multiple language learning and use (Herdina and Jessner, 2002), this research aims to unravel Hungarian secondary school students' use of their multilingual background to decode texts in an unfamiliar language. This study explores whether a heightened level of meta- and cross-linguistic awareness correlates with stronger motivation and decoding skills, and how this relationship manifests within Dörnyei's motivational constructs. The

study involves 134 Hungarian high school students, speakers of L2 English and L3 French, who are enrolled in a French bilingual program. Participants were administered the Language Experience and Proficiency Questionnaire (LEAP-Q), a language motivation questionnaire, an English proficiency test, a French proficiency test, a reading comprehension test in Italian, which is an unfamiliar language to them, and a retrospective questionnaire. The results show a significant relationship between metalinguistic abilities and the ability to decode an unknown language. Students with heightened metalinguistic abilities show greater success in deciphering the Italian texts, as they reflected on similarities between their previously learnt languages and the Italian language at lexical, structural, and phonological levels. Furthermore, the study found seven motivational constructs similar to those identified by Dörnyei et al. (2006), with some discrepancies observed in factor loadings. Students were surprisingly shown to be, to a certain extent, more motivated in learning English even though enrolled in a French bilingual program. The results of the current research (i) highlight gripping features of how Hungarian L1 students process an unfamiliar language and (ii) underscore the importance of metalinguistic awareness and language motivation in learning additional languages (Ln), promoting the usefulness of having a rich linguistic background in Ln acquisition.

Najla Lilya Jaballah

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Limerick, Ireland,  
Najla.Lilya.Jaballah@ul.ie, najla.l.jaballah@gmail.com  
and

Ahlem Bounechada

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Limerick, Ireland,  
Ahlem.Bounechada@ul.ie, ahlem.bounechada@yahoo.com

*Hegemonic masculinity in political discourse: a comparative analysis of Trump's and El-Sisi's Speeches*

Political leadership is often deeply intertwined with notions of masculinity, shaping public perceptions and reinforcing cultural expectations of authority and dominance. This study explores the construction of hegemonic masculinity in political discourse by analysing recent speeches of the current US president, Donald Trump, and the Egyptian president, Abdel Fattah El-Sisi. The researchers intend to draw attention to R.W. Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity, as well as its presence in performing a traditional and thus political masculinity, to present the stance of

each president. Above that, using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), this study examines how both leaders, grasping firm political positions regarding their stands, deploy discursive strategies to mirror authority, dominance, and control. This, in turn, reflects culturally and politically ideal perceptions and performances of conventional masculinity. The analysis is centred on certain linguistic features such as assertiveness, emotional restraint, appeals to strength, and nationalism, revealing how these traits align with and reinforce political, cultural, and social expectations of leadership. To address these features, this research also aims to shed light on the differences in how conventional masculinity is performed and framed within Western and Middle Eastern perspectives, offering insights into the intersection of power and masculine gender identity in political rhetoric. Findings suggest that while Trump's discourse often emphasises personal success, competition, and confrontation to make "America great again", and, most importantly, confrontation, El-Sisi's speeches frame leadership within paternalistic and protective narratives, mirroring Middle-Eastern values of authority and national unity. With regard to the above, this study intends to contribute to the understanding of the role of so-called conventional political masculinity in shaping public perceptions of leadership across both Western and Middle-Eastern cultures. It highlights the discursive mechanisms through which power and hegemonic masculine identity are intertwined in political communications and positions.

Raluca Levonian

"Ovidius" University of Constanța, Romania, r.levonian@gmail.com  
and

Ioana-Cristina Joița

University of Bucharest, Romania, ioana-cristina.joita@unibuc.ro

*Teaching Romanian culture to foreign language learners: an experiment involving  
students' understanding of visual arts*

Cultural awareness and intercultural communication are generally viewed as essential objectives in the process of foreign language learning. However, it is difficult to assess precisely what should be done in order to achieve these objectives. Foreign language textbooks often marginalize cultural information and focus on the linguistic content (Liddicoat and Scarino 2013), instead of viewing language awareness and cultural awareness as mutually supportive (Byram 1991). The selection of content poses another challenge. According to the European Reference Framework (Council of the European Union, 2018), one of key competences for lifelong learning

is represented by cultural awareness, which involves “knowledge of local, national, regional, European and global cultures”. However, cultural education involves a wide array of topics, ranging from traditions and customs, history and geography to politeness and degree of formality in personal and institutional settings (Nizegorodcew 2011) that cannot be discussed in detail in class because of time constraints. The current paper focuses on a specific aspect of culture, the art of painting, that represents a topic in the courses of Romanian culture taught to foreign students in the preparatory year at Romanian universities. First, we investigate students’ views and understandings of specific artworks based on a small-scale experiment conducted with a group of foreign students from the University of Bucharest. Second, based on their responses, we propose ways of teaching the topic of visual arts in the courses on Romanian language and culture, in order to raise students’ interest and cultural awareness.

Massimiliano Napoli

Rome University of Fine Arts, Rome, Italy, [massimiliano.napoli@unirufa.it](mailto:massimiliano.napoli@unirufa.it)

*Beyond borders: the cross-cultural impact of street art*

Street art is a universal language that steps over linguistic and cultural boundaries just because it’s strongly related to urban spaces – in particular, “the street”. So, street art becomes a site-specific textualization system that changes urban spaces into open-air art galleries and, moreover, into effective plots for a typical public dialectic towards social, political, economic, and environmental issues. In fact, murals, graffiti, performances and installations are not only expressive devices but real discourses that frequently go beyond national borders, stimulating reflections on wide critical issues of the contemporary. Street art is a dynamic and always evolving discursive process that feeds on the different urban cultures and subcultures, outlining expressive directions and communicative flows on a global level, constituting real connections between art, politics, and everyday life.

Stanca Măda

Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania, stanca.mada@gmail.com

*Verbal humour in romantic comedies. A Romanian-Korean comparative study from a sociolinguistic perspective*

Movies often display values, attitudes and social constructs associated with a certain cultural space. In romantic comedies, scriptwriters make use of verbal humour to shape identities and social relationships which are culturally embedded in the production of the movie. The paper offers a contrastive account of the various types and social functions of verbal humour in two romantic comedies: a Romanian series (*Come on, I like it! Room 609*, 2023, created by Ruxandra Ion, 34 episodes) and a Korean one (*Crash Landing on You*, 2019, written by Park Ji-eun, 16 episodes). The analysis focuses on the social contexts in which humour occurs, on the humorous construction of various characters and on the gender related humorous comments, highlighting the following functions of verbal humour: to entertain the audience in a relatable manner, to release/ diffuse tension and anxiety, to tease an insider, to facilitate relationships, to cope with a distressing situation, to attack, control or defend a person, to express feelings, to contest the established authority. The analysis is based on the English translations of both scripts and provides cultural background information where needed. The study contributes to the understanding of a rather traditional humorous discourse (that of romantic comedies) from a cross-cultural perspective, involving both European and Asian worldviews

Cecilia Peleggi

DxS Design (per) Semiotics, Rome, Italy, cecilia.peleggi.dxs@gmail.com

*Muted sequential art. Comics as a cross-cultural discourse*

When speaking about 'discourse' we tend to think about words and languages. Here I propose that a cross-cultural discourse doesn't necessarily involve words, taking as an example sequential art. Comics in their modern acceptance are born as commercial objects and developed as a full narrative language and art, going so far as to breaking borders to speak worldwide. How did they do it? They stopped talking. Starting from Scott McCloud's definition of comics as "*juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer*" (McCloud 1994), it is decreed that words are not essential to the transmission of this pictorial discourse, property which made it a precious tool for

mass communication, as we see through the phenomena of 'wordless novels', sequential images conceived in the 15th century as religious guides which then, in the 20th century, flourished in Europe with the Expressionist movement – primarily with Frans Masereel's work – and as a propaganda tool for socialists in their fight against capitalism. Aware of these premises, the core of this brief speech will be the analysis of Shaun Tan's (2007) *The Arrival*, a sublime wordless comic book about migration, belonging, war, and hope. In this masterpiece the author combines his great graphic technique with a true example of engaging storytelling: to narrate the travel and the struggles of a man leaving his country for a better future, he invents a land with alien-like shapes, structures and a whole new alphabet so that all readers will feel foreigners, no matter where they come from.

Andreea Petre

Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania, andreea.petre@unitbv.ro

*Aspects of representation of masculinity in the current Romanian advertising discourse*

A central element of economic culture, advertising is a form of communication through which information is provided, attracting the attention of the recipient, the intention of the issuer being to obtain a response, a reaction from the consumer. The social dimension of advertising is largely determined by its ability to reflect the needs, aspirations and desires of the public. In order to achieve its persuasive purpose, advertising constructs a spectacle to which stereotypes contribute. These allow the construction and reception of easily identifiable schemes which, through familiarity, create mental comfort for the target audience (Moraru 2009).

This paper focuses on gender stereotypes, more specifically on the image of masculinity, as it appears in recent advertisements broadcast on Romanian television channels. It is known that Romanian society has long been dominated by a patriarchal vision, which has had at its center the image of the secure, domineering man, while femininity has been under the sign of fragility and vulnerability. However, it can be observed that in the current advertising discourse is increasingly present, as a persuasive strategy, the antistereotype (Moraru 2009), which undermines, through humor and irony, the established image of the male hero.



Raluca-Nicoleta Rogoveanu

"Ovidius" University of Constanța, Romania, ralucarogoveanu@gmail.com

*Shared spaces, shared stories: the boarding house experience of the Romanian immigrants in America in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century*

This study focuses on the voluntary associations created by the Romanian immigrants in the United States, which function as "ethnic mechanisms" (Steinmetz) shaping the immigrants' experience, preserving Romanian loyalties and creating manifold opportunities for members to Americanize through variegated practices and experiences. My interest goes on the period 1900-1930, a deeply formative period for the Romanian immigrants in the United States, as they navigated the challenges of assimilation while striving to preserve their cultural identity in a rapidly changing American society.

While delving into the geography of the Romanian immigrant experience mirrored in ethnic organizations, this study offers an in-depth description of boarding houses, construed as spaces of civic participation and agreement on core social aims and as valuable research sites for understanding the process of immigrant socialization at the grass-roots level. The article assesses the collective identity-forging potential of such ethnic institutions and considers the significance of language and interaction in the construction, enactment and performance of the Romanian ethnicity in the United States.

Olivia Țîrlea

Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, t.olivia95@gmail.com

*Lexiculturemes, harbingers of spring: with one eye in the textbooks of Romanian as a foreign language and with another in the Romanian cultural space*

In an era of globalization, *knowing how to speak a foreign language* is constantly acquiring new and new values. Thus, grammatical accuracy, once so coveted, and mastery of a rich vocabulary in a foreign language (a non-native/a secondary/a desirable language to be acquired), seem to be insufficient today in the absence on minimal sociocultural knowledge.

This is also the case, for example, of Romanian *lexiculturemes* belonging to the lexical field of "calendar holidays". The RLS (Romanian as a Foreign Language) learner, level A1-A2, has already learned, from the textbooks, common terms that are used in any language, such as: "primăvară" (spring -season), "martie", "aprilie", "mai" (March, April May -months of the year), "cald", "soare" (warm, sun - weather), "flori", "grădină botanică" (flowers, botanical garden - leisure activities), but

encounters, in the Romanian cultural space, on the street or at the supermarket, a special word, such as "mărțișor".

On this basis, according to the lexicultural approach, theorized, in the French academic environment, by Robert Galisson, some words own some of cultural information that is difficult to access for the non-native speaker. In other words, the learner is asked to look, from time to time, beyond the form of the word, questioning not only "How do you say...?/What is the word for x...?", but, above all, "What do you mean by...?". We will therefore also exploit on reflections on *lexicultureme* from RLS Didactic (Elena Platon), respectively *cultureme* from Translation studies (Georgiana-Lungu Badea, Diana Moțoc). That we are talking about relatively new concepts is also demonstrated by their absence from Romanian linguistic rhetoric, with the exception of MDN, where the term "cultureme" is, though, present.

Specifically, in our communication, we aim to see to what extent the contents included in various RLS textbooks manage to provide the learner with sufficient tools to understand and to use appropriately the inputs seen in our everyday life (i.e., multimedia messages). The debate is more necessary as the *Companion Volume* (CV) of 2018 also includes a *General Scale for Facilitating Pluricultural Space*. Furthermore, referring to the same CV, where the one who acquires a foreign language is defined as having an active role in the process of the acquisition, the current concern, in this field, remains that of offering him the chance to highlight his quality as an intercultural mediator too.

Adrian Toader

Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania, toader.adrian@unitbv.ro

### *The face of expressives in political discourse: navigating the migration crisis in the European Parliament*

One of the most pressing issues openly discussed in the European Parliament deals with the topic of the migration crisis. The increasing number of refugees seeking political asylum on European soil, especially after the 2015 Syrian refugee crisis, has prompted member states to find common ground on how to support migrants and successfully integrate them within their societies. While the European Union actively seeks to find common ground and a unitary approach on dealing with these issues, debating them in the European Parliament generated both convergent and opposing views on the subject.

The starting point of this research is that the identity of the minority group is actively and re-actively negotiated by members of parliament (MPs hereafter) during public speeches, follow-ups

and interpellations. Their stance on socio-political and economic aspects, closely tied to the migration crisis, reveals diverse ideological, nationalistic and political views (Toader 2023).

This study examines how the identity of minority groups is co-constructed in Parliamentary discourse from a pragma-linguistic perspective. The research is framed within Speech Act Theory (Searle 1969, Searle 1976, Searle and Vanderveken 1995) and investigates how MPs project the identity of minority groups through appreciative and depreciative expressives. Appreciative speech acts include subtypes such as compliments, praises, and self-praises, typically projecting a positive assessment of the minority groups and the collective efforts of member states in dealing with this crisis. Depreciative speech acts encompass subtypes like insults, criticism, reproaches, imprecations, self-criticism, and self-deprecation. These negatively project the image of the minority group, revealing polarizing views within the European Parliament.

The purpose of the research is to investigate how the topic of migration is interpreted through the political lenses of the European Parliament when dealing with the migration crisis in Europe (from 2015 to 2025). By using a qualitative approach, this study analyzes the syntactic structure of the selected corpus to explore how the identity of minority groups is contextualized in positive, evaluative, and negative terms through the use of expressive speech acts. The corpus of the analysis comprises 20 follow-up speeches delivered in the European Parliament. The selection process was done by choosing publically-available speeches directly dealing with migration from various perspectives and ideological positions. The research also accounts for the illocutionary force and perlocutionary effects of expressives in political discourse, highlighting some potential image-building strategies and rhetorical impacts generated by appreciative and depreciative views on migration in Europe.

This research aims to shed light on the intricate ways in which political discourse shapes and reshapes the identity of minority groups, ultimately influencing public perception and policy-making within the European Union.

Noemi Tudor (Uretu)

Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania, noemitudor95@yahoo.com

### *Digital ethnic humorous discourses*

Weaver (2014) states that ethnicity is a common topic in humour research. Davies (1998) mentions that most ethnic minorities become the butt of ethnicity-centered humour. In the Romanian context, most ethnicity-centered humorous discourses target the Hungarians and the Gypsies (Popescu, 2011). In these discourses, usually, Romanians, as a central group, target Hungarians and Gypsies, the butts, i.e., the peripheral groups. Other times, the center-periphery

relationship switches, the Magyars/Szeklers<sup>1</sup> targeting the Romanians (Tudor, 2020). Laineste (2009, 31) shows that “[n]ow is the perfect time to analyse post-socialist jokelore in Eastern and Central Europe and to compare the results to the jokes of the well-established democracies of Western Europe”. The quotation, selected as the motto of the presentation, projects the niche of the research I undertook, mirroring the vision of Eastern European researchers on the need to collect and analyse humorous discourses circulating in former communist countries. The specificity of humour in these countries renders a broad approach to ethnically themed humour. Although European Union law prohibits discrimination of any kind, including ethnicity/minority group membership, ethnic humour is still a reflection of stereotypical information associated with these groups and of the interethnic relations that are being built at a social level.

My main research questions are: (1) *What sociocultural information does one need in order to interpret ethnic memes in extenso?*; (2) *What stereotypes/themes are accessed in the process of interpretation of ethnic memes that were posted on social media in the last three years?*

In order to offer a suitable answer to these research questions, I use Yus’s (2016) application of relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986/1995) to humour. Therefore, the *Intersecting Circles Model* (2013a, 2013b, 2016) is used to show which stereotypical information is activated during the interpretation, as part of the *cultural frame* (one of these intersecting circles).

Cristina Silvia Vâlcea

Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania, cristina.valcea@unitbv.ro

### *Interdiscursivity in antiscientific texts: hybridity and historicity*

Antiscientific discourse comes as a surprise to many who have not paid close attention to the unfurling of a tendency that takes over larger and larger stacks of people. Yet, far from being new, the antiscientific discourse is a social construct ensuing from a permanent restructuring of preexisting discourses (intertextual and interdiscursive diachronic and synchronic ones). The goal of this study is to demonstrate the hybridity of the current antiscientific discourse by tracking back the possible incipient antiscientific discourses; secondly, the dialogical construction of the antiscientific discourse by recontextualization will be tested in terms of the order of discourse it belongs to, namely, health-related contesting discourse. The study is based on a collection of modern statements issued by American and Romanian officials against health-related preventive

---

<sup>1</sup> One can notice that Hungarian is the name given by Romanians in their jokes that target the Hungarian ethnic group (as a peripheral group), while this group self-identifies as Magyar or Szekler when the joke is told from its perspective (as a central group).

measures in 21<sup>st</sup> century pandemic times. Another collection consists of previous facts, statements and reactions from previous centuries which were issued during similar pandemic periods. Searching for the roots of modern antiscientific attitudes in the contesting discourse of various types in previous eras demonstrates the hybrid and historicist character of this discourse type. The findings indicate that newer antiscientific ideas derive from older ones, sometimes relying on arguments that originate in other domains. Overall, modern antiscientific concerns have their origin in older antiscientific discourse which are recirculated or split and reunited to the detriment of science.

Galina Yavorska

National Institute for Strategic Studies, Kyiv, Ukraine, galina.yavorska@gmail.com

*'Saving fear of nuclear weapons' as a formula for Russian nuclear blackmail. Linguistic and pragmatic aspects*

The call to 'revive the saving fear' was made at a presentation of the new book by Kremlin analysts 'From Deterrence to Intimidation' (Trenin et al. 2024). The text was prepared in connection with the updated Russian nuclear doctrine, which provides for a lower threshold for the use of nuclear weapons. It also reveals some new aspects of Russian nuclear blackmail in Russia's political discourse taken through the prism of two types of speech acts - threats and promises.

Nuclear blackmail, along with criminal and other types of blackmail, is a kind of discursive activity, i.e. it is carried out with the help of language and other semiotic means. As a rule, a blackmailer uses verbal threats and promises (Blanco 2010, Yavorska 2023). S/he uses fear as a coercive tool, but does not use it as a component of the argumentation. It is almost impossible to tell the addressee directly 'I am threatening you', or "Be afraid of me!" because this would negate the meaning of the threat. Just as the hypothetical 'I'm lying' contains a logical contradiction and negates the lie (Vendler 1976).

A blackmailer would never say: 'Now I'm going to intimidate you and use your fear to make you do what I want you to do.' He acts with hints, and at the same time warns the victim previously, threatening severe consequences for refusing to comply with his demands (Christensen 2019). This is partly similar to the behaviour of terrorists, who also use fear, but not as a warning, but as a tool to create a state of mass terror that occurs after a terrorist attack.

Thus, Russia and Putin's court analysts easily overcome the conventional rules of communication, breaking the logical constraints that underpinned the so-called "rational deterrence" of the Cold War. They openly exploit collective fear like terrorists and turn it into a warning tool like ordinary blackmailers. Moreover, the phrase about the 'salvific' role of fear in the context of nuclear threats contains clear quasi-religious connotations inherent in contemporary Russian political discourse.

Rok Zupančič

University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, rok.zupancic@fdv.uni-lj.si

*The power of narratives: how local stories averted bloodshed in Baljvine, Bosnia-Herzegovina*

This paper examines the role of interethnic narratives in shaping peaceful coexistence in Baljvine, a village in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) that remained untouched by the interethnic violence that swept through much of the country during the 1992–1995 war. While dominant peacebuilding frameworks focus on structural factors that contribute to interethnic violence, we argue that the same factors, when refracted through specific discursive and cultural lenses, can also explain the absence of violence. Using a multi-method research approach—combining ethnographic observation, in-depth interviews, and discourse analysis—we investigate how historical narratives of interethnic cooperation were remembered, reinforced, and transmitted across generations. The findings reveal that locally embedded stories of peaceful coexistence functioned as a discursive framework that countered divisive wartime rhetoric, reshaping structural conditions and fostering intercommunal resilience. By conceptualizing Baljvine as a "peace mosaic," we highlight how discursive patterns and cultural narratives can align to create an environment resistant to conflict.

This study contributes to narrative studies, peace building, and sociolinguistics by demonstrating how cultural discourse shapes conflict dynamics, offering insights into the potential of narrative-based interventions in post-conflict reconciliation efforts.



## PANELS

### I. *Discourses on **otherness** across and beyond cultures*

#### Sub-panel A: Discourses on **otherness** across cultures

##### 1. Paola Giorgis

Proponent and coordinator of IOW – In Other Words, [paola.giorgis@iowdictionary.org](mailto:paola.giorgis@iowdictionary.org)

##### *Introducing **otherness**/othering*

##### 2. Bilyana Todorova

South-West University "Neofit Rilski", Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria, [bilyanatodorova@swu.bg](mailto:bilyanatodorova@swu.bg)

##### *The role of social media and political language in creating division between social groups via true and imagined memories*

Nostalgia is a complex phenomenon which is often used in political language, in marketing, in social media, etc. It may be seen as a community builder and it may create the feeling of belonging. However, it may also function as a manipulative device, as shared narratives about 'the good old times' often provoke nostalgic emotions. These messages value the past, presented as a time of simplicity, clean morals, and understanding among people who share a common culture and values or as a time of glory and prosperity. However, these narratives are often divisive as they exclude minority groups and fuel conservative attitudes.

The presentation aims to show some examples of political messages in different contexts containing nostalgic hints and the reactions they evoke in the audience. It will reveal some of the mechanisms by which nostalgic messages reach people even when they might be contradictory to the facts.

##### 3. Olena Semenets

Volodymyr Dahl East Ukrainian National University, Ukraine, [olenasemenets@gmail.com](mailto:olenasemenets@gmail.com)

##### *The concept of the sacred and changes in the public consciousness of Ukrainians during the Great War*

Russia, in its war against Ukraine, aims to destroy Ukrainian statehood and national identity. In this war, Russia also seeks to conquer Ukrainian Christian shrines, which have a thousand-year history. The struggle for Christian values, sacred war, is an important component of the information confrontation. How is this dimension of the war reflected in Ukrainian media discourses? The research uses the case study method and the critical discourse analysis approach.

## Sub-panel B: Discourses on **otherness** beyond cultures

### 4. Andrea C. Valente

York University, Canada, prof.acval@gmail.com

#### *The educator in the GenAI movement: destabilizations, otherness and discourses*

Artificial Intelligence has recently gained social attention with the launch of generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, Claude, and Copilot, raising concerns about their impact on high-skilled professions, particularly educators, destabilising a solid and traditional position. Hence, this presentation identifies a new group of agents, the AI Educators, as seen on platforms such as X, and it aims to discuss their levels of ethos, logos, and trustworthiness. It uses Burke's rhetorical pentad elements to analyse the symbolic otherness that emerges out of the social media discourse that can lead to division and disruption of human teachers, mainly in the context of higher education.

### 5. Ivaka Mavrodieva

Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Sofia, Bulgaria, mavrodieva@phls.uni-sofia.bg

#### *Otherness between creativity and repetition, between membership and individuality*

The presentation discloses the peculiarities in the behavior of Internet users, trolls, lurkers, haters and members of echo chambers and virtual forums at the level of difference and otherness. The presentation includes results in terms of creativity, replication of ready-made expressions and phrases, representation of individuality and their identity in virtual environments when using digital tools.

The focus is on presenting directions for future research on the identity of the individual. The research method is a cyberethnographic study.

### 6. Paola Giorgis

Proponent and coordinator of IOW – In Other Words, paola.giorgis@iowdictionary.org

#### *Conclusion. Challenging discourses on **otherness**. Examples from the online dictionary In Other Words*



## II. *The frontiers of discourse: media, war, and identity in crisis contexts*

This panel explores how public discourses are constructed, contested and instrumentalized in contexts of crisis, with a particular focus on war, migration and media representations. In a world where information circulates rapidly and is often subject to ideological reinterpretation, it becomes essential to understand the mechanisms through which collective perceptions are formed and the impact they have on society.

Discussions will address how social conflicts and crises are reflected in the public space and how the legitimacy of certain actors, ideas or actions is constructed through discourse. We will analyse the processes through which media contribute to the formation of dominant narratives and the shaping of political and social positions. In this context, new technologies, including artificial intelligence, which are profoundly changing the dynamics of informing and interpreting global events, will also be considered.

Another key aspect of the panel concerns how discourses on migration and integration shape collective perceptions and public policies. Recent crises have demonstrated that forced mobility and relocation of communities not only generate logistical challenges, but also significant transformations in the way national and cultural identities are defined. We thus explore how language and social representations influence community relations and processes of inclusion or exclusion.

By bringing together interdisciplinary perspectives, this panel provides a critical framework for examining the dynamics of discourse in times of crisis. The aim is not only to identify current trends, but also to reflect on the ethical and political challenges of the contemporary media landscape. In a global context marked by tensions and polarization, discourse analysis becomes an indispensable tool for understanding how social realities are constructed and reconfigured.

The panel is closely linked to the activities and objectives of the CORECON project (*The Coverage and Reception of the Russian-Ukrainian Conflict in Polish, Romanian and English-Language Media: A Comparative Critical Discourse Study with Recommendations for Journalism Training*, <https://grants.ulbsibiu.ro/corecon>), which investigates how media from different linguistic and cultural spaces report and interpret the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. By comparatively analysing these discourses and the way they are received, the project contributes to our understanding of the processes through which information is transmitted and perceived.

## 1. Katarzyna Molek-Kozakowska

Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu (Romania)/University of Opole, Institute of Linguistics, Opole (Poland)

*What does ChatGPT have to say about the war in Ukraine? Content and style variation in factual and opinionated prompting across three user profiles*

This presentation discusses current challenges to the study of public communication, particularly to conflict journalism, created by the advent of AI applications, such as ChatGPT. It takes into account the preferences of users of AI tools to access reliable information about political issues quickly and effortlessly. Inspired by the work within the CORECON project on the coverage and reception of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, it presents the results of an experiment in which ChatGPT-4 was prompted to provide information on the causes, responsibilities and future scenarios of the war in Ukraine and ended up presenting different details to different users.

## 2. Premyslaw Wilk

Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu (Romania)/University of Opole, Institute of Linguistics, Opole (Poland)

*A battle of David and Goliath: A culture-grounded (de)legitimization narrative of the 2022 Russian-Ukrainian conflict*

The 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine has been a highly covered issue in a wide spectrum of media representing both factual and advocacy journalism. This study focuses on Polish reporter Marcin Ogdowski's opinionated view of the conflict on Facebook and outlines the findings of a discourse analysis of patterns of his legitimizing Ukraine and delegitimizing Russia. A systematic analysis of a sample of his posts collected between February 2022 June 2024 (appx. 90,000 words) reveals a dominant culture-grounded narrative of depicting Ukraine as a small yet resourceful hero (the Bible's David) and Russia as a mighty but incapable villain (Goliath). The presentation catalogues some linguistic strategies instantiating this dominant (de)legitimization narrative across a number of thematic domains.

### 3. Simina-Maria Terian

Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania, simian.terian@ulbsibiu.ro

and

David Morariu

Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania, david.morariu@ulbsibiu.ro

#### *What about Ukraine? The Russian-Ukrainian conflict as seen in the discourse of Romanian presidential candidates*

In the context of the ongoing debates sparked by the most recent Romanian presidential elections, the Russian-Ukrainian conflict has been one of the main focal points in all candidates' speeches. From a discursive point of view, references to this war and positions on potential solutions for this tense situation have become metonymic instances of pro- and anti-European orientations. Furthermore, discussions on Romania's approach to this conflict have led to various (de)legitimization strategies concerning the war in Ukraine, engaging new analytical frameworks such as "proximization theory" and the intersection of political science and the "manosphere". Therefore, our presentation falls within the paradigm of critical discourse analysis, aiming to examine the views of all the candidates in the Romanian presidential elections regarding the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, as reported by Romanian-language media during the 2024 electoral campaign up to the present.

### 4. Simina-Maria Terian

Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania, simian.terian@ulbsibiu.ro

and

Denisa-Maria Bâlc

Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania, denisa.balc@ulsibiu.ro

#### *Cultural crossroads: Ukrainian migrants' discourse and perception of Romanian society during social integration*

Starting from the premise that language assimilation is one of the key factors in social inclusion, this study aims to analyse the perception of Ukrainian refugees regarding the Romanian language and culture during their integration into Romanian society. To provide a comprehensive perspective on migration, the study examines the social, cultural, and political causes that drive migration and how these perceptions have evolved across the two key phases: pre-migration and in-migration. A questionnaire was conducted with approximately 100 respondents, including both

Ukrainians and individuals from other cultural backgrounds. Additionally, discourse analysis was employed to examine the ways in which migrants articulate their experiences, challenges, and attitudes toward Romanian language and culture. The analysis of migrant discourse reveals a significant difference between Ukrainian migrants – who arrived in Romania due to the war with Russia – and non-Ukrainian migrants in terms of their motivation and the way their perception of Romanian language and culture has evolved. For Ukrainians, language assimilation plays a far more critical role, as they seek community integration, demonstrating resilience in overcoming linguistic and cultural barriers. Meanwhile, other migrants generally have short-term perspectives in Romania, influencing their approach to adaptation. The comparative perspective between Ukrainian migrants and those from other cultural backgrounds also highlights how integration challenges vary across different groups, providing a deeper understanding of the factors that facilitate or hinder the adaptation process. Ultimately, gaining insight into these perceptions and the discourse surrounding them can contribute to the development of inclusive programs designed to support migrants in their journey toward integration and cultural adaptation.

## 5. Iulia-Maria Ticărau

Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania, iulia.ricarau@ulbsibiu.ro

### *The role of photography in shaping the female imaginary during military conflicts*

Throughout this research, we aim to analyse how the use of photography in the news coverage of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict that discusses aspects of the female imaginary helps to shape the image of women in terms of the role they play in military conflicts. In this presentation we will focus only on social news in which are highlighted issues such as sexual violence, resistance to military aggression, but also changes due to forced migration. The period brought into discussion is the year 2022 and the main aims of our research is to point out how the hegemonic relationship between women and men is represented and how the use of modality helps to illustrate this type of power relation.

## 6. Corina Selejan

Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania, corina.selejan@ulbsibiu.ro

### *Alternative versus mainstream media discourse? Shifting boundaries: The curious case of Stephen Fry*

This is part of a larger comparative endeavour between the discourse of mainstream media and that of alternative/social media on the Ukrainian-Russian war with a specific focus on hot war tourism as defined by Piekarz (2007): travel to “locations, which are currently experiencing conflict and violence, or are still recovering from such events”. While many YouTube vloggers openly challenge the representation of the war in mainstream media in their titles (e.g. “Everyone Told Me Kyiv was Dangerous, but...”; “Don’t TRUST The Media: I Went To Ukraine”; “Inside Ukraine During the War! Kyiv Dangerous Now?”), others align their discourse with mainstream representations. British Actor Stephen Fry’s documentary *Stephen Fry into Ukraine* (2024) sits uncomfortably between the two categories, illustrating the increasingly porous, volatile boundary between alternative and mainstream media.

## 7. Crina Neacșu

Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania, crina.neacsu@ulbsibiu.ro

### *Conflict and consent. A linguistic analysis of the Romanian and English-language media representation of sexual violence in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict*

This study analyses the media representation of sexual violence in the coverage of the Russian- Ukrainian conflict. By using a comparative mixed-methods and multimethod approach, the aim is to identify the linguistic similarities and dissimilarities between how Romanian and English-language news outlets broach the subject of sexual violence, which, considering recent armed conflicts, has been categorized as a tactic and/or weapon of war. The main aim encompasses four points of interest: to establish the frequency of sexual violence cases in the news, to notice and explain the approach to and the understanding of sexual violence in a conflict setting from external points of view (Western and non- Western/Eastern), to identify and analyse the patterns of language use in relation to sexual violence in both study cases and notice how the depictions of sexual violence in a conflict discourse resemble or differ from those in non-conflict contexts. The corpus of the study uses – but is not limited to – that of the project *The coverage and reception of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict in Polish, Romanian, and English-language media: A comparative critical discourse study with recommendations for journalism training (CORECON)*, where a terminological constraint has been applied. The broad terms looked for are sex (EN)/sex (RO), abuse/abuz, torture/tortură, sexual violence/violență sexuală, sexual abuse/abuz sexual, rape/viol, genital torture/mutilare genitală.