

IDENTITY DISCOURSE OF IN- AND OUT- MOLDOVANS IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

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Abstract: The article targets at presenting the research “Moldovans’ identity in the global context”. The imperatives of this research are: (1) to analyze the essence of the identity discourse from different perspectives; (2) to describe the rationale of the implemented study; (3) to draw conclusions on a part of the first phase implementation. This research focuses on the identification of the structure of the Moldovans’ cultural identity on the basis of the selected two cohorts of in- and out-country Moldovans. The article provides rationale of the investigation, the procedure and some raw conclusions. As the research in ongoing, there has been described only a part of the first phase. There have been selected three questions to be analyzed from the research questionnaires. All the other answers are being processed. By the end, some raw conclusions are drawn on the structure of the Moldovan self and factors that determine its modification or change.

Keywords: cultural identity, self, in-country Moldova, out-country Moldovan, identity discourse, discourse indicators.

Introduction

The research addresses a stringent problem of identity discourse structure that is so important for any nation. Republic of Moldova is facing the problem of immigration. Statistically, almost two million Moldovans live in and out of the European zone legally or illegally. The study aims at pinpointing the Moldovan identity discourse elements that help at promoting Moldova's values, and facilitating Moldovans' integration into the non-native discourse community.

I have got double expectations for the research. First, the research will provide the complex Moldovan identity discourse structure, together with the ideologies and values that modify its content. Second, there is to be created a data base with the social behaviors, linguistic variations, and production/reception roles, associated with these that frame the Moldovan identity. In summary, this research will work beneficially on the general image of the Republic of Moldova among the south-eastern countries offering a chance for its tourism development and a better understanding of the 80 thousand immigrated Moldovans by the other discourse communities.

The concept of identity is one that has burst many discussions. There are different definitions of identity and identity discourse. There are opinions on identity being "the everyday word for people's sense of who they are" [3, p. 6]. The same idea is shared by Kroskirty who believes that identity represents the "linguistic construction of group membership" [9, p. 111]. In this respect, identity is not regarded as an independent phenomenon, but rather an individual supported kit. This identity kit is formed of true self and pseudo selves [7, p. 191]. The individual chooses what self is true, because, widely speaking, identity is a matter of choice.

Departing from the idea that discourse is language in use, idea developed by G. Cook, we take for granted the idea that identity discourse is the set of "social practices, historically grounded statements, bodily behavior" communicated through the language that help people refer to themselves and to certain social groups. I strongly support Cameron's and Gee's explanation of discourse as a "multifaceted and complex social act" that encloses individual and collective identities. In such a way, identity discourse cannot exist and develop without collective discourse.

Norman Fairclough asserts that discourse is a social practice that influences the development of identity and collective discourses, and the creation of ideologies and power hierarchy. From this perspective, identity is a continuous act shaped through discourse and interaction within a discourse community.

P. Riley (2007) distinguishes three broad categories of cultural knowledge through which cultural identity is rendered: know-that, know-of and know-how. The *know-that knowledge* refers to the relatively permanent background knowledge possessed by an individual. It consists of what the individual believes to be true and incorporates her/his political and religious ‘philosophies’ and values, ‘theories’ of disease, physics, child-rearing or hunting, versions of geography and history, etc. In other words, *know-that* category is the individual’s version of how the world works. Generalizing, these are Moldovan customs and behavioral practices. *Know-of knowledge* refers to the relatively ephemeral background knowledge. It consists of current events and preoccupations, such as what is going on in a particular society, *who is who* and *who is doing what*. Know-of knowledge, in this vein, refers to the structure of the community. The *know-how* knowledge refers to the pragmatic or procedural knowledge. It consists of the individual’s skills, capacities and competencies, and the effective mastery of reasoning.

Rationale

The *primary purpose of the research* is to emphasize the identity discourse of the immigrated Moldovans. The *hypothesis* thrown light on is that pure identity Moldovan discourse is a loose phenomenon. The identity discourse of the immigrated Moldovans is modified under the influence of the collective discourse of the nation they come in contact with. Moreover, their complex identity discourse influences the collective discourse they have immersed from. Thus, it is impossible to speak about a pure Moldovan identity discourse for years even among Moldovans that have always lived in Moldova.

The research questions of the present study are:

1. What is the structure of the in- and out-country Moldovan identity discourse?
2. What is the algorithm that alters Moldovan identity discourse?

There are some objectives to be fulfilled within the research:

- To create a data base for a cohort of people that migrated legally to other countries (in accordance with Information and Security

Service of the Republic of Moldova, it represents 30% of the total amount of people that work legally abroad);

- To determine target groups in accordance with a series of principles: age, education, country of residence, spouse's nationality;
- To identify discourse elements that form Moldovans' identity (social behavior, sets of relations, language, concepts etc.);
- To determine social and geographical variations of identity discourse elements of the in-country Moldovans;
- To determine social and geographical variations of discourse elements of the out-country Moldovans;
- To analyze interviews, questionnaires, natural speech's data where identity discourse or collective discourse elements can be detected;
- To pinpoint the roles the Moldovans perform when entering discourse;
- To catalogue the connection between production and reception roles and identity discourse elements;
- To draw the conclusions on true and pseudo in-country and out-country identity discourse elements;
 - To gather the discourse elements and tendencies in altering some of them, that might help the foreigners understand the Moldovans' way of thinking and behavior.

In accordance with the Information and Security Service of the Republic of Moldova, there are about 80 thousand Moldovans that migrated legally to other countries. They create identity images through social behavior, language variables of the community they have been raised into. These images help the foreigners understand Moldovans better and, at the same time, make the integration into a new community smooth. More than that, the picture of the whole Republic of Moldova is made through its people. Identity discourse of each Moldovan works on the collective discourse frame, and the collective discourse participates actively at the creation of the identity discourse of each who associates with this discourse community. These reasons form the background of the investigation.

Today, there is a tendency to blame the Moldovans that have left the country in looking for a new life. Very few understand that these Moldovans participate at the national promotion company of Moldova in the European zone and outside the European zone. Tracking the identity discourse of these Moldovans targets at

observing the connections with the native country and native discourse community. This investigation pursues the aim to rehabilitate the image of the 80 thousand Moldovans.

Recent studies have underlined the idea that within any cultural group, there are preferred discourse identities that have to match with social identities. As Moldovans' discourse identities match with Bessarabia community identities and Romania community identities, the divergences that occur coming into contact with other discourse communities may be taken as demonstrations of insincerity and untrustworthiness. It is well believed that "clear communication is based on the one's identity discourse and expected social discourse the person associates himself with". Thus, the novelty of the present research lies in the storing of all the identities Moldovans associate with as exponents of their discourse communities that might facilitate the Moldovans' integration into new discourse communities.

Generally speaking, identities are displayed and performed through language, social behavior, values, beliefs and attitudes. In this respect, discourse indicators to be considered in the present research are: (a) frequency of the Romanian language usage; (b) values, beliefs and attitudes that are invariable or become variable under certain factors; (c) social behavior in the native or non-native discourse community. I am interested in discovering the algorithm of the complex and multifaceted identity of in- and out-country Moldovans.

The process of entering discourse is a complex one. Those that participate actively or passively perform some either production or reception roles [11, p. 16]. The investigation aims at detecting the choice of selves when performing a certain role. Said differently, I am interested whether the power hierarchy affects the choice of selves in the native or non-native discourse communities. My hypothesis is that Moldovans choose certain identity elements when performing production roles that might not be true selves. This fact makes the identity discourse change very rapidly.

Procedure:

The investigation has occurred in some *stages*: (A) Stage I.: Creation of two cohorts; (B) comparative analysis of in-country and out-country discourse identities; (C) identity and social discourse matching for smooth integration and non-identity loss. The first stage aims at identification of respondents from in- and out-Moldova that will actively or passively participate in the process of identifying of social and linguistic discourse variations. Here are to be taken into

account some variables that will definitely help in gathering data (social status, age, gender and spouse's language repertoire). The results are to be stored on a created platform. The initial research method applied at this stage is literature review to determine identity discourse elements. The frames are to be referred to the in- and country Moldovans' identities. The timeline is from March through May, 2019. The second stage targets at identifying the discourse identities of two cohorts and divergences between these already different discourse communities. There is to be performed a lot of ethnographic fieldwork both in Bessarabia and Romania, the two discourse communities each Moldovan associates with. There are to be used face-to-face and virtual interviews, natural speech to select data for analysis. The timeline for this stage is June through October, 2019. The conclusions and recommendations are to be made in the third stage of the investigation. There are to be specified true and pseudo-selves the Moldovans associate with.

Results on the first phase implementation

The implementation of the research project is at the end of the first stage. The number of two cohorts is 2000 people. The in-country respondents are from 19 to 50 years of age, coming from different fields. The out-country respondents are from 25 to 60 years of age, coming from different fields. Gathering the data that might give answers to the research questions, we have taken into account the discourse indicators: (a) frequency of the Romanian language usage; (b) values, beliefs and attitudes that are invariable or become variable under certain factors; (c) social behavior in the native or non-native discourse community.

First, the association lists were sent to the respondents. The imperatives put forward are: to identify the self of the in- and out-country Moldovans; to track what the factors are that influence the change in the self.

Table 1. Moldovans' identity structure

No. of respondents	Question	Answers
1000 in-country Moldovans	What do you associate yourself with being Moldovan?	Food (500), weddings (200), Moldova (102), language (10), connections with relatives (188).

	What are the factors that might influence you to change the associations you have mentioned above?	Politics (50), relations at work (350), nothing (423), residence change (177).
1000 out-country Moldovans	What do you associate yourself with being Moldovan?	Food (723), weddings (120), mentality / the way of thinking (99), language (58).
	What are the factors that might influence you to change the associations you have mentioned above?	Relations at work (800), nothing (15), residence change (185).

The answers in Table 1. provide evidence on the structure of the Moldovan self. It can be observed that both in- and out-country Moldovans associate themselves with *know-that knowledge*. The customs, traditions occupy the second place in the Moldovans' self (*know-of knowledge*) and pragmatics occupies the last place in the structure of the Moldovans' self (*know-how knowledge*).

Second, there were sent three questionnaires to the target selected groups. Each group has to provide answers. The tables below provide information on the cohorts' identity discourse indicators. There have been selected for the present paper three questions only (as the processing is still going on):

Table 2. Discourse indicators

No. of respondents	Question	Answers	
1000 in-country Moldovans	How often do you use the native language in the circumstances where there are foreigners?	Never 278	From time to time 722
	Do you share the values and beliefs of people that are of higher status than you are (they can change your social status)?	0	1000
	Does the non-native community influence your social behavior?	80	920

1000 out-country Moldovans	How often do you use the native language in the circumstances where there are foreigners?	899	101
	Do you share the values and beliefs of people that are of higher status than you are (they can change your social status)?	0	1000
	Does the non-native community influence your social behavior?	190	810

Although in the questionnaires, the last option was *always*, there was nobody to choose it among the representatives of the two cohorts. The answers are different and we can observe that the out-country Moldovans are greatly influenced by the non-native communities. They choose pseudo-selves to integrate smoother into the new discourse communities they come into contact with.

The biggest concern is connected to the answers provided by the in-country Moldovans. The social status is such an important element of life, that the Moldovans are ready to hide their cultural identity or even adjust it to the principles of other discourse communities if they will take status benefits.

Conclusions:

The cultural identity is a complex notion that is formed of three components (know-what, know-of and know-how knowledge). The Moldovan cultural identity has the same structure. Generally speaking, the *know-that knowledge* prevails in the complex unity of the cultural discourse. There are some factors that might have an impact on the cultural identity discourse indicators. The most important factor is the process of taking advantage of the status benefits.

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