university of groningen — faculty of behavioural and social sciences — department of sociology

30-03-2016 | 1

Reality Claims after Democratic Transformation:
Forms of Public Discourse within Hungarian and German Newspapers, 1990-1997

Roel Popping

Prepared for departmental seminar Central European University, Department of Political Science, Budapest, 2016 March 30

30-03-2016 | 2

Overview

> Methodology
- Thematic vs semantic text analysis
- Types of intention
- Reality claims

> Substantial
- Justifications for social policy
- Rationales
- Template
- Model
- Findings

> Conclusion

30-03-2016 | 3

Reality claims after democratic transformation

Methodology

30-03-2016 | 4

Text analysis

Thematic				Semantic				
ID-number	theme 1	theme 2	theme 3	ID-number	agent	position	action	object
1	2	0	0	1	12	07	34	12
2	0	0	1	2	08	01	22	31
3	1	3	1	3	14	01	34	15
4	0	2	1	4	10	01	35	14
5	0	0	0	5	16	11	19	07
.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.

"Politicians argue too much,"
would be encoded as
politicians (agency) ought (position) not argue (action)
with politicians (object). [ID 1]

30-03-2016 | 5

Some linguistic theory

> Ferdinand de Saussure
- Word's meanings depend not only on their referents, but also on how they are used in speech.
- It is only in linguistic expressions that *references to processes* versus *states-of-affairs* and *references to descriptions* versus *value judgments* can be differentiated.

> John Austin
- The meaning of a linguistic expression (or "speech act") is dependent upon the *intent* of its source.
- There is a finite number of "types of intention" into which speech acts can be classified.

> Noam Chomsky
- All linguistic expressions are grounded in a single, universal "generative grammar".

30-03-2016 | 6

Implications for text analysis

> The encoding of texts requires the active involvement of the coder in disambiguating statements.

> Much of a text's structural ambiguity can be removed during the encoding process, if the coder begins by classifying according to one of four types of intention (to follow).

> After the coder assigns a type of intention to a statement, it then becomes possible to encode the statement according to a corresponding grammatical template.

> If relations among words can be unambiguously encoded according to intention-specific grammars, the resulting data matrix should (in principle) be "translatable" back into some semblance of the original text.

Slide 7

Representation of four types of intention

	describe	judge
a process	perception	justification
a state of affairs	recognition	evaluation

Roberts, 1989

Slide 8

Four intentional contexts for "Joe bought that camera"

› Description of a process
  · We both went to the store. Then Joe bought that camera.

› Description of a state of affairs
  · I'm trying to figure out what he spent his allowance on. Aha, Joe bought that camera!
    – (Notice here that "purchase" is the nominal form of the verb "to buy".)

› Judgment of a process
  · I pointed out that he might be arrested if he stole it. Fortunately, Joe bought that camera.

› Judgment of a state-of-affairs
  · Joe is an excellent photographer. Of all the cameras on the market, Joe bought that camera.

Slide 9

What is modality / reality claim?

A statement in which the source refers to a predicate that for the agent (subject) is ...
› possible: can, may, not compelled not to
› impossible: unable, compelled not to
› inevitable: must, had to, not able not to
› contingent (i.e., not inevitable): able not to

Modal statements are always based on a rationale (i.e., an explanation of "why" the predicate is possible, impossible, inevitable or contingent for the agent).

Modal statements are not used to talk about things that definitely exist or events that definitely happened.
These modalities are indicated as reality claims.

Slide 10

Reality claims after democratic transformation

Substantial

Slide 11

Justifications for social policy

› Countries in Central-Europe after collapse of communism

› Social-justice and market-justice are justifications for social policy
  · each of which is grounded in a distinct modality (i.e., a discursive form in which speakers socially construct each other's activities by referring to their possibility, impossibility, inevitability, or contingency).

› Intentions
  · Goal attainment is possible ("can") is characteristic for "liberals";
  · Convey inevitability ("must") is characteristic for "social democrats".

Roberts, Popping & Pan, 2009

Slide 12

Social construction of activities

› Social-justice and market-justice are justifications for social policy, each of which is grounded in a distinct modality (i.e., a discursive form in which speakers socially construct each other's activities by referring to their possibility, impossibility, inevitability, or contingency). Like Simmel's 'forms of sociation' (Vergesellschaftungsformen), each discursive form is characterized by a tension among interactants as they simultaneously seek to preserve the form while acting in their form-specific interests.
› Simmel ([1909] 1984) has already laid theoretical foundations for the modality, albeit within the more restricted social context of flirtation.
› With apologies for his presumption that in flirtation 'the object of love is a woman and its subject a man', Simmel depicts this social form as one that lasts only until the woman reveals her self (i.e., when she publicly acknowledges her commitment to a particular man). To avoid a common misinterpretation, it is important to recognize that for Simmel 'what the woman does for the man' is not what is at stake in flirtation. At issue is what she reveals to him. Her conquest only takes place once she definitively discloses her genuine support for her suitor's marital intentions. Yet during flirtation—and thus, for Simmel, prior to such a disclosure of loyalty—her behavior oscillates along a scale 'between affirmation and the denial of genuineness.'

(theoretical notes) Roberts, Popping, Pan & 2009

Nationality based rationales

A Hungarian's situation is influenced by

	a citizen's	
the nation's social order	application of …	manipulation of …
by using its internal working	**economics**	**politics**
in response to unanticipated problems	**welfare**	**security**

or her / his situation is influenced by "who we know ourselves to be" (i.e., our **culture**)

Guidelines for assigning rationale instances

		citizen's
	application of …	manipulation of …
social order		
by using its internal working	**economics** • regarding *global* markets • producers vs. consumers • competition • budget constraints • supply vs. demand • technological developments	**politics** • regarding *national* accountability • leaders as public servants • leaders: political, corporate, special interest, union, lobby • ineptitude vs. corruption • vested interests vs. public trust • reappointment & reelection
in response to unanticipated problems	**welfare** • threat *management* • recipients vs. providers of services • recipients' abuse vs. restraint • providers' neglect vs. responsibility • services: subsistence, health, education, employment, environmental conservation, elderly care, etc.	**security** • threat *response* • weak citizens vs. strong military • threat containment vs. prevention • domestic vs. foreign violence • affinity vs. animosity re noncitizens • citizens' (expatriates') safety abroad • military viability (expenditures)

Popping & Roberts, 2009

Hypotheses – Development democracy Hungary

> H1: The modality of Hungary's political discourse transformed during the years 1990-1997 from one of achievement to one of necessity.

> H2: The modality of Hungary's economic discourse transformed in precisely the opposite direction during this time.

> A modality of achievement is initiated when agents publicly state that their goal-attainment is possible. ("I can create jobs.")
> Discursive modality is one of necessity when modal statements will likely convey inevitability. ("You must do that.")

Roberts, Popping & Pan, 2009

Template / semantic grammar

There is a
{political, economic, cultural, security, welfare}
reason why something is
{possible, impossible, inevitable, contingent}
for a Hungarian.

The premise here is that social statements are "social constructions" with which people verbally create barriers and passageways for each other.
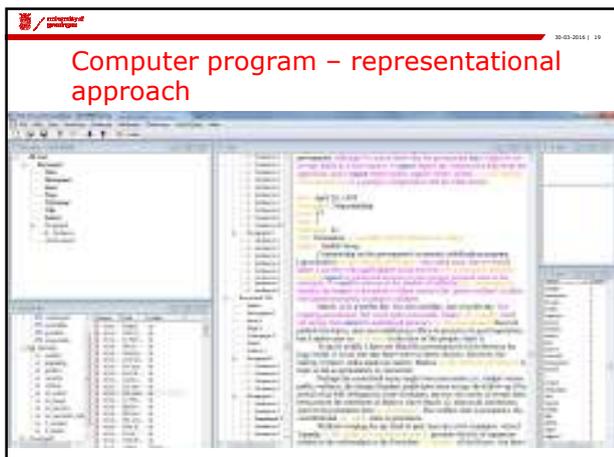
Examples of sentences

> We need to declare that welfare and cultural assets of the companies are common assets of the companies' employees and all waged/salaried employees, and companies are only managers of those assets. (February 18, 1991)
> The government (lit: state) must support the weak (tr.: the poor people). (September 10, 1996)
> Austria, and many international firms see this (tr.: expo) as a huge business opportunity, and we can share the success and the profits too. (December 10, 1990)
> Strong, young guys could work as porters (exclusively for tips only), they can, however, keep their numbered hats as souvenirs. (April 3, 1991)
> The voters cannot recognize yet, that the freedom of press is their freedom as well. (March 14, 1994)

Popping & Roberts, 2015

Sampling unit

> An article is "an editorial" if …
  • its author is a Hungarian citizen, and
  • the article's last three paragraphs contain at least one statement containing an inflected modal auxiliary verb / reality claim indicating ability (can, able to, and have the ability to) or compulsion (must, have to, and need to), and having the following two characteristics:
    – the verb's agent is a Hungarian citizen;
    – a rationale for the verb is made explicit in the article's last three paragraphs.

Computer program – representational approach

The model

The multilevel model used, is

$$\log(m_{ij} + \Delta) = \lambda + \lambda_i^M + \lambda_j^R + \ell\lambda^L + q\lambda^Q + \lambda_{ij}^{MR}$$

$$+ \ell\lambda_i^{ML} + q\lambda_i^{MQ} + \ell\lambda_j^{RL} + q\lambda_j^{RQ} + \ell\lambda_{ij}^{MRL} + q\lambda_{ij}^{MRQ}$$
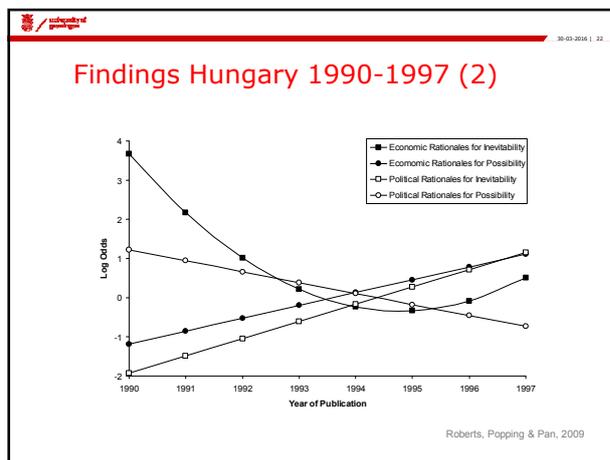
where m_{ij} is the expected count of ith modal form and j^{th} rationale category, ℓ is linear time in 1-year increments from -3.5 for 1990 until 3.5 for 1997, q is quadratic time (centered with largest values at the extremes), and the λ are modal form and rationale effects such that

$$\sum_i \lambda_i^M = \sum_j \lambda_j^R = \sum_i \sum_j \lambda_{ij}^{MR} = \dots = \sum_i \sum_j \lambda_{ij}^{MRQ} = 0.$$
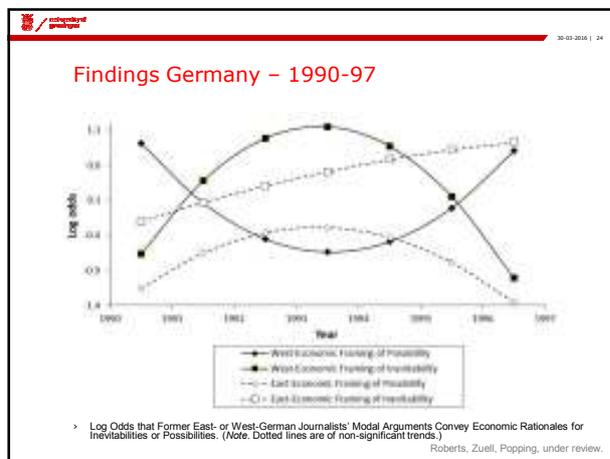
Findings Hungary 1990-1997

	rationale				
modal form	politics	culture	economy	security	total
possible	19.1	15.1	15.1	4.5	53.8
	(90)	(71)	(71)	(21)	(253)
impossible	8.9	8.6	5.5	3.0	26.0
	(42)	(40)	(26)	(14)	(122)
inevitable	6.2	3.7	6.6	1.9	18.3
	(29)	(17)	(31)	(9)	(86)
contingent	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.2	1.9
	(3)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(9)
total	34.9	27.9	27.6	9.6	
	(164)	(131)	(130)	(45)	

Note: Frequencies are in parentheses below percents. N = 470.

Roberts, Popping & Pan, 2009

Findings Hungary 1990-1997 (2)

Roberts, Popping & Pan, 2009

Findings Hungary 1990-1997 (3)

> Decline in opportunist rhetoric (political reasons for possibility);
> Increase in political responsibility rhetoric (political reasons for inevitability);
> An increase in political rationales during the 1994 election.
> Avoidance of austerity rhetoric during Hungary's 1994 election (economic reasons for inevitability);
> Increase in marketplace rhetoric (economic reasons for possibility);
> A precipitous drop in economic rationales after 1989;
> Conclusion:
> Hungarian political rhetoric shifted from the opportunistic modal rhetoric typical of the era of Soviet domination to a rhetoric of social responsibility more like that of the rest of Western Europe.

Findings Germany – 1990-97

> Log Odds that Former East- or West-German Journalists' Modal Arguments Convey Economic Rationales for Inevitabilities or Possibilities. (*Note.* Dotted lines are of non-significant trends.)

Roberts, Zuell, Popping, under review.

4

Slide 25

Findings Germany – 1990-97 (2)

> Economic rationales were more prevalent within eastern editorials.
> There was a decline (similar to that found in Hungary) in use of such rationales by the former East Germans with a corresponding increase in their use by former West German journalists.
> Other changes in modal rhetoric occurred at the time of the 1994 election:
>   · political rationales peaked (same as in Hungary);
>   · austerity rhetoric peaked (economic inevitablity);
>   · opportunist rethoric peaked (political possibility).
> Political rationales are less prevalent within eastern editorials.
> What rhetoric were former East German journalists using by then?
>   · Relatively frequent references to possibilities.
>   · The term, *Realpolitik*, may be most descriptive of their rhetoric.
>   · At issue in their writing are possibilities among real-world (political, cultural, etc) constraints.
>   · Western journalists stuck to political rationales throughout the study period, eastern journalists simply migrated to political rationales as the 1994 election approached.
>   · Unlike US pragmatism (involving marketplace logic) *Realpolitik* involves opportunism among (not merely within) social domains.

Slide 26

Findings Hungary 1982-1989

Popping & Roberts, under review

Slide 27

Findings Hungary 1982-1989 (2)

> Hungary's state-controlled media persistently used a rhetoric of permission in its editorial news: Newspaper journalists directed citizens in claims that specific actions were ones they had to do, yet did so without offering any consistent rationale for these inevitabilities.
> During post-1986 grassroots demands for reforms, there was an increase in such rhetoric in the form of popularistic "permissions" as editorialists made anticipatory claims of citizens' possibilities void of any consistent (economic or political) framing.
> The implication here is that in authoritarian states journalists need not be consistent in how they frame the news. In anticipating what citizens will be *able to* do or in directing what citizens *must* do, these journalists' need only convey what is permitted. The provision of consistent rationales as to why these capacities and necessities exist remains unnecessary, as long as political forces are "sufficiently powerful to ensure their possibility and inevitability. These findings are in contrast to increases in economic and political framing in post-1989 editorials reported in the same newspaper by the same journalists, but then with newly-granted press freedom. There was no evidence of such achievement and necessity rhetoric in the editorials from 1982-9.
> The most important finding is a near absence of modal argumentation in Hungarian editorials authored prior to 1986. During an authoritarian state's "normal functioning," there may only rarely be a need to "remind" citizens of permitted actions. However, challenges to state power apparently give rise to such needs, prompting anticipatory, directive, and possibly even self-critical rhetoric.

Slide 28

Results Hungary 1990-1997
compared to survey data

Slide 29

Results Cross Examination
(ISSP 1990, 1996, 2006)

Mean differences on three Mokken scales between pairs of years.										
	Means			1990 to 1996		1990 to 2006		1996 to 2006		Overall
$\overline{X}_{90}$	$\overline{X}_{96}$	$\overline{X}_{06}$	d	p	d	p	d	p	F(2,2727)	p
Scale										
political inevitability	2.56	2.39	2.45	-.17	<.01	-.10	<.01	.07	.02	13.21	<.01
				\		\		/			
political possibility	4.03	3.89	3.49	-.14	.02	-.54	<.01	-.40	<.01	28.26	<.01
				\		\		\			
economic possibility	2.57	2.81	2.92	.24	<.01	.35	<.01	.10	.02	24.03	<.01
				/		/		/			
Note: d denotes mean difference, p-values for mean differences are one-tailed										

Popping, 2013

Slide 30

Conclusion

> It is possible to catch reality claims that picture developments within a culture.
> In authoritarian states journalists need not be consistent in how they frame the news.
> In democratic states over time patterns are visible.
> Why patterns between various cultures differ is still an open question.

Papers

> Popping, R., & Roberts, C.W. (1998). "Democracy as reflected in East-Central European newspapers," in Van der Wusten, H. (ed.), *Proceedings Conference Transformation Processes in Eastern Europe, Part IV: Politics and the Environment*. The Hague: ESR/NWO, 75-86.
> Popping, R., & Roberts, C.W. (2009). "Coding issues in semantic text analysis." *Field Methods*, 21 (3): 244-264.
> Popping, R., & Roberts, C.W. (2015). "Semantic text analysis and the measurement of ideological developments within fledgling democracies." *Social Science Information*, 54 (1): 23-37.
> Popping, R., & Roberts, C.W. (n.d.). "Political rhetoric in the Hungarian press during the communist regime." Under review.
> Popping, R., & Roberts, C.W. (n.d.). "US Individualism versus Dutch Mutualism: Cultural Differences in Editorial Usage of Modality within The New York Times and the NRC Handelsblad." In preparation.
> Roberts, C.W., Popping, R., & Pan, Y. (2009). "Modalities of democratic transformation: Forms of public discourse within Hungary's largest newspaper, 1990-1997." *International Sociology*, 24 (4): 498-525.
> Roberts, C.W., Zuell, C., & Popping, R. (n.d.). "On the social construction of democracy: Modal rhetoric in post-reunification editorials by former East vs. West German journalists." Under review.

Reality claims after democratic transformation

Thank you!

… time for questions and comments