

Critical discourse analysis

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'Critical discourse analysis' (henceforth CDA) subsumes a variety of approaches towards the social analysis of discourse (Fairclough & Wodak 1997, Pêcheux M 1982, Wodak & Meyer 2001) which differ in theory, methodology, and the type of research issues to which they tend to give prominence. My own work in this area has also changed to some extent in these respects between the publication of Language and Power (Longman 1989) and the publication of Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research (2003). My current research is on processes of social change in their discourse aspect (Fairclough 1992 is an early formulation of a version of CDA specialized for this theme). More specifically, I am concerned with recent and contemporary processes of social transformation which are variously identified by such terms as 'neo-liberalism', 'globalisation', 'transition', 'information society', 'knowledge-based economy' and 'learning society'. I shall focus here on the version of CDA I have been using in more recent (partly collaborative) work (Chiapello & Fairclough 2002, Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999, Fairclough 2000a, 2000b, 2003, 2004, Fairclough, Jessop & Sayer 2004).

Methodologically, this approach entails working in a 'transdisciplinary' way through dialogue with other disciplines and theories which are addressing contemporary processes of social change. 'Transdisciplinary' (as opposed to merely 'interdisciplinary', or indeed 'postdisciplinary', Sum & Jessop 2001) implies that the theoretical and methodological development (the latter including development of methods of analysis) of CDA and the disciplines/theories it is in dialogue with is informed through that dialogue, a matter of working with (though not at all simply appropriating) the 'logic' and categories of the other in developing one's own theory and methodology (Fairclough forthcoming a). The overriding objective is to give accounts – and more precise accounts than one tends to find in social research on change – of the ways in which and extent to which social changes are changes in discourse, and the relations between changes in discourse and changes in other, non-discoursal, elements or 'moments' of social life (including therefore the question of the senses and ways in which discourse '(re)constructs' social life in processes of social change). The aim is also to identify through analysis the particular linguistic, semiotic and 'interdiscursive' (see below) features of 'texts' (in a broad sense – see below) which are a part of processes of social change, but in ways which facilitate the productive integration of textual analysis into multi-disciplinary research on change.

Theoretically, this approach is characterized by a realist social ontology (which regards both abstract social structures and concrete social events as parts of social reality), a dialectical view of the relationship between structure and agency, and of the relationship

between discourse and other elements or 'moments' of social practices and social events (discourse is different from – not reducible to – but not discrete from – 'internalizes' and is 'internalized' by (Harvey 1996) – other social elements).

I shall proceed as follows. In section 1 I shall give summarise main theoretical features of this version of CDA. In Section 2 I shall discuss the view of methodology, including methods of data collection and analysis, referring specifically to an aspect of 'transition' (and 'globalisation') in central and eastern Europe and more particularly in Romania: the project of developing 'information societies' and 'knowledge-based economies'. I shall develop this example in Section 3, discussing the recontextualization of discourses of the 'information society' and 'knowledge-based economy' in a Romanian policy document.

1. Theoretical issues

The term 'discourse' is used in various ways within the broad field of discourse analysis. Two are of particular relevance here. First, 'discourse' in an abstract sense as a category which designates the broadly semiotic elements (as opposed to and in relation to other, non-semiotic, elements) of social life (language, but also visual semiosis, 'body language' etc). I prefer to use the term 'semiosis' (Fairclough, Jessop & Sayer 2004) to avoid the common confusion of this sense of 'discourse' with the second, which I retain: 'discourse' as a count noun, as a category for designating particular ways of representing particular aspects of social life (eg it is common to distinguish different political discourses, which represent for example problems of inequality, disadvantage, poverty, 'social exclusion', in different ways). The category of 'discourse' in this second sense is defined through its relation to and difference from two other categories, 'genre' and 'style' (see below).

The realist social ontology adopted here treats social structures as well as social events as parts of social reality. Like a number social theorists, such as Bourdieu and Bhaskar (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, Bhaskar 1986), I assume that coherent accounts of the relationship between social structures and social events depend upon mediating categories, for which I shall use the term 'social practices', meaning more or less stable and durable forms of social activity, which are articulated together to constitute social fields, institutions, and organizations. There is a semiotic dimension at each of these levels. Languages (as well as other semiotic systems) are a particular type of social structure. I use the term 'order of discourse' (the term is Foucault's, but it is recontextualized within this version of CDA in a distinctive way, see Foucault 1984, Fairclough 1992, 2003) for the semiotic dimension of articulated networks of social practices (for instance, the political field is partly constituted as a particular order of discourse, so too are specific governmental, educational or business organizations). I use the term 'text' in an extended way for the semiotic dimension of social

events – the written documents and websites of government are ‘texts’ in this sense, as also are interviews and meetings in government or business organisations (Fairclough 2003). The term ‘text’ is not really felicitous used in this way, because one cannot shake off its primary association with written texts, but it is difficult to find a preferable general term. Social practices and, at a concrete level, social events, are articulations of diverse social elements, including semiosis. One might for instance see social practices as including the following elements (though there is clearly room for argument about what the elements are):

- Activities
- Social relations
- Objects and instruments
- Time and place
- Social subjects, with beliefs, knowledge, values etc
- Semiosis

These elements are dialectically related (Harvey 1996). That is to say, they are different elements, but not discrete, fully separate, elements. There is a sense in which each ‘internalizes’ the others without being reducible to them. So for instance social relations in organizations clearly have a partly semiotic character, but that does not mean that we simply theorize and research social relations in the same way that we theorize and research language. They have distinct properties, and researching them gives rise to distinct disciplines. Conversely, texts are so massively ‘overdetermined’ (Althusser & Balibar 1970, Fairclough, Jessop & Sayer 2004) by other social elements that linguistic analysis of texts quickly finds itself addressing questions about social relations, social identities, institutions, and so forth, but this does not mean that linguistic analysis of texts is reducible to forms of social analysis. Nevertheless, the dialectical character of relations between elements underscores the value and importance of working across disciplines in a ‘transdisciplinary’ way.

Semiosis figures in broadly three ways in social practices (and the articulations of practices which constitute social fields, institutions, organizations) and social events. First, it figures as a part of the social activity, part of the action (and interaction). For instance, part of doing a job (for instance, being a shop assistant) is using language in a particular way; so too is part of governing a country. Second, semiosis figures in representations. Social actors acting within any field or organization produce representations of other practices, as well as (‘reflexive’) representations of their own practices, in the course of their activity, and different social actors will represent them differently according to how they are positioned within fields or organizations. Third, semiosis figures in ways of being, in the constitution of identities – for instance the identity of a political leader such as Tony Blair in the UK is partly a semiotically constituted way of being (Fairclough 2000b).

Semiosis as part of social activity constitutes 'genres'. Genres are diverse ways of (inter)acting in their specifically semiotic aspect. Examples are: meetings in various types of organisation, political and other forms of interview, news articles in the press, and book reviews. Semiosis in the representation and self-representation of social practices constitutes 'discourses'. Discourses are diverse representations of social life. For instance, the lives of poor and disadvantaged people are represented through different discourses in the social practices of government, politics, medicine, and social science, as well as through different discourses within each of these practices corresponding to different positions of social actors. Finally, semiosis as part of ways of being constitutes 'styles' – for instance the styles of business managers, or political leaders.

The semiotic aspect of a social field or institution or organization (ie of a specific articulation of social practices) is an 'order of discourse', a specific articulation of diverse genres and discourses and styles. At a higher level of analysis, part of the analysis of relations between different social fields, institutions and (types of) organization(s) is analysis of relations between different orders of discourse (eg those of politics and the mass media). An order of discourse is a social structuring of semiotic difference – a particular social ordering of relationships amongst different ways of making meaning, ie different discourses and genres and styles. One aspect of this ordering is dominance: some ways of making meaning are dominant or mainstream in a particular order of discourse, others are marginal, or oppositional, or 'alternative'. For instance, there may be a dominant way to conduct a doctor-patient consultation in Britain, but there are also various other ways, which may be adopted or developed to a greater or lesser extent alongside or in opposition to the dominant way. The dominant way probably still maintains social distance between doctors and patients, and the authority of the doctor over the way interaction proceeds; but there are other ways which are more 'democratic', in which doctors play down their authority. The political concept of 'hegemony' can usefully be used in analyzing orders of discourse (Butler et al 2000, Fairclough 1992, Laclau & Mouffe 1985). A particular social structuring of semiotic difference may become hegemonic, become part of the legitimizing common sense which sustains relations of domination, though hegemony is always open to contestation to a greater or lesser extent. An order of discourse is not a closed or rigid system, but rather an open system, which can be changed by what happens in actual interactions.

In critical realist terms (Fairclough, Jessop & Sayer 2004), social events are constituted through the intersection of two causal powers – those of social practices (and, behind them, of social structures), and those of social agents. We may say that social agents produce events in occasioned and situated ways, but they depend on social

structures and social practices do so – the causal powers of social agents are mediated by those of social structures and practices, and vice-versa. Texts in the extended sense I described earlier are the semiotic elements of social events, and it helps to highlight the productive activity of social agents in making texts if we think of them in process terms as 'texturing': social agents draw upon social structures (including languages) and practices (including orders of discourse) in producing texts, but actively work these 'resources', create (potentially novel) texts out of them, rather than simply instantiating them.

Analysis of texts includes 'interdiscursive' analysis of how genres, discourses and styles are articulated together. These are categories which are distinguished and related at the level of social practices (as elements of orders of discourse). At the level of social events – texts – they are drawn upon in ways which give rise to hybridity or 'mixing' of categories, ie a text may be hybrid with respect to genres, discourses and/or styles (for instance, the 'marketization' of higher education is partly a matter of texts which 'mix' the genres and styles, as well as more obviously the discourses, of education and of the market, Fairclough 1993). Analysis of texts also includes linguistic analysis, and semiotic analysis of for instance visual images (contemporary texts are characteristically, and increasing, 'multimodal' with respect semiotic systems, Kress & van Leeuwen 2000). Interdiscursive analysis is a central and distinctive feature of this version of CDA. It allows one to incorporate elements of 'context' into the analysis of texts, to show the relationship between concrete occasional events and more durable social practices, to show innovation and change in texts, and it has a mediating role in allowing one to connect detailed linguistic and semiotic features of texts with processes of social change on a broader scale.

Social change includes change in social practices and in the networking of social practices, how social practices are articulated together in the constitution of social fields, institutions and organizations, and in the relations between fields, institutions and organisations. This includes change in orders of discourse and relations between orders of discourse (and so changes in genres, discourses and styles and relations between genres, discourses and styles). Moreover, changes in semiosis (orders of discourse) are a precondition for wider processes of social change – for example, an elaborated network of genres is a precondition for 'globalisation' if one understands the latter as including enhancement of possibilities for 'action at a distance', and the spatial 'stretching' of relations of power (Giddens 1990). And in many cases, wider processes of social change can be seen as starting from change in discourse, as I argue below.

I said above that the relationship between semiosis and other elements of social practices is a dialectical relationship – semiosis internalises and is internalised by other elements without the different elements being reducible to each other. They are different,

but not discrete. If we think of the dialectics of discourse in historical terms, in terms of processes of social change, the question that arises is the ways in which and the conditions under which processes of internalisation take place. Take the concept of a 'knowledge-based economy'. This suggests a qualitative change in economies such that economic processes are primarily knowledge-driven, and change comes about, at an increasingly rapid pace, through the generation, circulation, and operationalisation (including materialization) of knowledge in economic processes. Of course knowledge (science, technology) has long (indeed, one might say always) been significant in economic change, but what is being suggested is a dramatic increase in its significance in comparison with other factors (including financial capital and labour force) – though the extent to which this is an actual change in reality rather than a fashionable rhetorical construal of reality remains contentious. The relevance of these ideas here is that 'knowledge-driven' amounts to 'discourse-driven': knowledge is generated and circulates as discourses, and the process through which knowledge (as discourses) become operationalised in economies is precisely the dialectics of semiosis.

Discourses include representations of how things are and have been, as well as imaginaries – representations of how things might or could or should be. The 'knowledge' of the knowledge-based economy includes imaginaries in this sense – projections of possible states of affairs, 'possible worlds'. In terms of the concept of social practice, they imagine possible social practices and networks of social practices – possible articulations of activities, social subjects, social relations, instruments, objects, space times, values. These imaginaries may be operationalized as actual (networks of) practices – imagined activities, subjects, social relations etc can become real activities, subjects, social relations etc. Operationalization includes materialization of discourses – economic discourses become materialized for instance in the instruments of economic production, including the 'hardware' (plant, machinery, etc) and the 'software' (management systems, etc). Discourses as imaginaries also come to be enacted in new ways of acting and interacting, and such enactments are in part 'intra-semiotic': discourses become enacted as genres. Consider for instance new management discourses which imagine management systems based upon 'teamwork', relatively non-hierarchical, networked, ways of managing organisations. They may become enacted semiotically as new genres (within new networks of genres), for instance genres for team meetings. Such specifically semiotic enactments are embedded within their more general enactment as new ways of acting and interacting in production processes.

Discourses as imaginaries may also come to be inculcated as new ways of being, new identities. It is a commonplace that new economic and social formations depend upon new subjects – for instance, 'Taylorism' as a production and management system depended

upon changes in the ways of being, the identities, of workers (Gramsci 1971). The process of 'changing the subject' can be thought of in terms of the inculcation of new discourses – Taylorism would be an example. Inculcation is a matter of people coming to 'own' discourses, to position themselves inside them, to act and think and talk and see themselves in terms of new discourses. A stage towards inculcation is rhetorical deployment: people may learn new discourses and use them for certain purposes (eg procuring funding for regional development projects or academic research) while at the same time self-consciously keeping a distance from them. One of the complexities of the dialectics of discourse is the process in which what begins as self-conscious rhetorical deployment becomes 'ownership' – how people become un-self-consciously positioned 'within' a discourse. Inculcation also has its material aspects: discourses are dialectically inculcated not only in styles, ways of using language, they are also materialised in bodies, postures, gestures, ways of moving, and so forth (which are themselves semiotized to various degrees, but without being reducible to semiosis).

There is nothing inevitable about the dialectics of semiosis (the 'dialectics of discourse', Harvey 1996) as I have described it. A new discourse may come into an institution or organisation without being enacted or inculcated. It may be enacted, yet never be fully inculcated. Examples abound. For instance, managerial discourses have been quite extensively enacted within British (as well as other national) universities (eg as procedures of staff appraisal, including a new genre of 'appraisal interview'), yet arguably the extent of inculcation is limited – many if not most academics do not 'own' these management discourses. We have to consider the conditions of possibility for, and the constraints upon, the dialectics of discourse in particular cases. This has a bearing on theories of 'social constructionism' (Sayer 2000). It is a commonplace in contemporary social science that social entities (institutions, organisations, social agents etc) are or have been constituted or 'constructed' through social processes, and a common understanding of these processes highlights the effectivity of discourses, as I have done above: social entities are in some sense effects of discourses. Where social constructionism becomes problematic is where it disregards the relative solidity and permanence of social entities (their 'intransitive' reality in critical realist terms, Sayer 2000), which may be more or less amenable or resistant to change of particular sorts. In using a dialectical theory of discourse in social research, one needs to take account, case by case, of the circumstances and factors which condition the allowances and resistances of social entities to particular discourse-led changes (eg those led by the powerful discourses of new public management).

Moreover, one might argue that dialectical processes of operationalizing (enacting, inculcating, materializing) discourses are always conditional upon them being incorporated into successful strategies. In circumstances of social crisis or instability, different groups of

social agents develop different strategies for change which include discourses which project imaginaries for new forms of social life, narratives which construe a more or less coherent and plausible relationship between what has happened in the past and what might happen in the future. Which strategies (and discourses) succeed, become hegemonic, and become operationalized in new realities depends upon a variety of conditions (Jessop 2002, Fairclough forthcoming b).

2. Methodology

The example I shall refer to in discussing methodology is aspects of a particular research project (on the 'knowledge-based economy' and 'information society') within a larger research programme: the investigation of semiosis as an element of processes of 'transition' in central and eastern Europe (CEE)ⁱ. I see methodology as the process through which, beginning with a topic of research such as in this case 'transition', and more particularly 'knowledge-based economy' and 'information society' as objectives within 'transition', one constructs 'objects of research' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). The choice of appropriate methods (data selection, collection and analysis) depends upon the object of research. More precisely, certain aspects of method appertain to CDA as such, while others are dependent upon the research project and the object of research. CDA entails some form of detailed textual analysis. It specifically includes a combination of interdiscursive analysis of texts (ie of how different genres, discourses and styles are articulated together) and linguistic and other forms of semiotic analysis. What data is selected, how it is collected, depend upon the project and object of research. So too does the particular nature of linguistic and other forms of semiotic analysis – whether for instance one focuses on argumentation, narrative, modality, transitivity, nominalization, voice, etc. Some work in 'critical linguistics' (Fowler et al 1979) and CDA is particularly associated with Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday 1978, 1994), but that merely reflects the biographies of certain figures in the field. In principle any approach to linguistic analysis might be drawn upon.

One should not assume that the research topic is transparent in yielding up coherent objects of research, or that the way people in the domain identify issues and problems transparently yields objects of research. In this case, it is widely perceived that neither 'transition' nor 'information society' nor 'knowledge-based economy' are concepts, representations of actual or projected realities, that can be taken at face value (see for instance Pickles & Smith 1998, Stark & Bruszt 1998, Jessop 2004, Garnham 2001, Godin 2003). They are themselves elements of discourses which are associated with particular strategies for change, and therefore with particular interested representations and imaginaries of change, whose epistemological and practical value may be difficult to unravel

from their rhetorical value (and perhaps their ideological value). For instance, 'transition' construes change in CEE and elsewhere as a passage from a well-defined point of departure to a unitary and well-defined destination, which seems difficult to reconcile with the complexity and diversity of the processes which are actually taking place. Stark & Bruszt (1998) for instance reject 'transition' for such reasons in favour of 'transformation'.

The process of constructing 'objects of research' from research topics involves selecting theoretical frameworks, perspectives and categories to bring to bear on the research topic. It is only on the basis of such theorization of the research topic and the delineation of 'objects of research' that one can settle upon appropriate methods of data selection, collection and analysis. Clearly, a critical discourse analyst will approach research topics with a theoretical predilection to highlight semiosis, but since this is inevitably a matter of initially establishing relations between semiosis and other elements, the theorisation of the research topic should be conceived of as an interdisciplinary (more specifically, transdisciplinary in the sense I have given to that term) process, involving a combination of disciplines and theories including CDA. In certain cases, this would be the work of a research team, in others (such as the present paper) it may be a matter of a critical discourse analyst drawing upon literature from other disciplines and theories (though in this case I have also collaborated with the main theorist in 'cultural political economy' (see below) I draw upon, ie Jessop). Needless to say, one has to be selective, ie to make judgments about which 'mix' of available resources yields the most fruitful theorisation of the research topic including the most fruitful perspective on relations between semiosis and non- semiotic elements.

I shall approach the 'information society' and 'knowledge based economy' as topics of research by way of recent developments in political economy (Pickles & Smith 1998, Jessop 2002, 2004, Stark & Bruszt 1998, Ray & Sayer 1999, Sayer 1995). In particular, I shall follow Jessop (2004) in viewing them as strategies for achieving and stabilising a new 'fix' between a regime of capital accumulation and a regime of political regulation in the aftermath of the demise of the 'fix' commonly referred to as 'Fordism'. This formulation derives from 'regulation theory', which has a political-economic rather than a narrowly and purely economic perspective on economic change, arguing that an economic order ('regime of capital accumulation') is dependent upon a political order (a 'mode of regulation') which can produce and sustain the preconditions for its durable operation. The more general claim is that there are non-economic (including as we shall see social and cultural as well as political) preconditions for the establishment and reproduction of economies. The dominant international political-economic order since the demise of Fordism has been widely identified as 'post-Fordist', which is indicative of the uncertainty of what follows, or should follow, Fordism. The significance of the 'knowledge-based economy' (this is Jessop's focus, though

the same could be said for the 'information society', and for the frequent conjunction of the two which is characteristic of the material I shall look at) is that it seems to be emerging as a strategy for change which can effectively be operationalized in real change.

They are strategies but, like any strategy, also discourses, particular ways of representing, or rather imagining (because they are certainly as much predictive as descriptive) a new political-economic order. And they are discourses of a particular kind, what we might call 'nodal' discourses, in the sense that they are discourses which subsume and articulate in a particular way a great many other discourses – technical discourses (eg discourses of ICT), the discourse of 'intellectual property', discourses of governance and government (eg 'e-government'), discourses of 'social exclusion' and 'social inclusion', and so forth. As discourses, they constitute selective representations, 'simplifications' (Jessop 2002), 'condensations' (Harvey 1996) of highly complex economic, political, social and cultural realities, which include certain aspects of these realities and exclude others, highlight certain aspects and background others. Not any discourse would work as a strategic nodal discourse for imagining and potentially operationalizing, actualizing, a new political-economic fix. A discourse can only work in so far as it achieves a high level of adequacy with respect to the realities it selectively represents, simplifies, condenses – in so far as it is capable (as these seem capable) of being used to represent/imagine realities at different levels of abstraction, in different areas of social life (economy, government, education, health, regional and social disparities etc), on different scales (international, macro-regional (eg EU), national, local). It is only if it is a plausible imaginary that it will attract investments of time and money to prepare for the imaginary future it projects, material factors which are crucial to making imaginaries into realities (Cameron & Palan 2004). In this sense, 'the knowledge-based economy' and the 'information society' have a partially discursive and partially material character. They are discourses, but not just discourses, they are discourses which are materially grounded and materially promoted. The theoretical framework we need to conceptualize this needs to be not just a political economy (rather than a narrow economics), but what Jessop calls a 'cultural political economy', a political economy which, amongst other things, incorporates a theory of discourse and of the dialectics of discourse, of how discursive construals of the world can come to construct and reconstruct the world, without losing sight of the material reality of the world, or the conditions which the material reality of the world sets (as I have briefly indicated) on the discursive (re)construction of the world.

This strategic perspective provides a basis for formulating objects of research for this aspect of 'transition' as a topic of research, and the 'cultural' orientation of the approach to political economy means that objects of research can be formulated to include or highlight questions of semiosis. Objects of research might include the emergence and constitution,

hegemony, dissemination and recontextualization, and operationalization of the strategies of the 'knowledge-based economy', and the 'information society'. These objects of research might be formulated specifically as objects for CDA research projects in the following ways:

- The emergence of the discourses of the 'knowledge-based economy' and the 'information society' as nodal discourses in association with the emergence of strategies, their constitution through the articulation of relationships between other discourses, including discourses 'available' within existing or prior nodal discoursesⁱⁱ.
- Relations of contestation between discourses within the framework of relations of contestation between strategies, and the emerging hegemony of these nodal discoursesⁱⁱⁱ.
- The dissemination of the discourses of 'the knowledge-based economy' and the 'information society' across structures (eg between economic markets, governments, public and social services such as education and health) and scales (between 'global' or international, macro-regional (eg EU or NAFTA), national, and local scales of social life), their recontextualization in new social fields, institutions, organizations, countries, localities.
- The shift of these nodal discourses from 'construals' to 'constructions' (Sayer 2000), from being just representations and imaginaries to having transformative effects on social reality, being operationalized - enacted as new ways of (inter)acting, inculcated in new ways of being (identities), materialized in new instruments and techniques of production or ways of organizing space.

These different research objects call for different methods in terms of data selection, collection and analysis. Researching the emergence and constitution of these discourses requires a genealogical approach which locates these discourses within the field of prior discourses and entails collection of historical series of texts and selection of key texts within these series, analysis of the constitution of these discourses through articulation of elements within the field of prior discourses, and specification of the relations of articulation between the diverse discourses which are drawn together within these nodal discourses. Researching the emergent hegemony of these discourses entails locating these discourses in their relations of contestation with other potentially nodal discourses, which involves for instance focusing on dialogical relations between and within texts in key institutions such as the OECD (Godin 2003). Researching dissemination and recontextualization entails comparing texts in different social fields and at different social scales (eg in different societies or localities), and analyzing for instance how, when these discourses are recontextualized, they are articulated with discourses which already exist within these new contexts. Research operationalization calls for ethnographical methods in the collection of data, in that it is only by accessing insider perspectives in particular localities, companies etc that one can assess how discourses are materialized, enacted and inculcated. I shall be discussing only aspects of the dissemination and recontextualization of these nodal discourses.

The predominant form of critique associated with CDA and critical social research more generally has been ideology critique. But we can distinguish three forms of critique which are relevant to CDA: ideological, rhetorical, and strategic critique (Fairclough forthcoming b). Whereas ideological critique focuses on the effects of semiosis on social relations of power, and rhetorical critique on persuasion (including 'manipulation') in individual texts or talk, what we might call 'strategic critique' focuses on how semiosis figures within the strategies pursued by groups of social agents to change societies in particular directions. The research objects I have distinguished (emergence, hegemony, recontextualization, and operationalization) can be seen as objects associated with strategic critique. One might see strategic critique as assuming a certain primacy in periods of major social change and restructuring such as the one we are going through now. This is not to suggest at all that ideological and rhetoric critique cease to be relevant, it is more a matter of their relative salience within the critical analysis.

3. Recontextualization of nodal discourses in Romania

The dissemination and recontextualization of the strategies and discourses of the 'knowledge-based economy' and 'information society' in CEE is closely connected to the process of EU enlargement. The Lisbon Council of the EU in 2000 adopted these strategies as part of the 'e-Europe' initiative. The EU's 'strategic goal' is to 'become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion'. The 'e-Europe 2002 Action Plan' was agreed at Feira in 2000, and the candidate countries for EU membership in CEE were associated with the EU's strategic goal in adopting the 'e-Europe+ Action Plan' in 2001, one reason for which was said to be avoiding a 'digital divide' within the EU. According to the Romanian government's 'National Strategy for the promotion of the New Economy and the implementation of the Information Society' (2002), it was made clear at a conference of ministers of the candidate countries and representatives of the EU in Warsaw (May 2000) that 'the e-Europe initiative will become a basic element of the process of integration'.

The 'e-Europe+ Action Plan' agreed by the candidate countries was explicitly modelled upon the EU's 'e-Europe 2002 Action Plan', and much of the Romanian government's 'National Strategy' document is modelled upon them. The document is partly an 'action plan' but it is also partly a strategy document comparable to an extent with the Lisbon Summit Declaration. The nodal discourse in the Lisbon Declaration is 'the knowledge-based economy', whereas the nodal discourse in the Romanian document is 'the information society' (the discourse of 'the new economy' could be seen as a secondary nodal discourse).

There seems to be no clear and stable relation between the two nodal discourses within the 'eEurope' and 'eEurope+' projects overall, they are articulated together in different ways in different policy documents. In the Romanian position paper on the knowledge-based economy for the World Bank's 'Knowledge Economy Forum for EU Accession Countries' held in Paris at precisely the same time as the publication of the Romanian 'National Strategy' document (February 2002), the nodal discourse is 'the knowledge-based economy', even though it refers to virtually the same set of strategies and policies. In the Lisbon Declaration, the 'information society' is one element of one of three 'strategies' for achieving the 'strategic goal' of becoming 'the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world' (see section 5 of the Lisbon Declaration, Appendix 1). Although 'the knowledge-based economy' is not an entity or imaginary or strategic goal in the Romanian 'National Strategy', the 'new economy' is defined partly in recognizably 'knowledge-based economy' terms as the 'intensification of incorporation of knowledge in new products and services' ('intensificarea înglobării cunoașterii în noile produse și servicii').

As these comments imply, what is significant with respect to recontextualization is both the presence or absence of particular discourses in particular texts, and the relations in which diverse discourses are articulated, 'textured', together. One can identify differences between texts in this regard by analysing the relationship between discourses and features of genre, in the sense that genres can be seen as 'framing' devices for organising relationships between discourses (Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999). Relevant features of genre include the rhetorical structure and argumentative structure of the text (Fairclough 2003). I shall focus my analytical comments upon these issues. One can see how this selection of focuses for analysis depends upon the particular object of research (recontextualization), though there are many other analytical issues (such as the presentation of processes and of agency) which are germane to recontextualization.

In the opening section of the Lisbon Declaration ('A strategic goal for the next decade', paragraphs 1-7, Appendix 1), predominant features of the rhetorical structure are arguments from problems to solutions and from ends to means. The two paragraphs of the first sub-section ('The new challenge') are both arguments from problem to solution, from what 'is' happening to what 'must' be done in response (from the 'challenge', the changes that are happening, to the necessary responses, what the Union 'must' do, 'needs' to do, what is 'urgent' for it to do, what these changes 'require'). The second section ('The Union's strengths and weaknesses') is also a version of a problem-to-solution argument, arguing for the proposed solution as a response to 'weaknesses' which is timely in the light of 'strengths'. Paragraphs 5 and 6 in the third section ('The way forward') are both arguments from ends ('strategic goals') to means ('strategy'), and paragraph 7 is an argument from ends ('strategy') to means of governance for achieving them.

This rhetorical structure constitutes a frame within which diverse discourses are articulated together in a particular way, within which relations are textured (textually constituted) between these discourses. In paragraph 5, for instance, the formulation of the 'strategic goal' sets up a relation of equivalence^{iv} (Fairclough 2003) between 'sustainable economic growth' 'more and better jobs' and 'greater social cohesion' (more precisely: there is a comitative structure which sets up a relation of equivalence between the first and the other two phrases, and a coordinate structure which sets up a relation of equivalence between these two), all as attributes of 'the knowledge-based economy'. Each of these equivalent phrases represents a substantive EU policy area associated with an elaborated discourse (the discourses of growth, (un)employment, social and regional cohesion). The formulation of the 'overall strategy' which is the means to achieving the 'strategic goal' sets up relations of equivalence between the three listed elements of the strategy, and within them between 'better policies for the information society and R&D' (and within this, between 'information society' and 'R&D'), 'stepping up the process of structural reform for competitiveness and innovation' (and within this, between 'competitiveness' and 'innovation') and 'completing the internal market'; between 'modernising the European social model', 'investing in people' and 'combating social exclusion'; and so forth. Again, diverse policy areas and associated discourses (eg 'the information society', 'competitiveness', 'social exclusion') are articulated together in particular relations within the nodal discourse of the 'knowledge-based economy'. A significant overall feature of the articulation of discourses in the document is that in the formulation of problems, the strategic goal, and the strategies for achieving it, discourses which represent the economy ('sustainable economic growth' in the strategic goal) are articulated with discourses which represent social problems and policies ('more and better jobs' and 'social cohesion' in the strategic goal).

One notable difference between the Lisbon Declaration and the Romanian 'National Strategy' document is that there is no section in the latter with a comparable rhetorical structure, articulating arguments from problems to solutions with arguments from ends to means. In more general terms, the Romanian document is not based upon arguments from the specific problems facing Romania to strategic goals for dealing with them (and strategies for achieving these). This is on the face of it a surprising absence in a national strategy document, though as I argue later not actually at all surprising given Romania's international position. This does not mean that problems are not identified in the document, or that goals and strategies and policies are not specified. They are, but what is significant is the relations that are textured between them. For instance, the relationship between strategic goals and problems is largely reversed: rather than goals and strategies being legitimized in terms of their adequacy and timeliness in responding to a diagnosis of the problems facing the country, the problems are construed as weaknesses and difficulties with

respect to achieving the strategic goal of 'the information society'. This is indicated by the wider rhetorical structure of the document: the strategic goal is formulated (as I shall show below) in chapters 1 and 2 on the basis of claims about the general benefits (not specific benefits to Romania) of the 'information society' and Romania's international commitments (especially to 'eEurope+'), and specific Romanian problems (of poverty, emigration of skilled labour etc) are identified only in chapter 3 within an assessment of the country's current position in respect of the 'information society'.

Arguments for the 'information society' as the strategic goal are largely implicit. The Lisbon Declaration is 'based upon' arguments from problems to solutions in the material sense that the document begins from these arguments. The Romanian document by contrast begins with a general chapter about the 'information society' and the 'new economy' which does not directly refer to Romania at all, and only indirectly alludes to Romania in the final few paragraphs. In terms of rhetorical structure, the chapter is an extended description of the 'information society', followed by prescriptions about what is must be done to construct such a society. The first, descriptive, section construes the 'information society' as actually existing, rather than as a strategic goal, representing it in an idealised (and to some degree utopian) way, which construes in universal terms what are commonly claimed to be its potential effects and benefits as if they were actual effects and benefits. Here for instance is a translation of the second paragraph:

The information society represents a new stage of human civilization, a new and qualitatively superior way of life, which implies the intensive use of information in all spheres of human activity and existence, with major economic and social consequences. The information society allows widespread access to information for its members, a new way of working and learning, greater possibilities for economic globalization, and increasing social cohesion.

It is only in the ninth of its thirteen paragraphs that a strategic perspective on 'constructing the new model of society' ('Construirea noului model de societate...') appears. The following paragraphs specify the role of government, business, the academic community, and civil society in this process. By this stage one can assume that Romania in particular is being alluded to without being explicitly named – this is implicit in the claim that 'national development priorities for the medium-long term' and 'objectives of adhesion to Euro-atlantic structures' (often formulated in this way in Romanian policy contexts) need to be taken into account. The 'information society' as a strategic goal is covertly established on the basis of idealised claims about the 'information society' as a universal reality.

The second chapter is a review of tendencies and policies internationally and within the EU including a summary of the 'e-Europe' and 'eEurope+' initiatives. Romania is a

participant in 'eEurope+'. The 'information society' as a 'development objective' is claimed to be 'an essential condition for participation in the single European market'. It is implied, without being explicitly stated, that this applies to Romania, and that the 'information society' is therefore its 'development objective' (strategic goal). The third chapter is a STEEP (social, technological, economic and political factors) analysis of the current situation with respect to the 'information society' internationally and in Romania, which includes a review of problems and possibilities and policies in Romania – it is here, as I said earlier, that specifically Romanian problems are introduced.

Thus the 'information society' is implicitly established as Romania's strategic goal on essentially extraneous grounds: the universal benefits it brings as an existing reality, and the commitment to this strategic goal as a part of commitment to the 'e-Europe+' initiative. It is only in chapter 4 ('Strategic Directions and Options') that 'strategic choices' for Romania are explicitly addressed. I shall comment on the rhetorical and argumentative structure of the first section (entitled 'Global objectives', see Appendices 2 and 3), and how it frames the articulation of discourses. The rhetorical structure of the section is characterized by arguments from general factual claims about economic changes and their societal consequences in 'the information society', to possibilities, policies and strategies (for, by implication, particular countries). Although these arguments are formulated in general terms without specific reference to Romania (Romania is referred to explicitly only in the last sentence), they can be taken as referring implicitly to Romania – the list of four policies includes what appear to be specifically Romanian policies (especially the fourth, which is very similar to policies advocated explicitly for economic applications of ICT in Romania in the next section of the chapter). The first sentence makes a general factual claim about the consequences of large-scale use of ICTs ('profound implications for socio-economic life, fundamental transformations in the way of producing goods and services and in human behaviour'). The second sentence is a conditional formulation of the possibilities opened up: greater use of information technologies 'can ensure the socio-economic progress characteristic of information societies', as long as 'objectives and orientations of a strategic nature are adopted through policies appropriate to the actual societies in which we live'. Four policies are then listed ('consolidation of democracy and the rule of law', 'development of a market economy and progressive movement towards the new economy', 'improving the quality of life' (and, through policies to achieve this, 'integration into Euro-atlantic structures and the Global Information Society'), 'consolidation and development of a national economic framework which ensures the production of goods and services which are competitive on internal and external markets'). The first three elements of this list are structured as arguments from end to means. In the following two paragraphs, there are two sentences making general factual claims about the 'information society', which frame a more specific claim (sentence 3) about the development of knowledge as 'a critical, determining, factor in

economic growth and standards of living', which by implication makes it possible (sentence 4) for the 'digital divide' to become, with 'appropriate strategies', the 'digital opportunity'. The pattern of argument from factual economic claim to strategic possibilities is repeated in the following two paragraphs. The final sentence is a recommendation, 'given the example of the countries referred to above and presented in the appendix' (Ireland, Israel, Finland), that Romania 'should make a fundamental choice to develop a branch of the economy which produces the goods and services demanded by the information society, based on ICT'.

The rhetorical structure of the first section of the Lisbon Declaration set up a relationship between diagnosed problems, a strategic goal for solving them, and strategies for achieving it (with means for achieving these strategic ends). Here by contrast the strategic goal is taken for granted rather than established on the basis of diagnosis of problems (there is no such diagnosis), and the focus is on possibilities arising from general claims about economic and social change. and the strategies for realizing them. Thus at the one point in the document where 'strategic options' specifically for Romania are addressed, there is no attempt to establish strategic goals adapted to Romania's particular problems, and the only strategic choice recommended, in the last sentence (the only one where Romania is explicitly referred to), relates specifically and narrowly to economic applications of ICT. The rest of the chapter is taken up with an elaboration of this.

I noted above that in the Lisbon Declaration, discourses which represent the economy are articulated with discourses which represent social problems and policies. In the Romanian document, there is something resembling this articulation in the list of four policies, but it is significantly different. First, this articulation is only within strategies to achieve the assumed strategic goal of 'the information society', whereas in the Lisbon Declaration the articulation of economic and social discourses is present in the formulation of problems, strategically goal, and strategies for achieving it. Second, and connectedly, it is only social policies that are represented, not social problems. Third, the social policies represented relate to political issues and 'the quality of life', but not for instance to standards of living (or the key problem of poverty), employment (or the problem of unemployment), or the major divisions between urban and rural areas and populations^v. That is, major social problems which one might see as demanding social policies (including those focused upon in the Lisbon Declaration, (un)employment, social and regional cohesion) are not represented.

I shall make a few comments on the articulation of discourses within the listed policies. In the first, a relation of equivalence is textured between 'democracy' and '(the institutions of) the rule of law', which one can see as significant in terms of the recontextualization of the discourse of 'e-government' (as a constituent discourse of both the nodal discourses): the aim of establishing the 'rule of law' was one of the key ways in which Romanian society after 1989 differentiated and distanced itself from the Ceausescu

era. The equivalence relations within the formulation of the means for achieving the policy (between 'the participation of citizens in public life', 'the facilitation of non-discriminatory access to public information', 'improvement of the quality of public services', modernization of public administration') constitute an articulation of discourses which one might find in the 'e-government' policies of EU members. In the third, the policy of 'improving the quality of life' is represented as a means to 'integration into Euro-atlantic structures and the Global Information Society'. This is again significant with respect to recontextualization. 'Integration into Euro-atlantic structures', subsuming integration into the EU, is often formulated as a Romanian policy objective which has been interpreted as merging together in a confused way EU membership and NATO membership (Repere 2004). Policies for improving the quality of life are a means to this end in the sense that they are amongst the conditions Romania must meet (in terms of the 'acquis communitaires' and the 'e-Europe' initiative) for joining the EU.

If we look at the arguments and explanations given in the document as a whole for Romania's adoption of the 'information society' as a strategic goal it may clarify what problems it is covertly construed as a solution to. ICT is 'considered an important engine for boosting the national economy and promoting national interests'. Romania has adhered to the objectives of the 'eEurope' programme, 'considering them a beneficial framework for the urgent process of integration in the EU'. If Romania is not rapidly integrated into 'Euro-Atlantic structures' (the strategy of the 'information society' is represented as a precondition for this), 'the economic gap between our country and developed countries will grow'. What is noteworthy is that factors to do with the economy, 'national interests' and EU integration are included, but - in contrast with the Lisbon Declaration - social factors (unemployment, poverty, social exclusion, social and regional cohesion) are not. These are the cases where Romania is specifically and explicitly referred to. There is a much larger number of others where arguments for the 'information society' are given in general terms, without reference to particular countries, which can be seen as implicitly applying to Romania. Apart from the first chapter, these are mainly economic arguments (eg 'developing countries can obtain certain economic advantages from rapidly capitalizing on the opportunities offered by ICT and especially electronic commerce'). In the first chapter, there are a number of general claims about the 'information society' which might be taken as implicit arguments in favour of adopting it as a strategic goal, and these do include solutions to social problems (see the paragraph quoted earlier). But these arguments do not of course address Romania's particular and in some ways quite specific social problems (eg approximately 40% of the workforce is still employed in agriculture).

In Chouliaraki & Fairclough (1999), we argued that recontextualization is a colonization-appropriation dialectic. There is both a process of an 'external' discourse

colonizing the recontextualizing practices (country, field, organization etc), and a process of the 'external' discourse being appropriated within the recontextualizing practices. In principle one can claim that there is no colonisation without appropriation – recontextualization is always an active process on the part of 'internal' social agents of inserting an 'external' element into a new context, working it into a new set of relations with its existing elements, and in so doing transforming it. This is often manifested in the interdiscursive hybridity of texts, the mixing of 'external' with 'internal' discursive elements. Moreover, in strategic terms one could argue that strategic relations between 'external' and 'internal' social agents will always be inflected by strategic relations between 'internal' social agents.

However, it is necessary to add two provisos to this theoretical account. First, the degree to which recontextualization becomes an active process of appropriation entailing potentially substantive transformation of recontextualized elements (which includes the possibilities of them being strategically used by some 'internal' agents in their struggles with others, being contained or marginalized or contested, etc) depends upon the state of the relations between 'external' and 'internal' agents and of relations between 'internal' agents. Recontextualizing contexts may manifest degrees of passivity. Second, however active the process of appropriation, one cannot assume that it will be equally active in all practices within the recontextualizing context (eg a nation-state such as Romania).

In general terms, the room for autonomous agency and initiative in contemporary Romania with respect to the main lines of economic and social policy and activity is rather limited. Romania is strongly committed to integration into the European Union and 'Euro-atlantic structures' and to maintaining good relations with and the support and assistance of the EU, the USA, EU states, international agencies (UNO, World Bank, IMF and so forth), and these come with conditions attached which leave Romania with little room for manoeuvre. I have shown in the analysis of the 'National Strategy' document that, rather than being explicitly legitimized as solutions to Romania's particular problems, strategic goals are implicitly legitimized through idealized claims about the 'information society' construed as a universal reality, and by reference to Romania's international commitments. Any state is faced with the problem of legitimizing its goals, strategies and policies, and these can perhaps be seen as the legitimizing strategies adopted by the Romanian government (though such a conclusion would require more extensive analysis of policy documents and other government material). Given its international position, one might argue that Romania does not have the option of formulating goals, strategies and policies on the basis of an analysis of its specific problems and needs. Though Boia (1997), in distinguishing 'defensive' and 'offensive' Romanian responses to integration with 'the west' over the course of modern Romanian history, suggests that it is a characteristic of the

'offensive' (integrationist) responses to proceed with scant regard for the consequences in terms of the already profound social divisions and inequalities in the country.

The data I have examined in connection with the recontextualization of the 'information society' and the 'knowledge-based economy' in Romania consists of policy texts produced by the EU, its member states, the EU in collaboration with the candidate countries, the governments of Romania and other candidate countries, individual government ministries, as well as interviews with government ministers. I have selected the Lisbon Declaration and the Romanian National Strategy document for illustrative purposes here in order to compare strategy documents and the formulation of strategic goals (though the Romanian document is in part also an 'action plan', and only comparable to a limited degree to the Lisbon Declaration), because the grounding, justification and legitimation of strategic goals is an important aspect of the recontextualization of 'nodal discourses' at the level of the nation-state. This data represents only a part of the sort of data relevant to recontextualization as an object of research; one would also need material from within particular institutions (eg educational), businesses, localities, political parties etc, including spoken as well as written data, to arrive at a fuller assessment of the recontextualization of these 'nodal discourses'. Such an extension of the data might also provide evidence of a more active appropriation of these discourses, hybrid relations between these and other discourses, and strategic differences in their recontextualization, than I have been able to show in this paper.

Conclusion

I have presented one specific version of CDA in this paper which is characterized by a realist and dialectical-relational theory of discourse, a methodology which is oriented to constructing objects of research through theorizing research topics in dialogue with other areas of social theory and research, and selecting methods which are in part inherent to this version of CDA and in part dependent upon the particular object of research. I have addressed the particular research topic of the 'information society' and 'knowledge-based economy' as elements of 'transition' in Romania only with respect to recontextualization as an object of research, and then only in a partial way.

Let me add a final note on the politics of 'transition' in Romania, which has its own specific characteristics. Romania was slower than other 'transitional' countries in implementing transitional programmes, though the pace has quickened substantially in the past few years. There is a general and widespread public cynicism about government and politics, and about how much the Romanian government's commitments on paper mean in reality. A commonplace in commentaries is that they are, in the much-used expression of the nineteenth century Romanian literary critic Maiorescu 'form without content' – as

modernisation and westernization in Romania have always been, many would add. The language of modernisation is readily 'imitated' from the West, but without much change in social realities. Governments since 1989 stand accused of echoing the language of neo-liberalism, of the Washington Consensus, of EU accession, of perfecting a 'rhetoric' for external consumption, while the Romanian economy, government and society remain relatively unchanged. The assessment of such accusations makes it particularly important to go beyond public policy documents, and to research the operationalization of discourses such as the 'information society' and the 'knowledge economy' not only by examining government initiatives such as the 'e-government' website but also, crucially, through ethnographic research which can give insights into the relationship between discourses, rhetoric, and reality.

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Appendix 1: extract from the Lisbon Declaration

A STRATEGIC GOAL FOR THE NEXT DECADE

The new challenge

1. The European Union is confronted with a quantum shift resulting from globalisation and the challenges of a new knowledge-driven economy. These changes are affecting every aspect of people's lives and require a radical transformation of the European economy. The Union must shape these changes in a manner consistent with its values and concepts of society and also with a view to the forthcoming enlargement.

2. The rapid and accelerating pace of change means it is urgent for the Union to act now to harness the full benefits of the opportunities presented. Hence the need for the Union to set a clear strategic goal and agree a challenging programme for building knowledge infrastructures, enhancing innovation and economic reform, and modernising social welfare and education systems.

The Union's strengths and weaknesses

3. The Union is experiencing its best macro-economic outlook for a generation. As a result of stability-oriented monetary policy supported by sound fiscal policies in a context of wage moderation, inflation and interest rates are low, public sector deficits have been reduced remarkably and the EU's balance of payments is healthy. The euro has been successfully introduced and is delivering the expected benefits for the European economy. The internal market is largely complete and is yielding tangible benefits for consumers and businesses alike. The forthcoming enlargement will create new opportunities for growth and employment. The Union possesses a generally well-educated workforce as well as social protection systems able to provide, beyond their intrinsic value, the stable framework required for managing the structural changes involved in moving towards a knowledge-based society. Growth and job creation have resumed.

4.

These strengths should not distract our attention from a number of weaknesses. More than 15 million Europeans are still out of work. The employment rate is too low and is characterised by insufficient participation in the labour market by women and older workers. Long-term structural unemployment and marked regional unemployment imbalances remain endemic in parts of the Union. The services sector is underdeveloped, particularly in the areas of telecommunications and the Internet. There is a widening skills gap, especially in information technology where increasing numbers of jobs remain unfilled. With the current improved economic situation, the time is right to undertake both economic and social reforms as part of a positive strategy which combines competitiveness and social cohesion.

The way forward

5. The Union has today set itself a ***new strategic goal*** for the next decade: *to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion*. Achieving this goal requires an ***overall strategy*** aimed at:

- preparing the transition to a knowledge-based economy and society by better policies for the information society and R&D, as well as by stepping up the process of structural reform for competitiveness and innovation and by completing the internal market;
- modernising the European social model, investing in people and combating social exclusion;
- sustaining the healthy economic outlook and favourable growth prospects by applying an appropriate macro-economic policy mix.

6. This strategy is designed to enable the Union to regain the conditions for full employment, and to strengthen regional cohesion in the European Union. The European Council needs to set a goal for full employment in Europe in an emerging new society which is more adapted to the personal choices of women and men. If the measures set out below are implemented against a sound macro-economic background, an average economic growth rate of around 3% should be a realistic prospect for the coming years.

7. Implementing this strategy will be achieved by improving the existing processes, introducing a *new open method of coordination* at all levels, coupled with a stronger guiding and coordinating role for the European Council to ensure more coherent strategic direction and effective monitoring of progress. A meeting of the European Council to be held every Spring will define the relevant mandates and ensure that they are followed up.

Appendix 2:

Chapter 4, section 1, of the Romanian 'Strategia Națională
Pentru Promovarea Noii Economii și Implementarea Societății Informaționale'

4.1 Obiective globale

Utilizarea largă a tehnologiilor informaționale și de comunicații (TIC) conduce la implicații profunde în viața social-economică, la transformări fundamentale în modul de a realiza produsele și serviciile și în comportamentul uman. Valorificarea superioară a acestor tehnologii poate asigura progresul economic-social ce caracterizează societatea informațională, cu condiția îndeplinirii unor obiective și orientări de natură strategică prin politici adecvate stării societății în care trăim:

1. **Consolidarea democrației și a instituțiilor statului de drept** prin participarea cetățenilor la viața politică și facilitarea accesului nediscriminatoriu la informația publică, îmbunătățirea calității serviciilor publice și modernizarea administrației publice (e-government, e-administration) ;

2. **Dezvoltarea economiei de piață și trecerea progresivă la noua economie**, creșterea competitivității agenților economici și crearea de noi locuri de muncă în sectoare de înaltă tehnologie prin dezvoltarea comerțului electronic, tele-lucrului, a unor noi metode de management al afacerilor,

de management financiar și al resurselor umane, integrarea capabilităților TIC în noi produse și servicii, dezvoltarea sectorului TIC.

3. **Creșterea calității vieții** prin utilizarea noilor tehnologii în domenii precum: protecția socială, asistența medicală, educație, protecția mediului și monitorizarea dezastrelor, siguranța transporturilor etc. și, pe această cale, *integrarea în structurile euro-atlantice* și în Societatea Informațională Globală.

4. **Consolidarea și dezvoltarea unei ramuri a economiei naționale care să asigure realizarea de produse și servicii competitive pe piața internă și externă**, cerute de evoluția lumii contemporane. O ramură a economiei bazată pe produse și servicii care valorifică TIC pe piața internă și, mai ales, la export, ar permite ocuparea resursei umane în activități caracterizate de eficiență maximă, comparativ cu alte ramuri, prin faptul că produsele și serviciile specifice SI conțin o cotă ridicată a valorii adăugate, asociată cu consumuri minime de resurse materiale și de energie. O asemenea opțiune corespunde previziunilor privind evoluția societății umane în secolul 21, fiind susținută de experiența ultimilor zece ani a unor țări de dimensiuni mici, cum sunt Irlanda, Finlanda sau Israelul. (vezi Anexa nr. 3).

În ultimii ani au intervenit schimbări importante în evoluția societății, cu un impact major asupra modului în care gândim, muncim, interacționăm, petrecem timpul liber și în mod special, asupra modului în care realizăm produsele și serviciile. Schimbările majore care au produs acest impact și care vor marca evoluția societății în perspectiva noului mileniu sunt legate în principal de globalizarea competiției și a pieței și de progresele obținute în domeniul TIC.

În acest context ce definește Societatea Informațională, asistăm la impunerea cunoașterii ca un factor critic, determinant, al creșterii economice și al standardului de viață. De la o diviziune a lumii în raport cu accesul la cunoaștere și la utilizarea noilor tehnologii din domeniu ("global digital divide") se poate ajunge prin strategii adecvate, elaborate la nivel național și global, la noi oportunități oferite dezvoltării societății la nivel planetar ("global digital opportunity", The Okinawa Summit of the G7/G8", iulie 2000).

Globalizarea și noile TIC impun realizarea produselor și serviciilor la nivelul standardelor existente pe piața externă/globală, în special pe piața internă a UE, în care aceste standarde sunt la nivelul cel mai ridicat.

Realizarea produselor și serviciilor inovative la acest nivel nu se poate asigura decât prin menținerea și dezvoltarea unei capacități de cercetare-dezvoltare-inovare susținută și de un transfer tehnologic activ către producătorii de bunuri și servicii. Conștientizarea acestei stări impune elaborarea unei strategii a dezvoltării economiei naționale și a unor sectoare viabile ale acesteia care să facă față competiției pe piața internă și externă, mai ales a UE.

Având exemplul țărilor amintite mai sus și prezentate în anexe (Irlanda, Israel, Finlanda), România trebuie să facă o opțiune fundamentală pentru dezvoltarea unei ramuri a economiei care să realizeze produse și servicii cerute de societatea informațională, bazată pe tehnologiile informației și comunicațiilor.

Appendix 3

English translation of Chapter 4, Section 1, of the Romanian 'National Strategy for the Promotion of the New Economy and the Implementation of the Information Society'

4.1 Overall objectives

The widespread use of ICT produces profound implications for socio-economic life, and fundamental transformations in the way of producing goods and services and in human behaviour. Capitalizing more on these technologies can ensure the socio-economic progress characteristic of information societies as long as objectives and orientations of a strategic nature are adopted through policies appropriate to the actual societies in which we live:

1. **Consolidation of democracy and the institutions of the state of the rule of law** through the participation of citizens in political life and the facilitation of non-discriminatory access to public information, the improvement of the quality of public services and the modernization of public administration (e-government, e-administration);

2. **Development of a market economy and progressive movement towards the new economy**, growth in the competitiveness of economic agents and the creation of new jobs in the high-technology sector through developing electronic commerce, tele-work, and new methods of business management, financial management and management of human resources, incorporation of ICT capacities in new goods and services, development of the ICT sector.

3. **Improving the quality of life** by using new technologies in areas such as: social welfare, health, education, protection of the environment and monitoring of disasters, transport security etc, and thereby **integration into Euro-atlantic structures** and the Global Information Society.

4. **Consolidation and development of a national economic framework which ensures the production of goods and services which are competitive on internal and external markets**, as the evolution of the modern world demands. A branch of the economy based on goods and services which capitalize on ICT for the internal market and especially for export would permit a maximally efficient use of human resources, compared with other branches, because specifically information society goods and services contain expanded added value associated with minimal use of material resources and energy. Such an option corresponds to forecasts about the development of human society in the 21 century, and is confirmed by the experience of several small countries over the last ten years, such as Ireland, Finland and Israel (see Annex nr 3).

Important changes in the development of society have taken place in recent years, which have had a major impact on the way we think, work, interact, spend our free time and, especially, on the way we produce goods and services. The major changes which have produced these effects and which will shape the development of society in the new millennium are linked especially to the globalization of competition and the market and progress in the field of ICT.

In this context of the Information Society we are witnessing the implementation of knowledge as a critical, determining, factor in economic growth and the standard of living. From the division of the world on the basis of access to knowledge and use of new technologies in the field ("global digital divide"), we can, with appropriate strategies developed at national and global levels, move towards new opportunities for social development at a planetary level ("global digital opportunity", The Okinawa Summit of the G7/G8, July 2000).

Globalization and new ICT mean producing goods and services to the standard of external/global markets, especially the internal market of the EU, where standards are the highest.

The production of innovative goods and services at this level can only be achieved through maintaining and developing a capacity for sustained research-development-innovation and for active technology transfer between producers of goods and services. Making people aware of this entails developing a strategy for development of the national economy and for viable sectors within it which can compete on internal and external markets, especially the EU.

Given the example of the countries referred to above and presented in the appendix (Ireland, Israel, Finland), Romania should make a fundamental choice to develop a branch of the economy which produces the goods and services demanded by the information society, based on ICT.

ⁱ I am currently embarking on research into 'transition' in Romania and other CEE countries. The example I discuss here is very much work in progress.

ⁱⁱ Godin (2004) lists some seventy five terms for societal transformation between 1950 and 1984 alone, including 'post-industrial society', 'neocapitalism', 'management society'.

ⁱⁱⁱ The stance of key states (notably the USA, European states, Japan) and international institutions and agencies (the World Bank, the IMF etc) towards strategies and discourses is one important factor in the outcome of struggles for hegemony. Godin (2004) traces the displacement of 'national systems of innovation' (NSIs) by 'knowledge-based economy' as the favoured strategy of the OECD in the 1990s.

^{iv} In Fairclough 2003, I suggest that analysis of the texturing of relations of 'equivalence' and 'difference' as the operationalization in textual analysis of the view of the political (which one can extend more generally to social action) in Laclau & Mouffe (1985) as constituted through the simultaneous operation of the 'logics' of 'equivalence' and 'difference'. I see this as a case where textual analysis can be enriched through transdisciplinary dialogue.

^v The discourse of 'social exclusion' which is widely used in the EU is not widely used in Romania. The discourse of 'poverty', which was for instance displaced by the discourse of 'social exclusion' in the UK in the language of New Labour (Fairclough 2000), is by contrast widely used, though it appears only once in this document – the issue of poverty is not otherwise referred to.