

## **Discourse in processes of social change: 'Transition' in Central and Eastern Europe**

This paper is an initial contribution to an area of research I am currently embarking on: the role of discourse in processes of 'transition' (ie from socialism to capitalism and western forms of democratic government) in central and eastern Europe (henceforth 'CEE'). My particular focus here will be on attempts in CEE, and specifically Romania, to construct a 'knowledge-based economy' (KBE) and 'information society' (IS). I shall begin with a brief sketch of the version of Critical discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) which I am currently working with. I shall then discuss discourse as an element in processes of 'transition', and the construction of 'objects of research' from research topics such as 'transition', KBE and IS. The final part of the paper will look in particular at the recontextualization of discourses of the KBE and IS, especially the later, in Romania. I shall analyse a specific Romanian government policy text, the 'National Strategy for the promotion of the New Economy and the implementation of the Information Society' (2002).

### **Critical Discourse Analysis**

I shall pick out some of the main features of the version of CDA I now work with (Fairclough 2003, 2000a, 2000b, Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999, Fairclough, Jessop & Sayer 2004), listing them for the sake of brevity:

1. Discourse is an element of all social processes, events and practices, though they are not simply discourse (Fairclough 1992).
2. The relationship between abstract social structures and concrete social events is mediated by social practices, relatively stabilized forms of social activity (Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999).
3. Each of these levels has a linguistic/semiotic element: languages (social structures), orders of discourse (social practices), texts broadly understood (social events) (Fairclough, Jessop & Sayer 2004).
4. Social practices and events are constituted as articulations of dialectically related elements including discourse. These are different (and they cannot for instance all be reduced to discourse as some versions of discourse theory claim), but not discrete: discourse internalizes and is internalized in other elements (Harvey 1996, Fairclough 2003). For instance, in researching any social organization one is faced with its partly discursive character, including its constitution as an operationalization (putting into practice, 'translating' into its non-discursive as well as discursive facets) of particular discourses. But this does not mean that the organization is nothing but discourse, or that it can be researched exclusively through discourse analysis – which would be highly reductive.
5. Discourse figures in three main ways in social practices: discourses (ways of representing, eg political discourses), genres (ways of (inter)acting, eg lecturing, interviewing), styles (ways of being – identities, eg styles of management) (Fairclough 2000a, 2000b).
6. Social practices are articulated into networks which constitute social fields, institutions, and organisations. Orders of discourse are more

exactly the linguistic/semiotic facet of such networks (Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999).

7. An order of discourse is a social structuring of linguistic/semiotic difference, which is constituted as a relatively stable articulation of discourses, genres and styles (Fairclough 2003). For instance, the political order of discourse, associated with the political field as an articulation of social practices, is constituted in a particular time and place as an articulation of (conservative, liberal, social-democratic etc) discourses, of genres such as political debate, speech, and interview, and of styles including different styles of political leadership.
8. Social change includes change in social structures, social practices and social events.
9. Change in social practices affects how elements are articulated together in practices, how practices are articulated together in networks, and how discourses, genres and styles are articulated together in orders of discourse (Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999). Thus the relatively recent development of 'mediatized politics' is a re-articulation of the relationship between the fields of politics and media, their re-constitution as a network, which includes a transformation of the political order of discourse, its genres (eg the forms of political interview), discourses (eg the translation of political discourses into popularized, more 'conversational', forms), and styles (political leaders adopt to a degree the 'show business' styles of entertainers).
10. Social change in countries, organisations etc is often initiated with new discourses. This operates through a dissemination across structural and scalar boundaries which 'recontextualizes' new discourses. These may be enacted as new ways of (inter)acting including genres, inculcated as new ways of being including styles, as well as materialized in eg new ways of structuring space. Thus liberal and neo-liberal discourses have been recontextualized in 'transitional' countries in CEE, and to varying degrees enacted in new ways of (inter)acting (eg in government, including government addressing and interacting with citizens as consumers), inculcated in new ways of being (eg people adopting the lifestyles and identities of consumers), and materialized in such new constructions of space as the 'shopping mall'.
11. 'May' is important: there are discursive as well as non-discursive conditions of possibility for discourses having constitutive effects on other elements of the social – the fact that discourses 'construe' the world in particular ways does not necessarily mean that they (re-) construct it in those ways (Fairclough, Jessop & Sayer 2004). Social fields, institutions and organizations are 'intransitive' realities which have properties which make them more or less amenable or resistant to particular directions of change.
12. CDA claims that analysis of social processes and change is productively carried down into detailed textual analysis. More detailed (including linguistic) analysis of texts is connected to broader social analysis by way of interdiscursive analysis of shifting articulations of genres, discourses, styles in texts (Fairclough 2003).
13. As a form of critical social science CDA analyses social life in its discursive aspects from a normative perspective, ie on the basis of a

commitment to a set of values of social justice, social equality, democracy – though there are difference in how such values are understood and interpreted.

### **Discourse as an element of processes of 'transition'**

The importance of language and discourse in processes of 'transition' in CEE and elsewhere is quite widely recognized in social research (for instance in Miroiu 1999, and in the conception of influential neo-liberal models of transition as 'discourses' in eg Bourdieu & Wacquant 2001). But social research has so far produced only a limited understanding of how discourse figures in processes of 'transition'. This is partly a theoretical problem: the theories of discourse which tend to be drawn upon are relatively underdeveloped, and do not constitute an adequate basis for providing full and nuanced accounts of how discourse interacts with other non-discursive facets of processes of 'transition'. It is also a problem of data and analytical method: acknowledgement of the importance of discourse in general and abstract statements about discourse in 'transition' or more generally in social change have not generally been translated into detailed analysis texts or talk, so there is little concrete knowledge of how they figure in the unfolding of events or change and continuity of practices in specific types of situation, organization, locality etc. Having said that, forms of textual analysis have already been used in Romanian research on 'transition', eg on media (eg Miroiu 1999, Beciu 2000, Coman 2003), but CDA's particular mix of interdiscursive and linguistic analysis is I think a more powerful analytical resource for addressing these issues than those I have seen used (Preoteasa 2002 is one case where CDA has been used). I see critical discourse analysis as a resource for producing richer understanding and analysis of the relationship between discourse and other non-discursive facets of social processes and social change, and of the effects of discourse on wider processes of social change, through a 'transdisciplinary' dialogue with other theories and disciplines. Transdisciplinary research is a form of interdisciplinary research which sees 'internal' development of a theory or discipline (of their theoretical categories and concepts and methods of research) as emerging out of dialogue with others (Fairclough 2003).

### **Theorising 'transition'**

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.

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 discourses<sup>i</sup>.
- Relations of contestation between discourses within the framework of relations of contestation between strategies, and the emerging hegemony of these nodal discourses<sup>ii</sup>.
- 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.

The Pickles & Smith (1998) collection on the political economy of 'transition', adopts a regulation approach in combination with theories of governance and elements of cultural theory, raising five central issues. A summary of them will fill out the sketch I have given with respect to 'transition' in more general terms..

1. The regulation of political economies in transition. Drawing upon regulation theory, there is a focus on attempts to achieve, and difficulties and failures in achieving, viable coupling between forms of capital accumulation and mechanisms of regulating them.
2. The path-dependent and evolutionary character of political economic transformation, the effect of 'legacies', how future developments 'arise out of the particular trajectories or paths that have been taken in the past'.
3. The dependence of political economic development on transformations in social networks, on new forms of connectivity between social and economic agents.
4. Geographies of transition and the re-scaling of power. Rather than assuming that transitional processes simply follow diverse 'national roads', exploring both sub-national regional differences and transnational processes.
5. The significance of local struggles grounded in concrete issues for processes of democratization and change in political subjects.

'Re-scaling' alludes to the category of 'scales', different levels of social process, organisation, structure and strategy – 'global', international and macro-regional (eg the EU and candidate countries), national, micro-regional, and local. One aspect of transition is 're-scaling', the emergence of new scales, and the re-organisation of relations between scales (Jessop 2002). The issue of 'globalisation' is significant here, as is what has been referred to as 'glocalisation' (Robertson 1992), a re-scaling which sets up new relations between the local and the global in ways which can to some degree bypass the national. Ethnographic and other studies of crisis and change in specific localities (Burawoy 2000, Burawoy & Verdery 1999, Anăstăsoaie 2003) have shown how 'global' resources are marshalled by local strategists in struggles over for instance environmental issues, or attempts to re-position economically depressed cities within global urban networks (Gille 2000,

Pickles 1998). These 'global' resources include discourses - for instance the discourses of internationally organised environmental groups.

On the basis of this literature, one can say the following about 'transition':

1. There is not one form of capitalism, but many forms. The market is only one regulatory mechanism within contemporary forms of capitalism, which combines in various ways with others, hierarchies (states) and networks (Pickles & Smith 1998, Jessop 2002, Stark & Bruszt 1998, Sayer 1995).
2. The particular trajectories of 'transition' vary in different countries but also within different countries, depending on legacies, including how the process of extrication from communism took place. The forms of capitalism which develop are consequently also variable. (Przeworski 1992, Pickles & Smith 1998, Daianu 200x)
3. Transition entails a mixture of old and new, rather than a simple replacement of the old by the new (Stark & Bruszt 1998, Verdery 2000).
4. Research on transition in a particular country should be sensitive to (a) variation both between and within social fields – economy, government, politics, media etc (b) hybridity (including mixtures of old and new) in particular fields, institutions, practices etc
5. Transition has semiotic as well as non-semiotic elements. Consequently variation and hybridity will be in part semiotic variation and hybridity (see for instance Miroiu 1999 on variation and hybridity in post-1989 Romanian political discourses) – in the way social life is represented, narrated, imagined (therefore in discourses), in semiotic aspects of forms of action and interaction (therefore in genres), in semiotic aspects of the identities of social actors (therefore in styles).

### **Recontextualization of the 'knowledge-based economy' and 'information society' in Romanian policy texts**

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, Text 1 in the Appendix). 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, text 1, Appendix), 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. I am particularly concerned here with the placing of expressions which are associated with different discourses in relations of 'equivalence<sup>iii</sup>' through listing and other forms of paratactic connection (Fairclough 2003). One can see this as a process of (re-)classifying, texturing relations between expressions as co-members of a class (even if, as is generally the case, the class itself is not named – what van Leeuwen 1996 calls 'association'). In paragraph 5, for instance, the formulation of the 'strategic goal' sets up a relation of equivalence 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), and the relations of equivalence between them are linguistic realizations of interdiscursive hybridity (the 'mixing' of discourses).

The formulation of the 'overall strategy' which is the means to achieving the 'strategic goal' again sets up relations of equivalence, between the three listed elements of the strategy ('preparing ...', 'modernising ...', 'sustaining ...'), 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, taken as given, 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 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 Texts 2 and 3 in the Appendix), 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<sup>iv</sup>. 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 state of right'<sup>v</sup>, 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 'state of right' was one of the key ways in which Romanian society after 1989 differentiated and distanced itself from the Ceausescu era. On the other hand, 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 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 (1999), 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.

## **Conclusions**

Miroiu (1999) describes the ‘mental cramp’ she experienced in discussing Romanian problems with western academics, and her realization that

Romanian realities could not be grasped in their conceptual frameworks. I think this is in part an issue of methodology. Bourdieu's approach to constructing the 'object of research' implies a progressive articulation or rapprochement of topics of research with theories and methods in the course of defining and refining the 'object of research', rather than immediately approaching the topic of research armed with ready-made theories and methods. What is implied is that theories and methods appropriate to the object of research and particular to this object of research should be progressively constructed out of existing resources of theory and method, which can quite legitimately include theories and methods hitherto used only 'elsewhere', be that in different parts of the world, different areas of research, or different disciplines.

We also need to draw distinctions, with respect to theory, between different types of theory. Metatheories (such as 'critical realism' as a philosophy of science) and general theories (such as the theory of discourse I have sketched here, or regulation theory) generally travel better than 'local theories' (eg theories focused upon particular social fields in particular sorts of society, such as theories of education, media or social welfare in social democratic societies). This is not to say that research in particular sorts of society may not lead to specific critiques of metatheories or general theories. There are for instance apparently general theories whose covert particularity is revealed by working with them in new contexts – recently influential economic theories are a case in point. And even with general theories one needs to carefully distinguish what is general about them from particularities which attach to them because of the specific research topics they have been used to address and the specific localities of such research. This is certainly true for CDA: the categories of 'order and discourse', 'discourses', 'genres', 'styles', 'interdiscursivity' are amongst those which belong to the general theory, whereas categories such as 'marketisation' or 'conversationalisation' which have figured quite prominently in CDA research do not, nor does the use of Systemic Functional Grammar for linguistic analysis of texts. If 'conversationalisation' proved to be a useless category for discourse analytical research in Romania, it would not be a problem for the theory; if 'interdiscursivity' did, it would.

CDA's transdisciplinary way of working makes it difficult sometimes to separate general from particular. For instance, I would say that 'recontextualization', a category which originated in Bernstein's sociology of pedagogy (Bernstein 1990, Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999) has become a general category of CDA because it has been fully reinterpreted in discourse-analytical terms and built into the relational structure of the categories of the theory; whereas 'conversationalisation' has not. Moreover the transdisciplinary way of working and the associated methodology I have pointed to entails that in the course of progressively arriving at one's 'object of research' one is also seeking to find a coherent synthesis between CDA as a general theory and other theories which bear upon one's topic – let us say theories of media and mediation, theories of politics, theories of identity, theories of learning – so that caution is always needed about non-reflexively 'importing' inappropriate or misleading particularities.



Finally, let me note the limited nature of what I have done in this paper, and point to directions in which this research will be developed.

1. I have looked at recontextualization only with respect to policy texts. One would also need material from within particular institutions (eg educational), businesses, localities, political parties etc to arrive at a fuller assessment. 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.
2. A commonplace in commentaries on transition 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. Such claims make it particularly important to go beyond public policy documents in looking at recontextualization, and especially to research the operationalization of discourses such as the 'information society' and the 'knowledge economy', not only by looking for instance at how imaginaries for 'e-government' are being operationalized in for instance the setting up of a government web portal ([www.guvernare.ro](http://www.guvernare.ro) CHECK!), but also through ethnographic research in localities, companies etc which can give insights into the relationship between discourses, rhetoric, and reality.

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## Appendix

## **Text 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.

## **Text 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 capacităților 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.

### **Text 3: English translation Text 2**

#### **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 right** 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.

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<sup>i</sup> Godin (2004) lists some seventy five terms for societal transformation between 1950 and 1984 alone, including ‘post-industrial society’, ‘neocapitalism’, ‘management society’.

<sup>ii</sup> 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.

<sup>iii</sup> 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.

<sup>iv</sup> 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.

<sup>v</sup> I use the term ‘state of right’ as equivalent to the German term ‘Rechtsstaat’.