

**ABSTRACT OF HABILITATION THESIS**  
**Discursive Analysis for Intelligence and Security Culture**  
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I am currently an associate professor in the Strategic, Public and Intercultural Communication Department of “Carol I” National Defence University. My studies have focused on strategic communication, intelligence analysis, intercultural communication, discursivity and argumentation. My scientific research interests are focused on four main directions:

1. **Security culture and strategic communication.** In the post-truth context in which consensual truth is contested by the plurality of individualistic and dissonant discourses that promote particular interests, concepts that have formed the bedrock of democratic societies such as science and security have come under scrutiny and even attack by disinformation campaigns orchestrated by adversarial states or non-state actors whose goal is to destabilize liberal democracies and undermine international security organizations. My research has revealed that the evolution from strategic culture to security culture is of relevance for contemporary society. The concept of strategic culture appeared during the Cold War and it referred to the ways in which a state presented itself to its adversaries in a bi-polar world, what principles and mechanisms it employed to manage conflictual situations. More precisely, strategic culture was at that time derivative of and dictated ways of interaction in the international arena which focused little on attitudes towards security at home. At present, security culture is a much more extensive term which refers to the ways in which the population in a state understands and relates to the policies and technologies that can guarantee its security in face of numerous, sometimes ambiguous threats, risks and vulnerabilities. It is also an opportunity that a state has to build confidence and resilience in its population, using policies and technologies that are designed to raise awareness of both of possible dangers, as well as of measures to counteract them, to develop the abilities the population needs in order to resist them, as well as to promote the values that guarantee not only state security but also individual security. Our research in this direction was materialized in two studies which were addressed to the public on the ways in which security culture is understood by the general public and promoted and on the connection that could be established between a mature security culture and population resilience in the face of the fake news phenomenon. The ensuing reports in which we have

analyzed the answers provide a clearer picture of what security culture is, of the ways in which it is promoted or it could be better promoted and of the usefulness of security culture in countering the threats derived from informational warfare based on disinformation campaigns. The Romanian National Defence Strategy of 2020 reveals the fact that security culture can be seen as a force multiplier of societal security and resilience as it promotes national security interests and values and addresses the whole population. Security culture and strategic communication go hand in hand, as the latter could be employed as a means to develop the former, to promote public values that are foundational for democratic society, to help audiences understand their roles, rights and responsibilities, and the need for their active engagement in supporting and maintaining democratic systems. However, strategic communication needs to embrace not solely the ethical principles of transmitting values and content, but also accept that it needs to influence the target audiences' opinions, attitudes and behaviors and therefore needs to employ pathos, emotion and use it in order to build strategic narratives that are effective in capturing the audiences' attention and thus ensure message retention.

2. **Intelligence analysis.** During and after my postdoctoral research studies I focused on the ways in which cognitive, discursive and argumentative mechanisms inform and sometimes obstruct the intelligence analysis process. Firstly, I focused on the effects mindsets could have on the intelligence analysts' abilities to interpret data and information and to understand facts and events, and I paid particular attention to the limitations that mindsets might cause. Mindsets cannot be avoided; they are the mental constructs that each individual employs in order to decode reality and to create their own representations of it. However, at times, they limit interpretations and could pose risks for the intelligence analysis process as they might lead to failures in interpretations. Consequently, I have focused on uncovering cognitive, discursive and argumentative mechanisms that could help limit the negative effects of mindsets and allow analysts to process information and data effectively and to uncover the subjects' intentions through discursive interpretations and to argumentatively structure their analysis so as to limit the drawbacks of inductive cognitive processes.
3. The third research direction is the undercurrent that unites all my research, as the role that **discursive, argumentative, and narrative mechanisms** play both in the security field and in intelligence analysis is becoming more and more relevant. Discourse and argumentation form the basis for strategic narratives that are needed in order to effectively transmit values,

engender behaviors, persuade audiences that security and democracy are common goals and they need to be involved and active in pursuing and maintaining them. Moreover, they have the power to counter or limit the effects of disinformation and specifically of fake news. My research into these mechanisms has uncovered the ways in which they function both in strategic narratives as well as in fake news.

4. **Teaching and docimology** is another research direction that I have pursued throughout my career, focusing on the ways in which e-learning and blended learning could help develop cultural, intercultural, linguistic and critical thinking skills. My research proves that, at present, the integration of e-learning into the curriculum could help students develop the critical thinking skills and the digital competences needed to identify fake news, to ascertain the sources and reliability of various online materials, to develop online, digital security culture that could help limit the effects of disinformation campaigns that unfold mainly online and especially in social media.

In the future, I would like to focus on further research into these four domains with a view to further develop a theoretical framework for intelligence analysis that could be employed during training. Secondly, I will continue my research aimed at creating a clearer understanding of what strategic communication is and how it could be employed to develop security culture especially at a societal level. Moreover, I would like to continue creating workshops and seminars addressed to students of all ages in which to present these research findings and to create the learning environment for them to develop their critical thinking and digital competences that can allow them to uncover disinformation campaigns, to become resilient in the face of radicalization and terrorist recruitment campaigns, to develop their argumentative and discursive abilities so as to become involved, active engaged members of society and vectors of the values that liberal democracies stand for.

