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SUBJECTIVITY IN THE POLITICAL LANGUAGE OF PRESIDENT MUJICA: THE CONSTRUCTION OF HIS NARRATIVE

La subjetividad en el discurso político del presidente Mujica: la construcción de su relato

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Abstract: This is a case study on the political discourse of former Uruguayan president José Mujica, which explores his discursive coherence and construction of power. French linguist Catherine Kerbrat-Orecchioni's Enunciation Theory was applied to five key speeches delivered between 1985 and 2011. A theoretical framework was developed combining two other theories to reinforce Enunciation Theory, which was insufficient to analyze the social inscriptions of discourse: the semiotic analysis of political discourse developed by Eliseo Verón and the concept of government myth developed by political scientist Mario Riorda. The findings indicate a relationship between narrative and the construction of power, and justify the use of the case study method for the analysis of other political discourse corpora.

Keywords: enunciation theory, political discourse, discourse analysis, government myth, subjectivity, discursive strategy

Resumen: Este artículo describe un estudio de caso sobre el discurso político del ex-presidente uruguayo José Mujica, y explora su coherencia discursiva y construcción del poder. La teoría de la enunciación de la lingüista francesa Catherine Kerbrat-Orecchioni fue aplicada a cinco discursos pronunciados entre 1985 y 2011. Se recurrió a una triangulación teórica ya que la teoría de la enunciación resultó insuficiente para esclarecer las inscripciones sociales del discurso, y se reforzó con el análisis semiótico del discurso político de Eliseo Verón y el concepto de mito de gobierno del politólogo Mario Riorda. Los hallazgos obtenidos señalan un evidente vínculo entre el relato y la construcción del poder, justificando la utilización del análisis casuístico para otros corpora de discursos políticos.

Palabras clave: teoría de la enunciación, discurso político, análisis del discurso, mito de gobierno, subjetividad, estrategia discursiva

1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine what valid theoretical and methodological contributions the field of linguistics can provide to the analysis of political discourse in Uruguay. This approach falls within current research trends in political communications in Latin America, which have pivoted from the classical study of political parties towards a closer examination of the particular worldview and profile of its leaders.

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The emergence of José Mujica as a unique political character within the social conservative environment of Uruguay is noteworthy. Not only does he speak like any other Uruguayan but his empathy, simplicity and humility give mass character to his discourse by demonstrating that he understands common folk, identifies with them, thinks like them and lives like them.

The relevance that his language has towards making a linguistic contribution to discourse studies in Uruguay inevitably makes him the topic for an in-depth case study. Additionally, the state of the art of discourse analysis in Uruguay has elevated this interest, since research on political discourse is mainly studied by disciplines such as history¹, political science² and sociology. This article develops an analytical framework based on three theoretical approaches for the analysis and interpretation of a corpus of speeches.

2. Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The analytical model applied falls within Enunciation Theory (Kerbrat-Orecchioni 1980). In the 1930s French semiotician Émile Benveniste pioneered Enunciation Theory defining enunciation as “putting language to work through an individual act of utilization” (1977: 83).³ This theory of the descriptivist French School of Discourse Analysis allows studying the linguistic performance of a speaker in a given communication situation by looking at the traces of subjectivity in terms of subject, place and time.

Steering away from structural linguistics, French Enunciation Theory and the American and English Schools of Pragmatics took their origin in philosophy of language and arose in response to the limitations of examining language as a closed abstract system. Both schools of thought give importance to language in use and language as action. Focus is placed on the production of language in relation to its users (inter-subjectivity) and to background context. Hence, language is conceived as an interactional activity.

While Speech Act Theory is a sub-field of Pragmatics, Enunciation Theory recurs to principles of Pragmatics in that utterances (*énoncés*) are believed to contain traces of the mode of enunciation (*énonciation*), reflecting the competences and knowledge of the enunciator and his/her interlocutors (*co-énonciateurs*), and more importantly, spatiotemporal traces of the situation.

Etymologically, the word “enunciation” stems from the Latin noun *enun-tiatio* meaning “a declaration” and refers to the manner in which a proposition is expressed. French enunciation theorists contrast the concepts of *énonciation* and *énoncé* in that the former implies the subjective activity of producing speech acts in a communication event, while the latter constitutes the end product of said activity.

1 See Aldo Marchesi on the cultural paths of authoritarian consensus during the dictatorship, in Demasi et al (2009: 325-398).

2 See Francisco Panizza (1990: 126-197) for a political science perspective on discourse.

3 See Émile Benveniste (1971; 1977) for a description of the formal apparatus of enunciation.

Before examining Mujica’s communication style, a review of his biography and a synthesis of Uruguay’s historical and ideological processes in the 20th century were necessary to place him within the constellation of debates and confrontations between the three major political parties: the dominant *Partido Colorado* and the minority *Partido Nacional*—the two traditional parties founded in 1836—, and the *Frente Amplio*, founded in 1971 and currently in power.

A chronology of historical events was prepared and matched against his climb up the political ladder. The milestones in Mujica’s political biography were identified on the basis of his rise to power by looking at the speeches he delivered in moments that were critical for his party or for the national scenario.

As an illustration, the first speech corresponds to a milestone that is of historic political relevance. Mujica is chosen by fellow *Tupamaros* to deliver a speech, hours after being released from prison where they spent 13 years. The central message in this speech is the historic decision of the Tupamaro National Liberation Movement (MLN-T, acronym in Spanish) to abandon arms and return to the political arena as a legitimate political force. This milestone is critical in two ways: the direction taken by the MLN-T that would change their role in history and the decision of their political group to assign Mujica as their orator. Years later, in an interview, Mujica would explain why he was chosen as their spokesperson (Mazzeo 2002: 10): “We were all gathered at Conventuales (Catholic School) and the request for someone to speak came unexpectedly. The comrades who were present decided I should be that person, probably because I had experience in giving speeches, that’s all (...)”. In summary, the selection of milestones was guided by changes in the strategic priorities of the MLN-T as well as Mujica’s rise to leadership in the roles he attained throughout his political career.

Mujica created a narrative that shaped his public image over time, while interpreting Uruguayan society differently than his predecessors. Said interpretation accentuated the Uruguayan ethos⁴ with its distinguishing character, sentiment, and guiding beliefs. At a conceptual level, this construction of image is of interest given the nexus that exists between the ethos and the reflexive nature of enunciation.

French linguist and discourse analyst Dominique Maingueneau⁵ understands ethos as a constituent element of discourse and writes: “The effectiveness of ethos is based on the fact that it somehow envelops the enunciative activity without being made explicit in the utterance.” (2002: 56). Since ethos underlies the enunciational performance, Mujica sets himself on stage discursively (phonetically, syntactically, through gesture, etc.) to legitimize his political persona. Enunciation theory conceives language as being marked subjectively, therefore, it is reasonable to examine subjectivity in Mujica’s discourse. Thereby, ethos forms an intrinsic part of the image that Mujica creates of himself and of his addressees through enunciation.

The concept of subjectivity was introduced into linguistics by Benveniste who writes: “It is in and through language that man constitutes himself as a subject”

4 The notion of ethos allows examining the processes by which discourse may create allegiances.

5 See <http://dominique.maingueneau.pagesperso-orange.fr/pdf/Ethos.pdf>.

(1971: 180). Similarly, Kerbrat-Orecchioni metaphorically describes how subjectivity permeates language: “very few words escape the shipwreck of objectivity” (1980: 189). Since enunciativational activity leaves traces in utterances, discourse analysis seeks to identify the markers, expressions and traces that reflect the subjectivity of those who speak in a given context of enunciation. Enunciation accounts for the construction of subjectivity and therefore inter-subjectivity, since there is no discourse without the presence of others.

Subjectivity is central to the analysis of enunciation. Enunciation theory looks at subjectivity through the notion of deixis, which is a referential linguistic cue that localizes a speech event and its participants in space and time. There are three principal categories of deixis: person, space and time. In other words, deictic markers require contextual information to convey meaning.

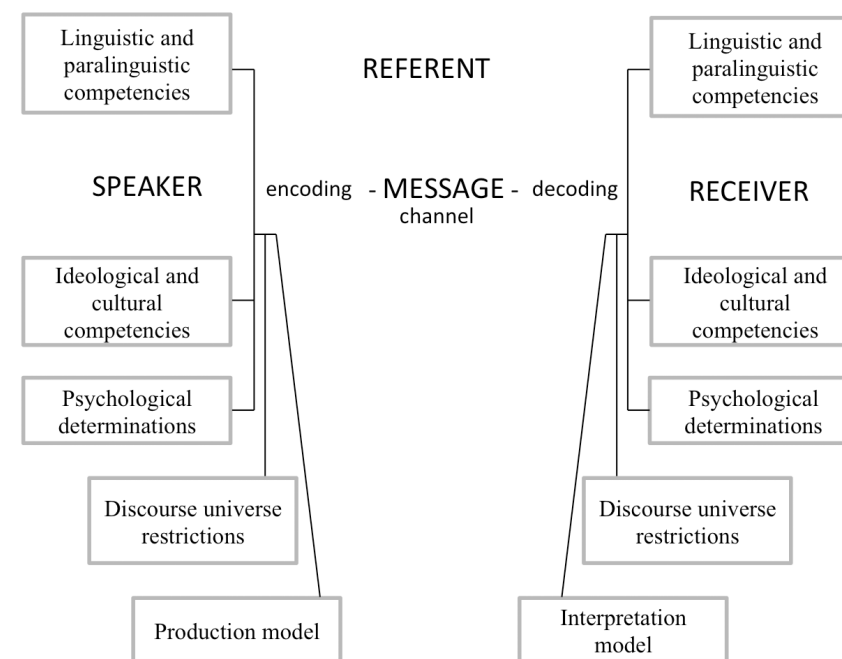
The most evident indicator of deixis is the personal pronoun “I”; followed by “you” and “we”. Non-deictic pronouns include “he”, “they” and “them” since they are external to the dialogic exchange. Spatial and temporal localization is provided by deictic adverbs such as “today” or “now” or location adverbs such as “here” and “there”. Kerbrat-Orecchioni has expanded the inventory of subjectivity markers and designates the nouns and adjectives that convey subjectivity “subjectivemes”. These include axiological nouns that are derogatory or praiseworthy, affective or emotional adjectives such as “coward”, non-axiological evaluative adjectives such as “important”, and axiological evaluative adjectives such as “useful” or “beautiful”. The same applies to verbs and adverbs, which also connote subjectivity. Adverbs that convey subjectivity contain value judgments or degrees of adhesion or rejection of the speaker in relation to the contents of his utterances: “personally”, “really”, etc...

The scope of this study includes research on the historical, sociological and cultural dimensions of Uruguayan politics, in general, and on Mujica’s distinctive ideology within the doctrinal heterogeneity of the Uruguayan Left, in particular. Furthermore, Mujica’s linguistic and paralinguistic competencies, to use Kerbrat-Orecchioni’s terminology, are a reflection of his formal education and his rhetorical ability for encoding and decoding messages. Also fundamental are his family origins, the economic conditions that marked his life and the interpretative and evaluative attitudes which led him to embrace socialist thinking despite having been politically initiated at the age of twenty one within the conservative ideology of the *Partido Nacional* (National Party) and affiliated, at the age of twenty nine, with the revolutionary MLN-Tupamaros.⁶

Kerbrat-Orecchioni’s theoretical framework goes beyond structural and generative linguistics, which studied language as an isolated object separated from other social dimensions. It takes into account parameters of the verbal interaction and the competencies required of speakers to achieve communication. Hence our interest in this author’s approach, which moves away from the concepts of message and code to consider other parameters of the communicative situation. Her approach is outlined in figure 1.

⁶ For an in-depth biography of Mujica see Campodónico (2005), Blixen (2009), Israel (2014), Mazzeo (2002), Pernas (2013) and Rabuffetti (2014).

Figure 1. Kerbrat-Orecchioni’s Enunciation Framework



In her book *Enunciation: On subjectivity in language*, Kerbrat-Orecchioni revises Roman Jakobson’s model and criticizes his definition of an ideal, complete, transparent, and failure-free communication between two individuals “who possess the same code”. Similarly, she questions the postulates of Ferdinand de Saussure and Noam Chomsky on a single monolithic code and argues that speakers and listeners possess a variety of *lektos* (Greek for ‘spoken language’), “dialects, sociolects and idiolects”. She invalidates the theory of a universal code shared by all speakers, claiming that it ignores the natural phenomena and variations within linguistic exchanges (Kerbrat-Orecchioni 1980: 11). For Kerbrat-Orecchioni, “partial inter-comprehension” is a natural result of communication.

Her revised model illustrates the intersection of the linguistic and extra-linguistic competencies of interlocutors and the encoding and decoding negotiations of speakers, which transform discourse as it develops, culminating in “partial inter-comprehension” and not in the ideal and perfect communication proposed by traditional linguistic models. This author’s model places emphasis on “production”, taking speech as a means of action. Among its parameters she includes linguistic, paralinguistic, ideological and cultural competencies as well as psychological determinations, among other considerations.

3. Methodology

Theoretical Triangulation

A theoretical triangulation was developed to examine the multiple dimensions of the object of study more accurately and reduce bias in interpretation. The triangulation includes Enunciation Theory and two other theoretical approaches. One theory, developed by Eliseo Verón, addresses the characterization of political discourse. In his article “The Adversative Word”, Verón defines the typology of political discourse as follows: “What characterizes the specificity of political discourse is a given configuration of discursive operations, with enunciational activities constituting a central part of them” (1987: 13-15). Another theory, developed by political scientist Mario Riorda, addresses the concept of “government myth”⁷ on the construction of symbolic meaning in political communication.

Riorda’s notion of “government myth” is similar to Verón’s notion of “invariant nucleus”⁸ (1987: 14), since they both refer to an epicenter of values and beliefs that is coherently composed and constant over time. Similarly, Kerbrat-Orecchioni (1980: 52-53) refers to a symbolic model for communicating shared ideals of a “political we” or an “inclusive we”, where subjectivity plays a fundamental role in interpreting this epicenter.

Consequently, by articulating complementarities between the theories of Kerbrat-Orecchioni, Verón and Riorda, it was feasible to analyze the verisimilitude of Mujica’s narrative in his construction of a common reality through ideals, principles and values, which create a framework of cultural belonging and institute a mobilizing myth. Through this triangulation, the objectivity of research findings was increased and preliminary conclusions were broadened. In particular, this was verified through the results achieved from the microscopic analysis of subjectivity (deictic markers and subjectivemes), its subsequent quantification, and its comparison with Verón’s multiple addressees in political discourse.

The Corpus

The corpus includes five speeches that correspond to the most relevant socio-historical milestones in a timeline spanning from 1985 to 2011. Each milestone marks a new stage in Mujica’s construction of political power: two speeches delivered during his militant participation, a harangue during the 2009 presidential campaign, his presidential inauguration speech, and a speech addressed to Mercosur businessmen.

⁷ Government myth is defined as a complete and coherent system of beliefs.

⁸ Verón explains the notion of invariant nucleus as follows: “(...) the definition of a type of discourse presupposes the definition of a series of its variations, which are no more than the different strategies within the same game. The general definition of “type” presupposes the definition of an invariant nucleus and of a system of variations, without which the description of inter-discursive relationships within the field at hand is impossible. (...) the same issue arises of differentiating an invariant nucleus and a system of variations” (14).

The corpus comprises the following speeches⁹:

- 17 March 1985: Speech at the *Platense Patín Club*, 48 hours following Mujica’s release from jail.
- 19 December 1987: Speech at the IV MLN-T Convention at the Franzini Stadium.
- 3 June 2009: Video of a presidential campaign speech delivered by Senator Mujica in Rio Branco, Cerro Largo Department.
- 1 March 2010: Presidential address.
- 2 April 2011: Audio recording of a speech delivered by President Mujica to Mercosur businessmen at the Conrad Hotel in Punta del Este.

Research objectives

Mujica’s discursive strategies were analyzed to shed light on his construction of power and the coherence of his political discourse. The study comprised two stages: an internal discourse analysis and an inter-discursive analysis.¹⁰ In the first stage, each speech was analyzed internally under enunciation theory in its restrictive sense—which involves the identification of the traces of subjectivity (deictic markers and subjectivemes). In the second stage, the speeches were compared and contrasted and taken as a macrostructure whose diachronic evolution revealed continuities and ruptures. (This consisted of the analysis of multiple-addressees, invariant nucleus of values, paradigmatic¹¹ enunciations and symbolic communication).

In order to explore the enunciation mechanisms used by the President, a proprietary classification table was developed based on Kerbrat-Orecchioni’s analysis matrix, with the objectives of:

- Providing an evaluation of the nature of enunciation in his speeches, from the most recent speech to the oldest, and based on the perspective of “open immanentism”.¹²

⁹ They were coded as follows: first discourse (D1, 1985), second discourse (D2, 1987), third discourse (D3, 2009), fourth discourse (D4, 2010) and fifth discourse (D5, 2011).

¹⁰ One of the basic distinctions made by French enunciation theory is between restricted and extended enunciation. The restricted sense analyzes the traces a speaker leaves in his utterances, whereas the extended sense gives consideration to the participants, the situation, the spatiotemporal conditions and the general conditions of message production and reception (Kerbrat-Orecchioni).

¹¹ The word paradigm stems from Greek para- (with) deigma (model, pattern). In his book *Dance with signs, general notions in semiotics*, Victorino Zecchetto defines paradigm as “the theoretical model that explains a structure of signs or a syntagmatic chain. The paradigmatic plane forms a vertical and invisible axis which travels through the syntagmatic plane and guides its deeper meaning.”

¹² According to Kerbrat-Orecchioni (1980: 283): “«open immanentism» consists of admitting that it is legitimate and even necessary to grant a place, at the heart of linguistics, to certain considerations (...) concerning the production/reception conditions of a message, as well as to the nature and status of the enunciator (speaker), co-enunciator, and the communication situa-

- Determining the origins and characteristics of his narrative, how it is constructed and who his interlocutors are.
- Explaining how his discourse reflects or is inspired by Uruguayan culture and national history.

The proprietary classification table was applied to review the use that the President makes of deictic markers (inscription of the enunciator's subjectivity), modalizers (indicators of the enunciator's attitude towards his interlocutors and towards his own discourse), and other categories of subjectivity like "subjectivemes". (Kerbrat-Orecchioni 1980: 42).

Given the scarcity of revolutionary narratives and literature that provide firsthand accounts of Tupamaro history, secondary sources were consulted¹³. This literature helps locate Mujica as an enunciative subject.

4. Data Analysis

The procedure involved analyzing the enunciation mechanisms used by Mujica for creating a narrative with a distinct style. Towards this end, the manifestation of subjectivity in the corpus was studied at different moments of his political career. A first stage identified the traces of the subject (subjectivity) and a second stage looked at the modes in which he referred to other voices (inter-subjectivity). The procedure identified the inscriptions of Mujica's subjectivity and how they intervene in the configuration of a discursive ethos that is coherent with respect to an invariant nucleus of values.

Similarly, Mujica's gift for symbolic oratory required the examination of the linguistic influence that the 1960's generation in Uruguay received from the revolutionary worldview of the *Hombre Nuevo* or New Man (Guevara 2007: 3-78) and of the deep-rooted oral tradition in Uruguayan politics. The socialist values in the concept of *Hombre Nuevo* include solidarity, self-criticism, tolerance, learning, change, sincerity, humanity, simplicity and empathy towards the poor. In Discourse 1, line 59, Mujica explains these values to Tupamaro youth: "I wish to disagree with many of you, especially with the youth gathered here today: I will not follow the path towards hatred, not even with those who were vile towards us; hate does not build. (...) These things are a matter of principle, things you can't mortgage". In Discourse 2, line 262, he legitimates his defense of solidarity by saying he will stand: "For people who —yesterday, today and tomorrow— fight for a society where what's mine and what's yours is not divided into antagonistic classes, for a society where the privileged are children, the elderly, and the weak, for a type of society where man can truly exercise solidarity".

tion". Radical immanentism states that linguistics has as its main goal describing language in and of itself.

13 For an in-depth review of the political history of the MLN-T and the Tupamaro culture see Aldrichi (2001) (2009), De Giorgi (2011), Garcé (2009), Gatto (2000), Gilio (2011), Labrousse (2009) and Rey Tristán (2006).

The identification of paradigmatic enunciations allowed visualizing the major axes that frame and cut across Mujica's discourse. These include: a change in paradigm in the political system and a new distribution of power; a call to unity and ethical values; the values that incarnate the socialist New Man as a way to action; a worldview based on the survival of the species and nature; the use of dichotomies to classify ideas in binary sets (poverty/wealth, the dominant/the dominated). Thus, the central leitmotifs that pervade his speeches are a moral discourse, an inter-subjective populist discourse, a philosophical discourse conveying ideals, and a discourse of action.

Mujica's connection to rural Uruguay is evidenced in his lifestyle and through deliberate linguistic choices that mimic the lower classes, such as dropping final s's, inverting accents, uttering syntactically convoluted phrases, and using other stereotypical repertoires of the less educated. Moreover, his rhetorical style which asserts a connection to history, positions him within the oratorical traditions of Uruguayans. This oral tradition spread to the covert language used in clandestinity by the Tupamaros¹⁴ and to the practice of having to memorize facts instead of documenting them in writing. This partially explains the absence of original source documentation for this study¹⁵. Finally, it was verified that all of these historical and cultural influences were permanently interwoven in Mujica's discourse.

American historian John Charles Chasteen, who has researched Latin American insurgency discourse and Uruguayan *caudillos* or "heroes on horseback" Aparicio and Gumersindo Saravia, reveals that war stories figure prominently in the oral tradition of nineteenth century Uruguayan rural life. According to this author, the discourse of insurgency shows contemporary insurgents identifying with past insurgencies explicitly. He defines the caudillo as a cultural hero who awakens a collective identity in his followers (2001: 22). Upon describing Aparicio Saravia's rise to national leadership of the Blanco Party and his ability to embody a set of beliefs and images in his followers' imagination, which Chasteen calls "the myth of the *patriada*", he writes (2001: 163): "the *patriada* myth had become a constitutive element of the Blanco party's collective identity". The term *patriada* refers to wars of independence and was adopted by the Blancos later to refer to their patriotic insurgencies. The Blanco Party fought for an inclusive Uruguayan nation while it was excluded from political participation due to the domination of the Colorado Party. Chasteen underlines the fact that "the Blanco identity was structured, in some respects, like a national identity" and goes on to say: "It is no exaggeration that the basic polarities of Uruguay's two-party system were constituted more through narratives of war than through administrative programs". Chasteen adds: "the Blanco's narrative of their shared past plainly reverberated in oral tradition, as well as in

14 See the interviews conducted by Clara Aldrichi (2009) of 17 Tupamaro militants and exmilitants for a representation of the opinions and experiences that shaped the guerrilla movement.

15 In Mujica's own words: "We Tupamaros were in the grips of urgency. Many times, we failed to do the fundamental things we wanted to do [...] We had to forget about teaching, forget about writing documents, writing books: because there were cantons that needed to be evacuated, because we had to fabricate documents, we had to fight in clandestinity (D2, 1987: l. 25-28). In the same discourse Mujica says: "we aren't fighting for a society to have more political leaders, but our fight is for a New Man who is capable of leading himself (l.127).

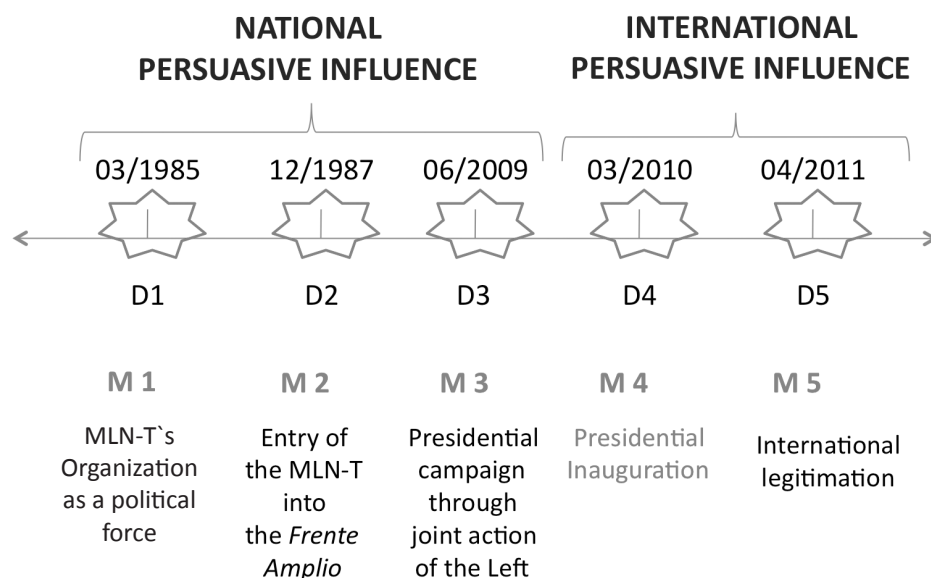
print". Mujica resorts to this narrative when he says: "we continue to fail at building the *Patria Grande*" (D4, l. 322) or when he refers to "building National Unity or *Patria para Todos*" (D4, l. 352), or in his statement "and while I'm Tupamaro, I am no less Blanco" (D1, l.161).

Rural upheavals took place as early as 1810 and paved the way towards a longstanding divide between the city and the countryside. This is when, in the 1830's, the white and red political factions (*Blancos* and *Colorados*) became *de facto* political parties.

The two traditional political parties acted under the same power paradigm resulting from the signature of the 1897 political pact called *Pacto de la Cruz* and when the National Party or *Partido Nacional* came out losing. In particular, Mujica makes reference in his speeches to his "*Blanco*" origins (historical framework) and to the need for a change in political paradigm, namely towards "a future New Man or *Hombre Nuevo*, and if not, towards an improved man or *hombre mejor*" (D1, l. 44) (ideological framework). This new paradigm that Mujica encourages has its origins in an invariant nucleus of ideas and values that he has long possessed, guided by a worldview or *Weltanschauung* that governs his discursive field, and a system of multiple strategic variations he uses to expand it, whilst antagonizing with his present adversary.

Schematically, starting from the invariant nucleus, the successive stages he followed served to conciliate and persuade a few and to confront other adversaries. Therefore, each milestone corresponds to a new stage in the construction of political power.

Figure 2. Milestones and Chronology of Facts



These milestones clearly emerge from his political biography and identify the moments when he earned positions of power.

The first milestone is the release of old Tupamaro leadership from prison on 17 March 1985 after 13 years of captivity and corresponds to a speech (D1, 1985) delivered to Tupamaro militants a few days after this historic event. The second milestone is the decision adopted in 1987 by Mujica and his partisans to participate democratically and legitimately in political life by requesting the entry of the *MLN-Tupamaros* to the left-wing *Frente Amplio* party, a historical decision conveyed in his speech at the IV MLN-Tupamaro Convention (D2, 1987). The third milestone corresponds to a harangue, captured in video, delivered in 2009 by Senator Mujica who addresses a rural community in the Cerro Largo Department to persuade them to vote for the *Frente Amplio* (D3, 2009). The fourth milestone corresponds to the presidential address of 1 March 2010 (D4, 2010). Lastly, the fifth milestone reveals the former President's economic and social views at a meeting for local and international businessmen held in 2011 (D5, 2011).

The discursive strategies Mujica uses are as follows:

- Political Militancy Strategy (D1, 1985)
- Legitimation Strategy (D2, 1987)
- Ownership-seeking Strategy (D3, 2009)
- Domestic Institutionalization Strategy (D4, 2010)
- Foreign Institutionalization Strategy (D5, 2011)

In the first speech of the corpus (D1, 1985) Mujica uses a militancy strategy to address Tupamaros and supporters. He shows the convictions of an old fighter who has just left jail and wishes to return to public life. He addresses a young political force that needs to become organized. He strategically appeals to the loyalty of militants who continued to support their leaders while in prison.

The second speech (D2, 1987) consists of a legitimation strategy that supports the entry of the MLN-T into the *Frente Amplio*. Mujica represents the leader who has come to challenge the existing power structure and who proposes an alliance to the balkanized left through the entry of the MLN-T to the *Frente Amplio*, with the ultimate aim of gaining power.

The third speech (D3, 2009) displays an ownership-seeking strategy for the joint action of the entire Uruguayan Left in the 2009 elections. Mujica shows himself as the motivator of a political force as he addresses a people-nation that has witnessed the public works carried out by the *Frente Amplio* in Government, and which are harshly criticized by the opposition.

The fourth speech (D4, 2010) is a domestic institutionalization strategy upon assuming the presidency of Uruguay. Mujica presents himself to the country as a guarantor of democracy.

The fifth speech (D5, 2011) is a foreign institutionalization strategy directed at businessmen and other international players. Mujica presents himself as an advocate of a small country that suffers great economic asymmetries with neighboring countries: the powerful industry that Brazil represents is cautioned as to the rules of the game, and Argentina is represented as a common homeland.

Figure 3. The Construction of Power

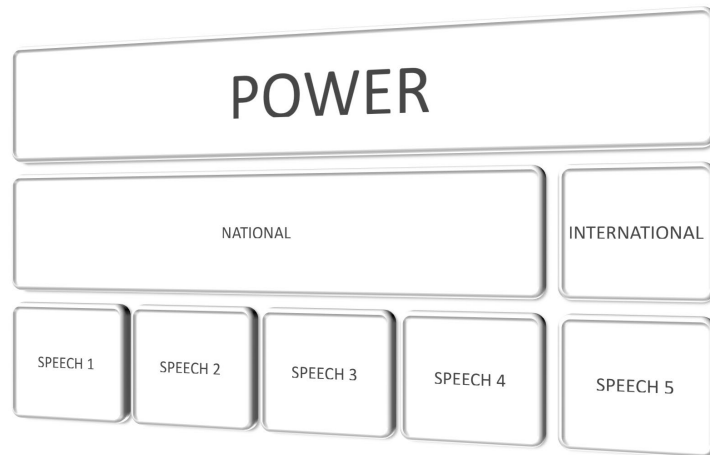
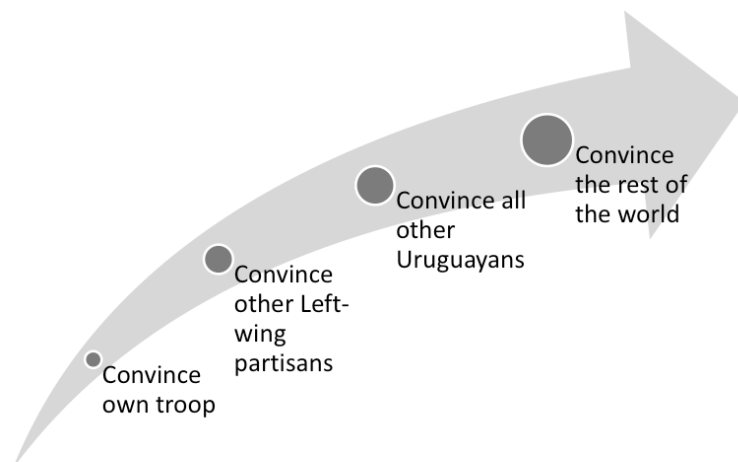


Fig. 4: Persuasion and the Construction of Power



The five speeches belong to each of these discursive strategies used by Mujica to expand his domestic and foreign persuasive influence. The struggle for power starts at the core of his political group and gradually extends outwards with time.

5. Data interpretation and preliminary findings

The country's traditional oratory is a skill that Mujica developed during his militancy in the MLN-T, which he describes as "our unwritten culture" or "*nuestra cultura no escrita*"¹⁶. The clandestine nature of the group forced its members and sympathizers to develop this orality to communicate and become organized. Moreover, Mujica's participation in the MLN-T endowed him with a revolutionary lexicon whose ideologemes¹⁷ (Kristeva 2001: 148) contributed towards the construction of his discourse and of a collective identity with which he identifies.

The ideologemes in his discourse include terms and expressions that refer to well-defined ideological formations (struggle, ranks, war against the enemy, vanquish) or refer to Uruguayan symbols of nationalist and populist banners (patriotic allusions such as "Fatherland for All" or *patria para todos* and "Grand Fatherland" or *patria grande*, people, Artigas, "All Orientals" or *orientales*, etc.). In discourse 1, line 174, Mujica invites youth to rethink history and explains "the message of national history is rooted in a homeland that is in the making". In discourse 2, line 279 Mujica appeals to a political gesture of unity "that has deep historical roots in the Old Fatherland or *Patria Vieja*". In discourse 4, line 351, he dramatically closes his speech: "We shall continue on the same path, building a Fatherland for All!"

This semiotic set constitutes an axis of the President's discursive paradigm that he embellishes with expressive resources taken from urban and rural idiolects, pantheistic expressions of nature, and political teachings, which he progressively adapts to his audiences' realities and to each specific situation of communication, while maintaining a core invariant nucleus of values. His first discourse contains his philosophical stance on life and a reflection on his years in prison: "In all of these years, *muchachos*, we learned from the destitution of confinement, how little we need to be happy, and if you can't get happiness, you won't get anything. We also learned, without books, a way to look at the world that is somewhat pantheist. We loved spiders and loved ants, because they were the only living thing we had in our solitary prison cells. We come from nature and are nature. After us, many more will come. What matters is the cause, not your last name." (D1, l. 80-87). From a pantheistic perception and invariant nucleus of values, Mujica manages to install a worldview and paradigm for interpreting reality in his listeners, whether they are old militant comrades, comrades from the Uruguayan Left, Uruguayan citizens or economic groups with present or future interests in the country.

¹⁶ Utterance taken from the speech delivered at the *Platense Patin Club* on 17 March 1985. Discourse 1, line. 91.

¹⁷ Kristeva defines an ideologeme as: "an intertextual function that can be read at different structural levels of a text, and that stretches across a text giving it its historic and social coordinates."

Another preliminary finding is a clear evolution of the President's rhetoric. Firstly, if he was once a young conservative "*Blanco*", as an activist his language took up social claims and progressively became radicalized. Once mature, even while his ideas were radical, he moderated said language to adapt it to the tone that most Uruguayans are accustomed to. This moderation was maintained throughout his presidential campaign through a discourse that was constructed around the priorities of citizens. According to Riorda (2006: 5), this "construccionism" upholds that "the fundamental premise of this perspective is that reality is a social product, and that the first meanings by which reality is shaped belong to language".

Secondly, Mujica utilized symbolic language to create bonds of trust and his rhetoric worked as an instrument of social interaction. Whenever necessary, his public speeches displayed changes in register and style: a) formal register of a left-wing militant; b) language used by rural farmers and *gauchos*, along with nature inspired images; and c) colloquial and vulgar registers of the poorest social sectors.

This direct communication style allowed him to build bridges with three of the most important sectors of society: establishment, media and public opinion, through the use of the particular registers and lexicons of each audience. In his search for consensus, he demonstrated a deep understanding of their particular interests and created diverse communication models for each audience, while adjusting to that understanding. He demonstrated his comprehension of social power and business to the establishment, and respected its role in Uruguayan society. He gave the press and the radio direct access to his private and political life, offering informal and spontaneous interviews that brought him the sympathy of the media. This decisively resulted in the exposure of his empathetic personality which evoked popular topics that the media made known to public opinion.

His ability to use simple language along with his command of sophisticated language contributed to the development of a singular political communication style, which is the "metonymy of a greater project and whose expression helps in its legitimization" (Elizalde, Fernández-Pedemonte & Riorda 2006: 82). In view of the suspicions that his guerilla past awoke and with his peculiar communication style, he managed to attain credibility vis-à-vis the rest of the world through a peace-making discourse that addressed the world, his fellow countrymen and his adversaries.

Thirdly, as a political leader, Mujica constructed a narrative based on liberal economic ideas upon which he set up a leftist social philosophy to build a future for his country. This is a vision he has alluded to in several of his speeches, an ideological pragmatism that—distancing him from the traditional bipartisan confrontation—has helped him garner the ideals and values shared by the vast majority of Uruguayan society.

Kerbrat-Orecchioni's enunciation framework and Verón's concepts were also applied to identify the paradigm change in Mujica's narrative construction. His nucleus of values and prototheory served to trace a larger symbolic message made visible through Riorda's notion of government myth. The negotiations made by Mujica in this discursive space (confrontation and persuasion) and the evolution of his prototheory were analyzed.

A clarification of the term "proto-theory" is required here. We have borrowed this term from philosophy of science to refer to Mujica's pre-comprehension horizon or intuition regarding Uruguay's static traditional bipartisan political model. His interpretation of the country's political scenario introduces a new paradigm for political organization which calls for the integration of large segments of the population that were left excluded under the old paradigm. Mujica introduces this proto-theory (Zanotti 2005: 106) in his first two speeches. The proto-theory set forth by Mujica in his first speech, which can also be understood under Verón's "invariant nucleus of values" is summarized in the following paragraphs:

Our two old traditional parties by no means deserve disdain, because if we scorn them it is because we ignore the true essence of this country. And it is good that the Left start acting quickly to rethink our national history and then recreate our own goals.

*We Tupamaros have differences, even amongst the Old Guard. Forgive me, comrades, I have no qualm in admitting it and don't ask me to say it again, **in my interpretation of the history of this country I belong to the "blancos", I am completely blanco.** And for being blanco I am not less of a Tupamaro, and since we belong to an organization that does not automate the minds of men, I have sufficient freedom to express our own personal way of thinking, which interprets that of so many other comrades, but not necessarily that of them all. And however, we continue to be on the same team. That for those of us who are not afraid of going against the holy cows of history, thus we categorically say that we are "blancos" and be it known that we say "blancos" and not National Party or "Partido Nacional."*¹⁸

The invariant nucleus of values is based on this statement of principles, found repeatedly in Mujica's discursive field. In this case, the focus is placed on the interpretation that Mujica-subject offers about reality through his discourse-object. It is worth recalling that the invariant nucleus remains stable across his discursive field.

The construction of his legitimacy is intra-discursive and is built with "the interest of the enunciator as transfigured by collective interest" (Verón 1987: 24). The enunciator demonstrates the narrative's verisimilitude through the exposure of utterances that are contrary or dissimilar to his own; the inter-subjective relationship between co-enunciators of the communicative exchange, that is, "I" in relation to the "Others". The construction of Mujica's narrative takes place through the diverse negotiations he makes as an enunciator with his partisans, opponents and other addressees, creating an image of himself in relation with the voices he brings on stage discursively.

Verón (1987) identifies the "splitting of destinaries" as a unique characteristic of political discourse, which includes: 1. The para-destinatory or positive destinatory, who is the partisan; 2. The contra-destinatory or negative destinatory,

¹⁸ From speech at the *Platense Patín Club* on 17 March 1985. D1, lines 155-167.

who is the adversary; and 3. The para-destinatory or third man, a mere spectator outside of the game.

Verón (1987: 16) explains how the political enunciation act builds the image of the enunciator: “The question of the adversary signifies that any political enunciation act presupposes that there are other enunciation acts, real or possible, opposed to our own”. The enunciation act is at the same time a reply and an anticipated reply. Moreover, political discourse simultaneously constructs three destinaries, and its functions necessarily reinforce, polemicize and persuade so as to obtain a response from its pro-destinaries, contra-destinaries and para-destinaries, respectively. “It is evident that the political discursive field implies confrontation, a relationship with an enemy, a struggle between co-enunciators. In this sense, we have mentioned the polemic dimension of political discourse; political enunciation appears to be inseparable from the construction of an adversary” (Verón 1987: 16).

Consequently, the discursive field of the political depends on the leading role of the subject in relation to other potential enunciators, and therefore enunciation theory is clearly central for evaluating the dynamics of inter-subjectivity, which is built through the identity and the narrative of the enunciating subject, who designs his utterances in response to other utterances during the process of meaning production and reception. Of particular interest is the polemic dimension of political discourse since it is through this dialectic exercise with an opponent that the enunciator grants legitimacy to his beliefs and positioning in an attempt to diminish the power of the other parties’ words, while increasing the legitimacy of his own words. In this sense the enunciator builds his narrative by addressing a positive “enunciatee” or addressee, and similarly considers his negative addressee, while he also succeeds in addressing —perhaps indirectly— addressees external to the inter-subjective exchange, with the purpose of gaining more adherents to his beliefs and views.

In the corpus, it was found that Mujica’s adversaries appear in the form of conceptual structures or as a real person with a name. Thus, for example, in D1 the chosen adversary is reflected in the mental structures of militants (the conscience of the Tupamaro youth), as expressed by Mujica in the following terms: “What is worthwhile is the cause, not the last name” or “*Lo que vale es la causa, no el apellido*” (D1, 1987, l.86); in D4 the unfair social structures of Uruguayan society, for example: “evidence of a society that is becoming cynical” or “*manifestaciones de una sociedad que se va volviendo cínica*” (D4, 2010, l.290); and in D5 the national and international economic domination structures, for example: “competition is asymmetrical and goes against us” or “*esa competencia es asimétrica, es en contra nuestro*” (D5, 2011, l.74). At the same time, in D2 and D3, Mujica as enunciator confronts adversaries representing opposite political ideals (the “Blancos”, Wilson Ferreira Aldunate¹⁹, the Right, etc.), for example: “Mr. Wilson allows himself the luxury” or

19 Wilson Ferreira Aldunate (1919-1988) was a popular National Party political leader, who founded the *Por la Patria* movement. He was defeated in the 1971 presidential elections by Colorado Party leader Juan Maria Bordaberry in a poll allegedly dominated by fraud, corruption and blackmail towards his person. In June of 1973, during the military coup, he was forced into exile. On June 16th 1984 upon his return from exile he was

“*el señor Wilson se permite el lujo*” (D2, 1987, l.50); “the replies of an omnipotent gentleman, Mr. Wilson” or “*respuestas de un señor omnipotente como la de Wilson*” (D2, 1987, l.57); “the fascist raid” or “*el malón fascista*” (D2, 1987, l. 231); “the treacherous *criollo* oligarchies” or “*las oligarquías criollas entreguistas*” (D2, 1987, l.207); “a mendacious democracy [...] that hides here and there in the false promises of a Minister, and by the threat of a big stick” or “*una democracia mentirosa [...] como escondiendo aquí y allá en el ‘veremos’ de un señor ministro, la amenaza del garrote*” (D2, 1987, l.8). Furthermore, his use of alterity is observed through stylistic choices such as nominalization when referring to “the participation” (directed at a positive addressee) and when he criticizes “dilettantism” (directed at a negative addressee). After having identified the presence of an adversary in each one of Mujica’s speeches, the statement offered by García-Negroni and Zoppi-Fontana that “political discourse seems not to be able to constitute itself without adversaries” is tenable. Similarly, the validity of another notion set forth by García-Negroni and Zoppi-Fontana pertaining to “reported speech” seems well-founded, when Mujica seeks to speak in representation of the poor: “we were poor” (...) “today I speak in name of the poor” (...) “I understand you” (...) “I am poor” or “*éramos pobres (...) hoy hablo por los pobres (...) los entiendo (...) soy pobre*”. In political enunciation the enunciator creates an image of himself and of his addressees appealing to this inter-discursivity.

Finally, the modalities in Mujica’s utterances which he uses to build relationships with entities of the political imaginary were identified in four areas of his discursivity: 1) a descriptive component; 2) a didactic component; 3) a prescriptive component; and, 4) a programmatic component.

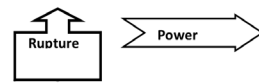
A quantitative analysis of deixis

The results in Table 1 for first, second and third person deictic markers in all five speeches showed variations that are worth mentioning since they would be indicating strategies in terms of Mujica’s subjectivity, specifically: 1) a salient increase in the use of the first person singular “I” in the last two speeches (and a preference for the imperative); 2) propensity for the use of the first person plural or “inclusive We” in all of his speeches, but most emphatically in the first two speeches —characterized by strong ideological traits; 3) the presence of a strong adversary in D2 with greater invocation of the third person singular; and, 4) a marked use of the second person plural “You” in the first speech addressed to Tupamaro youth and sympathizers.

arrested by the military who took him to the Trinity jail where he was held captive throughout the presidential elections. He lost the opportunity to participate in the presidential race and was freed on November 30th.

Table 1. The persons in discourse (forms and frequencies)

Form	Speech 1	Speech 2	Speech 3	Speech 4	Speech 5
I	10	1	8	25	28
I (omitted)	9	0	1	11	21
We	37	55	18	54	33
We (omitted)	70	65	19	73	25
You (singular)	1	3	4	0	4
You (plural)	12	1	6	7	7
He/They	3	12	5	4	4



Having acquired national power, Mujica increases self-reference as seen in his last two speeches; nonetheless, the discursive strategies vary in these speeches given that the enunciator in D4 uses “me” and “my”, whereas in D5 he explicitly uses “I”. Mujica’s worldview may be the main reason why a high frequency of the first person plural “We” is observed across the entire corpus, acting as a unifying form with multi-referential qualities.

A general conclusion is that the use of the first person plural is the preferred strategy by the enunciator. If Mujica fully commits his audience through the use of this first person plural deictic marker, with the second person plural he obtains the opposite effect by producing distance. Mujica takes distance from his listeners when he differentiates himself from them. Comparatively, his designation of a destinatary in the second person plural is much less frequent than his reference to the first person plural with a clear unifying intentionality. As the subject of enunciation Mujica opts for: 1. An objective discourse in which he tries to erase his subjective traces, and 2. A subjective discourse that contains implicit and explicit evaluative markers (words that carry a subjective semantic trait) and collective representations (with which he values or devalues Uruguayans).

Interdiscursive analysis

A first reading of the corpus consisted in identifying the subjectivity traces in Mujica’s utterances, which were classified in separate sheets and subsequently used to identify paradigmatic enunciations. The six paradigmatic enunciations listed below hold together Mujica’s narrative since they synthesize his visionary ideas as an enunciator and they constitute the points of reference of his thinking model and interpretation of reality:

- Worldview, strategy and unity: the generators of his narrative.
- Revolutionary doctrine and New Man philosophy: the sources of legitimacy

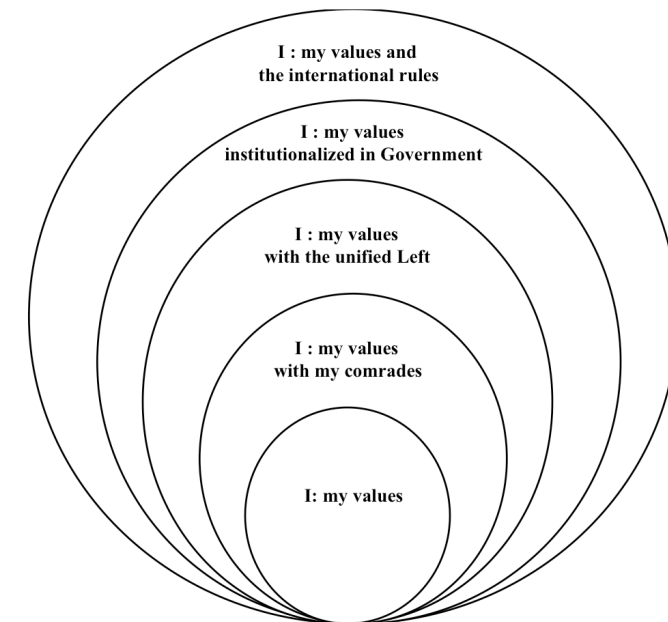
that he uses to nourish his narrative (or invariant nucleus of beliefs).

- Dialectic ethics: individual ethical values which allowed him to maintain coherence in his narrative across time.
- Democracy and Participation: how he makes his narrative progress over time
- Change in Uruguayan bipartisan system and redistribution of power: the ultimate purpose of his narrative and its extension through time.
- Alterity and/or Adversary: how he changes or adapts the narrative in accordance to the co-enunciator’s alterity (sympathizer, adversary or indifferent).

Consequently, these major axes in his enunciations include the necessary political participation of those who feel marginalized or forgotten by traditional bipartisanship, a fair and inclusive redistribution of power, an active ethical attitude in public life, national unity and the acceptance of the contradictions and paradoxes of the country’s social and political reality. In the background of all of his speeches an invisible script or subtext is perceived, which unifies his discursive strategies and contains moral underpinnings, an inter-subjective discourse reflective of popular language, philosophic bases of ideals and a call to action.

Through a diachronic discourse analysis the evolution of his words-language-discourse was examined and continuity was observed in the philosophical themes that constitute his six core paradigmatic enunciations. Mujica manages to place a Weltanschauung in the minds of his listeners, that is, a frame or paradigm for interpreting reality.

Figure 5. The Construction of Persuasion based on Subjectivity and the Nucleus of Values of the “I”



To achieve the objective of transferring his worldview to these increasingly wider circles of recipient co-enunciators of his narrative, Mujica builds an image of himself, intuitively following a theoretical formulation: the enunciator is the image created by the speaker in discourse. This construction relates to the idea found in Riorda where the myth takes shape from image, a social perception and identity.

6. Conclusions

The core objective of this study was to prove, through an in-depth emblematic case in political communication, how discourse analysis can contribute to the comprehension of the phenomenon of politics, while developing a theoretical approach for the analysis of other political discourse corpora.

Enunciation Theory remains theoretically bound to abstract linguistic explanation, despite its consideration of extra-linguistic elements that influence the communicative event. This micro-level theory which allows the molecular analysis of subjectivity in discourse was complemented by a meso-level theory that characterizes political discourse through multiple-addressees and an invariant nucleus of values, as well as a macro-level theory which provides a conceptual understanding of political communication through a coherent and complete systems of beliefs called “government myth”. Nevertheless, political discourse is inter-subjective and enunciation theory serves to address inter-discursivity in a universe of discourse.

Just as a story has its guiding thread, the three theories are organized around a similar axis. Said axis unifies the narrative around the person, the discursive field and the system of beliefs:

- The subject’s reference system
- The invariant nucleus of values of the political discourse
- The government myth underlying the political communication program

A preliminary conclusion is that former President Mujica takes from the cultural and moral idiosyncrasies of the Uruguayan ethos and reinterprets them successfully. This presentation of self through the ethos builds the trust required to establish the connection between speaker and audience. Mujica’s communication style clearly transmits personal values that are collectively well-received. He resorts to “plain speech” phonetic and syntactic registers that build a popular and effective political persona. The manifestation of subjectivity in his enunciation demonstrates his underlying strategy to consolidate power through the construction of a coherent and enduring narrative. Mujica builds his legitimacy through the adaptation of his semantic field that shifts from an early revolutionary lexicon to a social-democratic lexicon and culminates in a universal ethical lexicon, to reach a larger amount a group while producing a pragmatic expansion of the “inclusive We”.

Kerbrat-Orecchioni’s Enunciation Theory is insufficient for the analysis of political discourse since it examines subjectivity alone and does not address enuncia-

tion from the perspective that Verón proposes through his concept of multiple-destinataries, nor does she explain the symbolic language involved in the construction of a consensus-building political narrative, such as Riorda proposes in his communication theory on government myth. Since Mujica does not use the notion of adversary such as Verón conceives it, the concept of political theorist Carl Schmitt of an abstract enemy seems more appropriate provided that Mujica constructs an abstract or philosophical alterity instead of a personified adversary in his discursive strategies.

The deictics and subjectivemes in Kerbrat-Orecchioni had to be complemented with other notions so as to be able to analyze the paradigmatic enunciations and discursive strategies of the President. These consisted in a quantitative analysis of deictic frequencies, the visual organization of utterances issued by multiple-destinataries in three columns (proponents, opponents and undecided parties), the preparation of a table to collect information from the corpora on how the enunciator built his image, the analysis of the verisimilitude of actors in the political narrative script, the lexicological inventory of frequently used expressions, and visual graphs reflecting the evolution of his political power.

Consequently, this case study can serve as an initial step for replicability to other corpora of political speeches.

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