



Corporate Identity, From Allegorical Discourse to Storytelling. An Approach in Terms of Discursive Models

Lavinia Suci

Department of Communication and Foreign Languages
Politehnica University Timișoara
Timișoara, România

Abstract

In this paper, we examine two discursive models that an organization may use to build and promote its identity image, namely the signature-discourse and the storytelling-discourse. Our aim is to specify the place and role of each of these two models, as well as the important function that the storytelling-discourse performs in the understanding of the signature-discourse and in revealing symbolic meanings and the ways to access them.

The starting point of our study is the finding, which occurred in the teaching process, that first the perception and then the deciphering of the meaning of the signature-discourse involves a higher degree of difficulty. We believe that the association the two discursive approaches proves its usefulness, since storytelling corroborates the semantic interpretation of the signature-discourse and thereby the identification and assimilation of certain theoretical landmarks related to the construction of such a discourse. Another aspect that is worth mentioning is the achievement, in time, of continuity and coherence of the organization's identity image.

Our approach is based on investigation tools specific to communication sciences: elements of discourse analysis, and analysis of visual communication, which we use especially with the text but we will also discuss the construction of the visual message.

Keywords: Allegorical Discourse; Storytelling-Discourse; Identity; Organization; Message; Image.

1. Introduction

Research studies on organizational discourse previously undertaken on the one hand and, on the other hand, those focusing on discourse performed in the digital environment offered us the opportunity to identify two aspects of an identity message: one represented by a traditional discourse, the other, an electronic discourse. Beyond the coherence of identity messages, despite the span of time that separates them, the coherence reflected in the constants sighted in the two discursive models as identity representations of the same company, we noticed the ease with which the digital discourse, updated as text, image and sound, works in deciphering and getting the sense of the allegory. However, we cannot but point out the symbolic load, the semantic density of the signature-discourse, whose condensation in the form of a slogan is problematic in its perception and classification as well as in the deciphering of the meaning.

We consider it necessary that, in the beginning of our undertaking, we should specify and explain the concepts used, such as, for example, the signature-discourse, which made the subject of a detailed prior study and whose denomination belongs to us. Based on that study, we shall detail the concept of allegorical discourse, which we attribute to it here.

The organizational communication reveals the image that an organisation has created about itself, in order to institute it as common representation within the organization and as commitment outside it.

The contemporary organisations have evolved from closed to the society to open to the society communication structures that need to adapt their messages to the simultaneous plane created by the new technologies. In this

context, it is not surprising at all to discover that the organization is concerned with its branding in the electronic media which, according to the digital communication specialists, favour corporate communication [14].

Firstly, the communication highlights the social dimension of the organization, reflected internally by reconsidering the importance of the human factor, and externally by emphasizing the social utility of its acts. Secondly, it articulates the values, culture and ethics of that particular organization.

Taking into account Thierry Libaert's theory [8] according to which the brand strategy is determined by four factors: the desired image, the possible image, the projected image and the perceived image, we have studied the various stands the issuing organization takes with respect to its receivers. These images are in fact the various masks an organisation has and manages with the obvious purpose of building a positive relationship with the communication partners. For this subject, see [13]. Our intention was to highlight the online organisational communication and pursue the creation and perception of the identity image.

In one of our previous research projects, we have studied the signature-discourse. At the time, in 2005, Petrom Company was building an identity message in terms of signature-discourse, focused on promoting one of the values underlying its organizational culture, namely pioneering, defined in the company's Visual Identity Manual as "a spirit of change directed to continuous development" [9].

After 10 years, our attention has been drawn by the case of Petrom Company: now, the identity message was reiterated and potentiated in the campaign entitled Petrom: We set Romania in motion [17] and [18].

An advertising spot was created and broadcasted during the campaign, which brought the identity message up-to-date both as text and as image. Peculiarities of the transmission channel make it possible to tell a story staged as a frame story, and built up of 5 narrative sequences bound together by an element of our everyday life - motion, movement. This embodiment of the discourse resumes the fundamental semantic and construction elements of the signature discourse: (setting in) motion, patriotism and the hero (through professionalism, competence) and places them on a higher level, by means of complex implementation, which is meant for pluri-sensitive perception and which gives force and stability to the discourse

2. Review of Literature

Before starting our analysis, we have to define more accurately the concepts used throughout the study, that is signature-discourse on the one hand and narrative/storytelling discourse on the other. Here, the signature-discourse will be used with the meaning of allegorical discourse, which we assign to it.

Please note that we focused on signature-discourse considering that it has a special place among the methods used by an organization to make itself known and recognized in society, that is, to promote its identity. The name of this type of organizational discourse - institutional discourse of the signature type, in short signature-discourse - belongs to the author of this study; it is not established in literature. We have found the term for this type of discourse, used only accidentally and metaphorically, to render the similarity with a signature, but not constituting the actual name of the discourse, which was labelled as institutional discourse [15].

2.1. The signature-discourse of the organization

Signature-discourse is one of the forms of organizational communication, whose function is to indicate the place of the organization in society. Materialized as tripartite structure (name/emblem, slogan, logotype), where the language sign is doubled by the graphic one, this type of organizational discourse serves the simultaneous achievement of the essential objectives of the communication policy, namely, to make the society recognise the existence and specificity of a particular organization and to mobilize people inside it.

We appreciate this type of discourse as the essence of organizational communication, based on following its defining features that we also find in the signature-discourse: articulation of the organization's mission, reliance on its culture, tendency to detach from the competition (or rivalry) and the desire to produce an effect on all segments of the audiences. At the same time, this type of discourse is singled out by the contraction of the two orientations of institutional communication, outwardly and inwardly, which assumes the existence of a semantic bipolarity in the same sentence.

The importance of this type of discourse is generated by the dual function of the signature: on the one hand, it marks the speaker, involving accountability for the utterance, and on the other hand, it is an authentication means, assuming that the signing person and the one indicated in the content of the statement are the same [4]. Applied to the present context, the function of the signature would work as follows. The organization carries out an activity whose outcome is turned to account on the commercial market, which it marks, by means of a signature on the communication market. This signature, that is a testimony not only of the productive side, but also of the very existence of the organization, takes the form of discourse, capturing the vocation that animates the organization's

activity and its entire inner life. The status of signature of the discourse determines the identity between the professional and communication aspects of the organization, designating it as both producer and transmitter.

On the other hand, by means of the signature-discourse, the organization assumes the responsibility of its actions (as producer) and, at the same time, the responsibility of the act of communication (as transmitter), thus achieving correlation of both dimensions of the organization (as achiever and as communicator). In other words, the quality of signature requires that the discourse is built in compliance with reality, corresponding to institutional ethics. For example, the signature discourse "... we care about your comfort", of Tim Bertrand company, that manufactures furniture, establishes the equivalence: the Tim Bertrand company that produces furniture (as achiever) is also the transmitter (communicator) of the utterance related to the activity that the company has developed. The announcement of the solicitude that animates its activity involves taking responsibility of the attitude and of the assertion alike: We care, indeed, and we declare that we care.

In terms of communication, the statement of responsibility coincides with the obligation to comply with reality, in other words, the stated solicitude must be truly a quality that characterises the organization. In addition, if the company's business is really into benevolent attention for others, for the community, then by affirming that the company is responsible for this state of affairs, it allows the company to communicate their position.

The signature role of this type of discourse involves its conceptualization as discourse of the truth. It has been shown that scientific discourse in the middle Ages was necessarily accompanied by the author's name, this one having the connotation of an index of truth [6]. By analogy, it is considered that the organization's signature gives the value of truth to its acts. Since signature updates itself as discourse, reflecting these acts whose authenticity is certified, it means that the discourse expresses a reality, being a discourse of truth. Claiming to be a power in the professional environment, an organization wishes to be regarded as such by its employees. Conducting the self-perception of the group towards a common representation, "We are strong", the organization calls for a strategy that aims to maintain the legitimacy of the idea: "We are strong, we do everything possible". It tends to substitute personal ideals for a collective ideal, the power, but achieving this goal is conditioned by the respect for the truth of the group. For the group to be defined by this qualification, it is necessary to perpetuate the image through communication. The signature-discourse becomes, in this sense, a reflection of reality. For example, see [12].

We adopt the sense of true (real) speech, which Michel Foucault talks about, referring to the demand made by Greek poets of the 6th century in relation to discourse, namely, to be issued by someone entitled to do so, in accordance with certain requirements and that not only announces what is going to happen, but even contributes to the enforcement of prophecy: "Chez les poètes grecs du VI^e siècle, le discours vrai... pour lequel on avait respect et terreur, celui auquel il fallait bien se soumettre, parce qu'il regnait, c'était le discours prononcé par qui de droit et selon le rituel requis; ... c'était le discours qui disait la justice et attribuait à chacun sa part, c'était le discours qui, prophétisant l'avenir, non seulement annonçait ce qui allait se passer, mais contribuait à sa réalisation, emportait avec soi l'adhésion des hommes et se tramait ainsi avec le destin" [5].

Considered as the result of a collective production mechanism created within the organization, this type of discourse enjoys a legitimate status outside the company. Whereas it is obtained after a process of filtering opinions, desires, individual initiatives, interaction and interdependence relationships, negotiations and conflicts from within the organization, developing the signature discourse coincides with the legitimization of the organization. Expression of consensus, the signature-discourse, legitimate for the inside, is released on the communication market in order to draw attention to the organization, to make it known to the society. By focusing on identity and formulating the objective referring to the recognition of the usefulness of the organization for the community, it has the role to legitimate it for the outside world. Legitimate and legitimating at the same time, the signature-discourse acts as founder of the organization identity.

Taking the form of a slogan that expresses the company's commitment to society, the way forward in terms of an image that praises the organization, we consider that the signature-discourse is the symbolic representation of a complex reality. In other words, it is an allegorical discourse: the organization is claiming its special quality, its privileged position as result of a joint effort of its members. It is both an expression of dissonance - by trying to singularise the organization in the mind of the receiver, in relation to other organizations of the same type - and a mark of consonance that characterizes the internal life of the organization. The signature discourse thus becomes an allegory, perceived as motivation, both of the commitment of the organization in the outside world and of its involvement in the inside.

The symbol correlates the ability to articulate intelligibly with of the ability to understand a possible response, so that it means access to a meaning, more than a representation. The implicit intentionality of the symbol, translated into the individual's hope to make him understood and to understand the other, this directed conduct that it contains, defines the symbolic action and, at the same time, justifies the social dimension of the symbol. Mediating the creation of a common meaning, the social symbol is inherent in any action by a social actor over another, and hence in the communication, from the perspective of its relational aspect.

To understand the communication of the organization is therefore appropriate to consider it in relation to the culture of that organization, to the symbolic context as a set of beliefs, motivations, and feelings. The strength and stability of the signature-discourse as allegorical discourse, is conditioned by the way it is perceived by each individual and by the active role of the individual imaginary in what constitutes the social representation. The signature discourse, as self-referential communication form of the organization, involves the manifestation of the social-symbolic function. The signature discourse becomes the place to update certain social rituals and tends to support the image of the organization as a joint representation, the fruit of the conversion of the singular imaginary into collective imaginary, that, in order to have the desired effect, should be reflected in the individual imaginary for whom the signature-discourse is intended. By reference to the double orientation of the message, aimed, on the one hand, at expressing the utility of the organization for society, and on the other hand, at mobilizing people by strengthening their attachment to the organization, the symbolism triggers different echoes in the external interlocutor compared to the internal one.

In the signature-discourse, the manifestation of the social-symbolic function and, thus, of the psychological one of the imaginary, generates its perception as symbolic, mystifying discourse (the representation of a social phenomenon - the organization) and mythologizing discourse (providing a model for action). Also, legitimate interiorly and legitimatizing exteriorly, this type of discourse is founder of identity.

We conclude that the signature-discourse is an identity-founder type of discourse and, at the same time, a socially-symbolic discourse as allegorical discourse.

2.2. The storytelling / the narrative discourse

On the other hand, the meaning of storytelling is revealed by Terrence L. Gargiulo: „Stories are rich in nature. This richness goes beyond painting a compelling picture. Of course a picture is worth a thousand words and a story is worth a thousand pictures. Details saturate stories with enticing shelves and drawers for people to explore. Yet this is just one form of story richness. Story richness also shows up in some surprising ways. Our stories make messages memorable and help us connect with each other. Messages become imbued with meaning. Yet this ability of stories to encode information can also slash us.” [7].

The use of this concept in organisational context is related to successful presentation of a company, according to Nancy Duarte: “Over the last hundred years movies have relied on visual language to tell stories and evoke audience emotion. For a crash course in the principles of film language, take a look at Jennifer Van Sijll’s best-selling book, *Cinematic Storytelling*. In it she says, “Cinematic storytelling is the difference between documenting and dramatizing, between employing the potent storytelling tools in the medium or leaving them silent.” That same insight applies to presentations. You can create either a document or a dramatization. Many of the cinematic techniques in Van Sijll’s book will inspire you to approach presentations more like a screenwriter than a speechwriter. A screenwriter’s ability to envision the story is what differentiates them from other writers. Successful presentation developers not only focus on the content but should be fluent in conveying what the audience sees on the screen.” [3].

With the transfer of the identity message to the electronic environment, and, of course, with its adaptation, from a structural viewpoint, to this environment, prerequisites for a more facile accession to sense have been created. Because of the text - image - sound cohabitation, the storytelling-discourse in the electronic environment is able to explain the meanings that are only suggested or inferred in the signature-discourse.

Consequently, storytelling is investigated as a type of discourse that contains narrative elements, both at verbal and at visual levels. The visual elements play an overwhelming part in revealing the sense by emphasizing, nuancing, disclosing meanings transmitted through the verbal message.

3. The Analysis of the discourses

Considering the structure of discourses that make up the subject of our study, we shall discuss the linguistic message and the visual message for each one of them.

In verbal terms, discourses are as follows:

1. Allegorical discourse.

Petrom: The Essence of Movement.

2. Storytelling discourse.

Every day you take the road because someone is waiting for you at its end. Sometimes you your lifetime friend is expecting you. Other times there are all your friends. Sometimes you may say that all your childhood is waiting for you. That someone’s future is waiting for you... or even the most important person in your life.

For all those that expect you, we set Romania in motion, every day, in every Petrom station. Here you've got fuels that you can rely on, stations on your way anytime and a trustful team.

Petrom. We set Romania in motion.

3.1 The verbal message

The signature-discourse is designed as slogan-definition, with an argumentative role. Considered as quasi-logical argument, definition owes its argumentative value to the formulation of an idea that is accepted confusedly by the receiver. It is intended to prepare the recipient to carry out a judgment that will develop the elements provided by the speaker. By resorting to this form of expression, the condensed definition or the slogan definition, one aims to infuse certain vigour in the association of ideas. From a social perspective, the slogan constitutes a familiar formula and an object of consensus, because they are easy to be recognized and accepted ideologically.

The discourse takes the form of an equation that expresses a relationship of equivalence between the organization and the particular way in which it conducts its activity or its special vocation by completing the statement with the verbs to be, to mean and to represent, which are understood, linking actually the name of the organization to the essential, exponential quality of its business, materialised in an abstract noun. The syntactic concentration and the semantic condensation have the effect of faster overlapping of the two elements of the equivalence relationship. In turn, the faster overlapping of images is likely to generate in the receiver a substitution of equation terms, of one through the other. Thus, reasoning that the definition may cause in receiver's mind is: Petrom [means] the essence of movement. When I say Petrom, I say essence and movement, and vice versa, too: When I say essence and movement, I say Petrom.

The argumentative force of the signature discourse, partly due to its form (the slogan), is enhanced by the presence of a topos (source of argument): the novelty, that serves to devise the singularization strategy. Developed under the form of "everything that is new is unique in its kind", the place of the novelty is materialised by the lexical theme of the future. The statement Petrom: The Essence of Movement captures our attention due to the need to recognize the argumentative value of the word movement:

movement = drive (OMV Petrom is an integrated oil and gas company)

and

movement = dynamism, evolution, progress, future, change.

We note, in the design of the discourse, the lack of bias and the characterization of the transmitter by a delocutive behaviour. According to Patrick Charaudeau, delocutive behaviour is characterized by enunciating a message without making any reference to the protagonists of the communication act. Unlike elocution, marked by subjectivity by reporting the speaker to his statement, the delocutive behaviour requires objectivity, creating the impression that the act of enunciation is produced independently from its author [1].

The transmitter seems to be a simple informant, his function being reduced to making announcements without subjectivity and notifying on the progress of a performance, while the receiver's lack of involvement in the discourse, since he is a mere spectator in this staging, gives the signature discourse a configuration similar to the way universal truths are proclaimed, which derive their semantic weight from their depersonalised form, too [12]. It is what Pascale Weil called a discourse of sovereignty: a self-referential discourse par excellence, where the transmitter finds the source of authority in himself and achieves his task making use of attributes of power and superiority: "For the organization (the company), the sovereignty discourse is one of self-reference: It announces what the company is and it considers itself to be the centre of gravity for its own world." [15]. Thus, the discourse becomes a guarantee, as expression of power, of status, of authority of the organization: Petrom is what it is. In the discourse, the essence of movement works as a phrase reflecting the position of superior authority, which is why, we have established above the equivalence between the company's name and both terms of essence and movement.

3.1.1. The emotional dimension

Conversely, in storytelling, we deal with a narrative, a replay and a development of ideas occurring in the allegorical discourse. Thus, we recapture key elements:

- The theme of the future (someone's future is waiting for you, we set Romania in motion)
- The theme of exceptional quality, of professionalism (You've got fuels that you can rely on, stations on your way anytime and a trustful team.)
- Time sequences.
- Partially modified slogan-definition (Petrom. We set Romania in motion).

In her book, *Resonate*, Nancy Duarte notes: "There's something sacred about stories. They have an almost supernatural power that should be wielded wisely. Religious scholars, psychologists and mythologists have studied for decades to determine the secret to their power" [2].

Considering the aspects reported above, which, for that matter, we find perfectly justified, we advance the idea that the choice of storytelling-discourse in the creation and transmission of the identity image of Petrom organization facilitates the capture of public attention and the creation of a positive effect on it. Therefore, we propose below, to highlight specific elements of narrative that are detectable in the storytelling-discourse.

The most simplistic structural scheme of the narrative might be represented like this: situation + complication + resolution. In our case, the situation finds its reflection in the life of the individual, the complication is the permanent request to start driving and the resolution is set up by the services that the Petrom company can provide. It is known that the prominent element of the narrative is the plot. In the storytelling-discourse, the plot is not explicit, but it can be inferred: the continual challenge in an individual's life to hit the road, to get into a place where someone is always waiting for him.

The characteristic elements of the narrative discourse are discernible in this storytelling discourse. First, there is a main character, that universal, generalizing You, towards which the discourse is directed and which anyone can identify with, in general, the public. Experience, retold or indirect, strengthens the power of the message, being part of the narrative strategy. Often, people tend to organize their lives as a story; therefore, achieving a clip that centres around an anonymous individual facilitates the identification of the audience with the respective individual.

The protagonist of the narrative discourse has a childhood, friends, a future, there is an important person in his life ("the most important"). The story line follows, in fact, the thread of anyone's life. The sequence on the timeline, a key feature of the narrative discourse, is captured in the company discourse by chaining the three periods: the past (your lifetime friend, your childhood), the present (your friends, the most important person in your life) and future (someone's future).

The analogy with important existential stages makes us look at the storytelling-discourse like an allegorical staging of life. Therefore, we believe that in the case of the storytelling-discourse, too, we are dealing with an allegory, but this time it is more accessible, more easily detectable. This occurs on one hand due to the visual message that corroborates the text message and, on the other hand, due to the pre-eminence of the explicit, in relation to signature-discourse, where a considerable role in interpretation belongs to the implicit.

If in the signature discourse the slogan-definition gives a timeless character to the statement, the storytelling captures in its the architecture the entire axis of time: past (your lifetime friend, your childhood), present (your friends, the most important person in your life) and the future (someone's future). Interpreting the universality induced by the generally valid truth, Petrom is / signifies the essence of movement by marking moments, namely Petrom was, is and will be the essence of movement, we see that there is correspondence with the time axis, containing the explicitly stated moments of the storytelling discourse.

Another characteristic of the narrative identified in the storytelling-discourse is the narrator's presence. Omniscient, he tells the story, expressing even the deepest thoughts of the protagonist (you) and uses direct address (in the 2nd person).

The story is built around the idea of the road, at the end of which there is always someone, either the childhood or the friend of a lifetime or the current friends or the most important person. The reason for the travel, the motivation that always places the protagonist in the position to hit the road is represented by just the fact that someone is waiting for the protagonist at the end of the road. The road consists of a series of situations that create the narrative tension reflected linguistically by the reiteration of the term "waiting" (repeated five times).

The narrator is the one who provides the answer to this created tension, the solution to the problem faced by the protagonist:

For all those that expect you, we set Romania in motion, every day, in every Petrom station. Here you've got fuels that you can rely on, stations on your way anytime and a trustful team.

Referring to the presentation of a message with technical support, Nancy Duarte talks about the possibility to create, through visual message, a **S.T.A.R.** moment, which she defines as follows [2]:

"The S.T.A.R. moment should be a significant, sincere, and enlightening moment during the presentation that helps magnify your big idea - not distract from it. In the author's view there are five distinct types of **S.T.A.R.** moments:

Memorable Dramatization: Small dramatizations convey insights. They can be as simple as a prop or demo, or something more dramatic, like a reenactment or skit.

Repeatable Sound Bites: Small, repeatable sound bites help feed the press with headlines, populate and energize social media channels with insights, and give employees a rally cry.

Evocative Visuals: A picture really is worth a thousand words – and a thousand emotions. A compelling image can become an unforgettable emotional link to your information.

Emotive Storytelling: Stories package information in a way that people remember. Attaching a great story to the big idea makes it easily repeatable beyond the presentation.

Shocking Statistics: If statistics are shocking, don't gloss over them; draw attention to them.

The S.T.A.R. moment shouldn't be kitschy or cliché. Make sure it's worthwhile and appropriate, or it could end up coming off like a really bad summer camp skit. Know your audience and determine what will resonate best with them. Don't create something that's overly emotionally charged for an audience of biochemists.

S.T.A.R. moments create a hook in the audience's minds and hearts. They tend to be visual in nature and give the audience insights that supplement solely auditory information." [2].

Through its sequencing, the story staged by the Petrom organization manages to achieve such a S.T.A.R. moment, thanks to the emotion that it transmitted. The visual message brings out successively to the visual receptor, sequences that are strongly marked by subjectivity: the presence of an elderly couple who are parents or grandparents, the image of the friend and of friends, the image of the child. Besides the fact that the visual elements that represent childhood, friendship, and future are well chosen and rendered, we actually talk about some exciting moments and aspects and in everyone's life. The receiver's own life reels off in front of his eyes, which easily leads to the identification with the protagonist of the message. The narrator's tone of voice makes the visual message more explicit, strengthening it further, while another important aspect is his voice. The sound and the background images (the beauty of country life) are designed to amplify the intensity of emotions.

3.1.2. The identity dimension

Referring to the slogan-definition which story establishes, Petrom = the one that sets Romania in motion, we find a sliding of organization identity from Petrom is what it is in the signature discourse, to Petrom is what it does. The new equivalence relationship marks the transition from the register of sovereignty to the register action or activity. Semantically, this transformation does not constitute a loss of identity, understood as authority, but another aspect of identity that comes to completion. We believe that authority, the upper position is illustrated by the verbal phrase set in motion as only through professionalism and competence things can be set in motion.

Moreover, in the implicit of the discourse, we grasp a reference to its intended receiver: Petrom does what it does for you. The entire structure of the storytelling, up to the slogan-definition is created as a direct address to the receiver (you take the road, waiting for you, your friends, your life etc). The discourse is subjectified, the transmitter and the receiver appear explicitly in the discourse and the synthesis - reading of the discourse, in this light would be: You have to be moving constantly and Petrom is there, with gas stations, fuels and team for you, so that you may get to all those who are waiting for you. Petrom sets Romania in motion means, in fact, Petrom sets you in motion, i.e. there is an identification between Romania and the receiver (you). Therefore, the discourse of the action, of the activity in the formal plan is backed by an implicit discourse, which is one of vocation. Assuming, in fact the revealing of the organization identity by stating its vocation, the information aims at a double effect: the recognition of the organization by the society, in the outside and in the inside, the awakening of a sense of belonging to the group.

The identity aspect of the message is made explicit in both discourses by stating the name of the organization. In an earlier study on signature discourse [12], we pointed out that the presence of the name of the organization as an element of identity represents a component of the instituting ritual, in relation to those inside the organization and outside the organization it belongs to the rite of baptism.

The instituting ritual is meant to distinguish the organization from any other similar one, to beacon its identity. That marks a hidden conflict: by name and by expressing an exceptional quality specific to a group or an organization, the presence of the same quality in another group or another organization is questioned implicitly. On the other hand, this masked conflict that performs a delimitating role, constitutes the premise of the creation of a consensus between the transmitter organization and its receiver.

Through grounding of an interrecognition network, the instituting ritual has the merit of constantly restating the existence group, which involves the individual - group merging [11]. The name of the organization helps to achieve the instituting ritual because it produces an effect of recognition on those inside the organization that facilitates the awakening of a sense of belonging and strengthens their solidarity.

The name delimitates the members of the organization from others who are not part of it, but whose presence is implied by the affirmation of the organization identity, revealing thus the proportional nature of the inclusion–exclusion rate (the stronger the integration, the more vehement the exclusion). From this perspective, the above message can be interpreted according to the model: “We are Petrom, no other organization”. By this interpretation, we remark that the expression of the group identity contains in subsidiary the assertion of its symbolic dominance, since identity signifies singularity, whose effect is amplified by the statement itself, centred on declaring the exemplary professionalism. On the other hand, the name is a confirmation of this view and it marks the organization's presence in society.

Through the discourse, the audience from the outside world is announced that there is an organization, Petrom, in our case, characterized by an activity or a special vocation, whose name constitutes the core of the information contained in the discourse. As organizations developing a similar activity are numerous, it is the name that illustrates the rejection of anonymity and confers individuality.

According to the Dictionary of qualitative methods in the humanities and social sciences, the modern sense of the myth is “original reality [...] transformed into «signifier»: it is elevated to the rank of symbol. The myth tends to become an «image» of the real offering itself in ambiguous manner, both as an expression of reality and of fiction, containing its own reality. Could we say that it loses in credit, in the adhesion force? Even if it is understood as symbolic myth, the mystique that it develops based on its realistic mythical account gives it all the power of attraction and persuasion that the imaginary and the symbolic exert upon the individual and collective psyche. In this regard, it remains fully actual.” [10]. Both the allegorical discourse and storytelling stage a social phenomenon that they raise to the rank of order model and founder of the existence of a community (organization), thus performing a mystifying role (as representation of a social phenomenon) and a mythifying role (it provides a model for action). Similarly to the myth, which itself is a reiteration of the symbolic links that constitutes it, the allegorical discourse is trying to persuade by reiterating a relationship in all shades possible. More than storytelling, which by nature explains and narrates the allegorical discourse has the merit of preserving the myth: “However, the myth is maintained only to the extent that the suggestion triumphs over narration.” [10].

3.2 The visual message

Regarding the visual message, in the signature discourse, the text is accompanied by a logotype representing a wolf's head placed in the loop of the capital letter P. The company's current logotype combines graphic elements specific to both identities, Petrom and OMV: wolf symbol and Petrom wordmark plus OMV wordmark and reflects a reality, namely the integration, 10 years ago, of the Petrom business into the larger OMV group. In accordance with the Visual Identity Manual, OMV Petrom Corporate Communication, 2015 “The logotype brings together two visual elements representative for each of the two identities: wordmarks Petrom, and respectively OMV, highlighted with a green line. Thus, a new independent entity is created that acquires the value of a brand.” [16]

The colours used are red, yellow, blue and green, the last one being adopted with the affiliation of Petrom to OMV group.

The choice of a wolf head as symbolic representation sends to the idea of power, higher position, and authority. Indeed, the wolf is a potent animal but, taking the analogical reasoning further, we note that similarly to the wolf, whose power is rooted in the pack, which is always beside him, the strength of Petrom organization lies in its people, the team of professionals. This aspect is transferred to the explicit level of the storytelling/narrative discourse: You've got fuels that you can rely on, stations on your way anytime and a trustful team.

In addition, the national colours - red, yellow and blue –in the composition of the icon are echoed by the name of the country – Romania – from the storytelling/narrative discourse.

The significance of the logotype is explained in the Visual Identity Manual, OMV Petrom Corporate Communication, 2015 [9]: “It represents our brand experience and success to date, and also its openness to the future.” Here we find again the main points of the time line: the past (experience), present and future, which are reiterated in the storytelling.

Although it is easy to appreciate the complexity of the visual message in the storytelling compared to the synthetic character of the icon in the signature discourse, it is important to note that the visual identity of the organization is achieved by both types of discourse; it is possible to establish analogies, correspondences, between them, beyond the text-image association - which forms a single entity for each category of discourse that has been analysed.

4. Conclusion

We propose in this paper, an approach based on discourse analysis of the identity message that an organization is building and promoting, using two forms of communication: the allegorical discourse and the narrative /storytelling discourse.

In order to attain the proposed aim, we have focused on the OMV Petrom Company and noted that, after 10 years, they reshaped their identity message transmitted in the form of signature-discourse into a more refined and nuanced variant using storytelling-discourse. Following the analysis, we found that the OMV Petrom Company is building its identity based on the values promoted by its culture and transmits it by means of complementary verbal and visual messages. Despite the time span (10 years) from the creation and circulation of the signature discourse to the initiation of the storytelling/narrative discourse and regardless of the differences in formal semantics and media complexity, we have identified key elements of corporate culture, which are found in both types of discourse, a fact that denotes the coherence and consistency of the company identity image over time. We believe that Petrom organization provides a model of good practice in terms of how it builds and communicates its identity in a stable and sustainable way over time. Regardless of the form taken by the identity message, it is likely to capture awareness and be retained by the public as long as attention is paid to coherent chaining of fundamental elements of organizational culture, both in structural and temporal levels, in other words as long as the organization is always reaffirming itself symbolically.

Starting from the explanation from a communicational perspective of each of the two discursive models, we found that the perception of the storytelling-discourse and of the way it operates, through the explicit and nuanced exposure of the content, facilitates the accession to the meanings underlying the identity image of Petrom organization. The same meanings also substantiate the identity image conveyed through signature-discourse, but their deciphering involves, in this case, a more difficult approach and the appeal to theoretical elements of rhetoric, argumentation in order to make inferences and reveal symbols.

Following the two findings, we believe that the combination approach to the discursive patterns, which make the subject of this study, is able to highlight both the consistent character of the identity expression of Petrom organization and the way it is built. Multimodality characterizing the storytelling-discourse may support not only the “reading” of the signature-discourse but also the identification of the structural and symbolic parts used in its construction, that are detectable only by using complex theoretical instruments.

The parallel between the two models of discourse is not intended to shed light on the complexity of storytelling - discourse compared to the synthetism of the signature-discourse - an obvious situation, anyway. The aim is to reveal the fact that the two discursive models may function in complementarity, while building the identity image of the company, and that they may act efficiently on the receiver as long as the peculiarities of the audience and of the transmission environment are taken into account. On the one hand, we note that each of these types of discourse performs a well-defined role in promoting the identity image of the organization, and their integrate enactment is apt to assure the coherence and consistency in terms of building the identity message of an organization, an efficient manner, we believe, to bestow argumentative force on the identity image of the organization. We appreciate that whatever the form which the identity message takes, its foundation on the values of the organizational culture, the reiteration of the message in time, its nuancing and empowering may be a recipe for stability and credibility of the organization in the mind of the receiver. On the other hand, we signal the possibility to use the discursive model of the story efficiently not only in the semantic deciphering of the signature-discourse, but also in discovering its structural-symbolic construction components.

References

- [1] Charaudeau, Patrick, *Language et discours. Elements de semiolinguistique (Théorie ET pratique)*, Hachette, Paris; 1994. 176 p. 2-01-008853-0.
- [2] Duarte, Nancy *Resonate: Present Visual Stories that transform Audiences*; 2010. 248 p. 0470632011; pp.174; available at <http://ceciliayeung.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/resonate-nancy-duarte.pdf> (accessed in 2015, May).
- [3] Duarte, Nancy, *Slide:ology. The Art and Science of Creating Great Presentation*; Published by O'Really; 2008. 297 p. 978-0-596-52234-6; available at www.duarte.com/book/slideology/ (accessed in 2015, May; 2017, June).
- [4] Ducrot, Oswald, *Le dire et le dit*, Éditions du Minuit, Paris; 1985. 240 p. 9782707310033.
- [5] Foucault, Michel, *L'ordre du discours*, Gallimard, Paris ; 1971. 88 p. 9782070277742 ; pp.17.
- [6] Foucault, Michel, *Ordinea discursului. Un discurs despre discurs*, Eurosong & Book, București, 1998. 64 p 973-0-00533-8.
- [7] Gargiulo, Terrence L., *Cultivating Story Richness*, www.makingstories.net, [terrence@makingstories.net-415-948-8087](mailto:terrence@makingstories.net); 2012; 1; available at <https://www.scribd.com/document/114711053/Cultivating-Story-Richness-Principles-Practices-and-Techniques> (accessed in 2015, September; 2017, June).

- [8] Libaert Thierry, de Marco Andre, Les tableaux de bord de la communication, Dunod , Paris; 2006. 256 p. 978-2100491261.
- [9] Manualul de identitate vizuală. Comunicare corporativă OMV Petrom; 2015.
- [10] Mucchielli, Alex (coord.),. Dicționarului metodelor calitative în științele umane și sociale, Ed. Polirom, Iași; 2002. 448 p. 973-681-015-1.
- [11] Segré, Monique (coord.), Míturi, rituri, simboluri în societatea contemporană. Ed. Amarcord, Timișoara, 2000. 247 p. 973-9244-76-9.
- [12] Suci, Lavinia, Discursul-semnătură al Instituției. Miza unei identități și premisa unei relații, Ed. Orizonturi Universitare, Timișoara; 2005. 216 p. 973-638-208-7.
- [13] Suci, Lavinia, Simon, Simona, The masks of an organisation. Metacommunication elements in the digital media. In Proceedings of the International Conference Professional Communication and Translation Studies, 7 (1-2) / 2014. p. 11-17, Timisoara, 2014.
- [14] Suci, Lavinia. În căutarea sensului. De la analiza discursului la design-ul comunicării, Ed. Casa Cărții de Știință Cluj & Orizonturi Universitare Timișoara; 2014. 246 p. 978-606-17-0602-0 & 978-973-638-577-3.
- [15] Weil, Pascale, Communication oblige! Communication institutionnelle et de management, Les Editions d'organisation, Paris. 1990. 263 p. 2-7081-1261-9.
- [16] https://www.omvpetrom.com/SecurityServlet/secure?cid=1200523194054&lang=ro&swa_id=419770634402.05865&swa_site= (accessed in 2016 August).
- [17] https://www.petrom.ro/portal/01/petromro/ro/Private_Customers/Campaigns/punem-romania-in-miscare (accessed in 2016, August).
- [18] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3S7J8aT6RYs> (accessed in 2016, September).