

## ***Metaphors in Klaus Iohannis's and Donald Trump's recent speeches***

### **Abstract:**

*The aim of this article is to show how metaphors in political discourses are a reflection of the speaker's cultural background and an illustration of the linguistic environment in which they have been produced. The contrastive analysis of the discourses that presidents Donald Trump and Klaus Iohannis have recently delivered on the topic of the social and political changes in their countries focuses on the metaphors used in either case in order to conceptualize the urgent need of changing mentalities and practices. Although they are at the opposite poles of economic power, Romania and the United States of America have a similar political climate, characterised by the frictions between the president and the governmental body and the conflicts between the supporters of the major parties. Therefore, there are a lot of similarities in the speeches delivered by the presidents of the two countries, as far as the main topics and the discourse strategies are concerned. Besides the common features of these speeches, this article will also analyse the cross-cultural differences between them, as well as the cultural implications of all the metaphors and other figures of speech they contain. This complex contrastive analysis is meant to highlight the universalities of conceptual metaphors in political discourses, such as the description of democracy as a frail organism that must be protected by the presidential institution ("Democracy must be kept alive, defended every day and reinvigorated!" – Klaus Iohannis's discourse in the House of Parliament on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017; "to foster democracy for civilians" – Donald Trump's speech on foreign policy on April 27<sup>th</sup> 2016) or the image of a nation as a warrior fighting for its rights ("Do we want to be a strong, prosperous nation, which [...] can be proud of its independent justice, [...] or a weak, despised nation, which risks everything for a few politicians in a difficult situation?" – Klaus Iohannis, idem; "In America, we understand that a nation is only living as long as it is striving" – Donald Trump's inaugural address on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017). Nevertheless, it will also point to the variations in the use of metaphors, to the register and the tone of the speeches, as well as to some psychological factors, such as either president's type of personality and the pressure of the moment when the discourses were delivered (i.e. during fierce presidential elections, in case of Donald Trump's speeches, and during street protests against governmental ordinances, in case of Klaus Iohannis's discourse in the House of Parliament). Consequently, the analysis contained in this article illustrates how different languages and different speakers reflect similar realities by means of conceptual metaphors, which, if they are well-chosen and tailored to the needs of the audience, can make a great impact and even change the people's perception of a certain political context.*

**Keywords:** *Metaphors; Contrastive analysis; Political discourses; Similarities; Cross-cultural differences.*