

BETWEEN LOGOS AND ALGORITHM: A PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNEY THROUGH SPIRITUAL AND SCIENTIFIC WORLDS

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Abstract. Human communication unfolds between Logos and algorithm, always marked by a structural gap between intention and interpretation. This paper offers a 2025 assessment of uncertainty in public discourse, with emphasis on the Romanian political sphere. It integrates philosophical and linguistic perspectives with recent analyses of populist and sovereigntist rhetoric. The study examines the cognitive and discursive mechanisms that generate ambiguity, their strategic use by political and media actors, and the ways digital acceleration and geopolitical pressure transform communication into a field of permanent tension. Romania holds resources for navigating this ecology of uncertainty, yet risks persist as linguistic degradation and representational crises erode shared meaning.

Keywords: communicative uncertainty, interpretive frameworks, political discourse, populist rhetoric

DOI [10.56082/annalsarsciphil.2025.1.48](https://doi.org/10.56082/annalsarsciphil.2025.1.48)

1. Introduction

In 2025, Romania experiences a communicative paradox: never has more been said, and never has less been understood. From the press conferences of ministers across the political spectrum to the televised interventions of prominent figures, and from populist rhetoric to technocratic bureaucratic statements, the public sphere is saturated with messages that promise clarity yet generate confusion and polarization [1–4].

The central question guiding this study is: *How does the structural uncertainty of language intersect with the degradation of political communication in Romania, producing what may be described as a genuine “crisis of public meaning” in 2025?*

To address this question, the article examines:

- the theoretical foundations of communicative uncertainty (Maiorescu, Wittgenstein, Ducrot, Sperber, Cornea, etc.) [5–11];
- the ways in which this uncertainty is instrumentalized in recent Romanian political discourse—populist, sovereigntist, technocratic, and media-driven [1, 3, 4, 12–22];
- a 2025 assessment of the ecology of uncertainty within digital and geopolitical contexts [23–30].

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Following Edelman's view of politics as symbolic management [12] and Van Dijk's analysis of discourse as a privileged tool of manipulation [13], the Romanian case raises a deeper issue: not merely *what* politicians say, but *what kind of semantic world* they construct, and how stable that world remains for citizens.

2. Theoretical Foundations of Uncertainty in Communication

Before entering the conceptual architecture of uncertainty, it is worth noting a simple fact: recent communication crises in Romanian politics are not accidents but symptoms of deeper mechanisms inherent to language. From the tensions surrounding USR's entry into government to the contradictory messages within the current PSD–PNL coalition, the public sphere offers daily examples in which words circulate without stable semantic anchors. Terms such as reform, stability, transparency, or national interest are used simultaneously by different political actors, yet with divergent—sometimes even opposing—meanings.

This discursive volatility is not merely a rhetorical problem but an expression of the constitutive uncertainty of natural language. To understand why communication so easily becomes a terrain of conflict, manipulation, or confusion, we must return to several fundamental theoretical landmarks.

2.1. Titu Maiorescu: Language as Generalization and the Loss of the Individual

While the current Minister of Foreign Affairs struggles with vague formulas about “alignment with European values” or “a complex geopolitical context,” Titu Maiorescu had already analyzed, in the 19th century, the relationship between language, logic, and reality [5]. He argued that language operates with general concepts rather than individual realities: the word *professor* does not designate a specific person but an abstraction.

This structural generalization produces a first form of uncertainty: we communicate through abstractions, yet we live in particulars. When a Minister of Education speaks about *students*, *performance*, or *equity*, the concrete meaning depends on the institutional, ideological, and media context in which these words are placed. Without such context, we remain in the realm of “forms without substance,” precisely what Maiorescu denounced [5, 11].

2.2. Ludwig Wittgenstein: Language Games and the Incompatibility of Political Registers

Wittgenstein moved from the illusion of a perfectly logical language to the idea that the meaning of a word is given by its use within “language games” [6]. In Romania 2025, several political language games coexist:

- the **technocratic game** (statements from the Ministry of Finance, the National Bank, or certain USR/PNL ministers, saturated with terms such as *fiscal sustainability, resilience, European benchmarks*);
- the **populist game** (slogans like “We will not sell our country!”, “Down with the traitors!”, “Romania for Romanians!”) [17, 25];
- the **sovereigntist-identity game**, blending nostalgia, religion, and geopolitics [27–29];
- the **diplomatic-bureaucratic game**, where standardized formulas often conceal the absence of real positioning [26, 23].

These language games are not interoperable: what counts as “structural adjustment” in technocratic jargon becomes, in populist rhetoric, “Brussels’ diktat.” In Wittgenstein’s terms, the family resemblances between these linguistic practices are minimal, and uncertainty grows precisely from the impossibility of constructing a shared game [6, 4].

2.3. Oswald Ducrot: *Meaning Between Dictionary and Situation*

Ducrot distinguishes between *signification* (the codified meaning) and *sense* (the effective meaning in a given situation) [7]. In Romanian political practice, this distinction becomes significant. When a PSD or PNL leader says *reform*, the basic meaning refers to structural change; the situational meaning may instead imply clientelist rotation or the discursive rebranding of an old policy.

Classic examples such as “the horse is ready” [10] show that without context, we do not know *which* horse or *ready for what*. In 2025, formulas like “Educated Romania,” “Digital Romania,” or “Sovereign Romania” function exactly like “the horse is ready”: they sound appealing but say nothing determinate without a clear pragmatic frame [12, 20].

2.4. Dan Sperber: *Fast Inference and the Illusion of Transparency*

Sperber explains communicative efficiency through inferential mechanisms: the receiver deduces the speaker’s intention from message and context through a rapid, largely unconscious process [8]. When a minister says “it is late” during a government meeting, the meaning may be: “we are closing the discussion,” “no further changes,” or “we must go to the press conference.”

In the Romanian public sphere, this inferential mechanism is systematically exploited:

- ambiguous statements (“we do not exclude any option,” “we are analyzing all scenarios”) shift the burden of interpretation onto the public;
- crisis communications (pandemic, war, inflation) are formulated to allow later retractions, maintaining a zone of strategic ambiguity [22, 13, 21].

Uncertainty becomes not merely a side effect but a political resource: if the message is vague enough, interpretive responsibility shifts to the receiver.

2.5. Paul Cornea: Pre-Understanding, Emotion, and Worlds of Belief

Cornea argues that understanding is filtered through *pre-understanding*, a set of prejudices, values, and historical-cultural experiences [11]. In Romania, these worlds of belief are deeply fragmented:

- an urban, educated public aligned with European discourse;
- a rural or precarious public receptive to nationalist, religious, or anti-elitist messages;
- a young, digitalized public exposed to memes, TikTok, and political influencers [3, 1, 18].

The same sentence, “Romania must defend its interests”, will be interpreted differently across these universes: as a call for diplomacy, as an appeal to isolationism, or as a campaign slogan. Uncertainty is not only linguistic but also cultural and affective [4, 24, 23].

3. Instrumentalized Uncertainty: Political Discourse and Populism, and Sovereigntist in Romania

Uncertainty becomes truly dangerous when it is deliberately instrumentalized. Romania in 2025 offers a dense laboratory of such practices.

3.1. Sovereigntist as an Exploitation of Nostalgia and Ambiguity

Romanian sovereigntist discourse—articulated by parties and leaders invoking “tradition,” “faith,” and “the nation”—feeds on the nostalgia of an idealized past and on the ambiguity of concepts such as *sovereignty*, *national interest*, or *the West* [27–29].

Through the resemanticization of historical figures (Kogălniceanu, Maiorescu, Eminescu), a symbolic legitimacy is constructed that often masks a precarious or contradictory political content [12, 26]. In Van Dijk’s terms, these are discursive strategies of manipulation that exploit the mental representations of the public [13].

3.2. Populism and the Crisis of Representation

The crisis of representation described by Carp [23] and analyzed in the broader European context by Müller [17] and Ghica [26] manifests in Romania through:

- the constant delegitimization of “elites,” “experts,” and “technocrats”;
- the promise of a direct relationship between “the people” and the leader, bypassing institutions;
- the radical simplification of complex problems (“three-point solutions” to structural crises).

In this context, uncertainty becomes twofold:

- citizens no longer know who represents them;

- citizens no longer know what *representation* means within a democratic system [23–25].

3.3. *Technocratism and the Opacity of Expert Language*

At the opposite pole of populism, technocratism, visible in the discourse of ministers of finance, economy, or digitalization, produces another form of uncertainty: opacity. Terms such as *fiscal consolidation*, *structural optimization*, or *macroeconomic resilience* are often incomprehensible to the general public [3, 4].

Here, manipulation is not necessarily intentional, but the effect is similar: a widening gap between institutional language and the language of citizens [1, 21]. In Ducrot’s terms, situational meaning remains inaccessible to those who do not share the same “language game” [7, 6].

3.4. *Media, Social Networks, and Symbolic Violence*

Analyses of electoral and media discourse show how the press and social networks amplify uncertainty through:

- sensationalist, decontextualized headlines;
- conflict-driven narrative frames (“us vs. them”);
- excessive personalization of politics [14–20, 21, 13].

The concept of symbolic violence applied to electoral discourse [20] demonstrates that uncertainty is not merely a cognitive effect but also a tool of domination: whoever controls the interpretive frame controls public reactions [12, 1, 4].

4.2025 Assessment: The Ecology of Uncertainty in the Digital and Geopolitical Era

In 2025, communicative uncertainty in Romania is amplified by at least four major dynamics that overlap with existing internal fragilities.

4.1. *Speed, Fragmentation, and the “Regime of Discursive Urgency”*

Online communication, from Facebook and X to TikTok and Telegram, produces a regime of discursive urgency: messages must be short, fast, and emotional [3, 1]. Context is lost, nuance disappears, and ambiguity increases. In this environment, conspiracy theories, rumors, and alternative narratives spread easily, as Sunstein shows [22]. Romania is no exception: from fake news about the EU and NATO to delirious interpretations of the war in Ukraine, the public sphere becomes a semantic battlefield [25, 26].

4.2. Intercultural Scale and Identity Tensions

Romania's membership in the EU and NATO, large-scale migration, and exposure to global media create a complex intercultural ecology. The worlds of belief described by Cornea [11] diversify even further, while their compatibility decreases. Kundera [29] speaks of a "kidnapped West." In Romania, this metaphor takes on a paradoxical form: part of society feels "kidnapped by the West," another part "kidnapped by the East." Sovereignist, populism, and Euroscepticism feed on these tensions [27, 28, 26].

4.3. Information War and the Vulnerability of Inferences

The war in Ukraine and the narrative competition among geopolitical blocs turn Romania into a vulnerable node of information warfare. Russian, Western, and regional narratives intersect within the same media space [26, 25]. In Sperber's terms [8], public inferences become easily manipulable: without a stable shared background, any message can be "pulled" in one direction or another. In Van Dijk's framework [13], control over context becomes the primary weapon.

4.4. The Crisis of Epistemic Authority and the Fragmentation of Expertise

Carp [23], Fiume [24], and Ghica [26] show that we are facing a crisis of epistemic authority: experts are contested, knowledge institutions (universities, institutes, organizations) are suspected of partisanship, and "informed opinion" is placed on the same level as "a Facebook comment." In this context, projects aimed at crisis anticipation through discourse analysis [21, 22] or volumes dedicated to communicative uncertainty [30] demonstrate that sophisticated tools exist for understanding and managing communicative risk. The problem is that they are not systematically integrated into political decision-making.

5. Conclusions

The analysis developed in the previous chapters shows that uncertainty is not only a property of natural language but also a political, institutional, and cultural condition of contemporary Romania. In 2025, communicative uncertainty is amplified by three major dynamics: (1) Internal discursive fragmentation – incompatible political languages coexist: technocratic, bureaucratic, populist, sovereignist, diplomatic. They do not translate into one another, do not meet, and do not negotiate meaning. The result is a semantic misalignment between institutions, parties, and the public. (2) Digital acceleration – the speed of online communication, its reactive nature, and the absence of context turn any message into a potential generator of confusion. Romania lives under a regime of discursive urgency, where meaning is consumed before it is understood. (3)

Geopolitical and informational pressure – Romania is simultaneously exposed to conflicting external narratives, regional tensions, and a global erosion of epistemic authority. In this context, public inferences become vulnerable, and cultural pre-understandings radicalize.

These three dynamics converge into what can be described as a crisis of public meaning. Not only are messages uncertain, but so are the institutions that produce them. Not only are words ambiguous, but so are the intentions attributed to them. Not only are interpretations divergent, but so are the worlds of belief that sustain them.

The central question of this study now finds its answer: the structural uncertainty of language (generalization, language games, contextual dependence, inference, pre-understanding) becomes dangerous when combined with: populism that brutally simplifies; sovereigntist that exploits nostalgia and fear; technocratism that obscures; media and social networks that accelerate and fragment; the crisis of epistemic authority that relativizes all knowledge.

Romania is not facing merely a communication crisis, but a crisis of the shared interpretive framework. Language games no longer share “family resemblances,” forms circulate without substance, and situations generate not meaning but collisions of meanings.

The 2025 assessment is not a verdict but an inflection point: either we continue along the path of fragmentation and discursive cynicism, or we transform uncertainty into a critical resource, by acknowledging it, understanding it, and managing it lucidly.

In a world where meaning fragments, the most important political and democratic competence becomes the capacity to reconstruct meaning: to negotiate significance, to rebuild bridges between worlds of belief, to re-professionalize public communication, and to restore to words the dignity of being, once again, the beginning of a shared contract rather than the prelude to rupture.

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