

Guest article:

## Idiosyncrasies in the Negotiation of the EU Accession - Case of Romania

Melania-Gabriela Ciot<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** *This research<sup>2</sup> aims at explaining some of the decisions (or ways of action) in the public sphere through the analysis of subjective elements (idiosyncrasies) that occur at individual level. The use of psychological methods for the analysis of foreign policy decision-making opened a new path of investigation in the field of international relations. The case study which is brought to attention refers to the period 2000 – 2004, during Romania's preparation for accession to the European Union, from the perspective of the psychological factors that have intervened in the negotiations and decision-making process at the individual level. The discourses of former Chief Negotiator Vasile Pușcaș were analysed in this research process.*

**Keywords:** *psychological approach of decision-making process, idiosyncrasies, European negotiations, discourse, Romania's EU accession*

### 1. Introduction

The decision-making process in foreign policy is an important area of research, since the manner decisions are made can determine different choices. Therefore, an actor can reach a different result depending on how the decision is made. Moreover, significant cognitive limitations distort information processing. Some decisions are carefully calculated, while others are intuitive.

The level of analysis of the foreign policy decision-making process is different from the one in international relations, where experts talk about individual, states and system as the main units of analysis. In foreign policy decision-making, units refer specifically to the deciding entities: leaders, groups and coalitions. Foreign policy decisions can be examined in terms of individual, group and coalitions<sup>3</sup> levels.

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<sup>1</sup> **Melania-Gabriela Ciot** is associate professor at University Babeș-Bolyai, Faculty of European Studies, where she teaches courses of International Negotiations, European Negotiations, Negotiations and Intercultural Relations, Idiosyncrasies and Foreign Policy Decision-Making, Process of Foreign Policy Decision-Making and International Politics. From 2016 she is supervising doctoral theses in the field of international relations and European studies, in Doctoral School *European Paradigm* of Faculty of European Studies. From 2017, she is the Director of the above mentioned doctoral school. She has an intense scientific and research activity, which includes 10 books as single author, 6 coordinated volumes, 35 chapters in prestigious international publishing houses (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Brill, Romanian Academy Publishing House), more than 60 articles and studies in international and national journals. Her fields of interests are: international and European negotiations, foreign policy, idiosyncrasies in foreign policy decision making. E-mail address: [Gabriela.Ciot@euro.ubbcluj.ro](mailto:Gabriela.Ciot@euro.ubbcluj.ro).

<sup>2</sup> This article is based on a previous doctoral and research analysis, published in: Melania-Gabriela Ciot, *Negotiation and Foreign Policy Decision Making*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, UK, 2014

<sup>3</sup> Margaret Hermann, Thomas Preston, Baghat Korany, Timothy Shaw, "Who leads matters: The effects of powerful individuals", in *International Studies Review*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2001, p. 83-132

The presence of idiosyncrasies (of these personal, social factors) that influence decision-making can lead to other approaches to decision-making which are different from the “classical” rational model. Rationality in decision-making in foreign policy cannot be considered as the sole factor. At best, it may be taken as a reference factor, but postmodern approaches bring to the attention of specialists the consideration of the role and influence of psychological factors.

## 2. Methodology of research

This article is based on a qualitative research. The study period investigated is 2000-2004, when Romania’s accession negotiations to the European Union and the activity of the decision-making factor were conducted. It uses the *case study* as a research strategy, the method of data analysis is the *discourse analysis* and the interpretation method is *interpretive research*<sup>4</sup>. The deciding factor analysed is one of Romania’s Chief Negotiators, namely Minister Vasile Pușcaș. Through discourse analysis (political speeches, public speeches, media representations and interviews conducted during 2000-2004), we identified four types of idiosyncrasies that influenced the decision-making.

The analysis was conducted in three stages: a) a description of how the language is used (metaphors, evaluative terms used and representations); b) an interpretation; and c) explanations, the most important step, which would highlight the relationship between power, domination and ideologies grounded in statements. We have sought to identify discursive patterns that would mark the presence of certain types of idiosyncrasies, and investigate the association of their presence with the decisions undertaken.

This research has started from the questions related to the *idiosyncrasies that influenced the decision-making process of Romania’s accession to the European Union*.

## 3. Types of idiosyncrasies in foreign policy decision-making

The presence of idiosyncrasies demonstrates the need for a psychological approach to foreign policy decision-making<sup>5</sup>. The factors acting here are: the personality and beliefs of leaders, leadership style, emotions, images, cognitive consistency, the use of analogies, intelligence and how these influence decision-making and the results expected. These factors call into question the explanatory power of the rational model. This section presents briefly the main types of idiosyncrasies acting in decision-making: cognitive idiosyncrasies, idiosyncrasies of social perception, motivational and emotional idiosyncrasies.

*Cognitive idiosyncrasies* are systematic deviations from the normative models which prescribe rational behaviour, as articulated in game theory and other normative principles<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Adriana Băban, *Metodologia cercetării calitative (The Qualitative research methodology)*, Cluj-Napoca, Presa Universitară Clujeană (Cluj University Press), 2002, p. 21-22

<sup>5</sup> Alex Mintz, Karl De Rouen Jr., *Understanding Foreign Policy Decision Making*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 97

<sup>6</sup> Leigh Thompson, Margaret Neale, Marwan Sinauceur, “The evolution and Biases in Negotiation Research. An examination of cognition, social perception, motivation and emotion”, in M. J. Gelfand, J.M. Brett, (eds.), *The Handbook of Negotiation and Culture*, Standford Business Book, Standford, Standford University Press, 2004, p. 10

Thompson, Neal and Sinaceur<sup>7</sup> summarize in a table the cognitive idiosyncrasies which occur during a decision-making/negotiation process:

**Table 1: Cognitive idiosyncrasies in decision-making process** (adapted from Thompson, Neale and Sinaceur 2004, p. 10-11):

Theory	Cognitive idiosyncrasies
Prospective theory and the cybernetic model	Framing
	Anchoring
	Availability
	Over evaluation
Information processing theory	Utility
	Perceptual frames
	Perception of task

*Cognitive consistency* is the most prominent cognitive theory of how perceptions influence decisions. It means that decision-makers minimize certain information which is not compatible with their pre-existing *images* and *beliefs*, or pay exaggerated attention only to information that is consistent with these images and beliefs. At the level of knowledge, idiosyncrasies of the two elements may occur: (1) *cognitive content* and (2) *cognitive process*<sup>8</sup>. The cognitive content refers to what an individual thinks, at the level of knowledge; the cognitive process refers to the use of such content at a conscious and unconscious level. Another example given by Mintz and DeRouen<sup>9</sup> is the *evoked set*, a term taken from Jervis<sup>10</sup>. This refers to the immediate concerns which are in the mind of the decision-maker.

Suefeld, Cross and Stewart<sup>11</sup> identify two cognitive variables which cause the appearance of idiosyncrasies<sup>12</sup>: *conceptual complexity*<sup>13</sup> and *integrative complexity*<sup>14</sup>, both descendants of the cognitive style theories proliferated in the 1960s (especially the theory of conceptual cognitive complexity).

Another cognitive idiosyncrasy refers to the variables of the *verbal style*, developed by Weintraub<sup>15</sup>. These variables attempt to differentiate people based on the idiosyncratic use of verbal structures<sup>16</sup>:

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*

<sup>8</sup> Michael Young, Mark Schafer, "Is There Method in Our Madness? Ways of Assessing Cognition in International Relation", *Mershon International Studies Review*, nr. 42, 1998, p. 66

<sup>9</sup> Mintz and DeRouen, *op.cit.*, p. 98

<sup>10</sup> Jervis, *op.cit.*, 1976

<sup>11</sup> Peter Suefeld, P., Ryan Cross, Michael Stewart, *Indicators, Predictors and Determinants of Conflict Escalation and De-escalation: A Review of the Psychological Literature*, DRDC Toronto Contractor Report CR-2009-074, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, Defence R&D Canada, 2009

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 9

<sup>13</sup> Hermann, M. G., "Assessing leadership style: Trait analysis", in J. M. Post, (ed.), *The psychological assessment of political leaders*, Ann Arbor, MI, University of Michigan Press 2006, p. 178

<sup>14</sup> Peter Suefeld, Philip Tetlock, Siegrid Stuefert "Conceptual/integrative complexity", in C.P. Smith, J.W. Atkinson, D.C. McClelland, J.Veroff, (eds.), *Motivation and personality: Handbook of thematic content analysis*, New York, Cambridge University Press 1992, p. 394

<sup>15</sup> Walter Weintraub, "Verbal behaviour and personality assessment", in J. M. Post (ed.), *The psychological assessment of political leaders*, Ann Arbor, MI, University of Michigan Press, 2006, p. 138

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 143

- A large number of qualifiers (like *perhaps, might be*), occurring in the text may indicate indecision or a lack of desire to have a point of view;
- Using the *retractors* (for example, *anyway, however*) are signs of impulsivity;
- Using the pronoun *I*, rather than *we* indicates the need of a person to be seen as independent, vs. a spokesman for a group or a cause;
- Using *impersonal forms* (*someone did this*, where the subject is not specified), where it is more feasible to make a recognizable reference, is known as impersonal reference;
- Oppositional behaviour or stubbornness is indicated by the use of *negatives* (*not, never, nothing*);
- Using *explanations* (*because, therefore, since*) suggests rationalizing, points of view which are justified, explained or excused;
- Those who usually assign emotions or self-assessments (often saying *I like something*) or use other expressions related to emotions, transmit warmth;
- *Adverbs* which emphasize or add more authority to a statement are adverbial intensifiers (*very, really*);
- *Direct references* appear when the person speaking refers directly to the person spoken to.

*Images* represent another cognitive idiosyncrasy<sup>17</sup>. They are mental representations used for framing and organizing the world, and can be considered a kind of stereotype that the mind uses to categorize events and people. *Analogies* (or *historical analogies*)<sup>18</sup> represent a strong cognitive command. When leaders experience events demanding decisions, they tend to reflect the past showing similar circumstances, alternatives and possible outcomes. The analogy and its counterpart, *learning*, can provide useful commands. However, they can lead to disastrous results if the wrong lessons are learned or if the current situation is not a reflection of the reference event.

The *idiosyncrasies of social perception* differ from cognitive ones regarding the nature of the influence, which is centred on the perception of social objects, events and people<sup>19</sup>.

Table 2 presents the idiosyncrasies of social perception.

**Table 2: Idiosyncrasies of the social perception** (adapted after Thompson, Neale and Sinaceur 2004, p. 17-18)

Perception centre	Idiosyncrasies
Self	Illusion of transparency
	Perspective approach

<sup>17</sup> Joshua Goldstein, Jon Pevenhouse "Foreign Policy", in *International Relations*, nr. 7/E, Pearson, Longman, 2006, www.pearsonhighered.com/.../samplechapte...2006, p. 147

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 146

<sup>19</sup> Leigh, Thompson, Reid Hastie "Social perception in negotiations", in *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Process*, nr. 47, 1990, p. 98

Others	Rigid perception, creative devaluation
	Extremism
	Fundamental attribution errors
	Knowing the other party, ignoring the cognitions of others
	Idiosyncrasies of coercion

Beliefs provide powerful frameworks for the interpretation and understanding of decision-making situations<sup>20</sup>. The belief system of a leader involves inferences about the preferences of the *Self* and *Others* on policy outcomes. The intersection of these two sets of preferences on policy outcomes is influenced by strategies, tactics, movements and leaders' decisions.

The *motivational idiosyncrasies* arise from the activation of specific needs and goals. Where it is believed that social perception idiosyncrasies are present, the motivational idiosyncrasies can be switched by the presence of particular social goals. Thompson, Neal and Sinaceur<sup>21</sup> talk about a change in the goals that influence reasoning, behaviour and results and set four motivational goals: self-realization, closure and coherence, cooperation (maximizing shared goals) and responsibility (or pressure of coherence)<sup>22</sup>.

Table 3 presents a synthesis of the motivational idiosyncrasies conducted by the authors mentioned above:

**Table 3: Motivational idiosyncrasies** (adapted from Thompson, Neale and Sinaceur 2004, p. 23-24)

Nature of motivational idiosyncrasies	Idiosyncrasies
Self-realization	Egocentrism and self-serving
Closure, consistency and balance	Bittersweet effect
	Need for closure
Cooperation	Future interactions
	Social value orientation
	Common guidelines
Responsibility	Responsibility

*Emotional idiosyncrasies* refer to the misperceptions of one person or more. These may, in turn, address more inconsistencies or connections between feelings and actions, feelings and reasonings or feelings and different stages of negotiation. Thompson, Neal and Sinaceur<sup>23</sup> suggest three types of misperceptions which emotional idiosyncrasies focus on:

<sup>20</sup> Jonathan Renshon Stanley Renshon, "The Theory and Practice of Foreign Policy Decision Making", in *Political Psychology*, vol. 29, no. 4, 2008, p. 509-536, p. 512; Stephen Walker, Mark Schafer, M., Michael Young, „Systematic procedures for operational code analysis: Measuring and modelling Jimmy Carter's operational code", in *International Studies Quarterly*, no. 42, p. 175-190, 1999, p. 611

<sup>21</sup> Thompson, Neal and Sinaceur, *op.cit.*, 2004, p. 22

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 24

(1) inaccuracy in terms of reasoning and emotions that can be seen in others or themselves, (2) wrong beliefs about the duration of emotional states, and (3) wrong beliefs about the causal effects of emotion and behaviour.

Table 4 presents the idiosyncrasies that may occur in the following areas:

**Table 4: Emotional idiosyncrasies** (adapted from Thompson, Neale and Sinaceur 2004, p. 28)

Nature of emotion	Idiosyncrasies
Positive emotions	Positive
Negative emotions	Anger

There is evidence that emotions play an important role in foreign policy decisions. Leaders are influenced by public opinion, and in turn, by domestic and international events. McDermott<sup>24</sup> explains how emotions play an important role in decision-making: the presence of fear or anger can complicate the decision-makers' decision-making process, which may be lacking.

#### 4. Romania's accession process to the European Union - an idiosyncratic standpoint

EU accession has provided a framework for the Romanian society modernization, for the structural reforms of the economy, institutions, laws, political system, etc., according to the Copenhagen criteria<sup>25</sup>. The Europeanization process refers to the internalization of the values, laws, and procedures of the European Union and represents a "practical and desirable opportunity" of "real, systematic and integrated" modernization in Romania<sup>26</sup>.

Like other candidate countries, the dynamics of the negotiations for the accession to the EU, between 2000-2004, took into account elements of strategy: institutional, policies and developments in the external environment and internal negotiation, external perceptions of the preparation of Romania's conduct, strategic objectives on the criteria for accession and negotiation chapters, but also the forecasts on the evolution of negotiations<sup>27</sup>.

The most part of the negotiations for the accession to the EU was headed by Chief Negotiator Vasile Pușcaș. By examining the discourse of the Chief Negotiator in the period 2000-2004, we have drawn some conclusions related to the influence of the idiosyncrasies on the negotiation and decision-making process.

##### *Cognitive Idiosyncrasies*

We have proposed a synthetic form, in order to offer an overview:

<sup>24</sup> Rose McDermott, R., *Political Psychology in International Relations*, Ann Arbor, Michigan University Press, 2004, 2004, p. 700

<sup>25</sup> Vasile Pușcaș, *România spre Uniunea Europeană. Negocierile de aderare (2000-2004) [Romania towards the European Union. The Accession Negotiations (2000-2004)]*, Bucharest, Institutul European [European Institute], 2007, p. 32

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*

<sup>27</sup> Ciprian Goriță, *Negocierile de aderare la Uniunea Europeană [Accession negotiations to the European Union]*, București, Editura Economică [Bucharest, Economic Publishing House], 2008, p. 339

**Table 5: The cognitive idiosyncrasies of Romania's Chief-Negotiator**

Cognitive idiosyncrasy	Example
Prospective theory and the cybernetic model	<p><b>Shaping a positive framework</b>, default risk aversion:</p> <p>“In the upcoming period we are handling the completion of the implementation plans in all areas, and for this we have checked again with the local and central authorities, because Romania’s national interest requires that the implementation plans which we will soon send to Brussels to be as realistic as possible, because according to them, basically, our policies will be clearer, but also the EU will focus in the environmental policies and in relation to Romania” (Gabriel Langada, “Cum comentati actualitatea politica?–Multiplicatorii de opinie europeana și participarea lor la pregătirea pentru aderare”, <i>Radio România Actualități</i>, 20 August, 2003, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).</p>
	<p>Also influenced by the <i>frameworks set by others</i> (European Commission):</p> <p>“From these perspectives, Romania attaches great importance to the <i>annual report of the European Commission</i>, a working document for the Government of Romania. <i>Together with the social partners</i>, the entire Romanian society’s efforts are made <i>to reduce deficiencies signalled in the Report</i>” (Vasile Pușcaș, “EU Enlargement: Linking Civil Society, the Citizen and the State”, Berlin, 22 November, 2001).</p> <p>Although it is a proof of the flexibility of the Negotiator, considering the suggestions from the European Commission determines a reformulation of the accession framework. The social partners also have an influence on the formulation of this framework suggested by the European Commission.</p>
	<p><b>Anchoring</b></p> <p>It is present in the form of the perseverance of achieving the objectives assumed, the dynamic work rhythm of the Chief Negotiator being known:</p> <p>“This enhanced cooperation and the <i>commitment of the Government of Romania to implement coherent measures aiming to consolidate a functioning and competitive market economy</i>, levelled with the European standards, will prove beneficial for Europe as a whole, with impact on the regional stability” (Vasile Pușcaș, The International Symposium “Romania and the EU”, Academia di Romania, Rome, 6 November, 2001).</p>
<p><b>Disponibility</b></p> <p>The Chief Negotiator made decisions on structuring the position papers, only after having enough information from the specific work groups, in consultation with the social partners:</p> <p>“There will be a few <i>consultation meetings</i> on very important chapters, such as energy or agriculture. These will be consistent meetings, where <i>each partner will explain the political objectives</i>, within the 2007 term and after 2007, and then hopefully in October and in November, December to organize accession conferences for about four, five, six chapters” (Gabriel Langada, “Cum comentati actualitatea politica?–Multiplicatorii de opinie europeana și participarea lor la pregătirea pentru aderare”, <i>Radio România Actualități</i>, 20 August, 2003, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).</p>	

Information processing theory	Utility	<p>Appears when the benefits are seen by both sides, Romania and the EU (besides, the whole process of negotiation was based on the <b>win-win</b> principle):</p> <p>”The coming force of these agreements meant, in fact, the abolishment of the internal borders between the signatory states and <i>the establishing of a single market border</i> where the immigration control takes places, according to <i>a common set of rules</i> regarding visas, the right to asylum, the control of external borders, etc” (Vasile Pușcaș, “Migration in Europe”, Institute of International Sociology, Gorizia, 17 September, 2001).</p>
	Perceptual/ cognitive frameworks	<p>Perceptual frameworks are divided into three categories: based on relationships, emotional-intellectual and compromise-win. Each of these can be found in the interventions of the Chief Negotiator, demonstrating flexibility, partnership orientation and professionalism (using the art of compromise). For the cognitive framework based on relationships:</p> <p>“<i>The Ministry of Administration and Interior</i> has recently established a structure within the ministry with local administration subsidiaries, dealing only with programming, funding and implementation of environmental policies at the local level” (Dorina Zdroba, “Pulsul zilei”, <i>Radio România Actualități</i>, 17 September, 2003, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).</p>
	Perception of the task	<p>Similar perceptions on the task (common perceptions of Romania and the EU regarding the negotiation process):</p> <p>“I noticed that, in general, <i>like us</i>, the <i>first impression is that of quantity</i>, of how we have developed quantitatively in the <i>negotiation process</i>, i.e. the number chapters closed-open finalized [...] each of the negotiating states followed their own way and <i>the political decision of a group’s accession belonged to the Member States and the European Council</i>” (Vasile Pușcaș, “Cooperarea transfrontalieră–cheia unei Noi Europe”, <i>Radio România Actualități</i>, 10 September, 2003).</p>
Cognitive consistency	<p>It refers to how perceptions can influence decisions and how images and pre-existing beliefs can influence decision-makers. The Chief Negotiator showed that only his own perception, images and beliefs have influenced the decision:</p> <p>“In Romania’s case, I explained why Romania <i>came later to the negotiations</i>, why it has <i>conducted negotiations starting from a thinner chapter containing acquis communautaire than other states</i>, and finally, we presented the current state, <i>how Romania is simultaneously achieving three important steps</i> in the transposition of the <i>acquis</i>, the development of public administration reform and the establishment of special institutions designed to implement the <i>acquis</i> and finally, the third fact is switching immediately to the application of the <i>acquis communautaire</i>” (Vasile Pușcaș, “Cooperarea transfrontalieră–cheia unei Noi Europe”, <i>Radio România Actualități</i>, 10 September, 2003).</p>	
Cognitive content	<p>It refers to what an individual believes at the level of knowledge. Often Vasile Pușcaș presents his point of view with specific elements which mark this affiliation (e.g. “I am convinced”, “I want”, “I”, “I would urge”, “to participate”, “we, Romanians”, “active participant”):</p> <p>“I am absolutely <i>convinced</i> that this vote will show how much is perceived an important step forward which all citizens <i>want</i> to accomplish. I would <i>urge</i> all our <i>citizens</i> to take responsibility not only of the <i>desire to be in the EU</i>, but to <i>participate</i> in the processes that are running now, preparatory of the respective moment, because <i>we, Romanians</i>, for so long have wanted to stop being passive subjects in history, but active participants” (Victoria Stângescu, „Cum comentați actualitatea politică”, <i>Radio România Actualități</i>, 14 October, 2003, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).</p>	

Cognitive process	<p>It refers to the use of certain content at a conscious and unconscious level, this can be evidenced by the presence of verbs of action in the first person (for the conscious level) and at the unconscious level, by the presence of verbs and nouns expressing emotional states (e.g. "I am happy"; "I want"; "desire"; "I'm sad"; etc.):</p> <p>"[...] <i>I would like to say that I am happy to have been supported in several key elements, namely the regional policy and policy implementation of regional development in Romania will be done according with the EU objectives</i>" (Victoria Stângescu, „Cum comentați actualitatea politică”, <i>Radio România Actualități</i>, 14 October, 2003, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).</p>
Evoked set	<p>Refers to the immediate concerns that are in the mind of the decision-makers, who can be influenced by competing events:</p> <p>"The stakes could not be clearer. How our progress will be assessed and how the domains needing more development will be presented, these will be essential to plan a timeline of ongoing negotiations in 2004, and given that we have proposed a main objective to finalize negotiations in 2004, during the current mandate of the European Commission, we hope to have this opportunity just from the conclusions of the country report and hopefully a negotiation strategy with Romania" (Vasile Pușcaș, "Radiojurnal", <i>Radio România Actualități</i>, 22 October, 2003).</p>
Conceptual complexity	<p>Specialized, technical language is present in many interventions, some abundant in specific terms, showing a good grasp of concepts:</p> <p>"Also, for Chapter 21–Regional policies and structural funds, we have largely met our commitments, just a few weeks ago, by the decision of Government, the departments were established, specific units for processing structural funds in administrative units in our institutions and in this way we hope next year to be able to complete this chapter under good circumstances. Tomorrow, actually, we are expecting to complete the implementation plans for Chapter 22–Environmental protection" (Vasile Pușcaș, <i>Radio România Actualități</i>, 10 July, 2003).</p>
Integrative complexity	<p>Creating a framework for a comprehensive approach in general. This is highlighted, through presentations regarding the degree of negotiation of several chapters, belonging to a larger domain, for example market economy:</p> <p>"We focus primarily on the chapters that will give the <i>final contour</i>, the functional characteristics of market economy. <i>We insist on the four freedoms</i>. I do not know if we will be able to finalize, say, this semester, all four, because in December we've just opened Chapter 3–<i>Free movement of services</i> and the Community method is that there must pass a period of implementation and evaluation, to go further, but we hope that the <i>Free movement of goods, Free movement of persons and Free movement of capital</i> would be temporarily closed this semester" (Mariana Tomescu-Vilceanu, "24 de ore", <i>Radio România Actualități</i>, 7 January, 2003, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).</p>

Verbal style	<p>Many of the factors indicated by Weintraub (2006, 138) are found in the interventions of the Chief Negotiator, Vasile Pușcaș:</p> <p><b>Qualifiers:</b> rarely uses qualifiers, <i>might</i>, <i>maybe</i>; the action verbs are those that dominate (to insist, to participate, to support, to focus, etc.). Even if qualifiers are present (<i>might</i>), they are immediately followed by an emotional indicator (<i>I hope</i>), just to show personal involvement and a desire to achieve the goals set, and then by an action verb (<i>to advance</i>) to reconfirm the responsible commitment:</p> <p>“[...] the draft of a new draft which <i>might</i> take a while, but <i>I hope</i> that this directive will appear quickly, this spring so we can <i>move forward</i>” (Vasile Pușcaș, “24 de ore”, <i>Radio România Actualități</i>, 7 January, 2003).</p> <p><b>First person pronouns</b> mean acting as a representative of a group and being independent for what you stand for:</p> <p>“I would urge all <i>our</i> fellow citizens to take responsibility, not only of the desire to be in the EU, but to participate in the processes that are taking place right now, in preparation of the respective moment, because <i>we</i>, Romanians, for so long have wanted to stop being passive subjects in history, but active participants” (Victoria Stângescu, „Cum comentați actualitatea politică”, <i>Radio România Actualități</i>, 14 October, 2003, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).</p> <p>Using <b>explanations</b> (e.g. <i>because</i>, <i>therefore</i>, <i>since</i>) suggests rationalization, points of view which are justified, explained or excused, and the people who use these words are hyper-rational, obviously also for the Chief Negotiator Vasile Pușcaș:</p> <p>“Therefore, at the moment, it is very, very important how the firms’ managers respond to the questionnaire which was sent by the Department of the Environment, so we may argue as well as possible, I repeat, on behalf of Romania and the benefit of each of the investors or the existing companies” (Dorina Zdroba, “Pulsul Zilei”, <i>Radio România Actualități</i>, 1 July, 2003).</p> <p>Using <b>attributors</b> to transmit warmth–expressing emotions or self-assessments (often saying <i>I like something</i>) or using other expressions related to emotions. As I said, there are many examples of their presence:</p> <p>“[...] <i>I would like to say</i> that I was happy because several key elements have been <i>sustained</i>, namely that the regional policy and the implementation of regional development policies in Romania <i>will be</i> in line with the EU objectives” (Victoria Stângescu, „Cum comentați actualitatea politică”, <i>Radio România Actualități</i>, 14 October, 2003, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).</p> <p><b>Adverbial intensifiers</b> (e.g. <i>very</i>, <i>really</i>) add importance to the statements:</p> <p>“at the moment it is <i>very</i>, <i>very</i> important how the firms’ managers respond to the questionnaire which was sent to the Department of the Environment” (Dorina Zdroba, “Pulsul Zilei”, <i>Radio România Actualități</i>, 1 July, 2003).</p> <p><b>Direct references</b> appear when the person speaking is referring directly to the person he is speaking to and the use of these words indicate engaging behaviour:</p> <p>“I think the time we have left wouldn’t be enough it, but <i>if you invite us to Hunedoara</i>, we promise to do a simulation to see what happens at the accession negotiations’ table” (Vasile Pușcaș, “Chat cu multiplicatorii de informație europeană”, <i>Extranet Delegația Comisiei Europene în România</i>, 26 January, 2004).</p>
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Manner of presentation of events	<p>An explanation of events is done within the cause-effect parameters. In the presentation of events, the Chief Negotiator, Vasile Pușcaș addresses internal causes, global and stable, indicating an <i>explanatory optimistic style</i>:</p> <p>“Secondly, the <i>Greek Presidency has focused</i> on the signing, ratification of treaties, of the <i>accession</i> concluded with the <i>ten new states</i>. Therefore, I say that, technically speaking, the procedures went almost normally, meaning that our relations with the European Commission–the negotiation unit–have continued” (Varujan Vosganian, <i>Ziua Economică</i>, 2 April, 2003, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).</p>
Constructs which influence the decision-making style	<p>For the Chief Negotiator, Vasile Pușcaș, the dyad of constructs is <i>flexible-rigid</i>, with emphasis on the element of flexibility:</p> <p>“<i>I have entered</i> this formula and <i>I hope to succeed in negotiating it</i>, which means a fairly consistent financial support given to Romania” (Varujan Vosganian, <i>Ziua Economică</i>, 2 April, 2003, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).</p>
Images	<p>They talk about the <i>psychological projection</i> of one’s own feelings on another actor and are a kind of stereotype which we use to categorize events and people:</p> <p>“Therefore, I hope that, once the Athens moment had passed there would be a <i>willingness also from the European Commission and from Member States</i> to lean more towards the efforts of Romania and Bulgaria. From the point of view of the decision in Copenhagen in December, at least at the moment, <i>I do not have any signs indicating that they would perceive a different process</i>, and not the one that includes Romania as well” (Varujan Vosganian, <i>Ziua Economică</i>, 2 April, 2003, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).</p>
Historical analogies	<p>It is present also due to the professional training of the Chief Negotiator (a graduate of the Faculty of History and Social Sciences):</p> <p>“Think that even <i>during the Cold War period the decisions</i> on the accession of a state <i>were political</i>. Also now, <i>the decisions are political</i>” (Varujan Vosganian, <i>Ziua Economică</i>, 2 April, 2003, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).</p>
Learning	<p>It is the counterpart of historical analogy and highlights how decision-makers learn from the past or from other leaders. It can also refer to an understanding of how nations learn and can help to provide a sense of the pursuit of a <i>purpose</i> by a state (signing the Accession Treaty), of <i>pathways</i> (accession negotiation strategy, position papers) to meet them and of <i>making decisions</i> (made from the institutional position occupied by the Chief Negotiator):</p> <p>“Then we take into account the fact that in Romania <i>we have transposed into our legislation a large amount of the acquis communautaire</i> and we <i>make efforts to apply</i> this <i>acquis communautaire</i> in our daily lives” (Vasile Pușcaș, <i>România</i> 1, 9 May, 2003).</p>

### *Idiosyncrasies of the Social Perception*

We shall continue on the same pattern of idiosyncrasies’ identification:

**Table 6: The Idiosyncrasies of the Social Perception of Chief Negotiator**

Idiosyncrasy of social perception		Example
Self	<b>Illusion of / transparency</b>	<p>The principle of transparency was regularly followed from the beginning of the negotiation process, by which its essence was explained, to the strategy for accession and the public presentation of the position papers for each chapter. This principle has also been respected after the end of mandate, the presentation of negotiations being the subject of numerous books published by Professor Vasile Pușcaș:</p> <p>“Regarding the negotiations for Romania’s accession to the EU, the current Government <i>has embarked on a new path</i>: one of facts, not of words [...]. <i>We will present synthetically the stage of accession negotiations</i> to the European Union [...]. <i>We will present further the negotiation methodology</i>” (Vasile Pușcaș, “Noua abordare a negocierilor de aderare a României la Uniunea Europeană”, <i>Summer University Izvorul Mureșului</i>, 17 August, 2001).</p>
	<b>The perspective approach</b>	<p>Decision-makers with open perspective will have a greater success in creating integral arrangements than those with reduced perspectives. An additional argument for the presence of this idiosyncrasy is in the flexible style of the Chief Negotiator and the openness of perspective which give a feeling of safety and trust, just by this characteristic disclosure of future intentions:</p> <p>“<i>We continue</i> our training and, you see, the Belgian Presidency has announced a set of domains covering the chapters. <i>We intend</i> and it is <i>our objective</i> by the end of this year, to get into that rhythm, because Romania has been switched off at the end of the year 2000 from the other states. We must rejoin this pace to be able to find ourselves again in the structure of a presidency, regarding its priorities. This is what we are doing, <i>we are opening</i> and <i>proposing</i> for opening processing of a set of chapters which will be submitted during the months of September-October” (Mariana Tomescu Vilceanu, “24 de ore”, <i>Radio România Actualități</i>, 27 July, 2001, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).</p>
Others	<b>Rigid perception; creative devaluation</b>	<p>This is not strictly about a rigid perception regardless of the views of other parties, but about a <b>prioritization of our own interests</b>, even under the conditions of using the win-win principle:</p> <p>“the negotiation that we do means <i>harmonizing national interest with the interests of the European Union</i>, seen both through the lenses of the 15 Member States and by those expressed by Community policies. After the moment of accession, the negotiation will continue to <i>merge our interests</i> with the <i>European ones</i>. I want to tell you that all these developments will only <i>potentiate the national character</i>” (Cecilia Caragea, <i>Indigo</i>, August 2001, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).</p>

Others		<p>This is not strictly about a rigid perception regardless of the views of other parties, but about a <b>prioritization of our own interests</b>, even under the conditions of using the win-win principle:</p> <p>“the negotiation that we do means <i>harmonizing national interest with the interests of the European Union</i>, seen both through the lenses of the 15 Member States and by those expressed by Community policies. After the moment of accession, the negotiation will continue to <i>merge our interests with the European ones</i>. I want to tell you that all these developments will only <i>potentiate the national character</i>” (Cecilia Caragea, <i>Indigo</i>, August 2001, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).</p>
	Knowing the other party	<p>It is largely due to basic training, and also the expertise gained through positions held in diplomacy:</p> <p>“[...] <i>the analyses we conducted for various Western institutions and organizations</i>, in terms of geopolitics and geostrategy, at the end of twentieth century, and <i>regarding the European processes</i> of this period, including the <i>integration of Romania into the EU and NATO</i>” (Cecilia Caragea, <i>Indigo</i>, August 2001, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).</p>

Other types of idiosyncrasies present in the descriptions provided are not to be found for the Chief Negotiator, Vasile Pușcaș (that is: extremism, fundamental errors of assignment and idiosyncrasies of coercion), we believe due to his emotional balance and deep knowledge of international relations and European studies.

Regarding the convictions and belief system, we must specify that the Chief Negotiator’s substance of rationality is very strong, one of the most commonly used models of foreign policy decision-making being that of the rational actor. Another proof of rationality is the use of action verbs and explanatory elements.

#### *Motivational Idiosyncrasies*

These arise from the activation of specific needs and purposes and appear where the idiosyncrasies of social perception are present, and they can be turned on by the presence of particular social goals.

**Table 7: The Motivational Idiosyncrasies of Chief Negotiator**

Motivational idiosyncrasy		Example
Self-accomplishment	Egocentrism and self-serving	<p>Will be present in the sense of <b>self-overcoming</b> and the <b>use of available resources</b> to achieve the objectives set. Being the user of a rational decision-making model, in most cases, egoism and self-serving and can be interpreted only in the sense of perseverance (one of the beliefs present):</p> <p><i>“We focus, primarily, on the 12 chapters which are not opened. We presented to all ministries and the Parliament our intention to expedite the negotiations. I asked the ministries to draft laws. I had discussions with the MP’s from the Commission of Integration and Presidents of the two Chambers to lobby the Standing Bureaus, in the specialized committees, so that the projects should be promoted as a priority” (Ziarul financiar, 18 February, 2002).</i></p>
Closure, coherence and equilibrium	Coherence and equilibrium	<p>This idiosyncratic need is manifested in the Chief Negotiator, Vasile Pușcaș, but the need for closure is not present, due to the flexible negotiation style adopted, and his sanguine temperament:</p> <p><i>“Exactly this was the purpose of our meeting, because we asked on the one hand, an activity much more insistently correlated with environmental policies in relation to EU policies and, on the other hand, we requested that the work be given a much greater concreteness, more pragmatism and come up with concrete programs and projects to be useful to the activities in the field of environment” (George Nuță, “Cronica sonoră”, Radio România Actualități, 19 February, 2002, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).</i></p>
Cooperation	Future interactions	<p>Refers to future actions, with a defined or undefined time horizon, future interactions being marked by the specificity of action negotiating and preparing position papers, which means cooperation with working groups and line ministries:</p> <p><i>“In terms of Social policies chapter, Romania will elaborate, by the end of 2002, a new labour code, which will implement the Community provisions in the field [...] along with the continuation of structural reforms in health, the Government’s priority list for the first half of 2002 also includes adopting the Law regarding equal opportunities between men and women, the Union Law and the Law on insurance against accidents at the workplace or occupational diseases” (Alina Mihaela Dima, “Sub semnul integrării: Extinderea UE, ultima sută de metri sau ultima șansă?”, Piața financiară, March, 2002, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).</i></p>

Cooperation	Orientation of social value	<p>It refers to the <i>social benefits</i> of the negotiation process on Romanian society, economic, social, institutional modernization and transformation, being often referred to by the Chief Negotiator, Vasile Pușcaș:</p> <p>“To these imperatives Romania answered by a presentation regarding the <i>structural transformation in the Romanian society</i> both in <i>economic</i> terms, but also <i>social, legal, institutional</i>; and, of course, I have had very interesting <i>discussions</i> both with the <i>MP’s</i> present and <i>officials from other countries</i>, but also with <i>German officials</i> and especially with very valuable experts, who were invited by the German Foundation to present various pragmatic topics on this subject” (Mădălina Andronescu, “<i>Seminarul privind viitorul UE</i>”, Radio România Actualități, 10 March, 2002, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).</p>
	Common orientations	<p>The entire negotiation process is based on the win-win principle, so common interests are present:</p> <p>“The central message of the organizers of this meeting was that the Member States and candidate countries, those who are in the process of negotiating with the European Union should be create a <i>partnership for sustained development, for prosperity increase in the current and future EU area</i>. For this, three concepts were discussed: <i>convergence, economic and social cohesion and competitiveness</i>” (Mădălina Andronescu, “<i>Seminarul privind viitorul UE</i>”, Radio România Actualități, 10 March, 2002, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).</p>
Responsibility	Responsibility	<p>It is one of the Chief Negotiator beliefs and is frequently found at motivation level:</p> <p>“So, I would insist more on the quality of these chapters and on the fact that they <i>were opened, which means that basically we have taken this step to enter the acquis, to apply it in Romanian legislation, but also in everyday life or in the real economy</i>” (Mariana Tomescu Vilceanu, “<i>24 de ore</i>”, Radio România Actualități, correspondence from Brussels, 21 March, 2002, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).</p>

If we consider the classification of reasons made by Suefeld, Cross, and Stewart<sup>28</sup>, which consists of: the reason of power, the reason of affiliation and the reason of accomplishment, in the case of the Chief Negotiator Vasile Pușcaș (as we mentioned in the previous table), the reasons of accomplishment and self-overcoming are at the basis of the actions carried out<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> Peter Suefeld, P., Ryan Cross, Michael Stewart, *op.cit.*, 2009, p. 10

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*

*Emotional Idiosyncrasies*

A new category of idiosyncrasies has been gaining ground, also thanks to the increasing influence of psychological methods in the study of foreign policy decisions. Knowing this group of idiosyncrasies is the most important, as these items are related to temperament and the unconscious (this sum of emotions) and it manifests itself in cases where personal benefits for the decision-maker may appear, in the sense of professional capital, prestige, recognition, rewards, self-realization, etc. And to illustrate and analyse this category of idiosyncrasies we have chosen the form of the schematic table:

**Table 8: The Emotional Idiosyncrasies of Chief Negotiator**

<b>Emotional idiosyncrasies</b>	<b>Example</b>
Positive emotions	Positive status, cooperation and motivation lead to successful negotiation actions. These elements are present in the Chief Negotiator, Vasile Pușcaș:  “I <i>would like</i> to tell you that I have really a <i>joy</i> because several key elements have been sustained, namely that regional policy and implementation of regional development policies in Romania will be in line with the EU objectives” (Victoria Stângescu, “Cum comentați actualitatea politică?”, <i>Radio România Actualități</i> , 14 October, 2003, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).
Negative emotions  Anger	Much less, but still present are negative emotions present in speeches of the Chief Negotiator:  “But I was also <i>saddened and hurt</i> especially by the moment when the intervention was made. <i>Why now?</i> Of course, it was known that Romania should be given the last evaluation, in the Parliament of France, for NATO accession [...] <i>And why Romania?</i> Because in Romania there is a <i>very hectic atmosphere</i> : we are in pre-election campaign. What <i>bothered me very much</i> —as Chief Negotiator for integration—was that Mr Oostlander said he wanted to create shock. And he was successful, indeed—through discussions in our country, such as they were: voices were <i>agitated, irrational voices</i> , voices that have found something to do—so a <i>very diverse attitude</i> . I saddens me—once again I say it—that these stereotypes of the 90s still find echoes [...] this why I said that <i>I do not feel comfortable</i> with the motion proposed by Mr Oostlander: the proposal to suspend negotiations has generated very radical debates” (Ilie Călin, “Stereotipii despre România anilor ’90”, <i>Adevărul de Cluj</i> , 10 February, 2004, interview with Vasile Pușcaș).

Psychological approaches to the foreign policy decision-making process involved psychological profiling according to the “classical patterns”, often used in clinical psychology. Identifying emotional idiosyncrasies represents a support and an indication of an avant-garde direction in the analysis of the decision-making process. A retrospective identification of these idiosyncrasies will help prospect the future actions of the decision-maker, therefore the process of identifying idiosyncrasies is set to achieve the “classic” value of a psychological profile.

As we mentioned at the beginning of the emotional idiosyncrasies analysis, these are the newest class of idiosyncrasies. Their importance is significant and will increase with more frequent use of psychological approaches in the analysis of foreign policy decision-making. In the case analysed we presented a *leader* in whom we found *positive and negative emotions*, who *reacts* to external influences and is prone to *learning, collaboration and transformation*.

## 5. Conclusions

Following the analysis of the EU accession negotiations at the individual level (Chief Negotiator, Vasile Puşcaş, period 2000-2004), we have noticed the following:

- All four categories of *idiosyncrasies* have acted in the analysed case.
- In the category of *cognitive idiosyncrasies* the following categories were identified: framing, anchoring and availability, utility, perceptual/cognitive frameworks, perception of task, cognitive consistency, idiosyncrasies related to cognitive content, to the cognitive process, evoked set, conceptual complexity, integrative complexity, idiosyncrasies of the verbal style (through *qualifiers, first person personal pronoun, explanations, attributors, adverbial intensifiers and direct references*), presentation manner of events (explanatory optimistic style).
- Also there were identified *idiosyncrasies of social perception*, centred on the *self and others: transparency (self-centred) perspective approach (self-centred), prioritizing their own interests (centred on others), knowledge of the other party (centred on others)*.
- In the *motivational idiosyncrasies* category, several categories were identified: self-realization (*self-overcoming and the use of available resources to achieve the objectives set out*), *coherence and balance, cooperation (future interactions, social value orientation, common orientations)* and responsibility.
- From the *emotional idiosyncrasies* there were identified both *positive emotions* (joy, desire, hope, etc.) and *negative emotions* (sadness, distress, anger, and so on).
- By listing all the categories of idiosyncrasies identified in the decisional process of Romania's accession to the European Union at the individual level, we have answered to the first interrogation of the research: *yes, there are idiosyncrasies which have influenced the decisional process of Romania's accession to the European Union*.
- The second interrogation of the research: *Are these idiosyncrasies characteristic only for the decision-making process of Romania's accession to the European Union? We will answer yes, they are specific to the Negotiator Vasile Puşcaş who was involved in the decision-making process of Romania's accession to the European Union*. To support these statements, we will state that not all of the categories listed under each type of idiosyncrasy have been identified. This is explained by the presence of the Chief Negotiator in this decision-making process. From the psychological point of view, we cannot say that exactly these idiosyncrasies will manifest themselves in another decision-making process that would involve Vasile Puşcaş, because according to the international and internal context, the action of other subjective, personal factors and other idiosyncrasies will take shape (more, less, or exactly the same

may appear). In this fact lies the novelty of psychological approaches to the foreign policy decision-making process at the individual level; the fact that every time, any situation must be addressed in a complex way, and that we must leave room for interpretation for each situation and for personal variables.

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