Evaluating Political Regime through Discourse Measurement of Political Culture: The Case of the Republic of Armenia

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The article proposes to evaluate the level of political culture and the nature of current political regime through political discourse. The article argues that the suggested methodology for measuring political culture through the study of political discourse (the discourse measurement of political culture, DMPC) can be an effective and alternative method in the multitude of quantitative methods used in political science. The methodology of discourse measurement of political culture proposes to separate the semantic units in discourse, i.e. words, word combinations, expressions, etc., which can be important in the evaluation of political regimes. The method has been used for the measurement of political culture and evaluation of political regime type in Armenia. The research conducted by the DMPC method proves that Armenia has a semi-authoritarian regime that stands closer to semi-democratic regime. However, it is still characterized by a non-constructive multilateral discourse or its imitation, and the elements of weak participatory political culture continue to dominate politics.

Keywords
political culture, political discourse, political regime, DMPC method, post-Soviet transformation

Introduction

The new challenges in social and political processes stemmed from various internal and external factors, as well as the flawed democratic discourse practiced by modern autocracies requires the development of new and more effective tools for the evaluation of political culture and political regime. The studies on this issue prove that traditional approaches to the evaluation and classification of political culture and political regime can not fully comply with new realities due to rapid

development of new world order and transformations in social and political systems[1].

Whereas the study of political culture for addressing the problems of democracy consolidation and development has been applied since the 1980s, it is only recently used for the purpose of political regime evaluation and classification. Works on the study of regimes through political discourse address not only authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, but also democratic ones, including some post-Soviet transformation states. Still, there is no complex study on the regimes of post-Soviet states based on this method. Thus, in terms of these studies the general and specific features of this group of countries have not been disclosed yet[2].

A complex study on the regimes of post-Soviet states should consider both the results of researches based on traditional methods as the basis for comparative studies and the past experience. The latter reveals that while post-Soviet transformation is subjected to a number of general principles of transitology, it has some essential features the ignorance of which brings forth fundamental inaccuracies and flaws both when studying this phenomenon and when making forecasts and adjustments on the ongoing developments[3].

The study of regime peculiarities through political discourse is explicitly related to political culture since the latter includes political beliefs and relations that are linked to state institutions. Political relations include links between political community, political regime and political actors[4]. Thus, the study of discourse features of political actors can help to reveal the peculiarities of political regimes and turn to the basis for their classification.

Martinez Ramos made a comparative discourse analysis of populism and civic culture in Latin American states concluding that the

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[1] **Torosyan T.,** Hasarakakan hamakargi hetkhorhrdayin transphormatsia, Yerevan, HH GAA "Gitutyun" hratarakchutyun, 2006 (in Armenian)**.**
[2] **Ordukhanyan E.,** Assessing the Regimes of Post-Soviet Transformation Countries through Political Discourse: Possibilites and Challenges, Armenian Journal of Political Science, 2015, 2, 55-72.
[3] Ibid.
[4] **Norris P.,** Introduction: The Growth of Critical Citizens, *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Government,* Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 1-27.

study of political discourse practiced in those countries may enable to distinguish features that characterize both the existing political culture and the political regime[5].

Among the studies on political regimes, of particular importance is the work "Totalitarian and authoritarian discourses: A Global and Timeless Phenomenon?" which offers an analysis of authoritarian and totalitarian discourses and their aftermath. The study mostly focuses on communist discourse including the cases of former East Germany, former Yugoslavia, Romania, Lithuania, China, North Korea, the Philippines, Burma, Cuba and Tunisia. The objects of comparison are past and present discourses. The study reveals the universal characteristics of totalitarian and authoritarian discourses over space and time[6].

Totalitarian discourse is based on paternalism, declamation, and manipulative design of political setting. It generally conveys a unilateral "top to bottom" semantics, which provokes a rapturous response of the audience, reducing the communication format to a monologue. Key words of totalitarian discourse function as signals. This type of discourse poses an additional threat shaping mass totalitarian mentality[7].

Maria Vázquez Semadeni defines political culture "as a practice of a set of discourses and symbols through which individuals or political groups develop their own attitude towards the power, form their political demands turning them into the agenda"[8]. This, in its turn, determines the mode of political regime.

Studying the Romanian experience of transition from totalitarian to informative discourse, Luminita Rosca concludes that in Romanian

[5] **Martinez Ramos J.,** Populism and Civic Culture: Insights from Latin America, 2016, https://usal.academia.edu/juliantropo, (07.11.2017).
[6] *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Discourses*: A Global and Timeless Phenomenon? (ed. by Lutgard Lams, Geert Crauwels, and Henrieta Anisoara Serban), Peter Lang AG, 2013, 349 p.
[7] **Gronskaya N., Zusman V.G., Batishcheva T. S.** Totalitarian Language: Reflections of Power (Russian, German, Italian Case Studies), *Paola B. Helzel and Arthur J. Katolo (eds.), Autorità e crisi dei poteri,* Padova: cedam, 2012, pp. 277–290, p. 288, https://www.hse.ru/mirror/pubs/lib/data/access/ram/ticket/48/15162954439356542a549843a8f82275d3dc089930/text.pdf, (17.01.2017).
[8] **Vázquez Semadeni M. E.,** La formación de una cultura política republicana: El debate público sobre la masonería. México, 1821-1830. Serie Historia Moderna y Contemporánea/Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, núm. 54. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México/El Colegio de Michoacán, 2010.

media post-totalitarian discourse is a hybrid display of propaganda and information, where the "remnants" of the post-Soviet period are still present, and at the same time attempts are made to fit this within the liberal media[9].

To reveal the discursive features of political regimes, one should consider the three dimensions of political culture – cognitive, affective, and evaluative. Cognitive dimension implies the knowledge on political objects, i.e. how the whole political system works, who are its leaders, and what are the current political problems. Affective elements include affection, rejection, engagement and other feelings towards the political objects. In other words, it refers to the alienation from the political system or to a positive self-identification with that system as a single whole. Evaluative elements include judgments and opinions on political objects[10]. All this is shaped in political behavior and thus characterizes the political regime in which the above-mentioned elements become acceptable for one another and applicable in political process.

The analysis of totalitarian discourse is largely based on the study of linguistic peculiarities used in totalitarian regimes which mainly includes the fascist, nationalist-socialist (nazi) and military-bourgeois (communist) regimes. In this respect, of particular importance is Beatrice Turpin's research on totalitarian discourse, in which the author identifies the main features typical to that type of discourse:

- Totalitarian discourse absorbs all sources of information,
- It absorbs both public and private spheres,
- It is a "terrible supremacy",[11]
- It is associated with violence and death; "it smells of blood",[12]
- It is anti-historical and completely ideological,
- There is no individual in this language, the individual is a "livestock",[13]

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[9] **Rosca L.**, From the Totalitarian Language to the Informative Discourse. A Romanian Media Discourse Analysis During '90s., *Revista română de sociologie*, *serie nouă*, anul XXIV, 1–2, 2013, 21–39.
[10] **Vujčić V.,** Dimenzije političke kulture, *Politička misao: časopis za politologiju*, 1998, **35**, 1, Ožujak, 119-137.
[11] **Klemperer V.,** LTI, la langue du Troisième Reich. Carnets d'un philologue. Paris, 1996, p. 34.
[12] Ibid.

- It is mysterious[14].

The above-mentioned characteristics give a full picture of totalitarian discourse as a tool used by the government to suppress and subdue the people.

According to Jean Peytard, totalitarian discourse leads to the mechanization of mind[15].

Le Bon notes that authoritarian discourse is also distinguished by its exceptional verbal features of mobilizing the crowd using the following factors in that process – persistence, repetition, simplification, standardization, and emotionalism[16]. These successive phases of verbal process lead the totalitarian ideology towards the recipient's consciousness and impose an appropriate political behavior.

A carefully selected word or frequently repeated formulas have a powerful force[17]. The power of words is so great that correctly chosen terms are enough to make the most disgusting things acceptable. In this case, even the logics and arguments are powerless against some words and formulas[18].

Authoritarian discourse suppresses dialectics and contradictions. Only one voice should be heard. Totalitarianism eliminates any other party and opposition[19]. The negative pathos has its own place and role in totalitarian discourse. Regardless of its grounds, totalitarian discourse can be understood as domination, which contradicts a social dialogue, rejecting all other values besides those of its own. All arguments are regarded as signs of doubt"[20]. Totalitarian discourse does not look for any argument. It presents opinions as facts pretending that there is no need for them, since everything is quite obvious. In 1940-1990s, the discourse analysis of the leaders of some countries, i.e. the so-called "People's

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[13] **Klemperer V.,** Op. cit., p. 49.

[14] **Turpin B.,** Le langage totalitaire au prisme de l'analyse de discours, Actes du Colloque *Miroir,* 2012, p. 245.

[15] **Peytard J.,** Mikhaïl Bakhtine : dialogisme et analyse du discours, Paris, Bertrand-Lacoste, 1995.

[16] **Le Bon G.,** Psychologie des foules*,* Paris, Alcan, 1895, p. 73.

[17] **Turpin B.,** Op. cit.

[18] **Le Bon G.,** Op. cit., pp. 60-62.

[19] **Turpin B.,** Op. cit.

[20] **Perelman Ch., Obrechts-Tyteca L.,** La nouvelle rhétorique, Traité de l'argumentation, Bruxelles : Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 1988, p. 635.

Democracies", the Soviet Union, North Korea and Cuba, have shown their thematic and stylistic homogeneity, the most typical feature of which is the existence of some emotional content. These discourses contain propaganda on existing regime and anti-propaganda against other regimes[21]. According to A. Kacprzak, totalitarian ideologies, drawing upon the conflict, are steadily inclined towards the use of negative pathos expressed in separate linguistic means[22].

Analyzing the Soviet discourse, Merinov notes that totalitarian discourse may contain pseudo-democratic elements. Based on the example of the USSR, the researcher points out that the democratic concepts the name of this state contains, ie. council, socialism, republic, union, completely contradict democracy. Many state institutions, being in fact democratic concepts, such as trade union, election, collective economy, etc. did not correspond to their true meaning as well. They were fake, veiled the reality, and thus the political discourse characterizing these notions was pseudo-democratic. For instance, the slogans "land to the peasant, plant to the laborer" did not correspond to reality, as the peasant was not a landlord; the land was public property just like the plant. The laborers and peasants were deprived of any influence on economic processes. The elections were turned into a voting for a single candidate. The protests were directed exclusively to the defense and mass support of the established political system, to the loyalty and unity between the people and the party. The gap between speech and reality was so deep that in some cases there was a need to clarify the concepts[23].

According to H. Arendt, totalitarianism does not seek to impose a dictatorship over the people, but to establish a system in which people are absolutely unnecessary. Complete power can be achieved and then

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[21] **Tappolet Ch**., Émotions et valeurs, *Collection «Philosophie morale»,* Paris, 2000.

[22] **Kacprzak A.,** Le pathos négatif en tant que trait du discours politique totalitaire, *Argumentation et Analyse du Discours* [En ligne], 10, 2013, mis en ligne le 10 avril 2013, consulté le 21 novembre 2017, http://aad.revues.org/1427 ; DOI : 10.4000/aad.1427, (14.12.2017).

[23] **Merinov V.,** Psevdodemokraticheskaya leksika v sovetskom totalitarnom (politicheskom) diskurse, *Sovremnnii diskurs-analiz,* 14, 2016, http://www.discourseanalysis.org/ada14/st94.shtml*,* (04.11.2017), (in Russian).

maintained only in the world of conventional reflexes, i.e. in the world of puppets where people are deprived of the minimal signs of expression of will[24].

Words specific to totalitarian discourse generally have the meaning of eternity. Never, forever eternal, unchanging, unchangeable, absolute, untouchable, irrevocable, irresistible, irreversible, non-destructive, incoherent, glorious, etc. are words common to totalitarian lexicon[25].

All the words above with their semantic meaning fit into the context of the totalitarian formula suggested by Mussolini: "Everything inside the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state"[26].

Authoritarian regimes mostly apply flawed multilateral discourse or its imitation using the lexicon typical to both totalitarianism and democracy. The difference is that "democratic discourse" practiced by the authoritarian regime is largely incompatible with political practice,[27] and emotional discourse is used to keep people under control. The state often creates an image of outer enemy as an external threat to the stateness, against whom the people's consolidation becomes an important guarantee for the maintenance and continuity of the current regime. All these influences are mediated by political discourse.

The words commonly used in authoritarian and democratic discourses almost coincide to their semantics. Meanwhile, it should be noted that the discourse used in authoritarian regimes mostly differs from political practice, i.e. political speech and practice are not generally identical.

If totalitarian discourse is characterized by monologue full of pathos and emotionalism in which the addressee of discourse (the people) is a purely affected object and can not enter into a real dialogue and, moreover, into contradiction to official discourse, authoritarian discourse generally has flawed multilateral or imitative nature, in which discourse

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[24] **Arendt H.,** Istoki totalitarizma, Moskva, TsentrKom, 1996, s. 150 (in Russian).
[25] **Dámaso F.,** "Heavyweight" Words in the Totalitarian Lexicon.
http://cubademocraciayvida.org/web/print.asp?artID=32492, (11.11.2017).
[26] **Mussolini B.,** All within the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state,
https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/benito_mussolini_109829.
[27] **Ordukhanyan E.,** Op. cit.

and political practice differ from each other. As to democratic discourse, it largely corresponds to political practice and it is based on the desire to coordinate different political stances, which implies a genuine multilateral consensus.

The above-mentioned theories and cases of different countries show that the traditional approaches on the evaluation and classification of political culture and regimes are largely based on sociological methods, i.e. surveys, interviews, etc. However, the significant influence of competition regarding the formation of a new world order on social processes, as well as the frequent use of flawed democratic discourse practiced by modern authoritarian regimes requires the improvement of the mechanisms for political regime evaluation to provide more accurate results. Traditional methods can not fully meet the requirements of the current situation. Thus, there is a need to develop new, alternative approaches to observe current socio-political phenomena and processes on a broader spectrum, based, in particular, on the study of political culture. The discourse measurement of political culture may serve for this purpose since discourse is the element that exists in every political culture.

The discourse measurement of political culture (DMPC method)

The article proposes to use the DMPC method for the evaluation of political culture. It is a quantitative method that enables to evaluate the dominant elements of political culture through detection and analysis of the features of political discourse, and regarding them in the context of political regime to define the type of that regime.

The discourse analysis of political culture includes the elements of political consciousness, political behavior and functioning of political institutions.

The accuracy of the method has been proved by comparing it with the results of political regime evaluation conducted by other methods.

Political texts circulated by the most important representative state institutions within a certain period of time (preferably at least one year) including key political processes (eg, elections) constitute the

empirical basis of the DMPC method. Political texts of the president, the representatives of the parliament (ruling and opposition), the pre-election campaign, as well as civil society may become the object of political discourse as a single whole of "government-opposition-society" internal multilateral discourse.

The measurement of political culture through discourse implies the use of several successive steps, dividing the whole process of research into five phases:

- The first phase requires the collection of empirical data (political texts)
- The second phase requires the formation of cognitive map through the study of relevant texts[28]
- The third phase requires the analysis of cognitive map by the method of critical discourse analysis (CDA)[29]
- In the fourth phase the results obtained, already having been expressed numerically, are measured by the DMPC formula
- In the fifth phase (optional, on a voluntary basis), the reliability of measurement results, if necessary, can be checked by comparing them with internationally recognized indexes of political regimes (eg, Freedom House[30], EIU Democracy Index[31]).

The DMPC method identifies five major semantic elements of political discourse as variables for quantitative measurement:

V_1(Tolerance): Within the framework of this variable, it is necessary to find out the extent to which the discourse encourages moderate, balanced and tolerant relationship between the citizens and political forces, emphasizes the supremacy and excellence of ruling power, the irreplaceability of political leader. The variable is evaluated in {0;1} range.

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[28] **Ordukhanyan E.,** Politicheskiy diskurs kak sredstvo politicheskoy kommunikatsii/philosophiya, politika, kul'tura, Progress-Traditsiya, Moskva, 2011, pp. 222-236.
[29] **Fairclough N., Wodak R.,** Critical discourse analysis. Glasgow University Media Group, 1980; **T. A. van Dijk** (ed.), Discourse Studies. More Bad News, London, Routledge A Multidisciplinary Introduction, 2, 1980; **Kegan Paul**. Discourse as Social Interaction Glasgow University Media Group, 1982, pp. 258-284.
[30] Freedom House, https://freedomhouse.org/.
[31] EIU Democracy Index, https://www.eiu.com/topic/democracy-index.

V2 (Support to political system): Within the framework of this variable, it is necessary to find out the extent to which or by whom political system, implemented policy, democratic value system is encouraged and justified in discourse, the extent to which the discourse restricts the aspirations of other political forces towards the political power. The variable is evaluated in {0;1} range.

V3 (Political participation): Within the framework of this variable, it is necessary to find out the extent to which and by whom the citizens are encouraged to participate in political life, the form of participation is encouraged in discourse (positive or negative). The variable is evaluated in {0;1} range.

V4 (Interaction): Within the framework of this variable, it is necessary to clarify the diversity of discourse participants, the nature of discourse (monologue or dialogue, unilateral, multilateral or flawed multilateral, productive or non-productive). The variable is evaluated in {0;1} range.

V5 (Constructivism and Argumentation): Within the framework of this variable, it is necessary to clarify the extent to which the discourse is constructive or destructive, whether the discourse is contentious or not, whether it is aimed at deepening the conflict or restraining it. It is necessary to clarify the extent to which the discourse is substantiated, based on real facts, the extent to which the opinions are presented as facts, whether they correspond to reality, the extent to which the discourse is influenced by pathos and populism. The variable is evaluated in {0;1} range.

The research on a series of studies regarding the evaluation of political regimes based on political discourse[32] has allowed to formulate

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[32] **Jie Lu, Tianjian Shi.,** The Battle of Ideas and Discourses before Democratic Transition: Different Democratic Conceptions in Authoritarian China, *International Political Science Review*, January 2015, **36**, 1, 20-41; **Johnson David W. and Johnson Roger T.,** Civil Political Discourse In A Democracy: The Contribution of Psychology, *Peace & Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 2000, **6**, 4, 291-317; **Wilson S.,** A Review of Authoritarian Rule of Law: Legislation, Discourse and Legitimacy in Singapore by Jothie Rajah, *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, 21, 1, 2014, 297-301; **Lewis D.,** Civil Society and the Authoritarian State: Cooperation, Contestation and Discourse, *Journal of Civil Society*, 2013, **9**, 3, 325-340; **Lams L., Crauwels G., Şerban H.,** Totalitarian and Authoritarian Discourses: A Global and Timeless Phenomenon? Oxford, Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt am

three groups of discourse content and political regime type in compliance:

- Political discourse is totalitarian and implies a patriarchal and a subject political culture (totalitarian regime) when unilateral, monological, without an interaction and coercive
- Political discourse is authoritarian and implies a flawed participatory or a subject political culture (authoritarian regime) when based on flawed pluralism and interaction, in which the applied policy differs from presented discourse
- Political discourse is democratic and implies a civic and participatory political culture (democratic regime) when based on pluralism and constructivism, and accompanied by multilateral communication guaranteeing the compliance between applied policy and political discourse[33]

Based on this classification, the three groups above, in their turn, have been divided into five subgroups to make a more specific classification of political regimes and to increase the accuracy of evaluation within the scope of DMPC method.

According to the DMPC method, political regime is evaluated in 0-5 point scale. The closer the indicator is to 5, the more democratic is the regime and there exists a participatory and civic culture.

Numerical ranges corresponding to the above-mentioned five subgroups of the regimes are as follows:

The range $\{0<‹V≤1\}$ – an absolute unilateral discourse, a dominant patriarchal and a subject political culture, totalitarian regime,

The range $\{1<V≤2\}$ – a unilateral or flawed multilateral discourse, a dominant subject political culture, stable authoritarian regime,

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Main, New York, Wien, 2014, 349 p.; **Hall S.,** Can Authoritarian Regimes Learn? The cases of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine, University of Birmingham, 2014, http://etheses.bham.ac.uk/5502/;10.12.2017; Korovkova O., "Svoi chuzhie" v dorevolyutsionnom politicheskom diskurse bol'shevikov i sovetskom totalitarnom diskurse, *Politicheskaya lingvistika*, 4, 2011, http://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/svoi-chuzhie-v-dorevolyutsionnom-politicheskom-diskurse-bolshevikov-i-sovetskom-totalitarnom-diskurse#ixzz3XZT0GPsy, (02.11.2017).

[33] **Ordukhanyan E.,** Op. cit.

The range $\{2<\mathbf{V}{\leq}3\}$ – weak (non-constructive, non-productive) multilateral discourse (or imitation of multilateral discourse), a subject and weak (non-productive) participatory political culture, semi-authoritarian or hybrid regime,

The range $\{3<\mathbf{V}{\leq}4\}$ – full-fledged multilateral discourse, participatory and civic culture, semi-democratic regime,

The range $\{4<\mathbf{V}{\leq}5\}$ – stable, constructive and productive multilateral discourse, stable civic culture, consolidated democratic regime

The proposed classification of political regimes in five groups is conditioned by the general logic of regime classification applied in international practice and literature[34]. For instance, Freedom House classifies political regimes in five groups: stable authoritarian regime, semi-authoritarian regime, transitional government or hybrid regime, semi-stable democracy and stable democracy[35]. In this classification, totalitarian regime is not regarded as a separate type of regime whereas its characteristics differ from that of the authoritarian regime. Thus, totalitarian regime has been included in the proposed classification as a separate political regime. At the same time, as semi-authoritarian regime and transitional government or hybrid regime are varieties of semi-authoritarian political regime, the latter is used instead of these two to maintain the proportional division of political regimes.

For all five variables, the choice of the range 0 to 1 is conditioned by the principle of proportionality with 0 to 5 point scale of political regime evaluation. In empirical research, the principle of selecting parity units of equal value for variables is applied in international practice for the purpose of regime evaluation, particularly regarding the Democracy Index of Freedom House[36]. However, it is not ruled out that after long

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[34] **Ishiyama John T., Breuning M.,** 21st Century Political Science. A Reference Handbook, Sage Pub., 2011; **Hix S., Whiting M.,** Introduction to Political Science, University of London 2012; **Heywood A.,** Politics, Fourth edition, Macmillan Publishers 2013; The Oxford Handbook of Political Science, Edited by **Robert E. Goodin**, 2011; **James A. Medeiros, Robert L. Cord, Michael G. Roskin**, Political Science: An Introduction, Kindle Edition, 2013.
[35] Freedom House, https://freedomhouse.org/.
[36] Freedom House, Nations in Transit Ratings and Averaged Scores, Democracy Score, https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/2017/armenia, (18.12.2017).

term experiment the equal range of five variables defined by the DMPC method may be revised, if necessary.

In the methodology of discourse measurement of political culture, the subgroup of political culture and political regime is determined by the proportionality of the number of semantic units (words, word combinations, sentences) used in a positive and negative sense with regard to tolerance, support to political system, political participation, interaction, constructivism and argumentation and the general number of units of political discourse.

The empirical basis of the research, i.e. political texts should be analyzed by the method of CDA. In a given discourse, a set of semantic units of language is identified for each of the five variables out of which are separated those used in a positive and negative sense. Further, for each variable, it is necessary to find out the part of the total units positive semantic units constitute.

$$V_i = PSU_i/GSU_i, \text{ in which } i = \{1, 2, 3, 4, 5\},$$

PSU is the number of positive semantic units of language; GSU is the number of general semantic units of language. The total index of a particular discourse is determined by the formula below:

$$V = V_1 + V_2 + \ldots + V_5 = \sum_{i=1}^{5} V_i \; .$$

The use of DMPC method for political regime evaluation in Armenia

Within the post-Soviet transformation, the development of social and political systems of the former Soviet states takes place in diverse, multi-vectoral ways.

T. Torosyan and H. Sukiasyan distinguish three groups of post-Soviet states. The first group includes the post-Soviet states that have already formed strong democracies. The second "waiting group" is composed of countries still facing civilization and integration choice. The third group is called tough authoritarian or totalitarian group[37].
For the countries in the first and third group, post-Soviet transformation is considered to be completed with the second stage. The third stage can

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[37]**Torosyan T., Sukiasyan H**., Three Stages, Three Groups and Three Paradigms of Post-Soviet Transformation, 2014, 1, 51-61.

be considered only for the countries of the "waiting group" Armenia is also included in[38]. Thus, Armenia is still in the dilemma of political regime adjustment. From this perspective, the discourse measurement of Armenia's political culture becomes an important and urgent problem.

The empirical basis of the research is Armenia's internal political discourse of 2017.The focus is on the discourse of representative political institutions, i.e official speeches, interviews and press conferences of the Republic of Armenia[39]. The research particularly addresses 2017 pre-election discourse of RA National Assembly, the parliamentary discourse of RA National Assembly 6th convocation (transcripts of 2017 parliamentary sessions[40]) – speeches of pro-government and opposition political forces, questions and answers to the government, as well as the discourse of the most famous civil initiatives of 2017 (the students' struggle against the abolition of the Military Deferment Law[41]). The analysis of discourse of civil initiatives is due to the fact that this discourse often turns into agenda for political institutions promoting inter-party interaction and dialogue.

The cognitive map of Armenia's internal political discourse of 2017 has been drawn based on the analysis of the above-mentioned empirical materials:

Table 1

Variable	Number of semantic units of language		
	PSU	NSU	GSU
V_1	50	33	83
V_2	51	56	107
V_3	63	21	84
V_4	54	40	94
V_5	49	145	194

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[38] Ibid

[39] 2017 Speeches, interviews and press conferences ofthe President of RA, http://www.president.am/hy/statements-and-messages/; http://www.president.am/hy/interviews-and-press-conferences/, (24.12.2017).

[40] Transcripts of 2017 paliamentary sessions, http://parliament.am/transcript.php?lang=arm , (25.12.2017).

[41] Tarketum linelu e, https://www.azatutyun.am/a/28870098.html, (15.02.2018), (in Armenian).

The data presented on the map allowed to present internal political discourse in the form of numbers where the five variables have been separately analyzed by the DMPC method.

With regard to **V₁ (tolerance)**, 83 semantic linguistic units have been registered in Armenia's internal political discourse of 2017, 50 of which used in a positive sense, 33-in a negative sense. Thus,

$$V_1 = PSU_1/GSU_1 = 50/83 = 0.6.$$

Figure 1
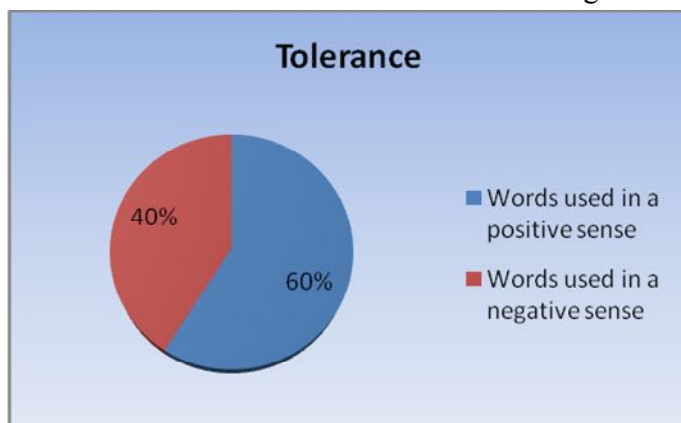
The percentage of positive applications was 0.6%. In internal political discourse, the use of words associated with tolerance in a positive sense has been more than that in a negative one. The discourse has mostly encouraged a more balanced attitude between the government, opposition, citizens and political forces, though some elements of intolerance mostly against the government's policy have also been detected. Elements of intolerance have also been observed in debates between parliamentarians, sometimes accompanied by physical force. Parliamentary discourse also included many critical speeches by MP's from the opposition parties, which, however, largely maintained tolerance towards political opponents. In some instances, the discourse of the authorities or government supporters displayed linguistic elements about the exclusivity, excellence, infallibility, truthfulness and indispensability of the country's leader. The presidential discourse also focused on the

elements of tolerance. Thus, tolerance was mostly encouraged in the internal Armenian political discourse of 2017.

With regard to **V2 (support to political system)**, 107 semantic units have been registered in 2017 internal political discourse, 51 of which used in a positive sense, 56-in a negative sense. Thus,

$$V_2 = 51/107 = 0,48.$$

Figure 2
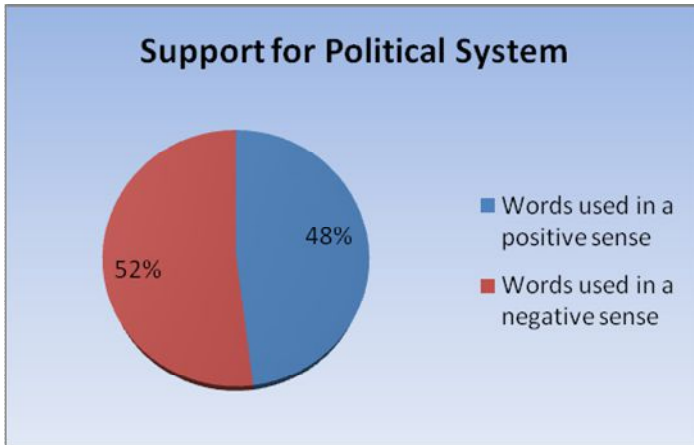
Positive applications made up 0.48% of the total. In internal political discourse, the use of semantic linguistic units on the effectiveness of political system in negative and positive sense was almost equal. Positive elements have been mostly observed in the discourse of authorities, where the transition to a new system of government was interpreted exclusively in a positive light. At the same time, problematic, dubious, skeptic verbal manifestations of parliamentary system of government have been observed in the discourse of parliamentary opposition. However, there was no speech on a complete rejection or overthrow of that system. The internal political discourse encouraged democratic value system, modernization of state institutions, primarily focusing on the priorities of the armed forces in terms of raising its effectiveness. In presidential discourse, verbal manifestations in support to the political system and the new system of government were introduced exclusively in a positive light. Meanwhile, it should be noted that the discourse of government restricted the

aspirations of other political forces regarding the proliferation of intolerance towards the system. As a result, negative verbal expressions have slightly exceeded the positive ones.

With regard to **V₃ (political participation)**, 84 semantic units have been registered in 2017 internal political discourse, 63 of which used in a positive sense, 21-in a negative sense. Thus,

$$V_3 = 63/84 = 0,75.$$

Figure 3
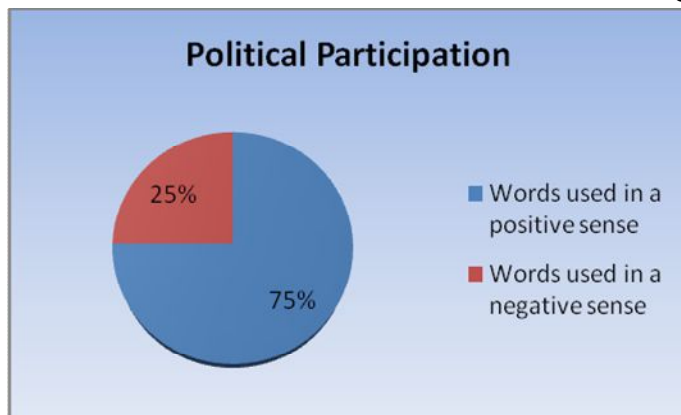
Participation of citizens was one of the key elements in internal political discourse. Participation to political life and political processes was largely encouraged by the representatives of the opposition and civil society, mostly in NA pre-election campaign of 2017 and during some acts and protests of civil disobedience. Regardless of numerous criticisms, extremist manifestations were not observed in pre-election discourse. In that period, the discourse of the opposition encouraged the activity of citizens in elections as an important precondition for the positive changes in political life. The number of voters in 2017 parliamentary elections was 60.93%[42] compared to the number of citizens included in the voter lists, in part due to the intensity of the pre-election discourse of political forces. During the post-election period, the discourse of ruling power included some verbal elements directed to restrain citizens' participation in various political acts, in the name of

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[42] Central Electoral Commission of RA, http://www.elections.am/parliamentary/.

non-violating the established legal procedures, which provoked a negative reaction of protesters. The presidential discourse contained not many verbal implications with regard to political participation. In this respect, the discourse can be characterized as neutral. The discourse directed to the promotion of political participation prevailed over the others also due to complex socioeconomic situation in the country.

With regard to **V4 (interaction)**, 94 semantic linguistic units have been registered in the internal political discourse of 2017, 54 of which used in a positive sense, 40-in a negative sense. Thus,

$$V_4 = 54/94 = 0.57.$$

Figure 4
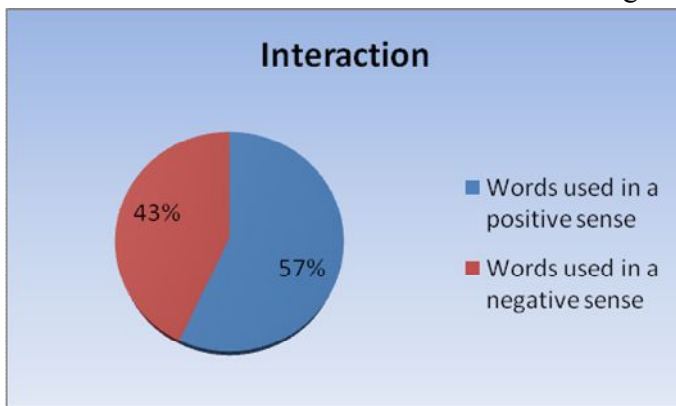
The internal political discourse has attracted many representatives from the government, the opposition and the civil society. Thus, the discourse formally provided the diversity of discourse participants. The discourse included both monologues and dialogues. The discourse of high-ranking officials, in particular the presidential discourse, was largely a monologue, also due to procedural peculiarities. In presidential discourse, the dialogues were mostly in form of interviews. The discourse of the president addressed to the citizens was mediated by the media. As to the dialogue with the representatives of the opposition, the president has been more passive than active. This is also due to the peculiarities of president's office, which does not envisage mandatory dialogues with the representatives of other political forces unlike the government representatives, who, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly, "... in the last sitting on each Wednesday of the four-

day sitting of the regular session answer to Deputies' questions"[43]. This, in itself, implies a mandatory dialogue between the government and the parliament. In addition to the parliamentary questions and answers, where the bilateral discourse was not effective enough (ie, most of the proposals submitted by the members of the opposition to the government were not accepted or, in case of criticism, the latter tried to justify itself or to reject them). The government also entered into dialogue with the representatives of civil society (in particular, with the students struggling against the abolition of the Military Deferment Law). In the aftermath of these bilateral discourses, the demands of protesting students were not met but, instead, they were offered to participate in further discussions of that issue. In general, the discourse of the government was not highly effective in terms of the interaction.

In pre-election discourse, the level of interaction was higher as compared to other political processes. Almost all political forces had meetings with voters from different parts of the country. During these meetings, the representatives of the opposition had more interactive in dialogues with voters, and their discourse was more direct and spontaneous. The representatives of the ruling party used mostly pre-designed texts during the campaigns; the public questions addressed to them were not that critical and the complaints were strictly limited. This created an impression of a flawed multilateral discourse. Nevertheless, the internal political discourse, in terms of its intensity, can be considered more active than passive first of all due to the electoral year. Thus, in internal political discourse, the interaction index was 0.58 on the 0-1 point scale.
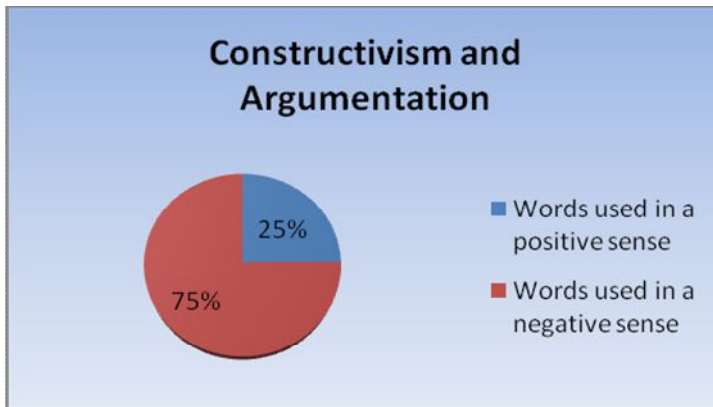
With regard to **V₅ (Constructivism and Argumentation)**, 194 semantic linguistic units have been registered in the internal political discourse of 2017, 49 of which used in a positive sense, 145-in a negative sense. Thus,

$$V_5 = 49/194 = 0.25.$$

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[43] The Constitutional Law of RA, Rules of Procedure of NA, http://parliament.am/parliament.php?id=bylaw&lang=arm, (09.11.2017).

Figure 5

The percentage of words used in a positive sense amounted to 0,25%. Internal political discourse was mostly characterized by contentious elements, which, however, did not lead to extreme political behavior. At the same time, discourse of conflict, mostly used by the representatives of the opposition and civil society, was not aimed at deepening the conflict between the parties and excluding concessions or consensus. It was rather balanced but did not stand out for its effectiveness. Elements of constructivism have been traced both in the discourse of the opposition and that of the pro-government forces according to their position in political field. However, the discursive constructivism has not generally turned into practical constructivism. For instance, the suggestions made by the members of the opposition were mostly rejected, or even if they were adopted in the bills, were later rejected based on voting results. The parliamentary opposition has been often charged with a non-constructive policy by the parliamentary majority. It is important to note that constructivism implies the willingness of all parties involved in that process to achieve common goals. From this point of view, some constructive political behavior in the discourse of the opposition has been rejected mostly by the parliamentary majority. Thus, the pro-government forces are primarily responsible for the failure of constructivism and, to a lesser extent, the opposition, which unlike the government, does not have administrative levers for the implementation of its programs.

Failed attempts of constructive discourse have also been observed between the civic initiatives and the government. Particularly, the attempts of productive interaction between the students struggling against the abolition of the Military Deferment Law, mostly failed.

Thus, weak constructivism in internal political discourse is first of all due to the above-mentioned circumstances. More often the elements of discourse rejecting constructivism have been traced in the discourse of ruling power, which emphasized that all the decisions were made in party office thereby, by means of discourse, reducing the role and importance of the parliament as a representative body and the most important state institution of constructivism. Meanwhile, there was also an exceptional case of the use of constructive parliamentary discourse in November 2017 on signing an agreement with the EU, when the ruling and opposition parties reached a political consensus on the issue.

In terms of argumentation, internal political discourse was characterized by weak and vulnerable elements. In most of the cases, the allegations made by the government, the parliamentary majority and the representatives of the opposition have been more abstract than argumented. Some approaches suggested have not been fully grounded. For instance, often the arguments presented in parliament with regard to the bills have not been stemmed from the interests of broader public, such as the changes of income tax in the Tax Code. There have also been persistent attempts by some government and opposition figures to present their own opinions as facts. The discourse of the opposition was characterized by a highly emphasized criticism on the bills proposed by the ruling power. From this point of view, the amendments regarding the Military Deferment Law raised criticism and disobedience outside the parliament, in particular among the students. These protests were based on a weak argumentation of the need for the proposed amendments to the law. Thus, the views expressed in governmental discourse often did not comply with the actual situation, and did not meet the requirements of a broader public. The internal political discourse was also rich with the elements of populism. The Government justified many of its decisions and laws adopted by its being a parliamentary majority claiming that the majority of the people have trusted them, which according to formal logic does not presupposes an argumented discourse.   Being a political

majority does not always mean being right, and, conversely, being a minority does not always mean to be wrong. The discourse of the opposition has not often been often substantiated as well. It was limited to "criticism for criticism" principle; in some cases being supportive to the parliamentary system of government and then criticizing that system merely stemmed from the fact that it was not the initiative of the opposition but that of the authorities.

Thus, the internal political discourse of 2017 mostly varied from real politics; the dominant opinions of the authorities have been often presented as facts; the discourse was rich in populism which had a strong negative impact on its argumentation. The internal political discourse was mostly devoid of constructivism. As a result, the index of constructivism and argumentation was 0,25 on the 0-1 point scale.

Combining the results of 2017 internal political discourse, the following picture can be drawn:

Figure 7
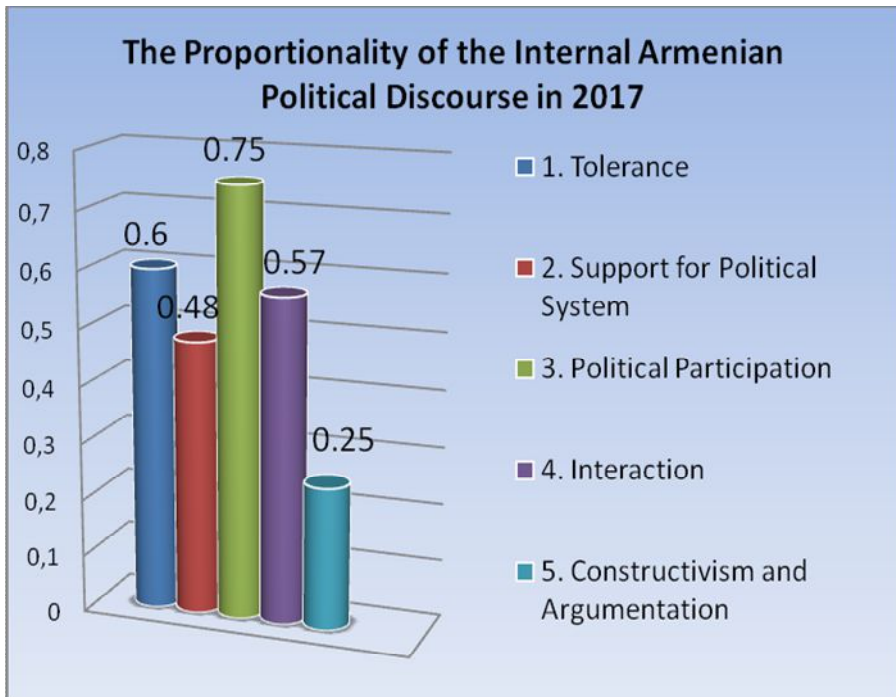
The proportionality of the internal Armenian political discourse of 2017 shows that the index of "political participation" was the highest

(0.75), therefore indicating the encouragement of political activity in discourse. At the same time, constructivism and argumentation have the lowest index (0.25) among all the other components of discourse. Due to this, the productivity and thus the total index of discourse was rather low. This means that in general the discourse varied from the political practice, which points out to its imitative nature.

Thus, to evaluate political regime through the DMPC method according to the formula introduced, it is necessary to sum the indexes of all five variables of political discourse. The total sum may enable to reveal the kind of political culture and political regime shaped in Armenia.
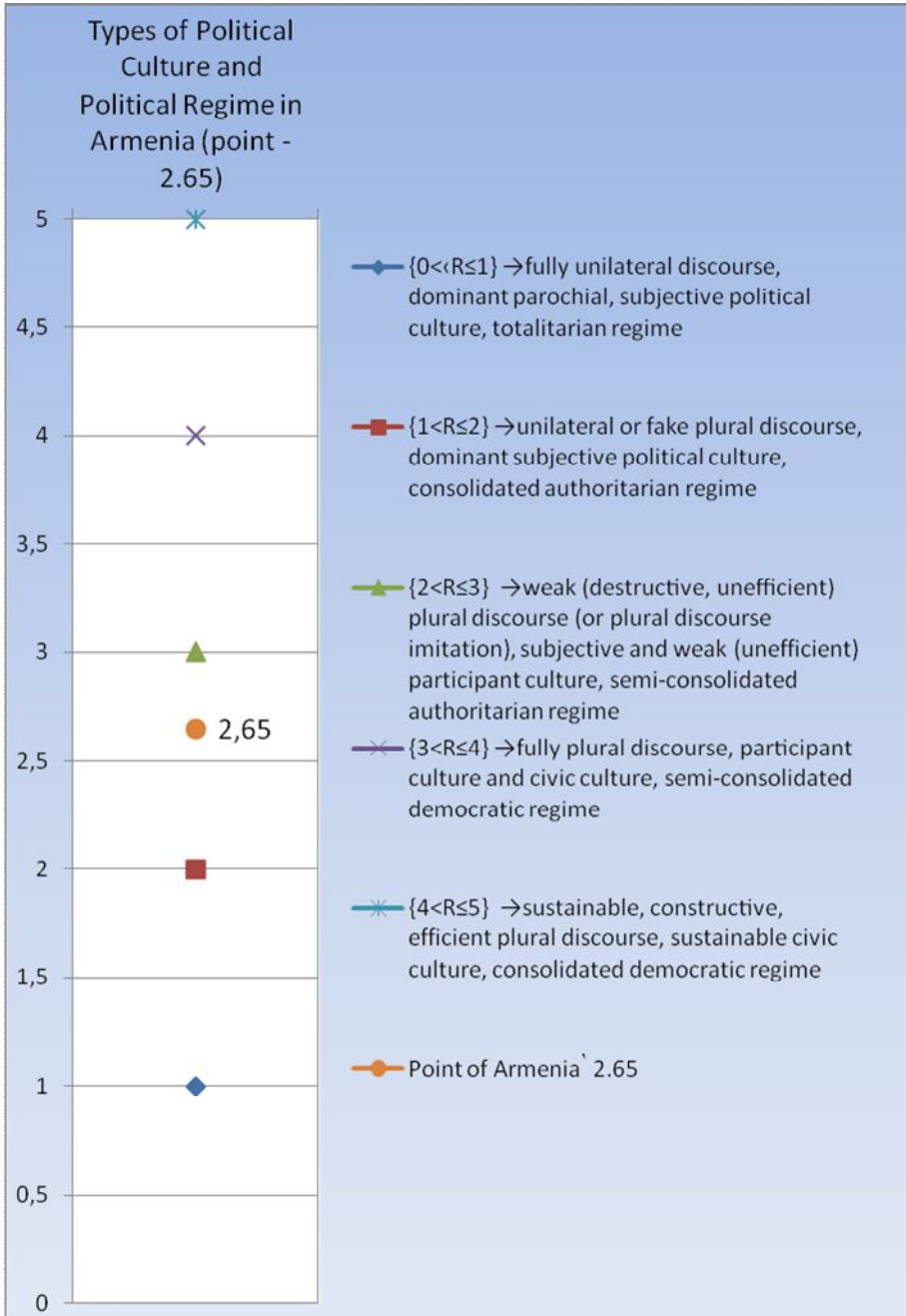
$$V=V_1+V_2+\ldots+V_5= 0.60+0.48+0.75+0.57+0.25=2.65$$

Thus, the 2017 index of political culture of Armenia amounted to 2.65, according to which the elements of a subject and a weak (non-productive) participatory culture dominated in the Armenian political culture, which corresponds to semi-authoritarian political regime, that stands closer to semi-democratic rather than authoritarian regime.

As to 2017 internal political discourse, it can be defined as weak multilateral discourse with the dominance of non-constructive and non-productive elements. Multilateral political discourse mostly had an imitative nature, filled with populism.

The table below shows the place Armenia occupies among the five groups of political regime classification (2,65 point), which defines the type of political discourse, political culture and political regime in Armenia.

Figure 8

Types of Political Culture and Political Regime in Armenia (point - 2.65)

{0<ᵗR≤1} →fully unilateral discourse, dominant parochial, subjective political culture, totalitarian regime

{1<R≤2} →unilateral or fake plural discourse, dominant subjective political culture, consolidated authoritarian regime

{2<R≤3} →weak (destructive, unefficient) plural discourse (or plural discourse imitation), subjective and weak (unefficient) participant culture, semi-consolidated authoritarian regime

{3<R≤4} →fully plural discourse, participant culture and civic culture, semi-consolidated democratic regime

{4<R≤5} →sustainable, constructive, efficient plural discourse, sustainable civic culture, consolidated democratic regime

Point of Armenia՚ 2.65

To verify the accuracy of research, the result of political regime measurement in Armenia conducted by the DMPC method has been compared with that of 2016-2017 Armenia's indexes of Freedom in the World (Nations in Transit) and Economist Intelligence Unit (Democracy Index).

According to Freedom House report (Nations in Transit 2017), Armenia's democracy score of 2017 is 5,39[44], which corresponds to semi-authoritarian regime. Similar results have been obtained from EIU democracy index of 2016, according to which the score of political regime in Armenia was 3.88[45] which characterizes it as an authoritarian regime. Thus, the results of political culture measurement obtained by the DMPC method and the indexes of Freedom House and Economist Intelligence Units are in line with each other. This shows that the proposed method is effective and, if necessary, can be applied in other countries as an additional or auxiliary method to carry out similar measurements. At the same time, unlike the indexes of Freedom House, Economy Intelligence Unit and several others, the novelty of the DMPC method is that it allows not only to clarify the type of political regime but also to reveal the elements that dominate the political culture and political discourse of a particular society. In the course of the application of this method, the type of political regime is determined by the evaluation of the relationship between political culture and political discourse. Therefore, unlike other methods, the DMPC method analyzes political practice in the context of "political regime-political culture-political discourse" trinity. However, it should be noted that the effectiveness of this method is conditioned not only by the precise selection and application of its tools, but also by the objective analysis of the empirical material. The researcher should by highly attentive to the objective perception of discourse in its interpretation and should avoid including his subjective perceptions on political institutions and processes in discourse analysis.

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[44] Nations in Transit 2017 The False Promise of Populism,
 https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/nations-transit-2017.
[45] The Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index, Explore the Democracy Index Results 2006 - 2016, https://www.eiu.com/topic/democracy-index.

Conclusion

The research reveals that

- The totalitarian discourse is characterized by monologue full of pathos and emotions where the addressee of discourse, ie. the people, is a purely affected object and can not enter into real dialogue, especially into contradiction with the official discourse. The latter does not "tolerate" any other discourse, it is unilateral and encourages full commitment and support of the people to political power and the established political regime.
- The authoritarian discourse includes the elements of both totalitarian and democratic discourse. However, it has largely a flawed multilateral or imitative nature where the discourse and political practice vary from each other. In contrast, democratic discourse is mostly in line with political practice and it is based on the attempt to coordinate different political stances providing for a genuine multilateral consensus.
- The proposed DMPC method can be used for the evaluation of political regime and political culture based on political discourse analysis. Comparison of the results obtained by this method with those of well-known international indexes testifies to their comparability.
- The result of the research conducted by DMPC method proves that a semi-authoritarian regime has been formed in Armenia where a non-constructive, non-productive multilateral discourse or the imitation of multilateral discourse are still prevailing and the elements of weak participatory culture continue to dominate politics.