

# The Discrepancy in the Perception of the Public-Political Speech in Croatia

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## ABSTRACT

*Key place in this paper takes the study of political speech in the Republic of Croatia and their impact on voters, or which keywords are in political speeches and public appearances of politicians in Croatia that their voting body wants to hear. Given listed below we will define the research topic in the form of a question – is there a discrepancy in the perception of the public-political speech in Croatia, and which keywords are specific to the two main regions in Croatia and that inhabitant these regions respond. Marcus Tullius Cicero, the most important Roman orator, he used a specific associative mnemonic technique that is called »technique room«<sup>1</sup>. He would talk expound on keywords and conceptual terms that he needed for the desired topic and join in these make them, according to the desired order, in a very creative and unique way, the premises of the house or palace, which he knew well. Then, while holding the speech intended to pass through rooms of the house or palace and then put keywords and concepts come to mind, again according to the desired order. Given that this is a specific kind of research political speech that is relatively recent in Croatia, it should be noted that there is still, this kind of political communication is not sufficiently explored. Particularly the emphasis on the impact and use of keywords specific to the Republic of Croatia, in everyday public and political communication. The paper will be analyzed the political, campaign speeches and promises several winning candidates, and now Croatian MEPs, specific keywords related to: economics, culture, science, education and health. The analysis is based on comparison of the survey results on the representation of key words in the speeches of politicians and qualitative analysis of the speeches of politicians on key words during the election campaign.*

**Keywords:** keywords, European elections, persuasion, public speaking, political speech

## Introduction

### *Political Persuasion in the Campaign for the European Parliament 2013*

The Republic of Croatia has July 1, 2013 joined the European Union as the 28<sup>th</sup> member state. By joining the EU Croatia, as well as other states, receives a right to full participation in the European Parliament, which with the Council of Ministers makes legislative body. Therefore, on 14 April 2013<sup>th</sup> in Croatia were elected 12 candidates, Croatian representatives in the EU Parliament. The electoral lists were offered 28 list and 336 candidates and for the first time in Croatia is enabled and preferential voting.

The objectives of this study are:

- a) Theorize research subject – political campaign speech Croatian representatives in the European Parliament.
- b) The submission of research methodology.
- c) Analyze and compare the results of the survey and respondents' opinions on key words in campaign speeches with the actual campaign speeches that were sent through various media: television, billboards, the Internet.

Aristotle recognizes that persuasive political speech is reasonable, passionate, and reflective of the character of the speaker<sup>2</sup>. Given the centrality of speech in both agonistic and rational/deliberative on captions of the public sphere, it is surprising that contemporary theo-

rists have not discussed the use of rhetoric more extensively. This neglect is all the more surprising when we consider that political legitimacy is closely related to the problem of getting people to listen to and accept what is said. To his credit, Aristotle recognized that rhetoric is a potential ally in our struggle to define the appropriate ends of political life<sup>2</sup>.

To paraphrase Sviličić and Maldini who points out the importance of the form and means of communication of symbols, since they are often more important even than their primary meaning. They seek to prove a decisive impact of political symbols on the political perceptions and behavior of individuals and entire social groups and their manipulative power by meanings assigned to them by forms of their communication<sup>3</sup>.

### *Object and purpose of the research*

In this part of the paper will be placed thesis and define research objectives, clarify the purpose of the research and give possible assumptions outcome of research and analysis in order to have any systematic reaching the ultimate goal of paper.

The scope of this study was to compare the pre-election political speeches in the campaign for the European Parliament with the results of a survey which examined the opinions of the respondents on the use of certain words and promises in these speeches. Elements for the survey was made and to whom the speeches were analyzed are: health, science and culture, welfare and education. During the focus group participants were given a task by using associative elements offer the key word and the more frequently mentioned keywords made the survey questions.

Thesis and assumption of this study is that the survey responses generally correspond to the actual analysis of political speeches, but since this will be a qualitative analysis it will not be empirically verified. Still, it will try to fulfill the main goal of the work – qualitatively observe and analyze how the real political speeches coincide with the opinions of some of the public about them.

The purpose of this research is the application of knowledge of previous studies on the organization of media campaigns, public appearances and pragmalinguistics and the research methodology on specific examples of political speeches during these EU campaign. In addition to the application of knowledge, as the analysis of speech concerning the candidates who received the most electoral votes, will be able to qualitatively determine the value of their political rhetoric, focusing on key social issues (to any of its components), and soon be able to track and compare how much will their representative speeches in the European Parliament coincide with here analyzed campaign speeches.

### **Research Methods**

This section refers to the analysis, display and defining research methods that were used in this paper. Two

basic methods were used in the research: focus groups and surveys. After conducting focus groups and qualitative approaches to respondents, followed a survey and quantitative approach to the elements and keywords that are derived from focus groups. After this, the obtained results are comparative method analyzed and compared with the existing political speech through the media.

The task focus group respondents was associative method provide keywords that politicians use when they talk about the already mentioned elements. And the results of the focus groups were:

- Economy: market liberalization easy availability of EU funds, the reduction of unemployment, emigration, better customs regulations
- Art and science: the affirmation of Croatian artists, more international scientific symposium, investment in scientist, easy exchange of cultural goods, opening markets for scientists
- Education: study abroad, student exchange, international cooperation, international experts, computerization
- Health and welfare: new technologies, medical attention in European clinics, exchange experts, better quality, new technology

After obtained certain keywords survey was conducted. It was conducted on a sample of 114 respondents which included populations from the Croatian. The survey was conducted in July and August 2013th year. It consisted of demographic data set required in the form of closed questions, four questions in the form of Likert scale and two open-ended questions. The next chapter will be analyzed survey results.

### *Analysis of election speeches*

This chapter will analyze the political campaign speeches by key words in the survey. Analyses were carried out with the video and the website where the candidates gave interviews and statements. Politicians who have been analyzed are: with the HDZ list HSP AS-BUZ: Ruža Tomašić, Andrej Plenković and Dubravka Šuica, list SDP-HNS-HSU: Biljana Borzan and Tonino Picula and list of Croatian Labour Party, Nikola Vuljanić. These MPs were chosen for analysis because of the largest number of votes they received in the election.

a) Ruža Tomašić, president of party »HSP-a dr. Ante Starčević«

Ruža Tomašić is a politician and president of the party »HSP dr. Ante Starčević«, which was during the referendum on the European Union invited the public to vote against joining the European Union. Her rhetoric during the political campaign was based on the speeches of Croatian identity in the EU, Croatian equality with other states, and it's all included their somewhat ethnocentric attitudes about the position of Croatian. In all her rhetoric and speeches prevailing paths – in every speech she gives personal stories (lives in Canada, patrio-

tism), pander to audience (calling them to notify her with their proposals), promotes Catholic morality (carrying the cross, declaring: »I answer only to God and beloved anyone anymore.«), but notes that although her speech prevailing emotions, they are not logical and well structured so that they are free of presenting the program and its objectives as well as her goal as Member of the European Parliament.

Her main goal is the national interest of the Republic of Croatia in the EU, but within this objective is not clearly defined its program content. Some of the key words mentioned in his speech are: easier access to EU funds, the reduction of unemployment in Croatia, criticized Croats emigration (especially in Lika), and she was mentioning that she will also strive for »softening« of customs and border regulations with Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It can be concluded that her speeches were mainly associated with the element of the economy, while other elements are almost not mentioned anywhere (video clips available on URL: <http://www.hsp-ante-starcevic.hr>).

#### b) Andrej Plenković, HDZ

Andrej Plenković is a member of HDZ party and one of their three candidates for the European parliamentarian. He has long-time worked, through political and diplomatic affairs, on Croatian accession to the EU, therefore, his rhetoric is based on experience, but also on good oratorical qualities: expertise, eloquence, structuring and good conduct of body language and radiofonic voice. As his overriding goal he highlights funds that Croatia should get access to, but also one that Croatia should provide the Union which will affect the growth of the economy, and in the context of economic development he highlights in particular the agricultural sector. He emphasized significant and improvements of the overall social situation in Croatia, and that all would be achievable if we go after plan with the European People's Party whose interests and program overlaps and HDZ policy.

Andrej Plenković, unlike Ruža Tomašić, is a much better orator and rhetorician, focused on targets and thus more specific, but also in his speeches it is the apparent lack of attribution on education and culture themes (video clips available on URL: <http://www.andrejplenkovic.com/>).

#### c) Dubravka Šuica, HDZ

Dubravka Šuica has been the bearer of the HDZ list, and is also a long-time member and the Council of Europe and she participated in a number of European conferences related to the subject of the European Union. She has often emphasized her Dubrovnik origin, adding that her rhetoric has local importance, and one of the goals is to improve transport links within Croatia (emphasizes connectivity with the rest of the region of Dubrovnik Croatia), what she would achieve with her commitment to funding from the European funds, which

would enable construction of Pelješac bridge (video clips available on URL: <http://www.dubravka-suica.eu/>).

#### d) Tonino Picula – SDP

SDP member Tonino Picula had the most constructive political rhetoric. Besides being constantly urged to vote and vote by real arguments, and he wanted to get people to inquire and inform themselves before they go to the polls. In campaign speeches he amounted plans to improve the quality of life and care for the »little people«, the industrial revolution (re-industrialization), a new educational system, better entrepreneurship and economic development, but also the Croatian cultural identity that would be introduced in the European Union.

Most of his speeches were based on two key notions, solidarity and the creation of new jobs. »Out of the crisis« also appeared several times in his speech, but solidarity, equality and justice are his main solution (video clips available on URL: <http://www.toninopicula.com/hr/>).

#### e) Biljana Borzan – SDP

Biljana Borzan was SDP's candidate for the European Parliament. By profession she is a doctor, so it's not a surprise that her speeches are based on the area of health, often referred to health reform, better quality and the possibility of treatment in European hospitals. How is native Slavonia, closer to her are subjects and problems of farmers and peasants, whose main problem was the custom pig around which argued numerous debates, but also the production of cheese which Biljana Borzan repeatedly mentioned in her speeches. She said that she will try to have an opportunity and after joining the European Union (video clips available on URL: <http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYmiYNn9SHDnSldkuIMDizA>).

#### f) Nikola Vuljanić – Croatian Labor party

To public media, Nikola Vuljanić said that he wants a fairer Europe and Croatia in it. His speeches and plans are based on the individual, on the infrastructure of the city of Zagreb, which is bad in comparison to other cities, but from that show that he is interested in the life and everyday living of citizens, and will strive to improve it. In his biography on the official website of the Croatian Labour Party (<http://www.nikolavuljanic.eu/>) wrote for himself that, based on the interests of citizens: »the desire for political engagement beyond the existing nomenclature, the belief that none of the existing political parties do not represent the interests of the Croatian citizens who are living from their work, corrupt and dangerous »security« political elites that create an impossible situation and then offer coming out of it – at the expense of citizens«. In addition to the interests of each individual, Vuljanić vowed to advocate for workers: »Our basic attitude is that we should strike a balance between labor and capital and more to advocate for the interests of labor, workers and those who live off of what they do. These are not only those working with a hammer and sickle, but also those who work intellectually and certainly different«.

## Results

### Final analysis of the results of the study and comparison with selected speeches of Members of the European Parliament

By all these facts, we see that in most cases politicians consciously use certain keywords in order to attract public attention. Our assumptions were partially confirmed because some politicians do not promise what they cannot fulfill, and also, the respondents did not see most of the key words, so the manipulation of political speech could not entirely succeed.

As for the analysis of demographic data, 38% of respondents were female and 62% male. Most respondents were from the city, 88% of them, while 12% of respondents were from the country. Respondents were belonging to a different age groups, so at the age of 18 to 30 years participated 22% of respondents in the survey. When we add up the percentage, from 30 to 50 years participated 66% – which is also the largest number, those of above are the sum of 17%.

As for the status, the respondents are mostly employed and that is the 67% of them, 14% are unemployed, 7% of students, pensioners 5% and 7% other.

In the survey are the most attended college-educated respondents – 56% of them. Those with masters was 19% and 6% of doctorate – when you add up the percentage of high educated we get 81%. Respondents with primary education were 2%, with high school 22% and other 2%.

Only 12% of respondents said that they do not have any income, while other respondents said they are receiving income, and it goes in a grades – up to two thousand kuna (2000) income has 9% of respondents. From 2000-5000 thousand (2000-5000) kunas has 23%, while those

with incomes of over five thousand to ten thousand (5000 – above 10 000), the sum of them is 56%.

By analyzing the responses, we have come to conclusions that will be presented in percentages, mentioning only the highest and lowest percentage in each area of study. Where there is a mean drastically higher we will stress it, but the average value will not apply on all processed terms (Figure 1).

As for analyzing the economic aspects and its appearance in political speeches, the survey sample is done faithfully portrayed the way they were and is among politicians. The most they were talking about creating jobs and reducing unemployment, and elsewhere on easier access to EU funds as suggested by the survey explored. Other concepts (market liberalization, emigration and better customs regulations) were not as represented in political speeches. As for the economic area in political speech, 13% of respondents believe that »market liberalization« is fairly present term, and 9% that is not represented, even while 31% think it is pretty presented term. Then, 36% of respondents claim that »reducing unemployment« is highly represented, while 9% think that term is not represented. Although we could expect that politicians might talk about customs regulations, regardless of frontiers, 18% of respondents believe that this concept is not represented, while only 9% of respondents believe that »better customs regulations« highly represented in political discourse. »The easier availability of EU funding« has been recognized as an established term, so 38% of respondents believe that the term is very present, and only 5% of respondents claimed that was not represented. When we talk about »migration« 5% of respondents believe that the concept is very frequent, so 17% said they either had not represented, or 44% think it is not as represented (Figure 2).

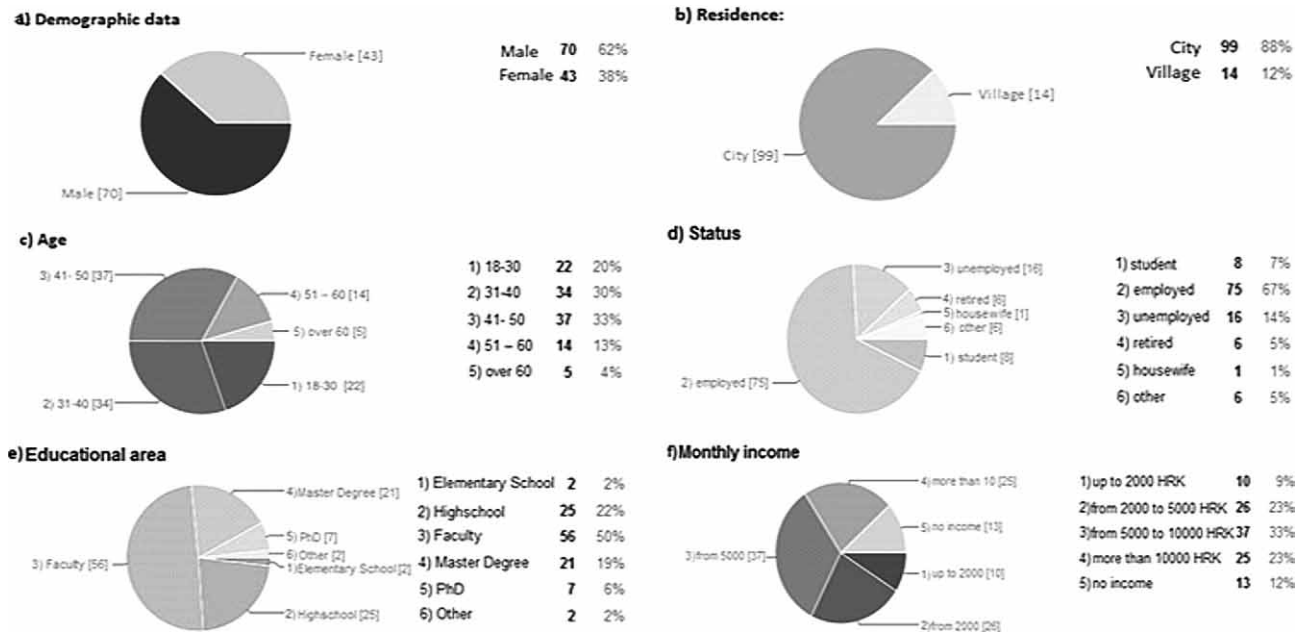


Fig. 1. Basic information.



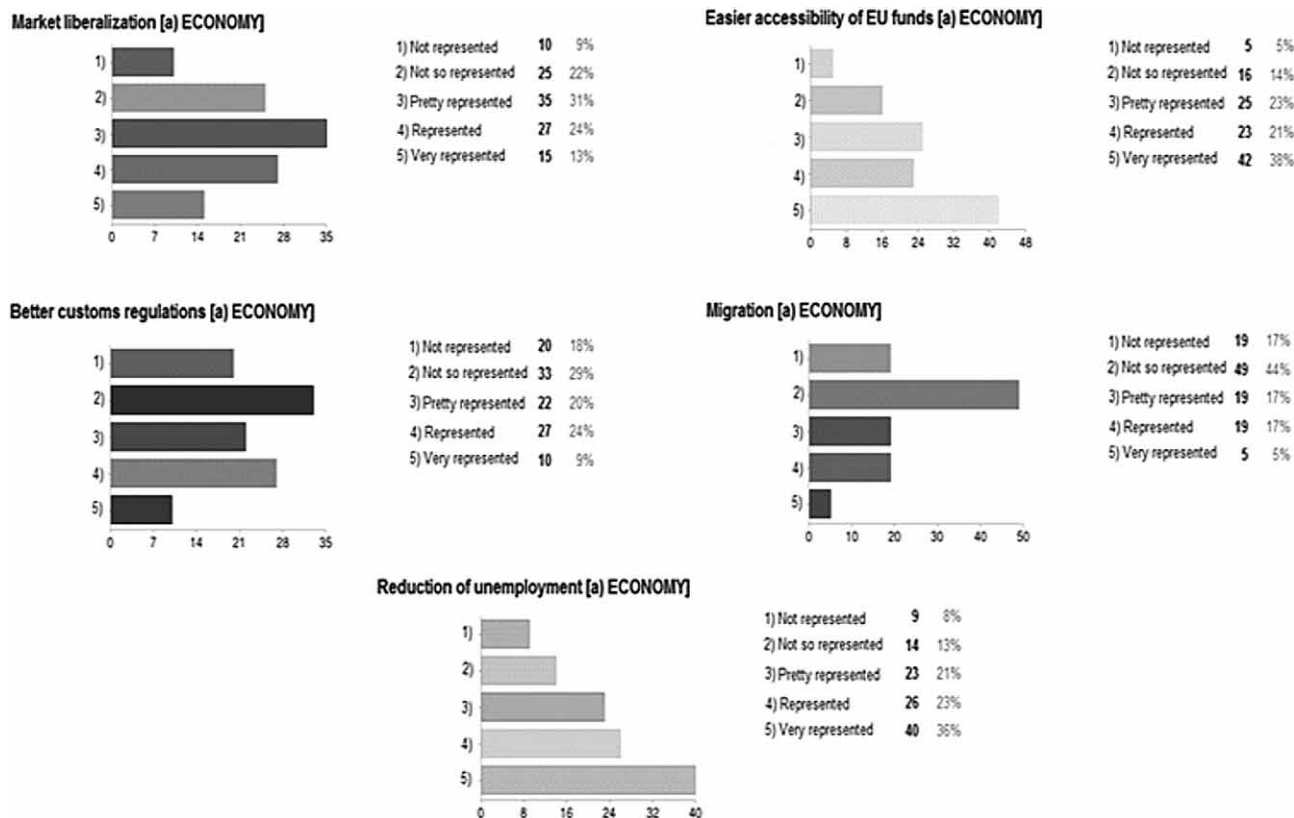


Fig. 2. Data on the subject of research and finding – Economy.

Keywords we tested and confirmed in some of the analyzed speech. So that, for example, Ruža Tomašić in her speeches often mention easier access to EU funds, the reduction of unemployment in Croatia, she has criticized the migration of the Croats (especially in Lika), and mentions that she will also strive for »softening« of customs and border regulations with Bosnia and Herzegovina. It can be concluded that her speeches mainly associated with the element of the economy while other elements are almost not mentioned anywhere.

Equally Andrej Plenković in his speeches as his most important goal highlights funds that Croatia should get by joining EU. Funding from the European Union funds that would allow the construction of Pelješac bridge is often mentioned and with Dubravka Šuica. Employment is a subject about which spoke Tonino Picula, as with Nikola Vujanić in which the only issue advocacy for workers. From the above it can be concluded that in the analyses speeches there are insufficiently mentioned researched keywords, but some of them are still in the speeches of politicians.

Looking at the results in the field of culture and science in political speech, we came to the following conclusions. Devastating figure of only 2% of respondents believe that the term »affirmation of Croatian artists« very present, and even 44% considered that about this term was not discussed. About »more international scientific symposium« 43% of respondents considered that term

not represented, while 3% thought that the term was used extensively. »Investing in scientists in the culture« is not as represented according to 36% of respondents, while only 5% think it is very represented. »Facilitate the exchange of cultural goods« is not presented at all, what thought 34%, respondents, and only 5% think it is very represented. Even 48% of respondents believe that »the opening of the market for scientists« is not represented, while 5% believe it is very represented.

Culture and education are related words that appear in a public speech, so we will consolidate the results of the analysis of these two terms. Looking at the educational aspect of political speeches, analysis of the responses showed us that the term »study abroad« is equally presented and not presented – so 14% of respondents believe that it is very frequent term, while 13% of respondents believe that term is not represented. That this concept should be further explored confirm the fact that other percentages in responses do not deviate from each other. Furthermore, 13% of respondents believe that the reference to »exchange student« in political speeches is not as represented, and only 8% think it is highly represented. The mention of »international cooperation« in political speech is not represented at all considered 9% of respondents, while 14% of them thought it was very frequent, and even 39% of respondents believe that term is relatively common. Then, 17% of respondents believe that the mention of »international experts« is not repre-

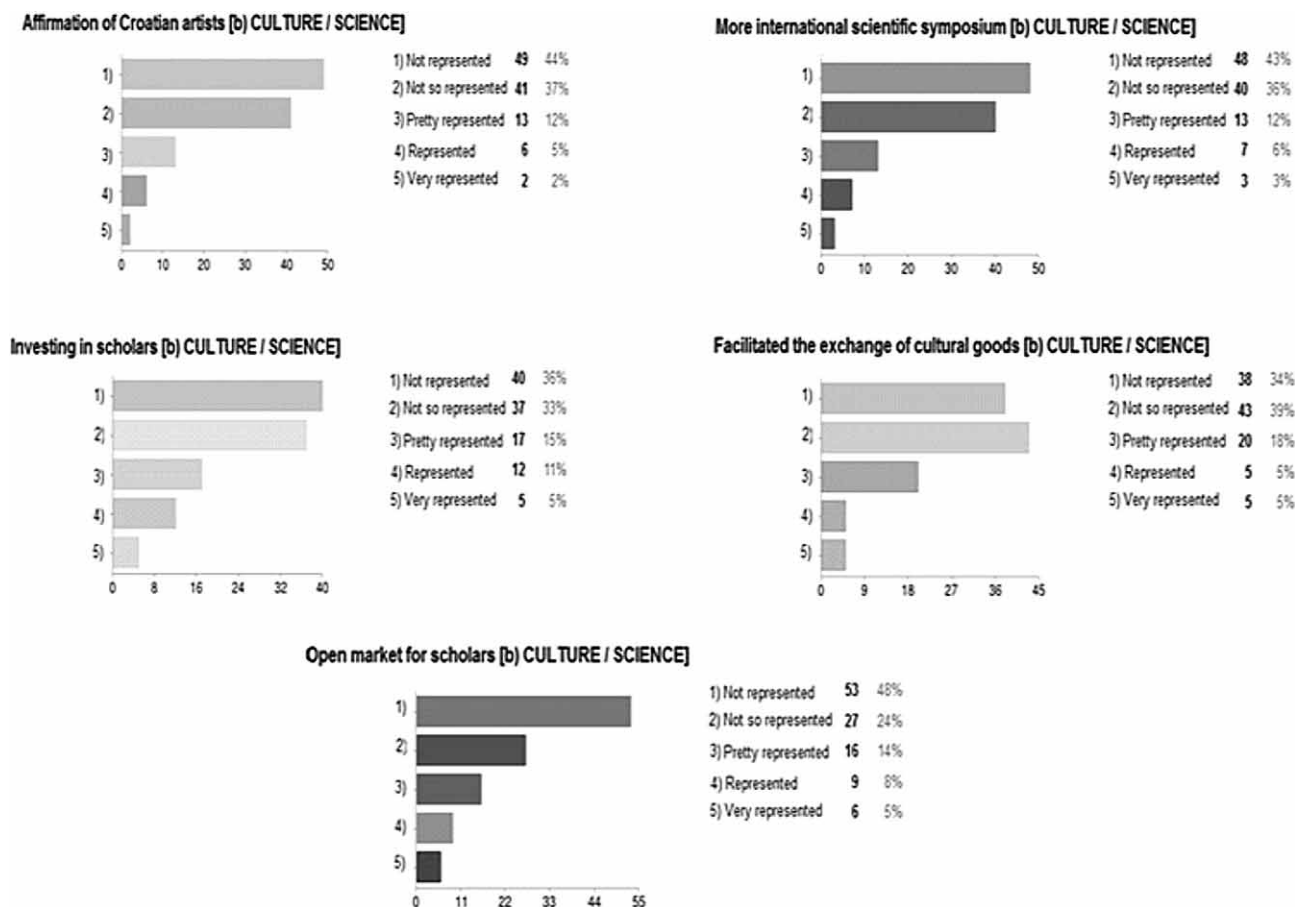


Fig. 3. Data on the subject of research and finding – Culture and Science.

sented, while 10% think it is highly represented. Although »computerization« is expected term, perception is again equal – 12% of respondents think that the mention of computerization, in general, is not represented, or even 32% think that it is not so represented, and 15% thought it was very represented (Figures 3 and 4).

Around the theme of culture and science were a lot of diverse opinions expressed in the polls, the most represented terms, according to the survey, is investment in scientists and facilitate the exchange of cultural goods.

To conclude and compared the percentages obtained and analyzed speeches, we can say that precisely these related topics were not significant for the political issues that dominated the campaign recently held, and the apparent lack of attachment elements of education and culture. Themes of culture and education were observed only in Tonino Picula speech who spoke about the new educational system, but also Croatian cultural identity, which would be introduced in the European Union.

Talking about health care in the Republic of Croatia, 23% of respondents believe that the mention of »new technologies« in political speeches is not represented or 38% considered that it was not so presented, and only 11% think it is very represented. The reference to »treatment options in European clinics« – 38% of respondents

think that in the political speech is not as represented, and 8% thought it was very represented. »The exchange of experts« – 31% of respondents believe that the reference was not represented, and 6% think it is very represented. Then, 17% of respondents thought that the mention of »better quality« in political speeches is not represented, or even 35% think that it is not as represented, and 10% thought it was very represented. For the »new technology« only 11% of respondents believe that the mention of the political speeches highly represented, and while 24% think it is not at all represented (Figure 5).

In the field of health and social welfare, the most common response was that the concept of new technologies as they present better quality health care and the possibility of treatment in European hospitals fairly represented in terms.

The topic of health only spoke Biljana Borzan, SDP’s candidate for the European Parliament, which is a doctor by profession and therefore it is not surprising that her speech werw based on the area of health. Often talked about health care reform, better quality, and the possibility of treatment in European hospitals.

Through this work we have provided insight into concepts and perceptions of respondents which may help

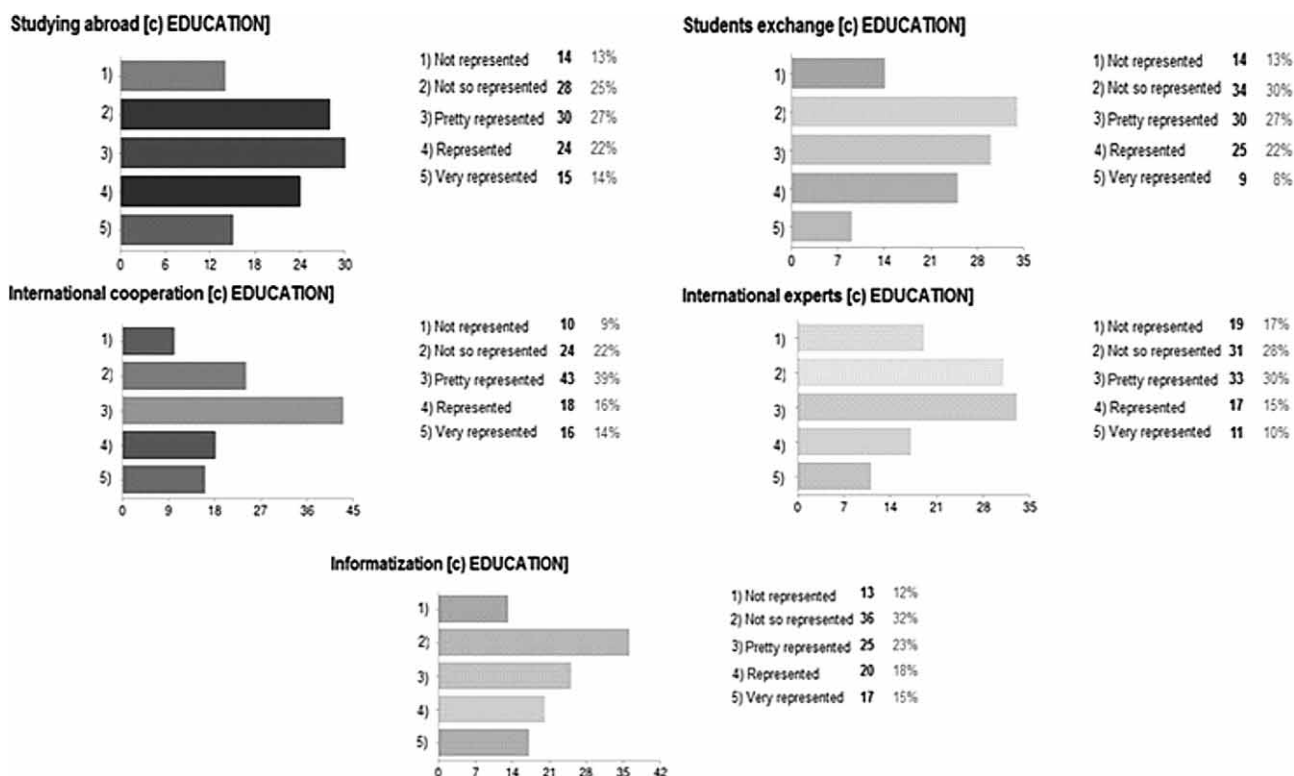


Fig. 4. Data on the subject of research and finding – Education.

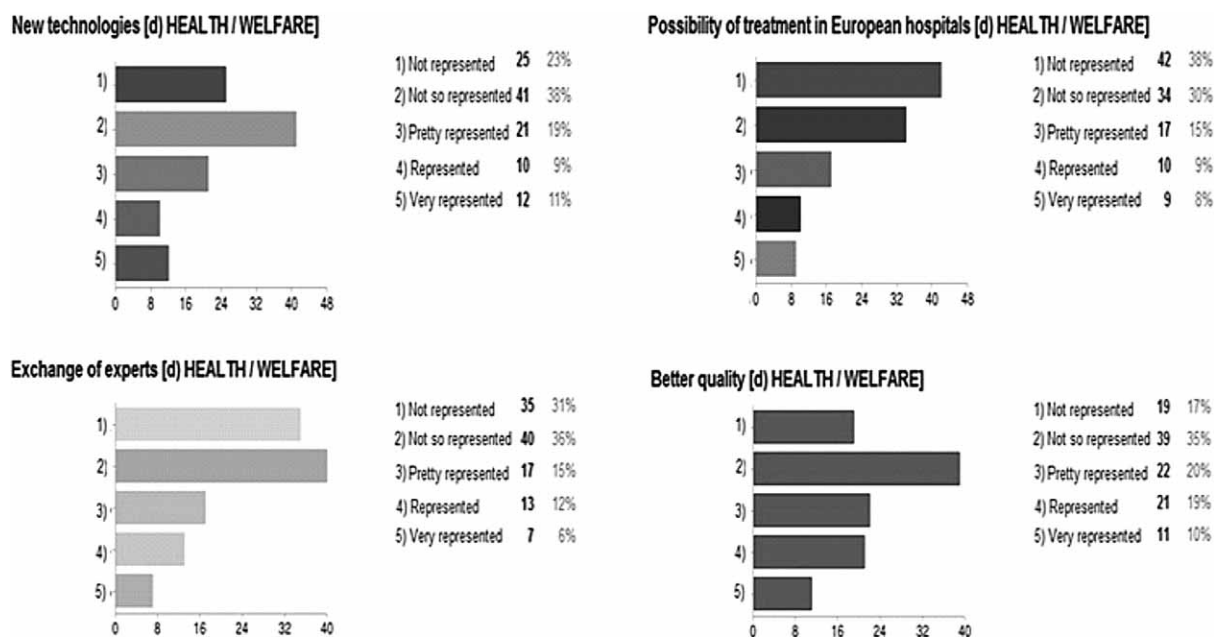


Fig. 5. Data on the subject of research and finding – Health and Welfare.

politicians to further preparations campaigns and political speeches. It is noted that the respondents very well connect keywords and their association with political speeches, with which we are surrounded every day.

## Discussion and Conclusion

Through a conducted survey it was concluded that almost all analyzed politicians have based on similar key terms. Besides the economy and new jobs, which were

the most promised terms, and get the most results in the surveyed respondents, agriculture was quite often mentioned in the political rhetoric. It is possible that impact on such rhetoric have had numerous external factors from recent scandals related to farmers. Plenty of politicians, even those who advocated for farmers, attach to their election plans local significance.

At the end of this research we can conclude that politicians in practice very seldom, or not at all mention the keywords we got in researching at focus groups, which are represented in the survey. In their speeches, the politicians most mentioned keywords in economics, and at least in the field of culture and science. However, as noted in the previous section, several politicians in their speeches are still mentioned keywords in the field of culture.

Most candidates, however, brings out the key terms of those spheres in which they are experts: health, welfare, etc., as this attach importance to what they say and give some security to their promises because they still come from these areas of science.

The intention was to show what the public expects from the politicians, and what the politicians really say-

ing – what are the similarities and differences. What we've got with work is that some of keywords appeared in speeches during the campaign, but more are present differences in what politicians say of what the public expects.

By all these facts, we see that in most cases politicians consciously use certain keywords in order to attract public attention. Our assumptions were partially confirmed because some politicians do not promise what they cannot fulfill, and also, the respondents did not see most of the key words, so that manipulation of political speech could not entirely succeed.

Nowadays of modernization brought many positive, through progress of technology, easier access to information, etc. But there are always disadvantages such as political manipulation, the bias of journalists and entire media, so it is still very difficult to assess the credibility of the political campaigns and the honesty of political speech, and inform itself is very difficult. It remains only a hope and confidence in the ethics of the political system, or at least the party.

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## NESKLAD U PERCEPCIJI O JAVNO-POLITIČKOG GOVORA U HRVATSKOJ

### SAŽETAK

Ključno mjesto u ovom radu zauzima izučavanje političkih govora u Republici Hrvatskoj te njihov utjecaj na birače, odnosno koje su ključne riječi u političkim govorima i javnim nastupima političara u Republici Hrvatskoj koje njihovo biračko tijelo želi čuti. S obzirom na navedeno u nastavku ću definirati temu istraživanja u obliku pitanja – postoji li diskrepancija u percepciji javno-političkog govora u Republici Hrvatskoj, te koje su ključne riječi specifične za dvije osnovne regije u Hrvatskoj a na koje stanovnici tih regija reagiraju. Marko Tulije Ciceron, najznačajniji rimski govornik, služio se posebnom asocijativnom mnemoničkom tehnikom koja je nazvana tehnika soba<sup>1</sup>. On bi govor razložio na ključne riječi i konceptualne pojmove koji su mu bili potrebni za željenu temu i pridruživao bi ih, prema željenom redu, na jedan sasvim kreativan i jedinstven način, prostorijama kuće ili palače koju je dobro poznao. Zatim bi tijekom držanja govora zamislio kako prolazi kroz prostorijekuće ili palače i tada bi mu ključne riječi i koncepti dolazili u um, opet prema željenom redu. S obzirom da je riječ o specifičnoj vrsti istraživanja političkih govora koja je relativno novijeg datuma u Republici Hrvatskoj, valja napomenuti kako još uvijek, ova vrsta političke komunikacije nije dovoljno istražena. Posebno je stavljen naglasak na utjecaj i uporabu ključnih riječi, specifičnih za Republiku Hrvatsku, u svakodnevnoj javnoj i političkoj komunikaciji. U ovome radu bit će analizirani politički, predizborni govori i obećanja nekoliko pobjedničkih kandidata, a sada hrvatskih zastupnika Europskoga parlamenta, prema određenim ključnim riječima iz područja: ekonomije, kulture i znanosti, obrazovanja i zdravstva. Analiza se temelji na komparaciji rezultata ankete o zastupljenosti ključnih riječi u govorima političara i kvalitativnoj analizi govora političara o ključnim riječima tijekom predizborne kampanje.