

Address and Greeting in Romanian and Spanish: A Comparative Analysis from the Perspective of Politeness

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Preliminary Statements

THE PRESENT paper approaches politeness models in Spanish and Romanian cultures from a comparative perspective. The analysis aims to determine to what extent certain conventional formulas—strategically used to express different types of interpersonal relationships—overlap. The comparative description of the two cultural models focuses on two aspects: the nominal and pronominal address terms, and the verbal acts of greeting and leave-taking. Our hypothesis is that the existence of politeness formulas against a strong conventional background does not simplify the intercultural interpretation and equalization of their social dimensions; on the contrary, it requires additional precaution in order to avoid intercultural interferences and misunderstandings. The selection of the linguistic data is based on the frequency of some conventional forms used in everyday communication within the two cultures. The data are provided by a wide range of corpora: *Interacțiunea verbală în limba română actuală* (Ionescu-Ruxândoiu, 2002), for Romanian, and *Corpus Oral de Referencia de la Lengua Española Contemporánea* (CORLEC), for Spanish, as well as by direct observations or interviews with Romanian and Spanish speakers working in the educational system in Romania. While the outcome of this study could be useful from a theoretical point of view—through the development of some comparative research in the area of pragmalinguistics—it also has a practical aim, of supporting the creation of specific materials that may be used for learning both Romanian and Spanish as foreign languages.

Our comparison is based on a set of specific notions regarding verbal politeness, which we will henceforth refer to. Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson (1987) have developed one of the most influential politeness models, which takes into consideration the rationality of the human communicative behavior and the representation of the public image of each individual—i.e. his/her “face.” The concept of “face” was developed by Erving Goffman who defines it as “the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself” (Goffman 1967, 5). Brown and Levinson (1987) made a distinc-

tion between the “positive” and “negative face.” “Positive face” enhances one of the main characteristics of the social image, which is the constant desire of every person for acceptance and approval. “Negative face” refers to each and everyone’s will for personal territories and the respect of that personal territory by others. Thus the speakers choose suitable strategies to communicate their own intentions according to their own concept of self-image in relation with social distance, relative power and rank of imposition. The constant desire to maintain a balance between the requirements of “positive” and “negative face” is what determines the strategic behavior of the speaker in the verbal interaction. Brown and Levinson’s model generated a great number of analyses of politeness, oriented towards either the intra-cultural or the intercultural dimensions. Thus we could identify a preference of different cultures for positive or negative politeness, based on tradition or other sociocultural factors (Haverkate 1994).

During the study, we also kept in mind Henk Haverkate’s politeness model in everyday communication (1994), also influenced by Brown and Levinson’s perspective (1987). When presenting the pragmalinguistic categories, Haverkate draws a comparison between the Spanish and the Dutch manner of rendering verbal politeness. Haverkate’s typical analysis starts from the basic premise that “politeness represents a form of human behavior governed by certain rational principles” (Haverkate 1994, 52) and aims to study manners of expressing politeness within the overall frame of communicative interactions. The author uses a specific method of analyzing the pragmalinguistic data, which mainly consists of conjoining multiple parameters: the politeness maxim, the representation of both positive and negative politeness within communication strategies, the implications of costs and benefits and, last but not least, the structural potential of the speaking acts within the verbal interaction.

Addressing and Referring Terms: Pronominal Forms and Nominal Structures

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS can be emphasized through many terms of address. Analyzing the ways they combine and interact helps us describe how the deference system operates throughout a certain culture. Forms of address are relevant for the process of negotiating both identity and interpersonal relationships. Their discursive actualization provides pieces of information about the communicative context (status, role, current framework, type or purpose of the interaction), and about the properties or means of remodeling the initial data within a given communicative event (Kerbrat-Orecchioni 1992, 9-158).

The value of the pronominal forms of address in both Romanian and Spanish are defined on the axis distance/solidarity or status/power of interpersonal relationships (Kerbrat-Orecchioni 1992). In his politeness model, Haverkate classifies the usage of address terms as a “referential act” (1994, 214), assigning it two ways of accomplishing the reference. The first is the pronominal reference, which is carried out through the pronouns of “familiar or polite use” (Haverkate 1994, 214). Accordingly, the selec-

tion of certain address terms clarifies the intention of pointing out the type of interpersonal relationship, such as solidarity or distance. The latter refers to focalization and implies the usage of an address term where its presence is not usually required. Braun (1988) identified nine categories of address terms, according to the manner in which they can actually be combined: anthroponyms (name, nickname, diminutive); terms of kinship, age marks, marks of social equality or inequality among interlocutors; terms regarding profession, loving or friendly marks; appellations; insults.

Romanian acknowledges the pronominal address terms *tu* (“you”)—*dumneata* (“you”)—*dumneavoastră* (“you”). In Spanish, the specific pronominal forms of address are *tú* (“you”)—*usted/ustedes* (“you”/“you”).

In both Romanian and Spanish, solidarity, trust and familiarity markers among interlocutors are similar and imply the mutual usage of the pronoun *tu*—*tú*. The relative power dimension is emphasized by using the politeness pronouns *dumneavoastră* and *usted/ustedes*. The selection of a specific pronoun is also influenced by other factors which come into play when shedding light over the representation of interpersonal relationships, leading to a structure of convergent linguistic forms marking the type of interaction.

In regard to the morphology of the pronoun, there are slight differences between the two linguistic systems. Romanian recognizes a single form of the politeness pronoun—*dumneavoastră*—which can be used when addressing either one or more interlocutors. The verb is used in the second plural form, similarly to French. This is “a consequence of the French influence, which was strongly felt at the end of the eighteenth century and in the nineteenth century” (Niculescu 1999, 171). *Gramatica limbii române* (Guțu Romalo 2005, 216) acknowledges this form of the politeness pronoun as pertaining to the plural. The Spanish politeness system has, however, two pronominal forms: *usted*, when addressing a single person, and *ustedes*, when addressing more: “[...] the pronoun *usted* reflects from both the lexical and the morphosyntactic points of view the expression of politeness and distance. Morphosyntactically speaking, *usted*, when replacing the subject, requires a third person inflexion, which conveys the distance in relation to the interlocutor, the prototypical reference of whom is expressed by means of the second person from the verbal paradigm” (Haverkate 1994, 215-216; our translation).

The presence of the pronoun next to the verb is not required in Spanish or Romanian—as it is in French, English or German—where polite address is marked only through the particular form of the verb. Thus, the presence of the pronoun indicates the interlocutor’s intention of carrying out a focalized sentence (Haverkate 1994) whose pragmatic values could shift from politeness to impoliteness. The pronoun aims to highlight the role of the person and holds an emphatic or contrastive function (Ionescu-Ruxăndoiu 1995, 65).

In addition to the above means of expressing politeness, Romanian also has an additional intermediate register between *tu* (indicator of role symmetry) and *dumneavoastră* (indicator of role asymmetry), namely the pronoun *dumneata*. In Spanish, however, there is no such dimension of politeness register through which multiple possibilities of configuring interpersonal relationships might be marked. The pronoun *vos* used in Latin American cultures seems equivalent in structure to the aforementioned intermediary politeness register identified in Romanian. However, the analysis of the soci-

olinguistics functions of *vos* emphasizes pragmatic differences rather than similitudes. This intermediate politeness register in Romanian is thus less and less used—for example, it continues to appear in the speech of certain socio-professional categories when the speaker is an older person addressing either a person of their age, or a younger one. Meanwhile, in Latin America, *el voseo* is used for pointing out the interpersonal relationships on the horizontal axis or for indicating solidarity (familiarity, trust, informal relationships) and it is preferred to both *tu* and *usted* (Carricaburo 1997, 25). Consequently, the comparative analysis of the pronouns *vos* and *dumneata* reveals certain differences of usage resulted from the neutralization of the age factor and of the social status when using *vos*, as compared to *dumneata* in Romanian.

From an intercultural perspective, the inventory of linguistic forms in Romanian includes the polite reference towards the third person: *dumnealui* (masc., sg.), *dumneaei* (fem., sg.) for the singular and *dumnealor* (masc., fem., pl.) for the plural. *Dânsul* could also be recognized as a middle form between *el* and *dumnealui* (its inflectional forms being *dânșii* for masc. pl., *dânsa*, for fem., sg., and *dânșele* for fem. pl.). These forms determine the restructuring of the politeness pronominal system for the third person (*el/ea—dânsul/dânsa—dumnealui/dumneaei*), depending on the three politeness levels involved in the second person forms: *tu—dumneata—dumneavoastră*, dating from the nineteenth century (Niculescu, 1999). As far as the Spanish pronominal system is concerned, there is no particular form for the third person.

While in Spanish politeness forms refer to the third person as to a “simple object of speech between the Speaker and the Interlocutor” (Matte Bon 1992, 243), in Romanian the third person illustrates a condition equal to that of the personal pronouns (*cf.* Benveniste 1966, 259).

2. The comparative analysis of the two cultures shows that deference in both Spanish and Romanian involves the selection of a suitable pronominal register of politeness and its association with other terms of address. In Romanian, the terms *domnul* (“Mister”), *doamna* (“Missis”) and *domnișoara* (“Miss”) are used either isolated or in association with other elements. In Spanish, the following forms are frequently used: *señor* (“Mister”), *señora* (“Missis”) and *señorita* (“Miss”). *Don* (“Mister”) and *doña* (“Missis”) are forms which indicate, however, a slight proximity between the interlocutors.

In Romanian, the process of selecting the nominal terms of address *domnul*, *doamna* determines the mark of interpersonal distance. The polite verbalization implies different ways of combining politeness markers: the association of the verbal form (1) with the politeness pronoun *dumneavoastră* (2) and the terms *domnul/doamna* (3), succeeded by the last name (4) or profession (5). Here are some examples:

Example no.1: co-workers; A. f., approx. 30 years old; B. f., approx. 45 years old (personal archive)

A. *Doamnă* (2) *profesoară* (5), *vă așteaptă* (1) *cineva la intrare*. / B. *Mulțumesc*. *Vin imediat*. (A. “Teacher, there is somebody waiting for you at the entrance.” / B. “Thank you. I’m coming right away.”)

Example no.2: teachers working in different schools; A. m., approx. 40 years old; B. m., approx. 45 years old (personal archive)

A. *Dumneavoastră* (2) *veniți* (1) *măine la conferință, domnule* (3) *Popescu* (4)? / B. *Nu pot veni, din păcate. Îmi spuneți* (1) *și mie cum a fost?* (A. “Mr. Popescu, are you coming to the conference tomorrow?” / B. “Unfortunately, I can’t. Will you tell me how it went?”)

Example no.3: conversation between office co-workers; informal register (personal archive)

A. *Vrei să-i spui tu domnului* (3) *director* (5) *că doamna* (3) *Marinescu* (4) *nu poate veni mâine?* / B. *Bine. Imediat.* (A. “Will you please tell the director that Mrs. Marinescu can’t come tomorrow?” / B. “OK. Right away.”)

While the Romanian language allows for the polite way of associating nominal addressing terms *domnul/doamna* with the first name only in colloquial interaction, Spanish seems much more flexible. When the degree of familiarity between the interlocutors is low, namely in formal situations, the first name will be more frequently used: *Carlos, ¿usted qué piensa?* (“Carlos, what do you think?”). This last possibility, the use of the first name, is not associated in Romanian with a distance marker, but rather marks an asymmetrical interpersonal configuration (high/low) or a symmetrical one (intermediate level of politeness, older interlocutors). As a distinction, using the pronoun in colloquial interactions is determined in the interpersonal relationships as pertaining to the horizontal dimension. Age is an essential factor. For example, verbal interaction within Romanian culture does not allow students to address their professor by using the professor’s first name, in the horizontal register marked by the pronoun *tu*. Yet it is the frequent use of the first name and of the mutual addressing with *tu*, as well as the mitigation of the importance of age in the Spanish culture, that are considered to indicate a culture oriented towards positive politeness.

In conclusion, the comparative analysis of the pronominal addressing terms reveals the fact that Romanian has a “system of hierarchical politeness” (Guțu Romalo 2005, 216), including the 0 degree, the minimum degree and the maximum degree of politeness. Spanish has a politeness system, but its presence in structuring the interpersonal relationships determines a certain model oriented towards the horizontal axis and positive politeness.

Meeting and Leave-taking—A Polite Way of Entering and Getting out of the Conversational Area

L BOTH GREETING when meeting and leave-taking formulas perform a function of creating solidarity between speakers when interacting (Haverkate 1994, 57; Kerbrat-Orecchioni 2001, 110). The regulating and conventional functions are very strong in this particular case as compared to other speech acts (Haverkate 2004). Cascón Martín assigns a phatic and an appellative function to the greeting and leave-taking acts, specific to the “*tu* segment” (1995, 62). These speech acts require the use of a considerable number of conventional formulas, which pertain to the segment of social politeness (Escandell Vidal, 1995). The analysis of conventional greeting formulas emphasizes the existence of different levels of stereotyping and a lack of informational con-

tent. Miranda (1992, 81) divides them into two categories, namely “convergent situations” (greeting) and “divergent situations” (leave-taking). The act of greeting is defined as a binary interaction (as the initial meeting formula is succeeded by a reply) and also a symmetric one.

2. Within verbal interaction, the greeting when meeting consists of one or more formulas, according to some factors which determine the actual context of communication. Romanian conventional greeting forms include: *bună dimineța* (“good morning”), *bună ziua* (“good day”), *bună seara* (“good evening”); *sărut mâna* (“I kiss your hand”), *am onoarea* (“I have the honor”); *bună* (“hi”), *salut* (“hi”/“hey”); *ce mai faci?*, *ce mai faceți?* (“how are you?”), *cum vă mai merge?* (“how’s it going?”), *cum merge treaba?* (“how are things going?”).

In Spanish, the conventional greeting forms include: *buenos días* (“good day”), *buenas tardes* (“good afternoon”), *buenas noches* (“good evening”); *buenas* (“hi”), *hola* (“hello”/“hi”), *¿qué tal?* (“how are you?”/“how do you do?”), *¿qué hay de nuevo?* (“what’s new?”), *¿cómo estás?*/*¿cómo estamos?* (“how are you?”) etc. (Miranda 1992, 81).

Both languages provide a wide range of possibilities to combine the current greeting with some other formulas (the complementary greeting).

In Romanian, the double greeting—the current greeting (1) and the complementary greeting (2)—are used in daily situations, such as *Bună* (1), *ce mai faci?* (2) (“Hi, how are you?”); *Bună ziua*. (1) *Ce mai faceți?* (2) (“Good day. How are you?”) or *Bună ziua*. (1) *Ce mai e nou?* (2) (“Good day. What’s new?”). Formula selection also envisages restrictions required by politeness rules suited for the specific situation. When talking about a two-sequence-greeting, the interlocutor will reply using a specialized formula, either to both sequences, or just to the latter one (but never only to the first one). The following verbal exchange: A. *Bună, ce mai faci?* (“Hi, how are you?”); B. *Ce să fac? Bine. Dar tu?* (“Well...I’m fine. How about you?”); A. *Bine. Tocmai am ajuns acasă.* (“Fine, I’ve just arrived home”) etc. is not only binary and symmetrical, it also includes the possibility of progressively transforming the ritualistic question into an actual one (Kerbrat-Orecchioni 2001, 118): *Dar tu?* (“How about you?”).

As for Spanish, Cascón Martín (1995, 61) claims that the greeting itself is part of the elliptic nominal formulas: *buenos días*, *buenas tardes*, *buenas noches*, *buenas*, *hola*. The complementary forms of address are labeled by the author as part of the interrogative formulas, which could accompany or substitute the nominal formulas and which “show interest, whether real or simulated, for one’s health, personal state or family” (Cascón Martín 1995, 62).

To compare Romanian and Spanish greeting from an intercultural perspective, let us look only at those conventional formulas most frequently used to delineate interpersonal relations within the two cultures. A contrastive analysis of the two sociocultural systems reveals a difference deriving from each culture’s perspective on rendering the temporal dimension. This is what generates asymmetries regarding the use of addressing formulas. The Spanish *buenos días*, *buenas tardes* and *buenas noches* do not cover parts of the day in the same way as the Romanian *bună dimineța*, *bună ziua*, *bună seara*. The Spanish culture marks the afternoon with a conventional formula (*buenas tardes*), while

the Romanian one uses a specific formula for morning (*bună dimineața*). The moment in which a conventional formula becomes active in structuring the greeting depends on different conventions and on the specific life rhythms of a linguistic community. It inevitably leads to differences in establishing the temporal landmarks of the day. Let us stress the fact that in verbal interaction, the two types of temporal conventional formulas in Romanian (*bună dimineața*, *bună ziua*, *bună seara*) and in Spanish (*buenos días*, *buenas tardes*, *buenas noches*) are associated with markers of verbal politeness specific to the level of distance between the interlocutors.

An additional dissimilarity can be noticed when comparing the values of the expressions *buenas* or *hola* to those of the Romanian colloquial expression *bună* or to the previously mentioned conventional formulas marking interpersonal distance (*bună dimineața*, *bună ziua*, *bună seara*). Thus, we conclude that the discrepancies between the temporal segment used in greeting in both cultures could be resolved easier than the issues generated by the social dimension implied by the act of greeting. What might be a suitable equivalent in Romanian for the Spanish *hola*? We ask this question the moment we look up for the translation of this word in a Spanish-Romanian dictionary and reach the conclusion that the equivalent expressions do not seem to induce any principle of selection from a sociocultural perspective. What we also notice is that *hola* lost its initial aim of drawing attention and has become a colloquial greeting form, similar to “hello” (En.) or “hallo” (Germ.) (Moliner 1997, vol. 2, 55). This greeting form is used mostly by the young, although it has reached other categories as well, such as people of different ages or social positions. It is also frequently used due to “its curtness and because of the fact that it avoids minor occasional conflicts, such as the right choice for an adequate politeness mark” (Cascón Martín 1995, 62). Consequently, the expression *hola* points out these types of changes at the level of representing interpersonal relations, images of the self, and generates new strategic configurations, which are rather glosses than equivalents of those in the Romanian culture. Since a greeting aims at opening a conversational interaction with the interlocutor in a positive manner, different strategies are being adopted to avoid possible conflicts (Kerbrat-Orrechioni 1992). This is what determines Romanian speakers to resort to more formal greeting forms, in asymmetrical situations. Their intention is to avoid an unjustified familiarity or the inappropriate use of terms of address caused by the lack of a clear sign regarding the nature of the relationship with their interlocutors. Whereas the Spanish conventional form *hola* may represent a strategy of clearing any misunderstandings at interpersonal level (examples 1 and 2), Romanian has no equivalent term (example 3).

Example 1: radio broadcast; A. f., unknown age; B. f., unknown age; A. addresses B. by using *usted* (CORLEC)

A. *Una nueva llamada, a través de la línea 4. Hola, ¿buenas tardes?* / B. *Buenas tardes./ A. ¿Su nombre?* / B. *Sí, Jacinta.* / A. *¿Desde?* / B. *Bueno, mire. Yo soy una mujer..* / A. *No. ¿Desde dónde llama?* (A. “A new call on line 4. Hello, good afternoon.” / B. “Good afternoon.” / A. “Your name?” / B. “Yes, Jacinta.” / A. “Where are you from?” / B. “Well, you see, I am a woman...” / A. “No. Where are you calling from?”).

Example 2: radio broadcast; A. f., unknown age; B. m., unknown age; formal register (CORLEC)

A. *¿Buenas tardes?*/ B. *Hola, buenas tardes./A. Un caballero, menos mal. Bueno. ¿Se lo ha tenido que pensar dos veces para marcar el teléfono del programa?*/ B. *Bueno, no [...]*/ A. *¿Su nombre, por favor?*/ B. *Nicolás./ A. Adelante.../B. Sí, pues, mire...*

(A. “Good afternoon.”/ B. “Hello, good afternoon.” A. “A gentleman, good! Well, I assume you thought twice before dialing the broadcast phone number.”/ B. “Well, not [...]”/ A. “Your name, please.”/ B. “Nicolás.”/ A. “Tell me...”/ B. “Yes, well...”)

Example 3: radio broadcast at Antena București; A. f., approx. 30 years old, entertainer; B. f., 24 years old, listener; C. m., 25 years old, listener (Ionescu-Ruxândoiu 2002, 219)

A. *Bună seara./ B. Bună seara./A. Da!/ B. Mă numesc Cătălina./ A. Da!/ B. Și aș dori să intru în direct cu Gabriel... / A. ...uite îl avem pe Gabi./ B. Da./ C. Alo?/ B. Bună./ C. Bună.*

(A. “Good evening.”/ B. “Good evening.”/ A. “Yes!”/ B. “My name is Cătălina.”/A. “Yes!”/ B. “And I would like to go on air with Gabriel...”/ A. “...look, we’ve got Gabi.”/ B. “Yes.”/ C. “Hello?”/ B. “Hi.”/ C. “Hi.”)

Initiating the greeting in Romanian involves the symmetric use of the temporal indicators *bună seara/bună seara* (example 3) and is rather similar to a symmetrical verbal interaction in Spanish, as shown by the following example:

Example 4: TV show; A. f., approx. 35 years old, entertainer; B. f., approx. 55 years old, special guest; conversation initiated in the formal register (CORLEC)

A. *Buenos días, doña Elena. / B. Buenos días.* (A. “Good day, Mrs. Elena.”/ B. “Good day.”)

In conclusion, *hola* can be used both as a formal greeting (*hola, buenos días*), and as an informal one (*hola*). However, in Romanian, the differences between formal (*bună ziua*) and informal (*bună*) are stricter, lacking an intermediate expression that could be used on both the vertical and the horizontal axis. While in Spanish students can address their teacher using *hola*, in Romanian it is impolite to do so. As a pragmatic value, in the informal register, the conventional Spanish form *buenas* would most likely relate to the expression *salut* than to *bună*, both of these being frequently used. Our remarks are not meant to restrict the possibilities of their use, but to highlight certain dominants regarding interpersonal relationships.

Both Spanish and Romanian have a “complementary greeting” (Kerbrat-Orecchioni 2001, 110) verbalized through a question with a symbolic value (Haverkate 1994). By analyzing the means of replying to the question within the verbal interaction which follows the greeting itself, Kerbrat-Orecchioni (2001) notices that in French the reply to the question *comment ça va?* is quite evasive, meaning that it doesn’t reveal concrete information and being mostly a positive response. It generates a verbal development (a source of initiation of a certain discussion topic) if its value is labeled as negative or positive, in compliance with norms accepted in the specific community, regarding the unmarked responses.

The use of the current greeting form followed by one or two questions (for example, *Bună. Ce mai faci?/ Bună ziua. Ce mai faceți?* or *Bună! Ce mai faci? Cum o mai duci?*) requires similar conditions of achievement for French and Spanish as well.

The positive reply to a question that marks the sequence of complementary greeting is considered by Kerbrat-Orecchioni (2001) to be “preferred” or “unmarked,” while the negative response is “un-preferred” or “marked” and is used only if “there

are serious reasons to do so, the most frequent motive being that of intending to tell someone about personal issue” (Kerbrat-Orecchioni 2001, 115; our translation). Miranda divides Spanish response formulas into three categories: very good (for the exemplification of which the author quotes almost exclusively expressions considered to be highly informal), (very) bad and good (normal) (1992, 82).

As for the expressions *¿qué tal?* and *ce mai faci?*, due to the frequent use of this type of complementary greeting in both cultures, we notice a constant tendency of equalizing them from a linguistic and sociocultural point of view. It must be acknowledged, however, that Romanian is not as conventionalized as Spanish and does not determine a symmetric reactive act. Thus, *ce mai faci?*, the most frequent complementary greeting in Romanian, did not yet undergo a process of ritualization as it did in Spanish, French or English (*how do you do*).

3. Organizing the leave-taking exchange also entails a balanced distribution of the participants’ intervention. Within this pair of adjacency, the first intervention of a speaker determines that of the hearer. Haverkate (1994) claims that leave-taking forms a symmetrical pair (an echo of the first intervention) in which, to achieve politeness, the first intervention calls for a stereotypical reaction. This kind of reaction is typical of both greeting and thanking, as well as of offering or inviting. The strategies used by every speaker aim to tone down the “brutality” of the separation and to convince the interlocutor that another meeting will definitely take place. Miranda speaks of a class of forms of “divergent communication” (1992, 81) which includes interruptions, the leave-taking, the mutual greetings addressed when separating or when referring to other people (in regular situations, in cases of illness etc.), and condolences.

The selection of specific expressions is determined, as expected, by the type of interpersonal relationships, as well as by other parameters of the communicative situation. The length and structure of the verbal exchange can be reduced in the cases of familiarity between the interlocutors or when the meeting is very close to coming to an end. The frequency of the encounters between the interlocutors also influences the length and structure of the conversational episode.

The constitutive elements of verbal exchange for leave-taking could be: the current leave-taking formula (1) + the expression of the wish to meet again (temporal indications of the moment of meeting) (2) + wishes addressed to the interlocutor (3) (+resuming leave-taking). The sociocultural conventions in use (both formal and informal) make it possible to resume and multiply the leave-taking exchange.

Miranda (1992, 83) identifies the following general leave-taking forms: *hasta luego* (“goodbye, see you soon”), *hasta la vista* (“see you soon”), *hasta la vuelta* (“see you next time”), *nos vemos* (“see you”), *te llamo* (“I’ll call you”), *os esperamos de nuevo* (“we’re expecting you again”), *buen viaje* (“have a nice trip”), *felices vacaciones* (“have a nice holiday”) etc. Both Moliner (1997, vol.1) and Cascón Martín (1995) point out that Spanish does not feature, however, a wide range of gestures and polite terms. This affirmation may be surprising, if we remember that Haverkate (2004) believes Spanish culture to be oriented towards positive politeness. In the Spanish sociocultural context, separation seems to evince a tendency to affirm the wish for speakers to meet

again at a later date, with more or less specified temporal indicators, while greetings are typical of specific situations (such as a trip, the imminence of an important event in one's life, health issues etc.) rather than to everyday life situations:

Example 1. A. *Ța nos veremos. A ver qué sucede entretanto./ B. Si, vamos a ver.* (A. "See you soon. We'll see what comes up in between."/ B. "Yes, we'll see.")

Example 2. A. *Nos vemos el proximo viernes./ B. Vale, hasta luego.* (A. "I'll see you next Friday."/ B. "OK, see you soon.")

In Romanian culture, conventional leave-taking phrases relate to expressions which can be used in various situations: *te-am pupat* ("kisses"), *vă sărut* ("kisses"), *sănătate* ("cheers"), *numai bine*, ("all the best"); specialized for certain professional or personal events: *baftă* ("best of luck"), *success* ("good luck"), *să fie într-un ceas bun* ("may God be with you"), *casă de piatră* ("happy wedded life"), *să-ți meargă bine* ("may good times lie ahead"); used for different ritual events: *Cnăciun fericit* ("Merry Christmas"), *sărbători fericite* ("Happy Holidays"), *la mulți ani* ("Happy Birthday"), *un an nou cu sănătate* ("Happy New Year"); used in daily or weekly moments: *o zi/seară/săptămână bună* ("have a good day/evening/week"), *după amiază plăcută* ("have a nice afternoon"), *weekend plăcut* ("have a good weekend"); referring to the forthcoming meal: *poftă bună* ("enjoy your meal") or bedtime: *noapte bună* ("good night"); when going on a trip: *călătorie plăcută* ("have a nice trip/safe journey"), *drum bun* ("drive safe"), *s-aveți vreme bună* ("may the weather be good"); pseudo-greetings addressed to youths by their parents or older relatives: *ai grijă* ("take care"), *fii atent* ("be careful"). The same expression can also be used when going on a trip: *(să) aveți grijă (de voi)* ("take care of yourselves"), or *să suni cum ajungi* ("call as soon as you get there"); some are addressed to people with health issues: *(multă) sănătate* ("good health"), *să te faci bine repede* ("get well soon") etc.

A comparative analysis of leave-taking phrases reveals that, in Romanian, this verbal exchange may consist of (1) the current leave-taking formula, (2) an expression for the perspective of a future meeting (temporal indicators for the next meeting) and (3) the greetings (+resuming the leave-taking formula), in different associations: (1); (1)+(2); (1)+(3); (1)+(2)+(3). Thus, in the selected examples we encounter different combinations of following conventional forms: (1) *bună ziua, bună seara, pa* ("bye"); (2) *la revedere* ("goodbye"), *ne vedem mâine* ("see you tomorrow"), *ne vedem la școală* ("see you at school"); (3) *după amiază plăcută* ("have a nice afternoon"), *poftă bună* ("enjoy your meal"), *spor la cumpărături* ("good luck with your shopping"), *baftă mâine* ("good luck tomorrow"), *sănătate* ("lots of health"), *o zi bună* ("have a nice day").

Example 1: co-workers; A. m., approx. 25 years old; B. f., approx. 40 years old (personal archives)

A. *Bună ziua. După amiază plăcută.* / B. *Mulțumesc, asemenea.* (A. "Good day. Have a nice afternoon." / B. "Thanks, you too.")

Example 2: in the street, co-workers; A. and B. f., approx. 40 years old (personal archives)

A. *Pa. Ne vedem mâine./ B. Pa. Poftă bună !* (A. "Bye. See you tomorrow."/ B. "Bye. Enjoy your meal!")

Example 3: conversation in the street between two colleagues; A. m., 23 years old, teacher; B. f., 25 years old, teacher ((Ionescu-Ruxăndoiu 2002, 33)

A. *Bine. Spor la cumpărăături, la ce faci acolo și baftă mâine. Ne vedem la școală.*/ B. *Să fie! Pa./ A. Pa, pa.* (A. “OK. Good luck with your shopping, with whatever you’re doing, and good luck tomorrow. See you at school.”/ B. “I hope so! Bye.”/A. “Bye-bye.”)

Example 4: at the drugstore; A. f., approx. 30 years old, shop assistant; B. f., approx. 40 years old; C. m., 45 years old, a couple-client (personal archives)

B. *Mulțumim mult./ A. Sănătate, numai bine./ C. Mulțumim. La revedere.* (B. “Thank you so much!”/ A. “Get well soon, all the best!” / C. “Thank you. Good bye!”)

Example 5: legal advice on the radio; A. f., approx. 35 years old, radio show host; B. f., approx. 60 years old, listener; C. m, approx. 50 years old, lawyer, the special guest of the broadcast (Ionescu-Ruxăndoiu 2002, 211)

B. *Vă mulțumesc mult./ C. Sănătate!./ A. O zi bună. Să mai ascultăm o întrebare. Bună dimineața.* (B. “Thank you so much!”/ C. “Lots of health!”/ A. “Have a nice day! Let’s listen to another question. Good morning.”)

As far as leave-taking is concerned, it reveals conventional formulas within categories (1) and (3); these are combined and multiplied frequently within the intervention and mark the interpersonal relationships of proximity. In Spanish, however, the first category is almost non-existent, the second one has a number of commonalities with Romanian, and the third one includes less specialized expressions of leave-taking, the essential difference between the two sociocultural systems being the small number of greetings for everyday situations in Spanish. Consequently, the most frequent combinations are (2), (2) + (3).

Since 1990, *o zi bună* (a structure borrowed from the English *have a nice day*) became a frequently used expression in Romanian, redefining current leave-taking formulas such as *bună ziua* or *bună seara*. Nowadays, this conventional form has a quite large stylistic register that “includes an area extending from the standard and the colloquial register towards the ceremonious one” (Zafiu 2003, 15; our translation). From the perspective of sociocultural functions concerning the neutralization, that *o zi bună* takes on, this way of taking goodbye denotes a similar evolution with the expression *hola* (the Spanish greeting).

Conclusions

THE COMPARATIVE analysis between Spanish and Romanian politeness models allows us to identify a relative degree of overlapping between the two models. The intercultural analysis of nominal address terms reveals the existence of a tripartite hierarchical system in Romanian (*tu—dumneata—dumneavoastră*), as well as the existence of some expressions used when referring to a third person, physically absent from the setting. On the other side, the Spanish cultural model has a bipartite structure (*tú—usted/ustedes*), oriented towards the horizontal axis of the interpersonal relationships, and the third person does not get any markers of deference in the pronominal address forms.

The act of greeting consists of similar sequences in the two cultures: the current greeting formula + the complementary greeting, when meeting, and the current leave-tak-

ing formula + declaring the intention of seeing someone again + forms of greetings (+ resuming the leave-taking formula), when parting. In Romanian, greeting someone upon meeting respects the hierarchical politeness model and reveals a lesser degree of conventionality for the complementary greeting, in comparison with the Spanish cultural model. From the temporal dimension perspective, the use of the greeting forms shows differences of usage in the two cultures regarding the moments of the day (morning, noon, afternoon, evening, night).

The conventional form of greeting *bola*—thought by Spanish specialists to play a neutralizing part and to perform a regulatory function in cases of uncertainty as regards the interlocutor's social position, according to the sociocultural orientation towards positive politeness—does not have an equivalent in Romanian culture.

In Spanish, leave-taking implies the existence of a much more limited inventory of greeting formulas than in Romanian, where attention is drawn to everyday events. In this case, it could be said that the Romanian model is more inclined towards positive politeness than the Spanish one. We also notice that the Romanian conventional leave-taking forms have developed due to the assimilation of the conventional form *o zi bună*, which has the role of neutralizing the social distance involved in the use of *bună ziua* and *bună seara*.



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Abstract

Address and Greeting in Romanian and Spanish: A Comparative Analysis from the Perspective of Politeness

The paper proposes a comparative analysis of the forms of address and greeting as part of the verbal politeness models identified both in Spanish and Romanian, in order to determine some similarities and differences between the two cultural models. This analysis reveals the existence of a tripartite system of hierarchical politeness in the Romanian language, whilst in Spanish there is a bipartite system, oriented towards the horizontal axis of interpersonal relationships. The act of greeting in Romanian goes by the system of hierarchical politeness and exhibits a lower degree of formality for the complementary greeting as compared to the Spanish cultural model. Leave-taking in Spanish culture covers a much more limited range of greeting forms than in Romanian culture, where higher attention is drawn to everyday life events.

Keywords

intercultural comparison, verbal politeness, terms of address, greeting, leave-taking