

Georgiana GHICIUC  
Université « A.I.Cuza » de Iași (Roumanie)

## **La campagne présidentielle française de 2012: une bataille des mots. Aperçu des instances d'hostilité employées par les cinq premiers candidats sur leurs blogs et sites officiels**

**Abstract:** Online campaign discourse during the 2012 French presidential elections revolved around criticising, ridiculising and attacking the opponent. Concrete policies, part of the candidates' platforms were, most of the times, neglected in favour of rude incivility. Opposition candidate of the Socialist Party François Hollande deployed significantly more instances of verbal hostility during the campaign than the other four main candidates altogether. Centrist François Bayrou remained level-headed and moderated throughout the campaign. Critique, ridiculisation and discursive blocking of the opponent were analysed with the aid of Tams Analyzer, a discourse-analytical tool that helped with inventorying and coding all of the texts the five main candidates (François Hollande, Nicolas Sarkozy, Marine Le Pen, François Bayrou, Jean-Luc Mélenchon) posted on their personal or official sites between April 9<sup>th</sup> and May 4<sup>th</sup>. The codes chosen during the analysis (some of which you will see exemplified in this paper) were part of Derek Bousfield's list for *strategies of impoliteness* (2008) and were classified with the aid of Benoit's *Functional Theory of Political Campaign Discourse* (1999). This paper will give a short glimpse of how the main candidates' discourse was constructed online. A further one will compare the data hereby presented to what was witnessed during the final televised debate between Hollande and Sarkozy.

**Keywords:** verbal hostility, presidential rhetoric, political communication, discourse analysis.