The Interconnections of Research and Design in Context of Social Trust and the Triple Helix Concept

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Abstract

Both explicitly and implicitly the central role of my paper is given to the description of the methodology that I used while designing my research, to the discussion of the problem that I faced while putting my research results onto paper. What I am really interested in is describing the mental design process through real life research examples of social trust that show the importance of this phenomena, that with its own dynamics, structures, systems and subsystems construct and maintain the functioning of the science-economics-governance triangle. To what extent can trust in neighbours, strangers or social institutions affect our social well-being? Is the digital communication of social trust capable of solving social and economic problems? Can trust function as a social connective tissue? How can we reveal these problems with the help of social sciences and how can we facilitate social trust with the help of social communication researches focusing especially on the interconnections between science-economics and governance. While trying to answer these questions I attempted to function as a problem solving agent. I designed abstract and concrete research categories in the framework of discourse analysis that functioned as tools to my research. Defining trust as social capital provides an opportunity to review national and international researches, which make it possible to survey the effects of social trust in a computer mediated context.

Keywords: *problem, solution, agent, trust, communication*

1. Introduction

In order to discuss the ICT dimensions of social trust I plan to conceptualize the term – trust – based on previous scientific discussions from significant authors of this scientific discipline. After a general overview of the term I tend to focus my conceptualization specifically on trust as social capital, focusing on my home country's – Hungary – social characteristics, as an example of social trust can function as a link between the actors of research, economics and governance. I plan to support my ideas with various international research results from OECD, Pew Global Attitudes Project research, Gallup research results and Hungarostudy research findings. I will explicitlit describe the research process I carried out to finalize my paper. Within this process I will especially focus on the rational public deliberation and discourse analysis as tools that helped me to identify my research results. Finally, I plan to draw conclusions of the lessons of social trust researches.

2. The conceptualization of trust

Individuals participating in social discussions or those being part of an institution might face the dilemma, when to trust and when to mistrust. Knowledge can reassure trust or mistrust if it is considered as justified true belief. We normally expect participants of rational deliberation to be able to prove their notions to themselves and to their counterparts

(Brandom, 1994). Brandom's enunciation is also applicable to the substantiable feature of trust or distrust.

In a given deliberative, social action or economic situation four essential elements can be differentiated: the situation itself, to whom we ascribe trust, the trust that is predicated, furthermore, that to which/whom trust is assigned. Trust can be attributed to functionality, system, individuals, structures, controlling mechanisms, propositions, knowledge, presupposition, and to social actions as well. According to Weber, in order for an action to become social, the individual acting in his/her subjective understanding of the action, takes into account, relates to, and orients him/herself towards other individuals' actions (Weber, 1978). We must surmise some trust not only in regards of instrumental actions, but also in connection with social action, in relation to other individuals, before these actions can be carried out (Gambetta, 1988). In case of successful social actions, trust generates trust, therefore trust can either be regarded as a prerequisite of social action, or as a product of it. For interaction with instrumental or social actions trust is a requirement, in case trust is replaced by mistrust cooperation between individuals becomes impossible.

Thomas Hobbes described the state of nature, a world without trust, as "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short" (Hobbes, 1985, p. 186). This condition is envisaged, as finding its seed-plot in self-preservation, realized as self-defence. Thus, making self-preservation and self-defence a natural right, a norm, a condition. A natural state, although created only for the sake of argument, is an unwanted state, among other reasons, because of the lack of trust.

The sociologist Talcott Parsons stated that double-contingency is a fundamental condition for all social actions, which is the result of our unaquintance of future situations. Double-contingency occurs when participant A's actions depend on participant B's and vica versa. Double-contingency therefore results in indecisive and unstable social relations, which in fact is capable of baffling social action. Future oriented actions in such cases are often uncertain and unpredictable. Coming from this inherent insecurity and unpredictability individuals are unable to trust one another's actions. (Parsons, 1989).

The neoclassical economic theory [12]declares that actors on the market, similarly to homo oeconomicus only focus on maximising their personal benefit. They know everything and are capable of doing everything, but finally are only interested in their own profit, regardless of other actors. Profit maximisation, with the assumable existance of an invisible hand on the market, should gear all workforce, goods, service exchange to function without defaults. Similarly to state of nature, actors strive for personal benefits, without profound care for others' needs. As Hartmut Rosa points out, societies based on market economics face challenges of accelerating social processes which have negative effects on those sub-systems incapable of social acceleration (Rosa, 2003).

One common feature in the above mentioned three theories – Thomas Hobbes' model, Talcott Parsons' double contingency, or the neoclassic economic theory – is characterised by individualism. The outcomes of these situations are rather predictable, at the same time mirroring why trust among individuals – and between state and individual – is difficult to be accomplished. As a result, unless structurally created mistrust between institution and individual is repealed, social stability does not become feasible. The other common characteristic feature of the mentioned models is that they describe individuals' freedom and autonomy as a result of other individuals' uncertainty and uncontrollability. Social interaction is often characterized by social scrimmage, as individual freedom is expected to be realized through the demolish of others' freedom. The state of nature, citizen revolt are all consequences of such thread, which implies that the above discussed models are all undesirable state for the actors of social sphere. Culture, common knowledge, norms, beliefs,

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[1] My discussion on neoclassical economics is based on the assumptions of E. Roy Weintraub (2007).

[2] The term was first used by Thorstein Veblen in his 1900 article of "*The Preconceptions of Economic Science*".

family structures, optimally functioning institutions, community collaboration are all tools for avoiding the realization of the state of nature, double contingency and boundless mistrust. In reality there is a conjugation between acting according to one's own interest and in favour of the community.

Trust and mistrust are not simple opposites (Giddens, 1990). Trust and mistrust exclude each other in the sense that we cannot suppose the presence of both at the same time, its declaration would be a repugnance that no one would keep to. This results from the asymmetrical relation lying between the two concepts. Trust is rounded by certain cognitive fallibility and blindness, opposed to this, mistrust does not surmise the notion of blindness. Expectations may simply be deceived one time in order to rationally justify the presence of mistrust. Trust is reconstituted and built up over time, but one single experience of dupery is enough to abrogate trust, before opinion can justly be modified and mistrust declared. From the perspective of time, it is characterised by asymmetry, as the logic of building trust and dissolving trust and creating mistrust, are completely opposite. It is possible for an individual to operate from totally different perspectives of trust concerning another individual or social actor, for example it is possible to trust in a doctors medical skills but mistrust his/her cooking skills at the same time. Such an atomistic trust based on specific features is possible in interaction between individuals, but not in the course of social actions. A differentiated notion of trust has to be synthesized in order to funcion in a type of cost-benefit evaluation, which is especially hard to accomplish if we take into consideration future actions. In social aspect trust usually operates in future oriented actions. Trust is maintained and rebuilt when a person reacts to rational commitments expected of them. Not being committed might terminate trust relationship. According to Brandom competent linguistic practitionars follow their own and each others' commitments and entitlements, as deontic scorekeepers (Brandom, 1994). Resulting from this deontic record it is not possible to build trust on juggled grounds. Trust based relationships take the retrieval of obligation and commitment. Making trust explicit requires a rather sensible tool to analyse social phenomena.

In this chapter I have dealt with the concept of trust, since I regard it a critical notion. Above I have presented the different forms of asymmetry between trust and mistrust. Opposed to mistrust, trust seems to have both culturally and functionally a positive connotation. Evolving trust is time consuming and functions inductively, whereas mistrust can be built quickly and justified by a single ground. As indicated by new asymmetry, trust can occur as cognitively naive, but socially and functionally necessary. The asymmetry refers to the fact that trust cannot be concluded from the absence of mistrust, therefore showing that trust understood positively and grounded in experience cannot be established as a well-proved true belief.

3. Discourse analysis as an explicit tool used to design my research

In the present part I plan to justify why I decided to use discourse analysis as a methodological tool for my research and I also plan to elaborate on how I used it as a methodology. Due to the fact that this type of analysis can be applied to any piece of writing or recorded communication it is currently used from media studies, to rhetoric, cultural studies, political science, psychology and cognitive science. According to Berelson (1952) it can be used for gaining information with the following purposes: (1) reveal international differences in communication content; (2) demonstrate the occurance of propaganda; (3) detect the intentions, or communication trends of an individual, group or institution; (4) elaborate on attitudinal and behavioral responses to communications; (5) decree psychological and emotional state of individuals and groups.

From the two general categories – conceptual and relational – I plan to rely on the latter one as a methodological concept of my research analysis. Conceptual analysis establishes the existence and frequency of concepts represented by words or phrases in a text. Relational analysis on the contrary, goes one step further by exploring the relationships among notions in a text, namely it focuses on meaningful relationships (Carley, 1992). Palmquist asserts that concepts are 'ideational kernels' that can be regarded as symbols which acquire meaning through their connection to other symbols (Palmquist, 1997, p.58).

Discourse analysis is a general term for a number of approaches to analyze written, vocal or sign language use. The objects of discourse analysis are characterized in terms of coherent sequence of sentences, propositions, speech. Discourse analysts are not only engaged in the study of language use but inclined to analyze 'naturally occuring' language use, not invented examples (Tannen, 2016).

Tracy and Mirivel discuss the steps of discourse analysis as follows. According to them the first step should be to audio or videotape human interaction, then a transcript of the selected segments of interaction should be made. They refer to the creation of a transcript as a fundamental act of DA. As a third step a data session for a small group of people should be organized, in order to make them listen to or view the tape of the interaction, followed by a discussion. Finally, a scholarly argument should be developed, while reflecting on what has been observed (Tracy-Mirivel, 2009, p.154). As the described discourse analysis process applies to verbal communication, I only plan to use it for gaining data from my semi-structured interview sessions.

As for the analysis of the comments' text I follow the 10-step methodological logic set up by Chilton (2004) and Schneider (2013) in their discussion about discourse analysis. As a first step Schneider mentions the importance of establishing a context, meaning to understand where the material comes from and in which social and historical context it was produced. Moreover, to get to know whether the analysed material is a response to a major event or not and how it was received at the time of publication. Concerning my analyzed document, the content comes from commenters, potential beneficiaries of the European cohesion funds – individuals and professional organizations likewise. Both the social and historical context in which the texts appear is significant, since it is the first time for Hungary to compulsorily carry out such a public consultation in order to be able to submit the Partnership Agreement to the European Commission. Therefore it can be stated without a doubt that the analysed material is a response to a major event, at the time of its publication it was well received and awaited by the commenters – by those contributors who decided to express their opinion.

As a second step Schneider (2013) advises to explore the production process, that is to make a thorough background check concerning who produced the source material – their institutional and personal background. What is the political position of the organization, and its affiliation if any. Once establishing the institutional background the researcher should describe the media and the genre he/she is working with. Correctly defining the genre helps the researcher to asses the 'genre-specific mechanisms' of the source. Some scholars argue that "the medium is the message" (McLuhan, 1964/2001, p.14), or rather the medium in which the message is presented is the essential element that shapes meaning. Concerning my analyzed texts in reference to who produced the text of the comment – what kind of political affiliation he/she had is hard to decide. The majority of the comments – especially in the second round – tend to show a neutral position, commenting mainly on the professional content of the text. However, if we take one step back and ask who produced the texts that functioned as the debate material, the answer is obviously, the Hungarian Government – although each Operational Programme was written by experts in the ministries responsible for the field. Concerning the genre, the documents are scientific and political at the same time. The medium in which the text were presented is definitely the Internet.

As a third step Schneider (2013) emphasizes the importance to prepare the material for analysis. In order to fulfil this step I have downloaded the comments from the webpage and made them available and re-readable for future reference.

In the meaning of step four (Schneider, 2013) the material should be coded, thus assigning characteristic features to specific units of analysis, such as paragraphs, sentences, words. The coding process itself is preceeded by the setting up of coding categories. During the coding process some of the original categories might be left out and some might be added at the end. In case of working with several documents the process should be repeated as many times as many different texts are there. This is what Mayring (2002) calls 'evolutionary coding'. In regard of my own research I established coding categories based on the discussion of the theoretical part of my dissertation, and I also took into account the information that I had about the commenters. Therefore I created 8 coding categories – in relation to emotions, trust, scientific resources, expression of own opinion, application of encouraging utterances, social aspect, identity and parlance (respect vs.solidity).

As a fifth step of discourse analysis process in line with Chilton's (2004) statements I examined the structure of the text. He asks whether the discourse strands overlap in the text or not. In general concerning the analysed comment material it can be said that the texts follow the structure of the original Operational Programme, not mentioning certain individual cases which rather express emotional opinion without focusing on the original scientific content.

Step number six should be the collection and examination of discoursive statements. At this point statements with a specific code should be examined, mapping out the truths that the texts manifest on each major topic.

According to step seven cultural references should be identified. After defining what the context of the source material is, the question of how the context influences the analyzed material should be clarified, which will help addressing the function of intertextuality. Concerning my research analysis it can be stated that the comments contain reference to other scientific sources – beside the Operational Programme – many of the commenters prove to be experts in the commented field and also in other disciplines, therefore seeing the analysed text from other perspectives as well.

As step eight linguistic and rethorical mechanism should be identified. This step is decribed as the most time consuming but the most rewarding at the same time. At this point needs to be recognized how the various statements function at the level of language (Fairclough, 1995). Do they belong to a certain jargon; are there any reguliarities in the grammar usage, such as 'we' –'they' – like this the protagonist and the antagonist of the statement can be identified. Passive versus active verb usage might be similarly telling, just like modalities that signify urgency, serve as calling to action. Concerning my research it can be stated that linguistic elements are salient. Especially in regards of 'Environmental and Energy Efficiency Operational Programme', 'Economic Development and Innovation Operational Programme', 'Regional and Settlement Development Operational Programme' the use of jargon is remarkably dominant. Grammar use is also significant (in relation to expressing difference between commenters and government institutions – we vs. they). I made this feature one of the three scales among which I carried out the coding, similarly to active and passive verb usage that functions as the second scale. The presence of modalities calling for action are also decisive in the text.

Step nine stays for interpreting data. Basically this is the point when the researcher has to define what all the received data mean, whether they have any meaning at all. Here knowledge of structural features and individual statements have to be merged. It is advisable to bear in mind questions regarding who created the source material, what is their position on the examined topic, and most importantly who might benefit from the discourse created by the sources. My research definitely has a meaning not only for the parties involved in the

consultation process, but also for wider audience, for the citizens of Hungary, who indirectly all benefit from the European development funds. My analysis might be useful first of all for government representatives who plan to carry out further consultations in the future, but also beneficiaries commenting on the Operational Programmes might profit from the findings.

Lastly, step ten urges for the presentation of the findings. This is the time when the original research questions should be answered and the hypothesis should be proved or confuted based of the received data. At this point evidence from the work can be added to present the arguments.

4. Changes in the concept of trust as social capital in Hungary

Beside the abstract categories of trust discussed in part 2 of my paper it is worth mentioning the fundamental notions declared by Francis Fukuyama (1996), who approaches social trust from the perspective of national cultures in order to predict the underlying features that bolster social and economic prosperity. Although, looking at societies from an economic view he declares that only those with a high potential of social trust will be able to bring about the large-scale business organizations that are needed to compete in the new global sphere. Based on this idea introduces countries classified as high-trust societies (like Japan, Germany, the United States) and low-trust societies (like France, southern Italy, Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea), the latter being explained with extremly strong family bonds that thwart trust outside the immediate family which hinders the creation of large-scale enterprises. It is questionable whether tested on a larger scale it would end up the same result. Even among the countries Fukuyama examines, he neglects the vital economic contribution of the small and medium-sized firms.

In modern societies we can observe the emergence of two types of models: one builds on social capital, trust and solidarity while the other sees the financial capital, fiscal aspects as primary. The first model, which was basically the vision of the founding fathers of the European Union, especially that of Robert Schumann's considers the compliance with moral principles and social norms fundamental, built on trust, solidity, the functioning of a strong civil society, in other words on the strenghtening of social capital. Numerous researches in the past decades show that social capital is a real capital, its reinforcement is a more reliable basis of economic prosperity than any fiscal model.

The defining of social capital has four major approaches: anthropological, sociological, economical and political. The anthropological view states that cooperation, community and trust are people's major needs. During the past centuries these needs were not questioned rather toned-up, communities considered to be functioning as individuals' life frame. Due to industrial developments and urbanization, that occured in the past three centuries the cooperation and community concept of modern and postmodern societies' had to be reformulated.

The sociological approach originates from the phenomena of social norms and human motivation and describes the significance of trust, mutuality, and community networks from this perspective. For the definition of social capital from a sociological viewpoint the works of Coleman (1988) and Bourdieu (1986) can be considered fundamental. Both of them emphasize the significance of correlation between different forms of capital. Among the Hungarian sociologists the works of Andorka Rudolf (1996) are seen as essential.

The economical approach accentuates that cooperation and trust are crucial economic factors. Since it is not my aim to examine the effects of social capital on economy in this paper, I do not intend to elaborate on this approach.

In political studies it is highlighted that the strenghtening of social capital is vital for the affirmation of democracy, social solidarity and sustainable development. A major difference between social capital and financial or human capital can be detected in the fact that it is not the characteristic of an individual's property but that of a social community. Therefore we can speak about the social capital of a country, region, city, thus being an ecologiocal not an individual peculiarity. According to its definition social capital is such an investment which aims at developing group identity, Jane Jacobs referred to it as the "value of networks" (Jacobs, 1961, p.138). Decades later the term regained its popularity serving as focus of a World Bank research programme and major element of mainstream intellectuals' writings, among others Robert Putnam (2000) made significant research in the topic of social capital. Friendship, trust, common norms and aims can be considered such investments that foster social cooperation through which they serve better economic efficiency. Evidently, most descriptions declare trust as the basics of social capital, however it is questionable, whether trust is the result of a strong social capital or it is its core element. No matter whether we characterise it as reason or as cause it is undeniably a major feature of social capital. Within social capital we can differentiate between three dimensions: bonding (referring to strong family ties) bridging (concerning bridges between colleagues and distant friends[3]), linking (in regards of networks between different social groups) (Skrabski & Kopp, 2007 own translation).

In part 3 of my paper I attempted to discuss the methodological steps that I used to design my research, I used this to illustrate how I gained information from public discourse in the topic of European Cohesion Fund distribution in Hungary, all these public discourses were carried out in the frame of national consultations about the content of the texts of the Operational Programmes designed to distribute the cohesion funds. Beside my own research in the following part I tend to discuss the relevant results of international research.

According to the OECD's 2001 study the measuring of social capital is still not in an advanced stage. The applied scientific instruments use trust, mutuality and participation as main indicators. These scientific instruments examine attitudes, opinions, behavior patterns. Concerning attitudes and opinions the role of cultural factors are significant, therefore based on such surveys only prudent intercultural conclusions can be drawn.

In Hungary the representative Hungarostudy researches have dealt with the concept of social capital, among others involving trust as a key element. These studies were carried out for several years: in 1988, 1995, 2002, 2006 (Kopp et al, 2008). Based on Putnam (1993) social capital was defined along three dimensions, such as trust or distrust concerning the social environment, help offered by others or given to others, moreover, help received by civil organization or commitment towards such an organization. The social indexes were defined as trust, competitive attitude and participation in civil organizations.

According to an international research (OECD, 2001) the highest rate of trust can be found in the Scandinavian countries: 65% of Norwegians and 60% of Swedes declare that co-citizens are trustful, thus only 35% of Norwegians and 40% of Swedes can be considered as socially distrustful. According to a recent OECD civic engagement survey (OECD, 2015) people in Sweden are highly engaged in politics – 86% [4]voted in the last parliament election. [5] [6]Another significant data from the mentioned survey is that among OECD countries

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[3] According to a TÁRKI survey 7 out of 10 Hungarians trust at some level in their colleagues, distant friends, while the rest of the population trust the mentioned group slightly. However, the general trust level of the Hungarian society is rather law, 56% stating they do not trust anybody (Tárki: 2009& 2013).

[4] Voter turnout is defined as the percentage of the registered population that voted during the surveyed election.

[5] According to the same study voter turnout in Hungary was 62% in the most recent election, while the OECD average being 68%.

Australians feel the strongest sense of community, 92% report they have someone they can rely on.

In the changing societies of the Central-Eastern European region, the level of trust – in general towards all the actors of society – is significantly lower than in Western-European countries, and particularly lower compared to the Scandinavian Countries. Distrust and corruption have a close connection with each other. In this respect in Hungary the statements like "one cannot be prudent enough", "one cannot be careful enough" are considered very important by research subjects (Kopp, 2008 own translation). It is questionable however that trust without circumspection would be a realistic approach under our conditions, or it is rather the consideration of social reality.

According to the Hungarostudy researches the level of distrust has changed a lot in the past decades. While between 1995 and 2002 it has decreased, it increased significantly between 2002 and 2006 and since then to nowadays onwards. The level of impairment and distrust has increased significantly as well, which refers to the severe moral state and mentation. Interestingly, trust in family relationships and friendships has not decreased significantly, which indicates the viability of the Hungarian society (Utasi, 2002). Comparing different countries Fukuyama (1996) has proved that economic prosperity is closely related to the strength of social capital. Surveying only the Italian provinces Putnam (2000) arrived to the same conclusion. The mentioned changes in the social capital indexes have a significant role in Hungary's economic prosperity likewise.

5. Reasons and appearance of distrust in contemporary Hungarian society

For discussing the current Hungarian situation I take as reference Ronald Inglehart's researches, who collects the World Value Survey results since 1981 in order to classify among two dimensions the attitudes and their changes present in each country. According to them the value structure of societies can vary among traditional and modernized/secularized value, on the other hand it can differ based on material or self-expression dimension. In case of Hungary concerning self-expression value it has "closed" characteristics, while concerning secularized-rational values the "rational" is typical. (Inglehart, 2005, p. 257). Based on Keller (2009) Hungarian way of thinking is far away from the core western culture, nearing the orthodox culture. Hungarians based on the dimensions of self expression compared to Western-European countries can be featured as follows:

- we consider civilian and political rights less important
- the daily political activity is of a lesser significance for us
- we barely tolerate otherness
- self-fulfilment is of little relevance
- we do not trust others

As a result of the European comparative research four such dimensions were specified that can characterize the Hungarian community relations based on Tóth (2009):

- Hungarian society lacks trust
- social inequality is barely tolerated
- the judgement of corrupt behaviour is uneven

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[6] High voter turnout is a measure of citizen's participation in policy making process, which is an essential element of trust in government that is necessary for social cohesion and well-being.

- the tax rate of state services are in general underestimated, therefore the expectations towards it are higher than the state's possible performace

Based on the survey results Hungary can be put into the lower middle group in comparison to other European countries concerning the amount of trust towards institutions. It is worth differentiating between trust in general and trust towards institutions, concerning the latter one Hungary has even worse results than the Western-European countries.[7] In general, as I have already mentioned in this part, Scandinavian countries can be typified with the highest amount of trust, while post-socialist countries have the lowest amount. Among the Swedes, Danish, Finnish, Swiss and Dutch the amount of trust towards others and each other is bewteen 50-70%, while in case of Cipriots, Portuguese, Romanians, Serbians, Slovaks, Latvians, Moldavians, Polish and Greek the amount is below 20%.

According to a 2009 Gallup research that was carried out in 120 countries of the world, surveying future aspects of certain nations and countries Hungary was ranked 117 (out of 120) in regards of their vision concerning the future. 34 % of Hungarians considered their future hopeless, while only 10% of Polish, 7,5% of Germans, 3% of Austrians, 0.8% of Danish, 0.6% of Dutch and 0.5% of Norwegians had the same dark vision about their own future. A 2011 Pew Global Attitudes Project research – the most current that is at my disposal containing data about Hungary – has also detected that Hungarians are the most pessimistic among Central-Eastern European countries. 77% of Hungarians declared that they do not trust th current political system, and only 15% felt satisfied concerning their own life, while this rate (satisfaction in relation to own life) in Russia was 35%, in Poland 44%, in Czech Republic 49%.

In Hungary the social-economical status of the individual has a great effect on his/her level of general trust towards others. Those with higher educational level tend to be more trustful (54% declare they trust people in general). Compared to Western- European countries even individuals with higher educational level tend to trust their co-citizens less. Trust towards foreigners in general is very low (depending on what kind of knowledge we have about that individual or social group). (Bernát, 2009). One certain trust factor is age, Hungarians tend to trust more in elderly than in young people – all age groups agree on this. At the same time they apt to distrust rich and trust poor, while distrusting atheists and trusting religious citizens (Tóth, 2009).

Concerning public confidence, the level of trust is dramatically low in relation to parliamentarians, bankers, journalists. According to the 2009 research on a 10 point scale Hungarian citizens give a score of 2 for political institutions, concerning the press and the legal system the given score is 3.5. Among public institutions, the State Audit Office of Hungary, the Hungarian National Bank, the Police are relatively trustable, but still under the average – medium – rate (Tóth, 2009).

The Hungarian results are not only low in regards of general trust but also in regards of participatory elements of social capital – Hungarians are inclined to socialize the least amount of time with their neighbours among European countries. Also concerning assistance given to other people and engagement in civic organizations Hungary is in the bottom group – the former one being specifically the lowest rate among European countries, while the latter being the third lowest, preceding Romania and Bulgaria (Giczi-Sík, 2009).

Akerlof and Shiller (2009) stated that the fact whether we trust others or not is in interconnection with the view we form about them, concerning their expected behaviour towards us in a similar trust situation. Low trust level against public institutions is in close connection with the image we form about them, namely citizens are not convinced about the operational cleanness of these organizations, they suppose institutions might be contaminated

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[7] In our region only the Serbians and Czechs have a lower level of institutional trust.

by corruption. In fact, according to citizens in Hungary all institutions are corrupt at some extent. The worst situation can be detected in business sphere and concerning political parties, but the Parliament, public media, central government fall under similar perceptions. The opinion is slightly better about local councils, public health, police and the court (based on TÁRKI economic culture research). Among the World Value Survey countries Hungarian citizens are the most convinced concerning the approach that the actors of economy can only grow rich at each others expense. Compared to the rest of the European countries in Hungary revenue disparity is relatively small, even though citizens feel that revenue disparity is huge (Tóth, 2008).

The same research has been carried out in 2013 as well (examining the level of trust and the value structure of the Hungarian society), which got the following findings: (based on TÁRKI research, 2013)

- the value strucure of the Hungarian society did not undergo significant changes
- the general level of trust is still low, however there is a slight improvement concerning institutional trust
- the expectation towards state functions is lower, however trust concerning welfare actions of the state has improved.

In general can be stated that in Hungary the lack of trust is significant. Interestingly, while Hungarians condemn transgression, they do think that citizens in general are norm-breakers. Lack of trust is not only present in relation to co-citizens but towards public institutions as well. Since the 1990s the majority of the population claims that it is impossible to grow rich in this country in a fair way, moreover progression is only possible through violating rules. In international comparison it can sharply be detected how malformed the view concerning active (through hard work) and passive (through personal networks) social progression is in Hungary. Among the European Union member states it is Hungarians who consider the most important family ties and social networks, while the least amount of citizens agree that good education and hard work can be a means of progression as well (Lannert, 2009). According to Hankiss (2009) the deficiencies of the Hungarian value structure can be explained with the late civilization, with the more than four hundred years of colonization, and the continuous faults committed by the elite.

6. Conclusion

As we could see from the scientific and empirical examples the notion of social trust is a crucial one in the functioning of a society, it can either connect or disconnect actors of different societal spheres. Research results showed that certain nations (at different parts of the world) have different attitudes towards trust, but there is a general claim in regards of the presence of trust concerning social and individual matters, making this term a fundamental one in the dimension of social, economic and governance relations. Beside the theoretical part I explicitly focused on the presentation of my research, highlighting discourse analysis as a tool that I used to desing my research.

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