

Functional Categories in Intelligence Support*

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Abstract

Intelligence support is a communication process and the communication models, communication functions and other psychological concepts are relevant for understanding the role of both intelligence operators and decision-makers, as well as specific functions of intelligence support. Differences in these functions are supported by the amount of actionable intelligence and by the level of Clausewitzian friction involved in the security/operational situation.

Consequently, three functions of intelligence support are suggested: construction of intelligence superiority, warning, and integration into action.

Keywords: intelligence support, communication process, actionable intelligence, clausewitzian friction, intelligence superiority, warning, decision-making, risk management.

1. Intelligence support as communication process

As well known, the meaning of intelligence is to support with intelligence products decisions to be taken at various levels in operational planning or in the wider realm of national security. Therefore, essentially, a structure specialized in a certain domain transfers an informational content to a structure which uses this content to decide and trigger certain actions. Described this way, intelligence support is, obviously, a communication process.

According to the Explicative Dictionary of Romanian Language (DEX), the verb «to communicate», derived through French from the Latin verb «*communicare*», defines the action of "letting known", "informing",

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"conveying news", "saying".¹ The DEX definition identifies only the informational substance as object of communication. However, other definitions provide a larger scope for the contents being transferred to the recipient: "communication is a process by which persons share information, ideas, and feelings"² or "communication is a process of transmitting a sense from somebody to somebody else"³. We see that not only information is transferred during a communication, but also *feelings, ideas, and sense*, which holds water for intelligence support as well.

For all these types of transferred content, the intelligence structure has the competence to store/process/generate professional contents, thus being the *epistemic authority* of the intelligence domain. The recipient of transferred contents – the beneficiary of intelligence support – would then utilize these contents to make decisions regarding concrete actions, process which reflects the quality of *deontic authority* for the beneficiary of intelligence products.

The above mentioned positioning is relevant for researches on the functional rapport between these two parts of the communication process because it defines the limits between the entire intelligence structure – the epistemic domain – and the decisionmaker, who belongs to the deontic domain, responsible for the commands on any level of the system (in this case, the military system or, writ large, the national security system).

Looking at communication as *transactional process* between two parts, one can notice the signification of a basic *transactional analysis* principle, which states that the *role* of each party determines the character of communication by the adaptation of communication to serve the relation defined by the *roles of the parties*⁴. Again, this underlines clearly the limit where intelligence structure ought to stop before jeopardising its epistemic role. This is «the red line» where the intelligence product, albeit a mere verbal briefing, risks to cross into the deontic domain, where it suggests solutions, recommends a certain decision or another, assuming, this way, a deontic role.

The relevance of this functional rapport resides in the fact that transfer is not conducted in view of storing the communication content or

¹ *** *Explicative Dictionary of Romanian Language* – DEX, Romanian Academy, Bucharest, 1984, p. 179.

² Sandra Hybels, Richard Weaver II, *Communicating Effectively*, Random House, New York, 1986, p. 6.

³ Dorina Sălăvăstru, *Education Psychology*, Collegium – Psychology Series, Polirom Publishers, Iași, 2004, p. 174.

⁴ Sandra Hybels, Richard Weaver II, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

with other inert aims, yet with the deliberate objective to make decisions which lead to actions, even very important actions, considering the social impact they might entail. Actually, "communication has always an end, an objective, an intentionality, which can be explicit or implicit"⁵. This is an important point in analysing communication. The destination of communication – the decision in view of an action – is well known to both parties, and the emitter cannot ignore the finality of the transfer and formulates the content in a manner coherent with the intended utilization. In other words, an important aspect of the transferred content is the substance which concretely supports the objective of the recipient's activity – the action. Thus, communication needs to include «actionable substance». In intelligence language, this requirement reflects in the necessity to transmit «actionable intelligence».

2. Models of the communication process

Communication is a bidirectional process and researching the transfer from the intelligence structure to the beneficiary of intelligence products – one of the transmission senses – requires the examination of both the intelligence structure role, and the decisionmaker's role. In this respect, it can be noticed that the definition in DEX reflects the vision of one of the *two classes of models of communication processes* – the *mathematic model*, informational and linear, respectively the *psycho-sociologic model*, of *interactionist* nature⁶. More exactly, the reference exclusively to information as object of the transfer corresponds, mainly, to the classic theory of information, fathered by Claude Shannon. This theory describes communication in a mathematic/cybernetic manner, only from the points of view of the mechanism, the volume/quantity of transmitted information, and of the fidelity of the transmission process, but with no reference to the content/the quality of the transmitted content.

John Fiske⁷ called this model the «process school», which "sees communication as transmission of messages... and is interested

⁵ Jean-Claude Abric, *Psychology of Communication: Theories and Methods*, Polirom Publishers, Iași, 2002, pp. 15-32.

⁶ Dorina Sălăvăstru, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

⁷ John Fiske – American philosopher and historian, professor at Harvard University in the second half of the XIX-th Century.

especially in issues like efficiency and accuracy of the message transmission". This technical feature explains the wide use of this model in information technology (IT), using the well-known graphic⁸ displayed in Figure 1. In the same time, this model sees communication as "a process by which [the emitter] acts upon the behaviour or state of mind of another individual"⁹.

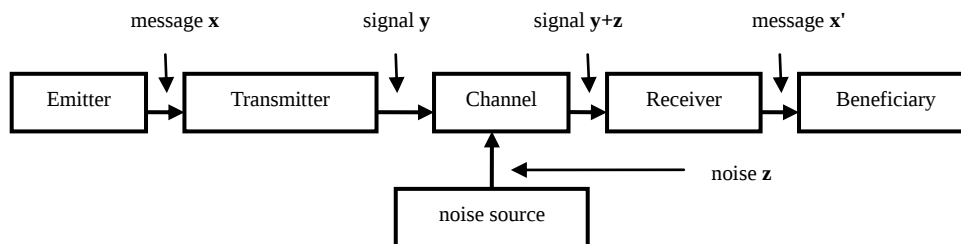


Fig.1. Shannon and Weaver model for the communication process

The other model of communication, the *psycho-sociologic model*, conceptualized by the Palo Alto School¹⁰, adds to the mathematic model the social context, the interaction between the Emitter and the Beneficiary, which implies action and reaction, thus being a circular, not a linear model¹¹. In the case of intelligence product dissemination, this model implies a dynamic interaction between the intelligence structure and the beneficiary, a complex transaction and not a simple cybernetic transfer. This interaction implies awareness regarding the fact that the objective of intelligence support is altering the behaviour of the beneficiary, in a logic assumed by both parties and based on a common interest. Actually, as Shannon and

⁸ www.veghe.ro.

⁹ This paragraph includes quotations from John Fiske, *Introduction to Communication Studies*, Methuen, New York, 1982, *apud* Vasile Tran, Irina Stănciugelu, *Communication Theory*, Comunicare.ro Publishing House, National School of Political and Administrative Studies (SNSPA), Department of Communication and Public Relations „David Ogilvy”, Bucharest, 2003, p. 39.

¹⁰ Group of researchers of various specialties (sociologists, linguists, psychiatrists, antropologists) united around Gregory Bateson. Palo Alto School includes Donald Jackson, Paul Watzlawick, Janet Beavin, Edward Hall, Ray Birdwhistell, Erving Goffman, Margaret Mead, Virginia Satir, Jay Haley, John Weakland, Richard Fish and others.

¹¹ Dorina Sălăvăstru, *op. cit.*, pp. 176-177.

Weaver stated, "the word communication has a wider sense, it includes all processes by which a spirit can affect another spirit"¹².

Consequently, intelligence production is influenced by specific factors called «determinants» which reflect analyst conditions such as his experience, his perception of reality, conceptions and convictions, as well as analytic errors and bias, his intentions and orientation towards an interest common with the beneficiary, but also his own creativity and professional qualities. In the same way, the decision-maker consuming the intelligence product is influenced by personal conditions such as his perceptions, expectations, conceptions and beliefs, his personality, experience, leader qualities, bias and creativity. In addition, decision-maker's intentions range wider than those common with the intelligence structure, which is the common interest expressed in commander's intent or the political project pursued by the decision-makers.

The absorption of the elements introduced by the social context, for the case of the models generated in interactionist approach, as mentioned above, as well as the approximation of the real communication channel by an ideal channel, with zero noise, allow reaching beyond Shannon's mathematic model. There, the conditionings operational both at communicator end and recipient end can be outlined according to the graphic presented in Figure 2, for the communication process adapted to reflect the intelligence support.

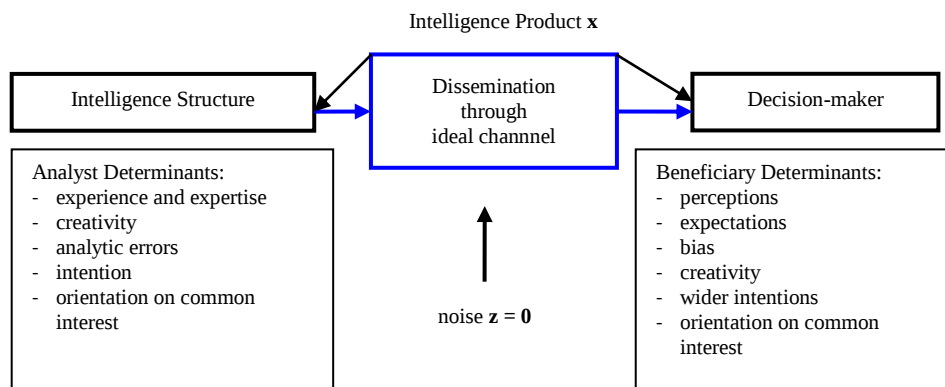


Fig. 2. Conditionings operational in intelligence support as communication process

Of course, this model works both ways, the reverse way reflecting the reaction from the decision-maker, who becomes communicator towards the intelligence structure.

¹² Vasile Tran, Irina Stănciugelu, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

John Fiske termed this model the «semiotic school», for which "performing communication means producing also an exchange of senses (significations)". For this model, "the object of interest is the study of the way the messages interact with people to produce *meanings* (or *significations*)"¹³.

3. The roles of participants in intelligence support

However, the encyclopaedic dictionary defines the action of communicating as "the fundamental mode of psycho-social interaction of persons through an articulate language or through other codes, in view of transmitting an information, of obtaining stability or individual or group behaviour modifications"¹⁴. In another definition, communication is "a process by which an emitter transmits information to the recipient... with the aim to produce certain effects upon the recipient"¹⁵, and "*the act of communication ends with practical implications upon the recipient*, the final stage of the information transfer"¹⁶. This underlines the natural fact that the recipient is an integral part of the functional model representing processes operating with information, intelligence included.

The same idea is expressed as representing a *power relation*: "an individual has power upon another if he can fulfil an action able to produce a change in the second individual"¹⁷. The factors which generate this influencing ability are agent properties called by the two authors «*power resources*». At the other end, the values of the target individual – in the case of intelligence support, the beneficiary of intelligence products – are termed «*motivational bases of power*». Psychologists Cartwright and Zander argue that "an act of influence establishes a relation between the resources of an agent and the *motivational basis* of the influenced individual"¹⁸. Thus,

¹³ This paragraph includes quotations from John Fiske, *Introduction to Communication Studies*, apud Vasile Tran, Irina Stănciugelu, *op. cit.*, *Communication Theory*, p. 39.

¹⁴ Vasile Tran, Irina Stănciugelu, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

¹⁵ J.J. Cuilenburg, O. Scholten, G.W. Noomen, *Communication Science*, apud Vasile Tran, Irina Stănciugelu, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

¹⁶ Vasile Tran, Irina Stănciugelu, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

¹⁷ Dorwin **Cartwright**, Alvin **Zander**, **Group Dynamics**, apud Vasile Tran, Irina Stănciugelu, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*.

intelligence support establishes a relation between the intelligence structure resources and the decision-maker motivational basis, which is reflected in the management conception and risk management policy.

These power relations are broken down into five power categories: *rewarding, coercive, legitimate, referential, and expert power*¹⁹. Among these, psychologists French and Raven define the expert power as "the influence based on superior knowledge attributed to the communicator and having affect upon the cognitive structure of the recipient"²⁰. Applying these concepts to intelligence support seen as a communication process, one can notice exactly the situation of intelligence structure's epistemic authority vis-à-vis the beneficiary of intelligence products. So, the production of an effect of cognitive nature is based on the acceptance of the intelligence structure expert status by the beneficiary of intelligence support in the domain where communication is performed, i. e. the intelligence domain.

The role difference in decision-maker and intelligence structure also marks the positioning of the two parties according to one of the two communication axioms, that "any communication process is either symmetric or complementary, depending on its basing on either equality or difference"²¹. In the case of intelligence support, the process is complementary, because the beneficiary holds the upper hand, according to Palo Alto School scholar Paul Watzlawick's explanation: "In a complementary relation, two different positions are possible. One of the partners holds a superior position..., primary or one-up, while the other holds the corresponding position, described as inferior, secondary or one-down"²². This role difference has clear consequences on intelligence support, because "the complementary interaction is based on maximizing the difference, which can lead to communication blockage"²³. In intelligence, these problems can occur when the content of intelligence products is altered to please the beneficiary's vision, when the intelligence

¹⁹ John P. French, Jr., Bertram H. Raven, *The Bases of Social Power*, 1960, *apud* Vasile Tran, Irina Stănciugelu, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

²⁰ *Idem*, p. 112.

²¹ Dorina Sălăvăstru, *op. cit.*, p. 180, with details about these axioms in pp. 178-181.

²² Paul Watzlawick, Janet Beavin, Donald Jackson, *Pragmatics of Human Communication. A Study of Interactional Patterns, Pathologies and Paradoxes*, *apud* Dorina Sălăvăstru, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

²³ Dorina Sălăvăstru, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

structure abuses by treading into the deontic domain – the realm of political or military decisions – or, the extreme case, when the decision is manipulated on purpose.

So, the study of intelligence support as communication process highlights the action and role of intelligence after the transfer is completed, the fact that the beneficiary of intelligence products belongs to the communication process, and the usefulness of intelligence products when the actionable intelligence is an integral component of decision and action.

4. Communication functions and the actionable content of intelligence products

The study of intelligence support as communication process is relevant from the point of view of functionality, because either the success or failure of intelligence can have important consequences in defence or security. This is why the best investigation path seems to lead to the communication functions. For the particular case of linguistic communication, six functions have been identified²⁴, which can be extrapolated for the communication process, in general:

- The «conative» function, which expresses "the capability of communication to produce effects upon the recipient", for example orders, requests, manipulation, advice, marketing messages, propaganda, recommendations. This function of linguistic communication bears no relevance for intelligence support, because the intelligence structures have to stay within the limits of its epistemic role, and to abstain from formulating recommendations. Obviously, references to any other example mentioned above are useless and alien to intelligence domain;

- The «referential» function is centred on the transferred content and "represents the communication capability to refer to a certain *state of facts*", expressing the "orientation of the message towards reality", and speaking to the recipient's intellect, to the quantitative, mathematic side of his perception;

²⁴ Roman Osipovici Jakobson, *Linguistic and poetry*, Moscow, 1896, *apud* Christian Baylon, Xavier Mignot, *Communication*, „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University Publishing House, Iași, 2000, pp. 83-85, and the same for the quotations in the following paragraphs referring to the communication functions.

- The «*poetic*» function is centred on the transferred content and "expresses the capability of communication to cross beyond the sense of words and determine certain *emotional states*". This function does not limit to literature, and includes messages not stemming directly from the objective substance transmitted, but views elements of qualitative nature, non-quantifiable, which speak to the «*affective side*» of the recipient's decisional mechanism;

- The «*emotional*» or «*expressive*» function "highlights the emotional states of the emitter", being centred on it and has no relevance for intelligence domain, where the analyst's momentary emotional state have no importance;

- The «*meta-linguistic*» function refers to communications regarding the very transmitted message, its structure, and the code used for the transfer to recipient;

- Finally, the «*fatic*» function is a function of technical nature and refers to the capacity of the transmission channel to assure the transfer of the contents.

Among the above mentioned functions, the poetic and the referential functions are worth researching for the intelligence domain, because they are centred not on the emitter, the transfer mechanics or the transmission channel, but on the content transmitted to the recipient and on the effect produced by the transfer of this content to the decision-maker. So, there is great interest in analyzing the substance included in the intelligence structure's product which has relevance for understanding the effect generated by intelligence support, substance which continues its existence and produces effects after the dissemination of intelligence products.

Logically, the intelligence support aims at bringing the beneficiary to a favourable situation for making a wise decision, this way being "an instrumental or *alloplastic* communication"²⁵ (i. e. the modification of somebody else). Thus, the intelligence support reflects the communication objective to "modify the state of the beneficiary, albeit his cognitive state, affective state, his pre-disposition to action or the action itself"²⁶.

²⁵ Dorina Sălăvăstru, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

²⁶ *Idem*, p. 188.

The role assumed by intelligence support speaks to the process of *social influencing* as "action exerted by a social entity (person or group), oriented towards the modification of another entity's actions or manifestations". This influence is based on one of the power relations mentioned above, specifically on the *expert power*, associated to the intelligence structure epistemic authority. The French sociologist Raymond Boudon argues that the mechanism of this influence as power relation is *persuadation*, which needs two conditions to work:

- the communicator should hold an acceptable degree of *competence* and *information*, which speaks to the epistemic authority of the intelligence structure;

- the influencing relation should be based on the *consensus* of the parties participating in the communication process regarding the shared values, the objective and the envisaged effects. In intelligence support, this cohesion reflects the attitude of serving the national interest, or the commander's intent, for the case of military operations, in the same risk management/operational conception.

To make sure that the epistemic role of intelligence structure is preserved, it is clear that social influencing, as a process associated to intelligence support, must be confined to persuadation about certain realities and probable evolution perspectives of the events, not at all about the concrete option the decision-maker should choose as beneficiary of intelligence products.

This rationale speaks to the «*actionable*» aspect of the content within the message transmitted to decision-makers by the intelligence structures. The content may refer either to simple data necessary for decisionmaking (for example numeric values, like calendaristic data or geographical coordinates), or other actionable elements able to trigger motivations or affective states which generate decisions. Contemporary psychologists specialized in communication propose²⁷ another typology of communication functions, ignoring the engineering elements of the communication machine. This typology identifies the cognitive, affective, actional, and socialisation functions, all relevant for intelligence support.

²⁷ Dorina Sălăvăstru, *op. cit.*, pp. 189-190.

These functions defined for the communication process generate effects which have correspondence in intelligence as follows:

- the *cognitive function*, corresponding to the Jakobson's referential function reflects the general providing of information in intelligence, which contributes to knowledge development for achieving informational superiority;
- the *affective function* triggers *motivations* related to the common interest served by the two parties for securing the opportune response to the security challenges, type of response necessary especially under pressure, i. e. under time constraint;
- the *actional function* concretely supports decisions by the sheer usefulness of the actionable intelligence and transfers the contents directly into action;
- the *social function* builds a community between the intelligence structure and the beneficiaries of intelligence products, by serving the common interest (commander's intent), and achieving an effective professional relation.

In order to complete the conceptual framework of intelligence support as communication process, it is useful to detail the form of communication the intelligence support can take along three criteria²⁸: the manner or technique of transmitting the message, the way the actors participate in the communication process, and the way communication process is performed.

From the point of view of the way intelligence products are transmitted, intelligence support can be either a *direct* communication (for example, in the case of oral briefing), or an *indirect* communication, in the case of using secondary techniques: written reports, electronic communications.

Considering the participation mode, intelligence support is either *interpersonal* or *group* communication, the latter being conducted between persons belonging to the same organisation - the case of intelligence reports disseminated inside a military structure or inside the national security system.

Finally, by the way communication is conducted, intelligence support can be an *ascendent/upwards* communication (when the beneficiary is a decision-maker up-stream the chain-of-command), a *horizontal* communication (towards coworkers of the same level, in cooperation exchanges), or a

²⁸ Vasile Tran, Irina Stănciugelu, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

descendent/downwards communication (from a higher echelon intelligence structure towards execution level organisations).

Given that intelligence support is sometimes destined for planning staff (in military operations) or politicians (for example, in the case of intelligence products provided to defence commissions of the parliament), the social/group communication, destined to groups of recipients, becomes the relevant type of communication. This is typically the situation of intelligence briefings, where psychologists identify six roles of communication²⁹, having the following connotations for intelligence domain:

- *It contributes to achieving group task*, role expressed in intelligence by the very purpose of its products – support for operational/political decision.

- *It supports group cohesion* by clarifying the context and harmonizing opinions, in the process of building the *common operational picture* (COP) – in the military – or a *shared awareness* of risks and threats – in the security domain;

- *Raises the group to a higher value* as recipient of communication, which means, in intelligence, an improvement in the cognitive domain, by absorbing the commander's intent and forming a common vision of the operational/international security situation;

- *Acts as groups' unity factor*, a role associated to those mentioned above for intelligence domain;

- *Solves group's internal problems* – role also associated to the previous;

- *"Helps the group become a reference for the individual"*³⁰, which, in intelligence, supports the relevance of mission, danger, risks, threats, and opportunities for all echelons of military or political decision.

In the logic of all examined functions, the communication element instrumental for establishing the effect of intelligence support on decision and action is the «actionable» content, which weighs differently in intelligence products and has various effects upon the beneficiaries, according to the response time it requires.

²⁹ Dorina Sălăvăstru, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

³⁰ Adrian Neculau, *Leaders in Group Dynamics*, Scientific and Encyclopaedic Publishing House, Bucharest, 1977, pp. 82-83.

Consequently, the «actionable» substance included in intelligence products has a paramount importance in shaping the intelligence support functions from the point of view of communication usefulness and of the practical destination of intelligence products. The functions of intelligence support are discriminated by the energy of the «actionable» substance applied in decision and in the action based on this decision. The resulting functional classes also reflect the impact of the time pressure and the emergency of response measures necessary to be taken by the system in risk management activities. Both time pressure and response emergency surge when the common interest served jointly by the intelligence structure and the beneficiary of intelligence products is jeopardised.

5. Classes of intelligence support according to the «actionable» substance and Clausewitzian friction

Even since 1950, immediately after the foundation of the modern concept of intelligence by Sherman Kent, the American geographer Norton S. Ginsburg stated that "intelligence derives its *raison d'être* from conflict, whether in time of peace or war. Its goal at all times is not the maintenance [sic] of peace nor the provocation of war, but preparedness for the latter"³¹. When analysing intelligence through the perspective of confrontation, the research of intelligence support requires the consideration of Clausewitzian concepts of war friction, danger, superiority, and surprise.

In the logic of preparation for conflict, Mark Lowenthal argues³² that the *raison d'être* of intelligence services requires: *avoiding surprise* (strategic and tactical), support with expertise projected on long term, support of political decision-makers, and the protection of secret information, requirements (including financial) and methods. This approach is somewhat eclectic, including all aspects of intelligence activity, in the absence of a thorough analysis of intelligence support and ignoring the

³¹ Harold M. Greenberg, *Intelligence in the past, Intelligence in the Media*, apud Loch Johnson (coord), *Strategic Intelligence*, Praeger Security International, 2007, Westport CT, 2007, p. 173.

³² Mark Lowenthal, *Intelligence from Secrets to Policy*, Congressional Quarterly Press, Washington DC, 2003, pp. 2-5.

tricky issue of the intelligence cycle. Lowenthal's approach offers an unquestionable practical value inside the intelligence structures, but with little relevance for the research of intelligence life after the phase of dissemination. However, the logic of these pages requires the consideration of the first component mentioned above, i.e. avoiding surprise.

From the point of view of performing intelligence support as communication process, the functionality of intelligence activity needs to be analysed like an architecture organised in the cognitive domain, meaning knowledge, understanding, information superiority over a potential enemy. This perspective has been underlined by the French psychologist Rodolphe Ghiglione, in the concepts specific to social representation and cognitive psychology theory regarding communication: "the individual who communicates is not just a mirror reflecting the reality; he is, especially, the permanent builder of social reality. We have here the proposition of a new paradigm: communication as process of *social «co-construction»*. From this perspective, among the functions accomplished by communication one can identify the *construction of the reference univers*"³³.

In intelligence, this construction of the reference univers translates by the evaluation of the security environment, more exactly by activities such as: security phenomena monitoring; risk, threat and opportunity identification; production of assessments which approximate reality as close as possible; performing warning about dangers against interests of military or security nature; and producing prognoses about future evolutions within the military/security environment.

In all these activities, the intelligence structures exert *social influence* operating upon beneficiary's cognitive domain by alloplastic communication in order to determine the generation of effects of deontic nature, i. e. to trigger decision-making and issuing of dispositions/military orders. For the intelligence structure, the instrument of this action is the intelligence product: periodic bulletins, pinpointed campaign intelligence reports (SPOTINTREP), briefings, annual national intelligence estimates, intelligence assessments, long-term prognoses and others.

³³ L. Iacob, *Research on Communication Today*, apud Adrian Neculau, *Social Psychology. Contemporary Aspects*, Polirom Publishers, Iași, 1996, p. 185.

Besides circumstances connected to dissemination context (peace, crisis or war), the place of intelligence product consumption (head of state cabinet, battlefield), beneficiary (brigade commander in operation or European Union programme planner) or the physical support of the intelligence dissemination, the intelligence product contains more or less «actionable» information, according to the intelligence product purpose: "the final product... needs to be disseminated to beneficiaries... to realise planning support, influence decisions and the way actions are executed, and prevent realising surprise"³⁴ by the adversary. Considering the «actionable» contents of intelligence products, the intelligence activity shells various functionalities which can be associated to the functions mentioned above for the communication process.

However, it is hard to imagine an intelligence product having zero content of «actionable» intelligence, since the intelligence structures always aim to deliver useful products in order to assure relevant support to decision-making finalised by concrete actions. Even at the highest level, "wisdom means the turning knowledge into useful action. So, knowledge becomes an abstract good"³⁵. Therefore, the destination of «actionable» intelligence is important, that is the action to be triggered by the beneficiary, considered in connection with the danger/opportunity it answers to.

Thus, for routine planning activities (for example, in the case of multi-annual governmental programmes), the «actionable» intelligence is not associated to emergency actions, wrought under time pressure, which alter the working pace specific to normality, but are transferred calmly into actions of planning adjustment.

Considering intelligence which detects the perspective of dramatic modifications of the security/operational situation, even in the absence of an armed confrontation, a pre-conflict Clausewitzian friction appears. In this case, intelligence products *warn* the beneficiary, meaning that they stimulate the generation of a reaction with an affective component, based on the common understanding of the fact that a common interest is jeopardised or favoured by an event which can occur in a relatively short time, i.e. under time constraint.

³⁴ Sergiu T. Medar, *Intelligence for commanders*, Military Technical Publishing Centre, Bucharest, 2007, p. 25.

³⁵ George Cristian Maior, *Editorial in Intelligence*, magazine of the National Intelligence Academy "Mihai Viteazul", nr. 21, Bucharest, March-May 2012.

Finally, in the situation of a response to an acute political crisis or during a military operation, the Clausewitzian friction is intense and the intelligence products contribute directly to the editing of decisions and get directly integrated into the very actions, even up to being automatically transferred into electronic commands which trigger the action of combat equipment (in the case of electronic warfare).

6. Functionalities in intelligence product utilisation

If the main goal of intelligence activity is avoiding/preparing surprise by warning about dangers or opportunities, other functions of intelligence support refer to utilisations employing less or more «actionable» substance than in the case of warning, or another rapport to the time factor, and reflect lower or higher levels of Clausewitzian friction.

The communication function easiest to translate to intelligence domain is the *referential function*, which reflects the transfer of information to the beneficiary by referring to realities about which the decision-maker should be aware for a good performance according to his duties. The referential function is simple to term as information function, by which intelligence support contributes to achieving general *informational superiority* by *building intelligence superiority*, in conditions of low Clausewitzian friction. Writ large, in the wider scope of risk management, the *construction of informational superiority* is described as "the state of relative advantage in the informational domain achieved by assuring the right information to the right beneficiary at the right time and in the right form, and, in the same time, forbidding the adversary to do the same thing"³⁶. Bearing this in mind, intelligence support fulfils its meaning even when a content of «actionable» substance is destined not for an urgent response to a danger jeopardising the main interests of the system, thus with no time constraint, but for a systematic elaboration of a future response, i. e. for a perspective planning or understanding a security situation with no pressing risks or threats.

Of course, informational superiority serves to achieve military superiority. Carl von Clausewitz reserves a subchapter of his masterpiece "On War" to military superiority, but he only deals with numeric superiority, which he considers "the most important factor in battle". This is quite

³⁶ ***, *NATO Information Management Policy (NIMP)*, C-M(2007)0118, Allied Command Transformation, Norfolk VA, US, 13.12.2007.

normal in the conditions of the military art of that era, considering that the armies were "much more similar to one another regarding weaponry, organisation, and technical knowledge of all kinds"³⁷ and there was no force projection, remote strike, mass destruction capabilities, computer networks or air capabilities whatsoever.

David Omand³⁸ considers that the finalisation of intelligence support includes three areas, all pertaining to the *construction of intelligence superiority*, here identified as one of the intelligence support functions. D. Omand proposes³⁹ the conceptual organisation of the intelligence support utilisation in three domains, according to the temporal perspective of analysis. These areas/«uses» are *explanation* – oriented towards the past, *building situation awareness* – linked to the present, respectively *prediction* – projected towards future events. Obviously, between these categories of intelligence product utilisation there is no clear separation, each of the three «uses» having relevant values reflecting the other two.

The *function of warning*, already established in intelligence, implies, of course, transfer of information, but also presents a component of the *poetic/affective* function, as a communication function, because it crosses beyond the mechanical transfer of information to generate or feed motivations beyond the mathematic calculus, namely in the affective domain. This way, intelligence support determines employment of ambition, courage, cunning, and preservation instinct. Facing a higher level of Clausewitzian friction, this implication has the nature to trigger decisions in view of concrete and relatively quick actions meant to lead to avoiding a danger, secure the most appropriate response to the detected danger or to the exploitation of opportunities with the goal to accomplish the mission. All these reactions face the constraint of a limited implementation time.

For warning in the military domain, without naming intelligence, Clausewitz identifies the role of intelligence support in adapting the effort of

³⁷ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Military Publishing House, Bucharest, 1982, p. 182.

³⁸ Sir David Omand, GCB, was Intelligence and Security Coordinator in the British Cabinet Office from 2002 to 2005. He has also been a member of the Joint Intelligence Committee, Permanent Secretary of the Home Office and the Cabinet Office, Director of the Governmental Communications Headquarters of (GHGC) and Deputy Under Secretary of State for Defence Policy. He is, in March 2014, visiting Professor in the War Studies Department of King's College London and honorary Fellow of Corpus Christi College, University of Cambridge.

³⁹ David Omand, *Securing the State*, Hurst and Co., London, 2010, pp. 24-26.

the system's own military organism, as the crisis escalates or the fighting actions unfold: "the relative superiority, meaning the shrewd manoeuvre of superior forces in decisive points, is based on the correct judgement of these points and on the adequate orientation"⁴⁰.

The third communication function selected for the research of intelligence support as communication process is the *actional function*, which highlights the most practical destination of the transferred information, namely their *integration into action, with a short and precise temporal perspective*. In this case, the corresponding function in intelligence can be named exactly «*the actional function*», which would define, for the intelligence products, a dominant content of actionable intelligence which is transferred immediately into decisions and actions. In a Clausewitzian approach, this function defines the situation of already engaged confrontation, characterized by a maximum friction, when the forces engaged in conflict seek to diminish the friction perceived by own forces, and to transfer the conflict friction to the adversary, following the battlerhythm. This «intense» domain of intelligence support can be exemplified by the situation of fighting actions or by the case of acute political-diplomatic crises. The extreme situation is that of intelligence operations, where the action is performed intensely inside the very intelligence system, and the intelligence products are an integral part of the very core of the concrete action.

Conclusions

The arguments presented in these pages lead to the conclusion that the construction of intelligence superiority, the function of warning, and the actional function can be considered functional categories of intelligence support, discriminated by the pressure/urgency of «actionable» intelligence utilization, by the rapport between the intelligence operator and the effect of his activity, as well as by the intensity of Clausewitzian friction associated to the confrontation perspective.

The consideration of these functional categories does not require modifications in intelligence production or the introduction of new types of

⁴⁰ Carl von Clausewitz, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

intelligence products. However, it allows a better understanding of the intelligence support effect upon the decision-makers and also opens the avenue of researching the way to optimize the integration and utilization of intelligence activity in risk management and decision-making at all levels.

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