

III. The Methodological Background

The present research proposes to emphasize the social costs of the migration phenomenon underlining the particularities, the structure of this very important social phenomenon, too little known from the scientific point of view in Romania. With the purpose of a better understanding of the manner of research I approached a series of criteria: temporal, the criterion regarding the type of investigative demarche, and the macro- microsocial conceptual binomial.

According to the temporal criterion and the principles of knowing the social reality of the migration phenomenon belong to the longitudinal method of analysis of the phenomena or social facts in their evolution through which the main method used was the case study , the study target was represented by the Romanians immigrated in Italy, Torino. Regarding the types of case studies, all three were used in the succession of research stages: *exploratory, descriptive and explicative*.

According to *the type of investigative demarche*, the methodological orientation of this research is an intersection one, in which there is a combination between the qualitative and the qualitative approach. For the unity of the qualitative with the qualitative and of the fact that unstructured -structured is a continuous, there are also “methods of intersection”. The starting point in the demarche I carried out was the qualitative method. One of

the characteristics specific to the qualitative methods is the fact that they have the function of understanding rather than describing systematically or measuring”, the words are “comprehension, profoundness”.¹⁹ Personally, I was interested in illustrating the socio-cultural and economical changes produced by the migration phenomenon in the current Romanian community. The work instrument used in the case study to emphasize the theoretical background of the project was the *semistructured narrative interview*. Within the quantitative method, the work instrument in emphasising the role of the social integration of the immigrants was the *questionnaire* (See Annex 1).

Another criterion used was the conceptual binomial: macro-microsocial. Through the macro analysis we analysed generally the migration phenomenon and the realities, and through the “micro” analysis I considered in details and concretely the entities comprising the phenomenon and the respective realities. I tried to identify the social costs and the profound transformations in the social and economical life of the migrants.

The construction of the theories was achieved in a deductive manner, starting from theories that establish relationships between the general and abstract concepts, new concepts and theories with more reduced generality degree were formulated. : these theories involving then the formulation of hypotheses, testing the, and validating the theory. *The theory of capitals* (constructivist - structuralist) of Bourdian type represented a well chosen theoretical

¹⁹ Kaufman, Jean- Claude, The enquiry and its methods :The Questionnaire, The Interview of data production, The Comprehensive Interview, Polirom, Iasi, 1998.

instrument in constructing the objectives and hypotheses and of course within the data interpretation.

The objectives of the research: identifying the causes of migration; identifying the effects of the migration on the family of immigrants; identifying the connection between migration and development; emphasising the role of the church in the process of integration of the immigrants in the adoption country; identifying the socio-economical consequences of external migration; achieving an emigrant's profile; proposing some solutions under the shape of social politics.

Work hypotheses: when mediating the work force, most of the migrants prefer the alternative of networks of knowledge and family from the environment of provenience; the migrants' families concentrate their economical practises in investments and less in the consume: the financial capital obtained is used in investments that have as objective improving the living conditions, acquiring house and fields, protecting the family on the long term ; there is an unequal distribution of winnings and losses between the issuing and receiving units.

The conceptual palette was covered by the human capital, symbolic capital, economic capital, social capital, and these types of capital being adapted conceptually at the research. As we can notice, the sociological demarche adopted was initially one of deductive nature, and then we used the inductive analysis, that the microsociological theories incite. (interactionism).

III.1. Research methods, techniques, processes and instruments

Methods

- Case study
- The method of comparison
- The content analysis

Techniques

Main techniques

- Documentation
- Direct observation (on the field)

Secondary techniques

- Meetings
- The observatory participant
- Interview
- Questionnaire

Instruments

- The observation grid
- Interview guide
- Questionnaire

The case study initially started from a theoretical background, essential when collecting data. After the planning of the data collection protocol, the selection of cases and the mentioning of the analysis units (individual) followed. Then, each case is studied through the interview, observation, and finally we extract the relevant data in the light of the layer idea, the initial theory is modified and all the implications are developed. The case study does not only approaches persons, and does not study the psycho(social) reality only from the perspective of those

persons, through their biography but a fragment of reality from the exterior is also researched, using also the method of observation.²⁰ The qualitative strategy of the case study appeals the intercase systematic comparison, the complex and sensitive comparison with direct references to cases in natural contexts. Through this comparative induction, we obtain the theoretical model of description and explanation. I also resorted to comparisons with other similar cases.

The comparative spirit must cross the whole sociological demarche in order to systematize, classify and clarify the data collected on the field and in the library.²¹ Thus I achieved multiple comparisons between the two states, Romania and Italy, comparisons referring to the living standard, the level of salaries, aspects regarding mentalities. The comparison puts face to face the constants and the legislative characteristics, but also the variables and the differentiations, and require the elaboration of a specific work demarche, scientific and elevated that consists in: describing the differences, accentuating the particularities, approaching a neutral behaviour in classifying and defining the field information, ordering the analysed units, evaluating the representativity of information collected, eliminating the data without comparability, eliminating the differences without value in the given context.

The content analysis consists of classifying and coding the elements of a message in specific categories in

²⁰ Ilut Petru, cited works, p. 105

²¹ Miftode, Vasile, *Treaty of sociological methodology*, I edition, Lumen Publishing House, 203, p.114

order to emphasize the different characteristics with the purpose of understanding the meaning. By message we understand here interview. The content analysis is the decomposing of the assembly into simple elements with the purpose of classifying, measuring, quantifying or hierarching the elements of a group of information. The content analysis is indispensable to this sociological research since the profound knowledge of the migration field cannot be limited only to the observation of behaviours or to what these behaviours express and the study of different communications is imposed identifying: who is the interviewed subject, what does the content of an interview consist in, how was the information transmitted, what is the effect of the information.

The criteria and characteristics of the content analysis are:

- *Objectivity.* The analysis is achieved according to some clear rules and demands, precise and adequate to the “scientific demarche” in order to ensure the comparativity and the veridicity of results.
- *Systematizing.* The informational content must be ordered and integrated into the categories established according to the purpose chosen. Nothing is left “out” or omitted from this ordering.
- *Quantification.* The content analysis usually refers to the counting and measuring of the significant elements, calculating some frequencies of the analysis units, but in the present case because of the complex nature of information from the

analysed interview is just a qualitative one, meaning that nothing is measured or counted exactly: in exchange we are looking for the main themes, their frequency and then they are hierarchized.

The content analysis is of *exploration type*, the social universe of the research theme is new, and it has never been researched systematically, but also of *verification type* of some initially established hypotheses. The type of material analysed (interviews) determines also the type of content analysis that can be used, in this research we are dealing with collected materials with precise purpose for interviews, according to questions and hypotheses formulated ante- factum. The content analysis aims at the authenticity and veridicity of facts presented in the information collected on the field.

The internal and external content analyses²² have a special importance:

- *The internal analysis* consists in the logical and subjective *decoding* of the more significant elements, of the relationships between these elements and the factors of their evolution and at the same time, in establishing the presence or absence of some characteristic themes from the volume of information collected on the field.
- *The external analysis* aims at replacing the information in the socio-historic context in order to make it legible, in order to understand its meaning and generally, in order to interpret it in a legitimate and adequate manner.

²² Miftode, Vasile, Cited works, 203, p.370

The two analyses are *complementary* and are found in a relationship of interdependency. For example, the internal analysis cannot be achieved successfully without the external analysis, under the conditions in which the “specific tasks” are not achieved or satisfied.

In a first stage, the content analysis has aimed at studying the informational content of the interviews through a few operations, namely:

- Classifying the information in the interviews
- Re-ordering them into categories, according to the themes and sub-themes discovered or established (according to degrees of finesse or generality);
- Counting or measuring these elements (their frequency)
- Correlating the categories and the quantified elements
- Comparing them with other documents of informational systems

The stages of the content analysis were established through the codification of their own system from theoretical perspectives:

- *Establishing the object of the analysis*, namely what we are trying to discover, with other words I identified the main themes;
- *Constituting* the data and information system by naming the nature, the number, the subdivision. The information identified is regrouped in interviews and they are extracted in view of ordering and classifying them in relationship with the objectives aimed.

- *Choosing the analysis units* which can be: a theme (the frequency of themes from the interviews), words (key words, concepts, slogans etc.), the unit of significations or the thematic (in the sentence, phrase, paragraph), idea (idea- proposition , idea-phrase);
- *The quantification of results* by interpreting the data and the results;
- Verifying the analysis
- *Briefly*, the whole methodological demarche of the content analysis – in the methodological and technical plan- can be ordered in two stages:
 1. Preparing the material for analysis;
 2. Choosing the units of registration and quantification

As far as the stage of preparing the material, the volume of information for analysis is concerned, we are talking about the constitution of texts of interviews that will be studied, namely:

- Writing down the observations, the interviews, and transforming them into “legible forms”
- Decoupling the “analysis units” established and ordering them in view of an accessible analysis;
- Filing the answers to different questions in order to facilitate their classification into thematic categories;
- Numbering the texts that will be analysed and constituting the recapitulating lists.

The whole analysis must offer validity in the end by observing the rules of exhaustivity, of representativity, of homogeneity and pertinence. For establishing the

categories I used two demarches: the deductive demarche that supposed the existence of some hypotheses that must be verified, and the inductive demarche that led to the identification of some elements significant for the research, establishing an inventory of aspects, themes but also “significant sentences”.

The value of content analysis depends on the quality of previous conceptualization, namely hypotheses, variables, scheme of analysis or categories, of concordance between the investigated reality and the conceptual elements.

The content analysis aimed this time, besides the explanation, the verification of some hypotheses and the elaboration of more exact images of what we know superficially, globally or even intuitively.

After the direct observation, the documentation constitutes the second important source of sociologic data and information. The documentation mainly referred to the knowledge of works published on the theme of migration and the results obtained in similar researches by different research teams. I started by creating a complete and “specialized” bibliography. Constituting the bibliography is the compulsory stage for any research, is the element that cannot be absent from the trajectory of an investigation. Thus the inquiry in course has superior objectives and is not limited to simple prospecting because of the existence of those data and previous knowledge, obtained through previous studies. The elaboration of a biographic list determines the progress of knowledge and the originality of results since they are not only confronted with the reality but also with the scientific world, with their

hypotheses and their theories, about the phenomenon of migration, in the present case. The process of constituting the bibliography was an empirical one since as a future researcher I chose by myself, little by little, sometimes even by accident the necessary bibliographic materials, and according to the content of materials I can say that I established a general bibliography (constituted of general theoretical, epistemological and methodological works and documents, which refer to the problems and aspects that refer to several research fields and themes) and a specific bibliography (constituted of documents referring to the internal or external migration from Romania but from other countries as well).

In the bibliographic demarche the statistic documents of studies carried out recently on the same theme plaid a very important part, an extremely necessary thing since a series of conclusions totally scientific, “representative” for the whole problematic investigated. All these are valid under the conditions in which the phenomenon of migration is very popular in the present Romania, and even though there are still rather few studies on the theme of migration at the national level.

That’s why a series of auxiliary documents were also very important, and here I am especially referring to the articles in the national and local press, articles that refer to the migration phenomenon. This time, the press was regarded from two points of view: on the one hand, as a source of information in the documentary side of the sociological research, and on the other hand, as a social phenomenon, as a reflection of different aspects and