

**„Ovidius” University Constanța
Doctoral School of Humanities**

**Language of written press in Romania in the framework of media crisis
Summary**

**Scientific coordinator:
Prof. univ. dr. Domnița Tomescu**

**PhD Candidate:
Alexandra Codău**

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1. Introduction

1.1. Argument

Journalistic language is, in recent years, the subject of many studies, papers and analyzes of various media organizations that closely monitor media evolution or involution, at all levels. Recent journalistic language of the press in Romania saw some slippage, especially in terms of semantics, by what we might call a trend of simplification and reduction to the minimum. These language slippages began to develop amid a deep financial and economic crisis that significantly affected the media market in Romania, from money coming from advertising and to dramatically decrease of the circulation of some daily newspapers, to the disappearance of the print editions of some journals, and even permanent closure of publications.

The above mentioned context, with major political, social and economic implications has not avoided the press in Romania. Under financial pressure that has never faced before, but based on his own crisis of legitimacy, press has chosen to withstand the crisis, but at the cost of its own quality. Renouncing the rigor in expression and having not always a proper language for different situation, press has suffered a malfunction in its relationship with readers, who considered themselves disappointed and somehow betrayed in their expectations of what media means, as a coextensive aspect in the current society. By slippages and changes of meaning, press operates, linguistically, with new semantic realities, as generous as damaging for readers, because, actually, they do not enrich the language, but diversify press language

The Centre for Independent Journalism (CIJ) published in May 2015, the report "The status of media sector in Romania in 2014. Vulnerabilities and Solutions" report showing synthetically the most significant problems facing both the journalistic profession and media businesses. CJI report underlines that 2014 was marked by a crisis in media in Romania. "The public believes that the media

are deeply flawed, people lament the fate of content quality, condemns sometimes slippages in the media, but they are not willing to pay for content and do not sanction media by changing consumption habits which, they criticize, anyway", notes the report's authors (CJI 2015: 4). CJI report states that the first and most visible cause of this financial bleeding is the collapse of media market because of the economic crisis which began in 2009.

We start the present paper based on the premise according to which the language print media suffers just mentioned slippages amid the financial crisis. Moreover, they are caused by this crisis. We note, in fact, a chain of existential conditionings that put the print media in a thankless situation of lack of professionalism, a dramatic drop in the quality of journalism. Thus, the power of the print media to play an intermediary role between public and information weakened.

Our intention for the present paper is to be not only an accumulation of generalities, a string of clichés but, on the contrary, to form a study allowing the knowledge of the inventory of the effects of a phenomenon deeply - financial and economic crisis - which has had considerable consequences on language of the print media. In this regard, we will analyze situations and examples from daily newspapers in Romania.

1.2. Objectives

The present paper aims to demonstrate to what extent the conditions imposed by the financial aspects weakened the quality of language in print media in Romania, seen as a sounding from the point of view of identity, ideology, politics and social and cultural life in a full post-transition society. The subject of the present research can be a challenge in communication and also in the language field, both through its dynamics and because it involves an analysis of the phenomenon from the inside. Along the same line, it should be noted that the relevant literature on the crisis in the Romanian print media is not consistent yet,

as for the time there are not sufficient works to approach this issue or any agreement on this subject.

1.3. Documents

As regarding our corpus of work, it consists of texts collected from three of the major daily newspapers in post-revolutionary Romania, newspapers which continue to appear, both in print and online edition and which, despite their own image are still particularly relevant in the current media landscape. We name here the daily newspapers "România Liberă", "Evenimentul zilei" and "Adevărul". It should be noted in this context that the three publications are considered everyday *quality* of the oldest in the Romanian print media. Not less important, the above selected publications cover the period from 2010 to 2015.

As concerning the corpus, we selected primarily headlines and articles where we noted an aggressive language, using abundant clichés and a number of changes and slippage of meaning, methods that we suspect to be used for financial reasons, translated and verifiable by the number of online editions readers.

1.4. Methodology of research

The present research proposes a pragmatic approach to journalistic texts, analyzing the print media language, from linguistic point of view. Depending on the type of media, we use a qualitative analysis, the discourse analysis, in order to explain and clarify which are the language slippages recorded by the three newspapers that serve our analysis: "Evenimentul zilei", "România Liberă", "Evenimentul zilei" and "Adevărul".

1.5. Terminology

An important aspect must be clear from the beginning of the present research and it is connected with the operational concepts to which we relate ie: speech, language, slang, intertextuality, cliché, ambiguity, persuasion, irony.

1.6. Structure

Our analysis of print media language in Romania in the framework of media crisis comprises three chapters, namely: Chapter I - "Media crisis" Chapter II - "Language, expression of media culture. Displacement of the print media language during the crisis, Chapter III - "Print media between the communication desiderata and the economic requirements".

2. Media crisis

2.1. Effects of the financial crisis upon the print media in Romania

Media in Romania is currently increasingly constrained by the imperative of marketing and advertising. In the context of the print media¹ governed by an aggressive policy to online hits, it is perhaps natural to witness a so-called perversion of journalism. That logic, according to which *clicks* are the most important for the print media does not regard the journalistic quality and content, prompting a series of slippages in mainstream newspapers.

Another aspect that has contributed to a greater crisis in print media in Romania has been determined by the "migration" of the readers from the printed editions to online editions, because there were no distinctions between the sites content and in print editions, and in equal extent, because the differences were at the expense of print. "Thus, there are newspapers which publish in print abridged variants of the online editions/materials, without giving readers an (extra) benefit for the acquisition of publications for purchase. In most cases, the pronounced development of online media has increased the speed of information, at the risk of journalistic quality degradation" (Active Watch Press Monitoring Agency 2012: 14).

¹ Communication mechanism of the XXI century can no longer be conceived without the Internet, as the technological put increasingly its default mark on communication and media. At present, given the continuous diversification of media messages broadcast, print media involves not only printed newspaper, but its digital edition. In other words, we mention online editions. Print edition and online edition of a publication represents different forms of the same journalistic manifestations, both being included in the print media. It is also worth mentioning that, at present, online editions are not subject to any regulations of the National Broadcasting Council.

2.2. Between the financial crisis and print media image crisis

In 2009, Transparency International achieved a "Global Corruption Barometer 2009"² which drew attention to the fact that the media in Romania became, for the first time, mentioned among the most corrupt institutions. According to the report, this is a direct consequence of partisan editorial policies. Thus, media were ranked 5, with the mark 3.4, among the institutions most affected by corruption in 2008, along with political parties, Parliament and business.

Also the functioning within normal parameters of the print media has been hampered by pressures that politicians have done over the media, by taking advantage precisely of the financial fragility of the area: "Authorities have spent public money to promote their image among taxpayers. In addition, they provided preferentially advertising contracts to the media institutions belonging to their close or which showed favorable editorial space "(AMP 2010: 7).

3. Language, expression of media culture. Displacement of the print media language during the crisis

3.1. Slippage/changes of meaning in the print media language

Print media in Romania has suffered, similarly to its content, significant changes in recent years, we could say defining it. We noticed in the print media, after 2009 "the loss, to varying degrees, of the semantic univocal aspect, in favor of polysemy, developed by the transfer of the political terms in other areas of communication or in common language" (Tomescu 2009: 102). Conversely, we have seen how the common language terms were handed over by the political language and also the language of the press. It is the situation of the common noun "baron" which, although appeared in the daily press, in the early 2000s, after the

² Transparency International, 2009, „Barometrul Global al Corupției”.

onset of the media crisis, used to have much higher frequency. Depending on the political and administrative realities of Romania, "baron" has come to define a world, a lifestyle, an ideology. Used only in the pejorative term, "baron" refers today to that representative of the political class for whom the political power in local government and financial plan knows no boundaries. Moreover, "baron" is one who often quarreled with the law, let the public mind the impression of an intangible character. "In publishing Romanian language, baron substitute less elegant terms - bigwig, oriole, sizable - preserving their irreverent connotation and marking a suspicious attitude. There are already in the print media typologies: the local and centre barons "(Zafiu 2007: 141). Linguists argue, therefore, that "baron" is more elegant than "stable", "starling" "sizable". However, its extremely high presence in print media language prompted a demonization of the word, with all the negative connotations posed.

Along with "baron", we analyzed terms "vuvuzea", "trumpet", "băsis" (from the name of the former president Traian Băsescu) and "mogul". Thus, we were able to note that the terms mentioned in articles appeared especially in the political subjects. The stake of using these words with other meanings than their original intention, is connected with the journalists concern to provide expressive language, but also accessibility.

3.2. Stylistic valences of the slang in print media language

Most often, the desire to attract to sell the product and possibly to retain the reader, determine journalists appeal to a range of strategies to promote information. "Not infrequently, the desire for a striking, artistic and original expression prevail over the care of correct and clear expression and sought to reach formulations, fireworks sometimes wrong. This rush deadline or striking rarely brings into circulation, depending on the situation and, especially, personal taste, neologisms, technical terms, slang etc archaisms or items "(Guțu Romalo 2008: 234). However, print media language tend to use words, phrases and slang

constructions is not a very recent phenomenon. "In terms of democratization of social and political life and liberation from the shackles of wooden language, proper to totalitarian regimes, unconventional languages gain ground, extending into areas of public communication that were traditionally forbidden (eg, publishing and politics language" (Stoichitoiu-Ichim 2007: 119). So the phenomenon began in the post-totalitarian era, and the media has been fed, we believe, by the desire to express what until then had been" inexpressible "interdicted.

3.3. Clichés of print media language in daily print media

Linguists argue that political language has consistently a tendency to clichés, which involves limiting it to a group of words, formulas and fixed metaphors. "The trend to clichés is linked to the need for accessibility: the clichés are a form of stability, a means of consensus, not to shock or provoke the recipient-type. (...) Clichés become symbols, emblems, labels allowing immediate recognition of political positions and orientations; accuracy logical, articulate meanings pass into the background, is essential *recațiile stimuli*" (Zafiu 2007: 35). The same logic functions also in print media language, which in recent years has become increasingly prone to use clichés. In our opinion, this is about the manifestation of interdependencies that put journalists- during the financial crisis, and the crisis of legitimacy of the image and the media- in a thankless situation. Constrained by quantifiable success in the number of online views of its materials and, equally, the number of sold copies of the print edition of the newspaper, journalists are urged to call - running out of time? of convenience? lack of inspiration? - the stereotypical expressions quickly recognizable by the general public.

Even if we can not talk about lack of stylistic expression to those texts in the print media which often use clichés, we can still mention that the ostentation of returning some of those clichés becomes tiresome and predictable. Therefore, the

phenomenon can have the opposite effect on readers who are not seduced by that publication anymore, to what theoretically should be considered different from everyday periodicals. "The clichés of the political and journalistic language are many and various; from quotes, paraphrases or worn figures of speech, belonging as well to high rhetoric style and orality colloquialisms, they appear almost always to invigorate a monotonous style, but slip quickly into a repetitive and irritating manner, than the initial one "(Zafiu 2007: 61). No less important, with no intention of making any "apocalyptic" theory in the research conducted on the three daily tradition newspapers in Romania - "Adevărul", România liberă and EVZ - we could notice some uniformity of language because of the numerous clichés returning to the journalistic text.

3.4. Aggressiveness marks in print media language

In Romania, the new semantic directions occur, in addition to slippages / changes of direction and trend of increasingly obvious to appeal to argotisms and trivialities, by resorting to violent language. We can see how, in recent years, but especially since the onset of the financial crisis, journalists have built and strengthened a real inventory of aggressiveness marks in publishing language. It is a phenomenon that under no circumstances should be treated simplistic and fleetingly, as in addition to mutations in the collective mind, in public space, can cause seriously to the actual language architecture. Paradoxically, it may weaken it. Linguists such as George Pruteanu claim that today violence of language is nothing but the result of slippage after 1989. In the early years after 1989, vocabulary and phraseology violent found their explanation in a sort of linguistic outpouring after censorship and wooden language. Today, we reap what was sown in that first post-December decade, the swarming proliferation of those early slippages. The matrix penetrated also the political layers up top and (...) highlights the unequivocal correlation between violence in the media and the real life. The brutality of the media is both a model and a legitimation "(Pruteanu 2007: 345).

We believe it is prudent not to say that brutality, violence in the media promoted intensively at the moment is a model, but rather a way, a measure of legitimacy. More or less consciously, journalists operate through the journalistic language, a transfer of aggression language from real to print media.

4. Print media between the communication desiderata and the economic requirements

4.1. Distorsion of reality. Manipulation and persuasion in the print media language

The present journalistic language is marked by a strategy whose objective is to provide to press consumers a distorted reality, a reality either to match to financial interests, to the editorial policy of a publication or to political interests. Part of the media culture, mainstream newspapers are inscribed in the logic that to draw in the first instance, readers and then to seduce, persuade, manipulate, it takes an appropriate language. Whether is about mystification about events, about misinformation or on favorable presentation of images, print media works, through language, to deliberate influencing readers' opinions, beliefs and values.

As regarding the three daily newspapers, under analysis, we noticed in our research that persuasion is present mainly in the texts of opinion and less on information texts. Journalists' objective is to convince readers that the opinions, beliefs and values to which they relate are correct. In this context, the construction of thematic articles circumscribes the idea or ideas that journalists will transmit nothing that the relationship between transmitter and receiver is not just communication, but also persuasion.

As concerning the three newspapers that we observe, we noticed that the most common method of handling consists in making titles that most often not faithfully reflect the editorial content of the article itself. In many cases, the titles are made in a style meant to shock, to vex the reader, even to intrigue him.

4.2. Ambiguity of the print media language

By cultivating ambiguity, the current journalistic language gives the consumer of print media the impression of superficiality, inconsistency of the publishing informational text. Also, by this ambiguity, readers may feel that they have access to ambiguous information and reality. Whether the desire to attract more readers, betting on a semantic pseudo-originality or convenience, journalists turn to the ambiguity of language, without taking into account the risk that such a cognitive dissonance between subject and reality. For these reasons, the message can be sent as unclear and meaningless.

The ambiguity of journalistic language in mainstream newspapers, but not only here, reduces the readability and comprehension. "Just because the press is a means of communication timeless and very quick, readers should find the information provided by text" (Guțu Romalo 2013: 420).

4.3. Marks of theatrical and performance means in print media speech - results of the financial requirements in press

Actual print media language cultivate a range of strategies for sensationalism, motivated, and these financial imperatives. In our analysis we noticed after studying the three newspapers that serve the case study - RL, EVZ and "Adevărul" - that the performance and theatrical means for describing media events, through language, are the most common of these strategies. However, we noticed that the idea of conflict, war and the presence of specific terms of this area have a high frequency.

5. Conclusions

Print media language in Romania is deteriorating amid the two crises unprecedented in post-Communist period: economic and financial crisis that caused the collapse of the advertising market and the global media image.

These phenomena have involved the disappearance of publications, the online migration others, layoffs, cutbacks in newsrooms, changes in editorial policy. On the other hand, the image crisis of the media has contributed and media owners' big problems, investigated, prosecuted or convicted for corruption. It is true that, in general, their files are unrelated to the businesses in the media, but the fact these problems exist affected the prestige of publications they hold.

The economic and financial crisis and the global image of the media have produced a fundamental change strategies through the media relate both to information and readers.

The intention of print media to survive by traditional means, represented by the printed edition of newspapers, but also in the online environment is inextricably linked to a series of compromises which in the long term, we believe that will affect more than they did before the quality of media product: the trend to tabloid content, by cultivating pseudo-events and topics related more to the privacy of individuals, an area of derision rather than the public interest, and deterioration of journalistic language.

Acronyms and abbreviations

AMP - ActiveWatch Agenția de Monitorizare a Presei

CJI - Centrul pentru Jurnalism Independent

CJC - Consiliul Județean Constanța

DEX - Dicționarul explicativ al limbii române

DNA - Direcția Națională Anticorupție

DȘL - Dicționar de științe ale limbii

EVZ - *Evenimentul zilei* newspaper

PNL - Partidul Național Liberal

PSD - Partidul Social Democrat

RL - *România liberă* newspaper

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