MASS-MEDIA COMMUNICATION IN MODERN LANGUAGES, A MEANS TO FOSTER EUROPEAN VALUES

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Abstract: At present Romania does not yet benefit from the changes occurring in the European mass-media. There are still linguistic and cultural barriers; there is no international television union. The main role is played by the cultural and political elites and the opinion of the various social groups is neglected. The political issues and the status of the European funds' absorption abound in media news and there are very few references to lifestyles. The Romanian public space is still dominated by the elites of which political interests and cultural and civilisation options are focused on what happens abroad.The Romanian state will resist providing they promote European values. Mass-media should honestly and convincingly reflect Romania's force to innovate and build economically and culturally in the EU space and, at the same time, to encourage debate of the decisions which are important to the public opinion in the entire region. Mass-media should make a better contribution to the modernisation of the Romanians by debates focused on taking over the European good practices with regards to professionalism, discipline, emotional balance, creativity in the work process. Achieving unity in diversity requires a good management of the languages which should ensure understanding among European citizens and guarantee each person the respect for their linguistic and cultural characteristics. Pluralism does not mean that an individual masters several languages at the same level; it means having knowledge of minimum two languages besides one's native language in order to build social contacts.

Keywords*:* Journalism, Process, Psycho-linguistic, Media discourse, Multilingualism.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The communication situations are different depending on the field of the social activities that they represent. A communication situation is a form of social practice. The question is: "What is the field of the social practices and what communication situations are represented in particular types by media events?".

An aspect worthy of consideration in the discourse analysis of mass-media is knowing the extent to which the context is relevant. The social and cultural context covering a larger scope may prove to be more important than the situational context.

The media communication may have several objectives:
- to train (in advice columns);
- to incite (in dramatising titles);
- to demonstrate (when experts provide their opinions).

"All these objectives meet in a double-dominating vision: informing in order to meet the democratic exigence which requires that the public opinion should be enlightened on the events occurring in the public space, and inciting in order to meet the requirements of the

commercial competition which seeks that such discourse addresses as many receptors as possible" (Tanasescu, 2015).

The goal is therefore to select the viewpoint of the approach. Nevertheless, it does not come down to communication only.

This element combines with other elements:
- identification of participants (example: the issuer, on the one hand, and the citizen, on the other hand);
- the proposal and its thematic structure (events occurring in the public space);
- circumstances stating the material condition of the communication (radio, press, television).

The communication situation is what determines (by characteristics and components) the conditions for the communication acts to produce and be recognised, the conditions of the enunciation in their external aspect. The notion of "communication contract" starts from these very aspects and proposes the partners a certain number of conditions which should define the process of communicational exchange without which recognition of the mutual understanding would be impossible. The special situations will be therefore considered as variants (or subcontracts) of a global contract.

In a country like Romania which is actually integrating in the European Union, the mass-media should be close to events and not to non-events and should not slide into cheap sensationalism or spectacular news.

2. MASS-MEDIA AND FORMATION OF PUBLIC OPINION

The public opinion is the summation of the majority answers provided at society level. The impression created is that society thinks in a certain way. There are several types of public (press public, television public, internet public, etc).

Mass-media build the public opinion using various discourse strategies.

One may use commercially-sensationalist criteria and therefore present as an opinion climate the notoriety of a key figure that captures the viewers providing there is a large-scale access to such media.

The media construction of the public opinion is also achieved through deliberative strategies in which the media is a moderator between the individual, the groups and the institutions.

The deliberative media communication is achieved depending on (Beciu, 2011):
- the variety of the types of press/television used on the media market concerned at a given time (general press, tabloids etc.), namely the **external diversity** of the media sphere;
- the variety of the media formats, in general, and the media coverage practices specific to a certain television channel or daily newspaper, namely the **internal diversity** of the media sphere.

Mass-media (alongside the opinion leaders) exercise a tacit pressure on the individuals and trigger the so-called **spiral of silence.**

A recognised role in the formation of the public opinion is played by cognitive theories. The individual deals with the new information in line with their own interpretation schemes which they formed over time. In the event the information fails to fall under their scheme, one may speak of **the effect of dissonance**, i.e. the individual rejects such information and therefore protects themselves against the unknown, the incertitude. What matters is the long-term memory, the punctual memory, the capacity to abstract, to integrate in a context.

Therefore, every individual has their own **cognitive map** which shows us:
- how the individual finds the information;
- how the individual interprets the information;
- how the individual uses the information in their everyday life.

One may no longer sustain the all-powerful effect theory of the media in relation to its public; the grid of the media instance does not always coincide with the message interpretation by the social actors. Example: a television public is built by the media based on a discourse by which the latter interpret things as others would see them and highlight the things that are important to the others.

In the 1980s there emerged signals of a new public space and the democratisation of the mass-media – the discourse strategies and the manner in which communication is achieved should emphasize the relevant issues for the public citizens.

The media public space undergoes some changes (Table 1).

Table 1. *Main transformations of the media public space*

Transformation	Content of transformation
• public visibility criteria	- the area of public issues expands as daily and private life themes are approached; - debate in the new public space goes beyond politics; - political issues are mediated in line with everyday life;
• lack of media culture configuration • maintaining pressure on decision-making structures • increase of "Americanisation" • extension of internalisation and globalisation	- the internet imposes affirmation of "electronic democracy" - discussion spheres are deliberately created; they interest the large public but inconvenience the decision-making structures - application of the logic of commercial mediation increases - the media products standardise and circulate freely

Source: Adapted from BeciuCamelia, 2011, p.36

The experts' conclusions lead to the idea that there is no common European language; no common transnational interests have been articulated yet. There is no emergence of the EU identity, a process in relation to which transnational media play a visible role (Although Euronews, Deutsche Welle, Financial Times, Arte still have low audience).

Our continent has a public of a diversified culture.

The guide for the elaboration of the educational linguistic policies (Conseil de l'Europe, 2007) makes a distinction between multilingualism and plurilingualism:
- **multilingualism** – presence in a geographical area determined by the existence of a "variety of languages", acknowledged or not; the individual may be monolingual and speak their native language only;
- **plurilingualism** – implies use of several languages by the same individual.
  Plurilingualism has the following interpretations:
    o diversification of the languages known in order to adapt to the requirements of the European society;
    o linguistic inheritance of languages. There are 220 indigenous languages in Europe, without including the languages of the immigrants and refugees;

o   shared purpose, a common ability, a skill which may be acquired.

Mass-media and cultural events may foster plurilingual education.

Plurilingualism is the fundamental characteristic of the current civilisation and the feature which, far from fading in through globalisation, intensifies and strengthens cultivation of European languages, representing the chance to preserve the cultural heritage of the "old continent".

3. READING AND UNDERSTANDING A MESSAGE IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Reading a message is a psycho-linguistic process in the sense that it starts with a surface linguistic representation codified by the issuer and ends by the meaning that the reader builds. Therefore, there is an essential interaction between language and thinking throughout the reading process. The issuer codifies the idea under the form of language and the receptor decodes the language through a thinking process.

"The elaboration and reception of a media text are determined and conditioned by the socio-historic and cultural context as well as the relations maintained by the participants to the communication process (…). Reading is both a process and a product; it is more than the mere reception of the literary meaning. It requires a whole life experience of an individual and their intellectual capacities so as to understand the idea codified by the issuer. Therefore, the previous experience and the human learning process allow the development of attitudes, abilities and skills that the reader needs to obtain information, create and react to ideas, cultivate interest and understand the message. In order to understand a message written in a language other than their native one, reading has to correlate the reader's experiences and knowledge on the mechanisms of a language functioning with the words decoded. The language is considered to be a mediation instrument and a means of social exchange; a form specific to human activity, motivated by the communication/representation needs and always relating to other forms of non-verbal activities, i.e. the individual's practical activities in which communication finds its origins" (Tanasescu, 2015).

Within the framework of the language one may therefore find the direct connection between the language and the receptor's cognitive development. The cognitive development is the result of a social interaction process, which is closely linked to the socio-cultural contexts in relation to which the subject uses language to take actions. It develops and organises itself due to the interiorization of the social representations typical of a given community and mediated through language.

There is a difference between the written language and the spoken one.

The written language is voluntary as it forces the subject to make an effort towards abstracting at several levels. It is first about abstracting the sensitive aspect of the language, i.e. the sound. A genuine mastery of the language enables a direct access to the meaning without going through establishing the correspondence "verbal – written". In addition, the physical absence of the partner implies an abstracting effort by the subject who has to recognise their receptor involved in the written communication. In the written language, the subject has to be motivated, to have a permanent control of the communication situation and, in particular, of the objectives targeted through language.

The written language has a conscious nature, the subject to whom the text is an objective is subject to structuring, comments, clarifications, manipulations.

All these activities imply a responsible attitude towards language.

The meaning of a media text is correlated with the consciousness of the reader and is seen as a reality. In a text, there are four general types of meaning (Table 2).

Table 2. *The four types of meaning of media text*

Type of meaning	Characteristics
Conceptual meaning	- it is the intrinsic meaning of the words as perceived by the reader who possesses satisfactory knowledge of a language; - all other types are based on the conceptual meaning as the text is built by assembling basic concepts in order to form sentences which fall under the next types of meaning;
Propositional meaning	- it is the meaning of a sentence which is not part of a context; - a single word has its own meaning; yet, included in a sentence, it may have several different meanings;
Contextual meaning	- it is the meaning acquired by a sentence when included in a context; - when in a context, (the situation) sentence "borrows" a value from the relation it creates among other neighbouring sentences;
Pragmatic meaning	- it is the meaning resulting from the interaction between the issuer and the receptor; - it is the meaning reflecting emotions, opinions and intentions of the issuer who seeks to convey them and to determine the receptor to perceive them as such. It is what all communicators seek: the message should be identical to the one decoded by the receptor. It is obviously difficult to achieve, it often remains as reference.

Source: Adapted from Nuttal, C (1982) "Teaching Reading Skills in a ForeignLanguage, Oxford, Heinemann"

4. ASPECTS ON TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF THE MEDIA DISCOURSE

"A first aspect concernsthe emphasize that should be laid on how major changes occurring in society and culture impose the ongoing transformation of the media discourse practices. Secondly, the media texts should be analysed by thoroughly approaching them in relation to the language and the texture which characterise such texts. It is about detailed analysis of both visual images and sound effects. Thirdly, the textual analysis should be completed by an analysis of the text production and consumption practices. Fourthly, the analysis of the texts and the practices should be oriented toward the analysis of the institutional and socio-cultural contact, moreover, the analysis of the practices, including the power relations and the ideologies. Fifthly, the textual analysis should simultaneously include the linguistic analysis and the intertextual analysis in terms of discourse genres. A sixth aspect is about the fact that the texts should be linguistically analysed in multifunctional terms. This analysis should be oriented on the representation and creation of identity relations as simultaneous processes within the meaning of the text and on the connections between them. The seventh situation considers the linguistic analysis of the texts which should be conducted at several levels: phonetic, lexical, grammatical and multistructural/schematic. The eighth aspect takes into account the fact that the relation between the texts and the society/culture should be considered from a dialectic point of view. The texts include the socio-cultural aspects, but they are also components of the society and culture" (Tanasescu, 2015).

With regard to the linguistic research of the computer-based communication, although one may say it is still in its infancy, characteristics of the media texts published on the internet have been identified.

The communication forms which have become essential to the modern man have been systematised as follows (Coja, 2013, *apud*Veghes Ruff-Grigore, 2003):
- asynchronic communication "one-to-one", "one-to-few" and "one-to-many" (see the e-mail);

- asynchronic communication "many to many", e.g. discussion forum;
- synchronic communication, which may be "one-to-one", "one-to-few", "one-to-many" and "many-to-many", e.g. chat rooms;
- asynchronic communication characterised by the receptor's need to access sites in search of various information, involving communicational relations of "many-to-one" type, and "one-to-one" or "one-to-many" such as the www websites, FTP etc. (Table 3).

Table 3. *Forms of internet communication*

Form	Content
- e-mail	Electronic mail(or email). Born in 1965, form of communication used between computer users, its characteristic is the Distribution list (e-mail addresses list)
- forum	The only difference is the public vs. private character in case of e-mail
- blog	Short for web log, It is similar to the forum but has the character of a private (personal) diary, usually an issuer and several receptors
- chat	Unlike the ones above, the chat applications do not store the messages issued for a later remittance to the receptor. They are remitted in real time, the receptor sees it in the window of the chat programme

Source: Coja Claudia, 2013, p. 26

Depending on the language location, the linguists are interested in laying emphasis on the particular types of the grammatical system or the specific intonation models.

An interesting point is represented by the **conversational analysis** conducted by a group of ethnomethodologists. The ethnomethodology is the interpretative approach of the sociology which is based on the daily life of journalists. The method attaches a special attention to the conversation and the manner in which the individuals interact and interpret.

The emphasis is laid on the informal conversation (see the conversation on the electronic means). The authors multiply the descriptive linguistic resources through the analysis of how interaction is organised (wordings, conversational projects, order of intervention when taking the floor etc). The focus is more on how people relate to each other and less on linguistic accuracy. The high-level traits pertaining to society and culture – power relations, ideologies, cultural values – are even neglected.

A valuable approach of the media discourse is the **semiotic analysis.** Its objective is the texts as components of the media cultural analysis. It is about the semiotic codes and conventions which equally concern the linguistic and visual aspects of the press.

The analysis of the visual codes refers to how the person speaks live, how he/she looks at the camera, uses graphs and photographs, videos with comments as background, the panorama achieved by moving cameras around, all these having social meaning.

A major quality of the semiotic analysis takes into consideration the fact that the text is analysed as a significant part of the socio-cultural media analysis and establishes relations between the features of a text and the ideologies, between the power relations and the cultural values.

Nonetheless, in comparison with the oriented linguistic approaches(linguistic, socio-linguistic, critical linguistic analysis, cognitive and cultural-generic analysis), the semiotic analysis has its limits in the sense that it does not seek to deal with the features of the **texture** of the texts in a systematic way.

The critical linguistics lays emphasis on the role of the choices made in terms of vocabulary. For instance, a study on the sexual discrimination in the press production may gear towards how differences between words used in reference to women and words used in reference to men people who have pre-existing classification systems of an ideologically

strong type of genre may assimilate. By way of example, are women systematically represented in terms of their family-related role (as mothers or wives) or in terms of sexual interest in relation to men? What types of participants and in what sorts of processes do they function predominantly? For instance, can women and men function in capacity of actors/participants in ongoing processes? If so, what categories of specific processes are involved in this case? It is, for example, about smiling or screaming, debating or voting.

The critical analysis has also its own limits. In terms of the distinction between text and practice, the focus is on the production text and practices; however, the analysts tend to interpret the texts without referring to the interpretative practices of the public-receptor. The studies on mass-media have transferred the focus from the textual analysis to intercepting and this naturally leads to criticism. In terms of socio-cultural practice, there is a tendency to consider the media role as a monolith in the reproduction of the ideology affecting diversity and change of practices and media discourse.

Although attention is attached to interpersonal aspects (relational, in particular) of the text, the emphasis is probably far too geared towards representations; the issues on social identity will have to be treated in more depth.

5. MULTILINGUALISM AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES, CHALLENGES IN OFFLINE AND ONLINE COMMUNICATION

In the European Union, all official languages are equal – at least in theory. Nevertheless, the everyday practice is completely different, especially due to languages such as English, Spanish, French or German which are used at a larger scale than languages such as Romanian, Bulgarian or Estonian. Moreover, national policies on immigration fail to treat all languages equally and see multilingualism as an active obstacle for social cohesion. While multilingualism is often proclaimed as a valuable asset in official documents, in reality only one type of multilingualismis truly valued, whereas other types are perceived as problematic.

Despite assessments conducted, the very concept of multilingualism is vague to many people – including the decision-making bodies in the EU – as they understand and use the term in a different way. To some people, multilingualism represents education policies, whereas to others it represents the protection of the minority language and to the rest the capacity to insert professionally and the international competition. Above all, the term "multilingualism" is associated with two types of discourse: first, a discourse focused on human rights and minority protection and second, on a discourse geared toward the economic value of multilingualism. Whereas the discourse on human rights deals with all languages equally, the economic pragmatism fosters the individual languages or the combinations of favourite languages in order to increase the economic success.

Resolving conflicts seems to function in the tourism industry: initiatives such as European Institute of Cultural Routes seem to be successful in the European history in terms of "Unity in Diversity" and may change perceptions among indigenous populations.

Some languages are "more equal" than others. English, Spanish and French are used worldwide on a large scale.

In the practice of the institutions, while official documents of the EU should be translated into all official languages of the Member States, the institutions have come to an agreement on using two to three working languages: English, French and German.

Even some EU officials who are in charge of linguistic policies consider multilingualismto be a fashionable term to set forth the idea of an integrated Europe, which is unable to approach the fundamental tensions and the real issues.

Although the term "multilingualism" is often used in official documents on European policies, its meaning is far from being clear, even to the decision-making factors in the European institutions responsible for linguistic planning or the institutions in charge of monitoring. When the request for clarification of multilingualismwas set forth, the majority responded using vague terms or institutionalised, pre-formulated responses. Multilingualism was often associated with individual linguistic skills, the EU obligation to use its official languages in relation to citizens of the Member States and also with the use of the language within the EU institutions themselves.

The situation becomes even more complex when terms such as "plurilingualism" and "linguistic diversity" are taken into consideration, the attempt being to highlight the difference between multilingualism and these concepts.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Our understanding of the corporate communication in a multicultural environment is to a large extent in line with what Appelbaum and Belmuth define as long-term planning of the strategic method to manage other nations' public relations (Appelbaum and Belmuth, 2007).

We consider that the linguistic abilities and the international experience are extremely important to the business environment nowadays. Moreover, they are even a preliminary obligatory condition to recruit employees. In addition to sound knowledge of English language, it is often useful (or in some cases mandatory) for the potential employees to possess skills in other foreign languages.

Additionally, we believe that an individual lacking the capacity to create interpersonal relations and networks, regardless of their best linguistic and cultural skills and knowledge, will never succeed in achieving the corporate goals. This thing highlights the importance of communication from a corporate and organisational perspective. Finally, the individual communicators are seen as part of the whole, as staff members and contributors to the success of the organisation, who keep their reputation in a pre-established framework of corporate communication.

The linguistic skills and the cultural know-how are perceived as minimum professional requirements. The individuals' linguistic and cultural skills increase and develop alongside their international experience, whereas such skills may be further shared within their teams.

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