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Descriptive Illusion or Untruth in Political Press

Abstract: Our study attempts to present a demonstration related to political language persuasion in the press of Constanta City, by resorting to rhetoric elements, the illocutionary and perlocutionary force of language and to the insertion of descriptive illusion or untruth. To this regard, I have selected over 40 articles pertaining to two local publications of Constanta City: "Cuget Liber" (C.L.) and "Telegraf" (T.), magazines of a different political orientation. I have selected by choice the front-page political articles (editorials, coverage, news, interviews) and those under the "Political" heading. The selection criteria were the following: the importance of the political event, pre-campaigns and elections, communication of manifestations, different conflicts or controversies between politicians, notoriety of political actors. Another criterion was the strategic space of the article in the newspaper page or the psychological means to attract the reader's attention: uneven pages, the first and the last page, the superior part of the page, the upper right corner of the newspaper page. We judge the ideological content or the persuasive language in terms of intentionality, approaching a critical lecture regarding the forms of untruth occurred in the media: propaganda or illusiveness, disinformation, psychological action. The aim of this paper is to demonstrate the fact that the media hosts, influences the political language but it also pretends to make it official and legitimate. The applications in media texts allow the study of processes related to intentional communication of information, pseudo – information and non – information. Within the political context presented in the written media, an important role is played by the prelocutionary objectives in locutory or illocutory acts.

Key words: analysis of political discourse, local press of Constanta City, intentionality, influence, untruth, truth, perlocutionary act.

According to Pierre Bourdieu, the symbolic instruments are used as domination instruments. Each party claims that the ideology be situated above all individual or collective conditionings, as any religion has the conviction that it represents the universality of Divinity idea: "The ideologies serve to those particular interests that they tend to present as universal interests" (Bourdieu 205)².

The language of political actants becomes power in the journalistic text, and media tends to win the legitimacy of the political act. We identify in discourse of local press illocutory acts, which are conventions describing social phenomena and which indicate the issuers'³

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² P. Bourdieu assigns the ideological power to the notion of "domination" or "political violence".

³ In the present cases, the issuers are the politicians as well as the journalists.

power or authority. At the same time, the political orientation of each local publication renders legitimacy to the authoritarian discourse.

According to the descriptive illusion postulate, the researchers in pragmatics admit the following hypothesis: "All descriptive phrases have a truth related value" (Moeschler and Reboul, 1999: 107).

J. L. Austin disconcerts the theory and proves that a great part of declarative phrases (illocutionary: order, promise) do not describe the reality (Austin, 2002: 159).

We notice that in media texts, the perlocutionary language acts during the electioneering become simple symbolic signs. According to the representatives of all orientations of linguistic pragmatics, the untruth corresponds to a perlocutionary act: "It seems that the lie is effectively categorized in the criteria settled by Austin for perlocutionary acts" (Moeschler and Reboul, 2001: 32).

Here are a few examples of our study case in which we observe perlocutionary objectives in illocutory acts:

(1) "**We propose to promote** projects for infrastructure, schools, kindergartens, treatment plants, tourism, agrotourism, industry, development." (T., 22.10.2008).

(2) "Think pragmatically, in a balanced, national manner, and not with your feelings, because year 2004 is gone, when there were mottos such as "May you live well!". Any vote for the orange color is a vote that **condemns** Constanta to **underdevelopment, to lack of funds, to a government that hates and is hostile to Constanta**" (T., 22.11.2008).

The receiver shall semantically analyze the phrase of the announcer to determine the truth related conditions. J. Moeschler and A. Reboul observes that any message decodification is equivalent to the seek of the truth related value: "*Determining the truth related conditions of a declarative phrase...is integral part of the process related to its interpretation*" (Moeschler and Reboul, 1999: 108).

The announcement: "**We propose to promote**" opens an illusionary dimension of prospective actions, as long as they have not been fulfilled yet, but they are projected in the imaginary of the political issuer.

The local journalistic discourse makes references to facts situated in the past or future:

(3) "Within the same context, **I remind you** that, after the analysis made along with the councilors, we have passed to materialization of household actions". (C.L., 23.10.1996);

(4) "**I hope** we shall have a much better president" (C.L., 21.05.2007).

The illocutionary marks performed by means of verbs such as *dicendi*, in example (3) and by means of behavior related verbs in example (4), work on a time scale that does not coincide to the scale of the speaking moment. In the first announcement, the verbal focus refers to past actions, and in the second one, such actions are placed in an undetermined future. In addition, the speaker in example (4) does not refer to his own person, but to a collective of third parties, to whom he assigns the appropriate duties for their statute (MPs), but of which he is not responsible himself.

A promising formulation shall be impaired if the fulfillment of the thing proposed by the issuer is not the one he wanted. If the promising party does not believe that the interlocutor wishes the fulfillment of the promise, we may also identify the defective character of the verbal action. For the promise not to be impaired, J. R. Searle asserts that the promise must be sent in the real sense of the word, as a promise, and not as a threat or warning.

The English philosopher thinks that the promise is certainly related to a challenging case or circumstance. The real situation obstructs the receiver's wish that the related promise come true. It equally depends upon the issuer, since "*the one that promises has the consciousness of the wish or need*" (Searle 100).

The two perspectives pertaining to the issuer and receiver must be balanced for the promise to be real, in no way shall it be false or defective. If the announcement "I promise" is made without the intent to put it in practice, then the speech act shall be a false one.

J. R. Searle makes researches over the sincerity of the speech acts in all speech acts based upon the idea of promise. By the assertion of the promise, the speaker is obliged to fulfill the speech act, which is an essential condition for the success of the announcement. In case on insincere announcements, we cannot call them as promises, since the speaker does not have the intentions that correspond to a promise. Thus, in such cases, we encounter a false act of speech.

If the receiver of the message has reasons to suppose that the announcement is a real one, the speaker's discourse is considered as sincere. The perspectives change according to the persuasion power of the political message. The rhetoric of political discourse, its influence and seduction may impose the sincerity conditions.

The promise implies the assumption of certain obligations from the speaker. The illocutionary announcements under the form of promise may also have other forms, of the type: "*I want to do this*", without being mandatory for the issuer to use the illocutionary mark "*I promise*".

According to D. Vernant, the untruth is based on the fact that it is not visible in interaction, it is masked and it may authorize all manipulations (74-76).

It may come in different interactive forms, fluctuating from the most treacherous insinuation to the greatest lie.

When the issuer's scope is to narrate unreal facts, he often uses the partial or total omission of the information. Concealing the information leads to the significance of the event's non – genuineness. Most of the times, the issuer's scope is not to directly manipulate the public's behavior, but to inoculate a negative attitude to the receiver, for example, regarding a political character. The omission of positive facts and publication of negative actions may represent a means to manipulate the reader, even if the assertions of the journalist or politician are not real.

The untruth is an interactional strategy to manipulate the interlocutor's behavior. D. Vernant recalls all forms of untruth used in the great military confrontations: propaganda, disinformation, psychological action, delusion or illusiveness.

Such forms of untruth shall be identified in the written local media:

A. Propaganda or illusiveness

- (5) „At the Ministry of Finance, efforts **that I have never seen** are made, even if some of the people think that they are working slowly.” (C.L., 22.05.2006).

The time adverb of aspect “never” emphasizes the verb “to see” and anchors the action in the political imaginary. The two parts of speech express the temporal reference and are selectively combined with the past in order to render the political discourse the significance desired by the issuer.

B. Disinformation

- (6) “Even if our colleagues from the opposition place red flags on the account of the failure related to current government, this is the best Romanian report coming from EU.” (C.L., 22.05.2006).

The adjective “good” at superlative relative degree accompanies the noun “report” and transforms the political discourse in utopia. The issuer does not bring arguments that would prove the genuineness of his assertion. The reader is invited to create it, although the opposition marked by means of the red flags the weaknesses on the governing map.

- (7) “Lamentable, hypocrites, incompetents. These are the appreciations of PD-L Prime Vice – President, Theodor Stolojan, to the address of the current governance” (C.L., 6.10.2009).

The adjectives “Lamentable, hypocrites, incompetents” are negative epithets launched over the governmental team, without any technical evidence from the issuer.

C. Psychological action

- (8) “The liberal tried to place the three red flags that Europe showed to us in the field of agriculture and the one in the finance field on account of the “heavy inheritance”, asserting that the negotiations carried in 2004 by the former governance would be the reason of problems encountered by the Romanian State in the two fields. ” (C.L., 22.05.2006).

Starting from the assertions of B. Russell, Denis Vernant reinterprets the truth and untruth related theory: “A good truth related theory must recognize the error. Nevertheless, by means of a good theory of assertion⁴, we must recognize the untruth” (Vernant, 1997: 71).

⁴ According to DSL, s.v. *assertive, assertive sentence*: sentence that bears the truth related value, and it becomes, by relating it to a factual state, true or false; it is opposed to interrogative and exclamatory sentences that do not have a truth related value

From this perspective, here are a few examples of the local media:

- (9) *„I strictly refer to the habit of those that use to see other people’s tiny mistakes and not their own gross mistakes. (T., 27.07.2006).*

The assertion is related to the discourse level and it is not erroneous and true. The sincere intention of the journalist is completed with the truth of his discourse. According to the hereinabove mentioned theories, it is about the first possible case, in which we confirm the necessity of assertion’s significance, combined with the journalist’s sincere intention reflected in the genuineness of his discourse.

- (10) *“Have you noticed how much milk is being drunk at the management of the country and of the main secret services? Do you expect all of them to be wet behind their ears?” (T., 27.07.2006).*

The journalist insinuates the childlike character of the president and secret services. The conjunction in Romanian “*to*” from the structure of the presumptive subjunctive introduces a nonassertive subordinate clause. The discourse does not have a truth related value and it is classified, according to the asserted theory, in the third possible case of genuineness – non-genuineness of the assertion (if the speaker is not sincere and his sayings are not real, the speaker lies to his counterpart and betrays him): “*The untruth is an interactional strategy of which the purpose is to manipulate the other’s behavior*” (Vernant 71).

D. Vernant draws the conclusion that using the untruth, we tend to distinguish the truth related conditions and success related conditions as well as to effectively combine them. The untruth becomes a defective case of assertion. To this regard, the Belgian researcher invokes the quality related moral pertaining to H. P. Grice: “*Do not assert what you think it might be false!*”.

The journalist strategically chooses⁵ (Sălăvăstru 280) a rhetoric question (to which no answer is expected), question by means of which he actually states his conviction or opinion. It is the case of example (7) hereinabove mentioned.

Other times, the untruth is rendered in an assertive form, eventually stylistically colored:

- (11) *“It is clear that, being superior in level and legs, the log got involved in the scandal of secret services” (T., 27.07.2006).*

The assertive sentence inserted by conjunction “*that*” becomes true from the perspective of the journalist. He inserts the insinuation (by means of the metaphor “log”) that the secret services would be suspect of complicity in the case of O. Hayssam escape. The assertion is classified, according to Vernant’s theory, in the second possible case of genuineness – non

⁵ According to Constantin Sălăvăstru: “*Any statement may be true or false and the listeners react out of this dichotomic perspective, dangerous enough from the point of view of discourse efficiency. Nevertheless, the interrogation is out of this duality, which allows a certain margin to the speaker, a certain maneuvering space in relation to his listener. At least the latter cannot reject the former in a direct manner for the simple reason that the speaker did not make any assertion.*”

– genuineness: if the sayings of the speaker are sincere from his perspective, but if the things he says are not real, then the speaker is wrong. In consequence, the journalist's assertion is fallacious. The discourse related strategy emphasizes the insinuation. The communicator's stake is to establish images that influence or set the perspectives and that serve to the political orientation of the publication.

According to the performing hypothesis, any statement has a surface structure and a depth one, and the latter equals to the meaning of the phrase. In the following article, we shall notice announcements in which the journalist's intention is to balance them, although the statements have different meanings:

(12) "*Romania could say "farewell" to the companies that send workers abroad.*" (T., 6.11.2007);

(13) "*The Romanian State declared war to fake companies that intermediate the work abroad*" (T., 6.11.2007);

(14) "*...the Minister of labor, Paul Păcuraru, stated that he shall analyze along with the representatives of the Ministry of Home Affairs and Administrative Reform regarding the possibility of abolishing the recruitment networks in charge of works abroad*" (T., 6.11.2007).

The announcements (12) and (14) have the same depth structures: the dubitative announcements "*could say farewell*" and "*shall analyze the possibility of abolishing*" do not have the capacity to convey the certainty related to abolishment of the related companies. If in the announcement (14) we identify the official source (genuine announcement), the Minister Paul Păcuraru, in announcement (13) the sources are missing. We do not know who asserts or the technical evidence according to which we assert that "*the Romanian State declared war to fake companies*".

Announcement (14) has the same surface structure as announcements (12) and (13), but here we notice another depth structure: the meaning of the phrase is different. We have a certainty, by means of the indicative "*declared*", regarding the fact that the Romanian State already acted against the companies. The hypothesis that announcements (12) and (14) have the same meaning from the phrase point of view may be proved to be false, because the phrases actually convey suppositions and not truths. The subject is different, since "*Romania*" from the first announcement is not only represented by "*Paul Pacuraru and the representatives of the Ministry*".

However, even in the case of the last announcement (14), the certainty induced by the verb "*stated*" is considerably diminished by means of two marks with a very powerful pragmatic impact: the use of future (unreal action, a possible one) in the second sentence, subordinate, and then the use of direct object noun, "*possibility*". The possibility never has the same meaning with the unreal "certain achievement".

Thus, we reach an unacceptable conclusion called „performadox”: different phrases that obviously do not have the same meaning are supposed to be equivalent from the meaning point of view, therefore from the standpoint of the conditions that render their genuineness or falsity (Moeschler and Reboul, 1999: 99-101, 111, 112).

In conclusions, the announcements (12) and (13) represent authentic assertions, but they are not true; they are false announcements. The journalist's intent is to mislead his reader by means of a perlocutionary act, when he chooses the announcement (12) to be the title of the article.

The manipulation is classified in the famous standard:

"The speaker of an untrue phrase intends to mislead the interlocutor, in the sense that he has the intent to make him believe that he (the speaker) apparently believes in his assertions" (Reboul; Moeschler, 2001: 29-30).

The French researcher Jacques Gerstlé considers the electioneering as a game structure *"characterized by conflict, by cooperation or mixed relations"* (75). In addition, the researcher asserts that he politicians that candidate are strategies that mobilize the electors and that position their actions towards success.

For the advertising political discourse to be efficient, it uses offers stating benefits oriented towards the elector's personal interest. A simple and fast strategy used by the journalists is the suggestion inferred from the title in that there is a simple and fast way for the public to get what it wants. For the discourse to be efficient, the journalist includes in his title the successful approach of the party:

(15) *"Current governors, at the hour of **positive.....balance sheets. We shall have heat in the wintertime. Next year, there will be food**"* (C.L., 14.11.1996);

(16) *"Adrian Năstase proposes **a grand project** regarding small and medium enterprises"* (T., 15.01.1998);

(17) *"The Popular Action promises **the profit taxation by 14% and dividend taxation by 15%**"* (C.L., 9.11.2004);

(18) *"PUNR – The Party of National **Dignity**"* (C.L., 27.10.1996).

Here are a few points of attraction by means of which the advertising political discourse influences the electioneering by promising and repetitive actions, clichés⁶ specific to baffle gab, which occur in all political discourses: economic growth, doubling the salaries, the society's training, decentralization and depolitization of the educational system, educational transformation, corruption eradication, fleet salvage, scholarships for young students, educational reform, potential exploitation:

(19) *"The government sees an **economic growth** by 5% for 2005"* (C.L., 6.11.2004);

⁶ We observe the echoes of the baffle gab, the artificiality of the discourse by the substantivization of the missing data: "growth", "doubling", "training", "decentralization", "depolitization", "transformation", "reconstruction", "salvage", "exploitation".

- (20) “*YES alliance promises the doubling of salaries in the educational system as well as scholarships for young students*” (C.L., 2.11.2004);
- (21) “*...The political offer of YES alliance in the educational field is based on six major objectives: equal and increased access to education, high educational quality and the society’s training based upon knowledge, decentralization and depolitization of the educational system, education transformation in a basic source for Romanian modernization, reconstruction of the educational buildings in the rural areas*” (C.L., 2.11.2004);
- (22) “*Ion Coja – Senate candidate, a fighter for truth and social justice, for corruption eradication*” (C.L., 27.10.1996);
- (23) “*Gheoghe Georgescu – candidate to Chamber of Deputies, a fighter for authentic reform and salvage of the national fleet*” (C.L., 27.10.1996);
- (24) “*I shall support the case of the unemployed, young people and retired, of mothers having many children.*” (C.L., 27.10.1996);
- (25) “*The exploitation of touristic potential, of the localities within the county – this is a priority for PSD – Social Democratic Party*” (T., 11.10.2008).

The format depicted by the political advertising in media presents the ways in which the politicians try to persuade the public by means of different discourse strategies. We observe in the selected media texts that the journalistic discourse rebuilds a political language aiming to eulogize the facts of the favored party. In consequence, we identify a simple and seducing rhetorical discourse similar to the advertising slogans.

When it comes to negative advertising, we notice in the selected texts references to certain defaults pertaining to the opposing candidate. We identify many articles where the issuer’s attack technique makes use of items of verbal, psychological, physical violence as well as violence in the commercial analysis. We observe that the electioneering is extremely aggressive.

1. Verbal violence

The journalist and the politician use different appellatives by means of which they insult their political opponents:

- (26) “*Some guttersnipes who considered themselves above the party’s forums*” (T., 24.10.2008);

- (27) *“The President of Constanta PDL County Organization also emphasized that, according to the assertions of young PDL supporters, the CJC representative, who considered himself as being apolitical, threatened them as follows: “I shall let the superiors know and then you will see!” (C.L., 13.10.2008).*

The threat discourse from the announcement *“I shall let the superiors know and then you will see!”* opposes the superiority of the political ego, the CJC representative, in relation to the inferiority of young PDL supporters.

2. Psychological violence

The journalist and the politician humiliate, threaten, and blame the other political referents from the opposition parties:

- (28) *“You will find in this register Hașotti’s **weakness**, who has already demonstrated his **incapacity** by his **weak activity**, which is proved during the four years of mandate...In exchange, Hașotti is looked as the parliamentary **who sleeps with his head on the table**”.... (T., 5.11.2008).*

The politician negatively assesses Hașotti’s political activity using the adjectives “weak”, “weak” and the noun “incapacity”, minimizing his political power. The political issuer blames his political opponent for absence or political inactivity using the expression *“he sleeps with his head on the table”*.

- (29) *“PDL advocates only **know how to lie and bespatter**” (T., 7.11.2008).*

The political issuer often blames his political opponents for lying. The communicator’s attitude appears as a certain opinion by means of which he insults PDL politicians. The communicational process is presented as factual (sure) using the etiquette verb “*know*”, which means: [they prefer to lie or they want to lie]. Thus, the negative attitude of PDL politician is classified in the sphere of wishes, of the intent to mislead.

- (30) *“**It’s a pity** to see that a State’s President, who normally has to be in charge with the Romanians’ condition, wherever they may be, participates in election meetings”.* (T., 7.10.2008).

The verb phrase *„It’s a pity”* blames the candidate Traian Băsescu because he does not care about the Romanians’ condition, but instead, he gets involved in political activities, transgressing the deontology of his position.

- (31) “**Impressed by tears**, just as their mentor, Traian Băsescu, in 2004, by the problems of Constanta inhabitants, PDL representatives of Constanta discovered now, just before the elections, their civic spirit, which has been lost so far in the party’s offices”. (T., 14.10.2008).

The expression “impressed by tears” conveys the journalist’s pragmatic irony, who blames PDL for lack of sensitivity, for lack of civic spirit.

PDL candidates are blamed for political incompetence using the expression “*they do not know what they write*”.

- (32) “Actually, none of PDL candidates at the Parliament **know what they write** in the governing program, being inspired in a percentage of 80% by the programs launched by the political opponents” (T., 14.10.2008).

- (33) “PDL Constanta launched candidates from the Unions’ House of Culture with great brilliance, in a **theater, kitsch atmosphere**. From the anesthetic decoration represented by a boat out of which one by one came out, in a **diffuse light**, the 14 democrat – liberal candidates to the Romanian Parliament...**they wanted to be actors** in a play of which the playwright was represented by themselves.”..... (T., 27.10.2008).

The negative items “*theater, kitsch atmosphere*”, “*diffuse light*”, “*they wanted to be actors*” bring negative connotations to an electioneering, in which the candidates are blamed of political falseness.

- (34) “PSD initiated a **denigrating, dirty** electioneering, without any real support, as the PSD supporters **used the security – communist methods** of the 50s in the last century, in order to **intoxicate** the electorate”. (C.L., 13.11.2008);

The issuers of Cuget Liber magazine blames PSD campaign by using adjectives such as “dirty” and “denigrating” and blames PSD for manipulation or disinformation, using the verb “to intoxicate”.

- (35) “he preferred to pay a protection fee to PSD and to govern in order to bring the country in a **total chaos**” (C.L., 17.11.2008).

3. Violence in economic analysis

The journalist or the politician accuses the political referent of illegal facts, infractions, such as: corruption, theft, robbery, political abuse, etc:

- (36) “We want to close the **theft** sources. The good people should get to work and the **thieves** should go behind the bars.” (C.L., 7.11.2004);
- (37) “Among the candidates in conflict with the Justice, we can mention the former PD deputy of Constanta, Stelian Dușu, currently independent, who was trialed by DNA prosecutors, being charged of **prejudice** caused to Constanta County Council, of which he was President, and the value of the prejudice incurred was of **3.3 million Euro**” (T., 19.11.2008);
- (38) “A law is made for many people. They (i.e.- PN-L and PSD) make the law so that it has many exits and get-offs. **Them with them at DNA**, us with you at the government” (C.L., 27.10.2008);
- (39) “**All of us obey the law** or just some of us are allowed to show that ?! From my point of view, Ionuț Barbu **stole** them. I wouldn’t be surprised if the Town Hall had given him money to take off the banners ...” (C.L., 11.11.2008);
- (40) “Thus, the leader of PDL County Organization asserts that the people, by means of PSD campaign materials, the people **are misled**, since they are brought to attention that they would vote other uninominal colleges than those to which they are assigned in reality” (C.L., 26.11.2008).
- (41) “Constanta PDL County Organization drew the attention at the beginning of this week over the party’s “**theft of identity**”, meaning that PSD-PC alliance would have taken over without any hesitation the message addressed by PDL at national and local level”. (C.L., 12.11.2008).

4. Threat by means of physical violence

- (42) “When we wanted to insert the beach related matter at local authorities, president Traian Basescu opposed. If PSD is going to reach to the governance, **I shall kick the law in his head** and I shall insert the beach related matter at the local authorities”. (T., 7.11.2008);

The expression “**I shall kick the law in his head**” renders the aggressive intention of the political issuer.

- (43) “Paloma Petrescu appreciates the event as not being coincidental at all, and this is because, according to her statements, the electioneering techniques **are under aggression, from the visual, intellectual aggression to the physical one**”. (C.L., 24.11.2008);

The article “*The campaign team of Palomei Petrescu assaulted in CET Square*” describes an effective aggression against PDL:

(44) “According to democrat – liberals, three people of the team **were aggressed** in front of the Square by certain individuals, three or four, who declared having received indications for us to be removed, that they were paid for this” (C.L., 22.11.2008).

We observe in the analyzed texts that the psychological violence prevails in the electoral advertising discourse, followed by an economical component of disclosures and threats, physical violence and verbal violence.

The most important affective states presented in *Telegraf* magazine, during the electioneering in 2008 are the following: indignation, resentment against those that had a four-year mandate.

The articles in *Telegraf* magazine (October, November 2008) favor PSD and criticize, mock and attack PDL in a negative manner, and the other 8 articles have been written from a neutral perspective.

In *Telegraf* magazine, we encounter the *best-seller* effect, in the sense that the leaders of the main political parties (PSD) benefit from a preferential treatment in promoting the party’s program. Research D. Roventă-Frumușani describes the contrary effects of the related procedure:

“...this effect acts by choice in the interpretation of the polls, and top candidates in the electoral chase (survey regarding the vote intentions) are more frequently quoted by the journalists, while the peripheral candidates are marginalized, if not effectively ignored” (Roventă-Frumușani, 2004: 132).

Regarding us, following the analysis of the frequency of electoral items in the two months of the electioneering in *Telegraf* magazine, we notice that “PSD” has 240 issues in articles, “PDL” has 90 issues, the alliance “PNG-CD” has 21 issues, “PRM” 40 issues, “PNL” 40 issues, “PNȚCD” has 11 issues, “PC” has 3 issues, “PSD+ PC” has 11 issues, PPPS has 10 issues, “UDMR” has 21 issues. The present narration in the analyzed corpus (T., October –November ,2008) configures a negative perspective, in which there is a malefactor (PDL) and a victim (PSD):

“...as the narrated fact is always depicted as a negative process: there is always a malefactor and victim, and the presentation of the facts is defined as a universe of evil’s experience” (Roșca, 2007: p. 34).

In our case, the malefactor is represented by PDL and the liberal and PD governance, and the victim embodies the following categories: the electorate, Constanta City, PSD.

To make a comparison, we shall analyze the media discourse regarding the electioneering of 2008 in *Cuget Liber* magazine for the months October and November. The 99 articles selected in the period 7 October – 3 December 2008 refer to launch of PDL candidates to the parliamentary elections, as well as the attack discourse against PSD, as we have emphasized in the hereinabove mentioned examples regarding the types of violence.

The perspective of *Cuget Liber* magazine supports PDL policy and conveys the repulsion and distrust towards PSD and PNL campaign. The journalists who write for *Cuget Liber* examine, observe, compare PDL facts and words associated to the correct image, and those pertaining to PSD are associated to the manipulating, incorrect image, with the evil universe.

We also notice the *best-seller* effect in *Cuget Liber* magazine, according to which the leaders of the main political parties (PDL and PNL) benefit from a preferential treatment in promoting the political governance program. This effect may be observed in articles such as:

(45) “*The liberal Ghe. Dragomir promotes his legislative priorities in the rural environment*” (C.L., 4.11.2008);

(46) “*PDL asks BEJ, by means of an electoral complaint, the interdiction of electoral advertising*” (C.L., 12.11.2008);

(47) “*Mircea Baniş asserts that the country needs a decentralization and not monopole and power abuses*” (C.L., 18.11.2008).

Applying the best – seller effect (October – November 2008), we observe that PDL leads: “PDL” has 197 issues in the articles of *Cuget Liber* magazine, “PSD” has 98 issues, “PNL” has 63 issues, “PNG-CD” has 33 issues, “PC” has 13 issues, “PRM” has 23 issues, “UDMR” has 8 issues, “PPPS” has 9 issues, “PNTCD” has 4 issues.

We notice from the hereinabove mentioned examples that the political perspective is one: PDL pro candidates. The narrative scheme is identified with the fairy tale: the subject (PDL candidate) propelled by the recipient (PDL), aims an objective (winning the parliamentary elections on 30 November 2008) for the benefit of the recipient (electorate, as well as PDL candidate or PDL). The hero (candidate) is helped by the media and he is impeded by the opposing party (political opponent) that is his counter-candidates or the opposition media. The discourse is built so that it leaves the impression that PDL intends to help the electorate. The following is intended: the inoculation of the idea that PDL governance for Constanta had a positive impact.

Conclusions:

The political language becomes power and it influences, by means of the symbolic propaganda, especially during the elections. This type of influence, in which the action is advantageous for the issuer, not for the one that bears the related effect, is projected in media texts in an apparently performing discourse or in a fictive political discourse.

The political discourse encounters cases in which the issuers and the receivers (the journalist or the politician) cooperate and distort the reality. In consequence, the political discourse is projected, in the cases that we selected, in a falsehood context. Starting from

the theories of researchers J. L. Austin and J. R. Searle regarding the acts of speech that they consider true or false, we identify both the importance of the verb in determining the truth-value as well as the context that accompanies the discourse action.

The pragmatic lecture of the political actions describes the verbal opinion acts of journalists and politicians, which propose a blaming scenario of the political opponents. The deviations from significance, the suppositions that lack arguments, the excessive metaphors, the stereotypes and reality dramatization configure a false political scenario. The political discourse is an ironic exercise, deprived of concrete data, theatrical and nevertheless, influential sometimes. Such characteristics represent a discursive failure in the examples that we selected. The ironic perspectives avoid the truth.

On one side, the discursive performance may be null if the act of speech is made under political pressure. On the other side, the act of speech may be efficient as long as the media institutionalizes or pretends the legitimacy or the truth of discourses pertaining to referent politicians. Unfortunately, most of the times, the condition of truth does not matter. What really matters is the powerfully marked form of the discourse, effectively and stylistically marked.

We observe that the theories of researchers J. L. Austin, O. Ducrot and D. Vernant, which sustain that the untruth corresponds to a perlocutionary act and that the discourse's objective is not to represent the reality, and the fact that valid arguments do not always carry weight, are confirmed in the local Romanian media. The untruth becomes perlocutionary or authoritative when it is well masked. By means of untruth, the manipulation becomes a performing act in the political discourse, which resorts to different influential strategies: misinformation, psychological action, delusion.

In their political advertising discourse, the issuers adopt discursive strategies to attract the public, if the politicians cooperate or if they are in conflictual relations: representational strategy, which has a figurative reality or strategy effect (simulated or not), where the issuer resorts to myths, figures of speech, and symbols. We notice a commercial act of speech, with marketing strategies, which tends to apparently solve the public's problems.

The political advertising discourse becomes tensed during elections, the advertising is negative and the official languages transform in a violent, assaulting language. The articles that we selected contain many examples of verbal, psychological and even physical aggression of the political and journalistic discourse. The political actions are formed and deformed in a conflictual approach. We observe that the psychological violence prevails in the electoral advertising discourse, and it is even followed by statement of physical violence.

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