Available online at www.sserr.ro
Social Sciences and Education Research Review

(6) 1 227-234 (2019) ISSN 2392-9683

SOCIAL JOURNALISM IN ONLINE WORLD. CONCEPTUAL DELIMITATIONS

Xenia NEGREA
Senior lecturer, PhD, CCSCMOP, Journalism, University of Craiova, Romania

Abstract

In this article we look at the type of journalism generated by technological evolution. Our study starts from the question: "How did technology affect journalistic content?". And the hypothesis of our analysis was that in the new logistic context, journalism of human interest, namely forms of social journalism, is preferred and privileged. Journalists themselves have gone through various stages of dealing with the public quickly, so that, as we have shown, the press liaison function has led to the creation of worlds of consensus, to the detriment of a conglomerate of individuals bound together by communication bridges.

Keywords: social journalism, technology, proximity, ideological consensus

Introduction

The technological changes that have been made to what we call the "digital era" have produced other types of mutations, not so easy to perceive. This a-spatiality has produced anthropological, psychological changes. The public's perspective on the journalistic act has changed (see the illusions of citizen journalism), the public's perspective on the type of information, rhetoric

BDD-A30267 © 2019 Sitech Publishing House
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 16:55:38 UTC)

(the escalation of forms of journalism as well as dramatization and emotional discourse) has changed.

The new virtual world demands its own type of expression, its own type of text and speech. All these changes are also internalized in the professional self-presentation of journalists. It is changing, therefore, the way the journalists perceive themselves and their profession. J. M. Charon (2007) has already been talking about a decade of transition from information journalism to a "communication journalism focused not on rapid and accurate data transmission, but on the creation of intersubjective links to an emotional contract between the press institution (incarnated by the star-presenter) and its audience".

From the very beginning, the professional status of the journalist assumed what the theory calls "openness" - to be a journalist it was necessary to have a writing talent, not even a specialization, not even an academic one. Luminița Rosca (2010) insisted on the "degree of instruction of those who make up this professional field", on the eclecticism of editorial offices in which everyone was accepted, regardless of type and level of education. Things have not become clearer over time, and the online environment, we say, has relaunched the discussion about the professional status of the journalist, about professional content, but also about the finality of this profession (Coman, 2007).

The Popular Journalism of the Digital Age

The distopya of virtuality also produces mutations in terms of types of journalistic discourse. Thus, for example, the idea of proximity is called to explain the constellation of publications (online) appearing outside the idea of hierarchy. Ephemeral or duplicate news sites (which replace the print edition), sites that act not necessarily as a brand, but as a source for a certain type of information, urges us to reconsider, rethink, maybe redefine the idea of proximity.

BDD-A30267 © 2019 Sitech Publishing House
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 16:55:38 UTC)

The axis of proximity, as we know, supports types of journalistic discourse subsumed to social journalism in its most general sense. Consequently, social journalism becomes, we could say, the popular journalism of the digital era, a form of human response to the pace of technology. And technology does not mean dehumanization. On the contrary, we could say, technology seems to have a more intense emotional discourse. The journalism of human interest quite frequently crosses the boundaries of the duels between the expressiveness skills. Many times, the struggle for impact and "like" overturns hierarchies of professional procedures, to the detriment of informational value and in favor of expression performance.

Online communication also means self-communication. The mix of institutional discourse and personal discourse is one of the key features of contemporary communication. In this context, the need for the appropriation and customization of online journalism has developed a proper writing for interpersonal communication: unformalized, personalized, close to oral language. Concision, clarity, accuracy, precision, and main attributes of journalistic style are preserved in the online environment. However, the new developments related to the natural evolution of colloquial expressions and the evolution of various linguistic fields have been added (Vlad, 2013; Stănescu, 2015; Stănescu, 2016). Certainly, the linguistic differences imposed by the types of audiences to which it is addressed are preserved, but the imperative, I would say, is to bring the audience closer together, not to create communication bridges, but worlds accepted and inhabited by both the issuer and the receiver. The accepted linguistic and ideological worlds are the result of tacit ideological adhesions in which the public accepts certain expressiveness and content that the journalist knows and offers. In the new linguistic world, personalized and generated by ideological adherence, persuasion efforts are quite timid, communal labor turning to confirmation and echo rhetoric.

BDD-A30267 © 2019 Sitech Publishing House
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 16:55:38 UTC)

Thus, going further, we can also make the observation that interactivity remains a basic word in online journalism, but we already call it different realities through this term. Since the opening of new virtual screens, readers have proven to be very active, very implicit, willing to leave footprints on the pages of the publications. The recipients post comments at the end of the article, expressing their opinion on a specific topic, bringing suggestions to the journalist, and even completing them. Feedback is, in this sense, the main feature of online journalism. The difference to the dawn of online journalism is, in our opinion, given that the recipients' agreement / disagreement is more important. Not only the number of reactions is important in evaluating an article. but also their quality. To challenge and educate interactivity, journalism in the digital environment also allows the introduction of interactive elements in text, generating the readers' reaction, and by a simple click they can open new information pages, new themes of discussion. We include surveys, questions on a particular topic, tests, answers to common questions, games, computers, discussion lists.

In the new world of the common agreement, there is almost no need for conversational incentives. Receptors are attracted emotionally by the force of expressivity. That is why we believe that certain types of journalistic, written press, second level (signage or photojournalism) can be restored or new ones developed (live text).

Emotion, personalization, humanity are characteristics that surpass the once inimitable principles of journalism in the traditional sense. An article should not just be liked. An article must awaken an emotional reaction (anger, sadness, joy).

Personalized Informations Worlds

In this sense, and at the level of content, the journalist's attention is naturally oriented towards the perfecting of the echo generated at the rhetorical

BDD-A30267 © 2019 Sitech Publishing House
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 16:55:38 UTC)

level (Smarandache et al., 2015). Most of the topics are selected based on the logic of proximity and human interest. In this way, the local press, the proximity press, the press of human (not necessarily citizen) issues becomes the type of journalism most frequent in the online environment. Global and national problems occur only when they find their local relevance or have a great customization disponibility.

More than a decade ago, theoreticians like M. Bromley (1997) and Deuze (2004) have long analyzed the convergence principle and have not once referred to this trait as a final point of journalism. Bromley shows that the potential for the final fragmentation of journalism is realized in the absence of an autonomous professional ethic. And Deuze sees technological development from the point of view of convergence. The researcher concludes that they will not end the journalism because the journalist is a pivotal point in the journalism network and he is the professional needed to filter the vast abundance of information available in technologically advanced societies.

The journalist becomes a kind of community gatekeeper (Voinea, 2015; Voinea et al. 2015; Voinea, Opran & Vlăduțescu, 2016). There was also debated the fear of dissipating the context and of diluting the accuracy in the transmission of information in the light of technological advances that have increased the speed of information (Abrudan & Fofiu, 2007; Radu, 2015; Coman, Popa & Radu, 2018). Time has shown that the new technology is superior (but postmodern) in terms of information transmission. Huang et al. (Deuze, 2007) shows how the quality of information transmission in newspapers remained relatively stable in terms of fairness and balance, in terms of sources, using official sources, and finding topics (Vlăduțescu, 2013; Vlăduțescu, 2014; Vladutescu, Budica, Dumitru & Stanescu, 2015). An important consideration here is that the impact of convergence on work in practice seems to be more about the exchange of information that reporters do with other specialists from different media institutions, rather than how independent journalists work alongside the

BDD-A30267 © 2019 Sitech Publishing House
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 16:55:38 UTC)

media platform. Convergence does not have a negative impact on the quality of information because technological development is a process of evolution, not of revolution, researchers show.

Conclusions

Adapting to new forms of journalism shows how journalism practices have become ways to enable the profession to reconnect to its community and restore confidence in the journalist's social function. The journalist has become sociable, friendly. The journalists met, at one point, their audience even on their personal blog. Today, the journalists invites their audience in their personal publication, a news site, usually generalist, a site strongly impressed by the reputation, the personality of the journalist, a single journalist. Journalism has touched the social media button and created this new personal world, much closer to eternity and absolute freedom. "The Internet is the perfect image of freedom," said journalist Cristian Tudor Popescu (2010) almost a decade ago. After 10 years, we discover this freedom limited by the journalist's seductive power and its emotional availability, by the ideological acceptability of the public.

REFERENCES

Abrudan, E., & Fofiu, A. (2017). Media Coverage of the EU Regional Policy Funds: Insights into Communicating Sustainability. Transylvanian Review, 26.

Bromley, M. (1997). The end of journalism? Changes in workplace practices in the press and broadcasting in the 1990s. A journalism reader, 330-350.

Charon, J. M. (2007). Les journalistes et leur public: le grand malentendu. Vuibert.

Coman, M. (2007). Introducere în sistemul mass-media. Ediția a treia, Iași: Polirom.

BDD-A30267 © 2019 Sitech Publishing House
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 16:55:38 UTC)

Coman, M., Popa, D. A., & Radu, R.-N. (2018). Romania: Unexpected Pressures for Accountability. In T. Eberwein, S. Fengler, M. Karnasim, The European Handbook of Media Accountability. Routledge.

Deuze, M. (2004). What is multimedia journalism?. Journalism studies, 5(2), 139-152.

Deuze, M. J. P. (2002). Online Journalists in Flanders and The Netherlands. European Journal of Communication, 17.

Deuze, M., & Dimoudi, C. (2002). Online journalists in the Netherlands: Towards a profile of a new profession. Journalism, 3(1), 85-100.

Luminița, R. (2000). Formarea identității profesionale a jurnaliștilor. Iași: Polirom.

Popescu, C. T. (2010). Publicul de internet vs publicul de presa tiparită. hotnewsromania.ro

Radu, R. (2015). Protejarea vieții private. In R. N. Radu (coord.) Deontologia comunicării publice (pp. 137-150). Polirom.

Roşca, L. (2010). The Journalistic Text. Theoretical Background. Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai-Philologia , 55 (3), 245-261.

Smarandache, F., Vlăduțescu, Ș., Dima, I. C., & Voinea, D. V. (2015). An Operational View in Computational Construction of Information. In Applied Mechanics and Materials (Vol. 795, pp. 201-208). Trans Tech Publications.

Stanescu, G. C. (2015). Breaking news and news alert, between information and spectacle for rating. Social Sciences and Education Research Review, 2(2), 81-91.

Stănescu, G. C. (2016). Mass media, protector of democracy in the present politicoeconomic environment. Journal of Romanian Literary Studies, (09), 549-558.

Vlad, Davian (2013). „Jurnalism 2.0 – Tranziţia de la modelul informaţional one-to-many la paradigma comunicaţională many-to-many” în volumul colectiv “România 2013: Starea naţiunii”, pp. 104-121, Editura UNIVERSITARIA Craiova, Editura PROUNIVERSITARIA Bucureşti, 2014.

Vladutescu, S. (2014). What Principles of Communication Law Are Violated in Manipulation. Journal of Studies in Social Sciences, 8(2), 333-345.

BDD-A30267 © 2019 Sitech Publishing House
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 16:55:38 UTC)

Vladutescu, S., Budica, I., Dumitru, A., & Stanescu, G. C. (2015). Functions and forms of managerial communication. Polish Journal of Management Studies, 12.

Vlăduțescu, Ș. (2013). Message as Fundamental Discursive Commitment of Communication. Journal of Studies in Social Sciences, 5(2).

Voinea, D. V. (2015). The journalists' obligation of protecting the victims of sexual assault. Social Sciences and Education Research Review, 2(1), 101-109.

Voinea, D. V., Busu, O. V., Opran, E. R., & Vladutescu, S. (2015). Embarrassments in managerial communication. Polish Journal of Management Studies, 11.

Voinea, D. V., Opran, E. R., & Vlăduțescu, Ș. (2016). Minimal Being as Implosion of Communication. Debates on Globalization. Approaching National Identity through Intercultural Dialogue, 757-763.

BDD-A30267 © 2019 Sitech Publishing House
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 16:55:38 UTC)