# The Press of Romanians in the Diaspora, a Manifestation of the Contact between Two Cultures

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**Abstract**
The intention of this study is to present the manner in which the Romanians in the Diaspora adapted to the cultures of the foreign-tongued environments. We are not dealing here with a social, professional adaptation, but a social one, promoted, first of all, through the phenomenon of bilingualism. The dimensions of the Romanian immigration can be shaped, among others, by analysing the situation of the Romanians that left for Italy.

**Keywords**: press, diaspora, culture, bilingualism

## 1. Introduction

It seems that one of the reasons of the presence of foreigners on the Italian territory is represented by the high living standard, to which is added the quite low childbirth of the population in the peninsula. The blossoming economic perspectives have represented a magnet for the immigrations flow. Once arrived on this land, the Romanians have tried to keep their national identity, to pass on the traditions of their natal country. They needed an institutional frame and a legal support of public manifestation. These can be achieved by means of some associations, press organs, gazettes or political parties. We must underline here the role held by the free mass-media, in Romanian, in the process of bringing closer the two cultures, the Romanian and the Italian one. The connection is easy to establish, especially since the two nations have a common origin.

## 2. Identity and bilingualism

In order to build the individual and group identity, the modern man who lives in the Diaspora must be simultaneously connected to plural reference areas, for example, his country of origin, the host country, the neighbouring countries, and in this entire process, the press has the capacity to initiate and maintain such virtual contacts. Therefore, mass-media plays a very important role in the expansion of the intensely debated "global village with cosmopolite values" (Chouliaraki, 2008, p. 371).

In their turn, the ones that stayed home are encouraged to go beyond the borders of their familiar universe, to set connections with the ones that are far and develop the conscience of a world perceived as a single place. Consequently, because of their incontestable ray of transnational action, the



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contemporary media holds the capacity to make us think of ourselves as belonging to the "cosmopolitism, the global society" (Hannerz, 2007, p. 301).

From this perspective, the press institutions developed by the immigrants in the host countries represent reference points for keeping the values, the symbols of their nation of origin. The newspapers issued in Romanian have an overwhelming role in maintaining the Romanian conscience, but also in establishing profound connections with the official institutions of the Italian state. Among them, our attention is directed towards *Gazeta românească*, a newspaper of the Romanians in Italy, as it is self entitled, which has been issued in Rome as early as 2003. If in its beginnings it was issued two times a month, starting from 2005 it become a weekly newspaper. Moreover, in the online format, as we have consulted it, one publishes daily news from various fields. The articles with economic, social, political, sports thematic, written with the verve and passion of the people away from home, bring forward the last our events, on which the Romanians in Italy get informed. The news reflects both the quotidian Italian reality, and particularly describes the changes occurring in the Romanian society. As mentioned earlier, we had the opportunity to read online some issues of this Romanian newspaper published in Italy. The general conclusion is that we can speak of the promptness and accuracy of the depiction of the news, which fulfil an important role, the one of keeping connected the Romanians in the Diaspora to the Romanian reality.

The preservation of the national specificity of the Romanians in the living conditions in Italy represents a desideratum and the press undoubtedly contributes to its fulfilment. Therefore, we propose ourselves, in continuing our endeavour, a more or less exhaustive analysis of the linguistic varieties that are developed in foreign-tongued environments. These differentiations are in a permanent contact with the majority, official language of the Italian State.

Our excursus was based on the observations made upon reading the daily paper *Gazeta Românească* during June 1st - 8th, 2015. Even though the number of the read articles is limited, we were also interested in an analysis of the Romanian vocabulary which is developed in a different area than the Romanian one and which, naturally, receives influences of the language of the state where the newspaper in questions performs its activity. Seen from this perspective, we consider useful and sufficient this description of the Italian-Romanian bilingualism. Because, by writing in Italy and publishing daily papers for the Romanian in this country, the journalists involuntarily make connections between the two languages, Romanian and Italian. The contact can be temporary, with momentary linguistic implications or it can become a constant, long lasting process.

As a consequence of the globalisation process, the Italian is one of the languages used in communication, even if the linguistic supremacy is held by the English. A consequence of the interaction between the languages is represented by the entering in the vocabulary of the languages of the



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borrowings, initially seen in a negative light, as *străinisme* (Sala, 1997, p. 44). It is known that there are no strict borders between the languages between the languages and that, therefore, there are permanent linguistic, cultural, social, civic connections between them. "Creations of some human collectivities" and understanding instruments within the human collectivities, the languages "reflect not the universal reasoning, but the social and civic institutions of each community, hence, their spiritual, psychical and civic" (Lobiuc, 1998, p. 13). The linguistic interferences cause changes in the vocabulary of the languages, and one of these interferences is the occurrence of the lexical innovations. Xenisms (also called foreign-tongued words, foreignism/peregrinisms or foreign words), some borrowings are intentionally kept with the form and meaning of the lending languages. That is why, by looking through the 8 issues of *Gazeta Românească. Ziarul românilor din Italia,* we shall try to identify those foreign-tongued words that penetrated into the Romanian language, the frequency of their occurrence in the publicistic language, and also the shape they take.

It is known that, of the forms of manifestation of a language, the vocabulary is the most mobile field, the one which is easily submitted to changes. The lexical innovations are a consequence of the economic, socio-political, cultural and linguistic interferences.

The enrichment of a language and its modernisation are processes reflected, first of all, in the vocabulary field. In this sense, an important role is held by the borrowings, because the use of a foreign word does not necessarily make it current, but its entering in another language reflects a social reality.

The dynamics the Romanian language recorded in the Italian foreign-tongued environment is a natural consequence of the pressure exercised by the official, majority language. The changes occurred are felt at all levels (especially lexically, but also phonetically and grammatically).

The intensity and complexity of the phenomenon are explainable, as we have mentioned before, in the conditions of the bilingualism.

After flicking through our corpus, made of the 8 issues of the newspaper *Gazeta Românească. Ziarul românilor din Italia*, we have observed more linguistic phenomena.

In the content of the Romanian articles one inserts, here and there, expressions, words, syntagmas or slogans in their original Italian form: *non c`e piu Italia Senza* (GR, June 3rd, 2015), *vieni qua e partiamo insieme, costa meno*! (GR, June 5th, 2015); *un caso unico nello scenario automobilistico mondiale* (GR, June 6th, 2015).

The borrowings recorded in the vocabulary of the Romanian articles are numerous, generally made in a non selective way, most terms being taken by the virtue of the automatism the current use of the Italian language creates. We encounter frequent associations between words of Romanian and Italian origin: *să-i ajute pe rezidenţi* (GR, June 5th, 2015); *turnuri pe trei schimburi* (GR, June



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6th, 2015). The insertion is usually made by adapting the foreign word to the Romanian language by adding the Romanian terms at the beginning or at the end of the syntagma. The genetic relation between the two languages helps putting together the Romanian word and the Italian word. In this moment the transfer between the languages becomes more frequent and more profound.

The vocabulary of the articles written in Romanian of a newspaper issued in the Peninsula, in enriched by inserting in the Italian language of the names of some associations, institutions, in a natural way, as in a great bilingual community: *Santo Stefano Magra (La Speza), Misericordia di Massarosa* (GR, June 3rd, 2015); *Uliva per Perdosa* civic list, *Festa dei Populi* manifestation, *Amici del Sud* association (GR, June 4th, 2015); *Pedale Arcorete* club (GR, June 6th, 2015); *Onlus Primavere del Mondo* association (GR, June 6th, 2015);

Bilingualism is noticeable even in the name of some institutions, name correctly made in Italian and in Romanian: *Consolato di Romania a Catania – Consulatul României din Catania* (GR, June 5th, 2015). Still a manifestation of the cultural contact between the two nations is pointed out in the articles with touristy character, as it is, for instance, the one called *Cele mai frumoase obiective turistice din Florenţa*, from the issue of May 8th of *Gazeta Românească*. We have integrated it in our research precisely for the opening it promotes, being used, for sure, as a guide. The most important cultural benchmarks of the town, with their names in Italian, are enumerated and described here *Galeria degli Uffizi, Ponte Vecchio, Galleria dell'Accademia, Duomo, Biserica Santa Croce, Bargello Museo del Bargello Museum, Santa Maria del Fiore Cathedral.*

The use of neologisms in the vocabulary of the articles from the newspaper of the Romanians in Italy mark the preference for the Latin-Romanic borrowings One uses always, for instance, the term *amici* instead of *prieteni*: *vorbesc în italiană cu amicii; unul din zece are numai amici italieni* (GR, June 3rd, 2015). The same situation is encountered in the case of the noun *carbienieri* which naturally entered the vocabulary of this Romanian newspaper in Italy*: la 1 noaptea carabinierii au reuşit* (GR, June 6th, 2015).

The above analysis points out the existence of some general tendencies of the present Romanian language, that we were able to notice in the language of the Romanian press which performs its activity in Italy: the entering of some new terms, naturally taken in our vocabulary, the use of calque, felt as well as a form of modernisation and evolution of a language.

### 3. Conclusions

The language of the Romanian press published in Italy is characterised by a series of facts which are also present in the other Romanian linguistic varieties used in foreign-tongued environments (Avram, 1997, p. 36): the transfer of the administrative-juridical, technical-scientific terms in particular, and of the neologisms in general, from the majority foreign language; its influence, in



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different degrees, on the compartments of the Romanian language which get such a dynamic form, in accordance with the realities they express.

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