

INTEGRATING FACEBOOK IN ROMANIAN ONLINE NEWSPAPERS:
EMERGING PRACTICES OF PRODUCING THE JOURNALIST'S
AUTHORITY

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the construction of the journalist's authority in a heterogeneous and evolving networked media environment. We analyse the specific ways in which the Romanian online newspaper *Adevărul*, which is relevant for encompassing a model of media convergence, integrates Facebook content into news articles in the context of the 2017 *#rezist* protests. Based on the dispositive analysis, we prioritize three discursive practices supporting the configuration of the journalist's authority: media representations, the media construction of responsibilities, and the critical and deliberative role of the journalist. We argue that the use of social media in online articles favours a more evaluative media discourse, yet not explicitly appropriated by the journalist, and also ways of engaging the audience within a field of power relations. These findings could bring valuable evidence of new forms of media power and, in particular, of the deliberative role of the journalist in a convergence and participative culture of high competitiveness.

Keywords: Journalists' authority, Facebook, media discourse, field of power relations, hybrid journalism

INTRODUCTION

A particular feature of the online media discourse in the context of social protests and disruptive actions that were foregrounded by the complexity and creativity of the mobilization practices, especially through the social networks, is the use of social media not only as a journalistic source, but also as a discursive practice.

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Social media are incorporated into media discourse “as a regular sourcing routine” of the journalist (Paulussen & Harder, 2014), and as a tool for the discursive construction of media representations and of modes of engaging the audience.

Thus, an emergent media dispositive results “as a heterogeneous and socially regulated practice” of media coverage (Beciu *et al.*, 2017) triggering a space of visibility, interactions and engagement. The fusion of two types of connectivity (online newspaper and social media), as a form of transmediality (Eder, 2015; Williams, 2009), creates a hybrid dispositive and thus new discursive mechanisms for building media representations, ways of engaging the audience, and last, but not least, ways of enactment of the journalist’s role.

One of the structural challenges brought by the new media and especially the social media regarding the role of the journalist lies in the “redistribution of power” (Molyneux & Mourão, 2017) in media environments, which can have dual consequences: on the one hand, it becomes more difficult for journalists to reproduce their symbolic power within a highly heterogeneous, competitive and evolving media landscape. On the other hand, journalists are likely to enhance their public visibility both as institutional actors and “personae” and also to increase their interaction with their audiences.

These findings are largely discussed in the current literature on the impact of online media “on the constitution of journalism itself” (Bossio, 2017, p. 3) and, in particular, on the journalistic authority (Voss & Thomas, 2018; Carlson, 2017) as one of the core resources for the practice of democracy. However, there is a consensus on the need for research to be more empirically grounded in order to reveal which are the emerging practices enabling journalists to preserve the seminal norms and values of their work (Ruotsalainen & Villi, 2018) while diversifying the practices of building a (professional) identity and interaction with audiences. In this respect, a less-discussed issue in the current state of research on the matter refers to how social media are used by journalists to shape meanings of events and issues.

A substantial amount of studies have approached the social media impact on the journalist’s work from a variety of aspects such as: the journalistic workflow and the flow of news (Lagneaux *et al.*, 2013); the use of specific technical affordance (*e.g.* Twitter) for reporting (Molyneux & Mourão, 2017; Vis, 2013); the use of social media “as a source for newspaper coverage” (Broersma & Graham, 2012, p. 1) and for distributing and promoting their news pieces (Welbers & Opgenhaffen, 2018), or the use of social media for the journalist’s personal branding (Molyneux *et al.*; 2019; Brems *et al.*, 2017). As a trend, numerous studies focus on the ways in which journalists employ social media as a tool and as a source, fewer analysing the use of social media as a discursive practice in constructing meaning, namely representations and positioning in media discourse. On this subject, we state that our angle of research could bring valuable evidence regarding (1) the discursive use of social media within mainstream online media, and (2) the way this practice influences the journalist’s authority.

Against this background, the issues we address are the following: how is Facebook used by Romanian journalists in the discursive construction of online news articles about protests?

In the first part of the study, we developed an analytical framework on the new types of constraints and opportunities that influence the journalist's work and the ongoing dynamics of the journalistic field within a convergence and participative culture (Hanusch, 2019; Fowler-Watt & Allan, 2013; Meraz, 2013). Next, we present a series of features of Romanian newspaper articles that rely on the integration of Facebook content as a discursive practice, prioritizing three dimensions: media representations, the media construction of responsibilities, and the critical and deliberative role of the journalist. Taking the Romanian online newspaper *Adevărul* as a case study, the analysis highlights specific ways of discursive use of Facebook in articles and discusses its implications in terms of the performative character of the media discourse and of the role of the journalist in a heterogeneous media environment (Van Aelst, 2017).

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

According to a current assertion, the reconfiguration of journalistic practices under the influence of new media is not understood as a way of breaking with the "old media" technical-material and cultural conditions, but as a continuous process of media appropriation of the digital, mobile technologies, as part of the emerging practices of production, dissemination and consumption of media content (Deuze, 2011; Fenton, 2010).

This intersection of old media and new media, online media and social media practices, as an expression of media convergence, reveals a series of transformations of the media environment (Carlson, 2017; Aalberg *et al.*, 2010) also concerning the journalists' authority and autonomy in relation to their sources and audiences. Some scholars view these transformations as a *hybrid turn* (Witschge *et al.*, 2019) in the journalistic field. The concept of hybridity along with others, such as "polyvocality" (of the press) (Carlson, 2017), "ambient journalism" (Hermida, 2010), "journalism as orientation" (Baym, 2017) or "entrepreneurial journalism" (Ruotsalainen & Villi, 2018) are used in current scholarship to explain the "rise of new structures" in the journalistic field (Witschge *et al.*, 2019, p. 652) and, correspondingly, of new forms of "knowledge claims of journalism" (Wahl-Jorgensen, 2015, p. 170) in relation to the dynamics of digital developments.

Recent research on the subject (Witschge *et al.*, 2019; Baym, 2017; Chadwick, 2013) points out that hybridity occurs at the levels of traditional and social media, producers' practices, construction and distribution of media products (through multiple media channels and platforms). Hybridity, as an analytical and an empirical tool, explains the journalistic work and the media production from the

perspective of the coexistence, connection, interweaving, and blending of genres, practices and formats.

In addition, with the new media, we are witnessing a reshaping of the ways in which journalism produces various types of public knowledge through plural and heterogeneous genres, dispositives / formats and discursive practices.

However, hybrid journalism is not a *per se* peculiarity of digital culture, but refers to those practices associated with the commercialization and instrumentalization of political journalism in the context of a more interpretative, adversarial and conversational journalism (de Beus, 2011).

In this sense, Beciu *et al.* (2018) analysed a less studied aspect, namely how hybridity manifests itself in the discursive performance of the journalist's role in a networked public sphere, in relation to his / her audiences and to various public actors (stakeholders, politicians, opinion leaders, etc.). Beciu *et al.* (*ibidem*) highlighted how the growing personalization of the journalist's discourse influences the way he / she performs his / her role of critical political journalist in broadcast talk as a "hybridized figure" combining the "radical role" (mediating a critical discourse against the decision-makers) with the "facilitative role" (Christians *et. al.*, 2009; Hanitzsch, 2017).

Or, the new media considerably diversifies the ways through which it mixes journalistic norms, practices, discourses and routines in the articulation of the journalist's role with respect to the socio-technological heterogeneity of communication. A significant example from this point of view is the blending of what some authors call "the rationality of traditional media and the affectuality of social media" (Ruotsalainen & Vili, 2018), which led to the diversification of sources and, in particular, to the enhancement of the "collaborative construction" of information through the mobilization of the public as a co-author of the news. The information is thus certified not only by the individuals' experience and emotions, but also by their ability to capture the "spectacle of the world". Through the media dispositive, the public is assigned multiple roles: a witness to the event, a journalistic source, an observer and/ or an amateur expert, and a citizen (an engaged user), which sometimes leads to an ambiguous relationship between the journalist and the source ("Who is the journalist? Who is the audience?", see Bossio, 2017).

In this respect, the growing "emotionalization of the public sphere" (Pantti, 2010), also due to the ongoing interdependence between the traditional and the social media, influences the production of media outcome (the public and private spheres coexist within the same text / socio-technical dispositive), related images (emerging visual styles) and the way the journalist communicates (an affective or a civic involvement), taking on multiple roles in relation to his / her sources (interlocutors) and audiences.

Thus, journalists relate to sources that can act simultaneously and autonomously under different expression and relational forms, through a multitude of voices and “claims to represent the public interest” (Mădroane, 2018, p. 178), each voice having a certain status mediated by the technological device (Facebook, Twitter, blog, institutional site, personal site, video you tube and so on) it uses.

Bossio (2017, p. 40) notes that through new practices of creating and disseminating media content, specific to the collaborative and participatory culture, “the biggest change in journalistic practice is not so much the practices themselves, but the broader institutional authority of the journalist”. Therefore, Carlson (2017) concludes that, in the digital culture, the concept of the journalist’s authority should be reconsidered, the main argument put forward being that the journalistic authority is articulated through a “polyvocal press” involving a fluid relationship between producers and media users/ consumers. Other features of this type of media focus on the use of different sources in real time and the display of subjectivity by the journalist as a more engaging discourse, in a constellation of voices and perspectives (Carlson, 2017, pp. 193, 194).

And yet, do these transformations, labelled as polyvocal press, erode the authority of the journalist? Especially if we think of the fact that post-truth is often associated with “contexts of a generalized crisis of confidence vis-à-vis the «knowledgeable individuals», those who bear the truth” (Mercier, 2018, p. 6), including journalists.

Some researchers consider that these practices do not necessarily indicate the erosion of the journalist’s authority as much as a repositioning and an adaptation of the journalist within the “post-industrial, entrepreneurial and atypical” (Deuze & Witschge, 2018, p. 165) journalistic field. This adaptability of journalists is expressed, among other things, through a diversification of strategies allowing them to reaffirm their authority as an expression of the ways in which they understand and put into practice normative claims and, thus, the boundaries of journalism in relation to other cultural fields (Vos & Thomas, 2018). Therefore, the journalistic authority is being built within the symbolic struggles for negotiating the meaning of journalism boundaries, through a dynamic of demarcation and “hegemonic co-optation” (Carlson & Lewis, 2015) of sources and critics. It is precisely this aspect of preserving the journalist’s authority in a competitive field of power that we investigate here, starting from the media / journalists’ discursive strategies of integrating Facebook into news articles.

We also place this emerging strategy in contexts that are specific to the media culture in Romania (from the evolution of the media market and political journalism to the media identity of the newspaper included in the corpus) in order to avoid a deterministic approach to the relationship between Facebook and media discourse.

METHODOLOGY

In defining the methodological framework, we have taken into account first of all the nature of the corpus made up of articles built through the imbrication between textual practices (specific to journalistic content) and social networks practices (specific to a shared interpersonal communication). From a journalistic genre perspective, the articles chosen have a specific structure, in which the story predominates, while also including evaluative titles or short evaluative statements that can point the audience towards an interpretation, to which various visuals (different ways of combining image and text) taken from Facebook are added.

These articles employ a factual style when presenting events. Their evaluative dimension is given mainly by the selection of Facebook posts and the short statements / comments that accompany them. Therefore, these articles have a relatively small part of the text produced by the journalist.

To analyse the ways in which the mainstream online media discursively have used Facebook in our corpus, we approach this type of news reports as a *hybrid media dispositive*, that is, as heterogeneous and socially regulated verbal and visual modes employed so that a space of representation and interaction is created (Beciu *et al.*, 2017). We use the concept of dispositive, grounded in the Foucauldian paradigm and subsequently in French Television Studies (Charaudeau 2005, 2011; Lochard 2006). From this perspective, the symbolic and performative power of the media relies on a communication project including various strategic choices (language, image, voices, design etc.) made by the media actors (newsroom and editorial policy, journalists), which are meaningfully combined and reinforced on a regular basis, providing the public with resources for interpretation and action. In this study, we approach the corpus as a variety of micro-dispositives, triggering spaces of visibility for the event and actors, of connectivity and engagement.

However, the socially pre-defined conventions of the media discourse are not seen as static, but as dynamic within the process of appropriation by the public (Ekström & Patronna, 2011). Broersma (2010, p. 20) argued that “the performative power of a text not only lies in its content but chiefly in its form and style – that is, in the expression of professional routines and conventions that justify, and mask, the subjective interpretation and news selection of the individual journalist”.

Starting from this premise, we consider two aspects in the analysis of the articles: (1) the modalities of integrating Facebook content (verbal and visual, actors, topics) and (2) the discursive construction of these articles by underlining certain strategies of actor representation and of engagement of audiences.

In the first stage of our dispositive analysis, we will highlight the following conditions of production of the article:

- Visual and verbal modes of integration of Facebook.
- The Facebook actors.
- Topics.

The corpus is comprised of news articles from the quality newspaper *Adevărul*, which stands out in the landscape of the Romanian online press due to its editorial profile, relevant to the “interaction between different media forms and platforms” (Dal Zotto & Lugmayr, 2016, p. 4). It is a newspaper with a well established history in the Romanian media sphere, which, in the context of the economic crisis of 2008 became also an online daily (like most of the Romanian press). The definitory aspect of its current format is the integration of a variety of blogs into its editorial structure. The editorial page is shaped in two large sections: one devoted to news and opinion articles and the other to blogs belonging to a variety of social actors of various status, from politicians, opinion leaders, experts, think tanks, and activists to celebrities or certain professional categories (teachers, physicians etc.). The first section includes news, updates and some reports, and comments on the media agenda. In the second section, the newspaper builds a debate arena starting from the agenda events through blogs. Thus, the deliberative role of the media is enacted through a polyphony of statutory voices, taken from other platforms, integrated into a new communication structure and redistributed as “types of discourse” on a topic or event. Apart from blogs, there are micro-sections that republish articles that have appeared in other newspapers from the media group to which *Adevărul* belongs (tabloid newspapers, thematic magazines, local versions of the newspaper, etc.). Thus, a carefully managed cooperation is ensured between the media platforms that make up a specific media business model (Beciu, 2017). As a consequence, the fact that *Adevărul* increasingly reuses the Facebook posts of other actors is consistent with an ongoing communication project of the newspaper to approach the news production and the interaction with the audiences through a variety of voices. In this sense, we consider that *Adevărul* is a significant media actor, its editorial practices also being relevant for the way the online mainstream press legitimates itself within a media convergence field.

We have selected 65 articles according to the purpose of research (*purposeful sample*, according to Koerber & McMichael, 2008), that is those comprising content taken from Facebook in different forms, covering the 2017–2019 anti-government protests initiated under the label *#rezist*.

Starting 2017, a debate has been launched in the Romanian public space about the Laws of Justice following the government’s proposal to introduce some amendments through emergency ordinances. While the government’s representatives called for the need to amend the legislative framework for the democratic consolidation of justice mechanisms, the political opposition considered that these amendments would jeopardize the independence of the judiciary and the whole process of democratic reformation of judicial institutions. In this context, a series of protests happened which would become emblematic for the new forms of political protest in Romania.

We have chosen the 2017 *#rezist* protests because this type of protests highlighted some emerging practices, such as the *simultaneity* of protests (in the

capital, in other cities of the country and in other countries through the mobilization of the diaspora), the *continuity* of protests on the long run and the *transnational* collective action (the mobilization of the diaspora).

For a long time, it has been on a permanent basis on the media agenda, so the dailies had to identify various ways to connect their audiences to an event in the making. Therefore, we consider this event as one of the relevant examples for the analysis of the online press discourse from the perspective of integrating Facebook into the structure of the article.

We have selected several time intervals corresponding to the dynamics of the protests, namely a relevant interval for the protests' peak (January-March 2017), another interval significant for the continuation of the protests after a certain time (October-December 2017) and, finally, a relevant interval for the resuming of protests within another framework of claims (June-August, 2018).

We have identified several types of news articles, depending on (1) how Facebook content has been introduced and (2) prevalent topics and actors. Hence, we have been able to distinguish between articles that reuse full Facebook posts, those that partially cite posts (a certain visual element, a fragment of a post) and those that use only the texts, without any visual elements. We have further categorized these articles, namely: (1) updates based on the events' chronology and on the visibility of the participants in the events; (2) reports of the protests, based on posts by public figures, and (3) reports of the protests based on content retrieved from FB pages of the event.

In the next stage, we have analysed specific discursive features of these articles by using a research tool based on critical discourse analysis (Beciu et al., 2018; Wodak, 2010; Koller, 2009; Fairclough, 2003), to highlight the ways in which integrating Facebook in the format of the articles contributes to the legitimization of actors. The following discursive strategies were taken into consideration:

a. strategies for representing the actors in the article (Wodak, 2010), that is, prevailing ways of acting and being in a field of power relations. At a micro-level, we have examined these strategies by looking at specific discursive and linguistic realizations: referential strategies (modes of designation, forms of membership categorization, inclusion / exclusion); predication strategies (positive / negative attributions);

b. strategies of audience engagement examined through discursive and linguistic realizations which highlight the actors' positioning linked to their responsibilities: enunciation strategies, such as 'interpellation', 'obligation', 'statement', categorical assertions: 'value judgment' or "reported discourse" (in Charaudeau's terms, 1992).

Based on dispositive analysis, we will present a typology of uses of Facebook as a discursive practice in the construction of media discourse and of the journalist's authority, as part of both the cross effects and traces of a specific form of transmediality.

FINDINGS

1. ONLINE MEDIA SHAPING REAL TIME INFORMATION

Facebook was integrated in several ways in articles on the *#rezist* protests: texts posted with pictures (in the form of screenshots), pictures or videos without the corresponding text, full texts of posts or text fragments and, last but not least, as a source citation. The newspaper reuses a variety of Facebook pages in the composition of its news articles: pages of ordinary users, of public persons, of events from the *#rezist* protests. In all cases, the “voice” of the journalist is minimal, the articles including mostly Facebook quotes and, with respect to enunciation, taking the form of “reported discourse” (Charaudeau, 2011), that is, producing an angle of visibility and interpretation through the others’ voices. Thus, a number of implications have emerged regarding the role of the journalist.

A first category of articles shows the protest as a temporal and spatial chronology of events. These articles are aggregated as a set of updates about the number of participants and the dynamics of their action – for example, their movement / location on a particular route, the evolution of the protest practices from one hour to another, slogans, statements of political actors/ participants, calls for mobilization etc. As a characteristic feature, these updates contain excerpts from Facebook pages (*Figure 1*) (most often Facebook pages of the event), minimally modified by the journalist by means of reported discourse, as can be seen in the examples below (no. 1 and no. 2).

- (1) UPDATE 18⁵². About 3,000 protesters gathered in Cluj. People in Cluj will continue the protests on Sunday evening, February 5, starting at 7 pm, as announced by the event created on Facebook. “The meeting place is the same: Unirii Square. (...) Meeting in the Unirii Square, at 19⁰⁰; we sit in the square, we talk with the people around, and in a more organized way we gather at the base of the statue, and at 20⁰⁰ we start a tour of the centre (suggestion: Avram Iancu Square, Mihai Viteazu Square and back to the city centre). It is important to conserve our energy. It could be a long process”, people write on Facebook¹. (*Adevărul*, February 5, 2017)

¹ https://adevarul.ro/locale/cluj-napoca/a-sasea-zi-proteste-cluj-rezist-nu-las-amagit-1_5896f8755ab6550cb8265f6b/index.html, retrieved at October 24, 2019.



UPDATE 19.20 În Piața Victoriei din Timișoara s-au strâns aproximativ 1000 de persoane. Mitingul a început la ora 19,00, mai târziu decât în alte orașe. Lumea continuă să sosească în Piața Victoriei.

Întâlnirea este programată de la 19.00, în fața Operei. Autorizația pentru miting, dată de Primărie, este valabilă până la ora 22.00.

Pe pagina de Facebook al evenimentului s-au arătat interesați de miting în jur de 10.000 de persoane, iar aproximativ 3.200 au spus că „vor participa”.

„Proiectul de modificare al Legilor Justiției a ajuns deja în Parlament și urmează să fie supus dezbaterii și votului în plen.

Figure 1 – Excerpt from Facebook pages integrated in the article.

The image of the journalist who has a full knowledge of the protests’ dynamics and connects the public to these dynamics is thus established. However, the journalist’s voice is predominantly impersonal (for example: “is shown on the Facebook page of ...”), indicating only the reference to the Facebook source; often, the title of the article is the sole evaluation item.

- (2) UPDATE 7³⁰. According to the announcements made on the Facebook page of the event, at 20⁰⁰ on Sunday, in the country as well as in the diaspora, the state anthem will be played in the public squares, and an hour later “each participant in the demonstrations in all the cities of the country and from the diaspora will raise its own light to the sky”². (*Adevărul*, February 5, 2017)

² https://adevarul.ro/news/eveniment/ziua-6-a-In-piata-victoriei-bucuresti-anuntat-astazi-mai-mare-protest-fata-oug-1_5896b6f95ab6550cb824818d/index.html, retrieved at October 24, 2019.

In addition, by incorporating Facebook content in the updated articles, the representations of the *#rezist* protests shaped a particular meaning: (i) a massive collective action (ii) with specific dynamics of mobilization and engagement (new steps or organizational practices, numerous references to the number of participants, the presentation of key moments, and the perspective of the collective and individual actor from the “inside” of the collective action). Hence, the integration of Facebook content assigns a specific discursive function to the updated articles in order to symbolically “confirm” the extent of the protests, placing the public in a specific connectivity regime.

The media discourse equates the protests’ magnitude with their quality, thus producing a positive representation, an indirect way of identifying with the protests’ actors, but without the journalist openly taking responsibility for it. In this case, the collaborative construction of the news is indicated mainly by the fact that the media / the journalist slightly recontextualizes Facebook posts, thus assigning itself / himself / herself the role of a meta-source: that is, a journalist is the one that mediates the diversity of protest events in real time and attests to an unprecedented mobilization.

2. FACEBOOK AS A SOURCE FOR THE MEDIA REPRESENTATION OF SOCIAL ACTORS

Another category of articles that are built with the help of Facebook content are shaped not as updates, but as stories – about the actors participating in the “*#rezist*” protests. In this sense, a series of articles construe the protesters as a collective actor in a field of power, most of the time indirectly, through the selection of Facebook posts, but sometimes explicitly through comments that associate the protests with the action of a collective actor. The articles explicitly incorporating Facebook material show the positioning of the protesters, generally ordinary people whom the newspaper identifies through attributes such as “a family”, “a group of friends”, “a profession”, “a place of residence” (for example, “participants from other cities” etc.), the “belonging to a generation” (“the young people”). In the enunciation strategy, reported discourse is used, this time, to mediate testimonies, confessions, interpellations, calls for mobilization, and the participants’ experiences in the context of the protests.

- (3) “Come on an evening outing in Râmnicu Vâlcea, downtown, next to the Clock...”, The event’s call to action says, on the Facebook page of the event. This evening, protests of Romanians in Zurich, Paris, Berlin, London, Birmingham and Munich are also announced³. (*Adevărul*, November 5, 2017)

³ https://adevarul.ro/locale/ramnicu-valcea/proiectul-modificare-legilor-justitiei-scoate-valceni-stradagubernul-psd-alde-doar-marioneta-1_59fef64d5ab6550cb8d52188/index.html, retrieved at October 24, 2019.

These articles introduce a reflexive distance towards the events in progress (in Bucharest and other cities around the country). The effect of authenticity and connectivity lies precisely in transforming a public and personalized message (specific to social networks) into a journalistic source, and thus, into a media discourse.

Another example is the reuse of protesters' Facebook pages to highlight the solidarity between demonstrators in different parts of the country and the Romanians abroad, and hence, to build the representation of a transnational public engaged from distance, *via* Facebook. The articles were accompanied by photographs of protesters from Bucharest or from other cities, whose calls mobilized their families abroad and posters from Romanians in other countries, showing their solidarity with the people back home, respectively.

This non-conventional dialogue between Romanians in Romania and those abroad, via Facebook content produced during the protests that has been published further by the newspaper, took shape as a form of collective engagement, legitimising a collective responsibility and certain power relations that consecrated a collective figure, defined both in an inclusive way ("we" in the country and outside the country) and in an exclusive way ("we" vs "they"/ the politicians / the government).

Therefore, most of the testimonies retrieved by *Adevărul* from Facebook and used in the news pieces place the authors of the posts in a relation of power towards the governors / decision-makers or those who do not share the same view on the legitimacy of the protests' objectives. Enunciative markers prevail in the construction of these testimonies that indicate power relationships, or negative value-judgements about the "others" and positive judgements about the participants (the exclusive "we"). In this way, based on an accumulation of a particular types of posts, the media is building the discursive representation of a collective actor, acting in a field of power, legitimising some representations of actors and courses of actions (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012), while delegitimising others.

The same strategy was used when selecting fragments of posts so as to tell the story of anonymous or public persons participating in the protest. A structural feature of these articles consists in dramatizing the agency of the protest participants. The collective actor is built by the media as a social body, starting from the individual stories of the participants.

- (4) The journalist Paula Rusu described the context in which the riot police sprayed tear gas at protesters: "I am shocked by what I have lived. (...) Two other riot policemen throw tear gas grenades at them. People retreat. The scene seems to me so unbelievable that for a moment it doesn't make sense. In 30 seconds, I cannot breathe, I fall on my knees on the pavement along with other people"⁴. (*Adevărul*, August 11, 2018)

⁴ https://adevarul.ro/news/eveniment/marturiiale-oamenilor-media-fost-protect-In-30-secunde-nu-maiputut-respira-cazut-genunchi-caldaram-impreuna-alti-oameni-1_5b6e3e2cdf52022f753f7040/index.html, retrieved at October 24, 2019.

In addition to the individual voices selected through Facebook, the newspaper amalgamated, in the construction of articles, various testimonies and calls for mobilization displayed on a series of collective Facebook pages dedicated to the “#rezist” protests. This practice served to legitimize the protests as an engaged collective actor (who makes claims), and also as an efficient civic actor (the selected posts highlighted the efficient organization of the participants in the protest).

- (5) About 500 parents and children gathered on Saturday in the Victoria Square, in the capital, for the ‘Civic Education Lesson’, as the event is called on the Facebook page where anti-government protests are usually announced⁵. (*Adevărul*, February 18, 2017)

Another way the newspaper represented the protests from the perspective of power relations was by reusing the Facebook posts by political actors, opinion leaders, intellectuals, other journalists, vocal activists from NGO’s, celebrities, various public actors who were in favour or against the protests. The articles were built by monitoring the updating of the Facebook pages of the public actors, reporting on each new post or any bit of information updated on these Facebook pages.

- (6) Mihai Şora posted several entries on his Facebook page about it. His latest message, Thursday afternoon, full of humour and irony (...)⁶ (*Adevărul*, February 2, 2017)
- (7) UPDATE 18⁴² The philosopher Mihai Şora announced on Friday evening on Facebook that he now has a banner, which has the logo of the book collection “Library for all” and the message “Library for all / Do not publish thieves”⁷. (*Adevărul*, February 3, 2017)
- (8) UPDATE 20²⁰. The philosopher Mihai Şora has posted on Facebook a protest call, the message being distributed by actress Oana Pellea, who expressed her disappointment at the small number of demonstrators⁸. (*Adevărul*, 20 June 2018)

⁵ https://adevarul.ro/news/eveniment/noi-proteste-anuntate-weekend-bucuresti-tara-1_58a7ecb85ab6550cb8942025/index.html, retrieved at October 24, 2019.

⁶ https://adevarul.ro/cultura/carti/filosoful-mihai-Sora-100-ani-participant-proteste-exclusiv-1_589334ba5ab6550cb80c76eb/index.html, retrieved at October 24, 2019.

⁷ https://adevarul.ro/cultura/carti/mihai-Sora-si-a-pregatit-pancarta-miting-biblioteca-toti-nu-publica-hoti-1_5894b06e5ab6550cb816e9ca/index.html, retrieved at October 24, 2019.

⁸ https://adevarul.ro/news/eveniment/protest-anuntat-astazi-fata-parlamentului-sloganul-ultimatum-dragnea-programate-proteste-alte-orase-1_5b29d1d7df52022f75523d11/index.html, retrieved at October 24, 2019.

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Bomba l Banii lui Soros si Fillera #REZIST din audiovizual ? (ep. 1)

Dezvăluiri uluitoare ale jurnaliștilor R.I.S.C.:
Chirilă, un #rezist camuflat în vedetă și „tolerat” de I
mmunity

irilă, dincolo de faptul că aburii minții sale rămân în c
și în adăncurile pornirilor sale tizoide, în acest moment face
vălului de senzație. **O grupare a jurnaliștilor indepen**
și care activează în underground-urile internetului și având
strate în Facebook, au aflat că așa-zisa vedetă #rezist a Pr
direct la CME (compania mamă a trustului ProTV).

cunoscut ca fiind unul dintre cei mai importanți operatori
jalului și broadcasting-ului din România, contractele colosului
postului fiind foarte
conținând reguli de-a
sartane.
Iputat clar în contractul
onilor săi faptul că
au dreptul să exprime în
oducțiilor păreri politice,
fiindu-le interzis să
la activități cu orice fel de
olitic.



r Chirilă, vedeta de la Vocea României, nu este altceva
: al #rezist, mișcare anarhistă, de extremă dreapta, care își
area României și atacul direct la ordinea constituțională. **kempiu al modului în care #rezist folosește influențeri și**
asumă în continuare pe Tudor Chirilă ca fiind un vector de presi
și este și cazul Melaniei Medeleleanu, care își desfășoar
leși cunoscute foarte bine activitatea propagandistică a inst
la Khashtalia, o companie unde acționar este nimeni altcine
lasează trustul în zona suspiciunilor rezonabile de colab
ratului mesianic al #rezist, Dacian Cioloș. Care este fillera
cu ONG-uri și case de producție prin conturile cărora trec ma
ros a transferat în conturile jurnaliștilor și liderilor de opi
te de bani pentru a-i folosi drept vuzele în scenariul
lovituri de stat din România din ultimii 60 de ani?

tu, în posesia căruia grupul de investigații R.I.S.C. a intrat, d
in dubiu acest lucru. Întrebarea legitimă care rezidă din
ate acestea, în curând.
u uluitoare este dacă CME (deci implicit ProTV) sunt instr
re și instigare folosite de George Soros în scenariul său diabo

Grupul de investig

74 82 13

Tudor Chirilă: „Se pare că deranjez destul de tare dacă pesediștii au început să distribuie paginile de fake news cu acoperire de pamflet“

Actorul și cântărețul Tudor Chirilă, ne lipsit de la protestele de stradă și unul dintre cei mai vocali artiști când vine vorba de evenimentele de pe scena politică, a reacționat cu privire la postarea PSD Arad și menționează că „a început să deranjeze foarte tare dacă pesediștii au început să distribuie cu disperare paginile de fake news cu acoperire de pamflet“.

„Se pare că deranjez destul de tare dacă pesediștii au început să distribuie cu disperare paginile de fake news cu acoperire de pamflet. Sigur, autorii sunt aproape simpatici și poate ar merita un internship la Times New Roman. Trofeul „Noaptea Minții” se acordă în unanimitate pentru fraza „gruparea jurnaliștilor independenți de investigații care lucrează în underground-urile internetului și având conexiuni bine ancorate în Facebook”. P.S. Totuși nu strică să raportăm shocknews.ro, să curățăm un pic „undergroundurile internetului.”, a scris cântărețul.

Tudor Chirilă  acum aproximativ un an

Se pare ca deranjez destul de tare daca pesedistii au inceput sa distribuie cu disperare paginile de fake news cu acoperire de pamflet.

Sigur, autorii sunt aproape simpatici si poate ar merita un internship la Times New Roman.

Trofeul "Noaptea Mintii" se acorda in unanimitate pentru fraza "gruparea jurnalistilor independenti de investigatii care lucreaza in underground-urile

Figure 2 – Excerpts from the Facebook page of the ruling party at that moment (SPD – Social Democratic Party) and from the FB page of one of the active opposition voices within the civil society⁹.

⁹ https://adevarul.ro/entertainment/celebritati/tudor-chirila-atacat-facebook-postari-sponsorizate-filiale-psd-autorii-aproape-simpatici-1_5a64641bdf52022f75b9a3d8/index.html, retrieved at October 24, 2019.

Besides some enunciative particularities, these news articles differentiate themselves through their graphic format: as a rule, the article begins with a brief introductory statement that mentions the use of Facebook as a source by the journalist (the reported discourse), the statement including sometimes an assessment of the post. An excerpt from a post is then reproduced, being followed by a screenshot from the same post, which visually delimits the testimony of the actor himself / herself, as well as a hierarchy of statements that make up the post. A frequent visual practice is to present a confrontation *via* Facebook between the representatives of the power and the opposition in the form of a screenshot's mixture from everyone's Facebook pages. In the example below (*Figure 2*), the news article brings together excerpts from the Facebook page of the ruling party at that moment (SPD – Social Democratic Party) and from the FB page of one of the active opposition voices within the civil society (actor Tudor Chirilă).

Beyond the function of persuading the audience, this type of visual rhetoric allows the journalists to show how they “organize” the Facebook content as a space for “public connection” (Swart, Peters and Broersma, 2018) in order to build a representation of the protests – a constant confrontation, under different forms, between representatives of power and participants in protests, of different identities and statuses. One of the forms closely watched by the media was that of replies and counter-replies on Facebook between political leaders (power vs. opposition) or between political leaders and representatives of the civil society (intellectuals, influencers, celebrities).

The public was connected in this way to the dynamics of the protests from the perspective of the polemical confrontation between the pros and cons of #rezist on Facebook (the decision-makers' pages / the users' replies, the activists' pages and the users' replies etc.). The newspaper extracted mainly those Facebook fragments containing interpellations – as a discursive strategy of delegitimization – used both by the government voices and the opposition voices.

- (9) Liviu Dragnea [leader of the government party at that moment] has posted the following words next to the picture that mocks one of the most popular slogans of the Victoria Square demonstrators: “feeling amused”. Obviously, replies were quick to come.¹⁰ (*Adevărul*, March 25, 2017)

The articles based upon public actors' posts on Facebook or those using such posts in framing a subject built up the dynamics of the protests in a specific way: they updated the articles following the updates of the public actors' posts. This

¹⁰ https://adevarul.ro/news/eveniment/liviu-dragnea-ironizeaza-protestele-rezist-intr-o-postare-facebook-1_58d6d2335ab6550cb8ac7a0c/index.html, retrieved at October 24, 2019.

mechanism reduced the time span between the moment of protesting, posting and reporting. Thus, the newspaper gave the Facebook pages of public actors the role of a strategic arena, distinct from and, at the same time, connected with the street arena, as an emblematic space of protests.

CONCLUSIONS

This study has highlighted various ways in which the Romanian online newspaper *Adevărul*, which is relevant for including a model of media convergence, integrates Facebook posts in its articles in order to assign meaning to the #*rezist* protests. As a common feature, we have noticed that extracting content from various Facebook pages indicates a practice of transmedial production (Eder, 2015, p. 75) that reveals a mode of adaptation of the newspaper to the “social media environments” (Bossio, 2017).

First of all, the use of Facebook by the online newspaper contributes to the establishment of a factual, but dramatized reality. Hence, it strengthens a performative media discourse by means of a certain structuring of the article, on the one hand, and by forging certain representations and modes of engagement with the audiences, on the other. As an “enforcement mechanism” (Carlson, 2017, p. 8) of the media discourse, Facebook enables the newspaper to mediate a real time social space of contestation and to legitimize a collective actor acting in a field of power. Actually, by relying on Facebook’s main mode of engagement, the news articles under consideration enact the lived temporality of a collective action characterized by magnitude, simultaneity and continuity. Incorporating Facebook as a discursive practice into the news makes it possible for the media to forge, beyond authenticity and immediacy, the dramatization of agency (narratives, live, testimonials etc.) and to construct the event as a specific digital form of the “witnessable” (Frosh and Pinchevsky, 2011, p. 140). The newspaper stages the visibility of mobilization practices experienced by various protesters, hence the numerous narratives / testimonies / confessions / stories that express “a highly mediated and networked display of affect” (Smit, Heinrich and Broersma, 2018, p. 3129). The result is a meaningful representation of a *collective actor* whose legitimate course of action is *naturalized*, this being the main discursive use of Facebook within the news articles. Thus, the media discourse situates the audience within a *field of power relations* (symbolic boundaries, hierarchy of voices) and of *political and collective responsibility* (interpellative posts, negative-other presentation).

Traditionally, the media (and especially television) places the testimonies of the witnesses in situations usually controlled by the journalist (e.g., the journalist asks the witness for an opinion or a testimony). In the case of the online media, the journalist

selects contents from Facebook pages and profiles, which means that those testimonies and positionings are publicly assumed by the source (the author of the Facebook page) and not produced by the sources upon some journalist's request.

What differs therefore is the status of the witness (source) and the way the testimony is disseminated through the source's public self-display management.

Secondly, the use of Facebook in the newspaper dispositive influences the construction of the journalists' authority and the performance of their critical and deliberative role. This research demonstrates that integrating social networks within the newspapers favours a much more evaluative media discourse, nevertheless not explicitly appropriated by the journalist, but "delegated" to other voices. Actually, we notice the absence of the journalist's voice (sometimes only the titles indicate a media positioning). The "voice" of the journalist results implicitly from the way the newspaper selects, *via* Facebook, the other voices that become visible in the article (through video, pictures, statements etc). Therefore, journalists assert their authoritative status indirectly, through an impersonal way of calling the public to action. They do not express their authority by producing content through commentary, advocacy and deliberative goals, as an expression of one of the main normative roles (see Hanitzsch, 2017), but essentially by discursively shaping a space of connectivity and engagement. Accordingly, the authority of the journalist "is emanating from a mostly monitoring, rather than deliberative or proactive, standpoint" (Papacharissi, 2010, p. 131), but which actually consolidates the control of journalists over the sources and, correspondingly, the enforcement of that power of symbolically constructing reality by legitimising actors and interpretations.

Therefore, these strategies of integration of the social media in the discourse of the mainstream media could be explained as an emerging expression of how media actors (including online newspapers) attempt to position themselves in a new media ecosystem, and correspondingly, as a specific practice of legitimising the *symbolic power* of the journalist and of the media to establish "the truth" (in the sense expressed by Couldry, 2000). The social media disrupt established journalistic practices (production and distribution of information) (Bossio, 2017, p. 134) and, consequently, have an impact upon the power struggles, in what concerns shaping events and engaging audiences. In this respect, we need further cross cultural and comparative research, in order to explore new practices of incorporating social media into media discourse and of informing the journalist's authority in a networked culture of convergence and of high competitiveness. This type of research is all the more important as the integration of social networks in the online press in Romania and in other countries has become a constantly used journalistic practice, with pragmatically varied functions.

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