

## **Metonymy And The Cult Of Intensity In Media Discourse**

Xenia NEGREA,  
Dan Valeriu VOINEA  
University of Craiova

### **ABSTRACT**

In the present paper, we present a new perspective on the features of the current media message. The Romanian media, under pressure of the markets, rapid digitization, and a considerable effort to synchronize with Western markets, builds on peaks of intensity, emotion, the mood of the crowds and far less (or sometimes not at all) on facts. The abolition of the eventual discontinuity and the consolidation of a media reality seem relevant to the present Romanian media landscape.

**Keywords:** media, metonimie, emoție, informație.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

In front of information captured from the outside, the journalist follows procedures of selection, hierarchisation, contextualization, interpretation so that, in the end, a certain aspect of an event is presented to the public as news. Depending on the number of people involved or affected, you can move to a second stage when you turn the news into a media event. In this way, the news has become an epicenter of the media event. From our point of view, the media event automatically means informational pressure, or more attention from the public.

Once the taste of the audience was caught, the sale of events, not of information, became a media goal. The processes listed above have been given a new status - they are no longer applied to transform information into news, respectively to facilitate information transfer, but to build events.

Our idea is that, at present, the media offer means a generalization of news as an event, so that today's media means the cultivation of a mood fueled by dependence on events, that is, peaks of informational and emotional intensity. To this end, the above-mentioned professional processes have been transferred from fact to sense, on the basis of acceptability, acceptance, conviction and persuasion, on the basis of emotion and seduction.

## **2 SENSORY DISCOURSE AND METONYMIC DISCOURSE**

The author of the media text (journalistic, advertising or social media) has moved the selection criteria from the paradigmatic axis to the syntagmatic axis, namely from intensive, metaphorical discourse, to extensive, metonymic discourse. The part, the fragment, the cut-out are collected for the construction of another world, the media world. Behind the alibi of representativeness we can find the rays of a new world, the already decoded world, which the receiver no longer has to understand, but just to live and feel. The sensoriality of this media, whose dawn can be found in

tabloidization, shortens the comprehension processes through systematic insertions of comprehensive impulses.

Metonymy means combination, fragments that can replace the whole. The substitute media world is, in fact, a continuation, as a contiguous image of the immediate, of reality. Hence, the immanent credibility, *per se*, of the media discourse. Metonymia does not replace, but continues (μ Group, Henry Albert, Le Guern, et al.), goes further, or, in the case of media discourse, brings closer to the the receiver certain parts that are considered relevant to the construction of the message and the media world.

We follow Lacan, who saw the metonymic effect as a movement. The same movement was named by Paul Ricoeur as a meaning transfer through an assignment operation. In other words, this assignment, this transfer or movement gives the powers of a whole to the fragment. Selection and hierarchization become stages of investing, not warnings. They contain in them the promise of the whole, as in an inexhaustible fractal. Thus, for example, competition between discourses, between channels of information and competition between brands is no longer a quantitative, but a qualitative competition.

Exclusivity, the truth, the reporter who "knows everything" about an event, the issues solved by a promoted product, the rhetorical questions, the comfortable, predictable questions, the type of guest in the studio that provides predictable answers (and when they don't, they are eliminated from the debate), the incomprehensible and insinuating tones of the hosts of the debates or of the actors from various advertising clips are common features that equally argue the journalistic and advertising discourse, which bring power to the media discourse (on any kind of channel).

The fragment, the example, the experiment, the test have become recipients of the certainty, respectively of the truth. Not versions, but solutions and responses are offered to the excited audience and thus captive. Therefore, in the logic of metonymy,

as defined by Albert Henry, contextualization and interpretation become the creative stages of identity of the message.

Metonymy "substitutes a word for a different term of comprehension" (Henry, 1971, 19). This is how the resemblance is not the basis of media selection, but the difference. The journalist does not repeat, replay, but bring novelties, completes, by virtue of the promise of complete, correct information. The issuer does not inform, but guides attention, as noted by Maurice le Guern: "The metonymic relationship involves a change of reference, a shift of attention" (Guern, 1973, 14) to the producer / receiver. Both Albert Henry and Maurice le Guern noticed this openness that presupposes metonymy. Based on conceptual contiguity, on logical comprehension, the metonymic relations „are external, extralinguistic" (Henry). It is a relationship that is outside the linguistic language and does not change the structure of a language (Guern). We talk about psychological comprehension and extension. (Henry).

In the name of logic, a mood of perplexity, total openness and availability for acceptance is built. Logical links, transfers, differences, mix things and words, the world and world discourse. Thus, the discourse about the world is the world, the represented part (filmed, photographed, described) carries in itself the promise of the whole.

### **3 THE MEDIA PUBLISHER AS AN ACTOR OF THE DIGITAL METONYMIC DISCOURSE**

Metonymia also involves an assumption, personalization. The self is intrised to the operations of building the metonymic discourse. Selection, cropping (even by virtue of consistency and comprehension) are underwriting operations of the issuer. Selection personalizes. In this way, media reality is a reality built by an ego and fully accepted by a segment of audience (Albert Henry, and in Le Guern,). Metonymy directs, that is, attracts attention, affirms, confirms, resonates, according to the

internal rhythms (and pressures) of the issuer. The media issuer is a undoubtedly unassailable actor.

Media communication, in its defining traits, urgency and completeness, fits perfectly on the metonymic process. Metonymy, said Crevier, "abbreviates" (in Le Guern, p. 80). Concision is a process of seduction, of the fuzzing of the silence of reception. The receiver, bombarded by information, does not have time to follow his own decoding paths. In the face of the essentials and illustrative example, there is only time for acceptance and consensus.

The media discourse has thus become an agglomeration of fragments, which seem to be supposed, to be explained and seem to reconstitute (or, at least, they assume) a discourse of the truth, the real. In fact, the end of the news, the show, the advertising clip, of the communication segment also means the end of that discursive world it created. The receiver was not informed about the world, but about that which the issuer wanted him to understand and communicate. These fragments, these sequences invested with the title of news, events, subjects, converge into a pseudo-immediate, a pseudo-reality (Baudrillard, 2008) increasingly crowded with issuers.

We need to open a little discussion about the "information superhighway", a unanimously accepted phrase among media communication theorists. This assumes the balance of messages between the different pairs of issuers and receivers - the same message is routed in the context of *one-to-many*, but also in the context of *many-to-many* (in an informational arbitrariness). The motorway does not mean (just) more information, but also more persuasive effort, or more energy invested in the message and the force of its penetration. This force increases exponentially with the number of issuers. In our view, "deaconification of practice" (Baudrillard, 2008, p. 151) was produced by digitization, since one of the most profound effects of digitization is the accessibility of creation. In Baudrillard's footsteps, as we see a logical and metonymic transition from the pop artist to the blogger and web designer, we can recognize a move

from the institutionally assumed media issuer to the citizen, the individual issuer with an assumed affective identity.

In this way, reality is pulverized in states, not in fact, nor in the news or media reports. From now on, raw information (utility, instrumental) articulates the media world, not reality. The show of crowds becomes the digital show built by producers (of artistic origin, which may not rely on inspiration, but rely on flair, may not have any recognized talent, but certainly have abilities that turn them into skilled film editors, text editors, photographers and publishers), a desacralized show in which the media builds its own concise, expressive, seductive and comfortable universe. The producers' effort is to seduce. The show is suggested through the shooting angle, the lens type, the tone, the letter body or colors. It rebuilds, in this way, an externality dedicated to the spectator, ie a state of participation, as though, extremely convincing, as the more he consumes the more the psyche becomes involved.

## CONCLUSION

Baudrillard called these constructs "pseudo-events" in a "hyperrealism unrealism" (p. 161). We can ask ourselves whether metonymy means falsification, if the perspective, the fragment transforms the event into a pseudo-phenomenon. Is this a false neoreality? "Medium is the message," said Marshall McLuhan when he saw the destruction of the boundaries and the limits of communication. Similarly, Baudrillard, in the quoted paper, gave the Caesar, and the context, almost everything. Gradually, with each issuer, the media has become the message.

Channels of communication have become matrices, selection and creative bands. The media bubble is a coincidence of intense emotional peaks that constrain the receiver to a unique reception convention.

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