Cultural diversity and minorities's dynamics in the local and central press

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Abstract:
Our contemporary world has a major feature: Globalization, but in spite of disappearance of the estate borders, there is still a virtual one most of the times impossible to trespass: culture diversity. Political and social representatives are conscious that a good cultural unity, tolerance and harmony between different cultures. Organisms and international institutions analyze interethnic conflict situations and establish reglementations to eliminate them. Governments must do their best to fully understand the ethnical group condition in their own country and in order to apply norms and tolerance principles, dialogue and diversity rights protection.
Starting from this configuration of the contemporary world, we initiated a study in order to find out how the minorities condition in Romania reflects in press. As a research material we selected a group from the central and local written press. By studying the chosen material, we identified the ways how these problems are reflected in Romanian and we revealed the topics associated with these communities in press articles. Vast information, from a previous research, we took the liberty to understand the particularities of the journalists' discourse but also of communities' and outline a true image of the studied issue.
Keywords:
Cultural diversity, community minorities, minority conformist discourse, claiming minority discourse

Introduction

The world of the future will be one of diversity, and diversity will be the engine of the evaluations at the global level. Diversity however involves tolerance and dialogue. As UNESCO stated in its *Declaration of Principles on Tolerance* (1995), tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human. So, tolerance is harmony in difference. In the attempt to accomplish this tolerance and protection climate, in our contemporary world, the role of the governments, as well as those of the state institutions is extremely important.

The declaration made by G. Ruffolo in 2001, questions the unity in diversity but also cultural cooperation in EU outlining that the European states „must consider culture as an essential element of the European integration especially within the context of EU expansion". Under the influence of this declaration, there comes the necessity to unveil the minority community condition, of their rights to diversity. The stated principles meant to insure the minority community protection, their integration in contemporary and future life.

Minority community protection is realized relying upon the following principles (Bădescu, I.; Severin, A., 2002; Ichim, O., 2006):

1) The principle of diversity respect: differs from the principle of tolerance, which supposes the arrogance of the hierarchic relation between the tolerated and the tolerant (the minorities are not tolerated, because they have a generated right equal as value with that of the majority);

2) The principle of partnership living: the supposed general minorities' associate to the act of leading, and especially, to the act of governing, without being aware of their number related to the whole population;

3) The principle of positive discrimination supposes the accordance of favors to the minorities, when that is necessary to compensate the numeric inequality between the minority and the majority (such favors take into consideration the right to have initiatives for various domains, or the special rights to control the functioning of the state's institutions, or the non-citizens' rights to vote for the local region etc.);

4) The principle of preserving the cultural identity takes into account the creation of conditions to maintain the identification elements of a specific community (language, religion, traditions, etc.):
- the danger of cultural homogenization, appearance and recognition of a single cultural form;
- the appearance of the cultural and psychological disintegration phenomenon for individuals as well as for societies;

5) The principle of multilateral integration (multiculturalism) goes beyond the simple co-existence, it has to do with each member of every entity, both majority and minority, to learn about, to understand, to respect, and to express himself according to the specific culture values of the other co-living cultural community.

These principles must be understood beyond the asserted theory, because they do not determine just a political or economical vision, but bring in a new paradigm in thinking and intercultural perception (Affaya, M. N. E., 2000).

E. Vaddell (1999) underlined that in spite of the fact that the geographical borders turn almost only virtual, there is a border not to neglect, that of cultural diversity and when we do not take into account the cultural diversity, there appear frustrations leading to intolerance, to community conflict, racism and ethnocentrism. Thus, according to J. Demorgon (2000), we must take into account that the notion of interculturality is related to socializing process and includes borrowing phenomena, exchange, interdependence, adapting to other cultures and to history.

V. Ripoll (1999) in his study *Les minorités dans le monde* outlined the fact that in all 185 members of UN, there are 7500 minority ethnical groups and minority communities, talking in 6700 languages and dialects and practice a broad variety of religions. In addition, in the study *Minority Languages in Europe*, published in 2003, it was emphasized the need of a realistic and pluridisciplinary articles of the minority language protection issue.(Hogan-Brun, G & Wolff, S., 2003).

Analyzing the historical stages in forming modern national states in Balkan peninsula, we can see the crucial role of linguistic, cultural homogeneity idea but also religious in shaping a solid national consciousness (Vavaris, A, 2007).

Types of Discourse Concerning the Minority Dynamics

In an elaborate study from 2002, Calen Rus identified three types of discourse, concerning cultural diversity issue (Rus, C., 2002):

1) Majority discourse – it dominates the necessity of communication, relationship and opening towards different cultures.

2) Minority conformist discourse - it emphasizes the fact they are loyal citizens, that they feel like at home in Romania, they have a good relationship with the others.

3) Claiming minority discourse - we are different and we want to stay like that and be accepted like that.

Recently analyzed studies, concerning the minorities dynamics we can identify aspects like: persecutions against religious minorities, economical marginalization of the minorities, discriminations relying in the ethnical origin and even antiterrorist legislation abuse.

In the report realized by Minority Rights Group International, from July 1st, 2010, from Great Britain, the conclusions are concerned with the persecutions against religious minorities are increasing and they become manifest by an increase of religious nationalism, economical marginalization of religious minority group and antiterrorist legislation abuse. (La Croix, 2010).

The Eurobarometer from 2009 concerning the discrimination issue due to ethnical origin identify the fact that the inhabitants of Northern and Central European countries face discrimination forms met in their country are widely spread. Such problems appear in Netherlands, then France and Hungary, Sweden, Denmark and Malta. A high level of discrimination is in Finland, Belgium, Greece and Italy but also the Cyprus.

 The countries facing the least discrimination events are those from Lithuania, Poland, Latvia and Bulgaria. As far as the situation of Romanian is concerned, according to the same barometer, only 46% consider they face discrimination of ethnical origin. This study tries to find some answers concerning the way in which they reflect, in written press, the problems faced by minorities from Romania as well to subjects associated to minorities in press articles.

Following the population structure in Romania, we can see that the biggest ethnical group is represented by the Hungarians (6,6%), the gypsies (2,5%). As a matter of fact, the gipsy dynamics is carefully monitored by EU, which admits the existence of 10 million gypsies. 38%of these are stateless and 80% of adults do not have a job. *Le*

Figaro (August 26th 2010), commenting upon the UNICEF report concerning the gipsy citizens, consider that most come from Romania and have some integration problems. Nevertheless, we can see that EU does not have an unitary politics (for all members) concerning the gypsies problems, but every state has its own policy concerning this issue.

Starting with these considerations, we have undertaken a study where we want to find out, with our own resources, the matching of the information from European press with that from Romanian press.

Research Methodology

Study Objective
O: Determining the way cultural diversity and minorities's dynamics are reflected in the local and central press.
Working Hypothesis
H1. There are significant differences between central and local press approach
H2. The press uses the stereotypes when reflecting minority issues

Used Tools
- the editions of 2 national publications and 2 local publications
Working procedure
There have been monitored the editions of 2 national publications and 2 local ones.
Local publicasions was chosen from Constanta region (south-est Romanian) because it is considered a intercultural model area. The monitored period was between March 1st 2009-September 31st 2009. There have been centralized all the articles involving topics on the minority groups from Romania.

Results

There have been analyzed 655 articles-510 appeared in central written press and 145 appeared in local written press-referring to the minorities problems, to the journalists' attitudes towards the minorities they referred to as well as the topics associated to them in press articles.

Following the population structure in Romania, we can see that this involves 89,5% Romanians, the ret of it 10,5% representing ethnical

minorities like: 6,6% are Hungarians, 2,5% are gypsies, 0,2% are Tatars and Turkish, and 1,2 % represents other ethnical groups.

As far as the Constantza population is concerned, we can see that this includes: 95,2% Romanians, 1,8% Turksih and Tatars, 1,7% Gypsies and 1,3% other ethnical groups. We can see that as far as the Hungarian ethnical groups is concerned, there is no member of it, in Constantza.

Constantza is considered an ethnical mosaique and a model of intercultural cohabitation although research concerning population structure emphasize the fact there is a lower ethnical percentage than the national average. This percentage can prove, on the one hand the ethnical groups perfect integration so that its members started to consider themselves Romanian as times goes by(this supposition appears in accordance with the official discourse which is promoted in the Romanian cultural space) and on the other hand, the fact that this assessment, appearing within the official discourse in Romania, can be a stereotype, originating within a historical truth that cannot be sustained anymore.

The topics proposed to be analyzed, as far as the central and local press are concerned have been the following: accessibility in institutions, accessibility to education, health care, NGA care, charity, casuistry, combating discrimination, interethnic conflict, discrimination, minorities' rights, cultural identity, social inclusion, criminal acts, work integration, protection, successful stories, ethnical communication, lives in the community, abuse victims.

As far as the topic *Accessibility in institutions*, in the local press there appear only topics concerning topics concerning Hungarian ethnical group 7, and as far as other ethnical groups like (gypsies, Turkish-tartars or others) there is no articles on the topic. The same topic, in the local press, does not refer to ethnical minorities.

The topic *Accessibility to education* appear in central press referring to gipsy ethnical groups (27 articles), Hungarian (2 articles), but there is no reference concerning Turkish-tartar ethnical group. In local press, this topic appears only referring to gipsy ethnical group (12 articleses) and to the other ethnical groups representatives (2 articles).

Health care, *NGA care*, *Charity*, *Casuistry*, *Discrimination* and *Abuse victims* are topics appearing in central and local press, referring only to gipsy ethnical group, the greatest number of topics concerning mainly *NGA care* (14 articles in the central press, 5 in local press),

followed by *Casuistry* (10 articles in central press and one in local press) and by *Charity* (3 articles in central press and 1 articles in local press). The topics *Health care*, *Discrimination* and *Abuse victims* benefit of the same number of articles in central press (2 articles), as well as in the local one (1 articles).

As far as the topic *Combating discrimination*, in the central press this appears referring to gipsy ethnical group (2 articles), Hungarian ethnical group (3 articles) and other minority ethnical groups (1 articles). In local press, the topic refers only to gipsy ethnical group (2 articles) and other minority ethnical groups (1 article).

The topic *Minorities' rights* appears in central press referring only to Hungarian ethnical group (5 articles) and to other minority groups (6 articles), and in local press there is only reference about minority groups (6 articles).

In central press there are topics referring to all ethnical groups related to the topics *Cultural identity* (meaning: 31 articles concerning the gipsy minority group, 15 topics concerning the Turkish-Tatar ethnical group, 20 topics concerning the Hungarian ethnical group and 24 topics concerning other ethnical minorities and *Lives in the community* (99 articles concerning the gipsy ethnical group, 9 topics concerning the Turkish-Tatar ethnical group and 3 topics concerning the other ethnical groups. Nevertheless, in local press, these topics refer only to gipsy ethnical group (3 articles, respectively 12 articles), Turkish-tatars (12 articles, respectively 9 articles) and other existent minorities (8articleses, respectively 3 articles). The fact that there is no reference to Hungarian ethnical group in local press it is justified as this group cannot be found within ethnical groups in Constantza.

The topic *Social inclusion* appears in referring to gipsy ethnical group (11 articles), Hungarian (3 articles) and to other ethnical groups (4 articles) in central press, and in local press this refers only to gipsy ethnical group (2 articles).

Most of the articles appearing in the central press are concerned with the topic *Work integration* which is one of the topics approached in the central press particularly concerning the gipsy ethnical group (64 articles) while in the local press besides the 11 articles concerning gipsy ethnical group, we also encounter reference to Turkish-Tatar ethnical group.

Successful stories is a topic appearing within the central press referring exclusively to gipsy ethnical group (5 articles). In local press, the

topic comes up as far as the gipsy ethnical group is concerned but also five times concerning the Turkish-Tatar ethnical group.

There is no reference to gipsy and Turkish-Tatar ethnical groups in local press concerning *Ethnical communication*, this appearing only for the Hungarian ethnical group (5 articles) but also for other ethnical groups (10 articles). The same topic, in the local press, concerns the Turkish-Tatar ethnical group (6 articles) but also other ethnical groups (3 articles).

A difference is represented by the topic called *Protection* because this one does not appear in the central press or in the local one.

Unjustified mentioning of the ethnical groups in criminal deeds re presents another aspect analyzed in this study, with a major importance concerning the confirmation or the infirmation of the second proposed hypothesis. (The press used the stereotypes when reflects minority issues).

In this respect, according to the analyzed data, we can see that in the local press, such mentioning mainly concern the gipsy ethnical group (69 articles), and such references are made for the Hungarian ethnical group or other ethnical groups but to a less extent, 5 articles, 2 articles. The same problem, in the local press, makes reference only to gypsies and Hungarians, the articles being less: 5 articles concerning gypsies and 2 articles concerning the Hungarians.

As far as the way to articles the subjects debated in articles are concerned, most of the negative articles we encounter in central press, 211 articles referring to gipsy ethnical group. Negative articles, in central press also appear at the Hungarian ethnical group, 12 articles. As far as the Turkish-Tatar ethnical group is concerned, in central press, there are no negative articles.

As far as the positive articles of the debated topics is concerned, we can see that most of the topics refer to gypsies, with 79 articles. In the central press, we encounter some positive articles concerning the Turkish-Tatar ethnical group (19 such articles), the Hungarian ethnical group (10 such articles) and as far as other ethnical groups are concerned (8 articles).

Some of the debated topics in the articles from central press have a neutral articles, and the ethnical gipsy minority is situated in the first place (86 articles). This is followed by some articleses concerning other ethnical minority groups in the country (30 articles), then references to Turkish-Tatar ethnical group (20 such articles), in the last place being on the last place concerningHungarian ethnical group (16 articles).

As far as the positive, negative and neutral aspects reflected within the written articles from local press we can say that: positive articles are realized mostly for the Turkish-tatar ethnical group (12 articles), the neutral

one is realized for gypsies (60 such articles) and the negative one concerns only the gypsies (17 such articles). In the local press positive and neutral references are mostly for Turkish-Tatar ethnical group (12 articles, respectively 23 neutral) and for other ethnical groups (5 positive articles, respectively 18 neutral articles).

The initiative of writing articles is another important dimension for the research proposed in this study. As far as this dimension is concerned, we have two potential variables like: journalist's initiative and the community's one. Thus, out of the 510 articles, appearing in central press, 353 are at the journalist's initiative and only 157 are at community's initiative. As far as the local press is concerned, things are completely reversed: out of the 145 articles, 98 are at the community's initiative and only 47 at the journalist's. This shows that locally journalists interact to a greater extent with the community's members and with its representatives.

The results of the analysis referring to the four ethnical groups brought in discussion (which actually, next to the Romanian citizens are part of Romania population structure), shows that most of the articles written at the journalists' initiative, in central and local press, concern gypsies (296 articles in central press, 52 articles in the local one). The same thing happens for the articles written at the community's initiative: the gypsies have the most articles written at the community's initiative in central press (80 articles) but also in the local one (52 articles).

Articles concerning the Hungarian ethnical group appear only in the central press, the number of articles at journalists' initiative being almost equal with that of articles at community's initiative: 23 articles at the journalists' initiative, 22 articles at community's initiative.

Although, in central press, articles written at the journalist's initiative are primary to those written at the community's initiative, concerning other ethnical groups, as well as the Turkish-Tatar ethnical group are a little different. We can notice that in central press, concerning other ethnical groups there are the most articles written at the community's initiative (35 articleses), the number of articles written at the journalist's initiative being less than a half in comparison to those written at the community's initiative (15 such articles). Regarding the written articles on the Turkish-Tatar group, we can say that the number of articles made at community's initiative is almost equal with that of articles made at the journalists' initiative: 20 articles made at community's initiative and 19 articles made at journalists' initiative.

In local press, the initiative of articles topics concerning the Turkish-Tatar ethnical group belongs mostly to community (25 articles), the number

of articles belonging to the journalist being reduced proportionally to less than the number of articles made at the community' initiative (10 such articles). The situation is the same for the writing articles initiative concerning other ethnical groups: at community's initiative we can encounter 21 such articles and at the journalist's initiative the proportion is about 10% (2 articles at the journalist's initiative).

Conclusion

The ethnical group mostly approached by the central press as well as by the local press is that of the gypsies. When retelling about the gipsy community and its members there have been identified stereotypes and dominantly critical and negative attitudes. An aspect to be outlined is that concerning the unjustified mentioning about the criminal deeds of the members of this group.

Another very important aspect concerning this study is represented by the results referring to cultural identity issue, reflected within the articles from the central and local press in a percentage of 17% in comparison to other issues approached in this study.

The comparative analysis of the results reveal the fact that the local press in comparison to the national one widely has a neutral position when approaching aspects concerning the ethnical groups, part of the population structure. In addition, minority communities face difficulties when it comes about accessing central written press, this being proven by the small number of articles written at the community's incentive. In comparison to the central press, accessing local press by the minority communities is done to a larger extent, being proven by the results showing that the number of the articles written at the community's incentive is twice larger than the number of articles written at a journalist's incentive.

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