

Images of Children in Romanian Newspapers

A study about the images of children and young people in the Romanian written media

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Abstract

Children and youth are present in almost every form of media. The starting point of this thesis was the desire to investigate how children and young people are presented in the media, especially in the newspapers coverage. The media is both a source of knowledge as well as having a significant contribution to our identity.

The ways the media present children and young people can influence the way their identity is constructed in the public discourse, as well as the public's general assumption towards children and young people.

In this master's thesis I have analyzed the ways in which the Romanian media present the children. In this study I have used both qualitative and quantitative contents analysis.

Children and young people are rarely present in the Romanian newspapers that this study is based on.

Thus this study reveals a certain under-representation of children and young people in the newspapers. As a solution for this, several newspapers focused on children and young people by creating pages dedicated especially for them. These pages are placed at the end of the newspaper or come along with the newspaper. The articles presented here focus on children as gifted, present attraction sites destined for children and young people. The materials are written both by professional journalists and by the children themselves.

An important finding of this study was that the high focus on violence in the Romanian newspaper coverage of children. One of the clearest findings in my study was that children and young people were often mentioned in connection with crime and violence.

Forward

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1. Introduction

Children are present in almost every media. It is relevant to analyze the way in which media present children. Furthermore, the media's presentation also has influence in children and young people's self-understanding – “How they see themselves?” "The media have a big influence in defining the reality around us, and thus, they help to define us.”(my translation)¹ The media representation of children may on one hand, represent or reflect society's attitudes and perceptions, and the other hand, help to create attitudes and beliefs towards children.

In the fast transmissions of news there are some media which are privileged, as they have greater coverage and their impact to ensure adherence to the meanings that they want to transmit is bigger. For example, social media, television, radio and newspapers have a greater chance of influencing significantly the opinions and judgments of the audiences.

“Thus, when media is producing news about social processes, they have an impact on the social imaginary, speeches and practices that arise in response to the speech communications.”²

1.1 The media – creator and disseminator of attitudes towards children

Previous studies show that images of children as subjects presented by the media have had a strong influence on the ways in which our society is related to these social groups.³

What is presented and reproduced in the media is important for people, as receivers of media messages, and how they understand the world. "They exercise their power, influence attitudes, disseminate knowledge and provide entertainment of many kinds through the texts they use."⁴

¹ Coman, Mihai, *Manual de journalism*, Polirom, Iași, 2009, p. 120;

² Duarte, Klaudio, “Ejes juveniles de lectura, para desenmascarar las bestias y anunciar los sueños”, in *Revista Pasos Especiales*, no 6., 1996, from <http://www.dei-cr.org/?cat=1043&year=1996>, accessed 1 October 2011;

³ Ibidem;

⁴ Alupului, Mihaela, Bejenari, Romina and Hintă, Oana, *The image of youth in mass-media. A research Project*, Teora, Iași, 2007, p. 14;

The ways in which children are presented in the media can both represent the prevailing attitudes and beliefs about children and young people, while it can also help to create such attitudes and beliefs.

The stories told by the media “teach about the intricacies of the world and its people and provide a wealth of images, all of which become part of the cycles of socialization and resocialization through which we move during our lifetimes.”⁵

Images of childhood and children cultivate conceptions of how children act and behave. “Lifestyles associated with different stages of life cycle are roles learned in a culture. Children learn about these roles as well as begin to develop expectations of what their teen and adult years will be like and media provide an almost inescapable set of messages.”⁶

Nancy Signorelli concludes that most of the roles created by the media involve job, adventure, sex, power, and other opportunities and chances in life. But like most resources, these values are distributed according to status and power. If the dominant social groups tend to be overrepresented and over endowed, minorities are “defined by having less than their proportionate share of values and resources, meaning less usefulness, fewer opportunities, and fewer but more stereotyped roles. Underrepresentation signifies restricted scope of action, stereotyped roles, diminished life chances, and undervaluation ranging from relative neglect to symbolic annihilation.”⁷

Media play an important role in defining what is "normal" and what is "deviant" in a society. The representations from media are one of the main sources of information on social issues for much of the public.

1.2 The media have a say in how we see ourselves

Media’s role and functions in society have been discussed over the years. On one hand, media offer entertainment, on the other hand - information. Most of the media want to be

⁵ Mazarella, Sharon, *20 Questions about youth & the Media*, Peter Lang Publishing, New York, 2007, p. 168;

⁶ Ibidem;

⁷ Idem, p. 169;

objective and balanced, but may as well be perceived as subjective. In addition to be providers of entertainment, news and information, media are also playing an important role in how we, as individuals, consider ourselves and other people.

In his book, "*Public Opinion*,"⁸ Walter Lippmann speaks about media's role in constructing meanings. In this book he gives several examples where different events were having too little in common with the beliefs that people were having about those events.

He also discussed how media's interpretations of a certain events can radically change people's interpretations of reality. He cited the example of the outbreak of the First World War, in 1914. Many people had not heard about the outbreak of the war for several days. Worldwide, people continued to manufacture goods that they would never had the chance to use, plan careers and businesses that they would never be able to accomplish them. In other words, they lived in a world which was going to change dramatically once they will read the news about the war.

Lippmann's conclusion was that people do not act based only on what is happening or has happened, but also based on what they think the real situation is. They obtain a new imagine of what is happening from descriptions provided by the press - meanings and interpretations which often have only limited correspondence with reality.

The media is telling us about life – people, places, power and fate. It show and tell us how things work. It is presenting the good and the bad, the happy and the sad, the successes and the failures.

It is for this reason relevant to analyze the ways in which people are presented in the media such as newspapers.

1.3 Presentation of the research questions

By conducting this research I intend to examine children's presence in newspapers by asking the question "*In which ways are children (re)presented in the Romanian newspapers?*" With children I mean people aged 0 - 18 years. It will of course be a too big project to examine all

⁸ Lippmann, Walter, *Public Opinion*, New York, Macmillan, 1922;

the Romanian newspapers, and I have therefore chosen *Libertatea*, *Adevărul*, *Jurnalul Național*, *Evenimentul Zilei* and *România Liberă*. To answer the broader research question I will use more specific research questions:

- How are children presented in newspapers?
- How visible are children's own voices in newspaper texts?
- To what extent are children represented in the Romanian newspapers?

First, in regard to the extent to which children and young people are presented in the newspapers, this is about frequency: “*How often are children presented in newspaper articles?*” Secondly, by addressing the question “*How visible is children's own voice in newspaper texts?*” I will examine if the children are speaking for themselves or somebody else is doing it. Thirdly, in connection with the third research question I intend to examine how newspaper articles describe the children.

1.4 Methodological and theoretical approach

My first objective is to see how children are presented in newspapers. To conduct the research, I will use the method of content analysis. The material for the analysis will be obtained by monitoring for four months five national newspapers: *Libertatea*, *Adevărul*, *Jurnalul Național*, *Evenimentul Zilei* and *România Liberă*. The newspapers were chosen based on the Audit Bureau of Editions and the National Study of Audiences (20 July 2009-18 July 2010). I have chosen to base my study on newspapers because the written media is a field used in general by adults. According to the last study made in March 2011 by the National Study of Audiences, the newspaper's readers with the age between 15 and 20 years old is declining. I think it is very interesting to observe the manner in which young people are perceived and portrayed by adults and the ways in which the adults relate to them.

In order to obtain a representative sample of newspaper coverage I will use the systematic sampling as a sampling method. This means I will take the newspaper on Monday in one week, on Tuesday the other week and so on. The months I have chosen to analyze are June, this is the month when the Child's International Day is celebrated, and the schools end in Romania, September, October and November. The articles I will chose will have as subject children and young people with the age between 0 and 18 years old.

In choosing the right articles to analyze I will look for those which present the children as subject (active player) and those in which the child is the object (passive player) who must bear the consequences of someone else's actions. The articles chosen will be coded under categories such as crime, violence, education, family, health, cultural issues and economics. In choosing the categories I will use Dale Kunkel and Stacy Smith's study, "*The News Media's Picture of Children in the United States.*"⁹

For a deeper understanding of the obtained data I will use qualitative content analysis as a further method, to analyze both the text and the layouts, and the graphical image.

Furthermore, qualitative interviews with five journalists, one from each monitored newspaper will be conducted. This method was chosen in order to offer an overview of the ways in which journalists make use of the information about children in constructing their materials.

1.5 Quantitative and qualitative content analysis

The analysis in this thesis is conducted both quantitatively and qualitatively. The material analyzed from both a quantitative and qualitative methodological approach provides the opportunity to present the issues in different ways. The quantitative content analysis will offer a numerical record of newspaper articles from the chosen period for the analysis. By using the qualitative content analysis I will analyze articles from the quantitative survey using text analysis.

Content analysis is a generic term for methods of research that aims to map the contents of the texts. Quantitative content analysis is the analysis of a material that can be treated as numbers and where the goal is to test. A quantitative content analysis assumes that the data can be organized in units, variables and values. The numerical description of the data must be both systematic and objective. Systematic means that the coding material is bearing general guidelines for the material to be processed.

It can be said that content analysis is based on reading (textual or visual), a tool of information gathering. But unlike the common reading this should be following the scientific method: must be systematic, objective, replicable, and validated.

⁹ Kunkel, Dale and Stacy L. Smith, *The News Media's Picture of Children in the United States*, Feilitzen von, Cecilia, Carlsson, Ulla (1999), *Children and Media Image Education Participation*, Nordicom, 1999;

Scholars have tried to define content analysis in different ways. For example, Bernard Berelson's definition says that "content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication."¹⁰ The "objectivity" refers to the use of procedures that can be used by other investigators so that the results can be verified. "Systematic" refers to patterns that can cover all the observed contents. "Quantification" means that all the obtained data are coded.

Krippendorff argues that every content analysis "requires a context within each the available texts are examined."¹¹ The "context" can be seen as a frame where messages develop their meanings. Thus any content analysis must be made in relation to a context and justified in its terms. In other words, the researcher can recognize the meaning of an act placing it within the social context where it has happened.

Meanwhile, according to Alexander L. George, content analysis is in the first instance "a statistical technique for obtaining descriptive data on content variable."¹² A more recent definition is given by Kimberly Neuendorf, who states that "content analysis is a systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics."¹³

She also states that content analysis "relies on the scientific method, including attention to objectivity-inter-subjectivity, a priori design, reliability, validity, generalizability, replicability and hypothesis testing."¹⁴

When analyzing newspaper articles, only the content available in the texts is openly and explicitly available to be examined and coded. "When making content analysis, we examine only the manifest content of the texts – that is, what is explicitly stated – rather than the latent content, the "hidden" material that is behind or between the words."¹⁵ Thus, the quantitative

¹⁰ Berelson, Bernard, *Content Analysis in Communication Research*, American Book-Stratford Press, New York, 1952, p. 18;

¹¹ Krippendorff, Klaus, *Content Analysis. An Introduction to Its Methodology*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, California, 2004, p. 24;

¹² De Sola Pool, Ithiel, *Trends in Content Analysis*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1959, p. 8;

¹³ Neuendorf, Kimberly, *The Content Analysis Guidebook*, Sage Publication, London, 2002, p. 1;

¹⁴ Idem, p. 10;

¹⁵ Berger, Arthur Asa (2000): *Media And Communication Research Methods: An Introduction to Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, California, 2000, p. 179;

content analysis relates only to the available text, and cannot say, for example, what possible effects the text has on its audience.

Content analysis can be applied to a vast range of materials such as books, essays or movies, but when it comes to media research, Anders Hansen states that “content analysis aims to examine how news, drama, advertising and entertainment output reflect social and cultural issues, values and phenomena.”¹⁶

Berger Arthur Asa identifies 11 steps in the content analysis conducting process, while Hansen presents six: the definition of the research problem, the selection of media and sample, defining analytical categories, constructing a coding schedule, piloting the coding schedule and checking reliability and data-preparation and analysis.¹⁷

I have decided to use content analysis after a careful analysis of both the research problem and questions. Following the steps presented by Anders Hansen I have first defined the subject matter of my research study, the children aged 0 to 18 years old, followed by the selection of media and sample – five newspapers from which I have chosen for analysis articles regarding children. After the material was collected, the categories and the coding schedule were constructed. For example, in the process of coding the material I have chosen the articles that presented subjects related to children and articles in which children are acting as agents and sources, even though the topics of the articles are not considered primary related to children.

1.6 Qualitative interviews

The interview is one of the major methods of working in qualitative/quantitative research of the social, the most commonly used for data collection in the qualitative inquiry of the human interests. This method allows the researcher to understand the deep and nuanced human being, its relations with the world, beliefs and behaviours of specific social groups.

With qualitative interviews the researcher tries to understand something from the subjects’ point of view and to uncover the meaning of their experiences. Research interviews are based on the conversations of everyday life. They are conversations with structure and purpose that

¹⁶ Hansen, Anders et al, *Mass Communication Research Methods*, Sage Publications, London, 1998, p. 92;

¹⁷ Idem, p. 98-99;

are defined and controlled by the researcher. Although the research interview may not lead to objective information, it captures many of the subjects' views on something.

By using this method I intend to find the principles a journalist has to apply when reporting about children, what practices journalists are using when they report about children and what ethical issues they are facing.

1.7 The newspapers as an arena for public debate

Why is it important to be aware of children's presence in newspapers? Previous studies (Dorfman – 1997, Kundel – 1999, Korać – 2001) show that children are presented in the articles in stereotypical ways. Romanian newspapers are a place for public debate and public conversation, and their presentation of any stereotyped attitudes towards children may have a major impact for social conversation when it comes to this age groups.

Furthermore, the newspapers are also disclosing attitudes, and even if we, as newspaper readers know that what is listed in the newspaper is not necessarily true, the media's message can still have an impact on the public opinion.

1.8 Children's right to information and participation

Article 13 from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child says that children have both the right to express themselves and to get information, and that the media have a particular responsibility to that. "The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice."¹⁸

There will also be interesting to investigate how children and young people are presented in the Romanian newspapers.

Children's rights in Romania are guaranteed and protected by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 49 from the Romanian Constitution, "Children and young people

¹⁸ <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/pdf/crc.pdf>, accessed 12 October 2011;

enjoy a special protection and assistance in achieving their rights”¹⁹, Law 272/2004 regarding the protection and promotion of children’s rights²⁰ and the Journalists’ Code of Ethics.²¹

¹⁹ http://www.cdep.ro/pls/dic/site.page?den=act2_1&par1=2, accessed 22 October 2011;

²⁰ http://www.dreptonline.ro/legislatie/legea_protectiei_copilului.php, accessed 22 October 2011;

²¹ <https://www.crji.org/>, accessed 22 October 2011.

2. Research about children

In order to say something about the ways in which children and young people are presented in the Romanian newspapers, it would be interesting to have a closer look at the definitions of children and young people, and say summarize how various researchers defined these two terms. The ways one studies and relates to children and young people are in a constant change, and the concepts of children and young people are far from a constant definition.

In this chapter I will give a rough overview of the historical concept of childhood. This is a major scientific field, with routes in pedagogy, sociology, anthropology and psychology, and has traditionally been concerned in defining and explaining what children and young people are. I have no ambition to provide a complete overview of the field, but I have selectively picked out the theories I have found most important in the research literature, as well as in an appropriate way, help to shed light on this master's thesis research. It will be interesting to see to what extent the theory of children affects or is present in the journalistic presentation of them.

2.1 The concept of childhood

In today's society, one can sense a growing rebellion against the role of adults. The child becomes for the contemporary adult the main symbol of what they have lost both on the individual, and the social and cultural level, childhood becoming a symbol of a lost paradise. The sight of children and childhood as something idyllic and ideal can probably arise in the adults' nostalgic thoughts about childhood.

Childhood is constructed through the prism of adult nostalgia: "the concept of childhood serves to articulate not just the status of the young within modern society but also the projections, aspirations, longings and altruism contained within the adult experiences."²²

Television program makers often have a nostalgic relation to their own childhood, and a desire to pursue the idea of childhood as idyllic in children's programs. In this way they preserved traditional notions of what childhood is and of what it consists.

The adults tend to idealize children and childhood. At the same time it is also about the vision of children as innocent, true and pure. "The notion that children are precious, that they need protection from the harmful adult world, is basic to contemporary understanding of

²² Jenks, Chris, *Childhood*, Routledge, London, 1996, p. 137;

childhood.”²³ “Childhood is a precious realm under siege from those who would rob children of their childhood.”²⁴

Childhood is seen as temporally separated, closer to nature, innocent and vulnerably dependent, “a dominant modern discourse of childhood continues to mark out “the child” as innately innocent, confirming its cultural identity as a passive and unknowing dependant.”²⁵ Jenks goes further and asks the question why childhood has become a contested terrain. He identifies three factors that led to this problem. The first is that the child symbolizes the social order, what happens to children tells us what kind of society we have become or are becoming: the child has become a way of speaking about sociality itself. The second factor is that adult anxieties are projected onto children; the third that the first two are themselves reactions to perplexing changes in adult experiences.

According to Buckingham “childhood is a shifting, relational term, whose meaning is defined primarily through its opposition to another shifting term, “adulthood”.”²⁶ He also argued that changing the perceptions of the status of childhood reflects some real changes in the lives of children and he identified three areas of change: in family life, education and employment, and leisure opportunities. In the family life, children’s experience has been changed by the disruption of the conventional nuclear family, the trend toward smaller families and increases on working mothers. In the second area, education and employment, earlier nursery care and larger numbers in higher education or compulsory training have meant that the “institutionalization of childhood appears to be starting earlier and ending later.”²⁷

Jackson and Scott identified three different levels at which childhood is constructed: structural – incorporating the family, education system and state policies; discursive – where psychologist and

²³ Best, Joel, *Threatened Children: Rhetoric and Concern about Children Victims*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, p. 182;

²⁴ Jackson, Stevi, Scott, Sue, *Risk anxiety and the social construction of childhood*, in *Risk and Sociocultural Theory*, Lupton, Deborah, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999, p. 86;

²⁵ Jenks, Chris, *in Moral Panics and the Media*, , Critcher, Chas, Open University Press, Philadelphia, 2003, p. 158;

²⁶ Buckingham, David, *After the Death of Childhood*, Polity, Cambridge, 2000, p.7;

²⁷ Idem, p. 6;

child experts predominate; and situated – everyday interaction where generalized understandings about children guide adult interactions with them.²⁸

An example at the structural level is the legal definition. Laws prescribe the ages at which it is lawful to be held responsible for criminal actions, undertake sexual activity, leave home or school or drink alcohol in a pub or bar.

The discursive conditions are undertaken by professionals. The capacity of children to think logically, make moral judgments and handle their emotions proceeds through a series of stages which professionals are trained to identify.

On the situated level of everyday interactions, childhood is negotiated in families but being a child cannot be practiced outside the structures of the law, the education system and the mass media.

Images of childhood circulate in novels, plays, films, news stories, and advertisements. Visual images are indicative. Some are presentations of children, others representations of childhood to adults. Some produce conventional idealized portraits of childhood; others explore its darker, more ambiguous side.

2.2 More research on children

The question of the child is a modern question. In ancient times, they looked at children as something that had not yet fulfilled its intrinsic potential. Aristotle, for example, thought that children are “miniature adults” and thus cannot be expected to engage meaningfully in adult intellectual activities. In the European Middle Ages there is no such childhood, and even four-five-year-olds were included in the adult great community, while children who were younger were not recognized as full human beings. Such recognition was given only to the elder children. The children proved viable, were incorporated into the community after they had acquired basic motor and language skills.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau posed the question of the child on the eve of the French Revolution. “The discovery of the child in the eighteenth century was the discovery of the indeterminacy of the future determination of humans, who had to develop themselves as historical and social beings.”²⁹ Thinkers such as Johann Gottfried analyzed the child in a historical anthropology in which language had a major significance. It was also the time when the question of the nature of the child was reformulated in terms of evolutionary theory. “Childhood became an ontological recapitulation of phylogenesis, which had no independent significance other than as individual development attaining every stage of

²⁸ Jackson, Stevi, Scott, Sue, op. cit., p. 156;

²⁹ Benner Dietrich, in *The Palgrave Handbook of Childhood Studies*, Qvortrup, Jens, Corsaro, A. William, Honig, Michael-Sebastian, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2009, p. 65;

maturation and rationality which manifests itself in the typical adult.”³⁰ Children become human beings who are not yet adult.

Nowadays there is only one criterion one must meet in order to be labeled human, namely to be born of a human being. Any child born of the people is as much worth as adults.

To define the concept of “child” might be difficult. Does the term refer to every human being from the birth to the age of maturity? It is a matter of children, or childhood? The definition of the “*child*” has been the subject of negotiation between both the public discourse and social interaction and children.

One of the pioneers when it comes to the research regarding children is the British anthropologist Charlotte Hardman. Her approach towards children regards children as people to be studied in their own rights, and not just as receptacles of adult teaching. “It is a matter of an autonomous segment of socioculture which is distinct not just from other segments, but also from the individuals who populate this segment: “The children will move in and out of this segment into another, but others take their place. The segment still remains. The segment may overlap with others, may reflect on others, but there is a basic order of beliefs, values and ideas of one group which bounds them off from any other group.”³¹

Matthew Speier analyzed the child by outlining the division between the world of children and that of adults. There are two cultures, engaged in a process of meaning negotiation, according to him, “children’s cultural activities have a viable organization of their own and it is this organized world that is not very visible to adults. The nature of the child’s organized world is hardly understood as yet.”³² The child is defined as being familiar to adults yet strange, he inhabits on adult’s world and seems to answer to another, he appears to display a different order of being.

It is argued that adults are the ones who construct and define child usually from a deep cultural notions of what childhood is. Childhood is a moving and relational concept whose meaning is determined primarily through its relative position to another, namely to be an

³⁰ Qvortrup, Jens, Corsaro, A. William, Honig, Michael-Sebastian , *The Palgrave Handbook of Childhood Studies*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2009, p. 65;

³¹ Hardman, Charlotte, *Can there be an Anthropology of Children?* In *Childhood*, 8(4), Sage Publications, London, 2001, p. 504;

³² Speier, Matthew, *The Adult Ideological Viewpoint in Studies of Childhood*, in *Rethinking Childhood. Perspectives on Development and Society*, Little Brown and Company, Boston, 1976, p. 172;

adult. It can be said that the child has been defined as a matter of what he is not and in terms of what they cannot do.

It is known that both fear and elevate children and young people. “Of course, the figure of the child has always been the focus of adult fears, desires and fantasies. Yet in recent years, debates about childhood have become invested with a growing sense of anxiety and panic.”³³ Children and young people's behavior can seem both attractive and frightening for us, because the children on the one hand, are free and natural, and on the other side, are unpredictable and uncivilized. This duality makes our relationship to the child is in a kind of tension.

In recent years, there is a common belief in research that considers society's attitudes to children and young people as socially constructed. Talcott Parson suggests that “the social norms become both the source of “identity” between the actor and the system, and the social order itself resides in this identity between the actor and the systems.”³⁴

Approaching the child as a construct is one of the central premises of a sociology of childhood. The construct of the “child” is an abstraction with its own social reality. “To be defined as a child is to be a child.”³⁵

During the time there have been researchers who have opposed to the theory of socialization. Jenks focused on the distinction between children and adults. They assumed that children are “other.” “The adult member [is] being considered naturally as mature, rational and competent, the child is viewed in juxtaposition as less than fully human, unfinished or incomplete. Such dichotomous discrimination in terms of socio-cognitive competence assumes its most explicit in theories concerned with the learning process.”³⁶

Leena Alanen states that “the adult ideological viewpoint led to the exclusive power of adults in defining children.”³⁷ She goes further and says that the socialization framework makes it

³³ Buckingham, David, p. 3;

³⁴ Qvortrup, Jens, Corsaro, A. William, Honig, Michael-Sebastian, op. cit, p. 66;

³⁵ Ibidem;

³⁶ Jenks, Chris, in *The Palgrave Handbook of Childhood Studies*, Qvortrup, Jens, Corsaro, A. William, Honig, Michael-Sebastian, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2009, p. 65;

³⁷ Alanen, Leena, *Rethinking Childhood*, in *Acta Sociologica*, 31(1), 1988, p. 58;

difficult “to imagine, and even harder to conceptualize children as veritable social actors.”³⁸ Such actions may lead to a denial of the children’s value as autonomous human beings.

Her critique is directed at a mode of thought which justifies the social marginalization of children as well as the measurement of normal childhood in terms of the child’s physical weakness and need for protection and the regularities of physical growth and physical development.

“The sociology of childhood is the antithesis. It regards children as social actors, not as objects of socialization. The ambivalence of this position lies in the coupling of an epistemological critique with a normative position. It carries with it the danger of an ontologization of power and a naturalization of the concept of the actor. For when the power of adults over children is regarded as a condition for the possibility of knowledge about children, this has to underpin all knowledge.”³⁹

According to Norma Denzin, the child plays a constitutive role. Just like the adult, the child is able to shape, define, and negotiate its relationship to the external world of objects, others and social situations. He can define his own reality and relationships to that reality. “Socialization means how the object called “child” comes to enter into the very processes that produce and shape its own self-consciousness and awareness of other.”⁴⁰

Children can define their own reality by appropriation to the adult’s culture. William Corsaro argues that “the biological child enters into a social nexus and through self-generated actions with others builds up a social understanding which becomes a developing core of social knowledge on which he/she build throughout the life course.”⁴¹

If until now the child was defined according to the socialization theory, Friedrich Schleiermacher defined the child using the theory of generation.

³⁸ Idem, p.57;

³⁹ Qvortrup, Jens, Corsaro, A. William, Honig, Michael-Sebastian, op. cit., p 67;

⁴⁰

http://books.google.no/books?id=cgTlsoWm9YIC&printsec=frontcover&hl=no&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false, accessed 21 December 2011;

⁴¹ Corsaro, William A., Cook-Gumperz, John, *Children’s worlds and Children’s Language*, Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin, 1986, p. 9;

The concept of generation has two axes: along one axis things turn around the relationship between older and younger; along the second axis things revolve around the relationship of members of a generation with each other. “In other words, it concerns generational relationships and generational membership.”⁴²

The concept of generation focuses on the relationship between children and parents, or children and adults. The duality of children and adults refers to a social, developmental and future-oriented dimension, that of children and parents to an individual, genealogical and past-oriented dimension.

According to Alanen “children and adults are relationally asymmetrical categories which are embedded in generationally ordered spheres, such as “public” vs “private” or “rational” vs “irrational”. [...] Children become children, and adults become adults, through “generationing”, through institutionalized practices of distinction.”⁴³

In the context of research about children, the question of the child is the question of the observability of children. Empirically children are unthinkable in the absence of childhood.

When speaking about children, does the researcher mean infant, school children or legally restricted competent actors?

One answer is offered by Dirk Rustemeyer who says that “children are human beings in transition from nature to reason in the unity of possibility and reality.”⁴⁴

2.3 Children’s rights

When it comes to thinking about children, the beginning of the 1900s was marked by a contradiction between a negative protection policy and a positive development right. Children are in most societies regarded as a distinct group with special needs. Their peculiar position is that on the one hand, they have rights, and on the other side they do not have a full responsibility of their actions and they need protection. Thus, the children's rights can be divided into two groups that are in a kind of contradiction to each other. One is the children's

⁴² Qvortrup, Jens, Corsaro, A. William, Honig, Michael-Sebastian, op. cit. p. 70;

⁴³ Alanen, Leena, in Qvortrup, Jens, Corsaro, A. William, Honig, Michael-Sebastian, op. cit., p 71;

⁴⁴ Rustemeyer, Dirk, in Qvortrup, Jens, Corsaro, A. William, Honig, Michael-Sebastian, op. cit. p. 73;

right to protection. This is a passive right. The second group includes the children's right to decide for themselves and to take legal actions on their own, that is an active right. This view harmonizes well with the trends of our time to see the child as someone independent, autonomous and with development rights, while not denying the fact that children, in some contexts, also need protection.

But, on the opposite side are those who are against children's rights. They argue that it is misguided to think that rights can achieve something positive for children. Onora O'Neill argues that "taking taking rights as fundamental in ethical deliberation about children has neither theoretical nor political advantages."⁴⁵ In her view, if we care about children's lives, we should rather identify what obligations parents, teachers and the wider community have towards children.

Another researcher who is against children's rights is Harry Brighouse. In his view there is "something very strange about thinking of children as bearers of rights."⁴⁶ He does not difficulties with seeing children as bearers of welfare rights, but he does not approve with agency rights, at least as far as young children are concerned. He is particularly critical of three agency rights, all recognized by the UN Convention: the right to freedom of expression, to freedom of religion and to enjoyment of one's own culture.

Children's rights in Romania are guaranteed and protected by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Un Convention on the Rights of the Child is a convention in which the child is constructed, for the first time, as a principal, a subject in their own right, rather than a concern or an object of intervention.

There are general rights – the right to life, prohibition against torture, freedom of expression, thought and religion, and the right to information and privacy; protective rights – including measures to protect children from economic and sexual exploitation, to prevent drug abuse and other forms of abuse or neglect; civil rights – including the right to acquire nationality, the right to preserve one's identity, the right to remain with parents; developmental rights – the child's right to a reasonable standard of living, the right to health and basic services, to

⁴⁵ O'Neill, Onora, *Children's rights and Children's Lives*, in *Ethics* 98(3), 1988, p. 447;

⁴⁶ Brighouse, Harry, *What Rights (If Any) Do Children Have*, in *The Moral and Political Status of Children*, Archar, David, Macleod, Colin M., Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 31;

right to social security, to education and to leisure; right concerning children in special circumstance, such as handicapped children, refugee children and orphaned children.⁴⁷

The children's rights should be universal, to be held by children simply because they are children. Race, sexual orientation, religion, social position, nationality, fortune are in these terms irrelevant, hence the important non-discrimination principle from the Article 2 of the Convention.

The Article 3 of the Convention talks about the best interests, not best rights. This neither creates any rights, nor for that matter does it impose any duties. The best interests principle can also be seen to supplement any catalogue of children's rights, such as those in the UN Convention. It can be used to reinterpret rights or construct new ones.

Other documents that protect the right of the children in Romania are Article 49 from the Romanian Constitution, "Children and young people enjoy a special protection and assistance in achieving their rights"⁴⁸, Law 272/2004 regarding the protection and promotion of children's rights⁴⁹ and the Journalists' Code of Ethics.⁵⁰

Getting a worldwide convention to recognize the right of the children was not easy. Debates around the 1989 Convention centered on how "child" was to be defined. Discussion were divided between those who argued that childhood should begin at the moment of conception and those who argued that any attempt to establish a beginning point should be abandoned. The latter viewpoint prevailed.

"During the past twenty years, concern with the safety of children has become a constant subject of attention. Children are portrayed as permanently at risk from danger... concern for the security of children has led to a major reorganization of the childhood experience. Childhood activities such as roaming about friends or walking to and from school are becoming increasingly rare experiences. There is now a well-established consensus that

⁴⁷ <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm>, accessed 3 January 2012;

⁴⁸ http://www.cdep.ro/pls/dic/site.page?den=act2_1&par1=2, accessed 22 October 2011;

⁴⁹ http://www.dreptonline.ro/legislatie/legea_protectiei_copilului.php, accessed 22 October 2011;

⁵⁰ <https://www.crji.org/>, accessed 22 October 2011.

children should not be left on their own. Middle-class children in particular are now subject to constant policing.”⁵¹

Adults have become so concerned about the safety of children because children have become their principal concern, they have become their protectors and nurturers and the children became adults’ primary love objects.

2.4 Summing arguments

In this chapter I have briefly outlined the various ways in which researchers and people generally perceive and define children and young people. The images of children and young people vary from seeing them as small, unformed people who need protection, robust, autonomous individuals who can withstand a confrontation with life's realities. Whether the media and the press pass on images of children and young people, or if they are simply part of the structure around the childhood and children concepts, it is a discussion that I will not get into here, but that has been commented on in the thesis introduction chapter.

⁵¹ Furedi, Frank, in Jenks, Chris, op. cit., p. 160;

3. Theory

Attitudes towards children are considerably influenced by the images, conceptions and values related to the nature of the child and childhood prevailing in that society. Those images, conceptions and values are based on what adults know, or claim to know, about children.

3.1 Media Presentations, media frames and stereotypes

The Reports of the Group of Analysis and Debates in Child Protection conducted in November 2008, in Romania shows that the journalists are rarely presenting in details the causes or consequences of an event involving children. More rarely they make the connection between the particular series of events to obtain a general framework for discussing general problems facing children in society. Even when it stops on cases of "exceptional" children the press does not present the child as an autonomous individual, endowed with rights. The report highlights those articles presenting children in difficult circumstances: the abused child, child victims of accidents due to neglect by parents or under-served socio-economic environment in which they live, prevails. The large quantity of "news in brief" which recounts abuses against children or accidents involving children contributes promoting the image of these children as belonging to the sphere of normal.⁵²

The child is brought to the fore when sensitive social issues make the subject of the news. The selected titles are designed to shock, and the articles offer detailed descriptions of acts that have caused suffering to the child.

Dale Kundel and Stacy Smith state that "how any nation perceives or stereotypes its youth in terms of their patterns of behaviour, how it treats its children in terms of laws to protect them and policies to benefit them, all depend upon how children are viewed by the nation's citizens."⁵³ The information that people have about children influence all these factors and one of the primary sources of such information is the news media.

Kunkel and Smith are not dealing with children as actors, but examine how children and young people are portrayed in the US media. They have studied how children are represented

⁵² www.fdsc.ro/library/RAPORT%20ANUAL%202003.doc, accessed 5 June 2011;

⁵³ Kundel, Dale, Smith, Stacy, *The News Media's Picture of Children in the United States*, in Feilitzen von, Cecilia, Carlsson, Ulla, *Children and Media Image Education Participation*, Nordicom, 1999, p. 79;

in the news media such as newspapers and television. Kunkel and Smith claims in the article "*The News Media's Picture of Children in the United States*" that how a nation understand the concept of childhood, how it forms the stereotypes about children and young people, and how it treats children and young people in relation to legislation, is in the context of how those considered by nation's citizens.

In the same time, media's representations provide significant symbolic resources for the construction of public and political agendas and "that dominant media frames are powerful in defining social problems and shaping public discourses."⁵⁴

The survey was conducted by Sonia Livingstone and Leslie Haddon in November in 1993. The newspapers that they analyzed were the *Atlanta Constitution*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Houston Chronicle*, the *Los Angeles Times* and *New York Times*, as well as an evening news broadcast, every night from *ABC*, *CBS* and *NBC*. Kunkel and Smith used content analysis as a research method. They analyzed 949 cases out of which 840 were from newspapers. They analyzed categories like crime / violence, education, family, health, cultural and economical issues. One of the findings of Kunkel and Smith's study was that children and young people are often associated with crime and violence, both as victims and as practitioners. Approximately 40% of all the newspapers' coverage about children falls into the category of crime / violence, while 25% of all newspaper articles were about education. A negative representation of children does not only affect the agenda setting, say Kunkel and Smith, but it can also lead the young readers to have a wrong perception of their own age groups.

The two scholars reveal that the focus of the press on children and violence can push other themes aside. They argue that the press need more balance in covering issues related to children and young people, so that the public can obtain information about all the social aspects related to young people.

Nada Korać (2001) conducted a study in Serbia and found that children are presented in a negative context, as victims or involved in infractions. Her study was focused on visibility and portrayal of children in the media. The study shows that children appear considerably often in incidental comments, are portrayed as an illustration of some other theme, or their

⁵⁴ Livingstone, Sonia, Haddon, Leslie, *Kids online*, The Policy Press, Portland, 2009, p. 159;

presence has a more decorative function. The portrayal of the child tends to be quite generalized and undifferentiated. Meanwhile the professionals dealing with children are present as sources of information to a much smaller extent (21%) than the journalists themselves (53%).⁵⁵

The study conducted by Korać shows that children's rights are practically not mentioned at all. While the children are presented as an endangered member of the society, neither their rights nor the documents regulating their rights are mentioned. Korać concludes that "by creating a picture of an endangered and passive child, the adults are painting an idealized picture of themselves as kind and caring guardians and rescuers. If a child's picture or statement is accompanying the theme, they are usually there in the function of drawing attention to what adults are doing."⁵⁶

A study conducted in Spain shows that 77% of information refers to children as victims of acts of violence, accidents, sexual assault and abuse. Only 19% of the articles present the children as the main actors of the news.⁵⁷

3.2 Children as a social group

The press, as part of civil society, can influence legislation regarding the children's protection. The media play a crucial role in disseminating knowledge and awareness about children's rights among the public opinion and can promote social competence in the areas of children protection. The message conveyed by the Romanian press may contribute to shaping values, changing moral prejudices in society.

Previous studies show that images of children and young people in the media have a high impact on the ways in which our society relates itself to these social groups.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ <http://www.doiserbia.nb.rs/img/doi/0048-5705/2003/0048-57050304451K.pdf>, accessed 2 June 2011;

⁵⁶ Idem;

⁵⁷ Casas, Ferran. *Infancia: perspectivas psicossociales*, Paidós, Barcelona, 1998;

⁵⁸ Duarte, Klaudio, *Ejes juveniles de lectura, para desenmascarar las bestias y anunciar los sueños*, in *Hablan los Jóvenes*, no.6, Costa Rica, 1996.

One of the best known researches of media image of different social groups, including children, is George Gerbner's *Cultural Indicators Project*. The most important findings of this 30 year study are those concerning visibility of different social groups in the media: those with less power and influence are underrepresented by the media, which cultivates a corresponding public image and contributes by maintaining their social status. Media do not only reflect, but also maintain the existing social power structure.

According to Gerbner, the vision of the world is "violent, mean, repressive, dangerous, - and inaccurate."⁵⁹

The media relay and create pictures of children and young people, and facilitate discourses, debates and discussions on topics that affect children and young people. "Some produce conventional idealized portraits of childhood; others explore its darker, more ambiguous side."⁶⁰

The media usually present a certain amount of reality or some parts of it. It is impossible to give a complete and accurate picture of the world. The media show ways of understanding the world, ways of presenting the world, in pictures, audio and written text, and they are launching ideas about what is important and unimportant, good and bad.

The newspapers pick their raw materials from reality, but in the same time they also present stories and interpretations, such as editorial interpretation related to the professional practices. The media's framing occurs through the choice of focus, sources, news angle, presentation and language.

Newspaper articles, like other media materials, often tend to take advantage of stereotypical ways of looking at the world. According to the *Dictionary of Media and Communication Studies* a stereotype is an "Oversimplified definition of a person or type of person, institution, style or event; to stereotype is to pigeon-hole, to thrust into tight lots of

⁵⁹ <http://depts.uwc.edu/wmsts/Faculty/Stossel.pdf>, accessed 2 June 2011;

⁶⁰ Critcher, Chas, *Moral Panics and the Media*, Open University Press, Philadelphia, 2003, p. 157;

definition that allow little adjustment or change.”⁶¹ The reasons for this may be that it is difficult to reproduce an issue or event in its entirety because of its complexity and scope.

3.3 Mass-media as a producer of images and realities about children

When children are portrayed in the media, it occurs in special contexts. The image of the child differs from one programme to another, from one article to another. One recurrent image in the news media is that children and youth are perpetrators and victims, and are physically and sexually abused. Another recurrent picture in the media is that of the good, innocent and cute child.

A research conducted in Romania by Alupului Mihaela, Bejenari Romina and Hintă Oana in 2007 shows that social reality is in a continuous construction and reconstruction. For this reason the media must produce different images that can allow a person to explain and understand the reality. In this process of construction of reality, the media play a vital role as transmitters of information, seeking to influence the individual to produce his own believes.⁶²

If we consider the media as producers and reproducers of reality, then we can ask how are the images about children and youth which contribute to the construction of certain views about childhood and youth. There is no doubt that the social representation of children transmitted by media exists in most cultures.

The research conducted by Alupului Mihaela, Bejenari Romina and Hintă Oana shows that most of the topics about children were the result of public events, press releases, summaries about criminality, or due to inherent seasonal themes (beginning of the new school year, children in summer camps).

The images that media promote is the image of a helpless child, poor, giving priority to the sensational news, in which children are victims of physical and sexual violence or he is in conflict with the law or is part of a drama, suffering or conflict.

⁶¹ Watson, James and Hill, Anne, *Dictionary on Media and Communication Studies*, Arnold, London, 2003, p. 279;

⁶² Alupului, Mihaela, Bejenari ,Romina and Hintă, Oana, *The image of youth in mass-media. A research Project*, Teora, Iași, 2007;

Positive topics about the child, the articles showing things beyond the narrow history of a particular case, bringing to the fore the child's personalities, his achievements, his opinions about issues and situations that concern and affect him were in minority. Such topics have been placed, most often, in the final pages of the newspapers.

The media is using the child mostly as a passive source of information. In most of the articles, the voice of children is missing, "they are tacitly presented as executors of the decisions of adults about life, education, or security."⁶³

Most media have respected the principle of ethics of the three sources. However, in some articles that showed sensitive or controversial topics, with great emotional impact and implications for the public this principle was violated. The same thing happened in the case of news based on press releases or summaries from the Ministry of Internal Affairs or The General Prosecutor, in Romania.

Although not a trend, there have been cases when journalists have inserted accusers wording against children, although their guilty had not been proven by the court. Also, sometimes journalists revealed details that could lead to the identification of the suspects, victims or witnesses.

Most often, the photos that accompanied the article about children fulfilled the ethical principles, for sensitive topics, using the image-symbol. There were several cases when the photo was used for political manipulation.

The media uses the word "*minor*" as a synonym for the word "*child*" even if the child's rights experts mentioned negative connotation of the word "*minor*" associated with "the punishment of a child for committing an illegality."⁶⁴

3.4 Negative representations of children in the media

The studies conducted by Dale Kunkel, *The News Media's Picture of Children*, (1994)⁶⁵ and David Buckingham⁶⁶ show that young people are perceived as a threat to the community. The cases in which the young people's own voice is heard in news are rare.

⁶³ Idem, p. 143;

⁶⁴ <http://www.anp-just.ro/interna/Codul%20Penal.pdf>, accessed 20 August 2011;

In news coverage, youth appears in only one of 12 local programs and only in one of 25 newscasts at the national level. When they appear in news, youth are presented in negative situations. Roughly 50% of the local stories featured youth accidents, violent youth crime, or youth as crime victims.⁶⁷

Another study conducted in 1997 shows that the majority of the analyzed stories (70%) “focused on specific crimes and their aftermath in the courts. The 444 stories on crimes included shootings, abductions, and child abuse and neglect. The 108 stories on trials were dominated by two prominent murder cases: that of the Menendez brothers, who were accused of shooting their parents, and that of Ellie Nesler, who shot her son's alleged molester. Seventy-four stories focused on crime at schools, including vandalism, shooting, sexual assault of students by teachers, and a bill signed by California Governor Pete Wilson allowing school districts to ban so-called gang clothing.”⁶⁸

These two studies show that problems like poverty, homelessness or suicide are avoided, while youth's violence, sexuality, and other behaviours are “exaggerated and often inaccurately reported.”⁶⁹

The study “*Young People and Media in Central and Eastern Europe, the CIS and Baltic States*” conducted by Intermedia for UNICEF in 2001, shows that young people complain about the way in which they are stereotyped. “The media tends to offer both positive and negative stereotypes. Among the latter are young people who are drug addicts, criminals, derelicts, street children, or victims of disease, abuse, crime or tragedy. The positive images of young people in the media tend to be either the well-off, trend-setting cool kids or the talented young achievers in school, sports, computers, art, fashion, film, etc. These positive images depict young people in a very optimistic way, as the future, as people with energy

⁶⁵ http://www.childrennow.org/uploads/documents/news_media_1994.pdf, accessed 3 June 2011;

⁶⁶ Buckingham, David, *After the Death of Childhood: Growing up in the Age of Electronic Media*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2000;

⁶⁷ McManus, John, Dorfman, Lori, *Youth Violence Stories Focus on Events, not Causes*, in *Newspaper Research Journal* 23, no. 4, 2002;

⁶⁸ Dorfman, Lori, Woodruff, Katie, Chavez, Vivian, Wallack, Lawrence, *Youth and Violence on Local Television News in California*, in *American Journal of Public Health*, 87 (8), 1997, p. 1312;

⁶⁹ Nichols, Sharon, Good, Tomas, *America's Teenagers – Myths and Realities*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, New Jersey, 2004, p.47;

who can do a lot, as a well-informed and self-assured generation that is growing up and managing to cope with the world.”⁷⁰

3.5 Moral panic, children and the media

The term “*moral panic*” is used in a number of scientific fields, which can involve everything from gene technology to the influence of video games on young people. “In the popular lexicon, the term often works as a kind of a short-hand for public hysteria by definition “*irrational*”, and is almost always held by indicative of someone else’s behaviour rather than our own.”⁷¹ The concept of “*moral panic*” has been a useful tool in the analysis of media representations of youth.

According to Chas Critcher, the moral panic that arises in a society mobilizes the need to protect children and young people, through increased regulation, supported by the way childhood is socially constructed.⁷² The desire to protect children and young people comes from the definition that they “are vulnerable and underdeveloped, incapable of informed choice about mass-media use or sexual activity. Adults are able to make these choices; children are not.”⁷³ Children and adults are seen as two opposite poles: one is sane and rational – the adult, while the children are vulnerable to adults who “proclaim the need to defend the innocence of childhood against corruption; and require authority to intervene to protect children.”⁷⁴

3.6 Children and Media Panic

In *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*, Stanley Cohen analyzes the media’s representations of the 1960’s “battles” between mods and rockers and defines the media alarm as a moral panic

⁷⁰ <http://www.unicef.org/magic/resources/InterMedia2000.pdf>, accessed 5 June 2011;

⁷¹ Allan, Stuart, *Series Editor’s Forward in Moral Panics and the Media*, Open University Press, Philadelphia, 2003, p. lx;

⁷² Critcher, Chas, *Moral Panic and the Media*, Open University Press, Philadelphia, 2003, p. 155;

⁷³ *Idem*, p. 156;

⁷⁴ *Idem*, p. 158;

which “denoted processes through which the media contribute to the escalation of social problems by distorting the activities of real or imagined deviant groups or “*folk devils*.”⁷⁵

The extent to which children and young people are affected by media violence has been discussed and researched as a result of the idea of media’s direct influence.

The hypodermic needle theory, also called “the magic bullet” theory states the media’s effects on audiences are strong and immediate. The theory emerged in the 1930’s, consistent with the behaviourism view that individuals are driven by external stimuli (stimuli – response reaction).

According to the hypodermic needle theory it can be assumed that media or media’s messages can be or are harmful to the recipients, and particularly dangerous if the recipients are children or young people.

“Nearly all the deleterious effects of media portrayals involve some form of inducements to behave impulsively. Disinhibition, desensitization, normalization, and learning of new rules of unacceptable behaviour all encourage the use of harmful solutions to social and personal problems that could be avoided with more effective decision making. Other forms of influence encourage attraction to immediately rewarding but potentially maladaptive behaviours, such as sex and consumption of fattening foods. Although these effects may not influence all consumers of media, they may be particularly powerful in young people who, removed from the constraints of adult responsibility and under significant conformity pressure from peers, are more prone to act impulsively without regard for long term consequences.”⁷⁶

In this case, one can speak about “*moral panic*” or “*media panic*”, the media playing “a crucial role in determining the characteristics of a moral panic.”⁷⁷

Another approach of “*media panic*” is given by Kirsten Drotner who concentrates “on the history of social anxieties surrounding the “effects” of media innovations on young audiences.”⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Osgerby, Bill, *Youth Media*, Routledge, New York, 2004, p. 74;

⁷⁶ Jamieson, Patrick E, Romer, Daniel, *The Changing Portrayal of Adolescents in the Media since 1950*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2008, p. 15;

⁷⁷ Alan, Stuart, op. cit., p. lx;

According to previous studies (Alupului, Bejenari, Hintă: 2007, Dorfman: 1997, Kundel: 1999) the interest in children, adolescents and media often follows two main tracks: pessimistic and optimistic. The pessimistic approach is characterized by the media panic, while the optimistic approach exists in regard with children and young people as being selective and critical consumers.

3.7 The children as receivers and users of media

Research that deals with children, young people and the media has often focused on children and young people as recipients of media messages. It has been proven that media can influence the images of children when they are the recipients of the messages.

As users of media, children “decide which information is relevant to their interpretation, both in terms of what they take from the text and in what they bring to it from prior experiences of life.”⁷⁹

According to Robinson, not all the children are engaging with the text in the same way and all the time. Moreover, they are actively varying their approach as they take account of the relative values of prior life experiences, and “of their understanding of narrative as derived from prior reading experiences.”⁸⁰ Their use of life experiences analogies decreases as their inter-textual references increase.

Also, as users of media, children are influenced by the medium where they live, “the children subverting adult prohibition on certain texts, by their challenges to adults and to each other over what counts as an appropriate text, and in particular by the collaboration into which they enter.”⁸¹

⁷⁸ Ibidem;

⁷⁹ Robinson, Muriel, *Children Reading Print and Television*, The Falmer Press, London, 1997, p. 177;

⁸⁰ Ibidem;

⁸¹ Ibidem;

3.8 The agenda setting of media

The agenda setting of media attempts to explain “why information about certain issues, and not other issues, is available to the public in a democracy; how public opinion is shaped; and why certain issues are addressed through policy actions while others are not.”⁸²

It can be said that the agenda setting represents the capacity of media capacity to amplify the importance of an event. It also shows the degree of attention that media give to certain ideas or themes, giving them a greater or a smaller significance.

A major influence in influencing the agenda setting of the media is the “*trigger event*” defined as “a cue-to-action that occurs at a point in time and serves to crystallize attention and action regarding as issue’s salience.”⁸³

Agenda setting sees issues as socially constructed regardless of actual changes in the incidence of social problems.

3.9 Summary

In this chapter I have explained some of the researches conducted on children, youth and the media. It has been conducted research about children and young people as receivers or user of the media and media messages, but there is also research that has focused on children and young people’s presence in media, and it is the last direction I want to conduct the study of my thesis.

⁸² Critcher, Chas, op. cit, p. 136;

⁸³ Dearin, James W, Rogers, Everett M., *Communication Concepts 6: Agenda-Setting*, Thousand Oaks, California, 1996, p. 40;

4. Methods

Children and young people are present in most of the media, so why investigate precisely newspaper media? The press and the media, including newspaper, have traditionally legitimized their profession by defining their role in the society both as representatives of the people and as a watchdog.

4.1 Why newspaper articles?

It is argued that the press has a social mission: "The press has the responsibility to inform about the important issues from our society, contributes to active citizenship debate and engages in social criticism."⁸⁴ This social mission is embodied in the Deontological Code elaborated by the Convention of the Media Organization. In the section 2.2, "*The Rules of Redaction*", the social mission of the press is described as follows: "The journalist should strive to present the views of all the parties."⁸⁵ The press has a special responsibility to ensure that different views of expression. Moreover, the Article 9 from the Ethic Code of the Journalist adopted by the Romanian Press Club stipulates that "The journalist has the civic responsibility to act for the established civic and social justice."⁸⁶

The newspapers are primarily aiming the adult recipients, and their arenas are largely controlled and used by adult actors. According to a survey conducted by The National Study of Audiences between May 2011 and February 2012, the readership aged between 13 and 19 years is steadily declining.⁸⁷ It is, according to the same survey, that this age group is most likely using new media channels, such as the Internet.

Thus the paper-based newspapers are largely a venue for, and regulated by, adult recipients and actors, and the way children and young people are presented in this "adult world" can give an indication of how elder people are perceive, produce and relate themselves to children and young people.

⁸⁴ Coman, Mihai, *Manual de journalism*, Polirom, Iași, 2009, p 143;

⁸⁵ <http://www.paginademedi.ro/2010/05/codul-deontologic-al-jurnalistului-elaborat-de-conventia-organizatiilor-de-media/>, accessed 14 March 2012;

⁸⁶ <http://www.ajs.ro/files/cod.pdf>, accessed 14 March 2012;

⁸⁷ http://www.sna.ro/index.php?page=detalii_livrari&id=99, accessed 20 March 2012;

The newspapers have impact when it comes to setting the agenda for public debate and public conversation. The press range of topics will contribute to the understanding of what kind of problems it is legitimate and natural to engage in. An analysis of how children and young people are presented in the Romanian newspapers can offer insights about the issues of how child and young people are helping the newspapers to raise public debate.

4.2 National newspapers

The newspapers that form the basis for the data of this thesis are: *Libertatea*, *Adevărul*, *Jurnalul Național*, *Evenimentul Zilei* and *România Liberă*. I have deliberately chosen the tabloid newspaper *Libertatea*. I think that it will be interesting to see how children and young people are (re)presented in both the quality newspapers and in the tabloid written press. I think the content similarities and differences between the various products in this study will strengthen the thesis results. In the case of the general newspapers, I have chosen the largest newspapers, owned by different media houses. It is my opinion that no matter under what ownership, newspapers tend to write about the same subject matter, which in turn enables a comparison of the national newspapers under different media houses.

Therefore, this thesis examines both general and tabloid newspapers. It will be interesting to conduct an analysis in which one looks at the similarities and differences when it comes to how different newspapers prioritize and present cases that involve children and young people.

This thesis concentrates on the paper-based newspapers and does not relate to the online edition of these newspapers. The online newspapers are less tangible in their appearance than the printed newspapers are. An article may be located on the online newspaper's front page for a few minutes before it “disappears” in the site. This would create problems in the collection of material, if one would examine all the articles published during a day on the online newspaper. Furthermore, online newspapers have different medium than print newspapers, and a study of these would also require an analysis of live sounds and moving image. Also, by choosing to analyze only the printed editions of the newspapers, the feedback from the readers, will not be analyzed. If it was to analyze the online editions of the newspapers, the comments from the articles would have offered a more clear image about the subject matter.

4.2.1 Libertatea

Libertatea is the first Romanian tabloid, founded in 1989 as the “first independent newspaper of the Romanian Revolution.” The newspaper has maintained its editorial profile and program by mid 1995, when it was acquired by the Swiss media group *Ringier*, which turned it into a tabloid in 1992. With this acquisition, the newspaper has removed from its nameplate the title of "Revolution's first independent newspaper." In October 2006, most of the newspaper's editorial employees, journalists, designers, proofreaders, DTP, drivers resigned and followed Adrian Halpert editor at another newspaper, with higher wages.

The newspaper's sales stood at 73,916 copies per edition in 2000 (4th place). In 2002, *Libertatea* emerged as leader of sales, even managing an annual average of 265,188 copies. In the last survey conducted by the Romanian Audit Bureau of Circulations, the newspaper ranked second after another tabloid newspaper, *Click*.⁸⁸

4.2.2 Adevărul

Adevărul is a daily newspaper founded in 1888 by Alexandru Beldiman and appeared in Bucharest until 1914, and from 1919 to 1937. It reappeared from 1946 to 1951, being suspended by the Communist regime. The editorial policy in the years following the Revolution continued adopting a critical position regarding the anticommunist opposition in Romania. In 2006, *Adevărul* was bought by the businessman Dinu Patriciu, the founder of the media company *Adevărul Holding*.

In 2000 the newspaper's sales stood at 185,565 copies, of which about 77% were subscriptions, being at that time the best selling newspaper in Romania. In 2007, the newspaper had the lowest sales - 26,309 copies per edition. In November 2011, the newspaper became the leader of the quality publications with 194.000 copies sold.⁸⁹ The same year, *Adevărul* occupied the fifth place in the top of the most read newspapers.

⁸⁸ <http://www.brat.ro/index.php?page=publications&id=87&index=0>, accessed 2 April, 2012;

⁸⁹ http://www.realitatea.net/studiu-care-sunt-cele-mai-citite-ziare-quality-din-romania_913817.html, accessed 2 April 2012;

4.2.3 Jurnalul Național

Jurnalul Național was founded in 1993 and is the leading publication of the *Intact* media group. In 1998, the newspaper started to appear in the tabloid form, and was structured on fixed pages. In 2001, it has changed again the graphical format, which is close to the British newspaper "*The Guardian*."

In 2000 the newspaper was sold in 70.466 copies per edition. In 2004, it had an average of 139,023 copies per edition. The latest survey conducted by the Romanian Audit Bureau of Circulations, placed *Jurnalul Național* sixth among the most popular newspapers.

4.2.4 Evenimentul Zilei

The first issue of *Evenimentul Zilei* (EVZ) was published in 1992 in broadsheet format. Fast, EVZ reached a circulation of about 850,000 copies. In 1993, the newspaper also recorded the highest average copies sold per day - about 675,000 pieces. At the time, EVZ appeared in three editions: the first - national, the second - for the readers from Bucharest and surrounding areas, the third - *Evenimentul de prânz*, the noon edition. Many journalists working today in the Romanian media have been at one time in the redaction of EVZ.

In 1998, the *Express* media trust, decided to increase the capital of the society and the German press group *Gruner & Jahr* takes over 50% of the shares. In 2004, after *Gruner & Jahr* decided to withdraw their operations from the Romanian market, the newspaper was bought by the Swiss group *Ringier*. After this change it followed a troubled period, marked by massive resignations and a conflict between the new owner and the editor in chief. Stabilization occurred after installing new editorial board.

According to the latest survey conducted by the Romanian Audit Bureau of Circulations, *Evenimentul Zilei* is the second among the quality newspapers from Romania, with 133.000 readers.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ Idem;

4.2.5 România Liberă

România Liberă was founded in 1877. During the Revolution from 1989 it was relaunched as a free newspaper under the leadership of Petre Mihai Băcanu. Owned by the media trust *Media Holding*, the newspaper makes major changes in 2010 when it changes its format, a new web site is launched and it is sold for a higher price.

România Liberă offers complex information about economical events and phenomena, presents political changes, compares statistical data and offers the opinions of some of the most known leaders of the Romanian public opinion. Thus the newspaper has a mature public who already has the knowledge to understand the materials presented in its pages.

4.3 The collection of material

In order to obtain a representative sample of newspaper coverage I will use the systematic sampling as a sampling method. This means I will take the newspapers on Monday in one week, on Tuesday the other week and so on. The material that is the subject of investigation in this thesis is collected in months of June, September, October and November. The months I have chosen to analyze are June, this is the month when the Child's International Day is celebrated, and the schools end in Romania, September, October and November. The articles I will choose will have as subject children and young people with the age between 0 and 18 years old.

The newspapers present many different journalistic genres such as news, news reports, commentaries, feature articles, editorials, feature stories, notes, reviews, and ads. I think it is necessary to make distinction between comment journalism (editorials, comments, reviews and commentary) and news journalism (news releases, portraits, reportage and reports). This thesis excludes all the materials falling in the category of comment journalism. I think it will be interesting to conduct an analysis of the press materials that offer information from as many angles as possible. The materials falling under that category of comment journalism are based on the opinions and beliefs of the journalist who is writing them.

Unlike the informative materials which aims mainly on showing facts, presentations, story events, highlighting the characters, etc., review articles (editorial, tablet, analysis, criticism,

comment, review, chronic, file) aim to deliver opinions, to state positions. Generally by writing articles as such, the authors express their own opinions.

The ideal of objectivity was previously considered one of the most important journalistic value and served as a legitimization of journalism as profession, considered to be "[...] a contract between journalist on the one hand and their employers on the other. This contract arose in the 1920s and 1930s as the ownership base of journalism was transformed. Editor/proprietors were out and corporations were in. So there arose a negotiated peace between journalists and corporate employers. The name of that negotiated peace is objectivity."⁹¹

"The idea of objectivity came naturally to a group of people seeking legitimacy in an era of scientific discovery. In its purest usage, the term suggested that journalism meant to be so utterly disinterested as to be transparent."⁹²

In his book, *News Values*, Jack Fuller, states that no one has ever achieved objective journalism, and no one ever could. "The bias of the observer always enters the picture, if not colouring the details at least guiding the choice of them."⁹³

Seven years later, Michael Schuldson, contradicts Fuller prediction stating that "somewhere there is a perfectly objective or fair way to present each event in the world (leaving aside the fundamental question of what constitutes an event and why events rather than, say, underlying processes should be matter of news.)"⁹⁴

Furthermore, the news should be informative and clarifying the citizen, so that they will get information and help to orient themselves in society.

In addition to the articles from the news genre, I will also analyze the feature newspaper articles. Bruce Garrison defines feature journalism as "a special part of something."⁹⁵ Feature articles are "something else" than news articles, but it is not easy to give a good definition of

⁹¹ Rose, Jay, in Fuller, Jack, *News Values*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1996,p. 205;

⁹² Fuller, Jack, *News Values*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1996,p. 14;

⁹³ Idem, p. 15;

⁹⁴ Schudson, Michael, *The Sociology of News*, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 2003, p. 34;

⁹⁵ Garrison, Bruce (2004) *Professional Feature Writing*, Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc Inc., New Jersey, 2004, p.6;

what the genre actually consists in. "Ask a journalist what a feature is and he or she is likely to respond: "Anything that isn't news."⁹⁶ Feature articles deal with actual facts, events and issues, and aim to go more in depth than news journalism does. "Features are essentially about people."⁹⁷

The way the newspapers present children and young people through feature journalism will, in the same way as news journalism, be interesting to analyze in this thesis. I will not concentrate in any appreciable degree on the genre differences between news and feature genre in the analysis of newspaper texts. The distinction is mentioned here mainly to account for the selection and definition of the data.

This study does not intend to investigate the advertising texts or texts of advertising nature, and these will therefore be omitted from the analysis.

The newspaper articles chosen for this study vary both in extent and volume, and range from small notes to reports turned up over several pages. I will use the word count as the measurement device to assess which articles to be included in the universe. All articles which have more than 100 words are included in the analysis, while articles with fewer words are omitted. It is my opinion that articles with less than 100 words do not offer enough information that can help me to categorize them.

4.4 Quantitative content analysis

Content analysis is a generic term for methods of research that aims to map the contents of the texts. Quantitative content analysis is an analysis of a material that can be treated as numbers, and its aim is to test hypotheses or, as in this thesis case, finding relationships and structures in a set of data. A quantitative content analysis assumes that the data can be organized in units and variables. The description of the data should be both systematic and objective.

When a researcher conducts content analysis only the content of the newspaper articles is available to be examined and coded. "When making content analyzes, we examine only the

⁹⁶ Pape, Susan, Featherstone, Sue, *Feature Writing. A Practical Introduction*, Sage Publications, London, 2006, p. 4;

⁹⁷ Pape, Susan, Featherstone, Sue, *Newspaper Journalism*, Sage Publications, London, 2005, p. 130;

manifest content of texts - that is, what is explicitly stated - rather than the latent content, the "hidden" material that is behind or between the words."⁹⁸ Thus the quantitative content analysis relates only to the available text and cannot say, for example, what effects, if any, the text has on its audience.

To organize a data set in a clear manner of variables this must be coded in an appropriate manner. "Coding is a process by which we classify the data we obtained from the material we have studied and give each item in a category, a symbol or number."⁹⁹

4.4.1 Reliability

Reliability is the extent to which a measuring procedure yields the same results on repeated trials. One method of testing the reliability of a study is by coding the same texts, two or more times, by the same coder, based on the same code form. The degree of correlation between the data collected using the same approach, but at different times, is called stability. The texts being studied are stable, they do not change over the time, and any differences between different times of coding are the result of a lack of stability in the research.

To test my master's thesis reliability, I used the test-retest method by coding the newspaper articles on different stages of the process. For example, the material gathered in June was coded at the end of July. Parts of the material gathered that month were coded again at the beginning of November. After the material was coded again, I checked whether it is consistent with the original coding. It turned out that the two coding processes correlated very highly with each other, and I will therefore assume that the reliability of my master's thesis is high.

4.4.2 Validity

Validity is the extent to which a measuring procedure represents the intended, and only the intended, concept. Validity is thus about the extent to which the survey has measured what it

⁹⁸ Berger, Arthur Asa, *Media and Communication Research Methods*, Sage Publications, London, 2000, p. 179;

⁹⁹ *Ibidem*;

sought to measure. Validity is considered as satisfactory if the collected data is good and appropriate in terms of the study's intentions.

My master's thesis validity is thus about the data's relevance to the issue, and the methodological approaches should be able to answer the research question: "In which ways are children (re)presented in Romanian newspapers?"

In order to increase the validity of my study I have chosen to use quantitative methods, content analysis, and qualitative methods, qualitative interviews. Triangulation means to compensate for weaknesses by combining different analytical approaches, in order to strengthen a study's validity. According to Creswell and Clark "the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach one."¹⁰⁰

4.4.3 Coding the material

After analyzing the newspapers gathered over the four months, I identified a number of 1964 articles where children and young people are mentioned. After a close reading only 317 articles have been analyzed. The 317 articles have been chosen according to the following principles:

1. Articles in which children and young people are the subject of the article;
2. Articles which have topics that are not considered as children related, but where the children are presented as a source.

The 317 articles were coded according to the three variables of age, the way in which the children are presented and the topic.

4.5 Age

This thesis poses the research question: "To what extent are children (re)presented in the Romanian newspapers?" After first having analyzed all the articles which dealt with

¹⁰⁰ Creswell, J.W., Plano Clark, V.L. *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*, Thousand Oaks, Sage publication, 2007, p. 5;

children I think it will be interesting to determine which age groups were the most and the least represented in the newspaper articles. The articles were placed in the following age categories:

1. Group 1: Children from 0 to 6 years;
2. Group 2: Children from 7 to 12 years;
3. Group 3: Children from 13 to 18 years;
4. Group 4: Children in groups varying age;
5. Group 5: Unknown.

Also in the articles which are having “School” as topic children were often presented as a group, without age differentiations. The articles that presented children as a whole or a group have been coded under the category “*Children in groups varying age.*”

The articles where the children’s age was not specified have been classified under the category “*Unknown.*” This category may lead to give a distorted picture of the presentation when it comes to the age presentation of the children.

To answer the research question: “*How visible are children’s own voices in newspaper texts?*,” the articles were coded according to the following criteria:

- a) Articles in which children are presented directly;
- b) Articles in which children are presented in an indirect way.

4.6 Topics

The next step was to code all the articles in thematic groups. The articles were coded according to the coding scheme used by Dale Kunkel and Stacy L. Smith in a survey conducted in 1993 when the two researchers analyzed the images of children in the U.S. media.¹⁰¹ The thematic categories under which the units in this survey were coded, are the following:

¹⁰¹ Kunkel, Dale and Stacy L. Smith, *The News Media’s Picture of Children in the United States*, Feilitzen von, Cecilia, Carlsson, Ulla (1999), *Children and Media Image Education Participation*, Nordicom, 1999, p. 82;

1. Crime
2. Infractionality
3. School
4. Politics
5. Culture
6. Sports
7. Health
8. Media
9. Other

Some of the articles could be placed in different categories. In these cases I have categorized them according to the articles' approach. The aspect of a case that had the most weight was decisive to which category the article was placed in.

4.7 Qualitative content analysis

The qualitative content analysis allows for a more thorough interpretation of the texts' content, the material is significantly limited and the purpose is to assess the characteristics. By using a qualitative method, the approach of the problem could be answered in a more detailed and comprehensive way than by only treating the material quantitatively. "[...] In general, textual analysis attempts to categorize, analyze, and evaluate one particular text."¹⁰² The textual analysis is able to analyze the text in a more comprehensive way, thus providing a more thorough answer for the posed questions.

By conducting textual analysis one "attempts to understand how meaning moves from author to audience. Ultimately, textual analysis is a scientific attempt to evaluate a text based on a set of established standards and criteria."¹⁰³

¹⁰² Iorio, Sharon Hartin, *Qualitative Research in Journalism*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, New Jersey, 2004, p. 165;

¹⁰³ Idem, p. 164;

When it comes to the analysis of media texts, this is not providing a single text analysis technique with a unique recipe that fits all type of texts. There are many possible approaches and one can use concepts from discourse analysis, dramaturgy, and rhetoric to semiotics. Furthermore, in analyzing a media text, both the text and the medium have to be analyzed.

4.8 The verbal level

When it comes to the analysis of the articles, the verbal level can facilitate the analysis to different levels of language. One can analyze sentences syntactically, that is, grammatical, or semantic, looking into the meaning of the phrases. The analysis of the verbal level can be directed down to the word and sentence level, longer paragraphs or the entire article.

In this analysis, I am mainly interested in the verbal semantic dimension of the language. I will direct my attention particularly to the words and phrases that present children in the articles.

It is important to be aware of who is talking when analyzing the sentence level of texts (micro level). This study will analyze both the journalistic representation of children and young people, as well as children and young people's own representations of themselves.

4.9 Citations

The journalist writing the article largely determines which sources are used and who will be heard in a case. Within the world of the press is an ideal that all representations should be as balanced as possible. In the *Journalists' Code of Ethics* it is stated that "It is within media's ethics to have a critical evaluation in the selection of sources."¹⁰⁴ This appeal is that the journalist should ideally let as many actors as possible get the chance to express their views in a case. Moreover, the sources selected by the journalist should be relevant to the issue they talk about.

In the analysis of the selected newspaper articles, I will examine which actors are used as sources and which are not. There will also be interesting to assess the source's relevance by, for example, examine the extent to which expert sources are used in cases dealing with

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.crij.org/>, accessed 26 April 2012;

children and young people. This in turn will offer the possibility to say something about the degree to which the journalist or the newspaper prioritizes issues such as good and important news stories. Furthermore, I also will examine the extent to which children and young people are used as sources in articles that concern them.

4.10 Angle and genre

By analyzing the angle of a newspaper article one examines what the article focuses on. An analysis of how newspaper articles are angled could therefore provide information on how newspapers represent children and young people, as well as the manner in which children and young people's own voice is visible in the articles.

The material for this study consists of only two genres: news and feature genre. These two genres can be classified in sub-genres, but this is not the focus of this study.

4.11 Qualitative interviews

This study aims to present how children are presented in the Romanian newspapers, indicating that qualitative interviews are an appropriate methodology. My main interest was to seek journalists with a particular knowledge on the area of study, given the aim of analyzing how children are presented. The interviewees were therefore chosen and contacted based on their experience in writing about children.

The purpose of conducting qualitative interviews is to collect data that reflect “comprehensive life-word stories of the interviewees,”¹⁰⁵ and as such to obtain an in-depth understanding of the phenomena being studied. Qualitative interviews can be more or less structured, “differing in degree from merely following loosely described conversational themes, to more precise questions to be asked in a particular order during the interview.”¹⁰⁶ In my case, the interviews were structured, with a series of themes and suggested questions to be asked.

¹⁰⁵ Kvale, Steinar, *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*, Sage Publications, London, 1997, p. 12;

¹⁰⁶ Lüders, Marika, *Being in mediated spaces. An enquiry into personal media practices*, AIT e-dit, Oslo, 2007, p. 27;

Rubin and Rubin suggest that “quiet and serene surroundings might be the ideal setting for research interviews.”¹⁰⁷ In the case of this study all the interviews have been conducted online. According to Crichton and Kinash “online conversations are automatically and immediately transcribed, and there is seemingly no loss of expected data.”¹⁰⁸ In the face-to-face interviews the researcher can analyze the non-verbal aspects of the conversation as well. With online interviews, non-verbal aspects are lost, but the archived interviews are nearly exact transcripts of the dialogue.

Conducting online interviews endows participants with more time to think and reflect on the things said, “thus influencing the process of reasoning, and reducing the amount, though not necessarily the quality of data gathered within a specified time frame.”¹⁰⁹ Online interviews do not demand less focus and concentration of the researcher, but the researcher is given second chances to review the conversation.

The interviews for this study were conducted with five journalists, one journalist from each analyzed newspaper. As stated before, they have been chosen according to their experience in writing about children. The interviews were conducted under the agreement that the interviewees will not be anonymous, thus assuring authenticity and credibility. Most importantly, participants have given their informed consent.

¹⁰⁷ Rubin, Herbert, Rubin, Irene, *Qualitative Interviewing: the Art of Hearing Data*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, California, 1995, p. 122;

¹⁰⁸ Crichton, Susan, Kinash, Shelley, *Virtual Ethnography: Interactive Interviewing Online as Method*, in *Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology*, 2003, 29(2), from <http://www.cjlt.ca/index.php/cjlt/article/view/40/37>, accessed 25 April 2012;

¹⁰⁹ Lüders, Marika, op. cit., p. 33-34;

5. Quantitative content analysis

In this chapter I will present the figures from the quantitative content analysis and the findings of the qualitative interviews that were conducted in this thesis. The figures are reported in tables and charts. First I will present the extent to which children and young people are presented in the newspapers. Secondly, I will analyze the age groups that are frequently or rarely presented. Thirdly, I will present the context in which children and young people are appearing and finally, I will analyze to what extent children and young people speak out in newspaper articles.

5.1 How are children and young people presented in newspapers?

One of the research questions posed in this thesis is: “*To what extent are children (re)presented in the Romanian newspapers?*” To answer this question, I registered all the newspaper articles and counted the cases involving children, and then calculate the percentage of all cases involving children. After a close reading only 317 articles have been analyzed. The newspaper articles are distributed as follows:

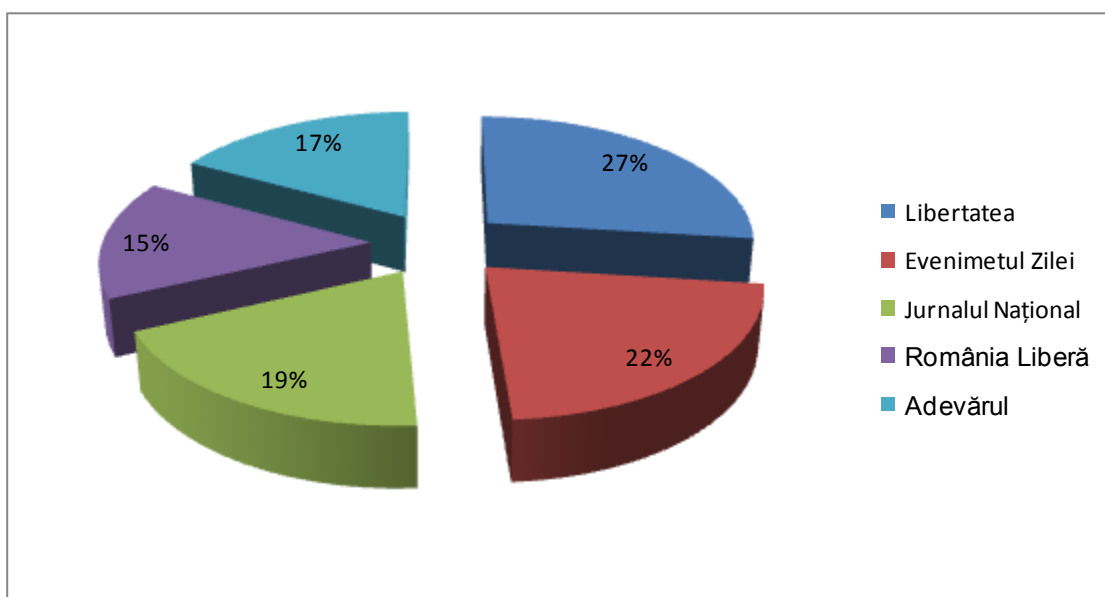


Figure 1 The distribution of articles in the monitored newspapers (n=371)

As figure 1 shows, the newspaper with the most articles about children was *Libertatea*. 27 percent of the articles from this newspaper presented children. *Evenimentul Zilei* presented children in 22 percent of their articles, while *Jurnalul Național* in 19%. The newspapers with

the lowest percentage of articles about children were *Adevărul*, with a percentage of 17, and *România Liberă*, 15 per cent.

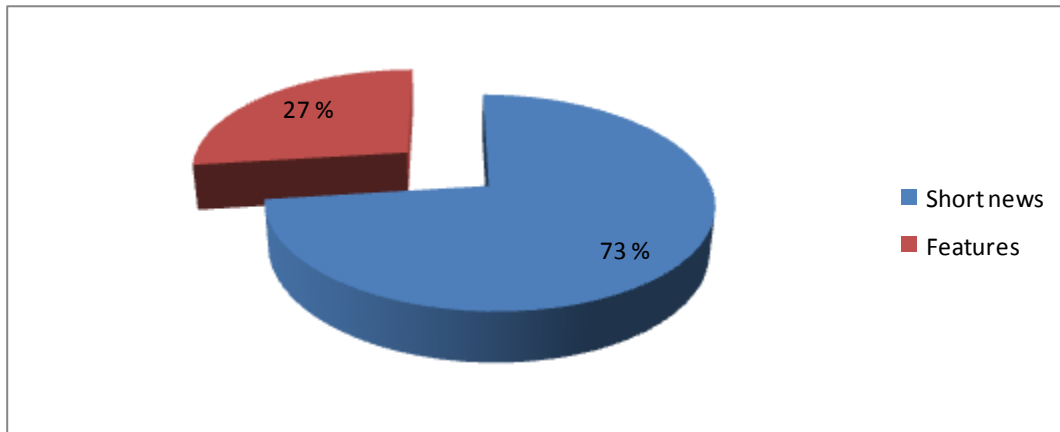


Figure 2 The distribution of articles by the article's type (n=371)

In the Figure 2 it can be seen that opinion articles or articles such as features reflect a higher interest from the journalists for an issue. Quantitative data show that the children are (re)presented mostly in informative, short news, followed by features.

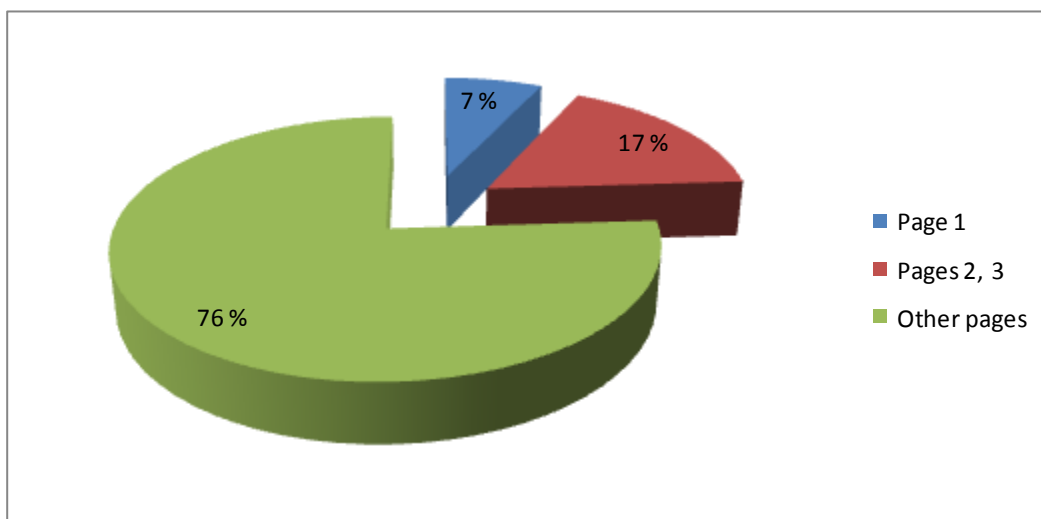


Figure 3 The distribution of the articles according to the page number (n=371)

In terms of the article's position in the structure of the publication, the most important news are mentioned, in general, on the first page (either by title or by a text sending the reader to the page where the article can be found) or on the second or the third page. 24% of articles

about children are present in the first three pages of newspapers, 7% of them being found on the first page.

5.2 The distribution of articles according to the geographical area

It has been noticed that the press presents more the events taking place in the capital compared with those from different parts of the country. 29 percent of the articles that presented the subject of this study had as subject events that happened in the Romanian capital. In 21 percent of the articles the geographical area was not mentioned. These articles were grouped under the category “*National*,” while those which presented the news from an international aspect were counted in a percentage of 2. The geographical area that offered the most articles about children and young people was Moldova, 23 percent. Events from Muntenia/Dobrogea were mentioned in 13 percent of the articles, while the ones from Transilvania/Banat in 12.

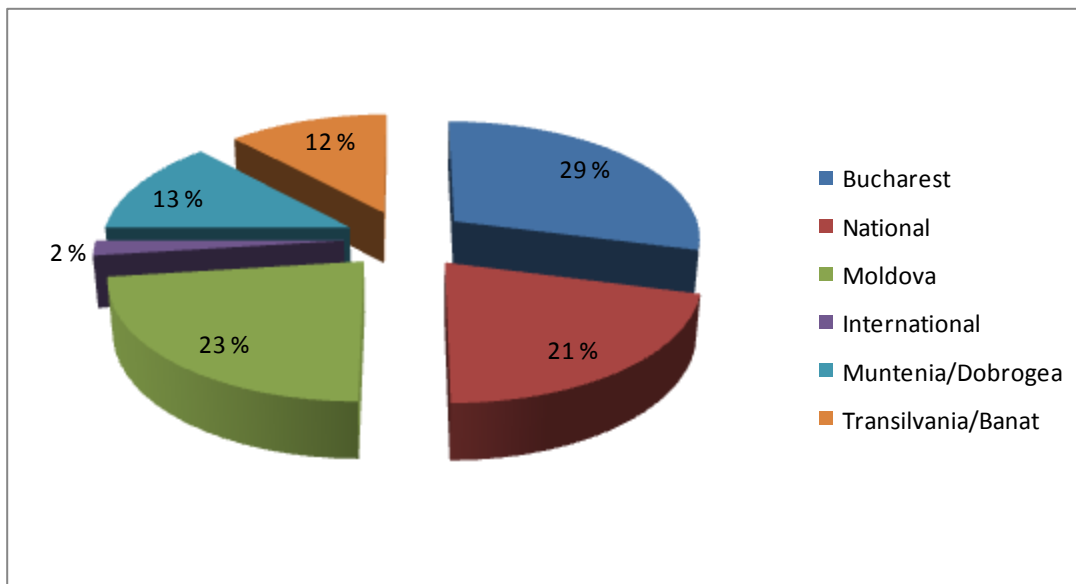


Figure 4 The distribution of the articles according to the geographical area (n=371)

Depending on the residential areas where children are living, the distribution of articles is as follows:

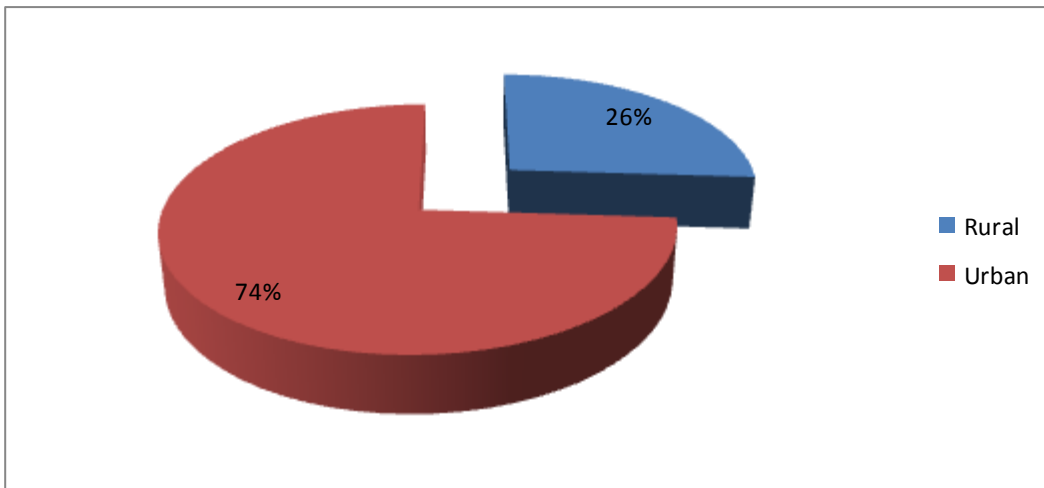


Figure 5 Distribution according to the residential areas (n=371)

Figure 5 shows that the journalists are focused on the news presenting events that occurred in the urban space, 74%, while the rural space offers news in a percentage of 26.

5.3. Distribution of the articles according to age groups

This study also looked at the age of the children presented in the five newspapers. This aims to give an idea of which age groups are the most and least (re)presented in the newspapers.

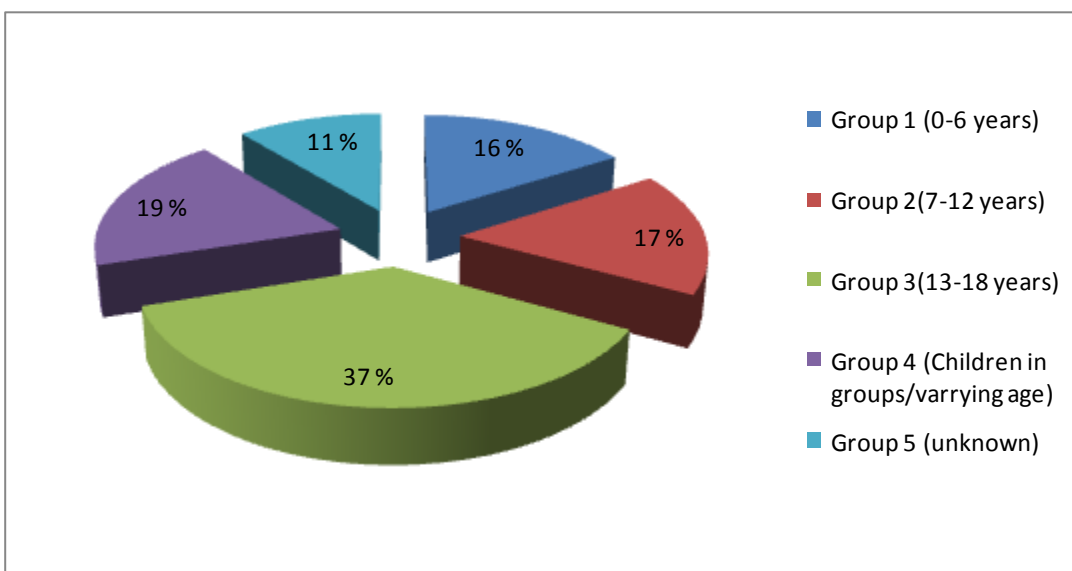


Figure 6 The distribution according to age (n=371)

When it comes to the age of the children who were presented in newspaper articles, it was clearly that the children with the aged 13 to 18 (group 3) are presented the most, while the distribution in the other age groups was more evenly. 37 percent of the cases referred to children between 13 - 18 years (group 3), 17 percent concerned children between 7 - 12 years (group 2), while 16 percent of all the cases involved children aged 0-6 years (Group 1). 19 percent of the cases presented children in combined age groups (group 4), while in 11 percent of the articles the age of the children was not known.

The reason for which the children aged 13 to 18 year old is more (re)presented than the ones from younger groups can act on several reasons. According to Sandra Ionescu, journalist for *Evenimentul Zilei*, a journalist must always obtain consent from the parents to use images and to interview children under 12 years. This unwritten rule can help to make the press more reviews on children over 13 years, because it is time consuming to obtain permission from parents or guardians. Also children aged 13 - 18 years are more active and more visible in society, making it easier for journalists to contact and use them in articles. It is also easier to use them as sources, or they themselves can contact the press to tell about the issues they believe should be covered.

5.4 Topics

In the Kunkel and Smith (1999) survey, which was reviewed in chapter 3, it could be seen that the thematic category in which children were usually (re)presented in the U.S. media was crime/violence, while the second largest thematic category was the education.

In the Romanian newspapers which constituted the data for this study, the thematic distribution of the cases is not different, especially in terms of the *Crime* category. The category *Crime*, in which children were (re)presented as victims of crimes, accounted for twenty percent of the cases, while crimes in which children were (re)presented as practitioners of crimes accounted for seventeen percent of the cases. It was found that 15 percent of all cases focused on articles related to education and teaching.

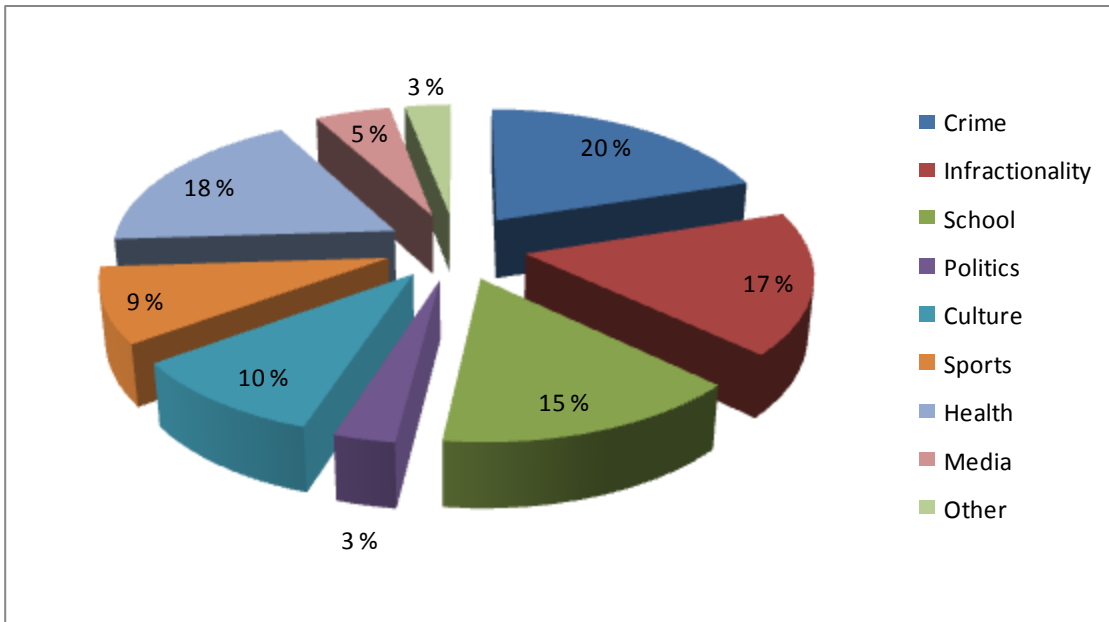


Figure 7 Topics (n=371)

As it can be seen from Figure 7 the categories of *Crime*, *Infractionality*, *Education*, *Culture*, *Health* and *Sports* are the ones in which children are the most visible. If it is to consider the newspapers separately, it can be seen that the five newspapers prioritize differently these categories.

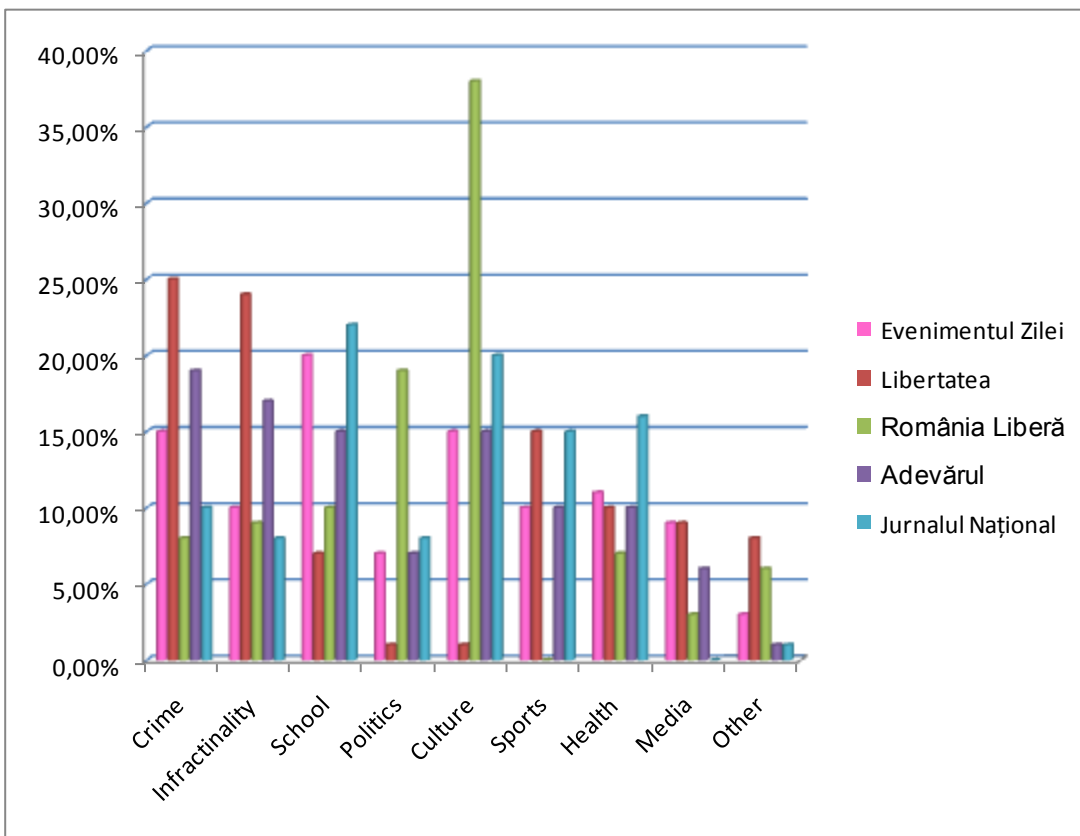


Figure 8 Distribution by newspaper (n=371)

As it can be seen in the Figure 8, *Evenimentul Zilei* has a balanced manner of presenting the news about children. Most of the news from this newspaper presented subjects fallen under the category of *School*. The tabloid *Libertatea* is focusing on articles presenting children and young people as victims or delinquents. This is the reason why the categories of *Crime* and *Infractionality* have the highest percentage. *România Liberă* has the lowest percentage of articles about children, 38% of these articles falling under the category of *Culture*. *Adevărul* is also adopting a balanced way of writing about children. Most of the articles from this newspaper are placed in the categories of *Crime* and *Infractionality*. *Jurnalul Național* is focusing on subjects from the categories of *School*, *Culture* and *Sports*.

5.4.1 Crime

In the category *Crime* were analyzed the articles which presented children and young people as victims of violence or accidents. The articles which had crime as the main theme were found in *Libertatea*. 25 percent of the articles from this newspaper presented children as victims of violence or accidents. The next newspaper which had a high percentage of articles regarding crimes against children was *Adevărul*, 18%, while in *Evenimentul Zilei* the percentage was 15. *România Liberă* had the lowest number of articles, while *Jurnalul Național* presented crime in a percentage of 10.

5.4.2 Infractionality

The articles presenting children and young people as delinquents, breaking the law were placed under the category *Infractionality*. Like in the category *Crime*, the newspaper that wrote the most about infringements of the law committed by children or young people was *Libertatea*.

Many of the articles dealt with different types of infractionality committed by children, from stealing, to rapes and murders.

5.4.3 School

Jurnalul Național has the most articles regarding school. In 22 percent of all cases presenting children fell in this category. In *Evenimentul Zilei*, 20 percent of all the articles about children

are placed under the theme “School”, while the corresponding figures for *România Liberă* and *Adevărul* were 10 and 5 percentage. *Libertatea* was the newspaper with the lowest figures placed under this category: 7 per cent.

The articles from the category “School” were angled on issues related to education, educational system or curricula. The cases in this thematic group are thus of non-political issues related to education and offered insights into how children’s school life takes place. Many of the articles dealt with different types of school projects, school trips, as well as graduations. Also, there were a number of articles which asked critical questions about children’s knowledge. In such cases, the adults were the source of the articles.

5.4.4 Politics

România Liberă frequently wrote about politics, respectively 19 percent of the articles regarding children could be placed under this category. It can be said the politics are not a popular category when it comes in writing about children. *Evenimentul Zilei* and *Adevărul* reported about children and politics in a percentage of 7 per cent, while *Jurnalul Național* covered only 8 per cent of this category. *Libertatea* was the newspaper with the lowest figures placed under this category: 1 per cent.

On the “Politics” category, most cases are concerning schools and kindergarten policy, and political regulations in connection with the development of schools, playgrounds, youth clubs or other places for children. In most of the articles, the topic is presented in a formal level, often by the government representatives. To some extent, children are presented as participants in the debate, mostly being presented as objects for discussion between the adult participants. On the other hand, the adults were portrayed as benevolent actors, who all claimed to know what “the best” was for children.

5.4.5 Culture

The articles which had culture as the main theme were found in *România Liberă*. 38 percent of the articles about children from this newspaper presented children in a cultural context. In *Libertatea* only 1 percent of the articles presented children in a cultural context, while in *Jurnalul Național* the percentage was 20. Both *Evenimentul Zilei* and *Adevărul* are presenting children in a cultural context on a percentage of 15.

In this category children were presented both as practitioners and recipients of culture. In these articles they often appeared as autonomous, independent and capable individuals. They spoke relatively frequent and were presented in a positive way.

5.4.6 Sports

In both *Evenimentul Zilei* and *Adevărul*, 21 per cent of the articles fell under the category of “Sports”. *România Liberă* had no articles in this category, while 15 percent of *Libertatea* and *Jurnalul Național*’s articles placed in this category.

Sport is therefore an important subject in which children are frequently presented. In these articles children are presented as autonomous, independent and capable individuals. In many cases, they were presented in the same way as the mature athletes. In the articles from this category the children were almost always presented in an entirely positive way and also as heroes and idols.

5.4.7 Health

In the category “Health” children are presented as passive actors, in need for help. The adults are the one who are offering images about children, journalists using expert sources in the cases falling in this category. *Jurnalul Național* wrote the most articles about health, 16%, followed by *Evenimentul Zilei*, 11% and *Libertatea* and *Adevărul*, 10%, while *România Liberă* had a percentage of only 8.

5.4.8 Media

The category “Media” was the category which had the lowest coverage. The articles fallen under this category presented the children and their relation with media. The highest number of articles which presented this relation was found in *Evenimentul Zilei* and *Libertatea*.

5.5 Who is speaking in the article?

To investigate the second research question: “How visible are children’s own voices in newspaper texts?” I analyzed all the statements that children gave in newspaper articles. In

43 per cent of the articles the children spoke on the issues that concerned them. In 48 percent of the cases they did not, while in 9 percent of the cases they were too young to speak (younger than two years old).

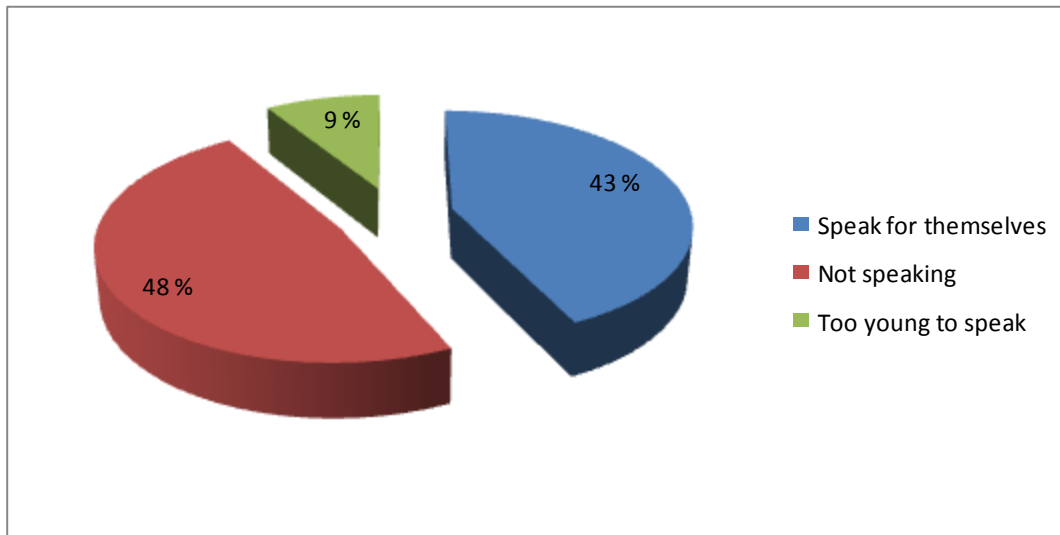


Figure 9 How visible is the children's own voice? (n=371)

The extent to which children's own voices are visible in the articles can say something about the manner in which children are presented in newspapers. Are they presented as individuals who can express their own views and opinions or someone else speaks on their behalf?

In the indirect speech is reproduced the main idea of the interviewee, while the quotes are actual statements from the source. It is common to use both forms of quoting, both indirectly and directly.

In a relatively low number of articles (seven percent) children's opinions were transmitted only through indirect quotes, and these indirect quotes were often placed in visual contexts. There were both indirect statements quoted by journalist, but also indirect quotes that were cited by other adults who were sources of the articles.

In the cases where other sources spoke on behalf of the children in the form of indirect quote, one could occasionally raise the question of credibility. A direct quotation would probably give more credibility.

An article published on *Evenimentul Zilei*, on the 23rd of October, can be offered as an example. The manager of a school from Bucharest speaks about the changes that he made to the books used by children:

“Before we used to use books printed on shiny paper. Now we are using books printed on plain paper. Our pupils said it is much better and they can focus more easily.”(Evenimentul Zilei, 23 October 2011).

It can be assumed that the journalist has visited the school, but it is only the manager’s indirect quotation on the children's opinions that is presented in the article.

The number of statements from children in the cases dealing with them can say something about the extent to which the journalist or the newspapers take children seriously, and to what extent they are considered reliable sources. The material for this analysis shows that in 43 percent of the articles we find statements from children (direct and indirect), while they do not speak out in 48 percent of the cases. The reason why journalists do not prioritize children’s statements in newspaper articles can be about journalistic professional norms when it comes to quoting, or ethical limits, restricting the use of the quotation, and does not necessarily mean that children’s voices are not given priority in a certain case.

5.6 Stereotypes of the children

Regarding the context in which children are (re)presented in newspaper articles, three categories can be distinguished:

- Negative context - abused children, children as victims of accidents, children as offenders;
- Positive context - exceptional children (gifted), children participating in various projects,
- Neutral Background: articles attempting a presentation of child problems and arguments based on sociological and/or legal argumentations (legislation, official statistics, studies and reports).

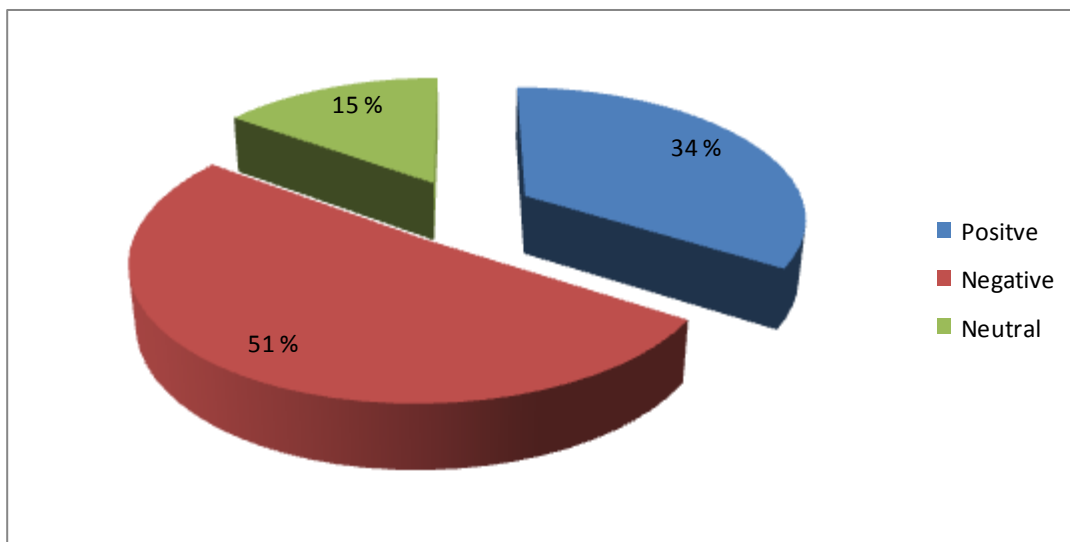


Figure 10 Contextual distribution (n=371)

The child presented in a negative context is prevalent in 51% of the monitored material. The media present extreme and sensational cases. It is generally recognized that the media show a special inclination for show, for news with a high content of violence, designed to shock the audience. To define this type of journalism is used the concept of "infotainment", a term that can define the media strategy of combining information and entertainment to constantly attract a wider audience. In Romania this concept is best illustrated by the format "the five o'clock news" of private television, which enjoys a significant audience and notoriety. The five monitored newspapers show a similar orientation in the written media as well.

From the qualitative interviews and the results of the content analysis, the main situations in which children appear in print can be classified as follows:

- a) *Children as beneficiaries of aid programs.* This category includes initiatives of the government and non-governmental bodies, companies or individuals. In this position the children are listed as recipients of help, being actively involved in a number of programs.
- b) *The gifted children* – the theme of the "gifted children" (international Olympians, for example) is predominantly in articles dealing with articles having sports as the main subject.
- c) *Children as offenders* – this category includes articles which refer to crimes committed by children. In these articles they are generally (re)presented as an active subject. Most criminal cases are seen in older children - teenagers (13 -18 years).

- d) *Children as victims of accidents* – this category refers to children who are victims of violence (car accidents, domestic accidents). Children are generally passive actors. Responsibility in these cases is often attributed to parental neglect or conditions such as poverty, underdevelopment, and low education.
- e) *Abused children* - this category includes cases in which children are victims of direct or indirect human or institutional abuse.

The social space in which the children are (re)presented consists of two basic dimensions: family and public space. The public space (everything outside the boundaries of family and home) is complemented by two other important spaces: schools and care institutions.

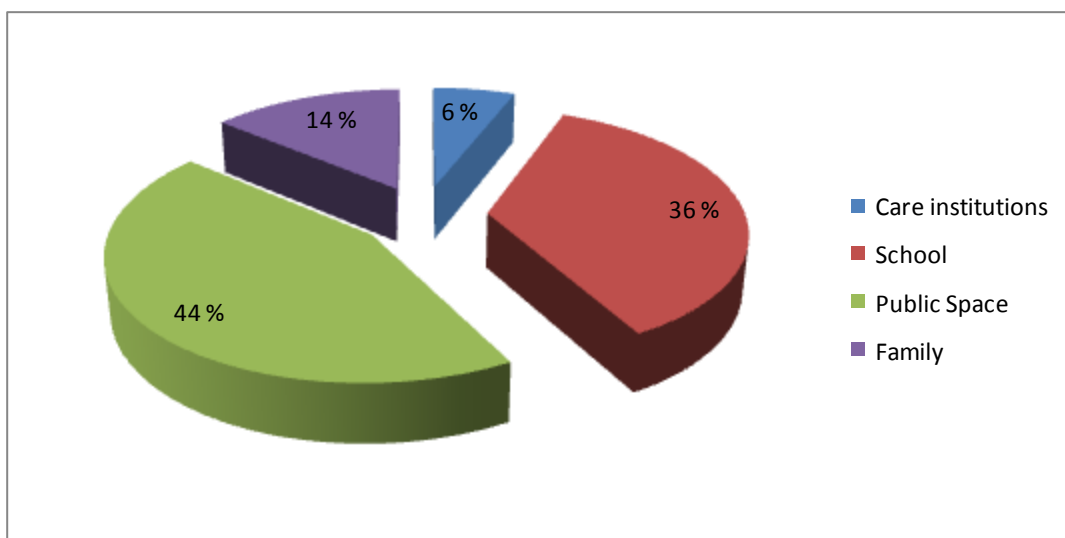


Figure 11 The social space in which are (re)presented the children's actions (n=371)

As I stated before it can be said that the mainstream media pay particular attention to events taking place in Bucharest, and relate less to specific cases in the province, unless they are unusual. It was noticed a variation of the data about children in Moldova, which is double the amount allocated to other provinces news (23% versus 13% or 12%).

5.7 The rural space a source for negative news

The analysis shows that there is a contrast between the type of news about urban and rural. It may be noted that the countryside is generally a "source" for negative news:

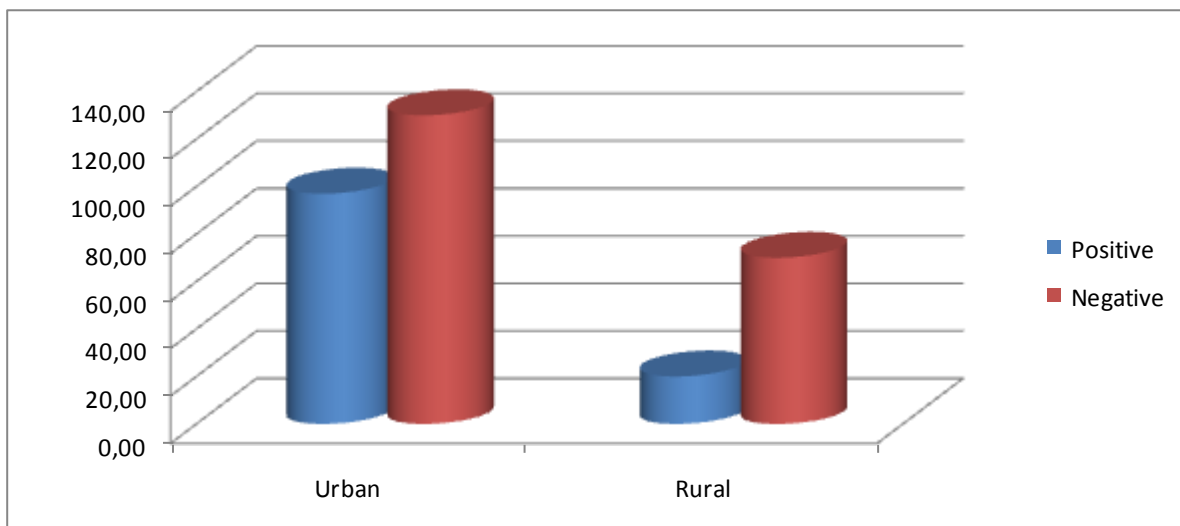


Figure 12 Distribution according to the residential context (n=371)

As it can be seen in the Figure 12, 70 articles from the total of 371, presented negative news about children from the rural space, while only 20 articles presented children from this space in a positive way.

Socio-economic differences between the urban and rural areas are reflected, on the one hand by the greater frequency of cases of juvenile crime and child abuse in urban areas, and on the other hand by the high incidence of children as victims of accidents caused by parental neglect or the poor conditions from the rural areas.

5.8 Summing up

Starting from the analysis of these data, it can be shaped the dominant image of the hypostasis in which children are (re)presented. Thus, most materials contain brief news (82%) and the context in which the children appear is predominantly negative (51%). Articles in which children are beneficiaries of aid programs ranks first, followed by articles in which the children are presented as abused.

The distribution of the articles in the five monitored newspapers offers an image of the editorial preferences of these publications. Generalizing, one can say that the quality newspapers are interested in presenting all situations in which children appear and are more sensitive to the presentation of positive examples. At the opposite end are the tabloid

publications which generally mediate the negative context (violence against children, for example) and show very little interest for examples of positive behavior.

6. Qualitative content analysis

The analyzed newspapers present the children in a double role: on the one hand they are the subject (active player) of the events, creator of the events. On the other hand children are the object (passive actor), who must bear the consequences of the action of other actors.

6.1 The gifted child

Children as authors of outstanding performance are a special category, in terms of public opinion and high interest in recent years due to the exodus of these children to Western countries. This category consists of two instances of the gifted child: the recognition in various competitions organized locally or internationally, and the hypothesis in which the child is valued only by possessing qualities.

In the newspaper articles that formed the basis of this study, children were presented as independent and knowledgeable individuals. A common feature in this category is that children's opinions and views are largely emphasized in the articles and they are (re)presented not only as motives for press photographers. The children are given more space to present their opinions.

The opinions, reflections and attitudes that the children give and are given in newspaper articles are clearly helping to (re)present them as competent and articulate individuals.

There are several levels, both visual and verbal, in these articles that help the readers to form an impression of the children as competent. Such articles have a good placement in the newspapers' internal contexts, and have as topics sports or cultural sites. The size of the headlines is bigger, to create the impression that the cases have been prioritized as important by the newspaper's editorial "side", which in turn helps to (re)present children as key actors in society and that they are worth listening to or reading about.

At the verbal level, the articles present positive words and phrases. The language is specific and precise. The specific, fact-based verbal language means that words have their basic,

literal meaning, the denotation, for examples, stands in the centre, while the words' values and culturally specific associations, connotation, is less relevant to the reader. The specific language, does not give the reader the possibility of interpretation and association.

When it comes to the pictures from the category of the gifted child, these don't leave too much space for interpretation. The images consist largely of portraits or pictures from situations such as cultural or sporting events, and the journalist counts on the image's immediate expression, that is what the reader sees concretely.

Children are mostly presented on the basis of their performance. In both *Evenimentul Zilei* and *Adevărul*, 10 per cent of the articles fell under the category of "Sports". *România Liberă* had no articles from this category, while 15 percent of the articles from *Libertatea* and *Jurnalul Național* were placed in this category. This is perhaps not so surprising considering that the national newspapers have an increased coverage of sports events. The fact that children are often presented in conjunction with sports indicates that this is considered an important topic when providing (re)presentation of children. Newspaper articles that deal with children, youth and sports, built to a large extent, both thematically and composition-wise. In the same time the children are (re)presented as autonomous, independent and often professional individuals and athletes. Journalists usually choose to prioritize the quotes from children in these articles. This applies in particular when it comes to competitive sports, while when it comes to school sports, it can be seen that the adults who speak indirectly or directly on behalf of children often show up.

To exemplify image of the gifted child I will present two articles. The subject of the first article is Raluca Haidu, a 17-years-old gymnast. The second article is about Bogdan Baciu, an 18-years-old teenager who was declared the best pupil from 2011.

6.1.1 The athlete-child

In *Adevărul* from the 22nd of November 2011, one could read about the gymnast Raluca Haidu (17). The article is placed on first page of the newspaper, covering the first two pages in the sports pages of the newspaper, which indicates that the case has received a good priority from the newspaper's editorial team. There are three photos that are part of the newspaper article, one portraying Raluca, another one showing her training and a smaller picture showing her with her parents.

The title of the article is “*Raluca Haidu a devenit campioană internațională a României*”(Raluca Haidu has become Romania’s international champion.) In one of the picture’s caption it is written, “ *Raluca Haidu pe urmele Nadiei Comăneci*” (*Raluca Haidu on the steps of Nadia Comăneci*). In other words, the readers’ first impression is that Raluca is a very talented teenager.

When it comes to the word level, the author of the article used the inverted pyramid as a template for the verbal level. The language of the article is specific and direct, and there are no descriptions or other literary elements in text. The journalist's own voice is almost absent, and the body of the news consists mainly of quotes from several professional sources that spoke about Raluca’s achievements and future as a gymnast. The sober and specific language is helping to present her as a competent practitioner in the actual events, achievements and her results are highlighted.

The body of the article strengthens the expectations the title gives. In addition to her coach, the article offers as source the gymnast Nadia Comăneci. Those who are speaking about Raluca are doing this in a serious and professional way and they commented her actual skills. They are not presenting her as "young" nor “child”, but a gymnast. There are no adults who speak on behalf of Raluca in the article. The relevance of her quotes shows that the journalist probably has asked relevant questions about the issues. The expert sources present Raluca as a very talented gymnast, and not only present her as competent, but almost as a hero. Although the journalist's own voice is little present in the verbal text, the angle, language and sources present Raluca as competent and as a hero.

6.1.2 The volunteer-child – from a province city to New York

The cases in which children are presented as competent are not falling only into the sports category, but they also present achievements in other areas. I will now examine a newspaper article in which the topic is about children's participation in society.

In *Jurnalul Național* from the 19th of November 2011 one can read an article about Bogdan Baciuc an eighteen-years-old teenager who was declared the best pupil from 2011. The article is not mentioned on the first page of the newspaper but it spreads on two pages. There are four pictures, one portraying Bogdan giving a speech when he was awarded the title, one

portraying him with the Minister of Education and two portraying him in New York with Ban Ki-moon, the Secretary of ONU.

The title of the article is “*Elevul anului, din Fălticeni, la New York*” (*The pupil of the year, from Fălticeni, to New York*). The lead is composed of a quote from the Minister of Education which emphasizes that this is an article about a gifted teenager.

When it comes to the word level, the author of the article used the inverted pyramid as a template for the verbal level. The language of the article is specific and direct, and there are few descriptions or other literary elements in text. The journalist's own voice is almost absent, and the body of the news consists mainly of quotes from several professional sources that spoke about the Bogdan's achievements. The sober and specific language is helping to present him as a competent person. In addition to his teachers, the journalist offered as sources the Minister of Education and the Secretary of ONU.

Also, Bogdan's voice is heard on the entire article. He speaks through the whole article in a professional manner “*Urmează luni întregi de pregătire atât pe domeniul politici de tineret, cât și al relațiilor economice internaționale.*” (*It will follow months of training both on the youth policy and international economic relations.*”) This quote shows that he has expertise when it comes to political issues. Despite the fact the journalist's own voice is more present than in the previous article, the verbal text, the angle, language and sources present Bogdan as competent.

6.1.3 Elder children are easier to be presented in newspaper articles

Newspaper articles fallen under in this category were characterized by the fact that elder children were mostly presented, which may indicate that newspapers and journalists present easier young people as competent, while the children are often presented as small and cute. The journalist has asked relevant questions, which can indicate that the newspapers and the journalists present easier elder children because they have more relevant things to say than the younger ones. It is also possible that the elder children are having more initiative, and therefore it is easier to use them as sources.

In this category, children are presented as competent individuals. We are talking about children with "healthy interests" that one can look up to the because of their achievements,

initiatives or actions. Children are thus often presented with an applauding approach by both the journalist who writes the article and the adults offered as sources.

The positive attitude towards children showed that this can be a stereotypical way of presentation, even if it had an immediate positive expression. In these cases can be detected an excessive positive attitude towards children, which at times seemed unnatural and excessive sympathetic. My opinion is that this was intended or desired by reporters, but that sometimes, exaggerated positive attitudes towards children could make the articles less credible.

6.2 The children as delinquents

Libertatea presented children more often as delinquents than the other analyzed newspapers. 24 percent of its articles were placed under this category, while the percentage from *Adevărul* was 17. The corresponding figures for *Evenimentul Zilei* and *România Liberă* were 10 respectively 9 per cent. *Jurnalul Național* had the lowest percentage of articles presenting children as delinquents: 8 per cent.

In several cases, the children were placed in opposition to the adults. They are presented as dangerous young people, hooligans, and criminals and as someone who threatens the established society. The adults presented the articles are in turn presented as confident, moral authorities whose task is to guide the youngsters.

Next, I will present two cases which can illustrate the presentation of children who are falling under this category.

6.2.1 Preventing the children to become delinquents

The article "*Elevii învață la școală cum să se ferească de efectele drogurilor*" (*The pupils learn how to protect themselves of the drugs' effects*) which was printed in *Adevărul* on the 30th of November 2011 is a good example of a newspaper article that describes the antagonism between children and adults, where the adults are presented as educators and children as dangerous. The subject of the article was the discovery of 600gr of cocaine in a pupil's locker in a high-school from Bucharest. The pupil in whose locker the drugs were found raped a teenage girl the night before the meeting took place. The article describes a

meeting between the Police and the children studying at that high-school. The case is presented over two pages of the newspaper. Although the case was given a good location, pages 34-35, which are the first pages from the section “*School and Education*” of the newspaper, it could have been placed higher up, which would create an even more impact. The article has three images. The main picture is capturing the head of Narcotics in front of a blackboard. Some of the words “*death*”, “*drugs*” and “*crime*” are visible on the blackboard. The image communicates well with the article's title, where both elements emphasizes that this is about prevention, and it is clear for reader what is to prevent. While the image and the title indicate that the article is about traditional preventive measures when it comes to drugs, the introductory paragraph refers to a rapping incident. This creates uncertainty and the media's message may seem obscure for the newspaper's readers.

The newspaper ambiguity when it comes to the reason why the Police organized the meeting will continue in body of the article where the head of Narcotics advices scantily dressed girls and walking alone at night in unpopulated areas.

Such a disorderly composition of the article's topic and sub-topics creates an impression that children and young people are involved or exposed to drugs' effects all the time.

Therefore the head of Narcotics ask pupils to be particularly aware of young people's drugs' use:

“Someone starts using drugs because he wants to feel better, to forget about pain, loneliness, and to have better results at school, but the these are all the wrong reasons. A common effect of drugs is that the users losses his focus, orientation, is happy and after suddenly sad, isolates himself.”(Adevărul, p. 34). Next, the article offers a percentage of the children using drugs, without offering the source of this figure, which can create a low degree of credibility in relation to the offered information.

Furthermore, the body of the article makes the police officer questioned how much the children care about their school colleagues. When the officer gives the Internet as an example of an arena in which children and young are tempted with dangerous things, he becomes the representative of a media panic, which traditionally considers new media as dangerous, especially for children and young people. The journalist continues to present the officers' ideas, saying that young people are misusing the new media, informing themselves where to buy drugs from and not how to protect themselves from them. No other opinion regarding this subject matter is offered by the journalist who wrote the article.

The article offers a picture of young people with knives, drinking alcohol and using drugs. These images of children are offered through the officers quotes. This does not mean that the journalist runs from his responsibility towards young people's presentation in a negative and stereotypical way, as they are presented in this newspaper article. It is the journalist who has chosen to let just these quotes to speak about the case, while it is also the journalist's choice to leave the officers' attitudes and opinions remain unanswered. No other expert sources such as scientists and other specialists will be heard in this matter, and no young people have opportunity to comment.

This newspaper article is a good example of how children and young people are presented in a stereotypical and one-dimensional way in newspapers. An authoritative source (the police) can speak freely while no other views on the matter are offered. It would have been interesting to found out what young people think about the issues raised in the article.

6.2.2 The delinquent teenager

The article "*L-a înjunghiat că a îndraznit să-și apere un coleg*" (*He stabbed him because he defended his colleague*) which was published in *Libertatea*, on the 22nd of November 2011 is a good example of a newspaper article that presents the children and young people only as dangerous and committing criminal acts. The article is about a fifteen-year-old teenager who tried to defend his school colleague but he was stabbed by another fifteen-year-old boy.

The article is placed on the seventh page of the newspaper and presents two pictures: one is presenting the victims and the attacker and one portraying the manager of the school where the incident took place.

The title of the article is placed on half of the page and it is overlapping the picture. In the right corner of the picture is presented the stabbed victim, while in the other corner is offered the picture of the attacker with the caption offering his name. In other words, the reader is offered from the beginning all the information.

When it comes to the word level, the author of the article used the inverted pyramid as a template for the verbal level. The language of the article is specific and direct, and there are no descriptions or other literary elements in text. The journalist's own voice is absent, and the body of the news does not offer quotes from the victim, attacker or witnesses.

The quotes are given as captions for the pictures from the article. The body of the article strengthens the expectations the title gives. There are no adults who speak on behalf of the two youngsters presented in the article. The journalist offers the reader the information that the incident took place in a school known to teach troubled children and incidents like this are frequent.

The category of the delinquent child presents two opposite entities: the children and the adults. The children are seen as threatening or dangerous, while adults are defined as safe, authoritarian, the one that do the right things. The stories placed on newspapers' pages, are usually presented as informative news in terms of composition and layout, and often have several images.

The presenting the children are negative in the headlines. There were some words and phrases such as "attack", "struck him in the face", "knee him in the stomach", "vandalism", "daily terror", "hooligans", which present children and young people as dangerous and threatening people.

It was primarily the adult sources who spoke about these issues, usually sources with authority. Still, I thought it was remarkable that the cases presented were so one-sided. Not only that the children's voices were missed, but also alternative views from other adult sources that could influence in a positive way the presentation of children have been omitted

6.3 The child as a baby

The newspapers portrayed the children as babies in 20 percent. *Adevărul* presented the children in this way frequently, and 26 percent of the articles could be placed in this subcategory. 20 per cent from the articles from *Jurnalul Național* can be placed under this subcategory. In *Liberatea* only 19 percent of the articles fallen under this subcategory, while 15 percent of *Evenimentul Zilei*'s articles were placed under this category. *România Liberă* presented children as babies in 20 percent of its articles.

I will discuss in the following the common features of this category by analyzing examples taken from newspaper articles.

In the newspaper articles that I have chosen in connection with this study, the children are presented as cute and sweet, needing the protection of adults. Such cases were often angled

and built around expert sources and documents like reports, statistics, and annual reports and so on. There are few quotes from children in these articles, but they are often featured in pictures. When it came to the small, cute child's presence in the "soft" news stories, the cases are more angled and built up around children. In these articles, it was usually little or no expert sources.

As explained in the second chapter, the children are defined in contrast to adults, being their opposite. The children are thus in many cases defined by adults. The newspaper article "*Copiii, în lumea de vis din Satul bunicilor*" (*The children, in the dream world from granmas' village*), published by *Adevărul* on the 14th of June 2011 stands out by presenting the distance between adults and children. The article is about a school trip to the Village Museum. Children's ignorance and dependence of the adults is evident through one of the themes that recur in the article, namely that children do not really understand what the history of the place where they live is. The adults presented in the article have to explain to the children why the wheel is called wheel and why the people were wearing different clothes two centuries ago. The way in which the journalist presents the children's ignorance and omniscience of the adults in this article establishes a distance between children and adults, and they are presented as opposites. The children are presented in the article's body as naive and "*being thirsty for knowledge*" while the adults are acting as rational and "*explanatory*". The journalist's choice of the verb "*ilumina*" (*to illuminate*) creates connotations in thinking that the children are naive and uninformed, in contrast to the verb "*think*" that one might associate with something more rational and targeted.

Throughout the whole article the children are presented as incomplete individuals. The journalist recounts the children's thoughts when they first see a cart with horses like this: "*They are not quite sure what they were looking at but they very excited being here. Most of them are raised in the heart of Bucharest and they have never seen a cart.*" In this sentence, it is the words "*quite sure*" and "*very excited*" which create the impression that the children are not only ignorant, but also cute. The article is written in a friendly way, the author using metaphors.

The verbal level from this article which presents children as cute has a positive charge. The children were described in part through words and phrases: "*heroes*", "*brave*", "*curious*", "*enthusiastic*", "*and happy*". In contrary to the wording describing the children and young

people from the category of the delinquent child, which was largely negatively charged, the verbal level from this category is primarily positive, having connotations and associations.

I have identified many articles where children's voices were not heard, their statements were only cited as indirect quotations, or that they spoke about something other than matters. This can be applied to this category as well. The article quotes a child who says: "*I visit my grandparents every weekend*" although the journalist's question was if he likes the museum. This is also the only child whose voice is presented. No other children speak out, despite the fact that in the pictures from the article are presented at least 10 children. This article is a good example of cases where the children's voices are heard, but they are not relevant for the article's subject. The child's comment helps to reproduce children as cute and playful.

In the "hard" news stories, the sources are adult expert sources. In such cases, there were maybe a few quotes from children, but they spoke, as I have said, about something other than the subject matter. In the "soft" news there were multiple quotes from children. The adults who spoke in these cases were the teachers, parents or daycare staff, and few expert sources.

Children were presented and portrayed as cute and sweet in several articles that formed the basis for this text analysis. Both from the positioning in the newspaper's pages, context, pictures, captions, verbal text, source selection, and the journalistic angle and composition, children are presented as cute and sweet. In several newspaper articles, it was obvious that this presentation was given priority at the expense of other alternative methods of presentation. That they were not presented as competent, autonomous, or with a voice, amplified the images of children as incomplete individuals. My impression is that this approach is present in a number of newspaper articles, although this is not necessarily intended by the journalist.

6.4 The child in need of help

In the second chapter, it has been shown that many theories envision that children need protection, partly because they are not able to see the range of their actions. This way of looking at children was also present in a number of newspaper texts from this study. The newspapers presented children as someone who needs protection in 34 percent of the articles.

6.4.1 The children whose parents are working abroad

In *Adevărul* from the 29th of September 2011, one can read a story about the children whose parents went to earn more money by working abroad. The article is part of a media campaign organized by *Adevărul*.

"*Children with rented mothers*" is the title of the article. The introduction informs the readers that the children whose mothers are working abroad will be closely supervised and checked by social workers. The image that follows presents four children playing. The children are playing in mud and are poorly dressed. The child looking straight into the camera is the oldest. The direct eye contact helps to create a high degree of proximity for the newspaper's readers. The image communicates with the title, and the introductory paragraph.

In the body it emerges that the children left alone will probably end in social care, reason for which a politician advanced a law saying that the children whose parents are going to work abroad will be directly placed in social care. First, the author of the text justifies the politician's choice, among other things, that the "*children will eventually end up in foster care*". Furthermore, the quote that follows says that "*It is our duty to protect them.*" PSD, the party to which the politician is affiliated, is thus a kind of guardian for children. Normally it's the parents' responsibility to protect their children, and to decide who will take care of their children while they are gone.

"You cannot live 2000km away from your child. Just by choosing doing so you lose your right as parent."

This quote gives the impression that both parents and the tutors who will take care of children are irresponsible. In a correct approach the journalist would have offered the opinion of the parents in the subject matter.

The subject of the article is introduced by presenting the case of an 11 year-old girl, who starved herself and who died because she has not seen her mother in more than four years.

In this article no children make a statement. It is of course impossible to know whether the journalist tried to involve children or not, but it seems unnatural that children's voices are not heard in a problem that affects them directly.

Except the politician who proposed the law there is no other source offered in this article. This article only presents one point of view without attempting to debate it. It would have been interesting to know what parents and their children would say about this topic.

6.4.2 Children affected by TV and Internet

The other case used to exemplify the group of children in need of protection is also from *Adevărul* and is titled "*Children affected by the modern life*". The article was published on the 1st of June 2011. It is a two pages article and it was published with the occasion of Child's International Day.

This case is raising two subjects: the obesity to which children are exposed by spending too much time in front of the computer and the risks to which children are exposed when using the Internet, especially the way in which the pictures posted online can affect their future recruiting process. From the title, subtitle and introductory paragraph it emerges that this is a matter that concerns, warns, parents, children and children as future job applicants. The article warns them to carefully use the Internet in order to post photos or controversial comments, because it may affect them in getting the job they seek.

The picture offers a message only when it comes to the prevention of obesity among children. When it comes to the image's denotative level, one can see a four member family sitting in front of the TV, while the mother is eating a slice of pizza. The room where the photo was taken looks like it could be the family's living room. In the caption of the picture is stated that:

"The bad habits of the parents can be imitated by children."

The captions is thus helping to present children as someone who needs protection, while it also presents the child and the adults as polar opposites to each other, where the child is the vulnerable one and the adult is the protective person.

The most interesting thing about this article is that the media's message is directed in two different directions, regarding two problems that can be the subject of two different articles. It is not an article approaching multiple topics, but it shift from the original theme to another.

Children are "*not aware*" of what they do when they use Internet to publish images. Children are presented throughout this quote as someone who is not able to see the effects of their own actions, thus presented in an indirect way as someone who needs protection and guidance.

An interesting aspect of this story is that while the text talks about a specific case in which an adult uses the Internet more than 15 hours a day, there are no examples that support the view that children do the same. It is only an assumption that children use the Internet on irrational ways, without being supported by studies or number. In this way children and young people are drawn into a problem that originally involved the elder people's use of Internet. A paragraph from the articles says that children may be more careful when using the Internet than adults: "*Unlike most children and teenagers who are still spending time playing outside, the adults can sit in front of the computer for hours and hours.*" It is difficult to say whether this is the journalist's own formulation, or whether it is a retelling of one of the sources.

The articles fallen under the category of children who need protection present various societal fears when it comes to children and young people. Journalists were rarely having critical questions towards sources who spoke on the issues presented in these articles. Thus, the newspaper articles appeared as a "playground" in which various sources are free to present their attitudes according to which children and young people need to be protected from various things, often without having these attitudes justified by the fact-based information.

6.4.3 The institutionalized child

Media has a strong interest in the cases of street children or those who are in specialized care institutions (orphans or children with disabilities). Most materials are related to institutions or programs for children with disabilities: "*Institutionalize camps for children*" - children from two juvenile reception centers from Bucharest and spent their holidays in mountain camps; - "*Orphans will leave to the mountains and the sea*" - children from orphanages will go in free camps in the mountains and the sea during summer holidays;

- "*Art Caravan for children from the country side*" - three young actors organize a caravan art for rural children and those with disabilities. The project started as an action to integrate disabled children but it was extended to children from some rural communities which were selected to participate in a creative camp.

Other articles bring to the public attention particular cases of institutionalized children who come in the attention of the media by outstanding results:

- "*How did a homeless child become the winner of Mamaia Song Contest*" – the article presents the case of a homeless boy who won the Children's Mamaia Festival. The material appeared in the context of the winner being challenged by other participants, who have cataloged the jury's decision as one of "*social welfare*".

6.4.4 The orphanages from Romania, the image of hell on earth

The article which, in my opinion, presents the best the stereotype of the institutionalized child was published in *Evenimneul Zilei*, on 11th of November 2011.

The article is placed on the third page of the newspaper and has the title "*Let's close the orphanages! Nobody's children go home,*" suggesting that the case has received high priority, despite the fact that it is not mentioned on the first page of the newspaper.

There is one image that is part of the story. At the denotative level, the picture shows two children sleeping, but the reader cannot see their faces. The reader can see toys, beds, clothes for children, but no distinct faces. The picture was taken in one of the orphanages from Bucharest, it is taken at noon or in the evening and it is uncertain whether the children are aware that they photographed. One could of course simply cropped differently the image, possibly the photographer could have chosen a different approach, to avoid the presentation of the children from this picture as helpless. Their faces are hardly visible, as well as the long distance from which the photographer has taken the picture presents the high degree of emotional distance. If they would have been presented from a closer distance and had a direct eye contact to the photographer, this would have created a greater degree of closeness between them and newspaper's readers.

When it comes to the word level, the author of the article used the inverted pyramid as a template for the verbal level. The language of the article is specific and direct, although the article has many descriptions or other literary elements. The journalist's own voice is present, but the body of the news consists mainly of quotes from several professional sources that spoke about the situation from the Romanian orphanages. The sober and specific language is helping to present the dimension of the subject matter. The body of the article strengthens the

expectations the title gives. In addition to the Romanian experts, international experts in the field of Human and Children rights are quoted.

The situation of institutionalized children from Romania is a popular topic for the qualities newspapers.

"I do not see too often how hell looks like, but a version of it exists somewhere in the northern part of Bucharest. There is a place that would be bad for animals, not to mention for people, but yet is the home for 35 souls from just a few weeks until the youngsters who are on the verge of maturity," said the reported in the introductory paragraph.

The journalist recounts how orphans, all with varying degrees of physical and mental deficiencies, are forced to live together in a small room, and tells about Ana-Maria, the orphanage's director, who does not feel the slightest sign of compassion for children who are in her care and the institution she leads. The article talks about the "*overwhelming smell*" of urine and feces that persist in the visiting rooms, which are both toilets and living rooms for the orphans. Also, the journalist argues that the institution has no elevators and no wheelchairs for children with mobility impairments, so that none of them ever came out. She does not hesitate to ask herself how can such a place exists in Romania, 20 years after the fall of the Communism, after the Romanian authorities have promised during the negotiations for EU membership that they will close all institutions of this kind.

6.4.5 The abused child

The violence of the abuses to which children are exposed is presented in detail by journalists. The context in which the abuse takes place is extremely varied, involving the school, the guardianship or any other public space, urban or rural. The child abuse presented by media includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect or abuse from the state's institutions. The most frequent media articles report the sexual abuse. The account of these situations can be regarded as public ways of awareness regarding the psychological implications that the abuse may have on child's development. Most of the articles of this nature account the situation where children are victims of abuse and rarely present solutions to prevent such cases. Most of them focus on victims and the perpetrators only tangentially, focusing on describing the act of violence, and less on the presentation of causes, circumstances and social and psychological effects of abuse.

In what follows I will present the case of a 17-years-old girl who was pregnant as a result of a rape. The article was published in *Libertatea*, on the 19th of November 2011.

The article is titled “*Come, come to make it, I know you want it!*” The title reproduces the words of the rapist. The material is published over the pages two and three.

In early November 2011, the family of a 17-years-old found that the girl was pregnant. The girl accused abdominal pain and the doctors who consulted her have noted that she was four months pregnant. After being asked by her parents, the girl said she was attacked by her teacher, aged 26. The story quickly reached the press and the subject was amplified by the fact that a debate whether the abortion was a legal solution in this case (considering the age of the girl and the age of the baby) was started. Because the pregnancy was too advanced, the choice of abortion became illegal. In these circumstances the family decided that this medical intervention should take place in the United Kingdom, after a Romanian family living in London contacted the family and offered their financial support. Finally the girl was operated in London, but meanwhile her identity, her parents’ name and address appeared in the press. The one who made public the names of the minor was the Minister of Health.

This case raises the question of the public interest and principles regarding the children’s protection and, in particular, the protection of victims of extremely sensitive offenses as sexual abuse.

In this case, the media offered all the data that could lead to the identification of the girl. The village where she lived, the supposed perpetrator, parents’ names, girl’s names and, finally, even the clear picture of the girl. Thus, a full debate on the appropriateness and legality of abortion for a minor, exceeding the legal period within which abortion can be done, has started. Several newspapers and TV have released the name of the girl, taking a statement from the Minister of Health:

“Because I found myself in a deadlock regarding the legality of this action and because of the diverging opinions within the medical specialists, we decided, together with the Ministers of Justice and Labor, representatives ANPDC to establishing a committee to analyze the case of Oana Radu, the girl who got pregnant after being rape,” said Health Minister, Eugen Nicolaescu.

In the article it can be found a number of other personal information or data that could lead to her identification, such as her name or the name of the person accused of rape.

"Girl aged 11 years, from Neamt, who became pregnant after being raped by her teacher, will leave later in the day to make abortion, according to information offered by the mayor, Nicolai Nicorescu."

"The teacher, who raped the girl from Neamt, was heard in Court. Dan Octavian Visan was taken to the Court of Neamt, where he was heard at around 12.00 o'clock. He said he was innocent and that the girl's parents wanted to take revenge on him, according sources from Neamt Tribunal."

"Oana's mother, Emilia Radu, said with excitement that her daughter is well and happy after so much trouble. She said that her daughter was treated very well in London."

The picture was not blurred in Romania; a black stripe was covering Oana's eyes. Although the debate on this issue was of public interest, even if the Minister of Health said the girl's name in a public statement and even if the mother allowed journalists to take pictures of the girl, the public interest in the girl's name or details about her family and her home are hard to be explained.

Beyond the responsibility of parents and authorities to protect the abused child's identity, there is also the responsibility of the press. However, no other material fallen under the aim of this study, revealed fragments of information about the identity of other abused children, nor any other information that can allow a clear identification. Journalists must take into account the need to protect the children's images, especially when they are victims of crime or abuse. Abuse against children can cause psychological trauma that can affect children's development and which, untreated, it can affect adult life. Abused children tend to believe that they are guilty of what has happened. Therefore there should be special care in relation to children in such situations. If abuse issues are not discussed, treated with caution, there is a high risk that the child will suffer a new trauma.

The children are abused within the family. The articles showing children in this position have a high frequency among articles on child abuse. Inappropriate behavior (ignore, disregard, refusing help, negative labeling) performed by adults towards children has negative effects on child's emerging personality. Thus, it may cause damage that substantially reduces the potential for creativity and mental development and mental faculties.

In what follows I will present other titles of newspaper articles presenting the children as victims:

- "*Baby found in alcoholic after he was fed by his mother*" - the baby was nursed by his mother who had drunk too much alcohol, doctors noting that the baby had suffered food poisoning after his mother had drunk a considerable amount of alcohol. The article does not state if the mother has been sanctioned in any way or if the baby will be delivered to a state care institution for rude behavior of mother.

- "*A mother has killed her child with ax blows ... while sleeping*". A woman of 34 years has beaten her nine years boy, hitting him repeatedly with an ax in his head because she did not want her son to be placed in an orphanage. No woman's acts are not, the article providing only the grandparents statement.

A very widespread phenomenon in both urban and rural environments is abandonment. Press report such episodes frequently encountered in various regions of the country, this behavior being mostly often found in families with low living standards or disorganized. There are also cases where reasons for abandonment are less common.

- "*Teenager, investigated after abandoning her newborn baby on the field*" - a teenager of 15 years abandoned her newborn baby on the field. The article does not specify the reasons that pushed the girl to this action.

- "She abandoned her daughter because she was ugly" - a mother has abandoned her six months child because she was born with the malformation "rabbit mouth". Although the family had a good financial situation, the mother said she wanted a normal child.

Another issue exposed by the press refers to child trafficking and prostitution. In these cases the children are (re)presented as victims and criminals.

- "*Child sold with 10 million lei by his own brother during his visit to Iasi*" – the describes in detail the phenomenon of child trafficking from Moldova and the measures taken by authorities trying to stop it.

- "*Dozens of children taken to begging in Italy*" - a network of 40 traffickers was dismantled by police in Gura Humor. The network was using handicapped children and minors who were forced to beg in Italy. The news was published on page three of the newspaper and does not include information about the children involved.

In this category were introduced materials relating to the failure of the state in protecting the children. In this case one can distinguish two subcategories:

- a) Children as victims of the inadequate conditions from the education system (public or institutionalized)
 - "*Children from a special school from Suceava, sick because of misery*" – the article presents the situation of a number of 33 children suffering from physical disabilities and who have become ill due to poor sanitary conditions in which they live. It is worth mentioning that the media draw attention to the inadequate environment where children were living.

- b) The legal rules were not respected
 - "*Hundreds of children did not receive social grants in the last four months*" - sick students, and orphans have not received the monthly allowance.

6.5 Summing up

In this chapter, I have analyzed the different ways in which newspapers present children and young people. The ways children and young people were presented in the articles that form the basis for the qualitative content analysis often stereotyped. They often appeared as small, cute, dangerous, and skilled or as someone who needs protection. In most of the categories that are reviewed in this chapter the children and young people are presented in opposition with elder people, with the exception of the group of the gifted child.

7. Qualitative interviews

This study aims to present how children are presented in the Romanian newspapers. To offer more insights into the field, I have chosen to use the qualitative interviews along with the content analysis. My main interest was to seek journalists with a particular knowledge on the area of study, given the aim of analyzing how the children are presented. The interviewees were therefore chosen and contacted based on their experience in writing about children. The interviews were conducted before the material was collected. In order to choose the interviewees I have read the online editions of the newspapers and I have identified the journalists who are frequently writing about children.

In the case of this study the interviews have been conducted online. In the face-to-face interviews, the researcher can analyze the non-verbal aspects of the conversation as well. With online interviews, non-verbal aspects are lost, but the archived interviews are nearly exact transcripts of the dialogue.

The interviews for this study were conducted with five journalists, one journalist from each analyzed newspaper. As stated before, they have been chosen according to their experience in writing about children. The interviews were conducted under the agreement that the interviewees will not be anonymous, thus assuring authenticity and credibility. Most importantly, participants have given their informed consent.

7.1 The rush for the sensational

One of the main findings of conducting qualitative interviews was that the newspapers are focusing on the sensational when it comes to reporting about children.

Some newspapers, especially the tabloids, present in detail the shocking cases involving children, without caring for the consequences of such reports. It has been noticed a practice of exploiting the sensational in order to obtain audience, sacrificing in this case the professional standards.

Ludmila Andronic, reporter for *Evenimentul Zilei*, said that journalists' tendency to give priority to the sensational news at the expense of ethics compliance is alarming: "*Journalists must focus on supporting the public interest and not to pursue the sensationalism. There are*

cases when some journalists present in detail suicide techniques which can then generate other reactions of this kind to minors". (Interview 1)

Mihaela Ilie, reporter for *Jurnalul Național*, says the journalists make mistakes because they are trying to be the first reporting about a sensational subject. *"Because there is a competition when it comes to who is reporting the first, the journalists overlook certain ethical norms that they have to respect."* (Interview 2)

Tatiana Marcu, reporter for *Libertatea*, recalls a case about a raped young girl. *"As reporters for a tabloid newspaper we are aiming for unusual, we are searching for a subject that will catch our readers. Our editorial policy is to offer as much details as possible. In the case of the young girl I took a picture of her with her mother. The face of the child was blurred and we did not give the name of the locality. But we have shown her mother's face. The next day I was called by her mother, crying, who was saying that the whole village knows about her daughter's tragedy. Eventually, the girl was forced to change schools."* (Interview 3)

The reporter goes further stating that she acknowledges and assumes the consequences of her choices but in order to attract more readers one has to offer the sensational, to give the readers stories that will affect them, one way or another.

On the other hand, Dan Istrate, reporter for *Adevărul*, says that the editorial policy of the newspaper is to present children in a manner as unharmed as possible. *"Of course we are writing about cases involving molested or abused children, but we, as journalists, are trying to offer as less details of the incident as possible. There are different rules and ethics when writing about children and for this reason we prefer to write about children when they are involved in school activities, in events that are presenting them in a positive way."* He goes further and says that: *"Children are vulnerable and their protection is everyone's responsibility."* (Interview 4)

"The more the news bleed, the better they sell," said Tatiana Marcu, reporter for *Libertatea*. (Interview 3) This seems to be the reason why journalists place on the pages of publications violent texts and images, with fragments of human bodies, with children and young people in situations which violated their privacy and dignity as human beings people.

Dan Istrate, reporter for *Adevărul*, says that the sensationalism is the weapon of a journalist who is not able to document and to prepare a targeted material, relevant, professional and original. He goes on insisting that a topic about an act of violence against children is more

successful if it is done in the spirit of journalism, is balanced and brings something new. Based in his comments, balanced journalism is to report facts, but to insist not only on the negative. Public journalism is to balance analysis with fragments of life, not human bodies.

7.2 Making a choice

The journalists concluded that when deciding the angle of the article they have to answer the question: "*I choose to do this topic because I want...*" A journalist might choose one of at least four possible answers for this dilemma:

I choose to do this material, because I want to:

- to punish the abuser
- to help child
- to warn society about a phenomenon
- to expose the child

When choosing the first option, to punish the abuser, one has to ask the question: *Are media a court?* Probably the best way to help is if one makes a material at a professional level. The second option is to help the child. The first reaction of the journalist, as a human being, is to relieve the pain. Then he is drawn to help. This is a slippery runway. Dan Istrate, reporter for *Adevărul*, said that one might ask the child about what he or she likes to do with friends and so it will help the child balance and trust his value as a human being. (Interview 4)

Another option is to warn the society about a phenomenon. Realizing articles about such topics can provide the solution: show that the involvement of those responsible - social workers, teachers, police, and community leaders - can save destinies. "*At the same time, think about how to avoid exposing the child,*" continued Istrate. A journalist has to ask himself the question: "*How will you live if you know that the child suffered after your intervention? How will you feel if he will commit suicide after being exposed in your material?*" (Interview 4)

7.2.1 Libertatea and Jurnalul Național - between information and the sensational

Libertatea is the most read Romanian newspaper. *Libertatea* is one of the most "violent" newspapers in terms of information, sometimes close to the edge of the necessary and even "disinformation". "We have a choice for the sensational topics, with an acid characteristic style," said Marcu, reporter for *Libertatea*. (Interview 3)

The journalists from *Libertatea* and *Jurnalul Național* said that the sensitive issues are presented in terms of sensationalism or the articles are focused only on actions, and not the causes or the phenomenon in general, as the case may be prevented. These two journalists continue to describe that they use detailed scenes of violence, murders. They use the professional sources to add more informative material, new disclosures designed to shock or stress the public opinion.

In conclusion I would argue that, often, journalists prefer to describe in detail the event, without seeing what happens beyond these details.

7.2.2 Evenimentul Zilei – between the necessary and the sensational

If the journalists from *Libertatea* and *Jurnalul Național* are focused more on the sensationalism and quantity, *Evenimentul Zilei* is focusing on quality. The assertion that journalists are very interested in topics in the field of violence and aggression is valid for this newspaper as well. In contrast with the first two newspapers, *Evenimentul Zilei* offers a bigger variation of articles about children. Ludmila Andronic said that it is important to keep a balance when it comes to writing about a social group. The reason for which most of the articles fall into the category of crime and infractionality is because the individuals from this category offer the journalists more subjects from this sphere. She said that a journalist has to be objective and cannot overlook a subject just because the main actor is a child.

Based on these interviews, what differentiates the articles from *Evenimentul Zilei* and those from *Libertatea* and *Jurnalul Național* is a more balanced way of presenting the news.

7.2.3 Adevărul and România Liberă – between the truth and the sensational

Adevărul and *România Liberă* are the newspapers in which the percentage of the articles presenting the children and young people in a positive way is the highest. Dan Istrate,

reporter for *Adevărul*, and Iulia Mantea, reporter for *România Liberă*, both agreed that their newspapers have a big responsibility when it comes to writing about children. They said it is their responsibility towards children to respect and to present them faithfully. (Interview 4, Interview 5)

They continued saying that a crime or an infraction committed by children is already sensational and approaching such a subject in an even more sensationalistic manner it would be unfair for the children. The journalists from these two newspapers want to present the news as balanced as possible.

It is my opinion that the editorial policy of these two newspapers is to write about “news of the day” and not trying to resolve the reader’s dilemma about a subject about which the newspaper wrote and which was not finalized.

7.3 Stereotypes

Stereotypes are ways of categorizing the world surrounding us. The main stereotypes that have been identified are:

- a) the “ignored” child – the press is not giving him attention;
- b) the exceptional child – the child presented as a role model;
- c) the feared child - the child presented as presented as criminal, rebel.

The journalists pointed to the fact that when the children are presented as infractors or delinquents, they are Roma children most of the times. They are often seen as beggars and pickpockets. Parents do not seem to take care of them and they are supposed to be ready to be exploited.

There are two different approaches coming from the journalists regarding this subject. The journalists from *Libertatea* and *Jurnalul Național* said that this is a “gold mine” for them. The Roma people are marginalized by the Romanian society which already has a formed opinion about them: beggars, thieves, and dirty people. The journalists from these two newspapers said there is not their responsibility to change the opinion of their readers. (Interview 2, Interview 3)

On the other hand, the journalists from *Adevărul* and *România Liberă* said that how the Roma children are raised may differ from the ways of how the Romanian children are raised and reflects the harsh reality of the Roma life. Roma children grow and learn in traditional families, mostly by example, not by study.

In my opinion if some Roma children are seen as begging or stealing from pockets, those may be signs of harsh social climate. But the Romanian children and young people are breaking the law as well.

My study shows that the newspapers have the tendency to write more about boys than girls. Iulia Mantea, reporter for *România Liberă*, said that “*the inferiority of women is not natural but socially constructed by the patriarchal system (political, linguistic, and economic) to promote male authority.*”(Interview 5)

It is my opinion that it is not unusual for girls to learn better in schools, to be better in some sports, gymnastics, for example, than boys. This quote shows that the boys are breaking the law more often; they are exposed to violence more than girls, offering the journalists more subjects to write about.

8. Discussion of the findings

This thesis has aimed to answer the research question: “In what ways are children represented in the Romanian newspapers?” In this chapter I want to discuss the analytical findings in relation to the study's theoretical basis.

8.1 Discussion of the findings and the application of the theories

There has been little media research in Romania on the subject that I wanted to investigate. This has created some challenges in terms of finding relevant theories and apply these theories to this project. The lack of theories related directly to the subject of this study led me to apply theories and researches from many disciplines.

One of the theories used in this research regards children and young people. The theory is presented and discussed in the second chapter.

Childhood is constructed through the prism of adult nostalgia: “the concept of childhood serves to articulate not just the status of the young within modern society but also the projections, aspirations, longings and altruism contained within the adult experiences.”¹¹⁰

The question of the child is a modern question. To define the concept of “child” might be difficult. Does the term refer to every human being from the birth to the age of majority? It is a matter of children, or childhood? The definition of “child” has been the subject of negotiation between both the public discourse and social interaction and children. Children are neither a general nor a natural category, and may be limited based on different criteria.

The purpose of this theory chapter was to examine how researchers define children and young people, and then to investigate whether such research perspectives can find resonance in the newspaper articles.

In the third chapter I have explained the research field of children, youth and media. It turned out that this research often revolved around children and young people as recipients of media messages, or users of media. Other theories focused on the presentation of children in media and their presence in the mediated space, theories which were highly relevant for my study.

¹¹⁰ Jenks, Chris, *Childhood*, Routledge, London, 1996, p. 137;

“Moral panic” is used in a number of popular science fields, which can involve everything from gene technology to the influence of video games on young people. The extent to which children and young people are affected by media violence has been discussed and researched as a result of the idea of media’s direct influence.

Another theory that I used was the agenda setting of the media. It can be said that the agenda setting represents media’s capacity to amplify the importance of an event. It also shows the degree of attention that media give to certain idea or themes, giving them a greater or a smaller significance

8.2. Children are under-represented in the Romanian newspapers

As discussed in the theory chapter, there are several researchers who have focused their work on children and young people’s presence in the media, and many have analyzed children’s lack of presence. George Gerbner’s survey on the U.S. TV programs shows an under-representation of children and young people on the American television. His study revealed an under-representation of girls and black children as well (Gerbner 1999).

Children’s under-representation in the mediated space is also discussed by Dale Kunkel and Stacy L. Smith in the article "*The News Media's Picture of Children in the United States.*" Their studies show that there is no correlation between the coverage of children and young people in relation to the number of children and young people living in a society.¹¹¹

In *Libertatea* 27 percent of all the articles were related to children and young people, while in *Adevărul* 17 percent of all the articles had children and young people as subjects of the news. *România Liberă* presented children in 15 percent of all the newspaper articles. *Jurnalul Național* wrote about children and young people in 19 percent of all articles, while *Evenimentul Zilei* in 22 percent of their articles.

That children are under-represented in the Romanian written media can be used as an argument that the children are not taken seriously as a "group", and therefore this group’s visibility in newspapers is low. With visibility in newspapers, I mean the articles in which the children and young people are the main characters, and whether their life is the main focus.

¹¹¹ Kundel, Dale, Smith, Stacy, *The News Media's Picture of Children in the United States*, in Feilitzen von, Cecilia, Carlsson, Ulla, *Children and Media Image Education Participation*, Nordicom, 1999, p. 77;

Many of the articles analyzed in this study present the children in a dramatic way. They appear in these articles not as the main character, but as background individuals, playing a secondary role. They do not have the capacity to speak for themselves. The abused and the delinquent children are the most present in newspapers. Also it can be noted that the visibility is primarily reserved for older children, the youngest ones being visible only in article which present them as dependent of adults' supervision.

8.3 High focus on violence in the Romanian newspaper coverage of children

Having surveyed the extent to which children and young people were presented in the Romanian newspapers, I wanted to investigate the thematic contexts in which they appeared. In 1993, Kunkel and Smith examined children and young people's presence in the American media. They looked at both newspapers and television channels, including the thematic contexts in which children and young people were portrayed. One of the clearest findings in their study was that children and young people were often mentioned in connection with crime and violence. In Kunkel and Smith's study the focus on violence was low, 20 percent of the articles from this study focused on crime, children being presented as victims of crimes. Furthermore, 25 percent of all newspaper headlines analyzed by Kunkel and Smith fell under the category of education.

In my study, approximately 48 percent of all coverage on children and young people was placed under the category of violence, while 40 percent of the newspaper headlines fell into the category of school.

Unfortunately, violence is part of life and the publications pertaining to remind us of this. When a story about a violent event (murder, rape, abuse) results in preventing similar cases, one can speak of media's serve towards the public. Most times, however, the journalistic value of these news is low. Poor in information, but spectacular, the news about violence exploit the public's weakness towards violence.

Assuming that "the media are involved not only in the genesis, but in the manipulation of public opinion as well," Robert Cisimo studied "the press as part of the active manipulating

systems"¹¹² of the public opinion and concluded that it is a "terrible weapon" in terms of the influence potential.

The media cover almost all areas in the sense that journalists pay attention to all "types" of facts and documents that fall under of the phenomenon of violence, writing about beatings, kidnappings, about child victimization or prostitution.

My analysis findings confirm the hypothesis from which I started: that the Romanian media present violence in a high extent. This assumption is proved mainly by the number of articles containing violence.

8.4 Children are presented as cute, dangerous or gifted in the newspaper texts

Media, sometimes unconsciously, often consciously, spread feelings towards children. When a crime is committed by a person, mentioning the age has no positive impact. Moreover, media are not presenting so often cases in which children and young people are presented in a positive way, but in cases where they are victims or delinquents. Media can be a valuable tool to raise awareness. Rather than focusing on negative news about children, media should find positive stories to give the children the opportunity to express themselves more often.

Newspapers' presentations of children and young people as cute are in the same line with the general perceptions of children and childhood as something idyllic. "The notion that children are precious, that they need protection from the harmful adult world, is basic to contemporary understanding of childhood."¹¹³ The child was presented as cute in articles where he was playing outdoors, in the fresh air and beautiful surroundings, farms and beautiful scenery, in situations where imagination and creativity were dominant.

Children were also presented as dangerous and threatening in newspaper articles. Such cases presented children as violent delinquents or abusing drugs. These views of children as dangerous are also present in other researches on children and adolescents.

¹¹² Robert Cisimo, in Buzărnescu Ștefan, *Sociologia opiniei publice*, Ed. Didactică și Pedagogică, Bucharest, 2000, p. 61

¹¹³ Best, Joel, *Threatened Children: Rhetoric and Concern about Children Victims*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, p. 182;

Other articles are presenting children as gifted individuals. In such articles they are considered active and creative participants in society, and thus providing an important contribution to the society in which they live. These articles often depicted children and young people as persons at whom one can look up to because of their achievements, interests or attitudes, and they were rarely set up as a contrast to an adult opposite.

The child in need of protection is another image under which the children are presented. In the articles where the children were presented as persons in need of protection, it was the elder sources' voices heard in the articles while the children and young people had little opportunity to express their views. Therefore it can be concluded that besides the representations of children as delinquents or gifted, the newspapers often present the children as fragile individuals who must be protected by adults or community.

8.5 Two different images of children

These images are undermining the full development of this group in society. Most of the time, the children are presented under rigid stereotypes. They are presented in two opposite categories: well behaved children versus the unprotected children, smart children versus children without possibilities, young offenders versus model children. These images are presented as social parameters.

Every culture maintains certain stereotypes about children. Although these may be reduced depending on education, social status or culture, they are still active and are practiced even by those who are aware. The cultural stereotypes lead to prejudice and negative opinions about others and are major obstacles in communication. Stereotypes are much simpler than reality, can be obtained from "cultural mediators" than by someone's own experience, and can be false by nature. When acquired in childhood, the stereotypes are very difficult to change and remain stubbornly in our minds, contributing to perceptions and influencing one's behaviors.

8.6 Are children's own voices heard?

David Buckingham argues in his book, *After the Death of Childhood: Growing Up in the Age of Electronic Media*, that children can speak clearly for themselves, but they are rarely given the opportunity to let their voices be heard in the public debate, even in matters that concern them directly. This study showed that children and young people spoke for themselves in 43

percent of the cases. In 48 percent of articles their voices were not heard while in 9 percent of the cases they were too young to speak up.

If it is to look closely at the quality of the statements taken from children and young people it can be said that although children and young people are given the opportunity to a statement, this does not necessarily mean that these quotes are relevant to the issues. In many cases it can be seen that children and young people's statements are not referring directly to the issues, but sometimes can be considered irrelevant.

8.7 The status of children as sources

In this case one question can be raised: *At the time of building the news, is the child considered the subject of the news or only an informant?*

Throughout the study, one of the findings was the under-representation of children and young people in the news. In most of the cases they are not considered reliable sources. They are used as informants about other issues, having no representation for the actual text of the news.

They can be considered valid sources, since they are involved in the story as informants. Letting their voices be heard will respect their rights to expression and opinion and it can give the public the possibility of framing a more informed reflection and judgment about them and therefore nondiscriminatory.

A child beaten by parents or teachers, a child being abused is not a "silent victim". He speaks if you ask him what happened, he gives details about why he was beat, pulled by his hair, tied up and hit with various objects.

These pictures with a bitten and torn child's face or bruised body can generate reports that impress the average consumer. These reports are appreciated, even required, by some editors. A story about an abused child can make a journalist known; can help him advance in his career. But in the same time the subject can harm the child. A journalist has a double-edged sword. On the one hand, he has to satisfy the public's need for violence, and on the other, there is the journalist's need to act ethically.

All the five interviewed journalists agreed that the public needs violence. Human brain is prepared for violent images. Gladiator battles in ancient Rome were great fun, in Spain

bullfighting is popular to date. To increase their audience some media outlets are using violence as the main topic of their articles. Journalist's dilemma is to encourage or not the consumption of violent images. To make a choice in this manner is even harder when there is a pressure from the publisher.

8.8 The children and the adults as opposites

This study shows that children are most often presented in thematic contexts such as culture, education, politics and sports. The quality newspapers usually present children and young people in the thematic contexts of culture and education, while the tabloid newspapers write mostly about children as victims or delinquents. It is tempting to suggest that children are present in thematic contexts that have a high degree of adult influence. For example, culture, education, politics and sports, are arenas that are largely regulated and controlled by adults. There were no newspaper articles that covered topics that were completely free from adult influence. Different researches present children and adults as opposites. The cute children were presented in contrast to adults. They were presented as cute, naive or trusting, while the adults were characterized as mature, logical, knowledgeable and protective. The delinquent children were presented as unwise, threatening and challenging, while the adults appeared to be strict, nurturing and disciplining people. When it came to the children who need protection, they were presented as vulnerable, fragile and dependent, while the adults appeared as safe, protective and instructive. The gifted child, on the other hand, was presented as independent and their comparison with the adults was not that visible or absent in some articles.

That children and young people are portrayed in contrast to adults is, in my opinion, helpful in creating an impression of children as an individual who needs protection, in the sense that they are defined by a different counterpoint.

8.9 The role of journalists

Speculating the sensational side of an event, the journalists are influencing the behavioral attitudes of their target audiences. The more victims an accident has, the more the information will be mediatized.

Thus, the need for information leads journalists to write news about violence, revealing in this way readers' need for sensational as well. The satisfied readers mean audience, advertising, and money.

Is there an excess of violence in the Romanian newspapers? The delight with which the Romanian media promote violence has its causes: emotional appeal is a source to produce audience, but a questionable professional perspective. Violence in Romania is not a generalized phenomenon to warrant such extensive coverage.

The stereotypes are ways of categorizing the world surrounding us. In this sense one could argue that stereotypes have a positive function, allowing us to make decisions quickly. But stereotypes are often used to justify and support the beliefs and values of the population. Stereotypes are usually promoted by the strong and applied to the weak, who cannot control how they are perceived by others and cannot change these perceptions. In general, it is said that stereotypes are true. Children are often presented without having a say, wanting to fit in and to be part of a society.

Common stereotypes illustrate children as thieves. This is the consequence of labeling an entire social group for the acts of some individuals who belong to that group.

Journalists should be careful of the words they use to be able to be objective and impartial. Journalistic objectivity is required to make a clear distinction between opinion and facts, so the choice of language and words is very important.

8.10 Research Perspectives reflected in newspaper texts

It turned out that many of the various research contributions from both the humanities and the social sciences about children and young people were visible in the newspaper texts about children and young people.

9. Summing up of the findings

Children and young people are not very often present in the newspapers that this study is based on. They speak in at least half of the issues that concern them, and are often presented in either very neutral ways or in very stereotypical ways.

Thus this study reveals a certain under-representation of children and young people in the newspapers. As a solution for this several papers focused on children and young people by creating pages dedicated especially for children and youth. These pages are placed at the end of the newspaper or come along with the newspaper. The articles presented here focus on children as gifted, present attraction sites destined for children and young people. The materials are written both by professional journalists and by the children themselves.

This is in itself good solution for covering more the subjects regarding children, but a greater coverage of children and young people would be desirable in the "normal" paper product.

In regards to the extent to which children and young people's own voices are visible in the newspaper texts, the newspaper editors and journalists can allow children and young people to present themselves to a higher extent.

This study also points out that it is a challenge for the journalists when it comes to ask relevant questions. If a journalist asks relevant questions, the children and young people are presented in a more independent manner, while making it more interesting to read about them. Quotes about how beautiful is a doll or how good is the ice-cream do not offer the readers of the newspaper an image about what children and young people are doing, stand for, or think.

9.1 Children are present only in articles regarding education, crime, culture or sports

This study shows that children and young people are presented in thematic contexts such as culture, education, politics or sports. It can be suggested that, in newspapers, children and young people are present in thematic contexts that have a high degree of adult influence, and little or no degree in contexts that are free from a certain grown-ups' regulation. This suggests that there are many arenas from children's life and experience that are not presented in the newspapers, and I think it is reasonable to encourage newspapers to report from other areas that are important to children and young people than they already do.

To present children and young people in more nuanced ways should also be a goal for journalism. The stereotypical presentation of children and young people like this thesis points out, often creates little nuanced and complete presentations of children and young people.

9.2 Children and adults as two opposite poles

Furthermore, this study showed that children and young people are often presented in opposition to the adults, which in many cases seemed to present only one side of the story, because the children and young people usually ended up on the negative pole.

To avoid transmitting such images, newspapers should allow children and young people to express themselves more and to limit the adult sources speaking on behalf of the children. Furthermore, the newspapers and journalists can increasingly challenge the stereotypical presentations of children and young people, and trying to seek alternative, more nuanced ways to present them.

Another conclusion that can be drawn is the significant differences between the manners of presenting the situation of children in terms of the residential areas. This study showed that the children living in rural areas are more frequently victims of accidents while in the urban areas there is a higher incidence of child abuse, especially sexual abuse. Cases of crimes committed by minors are frequently encountered in the urban areas. The involvement of government agencies and civil society actors in resolving the problems of children is much higher in urban areas.

Most programs supporting children take place in cities, especially in Bucharest. The images of the rural children, as it appears in this study, raise questions about the need for substantial involvement of NGOs, state institutions in programs for children from rural areas and in cities from provinces with a low socio-economic development. The images of rural children present the children as being neglected by the family and society, living in poor living conditions.

9.3 The media and the children's rights

The qualitative analysis revealed the fact that if the news is about child abuse or is presenting the children as victims of various accidents the media coverage of cases does not present the

subject in what is called in journalism, the cycle problem, presenting the facts before the problem and after post-issue, and ending by offering a definition of the problem and a solution. The titles are designed to shock and the body of the articles offers detailed description of the acts of violence. Often, even if the perpetrators are punished in court this fact is presented very expeditiously and often is even entirely omitted. Consequently the message to discourage this type of actions is very weak.

Although the Journalist's Code of Ethics adopted by the Romanian Press Club contains a number of provisions regarding the protection of children, they are omitted in most of the cases.

At the end of the Article 4 from the Journalist's Code of Ethics it is recommended: "The journalist will avoid the detailing of defects or morbid elements related to crimes."¹¹⁴ The role of media is essential in bringing to the public attention the issues regarding the children's rights. Media play an important role in defining what is "normal" and what is "deviant" in a society. The (re)presentations from the media are the main source of information on social issues for much of the public. The media can play an important role in developing child protection legislation, particularly by signaling problems which solution requires the initiation of public policies.

The qualitative analysis shows that journalists rarely stop on the presentation of the causes or consequences of an event involving children. And even more rarely they connect particular series of events to obtain a general framework for discussion of general issues presenting the child in society.

My analysis shows that most of the articles present children in difficult situations: physically abused, children as victims of accidents due to negligence of parents or due to the socio-economic environment in which they live.

The large number of "news in brief" presenting the abuses against children or accidents involving children contributes to promoting the images of these children as belonging to the normal sphere, while in fact they should be put out of bounds of what is accepted by society.

The media coverage on child abuse can have negative consequences for children and their families. But the media coverage of these cases is vital if someone wants the public concern

¹¹⁴ <http://www.pressclub.ro/publicatii/cod.html>, accessed 28 May 2012;

towards children to remain on the political agenda. Thus the presentation of these cases is still so important. But it is necessary to change the way the journalists approach the issues of the children's rights and status in the Romanian society.

This study also shows that there are significant differences in terms of approaching the issues of children by type of publication. For example, the tabloid newspapers are focusing more on subjects regarding violence towards children. A high percentage of the articles found in the tabloid press present children as victims or as feared delinquents. On the other hand, the quality newspapers are trying to offer more balanced images of children.

Some newspapers show a greater coverage when it comes to programs for children. This could be a prerequisite for a closer cooperation between social organizations or NGOs and journalists, on the one hand to publicize the NGOs' programs, and on the other hand to bring the preoccupations towards the quality of the children's life on the agenda of the media. The society and the media can form a partnership to develop a media culture that promotes children's rights, especially those at risk of marginalization.

9.4 Choice of methods

To conduct this research I have chosen to use both the qualitative and quantitative methods. The choice to use both methodologies was taken on the basis that both methodological approaches have clear advantages. The quantitative method shows patterns and creates visibility, offering a base for this study, while the qualitative method makes it possible to say something more detailed about what is behind the numbers.

The quantitative methodological approach of the material was used to answer the second and third research questions (*"How visible are children's own voices in newspaper articles?"*, *"To what extent are children (re)presented in the Romanian newspapers?"*)

The figures based on the quantitative analysis gave a good picture of both children and young people's representation in newspapers, the age group of children and young people who are presented in the articles, in which contexts they are presented and how often they talk in the newspaper articles. However, what proved to be problematic when it comes to the quantitative content analysis was that there were no similar data from recent studies conducted in Romania, so the possibility of comparing my findings with similar, recent analyses was not possible. It was therefore sometimes challenging to draw conclusions

from the numbers from the quantitative content analysis. I was aware of this before I began the thesis, and therefore compensated for this by analyzing the articles from both tabloid and qualitative newspapers.

By conducting the qualitative content analysis I wanted to answer the research questions in a more detailed and comprehensive way than if I had treated the material only quantitatively. The qualitative content analysis allowed me to examine, among other things, the ways children and young people were presented in the articles, how the newspapers presented children and young people (the first research question – “*How are children represented in the Romanian newspapers?*”), and the manner in which children and young people spoke in newspaper texts.

9.5 Further research

This study has examined the children and young people's presence in five Romanian newspapers. The study's findings initiated a series of reflections on what else could have been interesting and important to examine when it comes to children and young people's presence in the mediated space.

First, it would have been interesting if a more ample research would have been conducted, offering in this way a greater opportunity for generalization than is the case for this master thesis. Second, it will be interesting to analyze more journalists' own attitudes when it comes to the use of children and young people in newspapers. It will also be very interesting to investigate children and young people's experiences of being present in newspaper articles. Do they feel that they are presented in ways that they represent them? These are questions that this thesis has not studied, but that clearly would be an important contribution to the debate on children and young people's presence in the Romanian newspapers.

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12. Annexes

12.1 Interview guide

1. What are the differences in reporting about children and adults?
2. Are there ethical issues that a journalist is facing when writing about children?
3. What are those issues?
4. What are the principles you use to apply when writing about children?
5. Which is the greatest challenge when it comes to reporting about children?
6. Can you tell me about a case when you faced ethical principles when reporting about children?
7. How did you proceed in this case?
8. To what extent does the editorial policy of the newspaper influence your reporting about children?
9. Research shows that children are marginalized by the media. Are they marginalized in your newspaper?
10. Is media producing realities about children and youth?
11. When you write about children do you present them as the main actors of the news or do you place them in the background?
12. Are children used to draw attention to the actions of adults?
13. What kind of sources do you use when writing about children?
14. Why the involvement of experts sources of information should be higher in the articles about children?
15. What are the characteristics of media speech what it comes to children and young people?

12.1.1 Interview 1 – Interview with Ludmila Andronic, reporter for Evenimentul Zilei

1. What are the differences in reporting about children and adults?

It is easier to write about adults. When you write about children you have to have in mind not to hurt them. It is so easy. The adults have to possibility to protect themselves.

Children don't. You have to be careful with the words you use, not to give them a twisted meaning. That is not our mission. Our readers have to interpret the words by themselves.

If we are already using the words as metaphors, the readers will be confused from the begging. When writing about children keep it simple.

2. Are there ethical issues that a journalist is facing when writing about children?

We follow the same ethical code when writing about children and adults. We are faced with these issues every day, every time we write, but they are bigger when we write about children.

3. What are those issues?

The code says do not publish the identity. But also the code says to give credibility to your material. If I use a child as a source and I know that giving his identity will affect him how do I proceed in this case, should I give his identity or not? I have to think to my readers as well and how not giving the child identity will affect my work. These are decisions you have to take very fast but to have in mind not to hurt the child.

After that is the consent. The parents can offer their consent to name their child in the article, but the code does not allow me that. If the child is elder than 16 it is easier. I can offer his name, picture and so on.

4. What is your angle of approach when writing about children?

I always have in my mind one thing: my readers. I have to be devoted to them, first. But in the same time i have to be true to myself as well. There is one thing that ALWAYS I follow when I write about children: do not hurt the child. I know people what crime, violence, suspense. These are their interest, the sensational, and sensational all the time, but journalists must focus on supporting the public interest and not to pursue the sensationalism. There are cases when some journalists present in detail suicide techniques which can then generate other reactions of this kind to minors.

5. What is the greatest challenge when it comes to reporting about children?

In my case is to be combines the things that I said in the previous question: to satisfy the public's need for sensational and to stay true to myself.

6. Can you tell me about a case when you faced ethical principles when reporting about children?

There was a case of a 14-years-old girl. She was the victim of human traffic and was obliged to prostitute. *Evenimentul Zilei* was the first reporting about this case. She was a prostitute since she was 11 or 12 years old. It was hard not to give her identity, the place where she lives and all these information.

7. How did you proceed in this case?

The first time I presented her story I gave a false name. I named her Sanziana, but I described her physical aspect as best as I could. I wanted to make the readers to feel for her, to feel what she has gone through. I didn't publish the photo with her face, but with her wounds, her bruises, her tiny, skinny hands. She didn't know to read, but she had with her a book for children. She kept near her bed and she used to look at it after her clients were leaving.

After presenting her story for a few consecutive days, we started an ample debate about the human traffic.

This was the story that got to me the most, I felt like I had to do something for this girl.

8. To what extent does the editorial policy of the newspaper influence your reporting about children?

We don't have an editorial policy when writing about children. We apply the same rules for all of our articles.

9. Research shows that children are marginalized by the media. Are they marginalized in your newspaper?

I can't say they are marginalized. If we have to write about children we will do it. Young people are not active in the society and they don't offer so many worthy subjects to write about. I think this is the reason for which the press is not writing so much about them.

10. Is media producing realities about children and youth?

I would say that media is using the realities that are already existing in a society. What we only do is to reinforce or to bring them down. The readers are doing the rest.

11. When you write about children do you present them as the main actors of the news or do you place them in the background?

If the child is the main actor of the news, than yes, he is the in the centre of the attention.
If not they are used in the background.

12. Are children used to draw attention to the actions of adults?

Sometimes yes. If a child is affected by the actions of an adult person, then presenting the action and the way it affects the child the news will have a bigger impact.

13. What kind of sources do you use when writing about children?

I am trying to respect the rule of the three sources. But in the rush for news is hard to follow it all the time. I am trying to present the news as balanced as I can. Usually I am speaking with the child, his parents, and the authorities.

14. Why the involvement of experts as sources of information should be higher in the articles about children?

We use experts as sources because it balances the news. The declarations of parents, legal guardians, authorities have a higher impact and they are more reliable than the declarations of the children. I use experts to speak about and for the child, to give to his declarations the same impacts as the impact for the other sources.

15. What are the characteristics of media speech what it comes to children and young people?

You have to be more careful when you write, as objective and as distant as possible. It is easier to sympathize with the child and this can affect the angle of approach.

12.1.3 Interview 2 – Interview with Mihaela Ilie, reporter for *Jurnalul Național*

1. What are the differences in reporting about children and adults?

There are no differences when writing about adults and children. They all fall under the same category: subjects for our news.

2. Are there ethical issues that a journalist is facing when writing about children?

Because there is a competition when it comes to who is reporting the first, the journalists overlook certain ethical norms that they have to respect.

3. What are those issues?

The first one would be the issue of identity. Ask any journalist and he will tell you not to present the child's identity.

And a second one would be the one about the presentation of the pictures. A picture presenting the child gives more credibility to your news, but the code of ethics does not allow it.

And after is the presentation of photos with people who are hurting. And this applies to both adults and children.

4. What is your angle of approach when writing about children?

Always say the truth, no matter what. Present the fact as they are. If the child has committed a crime, say it. If he is the victims, say he is the victim. Present the readers the concrete facts. I never try to offer a distorted image of the events. It is not my job to judge the perpetrator or to protect the child. I only present the public with the facts. It is the public's job to judge and draw conclusions.

5. What is the greatest challenge when it comes to reporting about children?

There are more ethical rules about one writes about children. Following them and trying to offer the readers with the exact image of the events it is the greatest challenge.

6. Can you tell me about a case when you faced ethical principles when reporting about children?

I had to write about the incident for the ball a school organized for the children finishing the 8th grade. The ball took place on the second floor of a club. Because there were more than 200 people there, the floor collapsed and more children died or were hurt.

7. How did you proceed in this case?

What I did in this case was to present as detailed as possible the scene of the disaster, because it was a disaster. I offered the readers with ample descriptions of the scene, the smell, the noise, the panic; I was trying to make them to feel as they would have been there. I offered them pictures, but not with the children. They do not need to see that, nor the children's families.

8. To what extent does the editorial policy of the newspaper influence your reporting about children?

We try to write about children as much as possible. The news about children are one of our most read articles. The public empathises with children when they are victims or judge them when they are the delinquents.

9. Research shows that children are marginalized by the media. Are they marginalized in your newspaper?

As I said before, no, we are focusing on children as much as we can.

10. Is media producing realities about children and youth?

Media is only reinforcing the realities that are already in the Romanian society. To give an example, we write about the Roma people very much. It is a "gold mine" for us. The Roma society offers us many subjects. They are a colourful society, with beautiful traditions, they are different than us, sometimes in a bad way, and this makes our readers to feel better, to feel they are worthing more. This is their opinion and it is not my responsibility as journalists to change it.

11. When you write about children do you present them as the main actors of the news or do you place them in the background?

News about children bring readers so having them as the main character of the article is in our best interest.

12. Are children used to draw attention to the actions of adults?

Definitely. Whether the news is about politics, crime, sport, having a child involved in the actions or mentioned in the article will give the news more impact.

13. What kind of sources do you use when writing about children?

This depends on the type of the article and what the subject of the article is. Giving all the parties the right to express themselves will give the article credibility.

14. Why the involvement of experts as sources of information should be higher in the articles about children?

Offering an expert as a source is what will make your article stand out. It is not enough to present the words of all the parties involved. Having the word of a person with authority in a certain field will make your material better.

15. What are the characteristics of media speech when it comes to children and young people?

I would say the media speech about children has more restrictions than the one about adults.

12.1.4 Interview 3 – Interview with Tatiana Marcu, reporter for *Libertatea*

1. What are the differences in reporting about children and adults?

I don't think there are differences between the two. What differentiates the news about children and those about adults is that the news about children have a greater shift to public. Our readers will always choose first the news about children; either they are good or bad. The more the news bleed, the better they sell.

2. Are there ethical issues that a journalist is facing when writing about children?

We are facing the same ethical issues when reporting about children as well when reporting about adults. I cannot say that there are significant differences.

3. What are those issues?

In every news you have to choose if you will present the identity of the victims, if you expose the victims to the public. But this is what you should do and I don't think there is one journalist who is following them. It is impossible.

4. What is your angle of approach when writing about children?

We have a choice for the sensational topics, with an acid characteristic style. Any news about children is sensational. We are trying to find the sensational in every news we write and the news about children give us sensational all the time.

5. What is the greatest challenge when it comes to reporting about children?

Trying to get the consent to write and to speak with them would be the biggest challenge.

6. Can you tell me about a case when you faced ethical principles when reporting about children?

Most of our articles about children are about the abused children. These are the cases that are raising the highest problems, for example when writing about raped girls.

7. How did you proceed in this case?

In these cases we try not to present the face of the child and if so we cover his/her eyes with a black stripe. It is harder to be recognized in this way. For example, last week (2st of

July 2011) I had to write about a girl raped while she was coming from a club. She was 17. According to the law I do not need the consent of the parents to speak with the child because she was elder than 16-years-old. I have also chosen to present in the newspaper her picture and the picture of her abuser. We are trying to offer as many pictures as possible and less text.

8. To what extent does the editorial policy of the newspaper influence your reporting about children?

As reporters for a tabloid newspaper we are aiming for unusual, we are searching for a subject that will catch our readers. Our editorial policy is to offer as much details as possible. In the case of the young girl I took a picture of her with her mother. The next day I was called by her mother, crying, who was saying that the whole village knows about her daughter's tragedy. Eventually, the girl was forced to change schools.

We have in our redaction a board divided in two: people about who you can write and people about who you are not allowed to write. These are the rules that we follow here. If the child is in the first category then we write, if not, the subject is left aside, forgotten.

9. Research shows that children are marginalized by the media. Are they marginalized in your newspaper?

No, they are not marginalized, because we try not to differentiate between them and adults. It is not ethical.

10. Is media producing realities about children and youth?

You can say like that. Our readers are from a certain category, I have to admit this. Most of our readers are from the rural space, or they do not have a higher education. This type of readers is very easy to be impressed and to take things for granted or just as they are. So if I say in an article "that child is like this and like this" most of our readers will believe that and they will form an opinion on the facts that I present. So, yes, the way in which media is writing about children, and not only, is influencing the public opinion.

11. When you write about children do you present them as the main actors of the news or do you place them in the background?

If the subject of the article is about the child or what he did, then he is the main actor. If he just participated or was involved in something that was done by somebody else then he will be placed in the background.

12. Are children used to draw attention to the actions of adults?

I would not say that they are used for this intentionally. If this happens it is because the child was directly involved in that action.

13. What kind of sources do you use when writing about children?

The same sources I use when writing about adults. As I said before, we do not make any differences when writing about children and adults.

14. Why the involvement of experts as sources of information should be higher in the articles about children?

Usually experts are used as a third source, an impartial one, so their use is recommended in all the news.

15. What are the characteristics of media speech what it comes to children and young people?

The media speech about children has a higher impact on the readers than the news about adults.

12.1.5 Interview 4 – Interview with Dan Istrate, reporter for *Adevărul*

1. What are the differences in reporting about children and adults?

You always have to be as impartial as possible but this is harder when it comes to children. Writing about them is harder because you have to follow some written and unwritten rules. For example, you have to let the child to speak out. They have different perspectives than adults, so when you interview them you have to be careful not to misinterpret what they are telling you. Before starting writing you have to ask yourself: Is this what he meant?

2. Are there ethical issues that a journalist is facing when writing about children?

Yes, there are many ethical issues when it comes to reporting about youth.

3. What are those issues?

You have to respect their privacy. You have to ask how much I should say in order to be true to the child and to my readers. Do not manipulate the child. It is so easy to that. The children are easy to be manipulated and impressed. In the run for information and exclusivity, journalists can fall in this trap, and try to get as much as possible from the child, harming him even though that was not the journalist's intention.

4. What is your angle of approach when writing about children?

Always listen to the child. He might say more than you think so. It is very easy to understand him wrong. You always have to be faithful when presenting the child. You can have several possibilities to write an article about children. You can expose the perpetrator, help or expose the child, or to warn the society about a phenomenon. You have to ask the child about what he or she likes to do with friends and so it will help the child to trust his value as a human being.

5. What is the greatest challenge when it comes to reporting about children?

I think a journalist is facing the greatest challenge when writing about abused children. You have to ask yourself: How will you live if you know that the child suffered after your intervention? How will you feel if he will commit suicide after being exposed in your material? It is like walking on thin ice when writing about youth.

6. Can you tell me about a case when you faced ethical principles when reporting about children?

The article about a child with no identity, or the wrong identity, to be accurate, was the one that raised the greatest ethical principles. The article was about a child from an orphanage. He was abandoned by his mother when he was 4. After one year his mother came to take him back. The big problem was that the people from the orphanage gave the woman the wrong child, and not her biological one. When he turned 14 he had to make his Personal Identification Card (ID). It usually takes less than one week to receive the ID. For him it took more than a month. When he finally received his ID the state made another mistake. He was given the same personal number as another child. When he was 17 he tried to find a job and then he realized that he had a big Police record, although he never broke the law. The Police record was for the other child. The Police did not believe him and he contacted us. His story was worthy to be investigated further.

7. How did you proceed in this case?

The case presented many ethical issues. The boy agreed to make public his name, address, personal number. But by doing so the details of the other child would have been exposed without his agreement. Furthermore, by making public this information the identity of his younger brother would be presented in the media. What we did first was to investigate very thoroughly the case and to try to solve it before presenting in the newspaper.

In the end we found who his real mother was, but unfortunately it was too late. She passed away a month before we found her.

After speaking with the people involved in this case we have written the article. It was like doing Police work.

8. To what extent does the editorial policy of the newspaper influence your reporting about children?

Our editorial policy does not influence very much our articles about children. Of course we are writing about cases involving molested or abused children, but we, as journalists, are trying to offer as few details of the incident as possible. There are different rules and ethics when writing about children and for this reason we prefer to write about children

when they are involved in school activities, in events that are presenting them in a positive way. Children are vulnerable and their protection is everyone's responsibility.

9. Research shows that children are marginalized by the media. Are they marginalized in your newspaper?

In our newspaper you cannot find many articles about children, but this doesn't mean they are marginalized. We do not follow every subject about children. There are newspapers which are looking for the sensational when it comes to writing about children. The sensationalism is the weapon of a journalist who is not able to document and to prepare a targeted material, relevant, professional and original. A topic about an act of violence against children is more successful if it is done in the spirit of journalism, is balanced and brings something new. Balanced journalism is to report facts, but to insist not only on the negative. Public journalism is to balance analysis with fragments of life, not human bodies.

10. Is media producing realities about children and youth?

I don't think media is creating realities about children. I would say media exploit the opinions the public already has towards children.

11. When you write about children do you present them as the main actors of the news or do you place them in the background?

Our newspaper is trying to relate about cases where children are the main actors. We live in a world ruled by adults, and all the news are about them. But if a child participates in an action realized by an adult then he will be mentioned in the article.

12. Are children used to draw attention to the actions of adults?

Yes, they are, and a concrete example is the one of the child who was hit by our president (Traian Băsescu) in his election campaign. All the media were speaking about that incident. But this is not the case when the child was used to draw the attention. After one year after the election an article about the president's actions was written. As a part from that article, written over four pages, was a mentioned the child who was hit. The journalists were writing about his life. How the life of the child evolved after that incident was not of interest for that article, but it was used to give the article more impact.

13. What kind of sources do you use when writing about children?

The same rule that applies for the articles about adults should be applied for the articles about children: the rule of the three sources.

14. Why the involvement of experts as sources of information should be higher in the articles about children?

I would say it offers balance to the news. On one hand you have the adults as sources, they are saying something. On the other hand, there are the children saying something completely different. The experts are the ones helping the reader to create an opinion.

15. What are the characteristics of media speech what it comes to children and young people?

The press has a big responsibility when it comes to writing about children. It is our responsibility towards children to respect and to present them faithfully.

12.1.6 Interview 5 – Interview with Iulia Mantea, reporter for *România Liberă*

1. What are the differences in reporting about children and adults?

Writing about children offers the journalists a different angle that he can approach.

Children want you to present them as they are not to interfere too much in their story. It is very easy for a journalist to speak for the child, so this should be avoided.

2. Are there ethical issues that a journalist is facing when writing about children?

The ethical issues are faced all the time when writing an article, but the ones that emerge when reporting about children are the greatest.

3. What are those issues?

First you have to have the agreement of the child and his parents to present his identity, pictures of him. Moreover, you don't have to exploit the child's vulnerability. This is a sleeper-slope for journalists. If you are writing about a child make sure you have to be sure you do not expose him to imprisonment or violence.

4. What is your angle of approach when writing about children?

We are trying to write the article from the child's point of view. They are given the possibility to speak so rarely and for this reason we are trying to approach our materials from their view.

5. Which is the greatest challenge when it comes to reporting about children?

I would the challenge is not to be too sympathetic with the child. It is very easy to fall in this trap. By doing so your article will be very weak.

6. Can you tell me about a case when you faced ethical principles when reporting about children?

When I started being a journalist I had to write about the case of 4 or 5 years old boy who have died after he was bitten by dogs.

7. How did you proceed in this case?

The biggest problem I faced in this case was if I should present the picture of the little boy. The parents gave me their consent but the images with his torn body were too violent, too disturbing. According with our newspapers' rules I was entitled to show the pictures but I choose not to. There are cases when the journalist's moral ethics are more valuable than the written ones.

8. To what extent does the editorial policy of the newspaper influence your reporting about children?

Our newspaper has as mature audience, with studies, which already have their own opinions and knowledge about life. We are not focusing on children unless the subject is of high interest.

9. Research shows that children are marginalized by the media. Are they marginalized in your newspaper?

In this way I would say that children are not our main focus.

10. Is media producing realities about children and youth?

Media are both producing and reinforcing the realities about children. It is impossible not to do so. There are different audiences for each newspaper and according to their education they are either forming an opinion or reinforce the one already formed.

11. When you write about children do you present children as the main actor of the news or do you place them in the background?

Since our articles about children are very few we are trying to portray them as main actors.

12. Are children used to draw attention to the actions of adults?

It would say it depends from case to case and to the angle from which the news is constructed.

13. What kind of sources do you use when writing about children?

I always try to offer an impartial article so presenting equally the actors from an event is helping me to do so.

14. Why the involvement of expert sources of information should be higher in the articles about children?

The involvement of experts as sources is important for all the articles. They are those who are give strength to your news.

15. What are the characteristics of media speech what it comes to children and young people?

I don't think media has a strong speech when it comes only to children, so it would be difficult for me to say it has some particular characteristics.

12.2 Index of charts

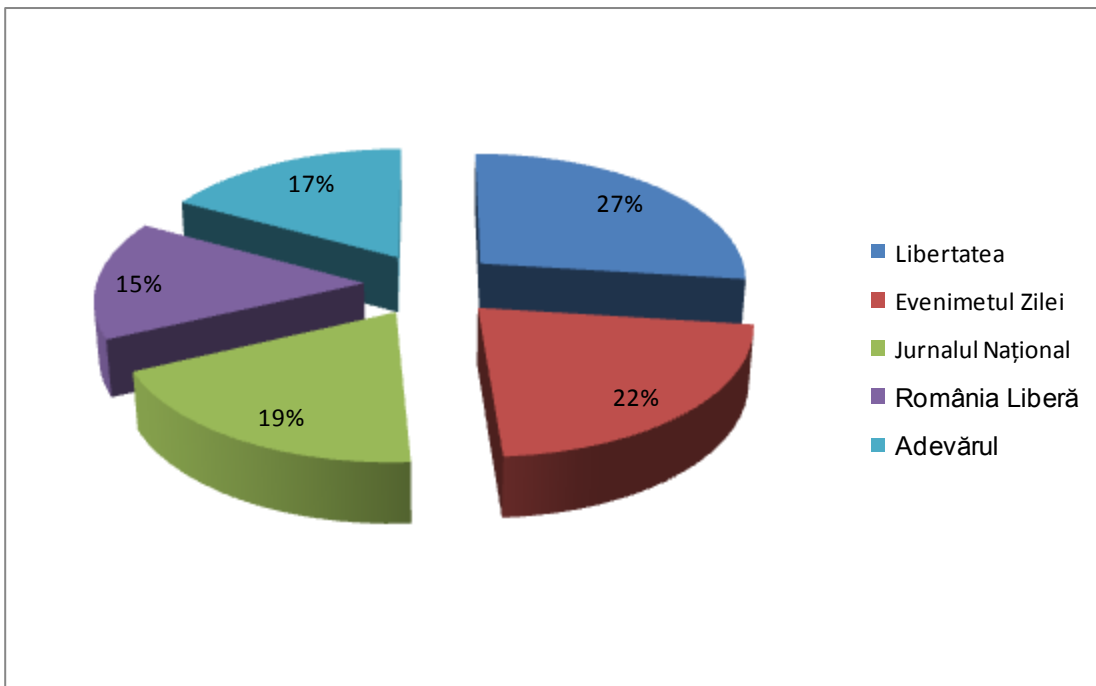


Figure 113 The distribution of articles in the monitored newspapers (n=371)

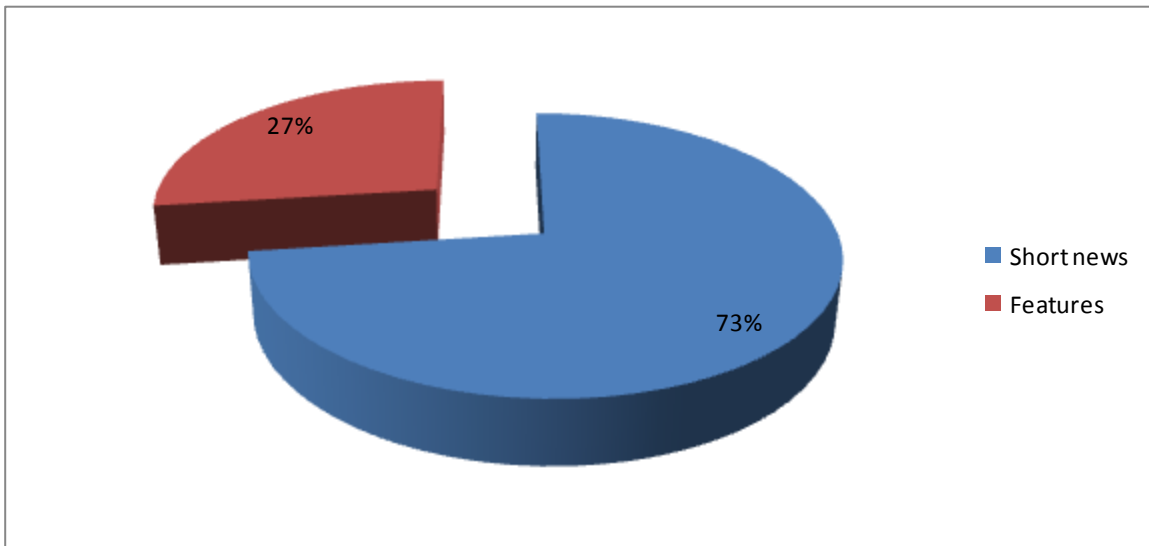


Figure 214 The distribution of articles by the article's type (n=371)

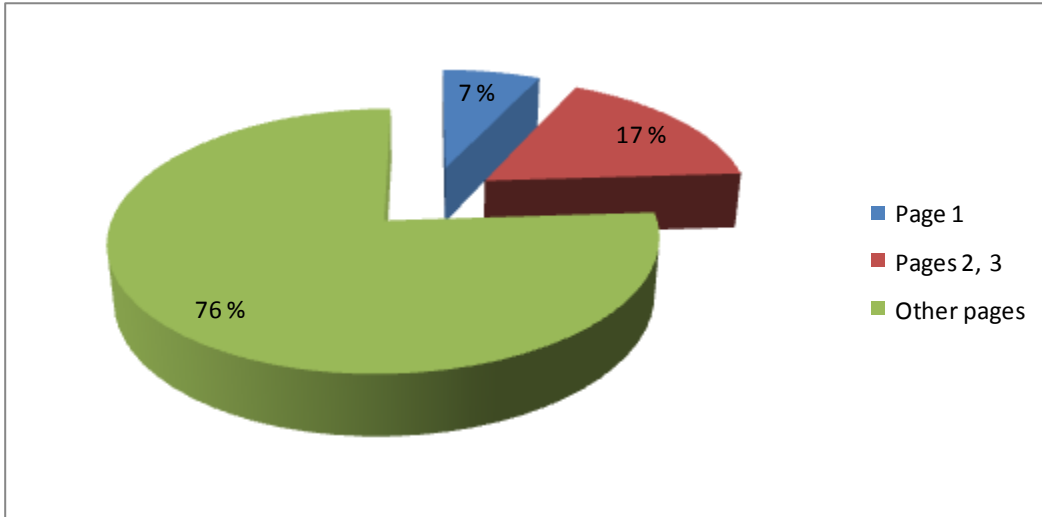


Figure 3 The distribution of the articles according to the page number (n=371)

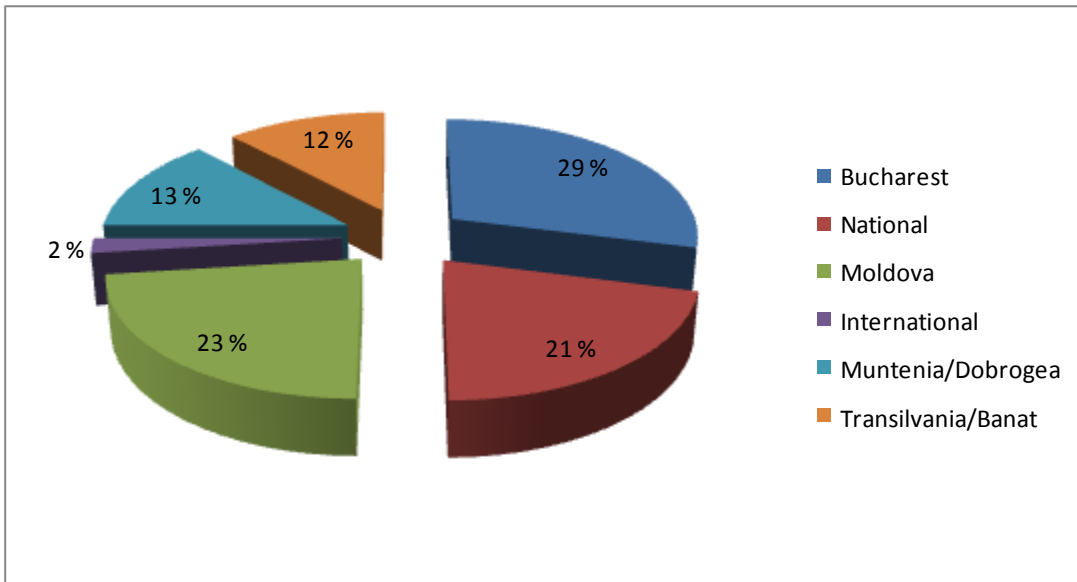


Figure 4 The distribution of the articles according to the geographical area (n=371)

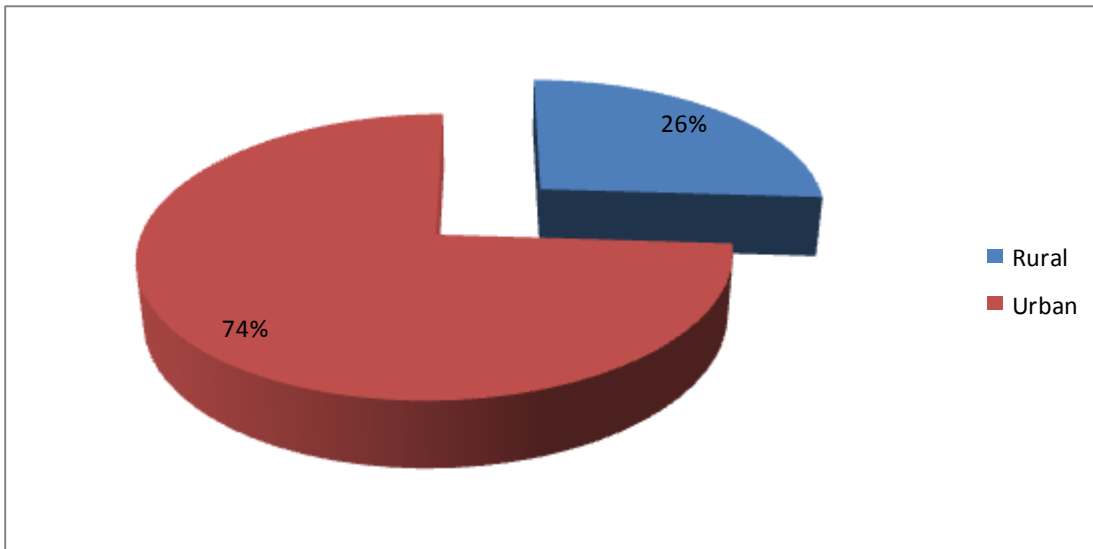


Figure 5 Distribution according to the residential areas (n=371)

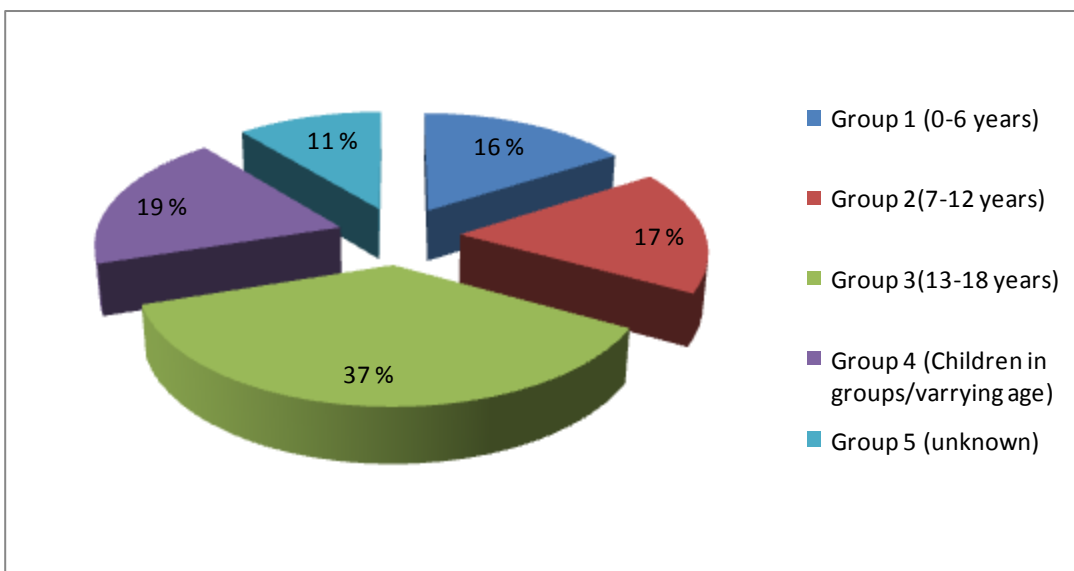


Figure 615 The distribution according to age (n=371)

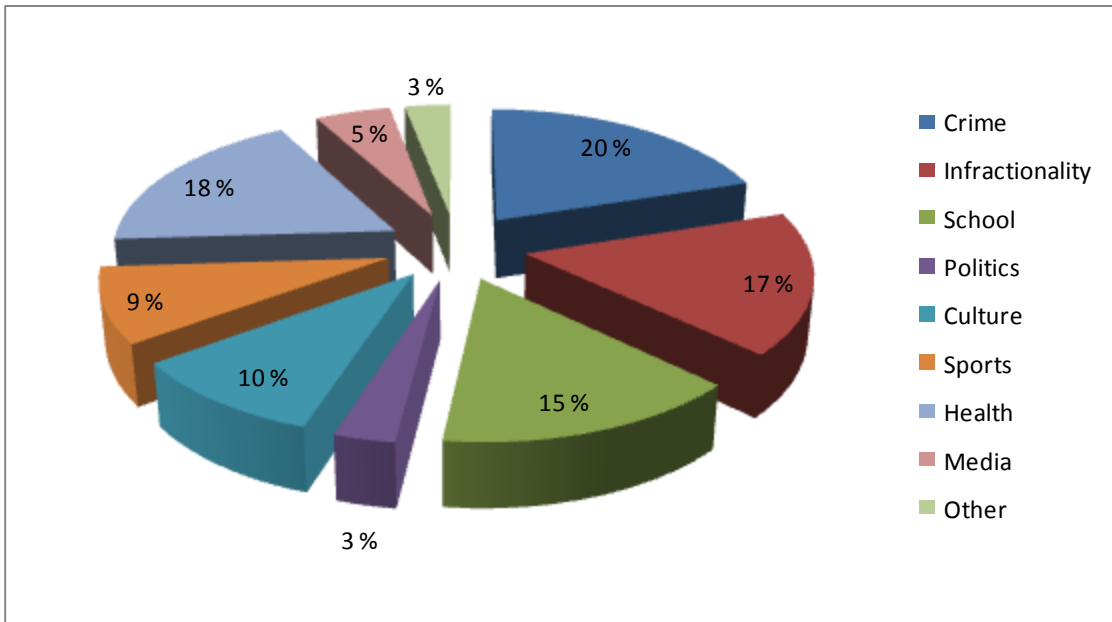


Figure 7 Topics (n=371)

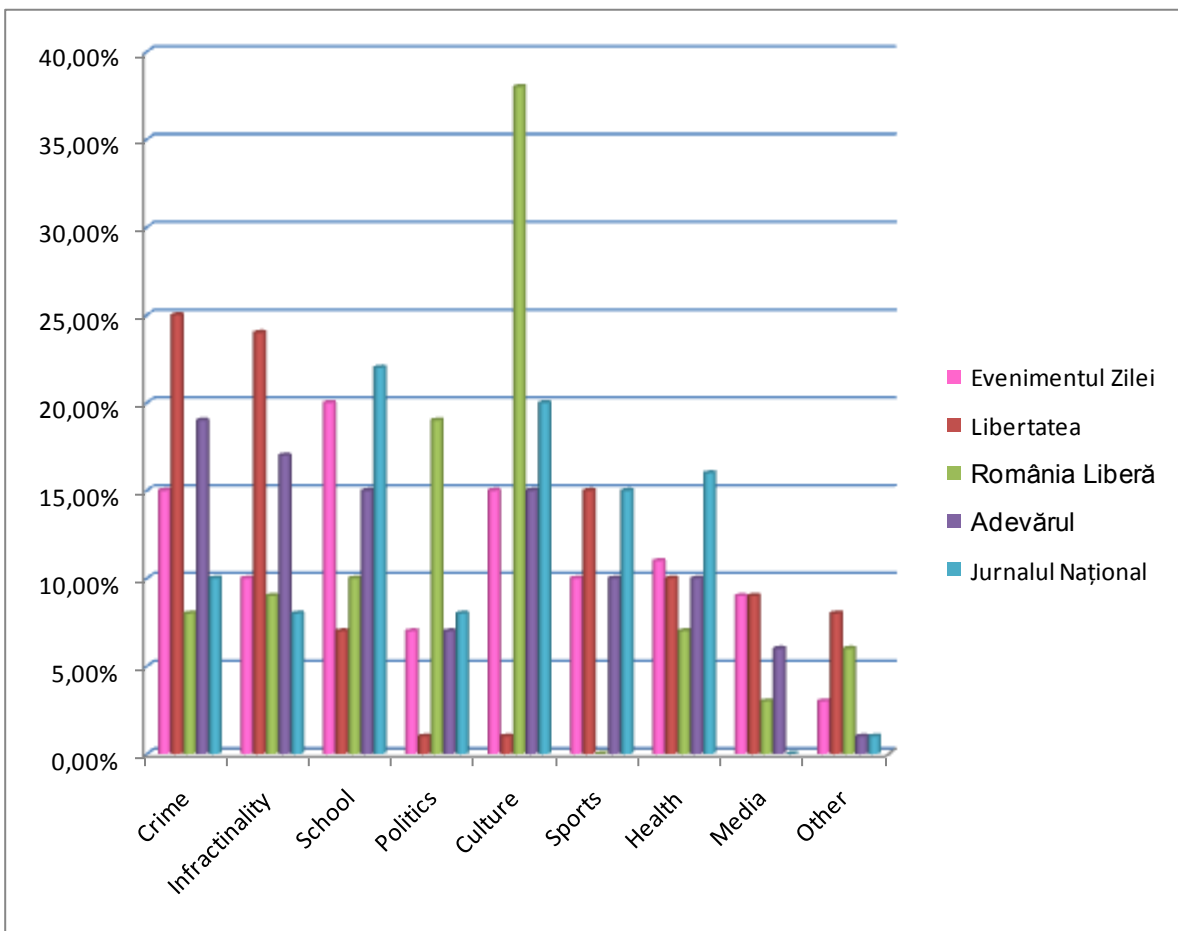


Figure 8 Distribution by newspaper (n=371)

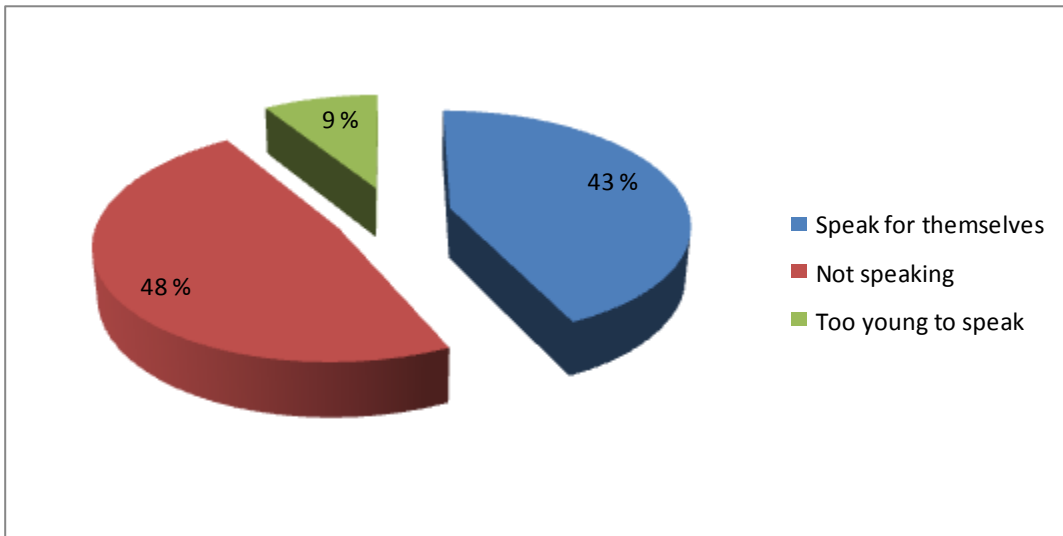


Figure 9 How visible is the children's own voice? (n=371)

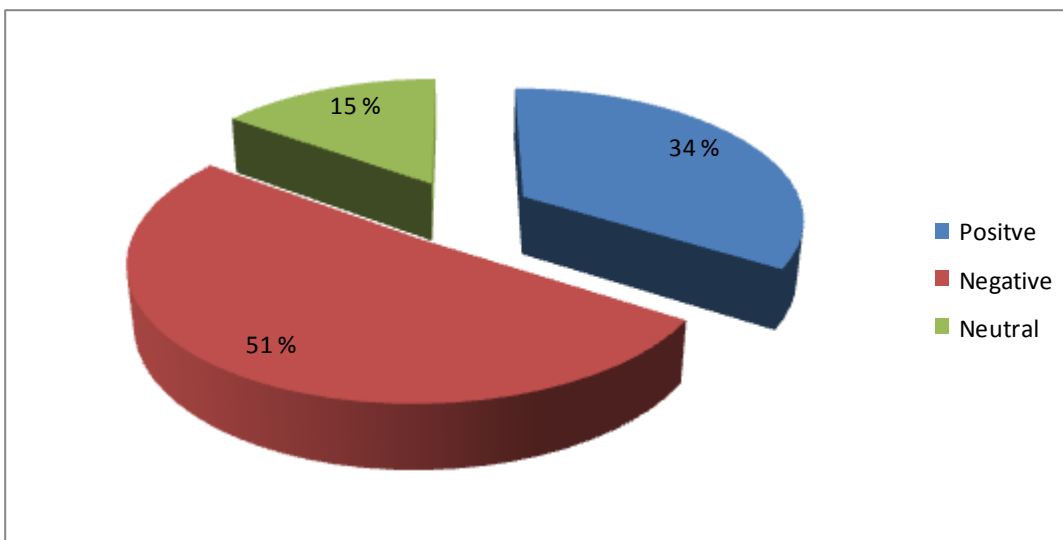


Figure 10 Contextual distribution (n=371)

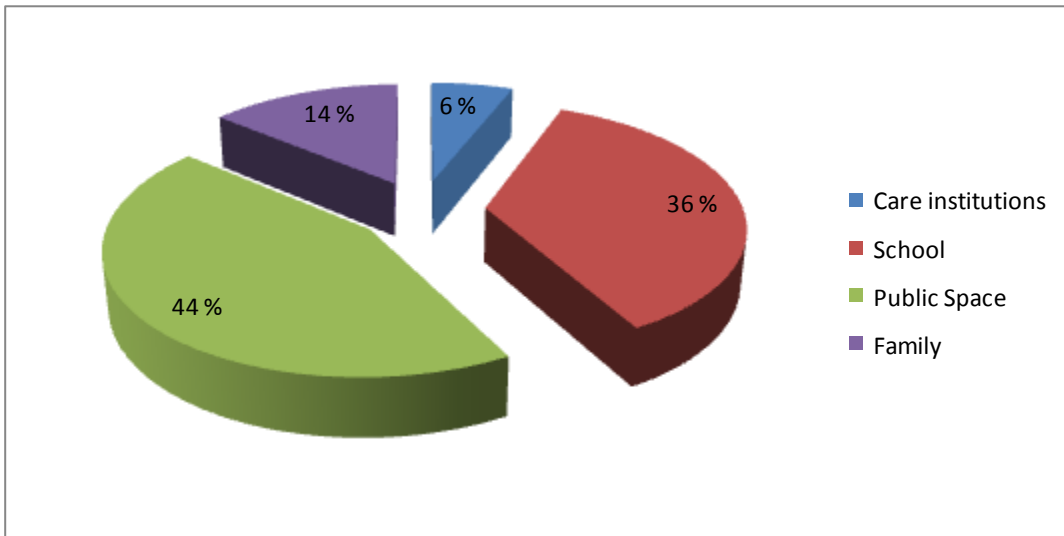


Figure 11 The social space in which are (re)presented the children's actions (n=371)

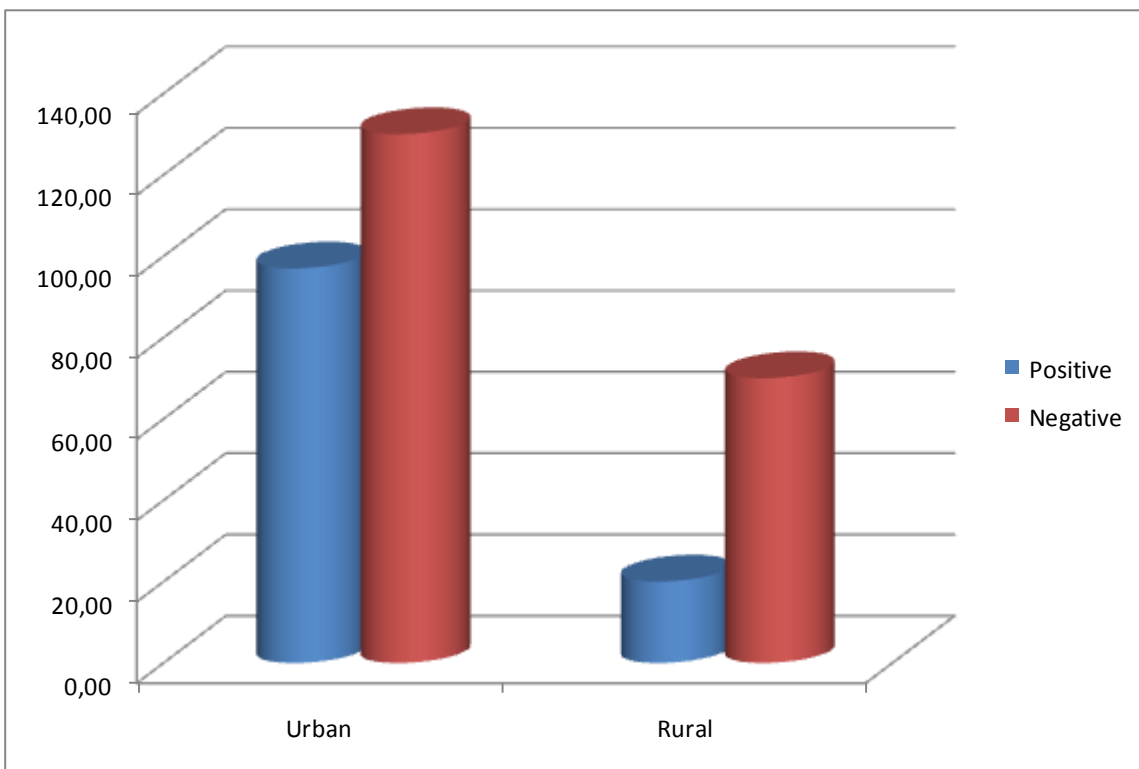


Figure 12 Distribution according to the residential context (n=371)

Dreptate cu cuțitul, la o școală din Galați

L-a înjunghiat că a îndrăznit să-și apere un coleg



Florin Gîrneată, agresorul lui Adrian

BOGDAN NISTOR

Un conflict izbucnit ieri, între doi elevi de clasa a VIII-a de la o școală din Galați a fost la un pas de a se sfârși tragic. Lovit de un coleg de clasă, un băiat și-a chemat prietenii mai mari să-l facă dreptate. Un tânăr a ajuns la spital.

Totul a pornit de la un conflict izbucnit între doi elevi de clasa a opta de la Colegiul Tehnic „Radu Negru”. Andrei Petrea ar fi fost jignit de Radu Bratu, motiv pentru care l-a lovit violent în față. Furios, tânărul și-a chemat în ajutor mai mulți prieteni de la Liceul Metalurgic, care au ajuns în doar câteva minute. Unul dintre ei avea asupra lui un cuțit. Din ambuscada creată la ușa liceului, cel mai „șifonat” a ieșit un alt elev, Adrian Șerban, care sârise să îi ia apărarea lui Andrei. El s-a ales însă cu o lamă de cuțit între coaste. Când și-a dat seama ce a făcut,



„Acum mă simt bine, dar ieri au avut dureri mari, abia puteau să respir. O să fac plângere împotriva agresorului.”

Adrian Șerban, victimă

JUSTIFICARE

„Am fost martor la acest incident, dar n-am putut să fac nimic, pentru că s-a petrecut repede.

Unul dintre cei veniți din afara liceului a băgat cuțitul în Șerban și a dispărut.”

Gabriel Gogoncea, directorul Grupului Școlar „Radu Negru”

RECORD

Porc de 580 kg transformat în 1.000 de salamuri și 32 de metri de cârnați



Porcul consuma la o singură masă o jumătate de sac de cereale

Un porc uriaș ajuns la greutatea de 580 kg și botezat „Urul”, a dat o cantitate record de carne: 350 de kilograme. Farcel Răcean, din Alba Iulia, cumpărat animalul în urmă cu trei ani și jumătate și a decis acum să îl sacrifice pentru un bal al vânătorilor. Din mea „Urului” se vor prepara în jur de 1.000 de rude salam și aproximativ 32 metri de cârnați, adică 80 de perechi de cârnați de 40 de centimetri fiecare. Și pulpa porcului poate candida la un record național: a cântărit 45 de kilograme. Pentru mușchiul mare cântarul s-a oprit la 11 kilograme. Bunătățile preparate din godacul uriaș vor fi mâncate la un bal al vânătorilor în februarie 2012, la care vor participa în jur de 200 de oameni. (Nicu Neag)



KISS fm

Asculti doar **HITuri!**

KISS FM

face sărbătorile frumoase!

La atelierele de educație urbană învătate în școli, copiii au realizat machete și colaje



Elevii învață la școală cum să trăiască în oraș

PREMIERĂ După trei ani de experimente urbanistice prin școli și licee, a fost lansat în această iarnă primul Ghid de Educație Urbană din România, document ce va sta la baza unui viitor manual alternativ

Raluca Sofronie
raluca.sofronie@adevarul.ro

„E foarte tare! Am participat la proiectul «Ia-ți orașul înapoi!» și am aflat lucruri interesante despre oraș, pe care altfel nu ți le spune nimeni. Ar fi o idee foarte bună ca educația urbană să fie materie la școală, să se predea o oră pe săptămână», spune Ana, elevă la liceul „Ștefan Odobleja” din Capitală.

Vă puteți gândi că patrimoniul industrial și explorarea urbană nu sunt cele mai interesante subiecte de conversație între liceeni. Greșit! Tinerii care s-au implicat în proiectul „Ia-ți orașul înapoi!”, cea mai amplă inițiativă de acest gen, derulată în șapte licee și opt școli din București, vorbesc cu însufletire despre ce au făcut din noiembrie 2010 când a început și până în prezent. Și au făcut o mulțime de lucruri!

Pentru început, elevii au învățat despre istoria urbanistică și arhitecturală a Capitalei, despre graffiti ca artă publică, despre patri-

niul, explorare și intervenții urbane.

Apoi au realizat filme documentare și prezentări multimedia pe teme precum arta străzii, sporturi urbane, demolări, clădiri de patrimoniu, istoria unor parcuri bucureștene sau viața de noapte a orașului.

ADOLESCENȚII AU SCHIMBAT FAȚA ORAȘULUI

Dar cele mai interesante activități au fost de departe intervențiile în spațiul public: elevii au îmbrăcat gardurile școlilor în graffiti, au construit băncuțe, au amenajat curtea unei școli cu mobilier din lemn și plante, au transformat aspectul unui parc din Ferentari (cartier marginal și rău famat), readucându-l la viață.

Toate acestea s-au întâmplat datorită Asociației Komunitas, un ONG care și-a

propus să schimbe mentalitățile oamenilor despre ce înseamnă să fii cetățean.

„Cei de la asociație au venit anul trecut în liceul meu să prezinte proiectul «Ia-ți orașul înapoi!».

Și-am zis: «oau, urbanism, ceva nou la noi în școală, trebuie neapărat să merg». Și mi-a plăcut, am învățat foarte multe. Partea mea preferată a fost realizarea unui film despre ce le place bucureștenilor la orașul lor, și așa am reușit și eu să cunosc orașul mai bine», povestește Cătălina, elevă la Colegiul Național „Mihai Eminescu”.

Școlul unui asemenea demers este de a transforma viitorii adulți în cetățeni mai buni. Asociația plănuește să extindă programul și în orașele din țară.

După toate aceste ateliere și intervenții, Ioana Florea,

cercetător în sociologie și Miruna Tîrcă, antropolog-fondatoarele Asociației Komunitas – au constatat că adolescenții au mare nevoie să se exprime liber în legătură cu orașul lor, dar sunt excluși de la procesele de luare a deciziilor urbane.

Așa s-a născut ideea unui manual. „Am zis hai să punem într-un loc tot ce am învățat din proiecte”, spune Miruna Tîrcă. Deocamdată Asociația a reușit să facă Ghidul de Educație Urbană, care va sta la baza viitorului manual.

„Mai avem mult de lucru. Cel mai important aspect legat de ghid e că va putea fi utilizat de profesorii care doresc să predea acest material ca sursă de documentare și informare”, spune Miruna Tîrcă.

CINE VA PREDA NOUL OPȚIONAL

Marea întrebare este însă cine va preda noua materie. „Am făcut acest Ghid ca material didactic, dar nu vrem

să-l punem în brațele profesorilor, iar ei să se descurce cum știu. Vom face cursuri de formare cu cei care doresc să predea”, explică Miruna. „Există și posibilitatea ca la început să mergem chiar noi în licee să predăm.” Din fericire, profesorii sunt des-



„Am făcut acest Ghid ca material didactic, dar nu vrem să-l punem în brațele profesorilor. Vom face cursuri de formare.”

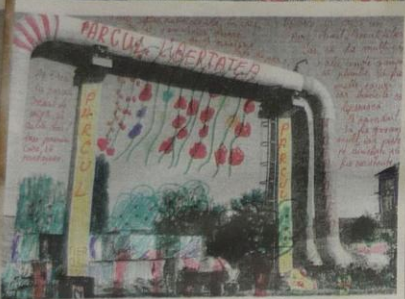
Miruna Tîrcă
președintele Asociației Komunitas

chiși. „Eu aș fi una dintre care ar face un astfel de opțional la clasă. Mi se pare poate adresa nu doar a profesorilor de liceu, dar și a profesorilor de gimnaziu”, spune Cătălina Ghită, profesor de Geografie la Liceul „Ștefan Odobleja” din Capitală. „Opționalul ar putea fi predat și de profesorul de Educație Plastică sau de Istorie de ce nu, chiar de cel de tematică sau de Informatică. O oră de educație urbană ar lărgi paleta de opționale, fiind un plus pentru profesorii de la liceu și pentru școlarii care adaugă profesora.

Ghidul are șapte capitole care pornesc de la istoria orașului și se termină cu proiectele culturale, produsul cultural, prin rândul său de cultură telegerea cătorva cartiere și tici simple ale spațiului în funcție de epocă și re au fost construite la constientizarea d lor și responsabilități care cetățenii le au în public, pe scurt, viața a orașului. ☺

15

școli și licee au participat anul acesta la proiectul „Ia-ți orașul înapoi” organizat de Asociația Komunitas.



Elevii au înfrumusețat cu carioca fotografiile unor zone din oraș

Cum să fii un cetățean mai bun



Elevii abia așteaptă să răsfoiască Ghidul de Educație Urbană

●● În 2009, Asociația Komunitas începea primele proiecte de educație urbană din România, adresate elevilor de gimnaziu și liceenilor. Asociația promovează educația urbană ca o îmbinare a unor elemente specifice mai multor discipline: antropologie urbană, educație vizuală, participare publică, urbanism.

Orașul este o reprezentare a acțiunilor tuturor cetățenilor, nu doar a administrației, consideră Anca Gînavar, director în cadrul Ministerului Dezvoltării Regionale și Turismului. „De aceea e foarte important ca procesul de educație să înceapă de cât mai timpuriu, ca oamenii să înțeleagă și să participe activ la această viață urbană, să aibă pretenții, să știe ce să aprecieze la un moment istoric, de ce trebuie să-l respecte, să știe cum să se poarte în oraș, ce să ceară administrației, când să se certe cu ea și, totodată, în clipa în care cineva vrea să construiască ceva, să înțeleagă că există un interes general, că dacă avem o proprietate a noastră nu putem face orice pe această proprietate, întrucât trăim într-o comunitate.”

O IDEE FOARTE BUNĂ

În ce-i privește pe elevi, aceștia sunt încântați de perspectiva unei noi materii care îi va învăța să-și negocieze mai bine poziția de cetățeni.

„În ultima vreme copiii nu mai au timp să iasă în natură, să vadă că există și altceva în afară de calculator. Într-o perioadă în care toată lumea se bazează pe electronică, noi am făcut altceva. Deci manualul e o idee foarte bună, pentru că îi ajută și pe alții”, spune Ioana, elevă la Colegiul Național „Ion Neulce” și participantă la proiectele Komunitas. ●

PE Pastila de educație



Carmen Constantin
jurnalist

Un 2012 mai deștept!

Sfârșitul de an te îndeamnă, vrând-nevrând, la bilanț. Ce s-a schimbat, ce a fost bine, ce nu, ce așteptăm...

Avem o lege nouă, care schimbă ciclurile de învățământ. Clase primare și gimnaziu de câte cinci ani, liceu de trei ani, care nu va mai fi obligatoriu. Absolvenții de nouă clase și de zece ani de școală ar putea intra la 16 ani în câmpul muncii. Sau ar putea merge la școlile de meserii, dacă acestea se vor reînființa. Partea bună e că schimbările se vor produce treptat, iar sistemul ar avea timp, cel puțin teoretic, să se adapteze.

Reversul medaliei: legea nu prevede termene clare pentru manuale noi, deși cărțile după care învață astăzi copiii sunt mult prea încărcate, uneori perimate sau, alteori, pur și simplu greșite. Corpul didactic îmbătrânește, mai ales că salariile derizorii „la intrarea în sistem” îi țin pe tineri departe de ambiția de a fi dascăl. Încă nu sunt destui bani, și nici nu se știe când vor fi.

Bac-ul 2011 va rămâne de pomină. A bătut toate recordurile negative imaginabile, mai ales pe cel cu elevi eliminați pentru că ar fi încercat să copieze. Primul examen supravegheat video a dat o rată de promovări sub 50%, la prima sesiune. Ne-a arătat unde suntem și nu

putem decât să sperăm că „am ajuns la fund”, că am atins punctul de minim de unde singura direcție posibilă e „în sus”. Așteptăm cu o oarecare preocupare Bac-ul 2012.

Anul care vine e primul în care elevii și dascălii deopotrivă vor încetca o săptămână de „școală altfel”, cu vizite la muzee și competiții sportive. Preșcolarii de 6 ani vor intra în primele „Clase Zero”. Toate liceele ar trebui să fie dotate cu sisteme de prezentă „antichiu”, pe bază de cartelă. Profesorii vor spera în majorări de salarii, fie și măcar pentru că vom fi în an electoral.

Un raport recent al Comisiei Europene ne arată că România continuă să fie pe ultimele locuri în privința majorității indicatorilor legați de educație: la abandon școlar, număr de absolvenți de studii superioare, copii plecați la burse în străinătate, preșcolari în grădinițe, rezultatele testelor internaționale care arată cum știu elevii noștri să aplice în viață ce au învățat la ore. Poate că motivele să fim optimiști nu sunt prea multe. Și cum spun europenii, de obicei, când vine vorba de România: „s-au făcut unele progrese, dar rămân încă multe altele de făcut”. Fie ca la anul să reușim să mai facem câteva! ●

Noul manual va ajunge pe băncile elevilor în toamnă

●● Manualul care va ajunge în toamna lui 2012 pe băncile elevilor de liceu va fi gata în luna mai și va păstra temele din Ghid, dar într-o formulă simplificată și adaptată nevoilor adolescenților. Bogdan Iancu, doctorand în antropologie la Școala Națională de Studii Politice și Administrative, e de părere că acest Ghid vine în cel mai potrivit moment. „Orașele din România trăiesc o freneză a reconstruirii peisajelor. E un moment în care hărnicia

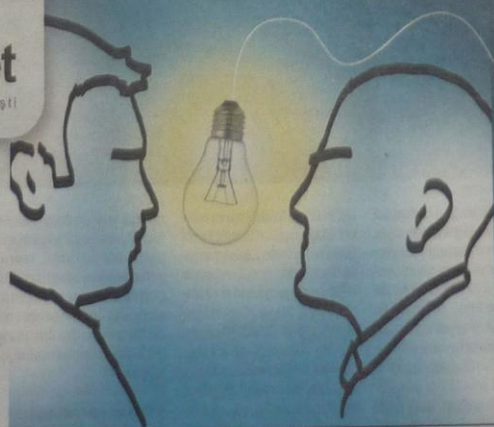
autorităților mă face să mă gândesc dacă n-ar trebui să li se spună elevilor că e mai bine să aștepte mai puțin de la autorități decât fac în general. Dacă vă gândiți prin ce trecem astăzi, cred că toți ne-am dori mai puțin zgomot și mai multă consultare despre ceea ce se întâmplă în jurul nostru. De pildă nu ești întrebat în ce culori se pictează cartierul, astfel un cartier liniștit, oarecum monocrom devine o favelă veselă fără consultarea locuitorilor.”

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profilul

Construiește-ți
rețeaua

Mărește-ți
influența



Ideile bune nu vin singure.

Nici oportunitățile, oamenii interesanți sau partenerii de afaceri.

Pe tetatet.ro găsești cea mai mare rețea de profesioniști din România, cu multe idei bune, oportunități și oameni interesanți.

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UN PROIECT SUBSTITUT DE
Adevărul
holding



Elevul Anului, Bogdan Baciu, a avut emoții în timpul discursului său de la Gala Premiilor în Educație

Mara Moise
mara.moise@adevarul.ro

●● E complicat să fii un tânăr cu inițiativă într-un orașel de provincie. Faci voluntariat, prietenii râd de tine că „o arzi aiurea”. Pleci în tabere, participi la traininguri, părinții se plâng că lipsești de la școală și că le arunci banii pe fereastră. Vrei să-ți asumi funcții și responsabilități, trebuie să-ți asumi și faptul de a fi diferit de ceilalți, cu toate dificultățile sociale care decurg de aici.

Se spune că suntem suma alegerilor noastre. Bogdan Baciu (18 ani), elev în clasa a XII-a la Colegiul Național „Nicu Gane” din Fălticeni, spune că suntem, de fapt, suma unor frustrări. Că toate reușitele, fie că recunoaștem sau nu, pornesc dintr-o frustrare „care nu-ți dă pace până n-o rezolvi”.

“

Să reprezinti peste 25% din populația României la cel mai înalt for din lume, în fața a 192 de state, e un lucru ce ține de domeniul SF pentru un puști din Fălticeniul nostru mic.

Bogdan Baciu
Elevul Anului

Dat fiind că Bogdan a făcut tot ce alții de vârsta lui se codesc să facă (e voluntar la „Salvați Copiii”, a mers în peste 20 de tabere, a participat la traininguri și conferințe, a organizat un festival internațional de teatru, este vicepreședintele Consiliului Județean al Elevilor și redactor-șef la revista liceului), suma frustrărilor sale n-a fost mică. „Să ai chiar și cea mai mică funcție în Consiliul Elevilor este dificil social, pentru că devii brusc diferit de ceilalți”.

La început, și părinții au fost de cealaltă parte a baricadei. „Orele lipsite de la școală, plecările prin țară la conferințe și cheltuielile unor sume de bani fără un rezultat concret, îi făceau să creadă – pe bună samă – că pierd timpul.”

Apoi s-a întâmplat imprevizibilul: Bogdan a fost ales să-l reprezinte pe tinerii din România la Organizația Națiunilor Unite, la New York.

ÎN FAȚA A 192 DE STATE

Pe 24 iulie, era cu colegii la mare când l-au sunat de la București, să vină la interviu. „A fost copleșitor, nici nu mi-a trecut prin cap că aplicația depășea acest concurs, «Delegat de Tineret la ONU», va avea un feedback pozitiv,

că un juriu m-ar putea alege în detrimentul unor studenți (în viziunea mea, mai în vârstă însemna mai capabil)”. Contracandidații aveau maiestrie și facultăți pe Relații Economice Internaționale, erau membri de partid și președinți de ONG-uri. Iar el, singurul licean.

„Este o responsabilitate enormă”, scria Bogdan, la vremea respectivă, pe blogul său. „Să reprezinti peste 25% din populația României la cel mai înalt for din lume, în fața a 192 de state, e un lucru ce ține de domeniul SF pentru un puști din Fălticeniul nostru mic. Urmează luni întregi de pregătire atât pe domeniul de politici de tineret, cât și al relațiilor economice internaționale, toate condimentate cu ore întregi de exersare a limbii engleze. Nu de alta, dar la discursul din fața a peste 400 de delegați, nu vreau s-o dau în bară.”

A SENSIBILIZAT AUDITORIUL

Discursul a avut loc pe 5 octombrie, a durat 7 minute și a reușit să sensibilizeze audiența, mai ales că „de la microfon nu vorbea un adult despre problemele tinerilor, ci însuși subiectul acestor discuții, un tânăr de 18 ani”.

Bogdan a stat la New York două săptămâni, timp în care a avut programul unui angajat cu ore suplimentare: ședințe formale și discursuri în comisi de la 9.00 la 13.00 și de la 15.00 la 18.00, urmate de ședințe informale și negocieri până la 20.00.

Ceea ce nu l-a împiedicat totuși să intre în atmosfera newyorkeză. „Trezitul de dimineață și alergatul în Central Park (aproso, oamenii din NY chiar nu sunt grași!), cafeaua și gogoșa, aglomerația, fericirea de pe fețele trecătorilor, muzica optimistă, mersul la muncă” (și trăirea sentimentu-

Raportul tânărului delegat la ONU

●● În prezentarea sa de la ONU, Bogdan a vorbit despre problemele tinerilor: rata șomajului, implicarea deficitară în activități de voluntariat (cu 13%, România este în coada clasamentului condus de Austria, Olanda și Suedia cu peste 50%). A vorbit de asemenea despre recentele măsuri luate de Guvern privind încurajarea și facilitarea înființării de către tineri a unor întreprinderi mici și mijlocii.

Elevul anului, din Fălticeni, la New York

AMBIȚIE Un băiat obișnuit face lucruri neobișnuite și ajunge Elevul Anului la Gala Premiilor în Educație a Fundației „Dinu Patriciu”

lui de a face toată ziua ceea ce-ți place), și seara încheiată pe străzile văzute în atât de multe filme (cu prețul unor papuci ruși de la atâta mers!). Toate acestea m-au transformat în fanul civilizației”.

**PROGRAMUL
CARE I-A SCHIMBAT VIAȚA**

Tot pe blogul său Bogdan scria că este sigur că acest proiect îi va schimba viața. S-a întâmplat. Acum se așteaptă să i-o mai schimbe de câteva ori până la finalul mandatului său la ONU, care durează un an. În februarie, urmează o nouă vizită la New York. „Deschiderile pe care mi le-a oferit acest program sunt infinite de prețioase, simple contacte care pot valora extrem de mult în cariera mea, care sper să fie una diplomatică.”

Când Fundația Dinu Patriciu l-a premiat la începutul acestei luni pentru toate realizările sale, Bogdan a marcat o victorie. „În sfârșit le-am putut dovedi celor care n-au crezut că voi reuși, că pierd timpul cu activitățile extrascolare și că mă îrosesc în loc să învăț, că s-au înșelât.” Pe părinții săi îi optese oamenii pe stradă ca să-i felicite.

Bogdan s-a întors la școală și încearcă să recupereze materia. Are teze săptămânile astea. Se pregătește și de Bac, dar fără pretenții, admiterea la facultate e mai importantă. Oscilează între Comunicare și Științe Politice. Abia așteaptă să termine liceul, să vină la București și să facă doar ce-i place. „Vreau să intru cât mai repede pe piața muncii, să aplic ce-am învățat și să cumpăr prima floare unei fete din salariul meu.”



Împreună cu Secretarul General al ONU, Ban Ki-moon

Alături de ministrul Klemen Hunor, la concursul Bilibonnet



7.000

de euro este premiul de la Fundația „Dinu Patriciu” pentru Elevul Anului.

Bogdan Baciu a stat două săptămâni la New York



Carmen Constantin
jurnalist

**PE
Pastila de educație**

Un buget pentru Educație!

Vă mai amintiti vremurile în care românii credeau că au cea mai bună școală din lume? Când eram eu copil, părinții mei aveau câțiva prieteni care aveau la rândul lor alți prieteni „plecați afară”, cum se spunea pe atunci, ai căror copii trebuiau să fie înscrși în anii superiori de învățământ „pentru a nu se plictisi la ore”, așa de avansați erau! Ani de zile, sfârșit de săptămână după sfârșit de săptămână, 23 august după 23 august și serbare de Moș Crăciun (acasă) după serbare de Moș Gerilă (la școală) am auzit poveștile astea! Mărturisesc că am fost întotdeauna puțin sceptică, dar nu m-am oboșit niciodată să verific dacă era adevărat, dacă într-adevăr copiii prietenilor părinților mei erau așa de avansați față de colegii lor (din Canada, cel puțin) cum se spunea. Știu sigur însă că părinții mei erau siguri de valoarea notelor pe care le primeam eu în școală, de nivelul educației pe care o primeam, de competența profesorilor mei. Nici atunci salariile dascălilor nu erau extraordinare, dar nici la nivelul în care să se compare cu veniturile muncitorilor necalificați nu ajunseseră. În plus, dascălii buni mai câștigau câte ceva din meditații. Și nu doar pentru că altfel ar fi dat note proaste la clasă, așa cum sunt suspecți mulți

dintre profesorii de azi, iar respectul pentru știința acestor oameni era la un nivel care astăzi nici nu cred că mai poate fi imaginat.

De 20 de ani încercăm să reformăm Educația, dar rezultatul acestor nesfârșite „îmbunătățiri” este că nimeni nu mai are încredere în ideea de reformă în învățământ, astfel că nici măcar o idee bună de schimbare nu poate fi pusă în practică fără să fie întâmpinată cu „unele” rezerve. Iar ideea unei reforme adevărate fără bani sau, și mai rău, cu bugetul Educației și mai mult redus, este de o originalitate pur românească. Guvernul a anunțat că în 2012 vor fi mai puțini bani pentru Educație și Cultură, mai mulți pentru serviciile secrete. Din acest punct de vedere, prioritățile par a fi clare.

Ministrul Culturii, Klemen Hunor, a protestat. Pe Daniel Funeriu încă nu l-am auzit, deși îmi imaginez că nici lui nu i-a picat bine. Întreb însă, pe jumătate retoric: când ați văzut ultima oară un tânăr inteligent, inspirat, competent, care să vrea să fie învățător sau profesor?

Și ca să fac un pic de haz de necaz la final, un citat din invitatul nostru din această săptămână, profesorul Vintilă Mihăilescu: „Nu mă îngrijorează exodul creierelor, ci amploarea lui”.

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AGENDA 29 SEPTEMBRIE

● **TĂLHĂRIE DEMONSTRATIVĂ:** Piața agroalimentară din centrul Buzăului va fi în această dimineață scena unei simulări a polițiștilor de la Ordine Publică, menită să testeze reacția trecătorilor. Oamenii legii vor inscena o tălărie în zona aglomerată și ulterior o demonstrație de imobilizare a infractorului.

ȘTIRI DIN TRAFIC

● **Lucrări pe carosabil:** Pe DN 7, în zona comunei Drăganu se circulă cu dificultate, pe două benzi, în urma unor alunecări de teren care au afectat acostamentul și parapetul metallic. Utilajele intervin pentru refacerea drumului, iar restricția de viteză este de 40 km/h.

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Copiii din familiile dezorganizate ajung de cele mai multe ori în atenția asistenților sociali. FOTO: IULIAN BUNILĂ

Copii de strănieri, cu mame de împrumut

INGRIJORARE Micuții care au mamele plecate în străinătate au intrat în atenția asistenților sociali din Buzău. Copiii neglijați sunt scoși din familie.

Iulian Bunilă
iulian.bunila@adevarul.ro

● Cazul fetei de 11 ani, de la Arad, care s-a infometat și a murit de dorul mamei le-a atras atenția inspectorilor de la direcțiile pentru protecția copilului. Inspectorii din Buzău au verificat câteva cazuri în care minorii au fost abandonați de mame plecate la muncă în străinătate. Anchetele sociale continuă, iar micuții lăsați în voia sorții de mamele plecate peste hotare ajung în grija statului sau, în cel mai fericit caz, la un asistent maternal. În această situație este și o familie de pe Aleea Grădini-

lor. Opt copii, între care două perechi de gemeni, una de trei ani și alta de un an, au fost părăsiți temporar de mamă, care a plecat în Franța, la muncă.

Copiii au rămas în grija tatălui. Autoritățile au aflat la timp despre situația tatălui cu mulți copii și au hotărât ca gemenii să fie plasați unor asistenți materni. Ceilalți patru frați au ajuns în plasament temporar la o mătușă.

STRIGĂTE DE AJUTOR

De o poveste asemănătoare are parte și un tânăr din Râmnicu Sărat. El are grijă de două fete de 4 și 5 ani,

lăsate de sora lui care a plecat în străinătate. Tutorele minorelor nu are decât 21 de ani și mai avea în grijă încă un copil, o altă soră în vârstă de 12 ani, pentru că și mama lui a plecat în străinătate. „Băiatul a solicitat sprijinul nostru, iar cei trei minori au fost preluați într-un centru de plasament

din Râmnicu Sărat”, a declarat Roxana Kovacs, purtător de cuvânt la Protecția Copilului.

Într-un alt caz de neglijență din partea mamei, intrat recent în atenția autorităților, este vorba despre șase frați, cu vârste de la 1 an până la 8 ani. Minorii au rămas în grija tatălui după ce mama lor a plecat de acasă. Unul dintre copii a fost luat deja în sistemul de ocrotire socială, alți doi sunt internați în spital, cu viroză, urmând să fie și ei preluați în centre de plasament, iar alți trei minori, cu vârste de 4, 6 și 8 ani, au rămas în grija tatălui. ○

Neglijență
Mai mulți copii ajung în sistemul de ocrotire socială

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MINISTERUL DEZVOLTĂRII REGIONALE ȘI TURISMULUI

GUVERNUL ROMÂNIEI

TRIBUTE OS

BUCUREȘTI, 29.09.2011

Finantare nerambursabilă pentru sprijinirea dezvoltării microintreprinderilor

Comunicat de presă

SC Alex's Beauty Salon SRL anunța începerea activităților proiectului "Impactul tehnologiei și calității serviciilor de înfrumusețare și îngrijire corporală asupra îmbunătățirii calității vieții locuitorilor din mediul urban" - Cod SMIS 24899

Proiectul va fi implementat prin intermediul unei finanțări nerambursabile acordate prin Regio-Programul Operațional Regional 2007 - 2013, axa prioritară 4 "Sprijinirea dezvoltării mediului de afaceri regional și local", domeniul major de intervenție 4.3 "Sprijinirea dezvoltării microintreprinderilor".

SC Alex's Beauty Salon SRL a încheiat un contract de finanțare cu Ministerul Dezvoltării Regionale și Turismului, în calitate de Autoritate de Management și cu Agenția pentru Dezvoltare Regională București Ilfov în calitate de Organism Intermediar pentru Programul Operațional Regional la nivelul regiunii București-Ilfov.

Proiectul va fi derulat în localitatea București, în perioada 09.09.2011 - 09.04.2012, cu o valoare totală de 463.598,08 RON din care finanțarea nerambursabilă este de 180.654,64 RON.

Pentru detalii suplimentare, Numele: Alexandra Visari, Manager de proiect
Tel.: 021.230.22.93; E-mail: Alexandra.visari@tributesalon.ro
„Conținutul acestui material nu reprezintă în mod obligatoriu poziția oficială a Uniunii Europene sau a Guvernului României”

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FOTOGRAFIA: SHUTTERSTOCK

Televizorul le amăgește inteligența

●● Copiii sunt suprastimulați de televizor și de calculator, iar inteligența lor se datorează într-o bună măsură tehnologiilor moderne la care au acces. Însă pe cât de utile sunt dezvoltării capacităților cognitive, pe atât de nocive pot fi dacă sunt utilizate în exces. „Calculatorul și televizorul sunt un rău necesar. Excesul este însă foarte dăunător dezvoltării intelectuale a copilului. Copiii cu vârste între doi și cinci ani sunt foarte vulnerabili și au cel mai mare risc de a dezvolta dependență de calculator sau/și de televizor”, spune prof. dr. Iuliana Dobrescu, medic primar psihiatrie infantilă. Cea mai afectată de privitul excesiv la televizor este capacitatea creativă a copilului, potrivit specialiștilor.

Diabetul de tip 2 poate fi automonitorizat

NOU

Alina Boghiceanu
alina.boghiceanu@adevarul.ro

●● Persoanele cu diabet zaharat de tip 2 își pot controla boala cu ajutorul unui concept inovator numit automonitorizare structurată a glicemiei. Această metodă se bazează pe înregistrarea glicemiei de șapte ori pe zi: a-jum, preprandial, la două ore postprandial pentru fiecare masă și înainte de culcare. După ce valorile glicemiei sunt înregistrate trei zile consecutiv, bolnavul trebuie să le comunice medicului. Protocolul de automonitorizare structurată pune accentul pe momentul în care pacienții se testează și pe modul în care personalul medical specializat folosește aceste date clinice. Doar în aceste condiții se poate obține un control glicemic eficient.

Automonitorizarea structurată a diabetului se folosește cu succes de câțiva ani



Glicemia poate fi monitorizată și acasă, după o anumită schemă

în cazul persoanelor diagnosticate cu diabet de tip 1 și 2 care sunt sub tratament cu insulină.

CONTROLAT DUPĂ NUMAI 12 LUNI

Deoarece existau controverse în ceea ce privește eficiența acestei metode și în cazul diabeticilor care nu-și administrează insulină, Laboratoarele Roche au realizat un studiu în acest sens. La cercetare au participat 483 de diabetici care nu luau insulină, iar pentru monitorizarea glicemiei s-a folosit sistemul de analiză Accu-Chek 360 View. S-a observat că, după 12 luni, valorile hemoglobinei glicozilate erau semnificativ mai scăzute. Datele statistice arată că, în România, există 600.000 de diabetici, iar numărul lor este în creștere. ●

Tulburările psihice, tot mai frecvente la vârste mici

DEZECILIBRU

Oana Antonescu
oana.antonescu@adevarul.ro

●● Fără dubiu, copiii de astăzi sunt mai inteligenți decât cei din generațiile anterioare. Ei știu să scrie și să citească încă de la grădiniță, pot să poarte o conversație de bază în engleză și cântă la un instrument sau practică un sport. Însă aceste abilități au de multe ori un preț: o vulnerabilitate psihoe emoțională mai mare. Când sarcinile pe care copilul le are devin prea numeroase, există riscul ca el să se simtă depășit și să devină

depresiv. Contrar opiniei unor părinți, această tulburare psihică nu apare doar la adulți. Între 3% și 8% din copii o dezvoltă, potrivit statisticilor internaționale, uneori chiar în jurul vârstei de trei ani. Până la pubertate, băieții sunt mai vulnerabili, pentru ca apoi frecvența depresiei să se inverseze la cele două sexe.

PĂRINȚII ÎN STRĂINĂTATE CAUZĂ DE DEPRESIE

Mai ales părinții care nu au timp pentru copii tind să-și orienteze spre diverse cursuri după programul de grădiniță sau după școală, în speranța că vor compensa astfel lipsa lor. Iar această tendință este tot mai pregnantă într-o societate care obligă adulții să lucreze foarte multe ore pe zi. La depresia copilului con-



zoom

AUTISMUL, UN FENOMEN ÎN ASCENSURĂ

În ultimii 10 ani, a crescut cu 17% numărul copiilor cu autism și cu tulburarea hiperkinetică cu deficit de atenție (ADHD) la nivel mondial. O mare parte din vină pentru acest fenomen este vârsta tot mai înaintată de concepere.

tribue, pe de o parte, supra-solicitarea, iar pe de altă, relația tot mai superficială cu părinții. În România, relația părinte-copil este și mai afectată în condițiile în care mii de copii sunt lăsați în grija bunicii pentru că părinții pleacă la muncă în străinătate.

Lipsa chefului de joacă, irascibilitatea și lipsa apetitului semnaleză depresia. „Lipsa de timp a părinților duce frecvent la apariția tulburărilor de comportament și de conduită de tipul furtului, minciunii și vagabondajului”, spune prof. dr. Iuliana Dobrescu, medic primar psihiatrie infantilă la Spitalul Clinic de Psihiatrie „Prof. Dr. Alexandru Obregia” din București. ●



Tot mai mulți copii sunt lăsați singuri în cea mai mare parte a timpului

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Să închidem orfelinatele! Copiii nimănui, acasă

CAMPANIE Există încă instituții de tip mamut, unde copilaria se consumă în pătuțuri cu zăbrele. Până în 2020, toți copiii părăsiți ajung „acasă”: unii în propriile familii, alții în centre maternale ori la părinți adoptivi

Cristina Olivia Moldovan
cristina.moldovan@evz.ro

S-au scurs mai bine de zece ani de când imagini din casele de copii românești, cu schilozi legați de pat și hrăniți în silă, făceau ocolul lumii. Străni se șocau și încarcu camioane cu ajutoare pentru români. Cum s-a schimbat de atunci viața copiilor instituționalizați?

„Evenimentul zilei” va prezenta în zilele următoare o serie de povești ale copiilor și tinerilor de care se îngrijește statul. Aproape 10.000 sunt încă prizonieri în 170 de centre uriașe și reci. Restul, fie au ajuns în familiile naturale, împinse de la spate de stat să-și ia pruncii acasă, fie în asistență maternală ori la părinți adoptivi.

Spinări și destine încovoiate

În Centrul de plasament „Alexandra” din Onești își trăiește existența 60 de suflete și trupuri chircite. „Vă rugăm închideți ușa când o deschideți”, scrie la intrarea în centru, mesaj ce ne amuză și mai șterge din tensiune. Urmează o întâlnire grea, cu tineri și copii cu nevoi speciale severe pe care nu-i vrea nimeni: nici părinții, nici asistenții maternali, nici familiile ce vor să înfieze.

E ora de somn, așa că pe holul întunecos se aud doar pașii noștri, cinci jurnaliști pe care fundația HHC (Hope&Homes for Children - Speranță și Case pentru Copii) i-a condus două zile prin instituții și case unde trăiesc copii protejați de stat și fundație.

În pătuțurile din dormitoarele centrului „Alexandra” se văd spinări încovoiate. Un puștii de 9-10 ani sare buimac din patul lui și o zbughește pe ușă. „Poză, poză, poză”, începe să țipe și se potolește doar în brațele unei femei din centru.

În camera alăturată, patru ti-

neri stau la o masă și se leagăna fiecare în ritmul și durerea lui: unii înainte și înapoi, alții de la stânga la dreapta. Se opresc câteva secunde, parcă și-au amintit ceva, apoi reiau mișcările.

Două fete cu figuri senine zâmbesc cu toată dantura la vedere. Nu înțeleg ce se petrece, dar par bucuroase de oaspeți. La fel e și puștii de lângă ele, echipat de plecare, cu ghiozdan în spate și șapcă galbenă pe cap.

Altă încăpere, alt tablou: un pătuț cu zăbrele, printre care se vântură o mână fragilă. Stă cu spatele, îi vedem limba care linge bara de fier. Alături de el, se leagăna un trup firav.

Locul unde sufletul se vindecă ori se betejește

De copiii aceștia au grijă 50 de persoane, care nu așteaptă de la ei decât să mănânce și să folo-



DESTINE. În centrul „Alexandra” din Onești trăiesc, la grămadă, copiii cu nevoi speciale severe
FOTO: HCC ROMÂNIA/PETRUŢ CĂLINESCU

170

de instituții de tip vechi, mamut, adăpostesc încă zece mil de copii și tineri abandonati de părinți

sească singuri toaleta. Acestea sunt performanțele maxime.

Doamna Otilia, o femeie mărunțică, lucrează aici de 23 de ani și își amintește de vremurile când copiii erau văzuți de personal ca „obiect al muncii”. Acum, vremurile s-au schimbat și abordarea e alta. „Nici nu se compară situația de acum cu cea din trecut. Acum, te uiți la copil ca la un om. Dacă nu muncești și cu sufletul, nu rezisti aici”, e concluzia ei.

Ea plecare, un panou ne scoate în fața ochilor un mesaj ce pare scos din alt film: „Sufletul se vindecă atunci când ești în preajma copiilor”.

SPRE NORMALITATE

Case de tip familial în locul orfelinatelor

Fundația Hope&Homes for Children - Speranță și Case pentru Copii (HHC) va închide până la finalul anului Centrul „Alexandra”. Copiii vor fi mutați în case de tip familial, aflate în construcție. Fiecare casă va avea câte patru dormitoare, living, spațiu de luat masă, bucătă-

rie și două băi. Până în 2020, HHC și-a propus să închidă toate cele 170 de instituții de acest fel din țară. În ultimii 12 ani, Fundația a scos din instituțiile de tip vechi 4.360 de copii. 44 de astfel de clădiri stau astăzi cu lacăte pe ușă, iar alte trei sunt în curs de închidere.

PUBLICITATE

Suștinem dezvoltarea societății românești



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NEAȚA!
SAMBĂTA 19 noiembrie
Sezonul lui STANCA

Dragă Catriel Meughia,
Ești considerată cea mai frumoasă româncă, ba și mai mult: una dintre cele mai frumoase femei din lume. Dar, adaug eu, fără noroc. Sau norocul începe să-ți surâdă de-abia de aici încolo, de când ai făcut pasul cu divorțul. De când te-ai eliberat de sub jugul macaronar. Te-ai amăgit crezând că Massimo Brambati ăla, fotbalistul italian, este perechea ta, Făt-Frumos din Oză. Și când colo, frumoasa mea, te-ai măritat cu o ciobă. Mai bine luai un tenor...

Acum, se pare că nu știi mare lucru despre italieni. Ei bine, macaronarii ăștia, în majoritate infatuați pe nimic, sunt mulți dintre ei chiar oameni de rînic. Născuți cantante. Născuți într-o țară binecuvântată de Dumnezeu - Italia, păcat că e locuță... Nu știu decât să cânte, să joace fotbal și să mîndance paste. E drept, o fac bine, uneori minunat. Dar fumulie din cap nu le dispar nici cu polita divină. Căci, și la ei proștii se dau mai despreți decât despreții înșiși. Aceste talente le conferă, așa precum spuneam, o îngâmfare de doi tehnici. Și, le mai dă un nejustificat și îngust simț atroce al posesiei. Cred că le-a dat Dumnezeu, Lor, Lumea. Nu e rău să crezi asta. Său, e mai bine așa decât să te naști cu sentimentul românesc al slugii, e mult mai bine. De aici, din această exacerbare de orgoliu, se naște gelozia. Așa orbiți, zgornțoși, crezând că în viața ei sunt singurii ei bărbați, crezând că vor fi singurii ei bărbați generații. Acum, în momentul în care, de frumusețe generoasă, acceptă să se mărită cu un bărbat care nu are nimic în comun cu frumusețea ei, se simțea că se aruncă în brațele unui frumuseț trecut de mai dureroasă decât trecera însăși a frumuseții. Apoi, știi și tu, frumusețea nu doare. Dar repet, treci! Obrăznicia ei-ului tău este însă că, devoratorul ăsta de fecioare, valahie a agățat pe net tot o româncă. "M-a părăsit. Ne-am despărțit acum șase luni. Vrei să vii la mine la Milano? Prefer să nu vorbesc despre astfel de lucruri personale aici. Când vii la Milano?"

Penibil, insistent și mincinos ca orice macaronar de rând. Rândas. Mascalzone!

George Stancu
PAMFLET

BUN!
Luminița Becali
Soția bossului de la Steaua are mare grijă de mama ei, pe care a dus-o la ozonoterapie.

Mădălina Pamfilă
Iubita lui Mazare stă noaptea la prezentări în club, deși e în plină perioadă a tezelor la liceu.

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Decizia magistratilor este definitivă. Magistratul proscris pe care elibera-
măditării profesionale pe care elibera-
rea acestuia este controlul judiciar. Dan Vi-
șan va rămâne după gratii 29 de zile, sub
accuzația de întreținere de relații sexuale
cu un minor. Dacă până atunci procurorul
cu un minor. Dacă până atunci procurorul
nu finalizează dosarul, judecătoarea va strîngi
no probele pentru întreprinderea în judeca-
tă, se poate cere prelungirea mandatului
de arestare cu încă 30 de zile.

Profu' de sport de la Liceul «Jean Monnet» a fost arestat, ieri, pentru 29 de zile. El susține că Oana l-ar fi rugat, în camera de la Predeal, să facă sex

«Haide, vinoș știu că și tu v

Profesorul de sport de la Liceul bucureștean "Jean Monnet" a ajuns după gratii. Acuzat că a întreținut relații sexuale cu o elevă, în timp ce se afla într-o excursie la Predeal, tânărul de numai 26 de ani își va petrece următoarele 29 de zile în arest. Dan Vișan a susținut și ieri, în fața judecătorilor, că Oana e cea care l-a "întărit" și l-a convins să facă sex.

CRISTINA MARCU

A venit la Tribunalul București în jurul orei 08.00, însoțit de tatăl lui și de avocat. Îmbrăcat cu pantaloni negri și o geacă maro, din piele, Dan Octavian Vișan a trecut, în patru ore și jumătate, prin toate stările posibile. Când a sosit la Tribunalul București, era agitat și pe fața lui se ci-

teau oboseala și îngrijorarea. Nu a vrut să stea de vorbă cu nimeni. A intrat în sală și a așteptat liniștit ca dosarul lui să fie judecat de cei trei magistrați. Procurorul de se-dintă le-a cerut judecătorilor să-l aresteze pe motiv că in-culpatul, organizator princi-pal al excursiei, a profitat de statutul lui și a avut "îndră-neala și dezinvoluțura" să o

cheme în camera lui de hotel, situată pe același palier cu a altor elevi, pe Oana R., în vârstă de 17 ani și 11 luni, și să facă sex cu ea. Tot conform procurorilor, profu' i-ar fi spus elevei că o tubeste și că vrea să întemeieze cu ea o fami-lie, să aibă copii. În repli-că, apărătorul lui Vișan a ne-gat acuzațiile și a spus că fata este vinovată întrucât a intrat peste el în cameră, îmbrăcată sumar. Pentru prima dată de la incident, profesorul Dan Vișan și-a spus punctul de vedere în fața judecătorilor. "Mă simt vinovat din punct de vedere moral. Regret cele întâmplate, dar am fost in-

Oana și-a acuzat profesorul de viol, la patru zile după excursie

Tot scandalul a pornit după ce mai mulți elevi de la Liceul bucureștean "Jean Monnet" au fost într-o excursie la Predeal, la sfârșitul lunii octombrie. Una dintre fete, Oana R., elevă în clasa a XI-a B, l-a acuzat pe profesorul de sport că ar fi violat-o. Plângerea a fost depusă la Poliție după patru zile, tatăl elevei explicând că întârzierea a fost cauzată

de faptul că el era plecat din țară. Oana R. s-a ales cu nota 4 la purtare, iar profesorul a ajuns după gratii. Tatăl Oanei, un prosper om de afaceri din Galați, a declarat pentru Click! că fiica lui este încă traumatizată de incident. El așteaptă încă rezultatele de la Institutul de Medicină Legală, care vor arăta dacă fata a fost abuzată sexual.



Tatăl Oanei susține nevinovăția fiicei sale

Oana R. e elevă în clasa a XI-a la "Jean Monnet"



Profesorul Vișan a fost răvășit la aflarea veștii că va merge după gratii



«i fă-o, rei asta!»

citată să fac asemenea lucruri. Nu am crezut că o să se ajungă aici. A venit la mine în cameră și și-a dat jos hainele. A tras de mine și m-a împins pe pat. Mi-a zis: «Haide, vino și fă-o, știu că și tu vrei asta!»» a spus proful în sala de judecată.

Dacă la sfârșitul seдинfeii, pe fața lui s-a mai zărit și câte un zâmbet, pe măsură ce se apropia momentul anunțării deciziei, acuzatul a devenit ca un leu în cușcă: a oftat, și-a frecat mâinile, s-a plimbat pe hoturi. Spera că va pleca din nou, liber, acasă.

«Știu că nu ea a vrut să meargă la poliție»

«Îmi este milă de ea, sincer să fiu. Știu că nu ea a vrut să meargă la Poliție. După aceea noaptea era foarte fericită. Pentru ea eram ca un trofeu. Chiar mi-a spus că multe colege de-ale ei mă plac. Ea obținuse ce nu au reușit altele», a spus Dan Vișan, încercând să le explice jurnaliștilor ce s-a întâmplat de fapt la Predeal. Vestea că va merge în arest l-a lăsat fără cuvinte. A simțit răceala cătușelor la încheieturi, pe care le-a ascuns de ochii curioșilor cu geaca.

Profesor de pian arestat pentru sex cu două eleve

Un caz a șocat recent România. Un profesor de pian din Sf. Gheorghe a fost acuzat că s-a iubit cu o elevă de-a sa de 12 ani și cu una de 15 ani. Totul s-ar fi întâmplat acum un an, iar părinții uneia din eleve au aflat toată povestea din jurnalul fetei. Tatar Gergely a fost arestat și el pentru 29 de zile.



PAGINA 3

Fata de sâmbătă

Nu rata **VOTEAZ-O!**

Cristina

Cristina Androne are 19 ani, este studentă și s-a născut în Buzău. Nu are iubit și consideră sexul la prima întâlnire o provocare.

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