Translation from Romanian language

„BABEŞ-BOLYAI" UNIVERSITY CLUJ-NAPOCA

FACULTY OF LETTERS

DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF LINGUISTIC AND LITERARY STUDIES

SCIENTIFIC DOCTORATE IN PHILOLOGY

OLD AND NEW MISTAKES IN ROMANIAN'S WRITTEN EXPRESSION

PhD coordinator,

PROFESSOR EMERITUS Gavrilă NEAMȚ, PHD

PhD student,

Bianca –Sofica PRUNCUȚ

CLUJ-NAPOCA

2020

CONTENTS

A. ARGUMENT

B. SCIENTIFIC GROUNDWORK

C. OLD AND NEW MISTAKES IN ROMANIAN`S WRITTEN EXPRESSION

Key words

Summary

Arguing the choice I have made, the paper starts from the idea that the way of speaking and writing defines the person, and the correct writing, according to the spelling rules, is a very popular subject, considering the fact that nowadays publishing and printing is extremely common.

It aims to study the most common mistakes, to discover, as far as possible, their cause and to analyse the degree to which the current generation of text authors is acquainted with the orthographic norms. The perspective of the present thesis is therefore of a normative type, its purpose being to present the linguistic structures which are not subject to the current norms and not to theorize grammatical notions or to propose new approaches in the analysis of linguistic facts. Approaching the relationship between written and oral, it is concluded that writing has a certain autonomy from oral expression.

In order to have a more conclusive image of the written language as it emerges in the Romanian press, we researched over 120 publications, be they daily or periodical, central or local, from 35 counties of all historical provinces, but also several books published in different publishing houses in the country.

The paper reckons and contrives on language compartments (phonetics, vocabulary, grammar) and - within grammar - on parts of speech and inflection, where appropriate, the most common faults encountered in the Romanian press (written and audiovisual) and in some books published by various publishing houses. The aim is, especially, to portray a synthetic image of Romanian

writing from the first and second decades of the 21st century employing the provisions of the second edition of *DOOM*.

For the scientific validation of the thesis, we first initiate a diachronic look into Romanian spelling, presenting the spelling reforms from the second half of the nineteenth century to the present day, appreciating that there should be a permanent balance between speech and writing. Reforms and the revision of spelling rules, although somewhat natural processes do nothing but confuse speakers.

The principles of Romanian spelling and their implications in writing are afterwards reviewed and commented on: the phonetic principle, the etymological principle, the syllabic principle, the morphological principle, the syntactic principle and the symbolic principle.

The third part devises the leading mistakes in the written expression of Romanians. Because most examples of spelling violations were taken from the written press, the preamble of the paper emphasizes the importance of text accuracy and correctness of expression so that the information conveyed by it reaches the recipient. Hence, the press can become a school of language cultivation and a means of essential communication between people.

The paper synthesizes some aspects of the reality of modern writing by examining some of the problems it raises through the well-known compartments of language: phonetics, vocabulary and grammar.

Phonetics

After highlighting the relationship between pronunciation and writing, and emphasizing the fact that the fundamental spelling principle of Romanian writing is phonetic, it is noted that phonetic changes in the oral code are not imposed as a literary norm, but they can affect the writing of lesser masters on morphology or writing, those who do not know the spelling rules. It should be noted that regional pronunciations were not taken into account.

A first problem would be that of contamination, in which case some weaker phonemes lose their properties in favor of the stronger ones. This phonetic phenomenon is invoked in explaining the errors caused by writing with *1-2-3 i,* in the incorrect use of the phonetic structures *des / dez,* in the diphthongization of the initial vowel and in neologisms or in the random writing with *cs* or *x*.

Homophony, a phenomenon that involves the appearance in language of words and morphological structures that are pronounced the same, but spelled differently, is the cause of very common mistakes, which prove poor grammatical knowledge. It is especially about the orthographies in which appear the unaccented forms of personal and reflexive pronouns, demonstrative adjectives of identity, feminine, singular and masculine plural, as well as the homophonic pairs of adverbs written tied or blank.

By changing the articulatory characteristics of one sound under the influence of another, assimilation causes many typos: *indentitate, intinerar.* Mistakes also occur in the case of paronym pairs: *incitat/incitant, marcat/marcant, șocat/șocant* and others.

The opposite phenomenon of assimilation is dissimulation, which leads to the modification (partial) or even disappearance (total dissimulation) of a sound in a word under the influence of another sound, identical or similar, in that word. This leads to typos such as: *delicvent, transcede.*

Hypercorrectness underlies many misspelled words. Also called *hyperurbanism, hyperliterary* or *false regression,* this phenomenon shows the desire of speakers to comply with the orthographic norms in force. A good example would be the word *corigent*, pronounced by some speakers *corijent,* believing that it derives from the verb *a corija.*

The erroneous spelling of some morphological forms of verbs also falls under this category: *așează, înșeală.*

The vocabulary is a chapter of the paper in which we present writing errors due to lexical causes. It is a natural and commendable desire that of any speaker (and author of written text) who wants to employ a vocabulary as elevated as possible, in the desire to be precise, clear and nuanced as he wants to convey to the interlocutor (or reader), but also to give the message (oral or written) the elegance of expression, to impress.

The desire of any speaker (and author of written text) to employ a vocabulary as elevated as possible in the desire to be precise, clear and nuanced in his message to the interlocutor (or reader) is natural and commendable but it leads to the excessive use of neologisms (we do not refer to specialized terms).The necessity here is to respect what is called the property of the

terms, that is, their correct meaning. Exact knowledge of the semantic sphere of words is the essential condition for a correct, accurate, nuanced, but also elegant expression.

The most common mistakes involving vocabulary are: inappropriate use of neologisms, without knowing the exact meaning of them and paronymic confusion. Inadequacy to the context also proves the use of neologisms only out of the desire to amaze. Thus, some Latin expressions whose meaning is not known to users are misused. Associations of terms are also made in incompatible syntactic structures: *ziar săptămânal, ziar lunar, a ateriza pe Marte.*

Grammar is a chapter in which errors are synthesized according to morphological classes. The mistakes encountered in written materials (press, spelling tests, official documents, advertisements, announcements, but even in some recently published books) are due to the problems raised by both word formation (by derivation, but especially those by composition: the use of the hyphen, the blank or the notation in a single body of the lexeme, the use of capital letters, especially in compound nouns), as well as the inflection. It is found that a large part of the population encounters problems in the construction of the plural form, in the construction of genitive-dative cases for feminine nouns, in the formation of the category of determination, especially in articulated proper nouns, but also in the writing of neologisms. Given the multitude of words of English origin that have recently penetrated into the Romanian language, the unschooled writer does not know if they are written as in English or are adapted to Romanian writing.

Notwithstanding the fact that the problem of using the two types of letters was complexly regulated by the "fundamental law" of Romanian spelling – $DOOM_2$, this question worries many of those who want to write a name of literary work, institution, animal breed, etc. And yet, in the written press, but not only, the answer given was not always the correct one, this type of error managing to take the first place in the top of frequency of typos. It should be noted that in the case of some of them, the norm is freshly changed, and those accustomed to the old rules have real problems in complying with the new spelling rules in force.

The inflection of nouns also causes writing inaccuracies. There is hesitation in the use of gender in some of the nouns, difficulties in using the endings of singular and plural or even confusion between the singular and plural numeral forms, especially in nouns borrowed from other

languages. The category of the case also raises some difficulties for writers with little grammatical knowledge. Although, at first glance, they seem less aggravating than those caused by the category of gender or number, being considered by some only grammatical subtleties, we consider that mistakes are deviations from normal language standards, regardless of their nature. Errors are also due to the use of analytical forms, but also due to the articulation of nouns.

Regarding articulation, although supposedly the simplest category of those of the noun, speakers encounter serious problems in its graphic marking frequently enough. Confusions and problems occur in definite articulated nouns, both singular and plural.

Consequently, in the singular form, there is an increasingly pronounced tendency not to mark in writing the definite article *-l,* a tendency that has its origin in colloquial language where the fast pace of speech causes speakers to stop pronouncing *-l /ul.* Situations are prevailing especially in the virtual environment, but not only.

The adjective, as a complement and determinant, which defines and qualifies, does not raise so many problems for users (oral or written). However, some hesitations and / or inconsistencies surface ,both in the colloquial style - with a spontaneous, unconstrained and less controlled expression, and in writing, determined by ignorance or, oftentimes, by superficiality anddisregard. Writing errors were found in materials from publications signed by people whose education and knowledge cannot be questioned.

The most common mistakes arise in the case of compound adjectives by ignoring the hyphen, when writing with *1 - 2 - 3 i,* in achieving agreement or building a morphological pleonasm, by using adjectives at degrees of comparison, although they do not allow this.

The pronoun raises a first problem in terms of its essence: the perfect fit between substitute and substituent, meaning the paradigmatic agreement in gender, number and case, between the two elements, which is not always achieved. The errors in this chapter are primarily related to the rich inflection of this part of speech, the presence of stressed forms that coexist with unstressed ones, and the lack of linguistic expertise of the speaker or writer, who often cannot achieve a paradigmatic agreement, not knowing who the pronoun replaces (as in the case of the semi-independent possessive pronoun).

As for the personal pronoun, due to orthoepic norms that require certain forms of it to be pronounced as a diphthong, there are often graphs with the notation of the semivowel. Also, a feature of our language is often ignored, namely the anticipation and resumption of direct and indirect complements, omitting the unaccented forms of accusative and dative.

Many problems are also raised by the adherence of semi-independent possessive pronouns to substitute nouns. Along with the use of hyphens and capital letters in the writing of nouns, the use of inappropriate forms of this type of pronoun occupies a leading place amidst the errors recorded by us.

Undoubtedly, the most common spelling mistake is provided by the structure of the relative pronoun which in the genitive case is preceded by *al / a / ai / ale*, and is so-called 'cross agreement'. Errors are particularly common and varied.

Disagreements in gender, number and case are also recorded in the pronominal adjectives of reinforcement.

The verb, being a very rich morphological class, determines numerous mistakes related to the transition from one inflexion to another, as well as morphological errors in the categories of mode, time and diathesis.

The adverb, being a heterogeneous part of speech, from a semantic and syntactic point of view, does not raise too many orthographic problems, except for the writing of compounds and - in some situations - in the construction of structures that express the state of intensity (degrees of comparison).

In the case of the preposition, an indispensable connector in almost any context, which imposes certain restrictions of use, the situation of hypercorrectness and inadequacy is frequently recorded, caused by ignoring the established constraints.

The conjunction does not raise too many problems in terms of spelling, but it does especially in terms of punctuation, restricting - in some cases - the use of the comma or imposing it in others.

Grammatical agreement is the essentialinstrument of expressing the relationship between words joined in a syntactic construction. The agreement between the predicate and the subject raises many problems because in current language there are many situations that do not comply with the grammatical rules of agreement. The use allows many variations of agreement, structures that represent hesitations of the speakers. These are manifestations of agreement by attraction or meaning and are not always excluded by the rules of literary language.

Pleonasm appears as a lexical or syntactic structure in which the second element is contained in the first or is synonymous with it, reaching the redundant association of words or expressions with the same meaning. It has enjoyed the attention of many researchers, with attitudes towards some pleonasms often permissive. The press, but not only, abounds in such constructions.

Our observations and conclusions are based on a corpus of texts excerpted from the 2014-2019 written press. Given the large segment of time, we do not exclude the possibility that, in the course of time, some publications have changed their name, political orientation and, why not, the editors.

By trying to classify and rank the most common writing errors encountered in the materials employed, we have resorted to two group criteria: a). in terms of their frequency; b). in terms of the severity

Classification of errors according to the frequency in which they appear in the written texts:

a). the use of small letters and capital letters, in the case of compound nouns and adjectives derived from proper nouns.

b). erroneous writing with 1 - 2 - 3 i, in nouns, adjectives, pronouns and possessive adjectives, verbs;

c). the omission or random use of the hyphen in compound nouns and adjectives or in the case of orthograms with unstressed forms of pronouns, error favored - sometimes - by homophones;

d). the wrong agreement of the adjective / participle with the determined noun, of the verbal predicate / copulative verb and of the predicative noun with the simple or multiple subject;

e). the incorrect achievement of the "cross agreement", in the case of the semi-independent pronoun in tandem with the relative pronouns which, when the proximity of the substituted nouns influences the incorrectness, through attraction;

f). the use everywhere of the unique form of the semi-independent pronoun or the random use of its forms;

g). writing with a single n, where it needs to be geminated and vice versa;

h). the inappropriate use of neologisms or their graphic alteration;

j). omitting article - l;

k). improper use of paronyms;

i). pleonasm and anacoluthon.

Classification of errors from the perspective of their severity:

a). inappropriate use of neologisms, because it affects communication;

b). improper use of paronyms;

d). anacoluthon;

e). all the others are unquestionable evidence of regrettable gaps in the knowledge of Romanian language along with its rules of use, and of the author's linguistic incompetence. However, but they do not affect the conversation:

- pleonasm;

- random use or omission of the hyphen, in compound words; the presence of homophones, written with or without hyphen, on a case by case basis, facilitates the error;

- the use of large and small letters at random;

- writing with *1 - 2 - 3 i* in all the exemplified situations;

- using only the form of 'a' for the semi-independent pronouns and not completing the "cross agreement" when it is in tandem with the relative pronoun;

- incorrect spelling of words with a twin or a double consonant where it is not required; anticipation in writing of the nasality in the case of some neologisms;

- the identical writing of some homophones of morphological order: the same / the same; once / once;
- omission of the definite article when it comes to the masculine singular

Ergo, the present paper is intended to be an alarm signal against all the linguistic deviations we encounter on a daily basis, whether we spend time on social networks, read a book, leaf through the newspaper or simply overhear people talking on the street.