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## STYLISTICS OF JOURNALISM AND JOURNALISTIC STYLE: FROM THE FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPERS TO THE TABLOIDISATION OF THE MEDIA

The aim of this paper is to present both the history of linguistic research into journalistic style in Slovenian and the development of Slovenian journalistic texts from the appearance of the first daily newspapers to the present. The two elements are interlinked so as to emphasise the more important researchers and the most representative or best researched periods of Slovenian journalism. The former begins with Breznik's linguistic criticism of »newspaper language« (1933), which is regarded as the first written reflection on functional varieties of Slovenian that includes the language of newspaper reporting. It continues in the 1960s when the first deeper linguistic-stylistic analysis of journalism appears and concludes by focusing on research after the »democratisation of the media« in 1991. The latter attempts to describe the basic developmental elements in Slovenian journalistic style from *Slovenski narod* (1873) to the present.

Namen prispevka je prikazati dva razvojna loka: 1. zgodovino jezikoslovnega raziskovanja slovenskega poročevalskega stila in 2. razvoj slovenskih poročevalskih besedil od začetkov v prvih dnevnikih do sedanjosti. Oba loka sta prepletena tako, da poudarjata pomembnejše raziskovalce in značilnejša ali bolj raziskana obdobja slovenskega poročevalstva. Prvi razvojni lok se začne z Breznikovo jezikovno kritiko časopisnega jezika (1933), ki jo štejemo za prvo zapisano razmišljanje o funkcijski zvrstnosti slovenskega jezika, v katerega vključuje tudi »časnikarski jezik«. Nadaljuje se s 60. leti, ko se pojavijo prve poglobljene jezikovno-stilistične raziskave poročevalstva in se ob koncu osredotoča na raziskave po »demokratizaciji medijev« l. 1991. Drugi razvojni lok je poskus opisa bistvenih razvojnih prvin v stilu slovenskega poročevalstva od Slovenskega naroda (1873) do sodobnosti.

**Key words:** stylistics of journalism, development of journalistic texts, tabloidisation of the mass media

**Ključne besede:** stilistika poročevalstva, razvoj poročevalskih besedil, tabloidizacija medijev

### 0 Introduction

Linguistic research into journalistic texts, not only in Slovenia but in general, is relatively young. Those offering an overview of the discipline (Zelizer 2004: 111) cite the last 30 years as the period when interest began to be shown in the linguistic description and analysis of journalistic language. It could be said, though, that Slovenes anticipated this time frame by several decades as Breznik in 1933 included »newspaper language« among his functional varieties, noting that it was the most influential but at the same time the lowest in terms of value.

However, most early contributions, including Breznik's, remained at the level of language criticism; authors were not generally interested in newspaper texts as examples of a functional text variety with particular linguistic and stylistic characteristics, but merely judged the texts on the basis of the »mistakes« that appeared in them.

Korošec (1976: 11–103), describing the state of Slovenian research into journalism up to 1975, observes that we cannot view these studies as serious linguistic contributions, as evaluation based on linguistic correctness is not research and identification of style, but merely language criticism, which easily becomes the quotation of material for different degrees of purist indignation at language errors.

Serious research into journalism was made possible in the 1960s, when linguistics outgrew at least the hierarchical perception of the functional classification of the standard language and when the marked linguistic-stylistic heterogeneity of journalism was identified as a hindrance for further research. This is due to the fact that journalistic texts are by definition aimed at the general public. On the one hand they include texts with the characteristics of scientific or popular scientific sub-genres (objectivity, unmarked language) and on the other they extend into artistic genres (subjectivity, emotional expressiveness, the use of figurative language and figures of speech), so that the language is not uniform – »sometimes it is close to scientific language, sometimes to artistic and sometimes to practical communication« (Toporišič 1992: 238). It was necessary, from among these heterogeneous texts which failed to present a unified object of research and thus no useful findings, to narrow the focus of study to news reports, in which the special role of linguistic devices is clear without further investigation.

This narrowing of the focus came about in the 1970s, when a more thorough and more modern approach was adopted to the discussion, evaluation, and research of *newspaper style* within the framework of specific journalistic functional varieties. According to Korošec (1976: 26), the weightiest contributions of this kind were made by Janez Dular (1971/72; 1974a; 1975a; 1975b). According to Korošec (1976: 27), a fundamental shortcoming of Dular's approach is his label »*publicistic*« language.

Korošec thus set aside from the stylistically varied journalistic variety the texts that are created anew each day, i.e., restricted the object of research to daily newsprint and showed that, within heterogeneous journalism, there is a particular field that is realised by the work of reporters, i.e., journalistic activity. The result of this work or activity is journalistic texts which, due to the influence of objective stylistic factors, developed unique linguistic devices. Korošec analysed the majority of these devices on the material published after 1968 and in his further studies on the stylistics of Slovene journalism. After 1981, he replaced the initial label of *newspaper style* with *journalistic style*. In so doing he rejected looser terms, such as *newspaper language*, *the language/style of reporting*, *newspaper Slovenian* or even the derogatory *journalese*, deciding at the same time that the term *newspaper* was unsuitable because »certain identified elements of newspaper style (written to be read) are identical to elements of radio news reporting (spoken to be heard)« (Korošec 1998: 10–12).

Within the broad journalistic functional variety there are thus narrower fields such as reportage, which is »a narrower journalistic activity, usually daily informing of the public of events in those spheres of life which are understandable to us and of interest« (Korošec 1994: 287). It is precisely the daily publication, because of which we speak of two important style-forming factors – the similar or repeat circumstances that the newspaper text articulates (Korošec 1976: 33, 34) and the time pressure – that shapes the particular characteristics of language and style in journalism.



## 1 The history of newspaper language as the origin of journalistic style

The formation of texts and their typological and generic features depends on the social and reporting needs of a particular period, and these needs often encourage language development or the adaptation of language to meet new needs. As Schildt (cited in Sommerfeldt 1997: 26) emphasises, in linguistics there is really no need to look for the causes of language changes in the reporting needs of a particular period if the changes are of a formal nature, if they are about grammatical structure. But when the reasons for change have emerged from changed social needs that have influenced the circumstances of reporting, they must be taken into account as basic factors of language development.

In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Slovenian standard language developed rapidly and adapted functionally to new fields that arose due to two important developmental factors: the growth of mass media (and thus written journalism) and the important advances in sciences that led to technological development and opened numerous terminological questions in Slovenian. The standard language was faced with new tasks, one of which was the result of the founding of the first daily newspaper in 1873.<sup>1</sup> The language had to adapt to a demanding new role, i.e., to provide information each day about events that the editors thought would be of interest to the readers of a Slovenian daily. Due to the lively social development, dynamic political life, and the ever growing number of new organisations in the final decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were more and more such events. Because of time pressure and technical limitations a need for brevity of texts, and the competition, specific linguistic features that characterise journalism developed with the first daily paper.

In my research into the development of the linguistic and stylistic elements characteristic of the first Slovenian dailies (Kalin Golob 1998) I paid particular attention to the analysis of *journalistic reports*, i.e., texts with a predominantly informative function. I attempted to identify and categorise the linguistic devices developed by the Slovene standard language faced by the new reporting demands of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, i.e., in developing news reports to keep the readers of Slovenian daily newspapers up to date with political, economic, and social developments. One of the aims of this research was to ascertain to what extent the generic features grew out of the Slovenian standard language and to what extent they were influenced by the generic features of the more developed German press and journalism. Some influences were identified through a comparison of the first Slovenian daily newspaper *Slovenski narod* (1868/73–1945) with the German-language *Laibacher Zeitung* (1778–1918). The latter, published in Ljubljana, was losing its influence towards the end of the century (Amon 1988), as the political situation was increasingly unfavourable towards it and it failed to develop linguistically or stylistically, while *Slovenski narod* overtook it in terms of the generic and linguistic-stylistic features of its journalism.

During the analysis, in particular with regard to extracts from late 19<sup>th</sup> century material, the question arose as to whether the comparison was still relevant. For that

<sup>1</sup> *Slovenski narod* first appeared in 1868, but until 1872 it was published three times a week.

reason I also made comparisons with the Munich daily *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten* (MNN).<sup>2</sup> An examination of reports and news items in MNN from 1895 to 1900 confirmed the results obtained through the comparison of texts from *Slovenski narod* and *Laibacher Zeitung*. The more developed German journalism acted as both model and competition. When in their early days German newspapers accumulated verbs in place of quotation set phrases, Slovenian papers followed suit, creating ever more new verbs to show the expressive capabilities of standard Slovenian. The range of abstract vocabulary, in particular verbs of reporting (*verba dicendi*), increased considerably and new (standard) syntactic patterns were formed. Although the range of options widened, the external, objective, style-forming factors resulting from daily publication, i.e., hasty formulation of texts under time pressure, only some were accepted as standard. The telegram also played a role in the creation of linguistic features of journalistic texts, as it influenced the textual, syntactic, and lexical properties of German (Burger 1990: 8; Haß-Zumker 1998: 193) and Slovenian news reports (Kalin Golob 1998: 85–99). Economising with words (the principle of succinctness) influenced the selection of the most essential words that later became standard news vocabulary and a new word family relating to the new technology was formed in the standard language (*telegram, telegrafirati, telegrafski*).<sup>3</sup>

The generic features of Slovenian journalistic texts at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century are comparable with those of German texts.<sup>4</sup> Due to the external style-forming factors news reports developed specific journalistic characteristics, i.e., a number of set phrases and formulae. In the daily newspapers, a distinction slowly arose between the style of journalistic reports (short items, extended items, continued reports, announcements, news reports) and evaluative texts (commentaries, editorials, columns, analytical articles, portraits). The former, because of their predominantly informative function, began to lose elements of commentary and include set phrases and neutral expressions, while the latter gradually freed themselves from their literary and correspondence tradition to become the first newspaper texts with a predominantly interpretative role.

<sup>2</sup> MNN has its origins in the year 1848, when it appeared under the name *Neueste Nachrichten aus dem Gebiete der Politik*. In 1887 it was taken over by Julius Knorr, renamed *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten* and revamped into a liberal political institution. It appeared until 28<sup>th</sup> February 1945, when it was replaced by the still current *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (Holz: 1972, 191). Today *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten* is a daily regional supplement to *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, containing news items relating to Munich and Bavaria.

<sup>3</sup> Along with the Slavic synonyms *brzjav, brzjaviti*.

<sup>4</sup> Haß-Zumker (1998: 150–194) comes to strikingly similar conclusions with regard to the use of established set phrases in German newspapers. She discusses the rise of the »formulaic tradition« in printed news reports from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Part of this is represented by the »formulations« that in the stylistics of Slovenian journalism /news reporting are referred to as »referential automatisms« (*sklicevalni avtomatizmi*). The parallels with Slovenian are great both with regard to the use of verbs instead of »referential automatism« (the terminology is, of course, different) as well as sentence construction. Her findings confirm the view (Kalin Golob 1998) that the more developed German press acted as a model for Slovenian journalism and that the objective style-forming factors represented by the given (and multiplied) possibilities within each language led to the selection of the most appropriate resources for effective (economic, topical) reporting that gave rise to the stylistic features of the sub-genre of journalistic news reporting in the Slovenian (German) standard language.

## 2 The 20<sup>th</sup> century and Slovenian journalistic style

With the increase in the number of daily newspapers and in the volume of information they contain, with new technical possibilities and photography, Slovenian daily newspapers in the 20<sup>th</sup> century become increasingly similar to the contemporary ones. As comprehensible linguistic-stylistic studies refer to the period after 1960s, there is unfortunately no clear picture of the language and style of daily newspapers in the first half of the century. From what is known about the appearance of journalism and its development up to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the situation from the late 1960s onwards, one can infer that the different norms relating to informative and interpretative genres that appeared in the first dailies became distinct in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Thus from the stylistic point of view a tension arises between the use of stock elements and contemporising elements: set phrases and formulae are expected in informative texts, contemporising elements in interpretative journalistic texts. Korošec's contributions on newspaper style published in the late 1960s (1967–1969) in *Gospodarski vestnik*<sup>5</sup> already cite set phrases as self-evident characteristics of news reports, initially (in 1968) by way of counter-argument to those who saw in them the stereotypicality, tediousness, and lack of creativity in journalists' work.

A more important contribution to the reevaluation of such views was Korošec's doctoral thesis (*Poglavja iz strukturalne analize slovenskega časopisnega stila* – Chapters from the Structural Analysis of Slovenian Newspaper Style, 1976), which critically evaluates the existing contributions, discussions, and views on the language and style of journalism and analyses its functional characteristics, i.e., »how language – the Slovenian standard language – works when we assign to it the role of journalistic reporting« (6). This work is followed by a number of articles on individual elements, which in 1998 Korošec supplemented and revised into a deeper analysis of Slovenian journalism and which represents the first such exhaustive theoretical stylistic and text-linguistic analysis of journalistic texts – not just in Slovenian, but also in European and American linguistics.

## 3 Journalism after 1991

The period following Slovenian independence brought a considerable degree of uncertainty and change to the country's media. The rudiments of popular press in the common state (the tabloid *Kaj*) grew into the tabloid daily *Slovenske novice* (*Slovenian News*), while the so-called serious press, in response to competition, replaced some of the principles of quality journalism with more market-oriented approaches. This is most apparent in headlines, which increasingly become a means of attracting consumers, so that the boundaries between the serious and tabloid press, at least in this respect, become blurred.

In Slovenian journalism from the 1990s onwards the borders between genres become indistinct (Kalin Golob 2004a) and the separation between the stylistic norms

<sup>5</sup> Partly reprinted in *Pet minut za boljši jezik* (1972), including the contribution mentioned here (20–22).



of informative and interpretative texts unclear. The notion of democracy is often misinterpreted by writers of journalistic texts to mean unlimited freedom, i.e., freedom without responsibility. This issue was addressed by a research project into the use of insults in the print media<sup>6</sup> that showed how the number of complaints against journalists under Article 169 of the Penal Code (libel) has grown enormously. The pages of newspapers are often filled with journalistic contributions whose linguistic choices raise stylistic, ethical (cf. Poler Kovačič 1997, 2001, 2003), and legal questions. The research, the results of which were published in the collection *Razžalitve v tiskanih medijih (Insults in the Print Media)*, ed. Tomo Korošec, 2002), showed that libel was often realised through deliberate choice of non-standard and expressive linguistic devices that were insulting in the specific context.

It is well known that stylistically marked linguistic devices in journalistic texts have long played an evaluative role as well as enriching the texts. In the cases we are considering they were indicators of insults. The transfer of non-standard, expressive and other stylistically marked elements into journalistic texts after 1990 thus took on a new role – some of them, because of their insulting connotations, were from a linguistic stylistic point of view identified as devices that were intended to show contempt – the consequence of which was that those who had been libelled sought satisfaction in the courts.<sup>7</sup>

The new role these elements assumed in the Slovenian tabloids is most evident in the more frequent presence of (low) colloquial elements, from lexicon to sentence patterns. The newspaper becomes a commodity which sells on the basis of more or less juicy stories about public figures. Through the open door of the only important market came »the only missing sign of Western commercial journalism – sensationalism« (Korošec 1998, 150), which appears in popular or tabloid journalism. A definitive analysis of contemporary media practice has yet to be completed, but some research has been done (Korošec 1998: 149–159; Kalin Golob 2003; Kalin Golob, Poler Kovačič 2005).

Alongside changes that were conditional upon the tabloidisation of the media and which are visible in the appearance of new genres (investigative stories, journalistic stories, features) or mixtures of old genres (extremely unrefined genres in *Slovenske novice*), and which at the language level introduced into the texts an abundance of substandard elements and colloquial patterns, we can also discern new developmental tendencies in the elements that had become established or automatic in the quality press by 1991. In the rest of this paper we shall present some of them by comparing Korošec's (1998) analysis with the situation after 1995.

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<sup>6</sup> The research project *Insults in the media as a linguistic and a legal question* (1999–2001) was led by Dr. Tomo Korošec.

<sup>7</sup> Examples and analysis are available in the already mentioned collection (Korošec 2002).

### 3.1 Journalistic referentiality

#### 3.1.1 The expression of unreliability with regard to the reported event.

Korošec (1998: 33–42) discusses the particular grammatical form that developed in journalism at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Kalin Golob 2003: 120 ff) to satisfy the need for expression of something unproven, uncertain, and unofficial. The reporter cannot report on alleged misdemeanours, criminal offences, or unconfirmed information as if they were certain, proven, or confirmed, as for purely legal reasons an individual is presumed innocent until proven guilty. Along with certain words or word combinations (*XY je osumljen* – *XY is suspected of*, *domnevno dejanje* – *an alleged offence*, *menda* – *supposedly*) that are used to describe such circumstances, journalism also developed a morphemic expression of the state of being unproven, i.e., the form *naj bi + l-participle* (*naj bi ukradel* – *is alleged to have stolen*; *naj bi aprila obiskal Slovenijo* – *is expected to visit Slovenia in April*). This pattern was at first attacked as non-Slovenian, but Korošec, taking pragmatic factors into account, showed that it came into being to meet a particular journalistic need and was thus a journalistic stylistic device, a special form that is neither predicative, nor conditional, nor imperative, but rather a hybrid form that he labeled *ne-povednik* (>non-predicate<).

In spite of the extensive analysis, the range of collected material, and the years of research evidence supporting the use of this special form, Janez Sršen in one of the latest manuals of style (1998), attempts to get rid of it. Under the headword *naj bi* Sršen (1998: 86, 87) on the basis of his work as a language editor rejects this serious research work: »the expressive power of the language is **weakened** by certain linguists who **thoughtlessly** declare the use of *naj bi* to be an established journalistic feature suitable for expressing a supposed event in **the past**« (emphasis by MKG). Like Gradišnik before him (1981/82), Sršen corrects this type of examples with the form *naj bi bil*, which is the past conditional form in Slovenian and has another grammatical role. In journalism the pattern *naj bi + l-participle* is also used to express an »assumption about the future«, which is particularly common in diplomatic affairs (with the pragmatic meaning »XY will visit Slovenia, but this has not been officially confirmed«). The roles of the *non-predicate* are analyzed in numerous examples and it is made clear that *naj bi + l-participle* »does not express any temporality or phase, but takes its temporal determination from the context and the circumstances of reporting« (Korošec 1998: 39). More than a century of use shows its necessity and stability, therefore Sršen's »explanation« should serve as a (symptomatic) example of the cultural-linguistic tendencies in Slovenia remaining unchanged, that linguistic research, unfortunately, has no influence on certain individuals (even though it should represent one of the foundations for their work) and that the development of the expressive capabilities of language linked to its new role in journalism can be considered its weakening only if one fails to acknowledge the facts. The consequence of this ignorance is continued »corrections« of *naj bi bil + -l*, occasionally (depending on the particular editor on duty) seen in the newspapers *Večer* and *Dnevnik*.

With regard to the expression of unreliability, where Korošec identifies as a typical element the particle *menda*, it should be added that today's media also makes use

of *baje*, which appeared as an unmarked form in the first daily newspapers (cf. Kalin Golob 2003: 117–120). For the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Korošec (1998: 203) considers it colloquial and therefore marked in journalism.

The word *baje* seems to have returned to Slovenian journalism via the tabloids. In order to get closer to the addressee, the tabloids create a pseudo-intimate language (Luthar 1998) that includes colloquial elements such as *baje*.<sup>8</sup> The other reason seems to lie in the fact that the news printed in the tabloids is somewhat unreliable, since it is based on questionable sources and hearsay, for which *baje* is actually a good indicator of the quality of reporting. From the tabloids, the expression spread to the commercial television station POP TV, which alongside the (over-)frequent use of the adjective *domneven* (translated from American sources) at the expense of the more usual *naj bi + l-* participle for an alleged criminal offence often relies on information derived from hearsay. And from here, its use seems to have spread to the »serious« dailies, for it can be found in *Delo*<sup>9</sup> and *Večer*.<sup>10</sup> The frequent use of *baje* even spread into court reports, which are sometimes written as if they were based on gossip rather than proven acts, which are, because of the presumption of innocence, recorded with *naj bi + l-* participle (Korošec 2004).

### 3.1.2 Quotation referentiality

Although Korošec (1998: 209) observes that direct speech occurs relatively infrequently in written reporting, the situation in recent years has changed. Slovenian daily papers often carry reports that could be best described as a collage of statements. The same point is made by Srpova (1998: 65) in relation to Czech papers since 1990. She believes that this is primarily the result of pressure for accuracy and the avoidance of rephrasing, which could be counted as subjective and thus reduce the credibility of informative genres. In reports on Slovenia's joining NATO,<sup>11</sup> the texts are sometimes composed almost exclusively of statements from politicians.<sup>12</sup> This is not the only topic (exceptional circumstances, the importance of this topic for Slovenia) treated like that, but all three dailies (*Delo*, *Dnevnik*, *Večer*) publish reports that place the journalist's verbal competence firmly in the background. To take but one example (*Je*

<sup>8</sup> »Holmes [...] pa baje ne načrtuje velikih tekem« (*Slovenske novice* 29. 10. 2004, p. 18).

<sup>9</sup> »Težave so tudi astronomski računi, po podatkih Potrošča menda t-ht vsak dan pošlje okoli 30 spornih računov, nekateri so *baje* visoki tudi 100.000 kun ...« (*Delo*, 27. 10. 2004, p. 17).

<sup>10</sup> Research projects carried out as part of the subject Stylistics of Journalism over the last two years have highlighted the tendency to use *baje* with unofficial comments, as the following example shows: »O brancinih je voznik *baje* izjavil, da jih je pri nas kupil kot preizkusni 'vzorec' /.../ Informacija je neuradna.« (*Večer*, 12. 11. 2004, p. 21).

<sup>11</sup> The research project *The Media in a Pluralist Society* (led by Melita Poler Kovačič) which was carried out in 2002/2003 at the Centre for Research into Social Communication at the Faculty of Social Sciences. The project, part of the Targeted Research Programme »Slovenia's Competitiveness 2001–2006« was financed by the Ministry of Education, Sport, and Science and the Government Public Relations and Media Office.

<sup>12</sup> For example: *Neslana šala ali minister že ve, kaj govori* (*Delo*, 23. 1. 2003, G. Utenkar), the body of the text has 68 lines in three columns of which 50 are direct speech.



*Luka Koper diktator slovenske države? Večer* 10. 4. 2004, 9, Damjan Toplak): a long, four-column report has 287 lines of which only 20 are the reporter's words and even those are merely clauses accompanying the direct speech.<sup>13</sup>

The job of the journalist is not to string together quotes or to form a mosaic from the statements of one or more politicians, but to write a coherent and readable text, in which other methods of source citation or abstracting do not mean the lack of objectivity, but, rather, show the journalist's verbal skill and his/her mastery of the stylistic features of the genre.

At the same time, such collages are a type of manipulation. In the text under consideration (footnote 12), direct speech plays another role, i.e., only extremely evaluative literal quotes are selected. The selection of quotes that assign a negative value to the statements of a particular politician is done so as to express an opinion in an informative genre, but in a concealed fashion – only seemingly appropriately by using direct speech: »These kinds of statements are clearly false and misleading propaganda [...] which show that the government, lacking genuine arguments, is resorting to manipulation and lies ...«

Quotations can also be contemporizing elements: in informative texts that describe repeating circumstances they represent a break with the automatic use of set phrases and provide colourful statements that liven up a dull text (Srpovala 1998, 70). In reports on NATO they also transform some texts into concealed evaluation, which is unexpected in an informative genre. A quotation can also provide an alibi to the journalist, allowing him/her to pass on responsibility for what is said to others: »The party New Slovenia referred to Grizold's 'trivial and untrue' statement as groundless threats. [...] The student movement against militarisation characterised Grizold's words as 'false and misleading propaganda' ...« (*Neresnost z namenom? Delo*, 23. 1. 2003, G. Utenkar).

### 3.2 Headlines

Korošec (1998: 43–159) discusses in detail the headlines of newspaper news reports as he believes these to be the most distinctive element of written reporting. With great precision and thoroughness he analyses »headlining« – text formation adapted to the particular way of reading a newspaper so that the most important information is in a graphically highlighted location. Taking into account the findings of other researchers of newspaper headlines, he identifies and renames the functions of headlines, uses clear criteria to determine their typology, discusses headlines involving punctuation, and researches a special contemporizing element in newspaper headlines, i.e., recycling. In light of the frequency of ellipsis in headlines he categorises elliptical headlines and in relation to difficult processing of certain headlines he identifies two kinds of veiled headlines – empty and hyperbolic. This exhaustive analysis, which is also

<sup>13</sup> ... ugotavlja Boštjan Penko, direktor vladnega urada za preprečevanje korupcije ... pravi Boštjan Penko ... Bruno Korelič, predsednik uprave Luke Koper, komentira Penkove navedbe: »[...]« ..., razloži Korelič ...

text-linguistic (cohesion, co-reference, anaphoric and cataphoric links) confirms the author's opinion that headlines are one of the key style-forming characteristics of journalistic style.

When one adds the changes that have taken place over the past ten years to Korošec's analysis, one can observe that newspapers have become a commodity and as other competing products, they win readers with numerous advertising campaigns and tricks. The effort to attract consumers who will read the paper or listeners/viewers who will listen to a programme or sit in front of the TV, is particularly evident in the front page headlines of the newspaper or in radio or television trailers (in which the function of attraction predominates). Headlines are thus increasingly a means of encouraging purchase, listening, or viewing. At the language level this is evident in the use of elements that prior to 1990 rarely appeared in headlines or journalistic texts, i.e., vulgarisms and low colloquialisms (cf. Kalin Golob: 52–54). Another difference is in the increasing use of hyperbolic headlines.<sup>14</sup> Hyperbole can lead to sensationalism, which is today a characteristic of both the serious press and the popular tabloids. In fact, the market orientation has blurred the lines between these two types, so that on the front page of the traditional, »serious, quality« paper *Delo* (23. 2. 2001) there is a headline with a low colloquial word (actually labeled in *Slovenski pravopis* 2001 as »journalistic«) *Čudeža ni bilo, Čadež na koncu »izvisel«*, which would have not been possible to find in the past, at least not on the front page. Research done as seminar work has shown that even *Delo* cannot avoid hyperbole, especially in human interest stories, where it takes the form of exaggeration and deception (*Temni lesk seksualnosti, Prevroči računalniki* 27. 1. 2004, back page), as well as in sports reports (*Želja pokopala Laščane*, 9. 2. 2004, 12; *Nike ni ponudila toplega objema*, 12. 2. 2004, 14); it is included less frequently in the traditionally »serious« themes, i.e., politics and the economy.

Hyperbole is often built on ambiguity, which is, admittedly, clarified at some point in the text, but it is still a type of deception. Thus the headline *Bush je za na Mars* (*Dnevnik*, 16. 1. 2004, 20) is first understood by the reader idiomatically and not, as the sub-heading makes it clear, that the American President is announcing a serious addition to space exploration.

Another interesting phenomenon worth a closer analysis is recycling of headlines. In recent years, an ever more frequent source of recycling is advertising slogans and titles of pop songs and films, to a lesser extent the titles of literary or other, intellectually or educationally more demanding texts. Successful slogans, such as *Vsi drugačni, vsi enakopravni*, have been frequently recycled in different daily newspapers; similarly also, for instance, *Vsi drugačni, vsi za rešetakami* (*Delo*, 10. 1. 2004, 8) or *Vsi dobri, vsi premagljivi* (*Večer*, 27. 1. 2004, 10). As an intensive part of our everyday life, advertising appears more often in journalism than it did in the past; the same is true of popular songs: *Od višine se zvrtili, Kar je staro, se novo zdi* (repeating the titles of

<sup>14</sup> The term is Korošec's (1998) and relates to a kind of veiled headline in which the selection of language resources distorts the truth value of the content of the article, usually by increasing the actual importance of the message or part of it.



songs by Vlado Kreslin, *Delo*, 5. 1. 2004, 24, and 24. 1. 2004, 13), *Računajte na nas* (from the Rani mraz song, *Slovenske novice*, 24. 12. 2003, 15); and *Cela ulica gori, ne kliči 113!* (recycling *Cela ulica nori ...*, *Slovenske novice*, 23. 1. 2004, 4).

In addition, *Slovenske novice* introduced a new type of headline that appears as a sticker across part of another headline (according to Korošec's typology, this could be referred to as a »cross-heading«) and shows the journalist's interpretation of a »scandalous« event, e.g., »terrible, perverse, tragic«.

### 3.3 The temporal-spatial framing of the journalistic text

Shortly after Korošec's book was published (1998), the main Slovenian daily *Delo* decided to change its long-standing practice based on a tradition derived from the German journalism: the temporal-spatial framing of the journalistic text was tied to the time when the text was written; also, the adverbials in the text were related to the frame, which, in turn, established the relationship with the time of the event itself. The second temporal information was the date on each edition of the paper: »The double recording of newspaper time, i.e., the use of two different predominant times (as in *Delo* or in German daily newspapers) is richer from a journalistic point of view, although it is not the only option. If I am in favor of this system, it is out of respect for the tradition, for the conventions established between newspapers and readers. Any change of routine causes not only uncertainty among readers, but also difficulties in processing the content« (Korošec 1998: 185, note 96).

*Delo* did precisely that and caused a lot of mistakes and difficulties in processing, as the journalists, still used to a different practice, continued to make mistakes for a long time. The readers, on the other hand, kept asking themselves what the writer meant by yesterday or tomorrow. For example, on February 15, in a report with no date, only the spatial framing, *Ljubljana*, we read, »Tomorrow the lecture on ...«; later in the text we find out that the lecture was »today«, February 15, at 11 o'clock. It was no doubt a mere coincidence that this change or elimination of the traditional temporal-spatial framing occurred immediately after the publication of Korošec's book. It was probably due to the fact that *Delo* at that time hosted an expert from Britain who recommended certain changes to the paper's visual image (Media Watch 1998). The British tradition quotes only one temporal piece of information, i.e., the date of the edition of the paper, hence the Slovenian approach must have seemed unusual and was even perhaps, with the self-confidence of the big, declared to be »wrong«. If those responsible at *Delo* had had a more thorough awareness of tradition and if they had checked the book by an expert in the »newspaper style«, they would have certainly given the change some thought and would have not done away with a convention well-established between the paper and its readers.

Today *Delo*, *Dnevnik*, and *Primorske novice* use only a spatial framing for texts, while the prevailing time is the date on the masthead, which compels the journalist to adapt the time of the event to the time of reading. *Večer* leaves out both temporal and spatial framings, which means that sometimes we simply do not know when an event took place. Paradoxically, the traditional temporal-spatial framing is retained by the

popular tabloid *Slovenske novice*, in which the date is the time of the creation of the text and does not signify an unnecessary repetition of the time on the masthead.

#### 4. Conclusion

The work of the journalist has changed with the growth of the media, newspaper tabloidisation, and the appearance of Internet journalism. The theory of journalism has still not answered the question as to what now belongs in journalistic domain: should we count only serious journalism (i.e., retain the traditional concept) or should we face reality and include also infotainment (Poler Kovačič 2001), the journalism of media scandals and sensationalism, and other marginal areas?

Stylistic research that currently relies primarily on newspaper material should also include the electronic media. Media texts remain of interest to linguistics in general particularly because they most accurately reflect developmental trends in language.

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#### POVZETEK

Teorija novinarstva še ni odgovorila na vprašanje, kaj danes sploh sodi k novinarski dejavnosti: smemo med novinarstvo šteti le t. i. resno novinarstvo (torej upoštevati klasično pojmovanje) ali pa sprejeti realnost in dodati še t. i. infozabavno novinarstvo, novinarstvo medijskih škandalov in senzacionalizma, ter druga mejna področja?

Pri stilističnem proučevanju bo treba v raziskovanje, temelječ predvsem na časopisnem gradivu, vključiti tudi elektronske medije. Za jezikoslovje nasploh pa ostajajo medijska besedila zanimiva predvsem zato, ker se prav v njih najprej pokažejo razvojne težnje v jeziku.