Linguistic Encoding of Youth Ideology by the Romanian Teen Magazines for Girls

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This paper aims to establish and identify the linguistic devices through which the niche printed media specifically targeting a young female local audience identify, shape and construct their addressee by acknowledging their subcultural ideology. Our intention is to trace the measure of congruency between the two types of discourse: of the encoder and of the decoder. Such instantiations as were found at the level of text functions, discourse patterns and strategies, rhetorical and linguistic items testify to our conclusion that the niche printed media – specifically teen-oriented music and lifestyle magazines – gratify a local community of young female consumers by programmatically encoding their cultural products in a language of solidarity with their audience.

Introduction

The symbiotic connections between the media and subcultures have a history that has been identified and minutely followed by anthropologists, ethnographers, scholars of cultural and media studies with an interest in subcultures. The media-subculture relationship has not been an unproblematic one and positions and theories in the scholarly field have varied over the years to the point of contradiction. The main queries engaging this issue revolved around the effects of the media on the audiences, the functions of the

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media in general and television in particular, and the issue of passive/active audiences. Most have tried to answer the question whether the media are manipulative and have a narcotizing effect on a passive mass audience, or on the contrary, audiences are active and use the media to their own benefit[1] with the media fulfilling some basic psychological needs of the individual. Recent theories have found both elements in the media-audience ratio to be dynamic, allowing for the audience to have an important influence on media products and trends. Audiences are no longer viewed as an undifferentiated mass of individuals but as a complex structure of socially organized individuals forming a number of overlapping subgroups. Hence the suggestion that the primary relationship for analysis is that between linguistic and cultural codes and patterns of class, race, and gender[2].

Media consumption by young people is today one of the main articulations of subcultural activity and combines with other focal interests, a distinctive ideology and subversive practices as the homologies of a style[3] to create an identity for young people. Youth increasingly define themselves as music and media consumers, while their media consumption patterns – for instance, watching a program with friends or sharing the same taste in media products and genres – re-enforce their group identity[4]. Yet we should avoid the danger of considering media consumption by young people to be a straightforward, linear act. In the subversive vein common for all youth practices, young people do not passively consume the media but actively use them by negotiating the meanings of their texts, which they at times decode in oppositional or radical ways[5].

The aim of this paper is to show how the printed media acknowledge the existence of a collective young audience by the linguistic encoding of subcultural taste and ideology. In doing this they fulfill a socially aggregative function,[6] for through the language of their texts they construct young communities of media consumers. However, this community is certainly not a homogeneous sub-group within a mass audience. The constituency of the modern audiences is fluid and recent studies on media consumption patterns have shown that audiences are becoming increasingly fragmented and polarized. Consequently, new forms of media have emerged catering to ever smaller segments of consumers that they narrowly target with gendered, ethnic, and subcultural messages.

Moreover, our choice of research of a local linguistic area will also consider a venue opened by recent audience studies and media effects: globalization. It will thus examine how the local printed media alternate between accommodating and re-negotiating global identities built on imperial export models[7] that disseminate a certain ideology and that shape a specific local audi-

ence that is culturally knowledgeable in both global and local subcultural values.

Our intention is to identify the generational markers of youth language – correlative linguistic displays and strategies, patterns of interaction, rhetoric and discourse strategies – in the printed media texts and to show how they supply the resources for the niche media to target and cater to the needs of a young female audience. The media venues examined include issues of teen lifestyle and music magazines in both printed and electronic formats. Our intention is to establish the extent to which the niche media 'language' enables the meanings produced by the encoder – the preferred meanings - to coincide with those decoded by the young consumer[8] and eliminates any potential disjunction.

Categories of media and subcultural representation

In an age when the individual can simultaneously consume several media, young people are hailed as the champions of multitasking[9] - accomplishing such feats as listening to the radio, watching television, e-chatting with friends, and interacting with TV shop channels, all while doing their homework. Moreover, young people can and do produce their own media. As the mass-media is a multi-level construct that no longer produces texts for a mass audience, an examination of the media-subcultural audience relation will have to distinguish between different strata[10]: mainstream media, niche or youth directed media, and micro or youth-made media. These three types of media have different audiences in terms of size and composition, and therefore have differing circulation.

The early interest of the mainstream media in young people was dictated both by their newsworthiness and their commercial potential. Initially, the media used as news the young people's allegiances to spectacular subcultures and their natural inclinations for subversiveness and radical actions. The media were outside[11] of the phenomenon of subculture with which they identified and labeled youth. The media then reintroduced them on TV and in newspapers as a domesticated Other, trying to fit youth within the 'commonsensical' socio-cultural map. This recuperation took and still takes two forms[12]: the commodity form – the conversion of subcultural signs into mass-produced objects - and the ideological form – the re-definition of deviant behavior by dominant groups, whereby the youth subculture is either naturalized (Barthes) or turned into exotica. This is exemplified by the treatment of youth as stereotypically deviant, by labeling them as folk devils[13] in such media campaigns of moral panic as were at times conducted against rock music, cartoon and video 'nasties', etc.

All of the above are in line with early media theories, which concluded that the media offer stereotyped images of youth in line with the dominant ideology and that audiences are narcotyzed[14] into passively accepting these preferred meanings. However, more recent research focusing on cultural studies and content analysis have noted that the media representations actually construct a multiplicity of contrasting definitions of feminity and masculinity, for example, which serve as subject positions for the varied, rather than mass, media consumers[15]. Moreover, in the new media – the interactive media - messages are passed in both directions, in contrast to the old media, and thus socio-cultural segments of the audience can be more readily identified by way of audience feedback. In this way niches, albeit fluid, are identified within the audience to which the media narrowcast popular culture texts and which they empower by justifying their consumption of such texts. This empowerment is taken one step further by fan communities, who appropriate the media messages, rework them to their pleasure, and build upon them a subcultural knowledge that affords them new status. They even create their own texts and media (letters to editors, film actors, pop stars, pressure on the script of soap-operas, fanzines, genzines, fan-clubs) and thus close the circle of empowerment.

Therefore, in contrast to the mainstream media, which document subcultures, the niche media identify and even construct them[16]. The niche media play an important role in congregating and maintaining a loyal audience through their formats, program policing, and orientation, and trigger an active response from the audience by providing the electronic space for the young people's own media inputs: in the electronic forum of teen lifestyle and music magazines, chat messaging space on the TV screen, interactive radio and TV shows, call-in programs where viewers or radio listeners select their own videos or music, etc. All of these processes are mediated through the linguistic code choice of the niche media, a language that is deliberately coincidental with youth language. Thus, rather than having a mainstreaming effect[17] the niche media actually are integral to subcultural formation, to the "way we create groups with words"[18].

Teen lifestyle and music press for girls

(Some of our exemplifications below can be found in the Annex, which is a collection of contributions by young people to the electronic forum formats of the teen magazines surveyed. Others are taken from the collection of the Sep-

tember issues of seven teen magazines and the March-August issues of *Popcorn* and *Bravo*)

Sociological research has established young people to be diligent media readers and to consume the media for their aesthetic feature[19], which distinguishes them from adults in terms of the purpose of consumption. The appeal of the niche press is explicable in part by the fact that they cover a niche taste that is dynamic and changeable and that more often than not the staff itself might be former or current subcultural members, forming with their readership a common interpretative community. They are what Sarah Thornton calls *aficionados*: "the writers or editors of subcultural press who at one point or another have been participants in subcultures and still espouse versions and variations of the underground". Their obvious penchant for colloquial forms and idiomatic uses, which are linguistic taboos in the mainstream media, suggest that they relate symbolically through language with their young audience. This is a programmatic use of a particular code which shares many of the features of what Bernstein has termed the restricted code[20], showing that the encoder-decoder pair belong to a common socio-cultural space.

In order to establish the linguistic bond between the printed niche media and the youth community we have analyzed a number of music and lifestyle teen magazines printed in Romania and sampled some of their electronic formats. The magazines under scrutiny are *Popcorn* and *Bravo*, covering a period of six months - March-August 2003 - and the September 2003 issues of *Popcorn, Bravo, Cool Girl, Cool, Fan, Sunete,* and *What's up.* Our intention was to identify the measure of congruence between the teen magazine discourse and youth discourse as an acknowledgement that this niche medium identifies a specifically young readership to which it caters with a gendered message.

We have examined the media corpus across the editorial, advertising, and reader's own mediated materials. Each of these discourses contains different measures of the features of youth discourse, which have been identified under three categories: socio-cultural references, discourse, and linguistic patterns and strategies.

a. socio-cultural references

The socio-cultural references are made visible by the topic choices and cultural references contained in editorials, reviews, scene reports, interviews, star gossip, fashion tips, beauty tricks, and psychological tests. Their combination is the recurrent content structure of all the magazines examined both longitudinally and latitudinally. The majority of the content focused on music, which is the domain with the most fervent subcultural activity. Besides being a pleasure object, music

carries an attribute that is pertinent for our analysis: music plays an important role in the socialization of adolescents by helping them identify with a peer group[21] and "supersedes all other cultural products that help teenagers identify with a community of taste"[22].

We have paid special attention to the magazines' covers and their aggregative function, which is fulfilled through the linguistic codification of socio-cultural values. They combine visuals with linguistic syntagms into a symbolic address for the community of young girls. The magazines were seen either to address, and thus identify, their target group by an evaluative gender and age framing message:

e.g. COOL GIRL CEA MAI TARE REVISTĂ PENTRU FETE DIN ROMÂNIA

[Cool Girl the coolest magazine for girls in Romania]

or to address directly the individual reader, a sort of ideal reader who is the prototype for the subject position that the magazines create for their target group. The directness of the address is achieved through a second person singular imperative verb in Romanian:

e.g. *Harry Potter. Descoperă secretele noii cărţi*

[Harry Potter. Discover the secrets of the new book]

Câştigă o placă de surf

[Win a surf board]

The linguistic syntagms function as metonyms for the components of the socio-cultural reality of young people in general [23] and young females in particular. They stand for music, TV, fashion, romance, etc., and combine practical items linked to daily life with those of a mythical world.

e.g. *Andra Povestea unei Stele*

[Andra The story of a Star]

Star Factory Backstage Cei mai cool profesori

[Star Factory Backstage The coolest teachers]

7 piese pentru 7 zile modă

[7 items for 7 days of fashion]

SOS Sfaturi de prim ajutor pentru inimioare zdrobite

[SOS First aid advice for little broken hearts]

Other linguistic and visual syntagms function as intertextual links to other media texts. This is an example from the cover of *COOL*: *Star Factory* (television), *Bad Boys 2* (film), *New Video Akcent* (music television and video), *Game Hulk! Outlandish* (computer games).

The visuals, most of which are photos of male pop stars, fall into the same category as the strongly male oriented videos, with males ap-

pearing as active heroes and females as passive objects, which have been met with strong criticism and have been proved to be part of the overall stereotypical approach to youth representations in the media[24]. Feminist studies of the media[25], while they acknowledge the socializing role of the media, criticize the media perpetuation of sex-role stereotypes because they reflect dominant social values.

Other visuals, beautiful faces and figures fashionably attired, are anchored by linguistic symbols and position the young reader as a female subject reader, the member of a mythic community (in the Barthian sense) that is naturalized through repetition. This community enlists the membership of the editorial staff – the *we* in the editorials – who invites *you,* the readership, to participate in and share a socio-cultural network. In a seemingly asymmetrical discourse the *we* and *you* are not merely representational but also carry cultural meanings, all of which combine to produce the conditions of intersubjectivity (Fiske1992:46[26]): "the area of subjective responses that are shared to a degree by all members of a culture," or in this case a subculture. The linking elements are direct address, clichés, authentic youth language incorporated in the media text – e.g. *Cool Girl rulz* – as well as such interactive devices as the readers' letters in the problem page or to the editor page, competitions, or electronic forum debates.

The electronic site for debate, which actively engages the young readership, is also organized around focal topics. For example, these are the debate topics proposed by the forum site of *Popcorn*: introduce yourself, music, vocalists, favorite season, first love.

The choice in youth-oriented magazines of such topics to be covered as fashion, music and movie stars, romance, and health and hygiene, are a reflection of the media's socializing role. Studies of print media[27] have shown that they contain traditional socialization messages for girls such as spelling out a gender role in a patriarchal society, which includes depending on someone. Later studies[28] have recorded a change over time of girls' and boys' identities, with new interest focused on such topics as safe sex and a general insecurity, so that the early romance picture stories were superseded by the problem pages and more recently have been entirely replaced by sex education narratives or problem pages addressing exclusively sexual issues (e.g. *Dr. Love* in *Bravo, Girl intim* in *Cool Girl, Helpline* in *Popcorn*).

b. discourse

The survey of the discourse of the teen magazines under scrutiny has yielded results that coincide with other findings in similar research: the magazines' is a dialogic mode of discourse fa-

cilitated by an equivalence between the reader's speech code and the magazines' written discourse[29]. The effect of this choice of discourse is the sensation of an ongoing conversation between addresser and addressee undergirded by common ideological values. The referents do not have to be explained since they are known both to the professional editors and to the young female consumers:

e.g. *Dulce şi rea. Honey*
[Sweet and mean. Honey]
Şişu aduce fete noi şi feţe noi în hip-hop
[Şişu brings new girls and new faces to hip-hop]
Miki de la fata zăpăcită la diva sexy
[Miki from absent-minded girl to sexy diva]
Andreea + Fabrizio O iubire de o vară
[Andreea and Fabrizio a summer's romance]

Other conversational devices are identified in written discourse: use of contractions, clichés, non-literary sentence structures, elliptic sentences, orally based restricted vocabulary, and direct address all lend character to a dialogic and can be identified in youth discourse as it has been presented in the sociolinguistic literature.

c. linguistic patterns and strategies

Our survey of the linguistic display in editorial and advertising material on the one hand, and the reader input in the electronic forum site on the other hand, has identified several common linguistic patterns and strategies as well as a special typography connoting an oral style:

(see table 1, next page)

A special note should be made of the deliberate misspellings and special spellings. They are used both for loan words and for words in Romanian. They have several distinct functions:

1. contextualize subcultural identity. The spelling variants occur both in English loan words and in native Romanian words.

- spelling of Romanian words according to English pronunciation rules

e.g. *sh* for *ş* *shtiu, shi, cunoshtinta* (4), *asha* (6), *reushit* (18)
tz for *ţ* *feritzi-vă* (2) *spunetzi, intratzi* (10) *invatzat* (6) *mintzi* (12)
ph for *f* *marpha* (25)

- spelling of English words according to Romanian pronunciation rules

e.g. *x* for *cks* *sux* (23)

- spelling of English words according to pronunciation

e.g. *rulz* for *rules* (23)

2. contextualize subcultural originality and creativity

		Editorial and advertising material	Readership electronic input
Deliberate misspellings, special spellings, and calques		*Coolgirlitze, Orlando rulz, trendsetteritza*	*Mah* for ma [you] *Nust* for nu stiu [don't know] *Sunt fana* [I'm a fan]
Oral markers		all caps to connote admiration, surprise special spellings: *Cine eeeste el?* [Who is he?]	RUUUUULES SUNT NEBUNA DE LEGAT
Short or incomplete sentences		*Ce sa faca, ce sa faca....* [what to do, what to do]	*sau cum s'o chema* [or whats'it called]
Slang words		*tam-tam*	*e bethon* [he's tough] *naspa* [bad, ugly]
Idioms, clichés, first names, nicknames		*Eminem alias Jacko* *Au spart piata* [it's a hit]	*chill out, AngelofRock, flowergirl,capacu*
Foregrounding: puns, Metaphors, alliteration, rhymes		*girl 2 girl, trend-o-metru* *cool girl cea mai tare din parcare* [the toughest of all]	*4school* *Pupiki Dulciki* [sweet kisses]
Typography		Combination in the same word of different font sizes and typeface	emoticons ☺), intercaps *IoNiShKa*, all caps *sunt NEBUNA DE LEGAT*
Colloquial items		*fa-i în ciuda* [spite him] *spune-ti oful* [say what is on your mind]	*is de'ai mei* [they are my people] *tre'* for *trebuie* [must] *fain* for *frumos* [nice]
English items or sequences	in non-English context	*Delia Reloaded,* *Dr. Love raspunde,* *Animal X then and now,* *Arm-band-urile sunt cele mai trendy accesorii* [armbands are the trendiest accessories] *s-a hranit din mail-urile voastre* [it fed on your mails]	*Ce melodie do you like* [What melody do you like?] *Îmi place look-ul lor* [I like their look] *Porecla mea la school* [My nickname at school]
	English titles	*Heart Beat, Interview, Style Check, Movie Check, Chart News, Sound Check, Bravo Songbook*	

Table 1

e.g. *th* for *t* *bethon* (18)
ph for *p* *supher* (18)
k for *c* *moldovenesk* (19) *pupik dulcik* (7) *apuk* (14)
k for *ca* *muzica mai comerciala k aia (*28)
k for *că* *dakă* (10) *adik* (17) *văd k* (12) *ce contează k* (7)
ki for *ci* *pupiki* (4)
j for *ş* *ejti o fană* (12) *najpa* for naşpa (20)
ah for *ă* *mah* (27)

The strategies for defining a special youth or subcultural identity primarily involve consecrated borrowed usage: all caps, intercaps, all small caps, use of number for letter or number for word. These are graphemic features that function either as orality markers or contextualized cues or simply signal subcultural identity[30].

Use of caps to indicate shouting or exclamation:

e.g. *BAFTA LA CAPACITATE* (4) or *SUNT NEBUNA DE LEGAT* (2) *They RUUULE* (11)

Intercaps: in nicknames *IoNiShKa PiShKa, AngelOfRock, GuyS* (10)

All small caps: *candy, cluj, capacitate* (3)

Use of number instead of letters:

00 for OO *c00l* (19), *l0ve* (19) *g00d*, *Hell0* (17)

Use of numbers for words:

I want 2 know them (17) *4school* (14) *Nice 2 meet U* (14)

Foreign models can be adopted and re-contextualized,[31] which is an instance of how language functions as a resource in the construction of a particular ethnic-social identity. This is the point where local language creativity surfaces to create a unique style. It is the case when special contractions occur:

e.g. vb for *vorbesc* (6) *vorbim* (7) [speak]
nust for *nu ştiu* (20) (21) [don't know]
ce's for *ce este* (28) [what is]

or ways of address:

e.g. greetings *sal* (5) (6), *salz* (30) for salut [hello]
addressee pronoun *U* for *tu* [you] (20)
addresser pronoun *Yo* (16) *moi* (17) *j3* (2) for eu [I, me]

Although most formats, linguistic uses, and discourse strategies of written discourse rely heavily on loan words and phrases, a large amount of the local potential for linguistic creativity surfaces and can be identified both in editorial material and in readership feedback. The greater density of colloquial features is readily noticeable in the young people's written inputs on electronic forum sites. The repetitive uses, the recurrent occurrences, show that this is a normative language whose functions, besides be-

ing representational, connotative, emotive, and poetic, also shroud the messages from unknowledgeable outsiders, turning it into a veritable anti-language[32].

Advertisements also reflect the subcultural identity promoted by teen magazines and assemble readers into a community of consumers who identify themselves through what they consume[33]: for example, *the Pepsi Generation*. They address the reader both as a consumer as well as an audience. Still, young people can consume ads independently of the product that is being marketed[34]. A survey of advertisements enables us to classify them into four categories based on the criterion of topic:

1. educative: health or hygiene – deodorants, tampons, hair shampoos, shaving cream; campaigns against smoking and drinking and for safe sex;
2. informative: concerts, club events, movie releases;
3. self-referential: new magazine issues, music events;
4. commercial *per se*: cell phones, electronics, CDs, DVDs, beverages, food.

Their common denominator is the fact that they are all subculturally oriented through the advertised products, commercial and cultural alike. The unifying element is the linguistic support, which is both representational and connotative and codifies both general (global) and specific (local and subcultural) youth currencies[35]. Thus several of the ads combine vocals with written scripts in English (e.g. ads for Pepsi or Coca Cola), assuming that a command of English is a typical skill of young viewers everywhere. Other ads mediate their messages both in English – usually the slogan – and in Romanian. Such messages are primarily consumed by young people, for they are the ones who are most likely to accept the challenge of decrypting the polysemantic texts of ads. This is an instance of how the 'convergent selectivity'[36] operates to congregate the young in a community of taste.

Conclusions

Youth directed niche media in Romania draw heavily on imported models, which, however, are re-contextualized in a new socio-cultural context to suit the local tastes of young Romanian females. A defining feature of the local (in contrast to the imperial) media is that, although they do adopt the foreign dominant ideology, they cloak it in a language that reflects both the extent of their borrowings as well as the membership of the Romanian audience in a special geo-linguistic discursive space. Thus, they acknowledge the existence of a local young audience that they also helped shape and construct

and with which they espouse a socio-cultural solidarity through language.

This linguistic solidarity materializes at the levels of the socio-cultural references, the discourse strategies and patterns, and the linguistic variants of the oral and written discourses of the printed media sampled. The congruence between the linguistic codes of the encoders and the readership is explicable in part by the fact that the niche printed press adopts a restricted code that is characteristically oral. This code is based on a common set of closely shared identifications and communalized roles that are the underlying socio-cultural framework of youth networks. Although the media are subject to some linguistic discipline, and their codes are primarily mainstream and encode dominant meanings, the niche media succeed in establishing a dialogue with their young audience. This is effected through drawing on the vernacular of young people, through adopting the discourse strategies that have been found to correlate in young people's verbal displays, and through featuring in the written discourse the normative anti-language of Romanian teenagers' e-chatting. In conclusion, the linguistic encoding of subculture and ideology by the Romanian teen music and lifestyle magazines for girls in particular is effected primarily through the use of a language of solidarity and a dialogic discourse, which although formatted on foreign imperial models, credit the originality, creativity, and media literacy of the active female readership.

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ANNEX

Samples of messages sent by readers on the electronic Popcorn Forum.* (January – September 2003)

1.

cum nu am avut unde sa pun sb asta m-am gandit sa-l pun aici fiindca intra mai multe persoane pe el. Deci presupun ca tre' sa incep eu nu? OkJ eu sunt Gabriela am aproape 16 ani sunt nascuta in zodia sagetator si sunt din bucuresti cartierul militari. Ma mai cheama si florentina (de aici vine si userul flowergirl). Ok cred ca e sufficient acum sa va vad si pe voi ciao

[English translation: since there was nowhere to put it under I thought I'd put it here because more people enter it. So I suppose I have to start no? OK I am Gabriela I am almost 16 I am born a Sagittarius and I am from Bucharest district Militari. I am also called Florentina (hence the user flowergirl). OK I think it is sufficient now let me see you too ciao]

2.

Salz….Shtiu ca nu prea sunt placuta pe forumu' asta..da' hai sa ma prezint shi eu totusi…)) Deci..Sal Florentina Gabriela parca!))) Eu ma numesc Ioana (IoNiShKa PishKa) P, am 12 anishori, sunt din Piatra-Neamt… (trandafiiirrr de la Moldova…) sunt din zodia Fecioara shi cam atat … shi sunt NEBUNA DE LEGAT !!!!!!)))) Asa ca ar fi bine sa va feritzi de .. j3J)))))

Pa-pa-pa-pa!!!! }{}{}{}{}{

[English translation: Hello…I know I'm not very liked on this forum but still let me introduce myself…So.. Hi Florentina Gabriela I think. My name is Ioana (IoNiShKa PishKa) P, I am 12 little years old, I am from Piatra-Neamt…(Rose from Moldova…) I am a Virgo and that's about all…and I am nuts crazy. So you had better beware of …me. Bye!]

3.

salz! Eu ma numesc caludia..dupa cum se poate observa din user! Am 15 ani .. shi sunt in

clasa a 8-a din pacate pt mine…am capacu peste doua saptamani …((((((aa…sunt din cluj..sunt fana candy system cocktail shi imi mai plac o gramada de formatzii dar nu ma pot numi fana adevarata decat a celor trei super formatzii…ce sa va mai spun? Aaa…nik bye! Clau

[English translation: Hello! My name is Claudia..as you can notice from the user! I am 15…and I am in the 8th grade unfortunately for me… I have capacity [national examination for 8th graders] ..oh..I am from Cluj I am a fan of Candy, System, Cocktail and I like countless other bands but I am a real fan only of the three superbands…what else should I say? Oh..nik bye! Clau]

4.

Incantata de cunoshtinta "clau") Suna mai c00L asa…BAFTA LA CAPACITATE!!!!!!!! PUPIKI !!}{}{

[English translation: Glad to meet you Clau. It sounds more cool like this. Good luck with your capacity. Kisses!]

5.

Sal fetelor Ioana si Claudia imi pare bine de cunostinta. Sper sa ne intelegem bine si … nu mai stiu…vedem noi ps: Claudia multa BAFTA la capacitate si sa inveti ca nu-i de gluma fiindca am trecut si eu prin asta. apropo unde vrei sa dai la liceu? Ciao

[English translation: Hello girls Ioana and Claudia I am glad to meet you. I hope we get on well and I don't know what else..We'll see. PS. Claudia good luck with the Capacity and make sure you study and don't take this lightly for I have been through this too. By the way what high school would you like to be admitted to?]

6.

Sal girls! Asha mai merge! Imi place shi mie sa vb cu voi! Dk vretzi sa-mi scrietzi adresa mea de mail este…vreau sa dau la un liceu cu profil uman din cluj…sper sa intru unde vreau! Va pupik! P.S. – ma pun shi eu pe invatzat … mai am 2 saptamani…((((((

[English translation: Hello girls! This is more like it! I like it too talking to you! If you want to write to me my mai is…I want to be enrolled in a Humanities high school in Cluj. I hope I am admitted where I want to! I kiss you. PS. I'll get down to studying. I only have two weeks left.]

7.

Sal…ce conteaza k numai noi vb? Pt mine nu!J am intrat de vreo trei zile pe site-ul … shi scria k e in constructzie! Ce bine imi pare k e gata! O sa intru shi o sa va scriu userul cu care voi intra! Va pupik dulcik, clau

[English translation: what does it matter that we are the only ones talking. I don't care I have been on this site and it said it was under con-

struction! I'm so glad it's finished! I'll enter and write you the user I will enter with! My sweet kisses to you, clau]

8.

Nume: Adry (Adriana & atat)

Zodie: Taur

Inaltime: 1.72 m

Bautura preferata: Coca-Cola, Fanta Madness, Fanta Shokata

Food: Pizza, cartofi prajiti, inghetata din frisca si ciocolata

Love: Akcent!!!!

Alte formatii preferate: Sistem, Simplu, Jais, The Calling, N*Sync

Likes: jucariile de plus (in special ursuletii).

Placeri: Filmul (numai nu cele de groaza), internetul, muzica

[English translation:

Name: Adry (Adriana % that's all)

Star sign: Taurus

Height: 1.72 m

Favourite beverage: Coca-Cola, Fanta Madness, Fanta Shokata

Food: Pizza, French fries, cream and chocolate ice-cream

Love: Akcent

Other favourite bands: Sistem, Simplu, Jais, The Calling, N*Sync

Likes: plush toys (especially teddy bears)

Pleausures: Movies (except horror ones), Internet, music]

9.

SAL, tocmai mi-am facut si eu user pe aici si vreau sa ma prezint!!! Sunt Angela din Arad, am 14 ani, sunt in zodia Scorpion si sunt o fata de gasca!!! Fetelor am vazut ca tot voi ati vb si un baiat care nu a vrut sa se prezinte!!! Astept vesti de la voi PUPIKKKKKKK Angy

[English translation: Hello, I have just made my user here and I want to introduce myself! I am Angela in Arad, I am 14 years old, I am a Scorpio and I am a cool girl! Girls I saw that only you have been talking and a boy who wouldn't introduce himself! I am expecting news from you. Kiss Angy]

10.

Come On GUyS… Spunetzi'mi ce parere avetzi despre SATANISM .. si2.. dak ati fi in stare sa intratzi intr-un grup dintr-asta…sau cum s'o chema….;roll

[English Translation: Come on guys. Tell me what you think of Satanism and two if you were able to enter a group like this..or whatever it's called….;roll]

11.

EVANESCENCE IMI PLAC LA NEBUNIE ….THEY RUUUUUUUUULE!!!!!!!!

[English translation: I'm crazy about Evanescence. They rule!]

12.

Serios?! Nu ma mintzi..??? Vad k ejti o fana adevarata…Asa ca nu ma pun cu tine I WILL DIEE

[English translation: Seriously? You are not lying to me? I can see you are a real fan. So I am no match for you. I will die]

13.

HIhIhI..Da..e f.f. agitat imi place LOOK-UL LOR. Si coafurile… They are SUPER. Ce melodie do you like??

[English translation: giggle giggle he is very agitated I like their look. An their hair-dos. They are super. Which melody do you like?]

14.

APLAUZEEEEEEEEEEEEE….pt AngelOf ROCK G00d joooob dear..O sa ma apuk de citit later…Now It's time 4school!!! Aaaa si mie imi place…

[English translation: Applause...for AngelOfROCK. Good job dear. I'll get down to reading later. Now it's time for school! Ah I like him too.]

15.

I LIKE THEM…Adika … I looove them!! Ce melodie va place…?! Asta pt fani…si pt cei care nu sunt fani: Va Place…? Ati ascultat vreodata!? Aaa

[English translation: I like them. I mean I love them! What melody do you like? This is for the fans and those who are not fans: Do you like them? Have you ever listened to them! Aaa]

16.

Like chill out AngelOfROCK…hmmm stiti cumva care e urm' clip de la EvanESceNCe?! Yo vreau sa fie "TOURNIQUET"!!!!! Si daca e "HELLLo".. nu ma supar!

[English translation: Like chill out AngelOfROCK..hmmm dou you happen to know what is the next clip by Evanescence? I want to hear Tourniquet! And if it is Hello ..I don't mind!]

17.

HellO….) Are si moi o intrebare…Avetzi porecle???..Daca da, I want 2 know them. Porecla mea la school …..e WALE (adik BALENA) couse'..I'm a little bit grasa.

[English translation: Hello. I have a question myself Do you have nicknames? If so, I want to know them. My nickname at school is whale. (that is Whale] 'cause I am a little fat.]

18.

Marilyn manson???? E cel mai tare…. Muzica lui e supher la fel shi el…mie imi place cum arata chiar daca se fardeaza… e bethon…

[English translation: Mrilyn Manson? He's the best. His music is super and so is he. I like the way he looks even though he uses make up. He's cool.

19.

FARA ZAHAR?! I just l0ve them…Sunt asha de c00l… si imi place accentul lor moldovenesk…is de'ai mei…hihihi Cam atat…Aaaa..si cred ca au demonstrat ca si moldovenii sunt ceva……

[English translation: Fara Zahar? I just love them They are so cool and I like their Moldavian accent. They are my own [people] hehehe. That's about it. Ooh and I think that the Moldavians too are something.]

20.

Salut…first of all Nice 2 meet U…I'm Ioana! Soooo… mie imi plae muzika veche…care e intr-adevar muzica ADEVARATA…am si eu cateva exemple…Sper sa nu se supere nimeni

De ce zici ca melodiile astea noi sunt najpa ? cel mai "nou" album e Spaghetti Incident si sunt melodii faine si pe albumul ala. Albumul Chinese Democracy inca nu e scos…nu cred..nust sigur…in fin…

[English translation: Hello. First of all nice to meet you I'm Ioana! So I like old music that is the real music. I have a few examples. I hope nobody gets upset. Why do you say the new melodies are bad? The latest album is Spaghetti Incident and there are nice melodies on that album too. The Chinese Democracy album is not out yet. I don't think so…I don't know for sure…anyway…]

21.

Mah…si mie imi place linkin park sau …imi placea..nust nici yo exact..dar si'au cam luat'o in cap…adik…dintre linkin park si metallica au fost ales linkin park …asta la MVA 2003 sau 2002 nust…

[English translation: Hey, I too like linkin park I used to like them.. but I don't know for sure it sort of got to their head…that is..from between linkin park and metallica they chose linkin park.. at MVA 2003 or 2002. don't know.]

22.

Na'seara fetelor…RAMMSTEIN rulzzz!!! Ihihi…is nebuni de legat…pacat ca s'au despartit…sau trebuie sa se desparta…nust exact…dar au 3 albume pe viata lor…ati auzit de trupa Megahe..

[English translation: 'Evening girls. Rammstein rules! Hehehe. They are one crazy bunch. Pity they broke up….or they are sup-

posed to break up…I don't know for sure…but they have had three albums in their existence…have you heard of the band Megahe.]

23.

Inteligenta intrebare…NU'MI PLACE CANDY ..si melodia aia hei-la sux!!!!

[English translation: Intelligent question. I don't like Candy and their song hei-la sucks!

24.

Va place cum canta Avril melodia Knockin' on heavens door??? God…she sux big time…melodia asta nu i se potriveste … dar ea canta fain…imi place cum canta…oricum…varianta de la GUNS N…

[English translation: Do you like how Avril sings the song Knockin' on heavens door? God…she sucks big time…this song doesn't suit her …but she sings well…I like how she sings…anyway…the version by Guns N [roses]]

25.

Avril Lavigne? Eu am shi un fan club! Prin urmare…sunt fan Avril…imi place stil'ul ei, muzik ei..totul! care vi se pare cel mai marpha videoclip al ei? Adik cel mai reushit? Zi'mi si mie..

[English translation: Avril Lavigne? I even have a fan club! Therefore I am an Avril fan I like her style, her music, everything! Which do you think is her coolest video clip? That is the most successful? Tell me.]

26.

Nust cum sa va zic ..da' avetzi mare dreptate…GUN N'ROSES RULZZZZ…pacat ca nu am facut rost de el..si pacat ca nu mai e formatia veche…adik slash si restu' gashca…axl s'a ingrasat ca un …

[English translation: I don't know how to say..but you are right. Guns N'Roses rules…pity I couldn't get it.. and pity they aren't the old members.. that is slash and the rest of the troop..axl gained weight like a ...]

27.

Mah omule…puteau sa fie ele si pe locu' intai pe glob..da' nu vezi ce melodie au…asa de proasta e lumea asta? cum sa iti plac asa o melodie mah?

[English translation: Hey man…they might have well been first in the world top list..but can't you see what their song is…it is so stupid…are people so stupid? How can you like a song like this?]

28.

Ozone si accent … fiti seriosi mai…muzica mai comerciala k aia nu este pe piatza…inafara de manele offcourse…ma inec in ochii tai

..lallalallei…a iesit o rima…si cu accent…nust ce's cu ei.

[English translation: Ozone and Akcent.. be serious, man… there isn't a more commercial song than that on the market… except for manele of course…*ma inec in ochii tai… lallalallei* …what a rhyme they came out with…as for Akcent … I don't know what is with them.]

Notes

[1] Refers to the 'uses and gratification' theory, which is criticized for seeing the media as having only positive effects on the audience.

[2] Denis Quail, in The Television Audience: A Revised Perspective. In Marris, Paul and Thornham, Sue. (eds.) 1988.

Media Studies. A Reader. Edinburgh University Press

[3] Hebdige, Dick 1987. *Subculture. The Meaning of Style*. Routledge. London and New York

[4] Bignell, Jonathan. 2002. *Media Semiotics. An Introduction*. Manchester University Press, p 173.

[5] David Morley speaks of the decoding competencies and strategies that the audience uses in reading the preferred or dominant meanings in which the media message is encoded. Cultural Transformation: The Politics of Resistance in Marris and Thornham (eds) *Media Studies. A Reader.* 1988. p. 473.

[6] The functionalist tradition sees the media as fulfilling four functions: informative, editorial, entertain-diversion, socialization.

[7] James Lull warns against the generalizing assertion that globalization creates uniform audiences, although he admits that certain imperial imports, of which the American soap operas are an example, create a domination by consent of American ideology over local cultures. Lull, James. 2000. *Media, Communication, Culture*. Polity Press p. 5

[8] According to media theorist David Morley, decoding can be in line with the preferred meanings or negotiated based on the distribution of decoding competencies across different sections of the audiences.

[9] Lull Loc.cit. p. 250

[10] Thornton, Sarah. 1995. *Club Cultures. Music, Media and Subcultural Capital*. Polity Press

[11] Hall, Stuart and Tony Jefferson (eds). 1976. *Resistance through Rituals. Youth Subcultures in Post-War Britain*. Routledge, London

[12] Hebdige Loc. Cit. p. 94

[13] Stanley Cohen and Paul Young are representatives of an academic tradition that contrasts with the cultural studies tradition of the Birmingham Center for Cultural Studies. It regards the young as indiscriminately deviant and applies to them a sociology of 'moral panics'. They completely ignore the youth oriented and music press.

[14] Early studies of the media effects mention narcotizing, desensitizing and creating media dependency as the direct negative effects on audiences.

[15] Ien Ang and Joke Hermes in Curran and Gurrevitch, *Mass Media and Society*, speak of the contradicting definitions of gendered roles in the media. 1994. pp.308-309.

[16] Sarah Thornton has shown the role played by the media in assembling acid house in a full-fledged subculture Loc. Cit. p. 153.

[17] Lull. Loc.cit. p. 50

[18] Pierre Bourdieu quoted by Sarah Thornton. Loc. cit. p.6

[19] Förnas, Johan and Bolin, Goran. 1995. *Youth Culture in Late Modernity*. SAGE Publications. pp.60-61

[20] In Bernstein's definition, the restricted code, complementary to the elaborated code, reflects the social organization of working class defined by a common set of closely shared identifications and communalized roles.

[21] Crockett, Lisa J. and Silbereisen, Rainer K. 2000. *Negotiating Adolescence in Times of Social Change.* Cambridge University Press Strasburger

[22] Ibidem

[23] Bignell, Jonathan. 2002. *Media Semiotics. An Introduction*. Manchester University Press

[24] Crockett, Lisa J. and Silbereisen. Loc. Cit. p.86

[25] Liesbet Van Zoonen in Feminist Perspectives on the Media in Curran, James and Gurevitch, Michael (eds.). 1994. *Mass Media and Society*. Edward Arnold: London

[26] Fiske, John and Hartley, John. 1992. *Reading Television*. Routledge: London and New York

[27] Klein et al, quoted in Victor C. Strasburger, *Adolescents and the Media.* 1995: 80

[28] Angela McRobbie studied weekly magazines aimed at young women and noted that the space devoted to romantic texts was replaced by material on pop and fashion and the number of problem pages and letters to the editor have increased.

[29] Bignell. Loc. Cit. p. 90

[30] Crystal, David. 2001. *Language and the Internet*. Cambridge University Press

[31] John Clarke defines this as a particular stage in the process of style formation. Cultural objects which have been borrowed from different contexts are re-integrated in a new social context.

[32] Montgomery, Martin, 1995. *An Introduction to Language and Society*. Routledge, London & New York

[33] Barrat, David. 1994. *Media Sociology*. Routledge: London and New York

[34] Mica and Orson Nava (in Marris 1996:766) make a note of the fact that the advertising industry is highly respectful of the critical skills and visual literacy of young people.

[35] Sarah Thornton draws on Pierre Bourdieu when she speaks of the subcultural capital that is constructed by youth currencies, values that are authenticated by acceptance of and circulation among young people.

[36] Fiske, John and Hartley, John. Loc.cit. p. 108

36*

The English translations do not reproduce the special spellings, punctuation, and graphemes of the originals in Romanian. They are only syntactic translations.