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Gender-inclusive language as an impossible endeavour in Romania: The representation of non-binary linguistic proposals in a language-focused TV show

The present paper centres on the representation of gender-inclusive language in the media, and lays emphasis on the way in which a recent popular TV show which focuses on language matters in Romania (*Pe cuvânt cu Ana Iorga*, on the TV channel *Antena 3*) contributes to undermine the status of non-binary Romanian as a feasible linguistic project. Emphasizing the role of metalinguistic commentary as a vehicle through which prescriptive discourses are created and disseminated (see Beal et al. 2023) and stressing the role of popular language TV shows and of their hosts as ‘linguistic authorities’ within the discourse of “verbal hygiene” (Cameron 1995), the present paper will discuss the way in which *Pe cuvânt cu Ana Iorga* frames non-binary Romanian (and non-binary language in general) as lying beyond the boundaries of acceptable language. Taking research on language ideology (Irvine and Gal 2000) as a point of reference and underlining the complex interaction in the media between expert opinions and the ‘language complaint tradition’ (Milroy and Milroy 1999), the paper means to uncover the mechanisms underlying current representations of gender-inclusive language as ‘impossible’, at their interface with prescriptive representations (see also Vișan 2024).

References

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