

Expressive Interrogative Sentences in the Language of the Media in Montenegro

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Abstract

Various expressive realisations of interrogative forms in the language of contemporary journalism are the result of the thematic scope of its texts and commitment to a wide area of socio-cultural trends, but also of the need to attract the addressee's attention through discourse markers of sensationalism and exclusivity. The stable place of interrogative sentences with the auxiliary verb to be (*jeste*) and the particle *li*, in accented and enclitic forms, in such a system in Montenegrin language is reflected precisely through the possibility of stylistic constructions, often uncharacteristic of what we consider to be the typical features of the media language in a strict sense. This paper concludes that the expressive form of interrogative sentences in the media language is most often built by lexical markers (such as figures of speech, vocative forms, nouns expressing negative assessment, metaphorical and phraseological expressions, contrastive forms, etc.), and less often by structural ones (such as ellipsis and parcelling). The expression is usually formulated as direct, through the method of labelling, transfer of assessment from a particular term, or the use of tropes or sentimental intonation. In addition, the expressive function considerably weakens the primary communicative function of the interrogative form, which is to ask a question.

Keywords

interrogative sentences, expressiveness, media language, auxiliary verb to be, particle *li*, Montenegrin language

1. Introduction

Media discourse is among the most complex because of its hybridity, its mixture of genres and functions. Since it connects the public and private domains, its analysis is an important element in the research of contemporary processes of social and cultural changes.¹ Allan Bell² explains that the great interest in the scientific observation of the media language comes from the fact that media is a reflection of society and culture, politics, and values of a certain community, that by shaping the public information it influences society and the language itself, and that its written and spoken discourse is an easily accessible material for analysis by researchers in various fields, particularly linguists.

At the microstructural level of media discourse, which according to Teun Van Dijk³ concerns linguistic analysis of media discourse, researchers pay attention to all the tools and means of sending a message. Interrogative sentences are certainly an indispensable tool among them. They are one of the linguistic universals without which it is impossible to carry out a conversation in almost any world language, and therefore to produce a media message. In addition, they are often a tool for the media to express exclusivity and sensationalism. Their affective character establishes immediacy, produces a particular emotional attitude, formulates assumed content, ostensibly is involved in thinking and providing answers,⁴ and has the function to appeal, act, and persuade.

Since expressive features are seen as a means of subjective ways of communication,⁵ therefore, expressive questions are also interrogative forms with a secondary function. Thus, they are not primarily informative in nature, so their pragmatic character cannot be ignored. Hence, in the analysis, we will start, first of all, from the division found in the third Soviet Academy Grammar,⁶

¹ Norman Fairclough, *Media Discourse* (London, Sydney, Auckland: Arnold, 1995), p. 37.

² Allan Bell, *Language of News Media* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), pp. 3, 4.

³ Teun Van Dijk, *News Analysis* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1988).

⁴ Marina Katnić-Bakaršić, *Lingvistička stilistika* (Czech Republic: Research support scheme, 1999).

⁵ Margaret Apresyan, 'On The Concept of "Expressiveness"', in *Modern Linguistics. Annals of Language and Literature*, 2, 4 (2018), 8–12 (p. 8).

⁶ Svyatogor (1980) vol. II: 394–396), compare Dušanka Mirić, *Upitni iskaz u ruskom i srpskom jeziku* (Novi Sad: Filozofski fakultet, 2013), pp. 29, 30.

according to which a question in a secondary function may be: question – expressive assertion, question – expressive negation, question – clarification, question – stimulus, question – emotional response, or question to attract attention. Interrogative sentences with the particle *li* have served as a good model for exploring the relationship between expressiveness and interrogativeness. In addition, they are very common in the modern Montenegrin language as a special group of so-called *yes/no* questions, ‘syntactically “degenerate” alternative questions’.⁷

We have approached the subject of the research primarily from the syntactic-semantic aspect, so the work is theoretically based on the relevant domestic and foreign syntactic literature: *The Syntax of the Modern Serbian Language* (2005) and research on interrogative sentences by Milanka Babić (2004, 2002), Miloš Kovačević (2012), and Lauri Karttunen (1977), but also on the work of Dušanka Mirić (2013), who performed a contrastive analysis of interrogative sentences in Serbian and Russian, and Nataša Radusin-Bardić (2019), who compared the situation in French and Serbian languages. Since the subject of the research includes the category of expressiveness, the theoretical framework had to be based also on research in that area conducted by Stana Ristić, Marina Katnić-Bakaršić (1999), and Margaret Apresyan (2018). Media discourse as a material for research also required us to consult the research results of prominent scholars of that discourse: the works of Teun Van Dijk (1988, 1989), Norman Fairclough (1995), Allan Bell (1998, 1991), Jelena Jovanović (2012), Branko Tošović (2002), and others.

2. Methodology

We start with the assumption that expressive interrogative sentences are certainly one of the ways for a journalist to make an appeal with his statement, ‘with the desire that his message, and especially the headline, appear more powerful, to draw attention to itself, to emotionally influence the user to change his position or to reinforce an existing one’,⁸ and that they are very frequent in the language of the media. Therefore, we were interested in their syntactic-

⁷ Lauri Karttunen, ‘Syntax and Semantics of Questions’, *Linguistics and Philosophy* 1,1 (1977), p. 383. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226010506_Syntax_and_Semantics_of_Questions> [accessed: 19 April 2023].

⁸ Milan Mladenov, *Novinska stilistika* (Beograd: Naučna knjiga, 1980), p. 70.

semantic characteristics, and we set ourselves the task of examining them using sentences with the verb *to be* (*jeste*) and the particle *li*, which we excerpted from online media texts in Montenegro. The following research questions also arise: What are the means of conveying an expressive message? What is the relationship between the structural and semantic characteristics of such questions? What is the functional relationship between elements of a sentence and how is the centre of information established?

The research tasks were:

- Description of the relevant syntactic and semantic features of the selected sentences with a particular emphasis on the description of the functioning of the procedures of expressive syntax and expressive vocabulary
- Description of the connection between the expressive and informative nature of the question
- Grouping of excerpted examples by prominent syntactic, semantic, or stylistic similarities

The material for analysis was excerpted from Montenegrin journalistic texts available on internet portals (*Analitika*, *CDM*, *Vijesti*, *RTCG*, *AntenaM*, *RTNK*, *Gradski*, *Berane online*, *Pobjeda*, *Dan*, *Onogošt*),⁹ which were published during the previous year, 2022. Therefore, the texts of all the portals that exist in Montenegro were analysed, so that the research material would be relevant and appropriate, but also to acknowledge the media outlets' different ideological positions, which they undoubtedly propagate, either explicitly or implicitly. Since the portals offer the possibility of searching for material, we obtained the research material by entering variant forms of *je li* questions into the search engine, after which the system marked the texts in which the mentioned sentences appeared. Often the same texts can be found on different portals in Montenegro, and when repeating sentences were excluded, we came up with a corpus of 101 questions using some variant of the auxiliary verb *to be* (*jeste*) and the particle *li*. Out of that number, 51 sentences had the expressive form (more on the criterion for

⁹ The websites of Montenegrin portals from which the examples were taken are: www.antenam.net, <http://www.beraneonline.me/>, <http://www.m.cdm.me/>, www.portalanalitika.me, www.pobjeda.me, www.rtnk.me, www.rtcg.me, www.vijesti.me, www.gradski.me, www.onogost.me, www.dan.co.me

determining the expressive model in the next chapter). Below we present a table with the research results, i.e., the sentences that will be analysed in the main part of the paper.

1. Jesu li naši građani zamorčici da razni eksperti" populističkim mjerama, zarad političkih poena, vrše razne eksperimente nad njima? (Analitika, 11. 9. 2022)
2. Jesmo li se umorili od lažnih proroka i mesija, od „velikih ideja”za koje se mora umirati, iznova i iznova? (Analitika, 16. 7. 2022)
3. Jesu li za ovo tekli potoci krvi, kuće se gasile? (CDM, 20. 12. 2022)
4. [Je li Budućnost Mijačeva igračka?](#) (Dan, 10. 8. 2022)
5. Jesu li performansi ventil za društveno nezadovoljstvo? (Vijesti, 27. 12. 2022)
6. Jesu li naši građani zamorčici (...)? (Analitika, 11. 9. 2022)
7. Je li ovo onaj "čaj od nane"? (Pobjeda, 28.04.2022)
8. Jesu li tikve pobrane ili slijedi još jedna tura sađenja sa đavolom? (Analitika, 20. 12. 2022)
9. Jesam li ja idiot? (Analitika, 11. 7. 2022)
10. Jesmo li mi teroristi? (Analitika, 15. 7. 2022)
11. Je li Kina upravo zabila nož u leđa Putinu? (Gradski, 15. 11. 2022)
12. Jesu li Crnogorci baš nule od ljudi? (Pobjeda, 1. 1. 2022)
13. Je li najtrofejniji crnogorski klub postao Mijačeva igračka, sa kojom može da se igra kao dijete sa zvečkom?! (Dan, 10. 8. 2022)
14. Je li ovo ona stara Šešelji—Vučić želja da će "Crna Gora, bit' obala srpskog mora", pa šalju partijske saborce za rovovske borbe po Budvi"? (Dan, 27. 9. 2022)

15. Je li ovo to „pomirenje“ o kojem neprestano govori nova parlamentarna većina? (Dan, 5. 7. 2022)
16. Je li ovo patriotizam? (RTCG, 7. 8. 2022)
17. Je li ovo sada svojevrsna katarza koja bi trebalo da nas pročisti od prošlosti? (Analitika, 11. 5. 2022)
18. Je li ovo sve za nas? (Vijesti, 26. 5. 2022)
19. [Je li ovo kraj Borisa Džonsona?](#) (Gradski, 19. 1. 2022)
20. Jesam li ja dobro razumio da Abazović ruši Vladu zbog mene i Spajića? (Analitika, 29. 1. 2022)
21. Jeste li vi svjesni da možete da odgovarate? (Analitika, 13. 6. 2022)
22. Nije li onda takvo površno promišljanje jedne epohe i svojevrsni nedostatak samosvijesti, nipodaštavanje sebe? (AntenaM, 5. 11. 2022)
23. Jer, nije li i to jedna geografska ideologija? (Gradski, 16. 10. 2022)
24. Nije li bolje, časnije i pametnije nestati zajedno sa njim? (RTCG, 7. 11. 2022)
25. Nisu li to te „emancipatorske“ vrijednosti ka kojima težimo? (Dan, 5. 7. 2022)
26. Nije li ta buka zapravo njihov strah? (Analitika, 5. 1. 2022)
27. Ljudi, je li moguće da nakon martovske, moramo da čekamo aprilsku sjednicu Glavnog odbora o Socijaldemokratskoj partiji, a onda majsku o Socijaldemokratama? (RTCG, 17. 4. 2022)
28. Suada, jesi li Crnu Goru ikad voljela? (Analitika, 1. 8. 2022)
29. Brit, šta se dešava, jesi li dobro? (CDM, 2. 12. 2022)
30. Tužilaštvo i policija, samo da provjerimo, jeste li tu? (Pobjeda, 22. 4. 2022)
31. Mi smo protiv ugnjetača i njihovih pomagača. Jesmo li? (CDM, 20. 12. 2022)

32. Zvučite kao da ste se razočarali u Abazovića u političkom smislu. Jeste li? (Pobjeda, 2. 9. 2022)
33. Samo rijetki će pronaći mačku na fotografiji za deset sekundi, jeste li među njima? (CDM, 21. 12. 2022)
34. Volio bih da kaže otvoreno ko su moje kolege, jesu li oni nešto nečestito uradili? (Dan, 19. 10. 2022)
35. Na primjeru Svača vidimo da oni traju kontinuirano, već decenijama, kroz brojne druge oblasti. I tako dolazimo do pitanja – jesmo li oslobođeni? (Analitika, 16. 4. 2022)
36. Jer, nije li i to jedna geografska ideologija?
37. Pa šta, jesi li ga upucao ili nešto? (Dan, 4. 12. 2022)
38. Jesam li izbjegao kovid i šta to znači? (Vijesti, 7. 12. 2022)
39. Jesmo li blizu izlaza iz institucionalne krize? (Vijesti, 18. 11. 2022)
40. Jesmo li dosta trpjeli? (Gradski, 11. 6. 2022)
41. Jesmo li sljedeći na redu? (Gradski, 27. 3. 2022)
42. Jeste li znali kako je i zašto nastalo rukovanje? (Analitika, 14. 1. 2022)
43. Jesu li kokice jedne od najzdravijih grickalica? (RTCG, 24. 1. 2022)
44. Je li podbacila sezona u Budvi? Dok iz Vlade tvrde da jeste, lokalne turističke vlasti kažu da će opet donijeti najviše novca u državnu kasu. (Vijesti, 23. 07. 2022)
45. Je li vaša veza zdrava? Jeste, ako izgradite ovih pet stvari. (Vijesti, 4. 4. 2022)
46. Boje jutra: Je li otvaranje auto-puta doprinijelo boljoj posjećenosti sjevera? (Vijesti, 19. 07. 2022)
47. Jesu li svi putevi prohodni za saobraćaj zbog obilnih padavina? (Vijesti, 22. 11. 2022)

48. Jesmo li tkanje kao zanat u Crnoj Gori uspjeli da sačuvamo od zaborava? (Vijesti, 29. 10. 2022)
49. Je li zbog gledanja u ekran sve više kratkovide djece? Kako sačuvati vid? (Vijesti, 9. 2. 2022)
50. Problemi na samom početku: Hoće li se mijenjati način isplate dječjeg dodatka?
51. Jesu li svi putevi prohodni za saobraćaj zbog obilnih padavina? (Vijesti, 22. 11. 2022)

1. Are our citizens guinea pigs for various ‘experts’ to perform various experiments on them through populist measures, for the sake of political points?
2. Are we tired of false prophets and messiahs, of ‘big ideas’ for which one must die, again and again?
3. Did streams of blood flow and houses go out for this?
4. Is Budućnost Mijač’s toy?
5. Is performance art an outlet for social discontent?
6. Are our citizens guinea pigs [...]?
7. Is this the same “mint tea”?
8. Have the pumpkins been harvested or is there another round of planting with the devil coming?
9. Am I an idiot?
10. Are we terrorists?
11. Did China just stab Putin in the back?
12. Are Montenegrins really zero people?

13. Has the Montenegrin club with the most trophies become Mijač's toy, with which he can play like a child with a rattle?!
14. Is this that old Šešelj-Vučić wish that 'Montenegro will be the coast of the Serb Sea' [...]?
15. Is this the 'reconciliation' which the new parliamentary majority constantly talks about?
16. Is this patriotism?
17. Is this now a kind of catharsis that should cleanse us of the past?
18. Is this all for us?
19. Is this the end of Boris Johnson?
20. Have I understood correctly that Abazović is toppling the government because of me and Spajić?
21. Are you aware that you could answer for this?
22. Isn't then such a superficial consideration of an era also a kind of lack of self-awareness, and of self-deprecation?
23. Because, isn't that also a geographical ideology?
24. Isn't it better, more honourable, and smarter to disappear with him?
25. Aren't these the 'emancipatory' values we are striving for?
26. Isn't it better, more honourable, and smarter to disappear with him?
27. People, is it possible that after the March session of the Central Committee, we have to wait for the April session on the Social Democratic Party, and then the May session on the Social Democrats?
28. Suada, have you ever loved Montenegro?
29. Brit, what's going on, are you ok?

30. Hey, prosecutor's office and the police, we are just checking if you are there?
31. We are against the oppressors and their helpers. Are we?
32. You sound like you are disappointed in Abazović in the political sense. Are you?
33. Only a few will find a cat in a photo in ten seconds, are you one of them?
34. I would like him to say openly who my colleagues are, have they done something dishonest?
35. On the example of Svač, we see that they last continuously, for decades, through numerous other areas. And so, we come to the question – have we been freed?
36. Because, isn't that also a geographical ideology?
37. So what, did you shoot him or something?
38. Did I avoid Covid and what does that mean?
39. Are we close to getting out of the institutional crisis?
40. Have we suffered enough?
41. Are we next in line?
42. Did you know how and why the handshake came about?
43. Is popcorn one of the healthiest snacks?
44. Did the season in Budva fail? While the Government claims that it did, the local tourism authorities say that it will again bring the most money to the state coffers
45. Is your relationship healthy? It is if you build these five things.
46. Colours of the morning: Did the opening of the highway contribute to more visits to the north?

47. Are all roads open to traffic due to heavy rainfall?
48. Have we managed to save weaving as a craft in Montenegro from oblivion?
49. Is looking at the screen the reason for more and more myopic children? How to preserve vision?
50. Problems at the very beginning: Will the method of payment of child allowance change?
51. Are all roads open to traffic due to heavy rainfall?

In accordance with contemporary trends in linguistics and its overlap with other disciplines – semantics, and pragmatics and stylistics as well, the approach of syntactic orientation in this work will require that the research material be processed using several methods. We shall start with the standard method of deduction. We will describe the material from larger units towards smaller ones, i.e., we will start from the sentence as a specific form, and then focus on individual parts of the sentence. The method of composition or synthesis will serve us when determining syntactic relationships at the sentence level, and the method of segmentation or analysis for the description of the functions of individual words, the position of the interrogative centre of information, and the observation of the meaning and of stylistic characteristics of all excerpted models, the isolation of means of the expressive message, i.e., the overall description on the structural plane. We will check the synonymy of interrogative forms and the possibility of replacing them with competitive forms using the method of substitution. In addition, striving for a detailed description of each segment of the research using modern syntactical and linguistic terminology, we will also use the method of description throughout the research. The main goal of the research is the systemic analysis of expressive models of interrogative sentences observed in the language of the Montenegrin media from the syntactic and semantic aspects.

3. Theoretical framework of the research

a. Defining interrogative sentences

Interrogative sentences are those sentences in which the speaker addresses the interlocutor using a particular form, partially fixed word order or specific intonation in order to obtain information from them,¹⁰ indicate that they lack knowledge about something, and remove the uncertainty that the question always contains.¹¹ Typically, interrogative forms have structural signs of interrogativeness: interrogative particles, interrogative/relative pronouns, pronominal adverbs and interrogative intonation, relatively fixed linearization, while its semantic-pragmatic content consists of: the absence of information and the speaker's desire to obtain it, and the encouragement to the interlocutor to react.¹²

The first divisions of interrogative sentences start from the distinction between real and rhetorical questions, i.e., those that have the function of seeking information and those that do not expect an answer.¹³ Milan Mihaljević (1995) divides them into five groups: yes-no questions (which may be zero (intonational) questions and questions with particles (*li*, *da*, *zar*)), supplementary, special (pronominal) questions, and alternative and affirmative (echo) questions. In the *Syntax of the Serbian Language*, interrogative sentences are divided according to different criteria: 1) according to the scope of the situation into situationally general and special questions;¹⁴ 2) according to the level of information into open, alternative, and minimal choice questions; 3) according to the degree of grammaticalisation into direct and indirect; 4) with regard to the left context into initial and echo questions; and 5) according to the right context into sentences with a typical right context and leading questions. Interrogative sentences may be weak or strong according to the intensity of insistence on the

¹⁰ Mihailo Stevanović, *Savremeni srpskohrvatski jezik II* (Beograd: Naučna knjiga, 1969), p. 7.

¹¹ Ivo Pranjković, 'Upitno, pojačajno, namjerno i uvjetno li', in *Pismo, časopis za jezik i književnost*, 10,1, (2012), 33–43 (p. 17).

¹² Predrag Piper et al., *Sintaksa savremenog srpskog jezika. Prosta rečenica*. (Beograd: Institut za srpski jezik SANU, Beogradska knjiga, Matica srpska, 2005), pp. 670–671.

¹³ Predrag Piper et al., p. 677.

¹⁴ The term general question is synonymous with the terms yes-no and total questions, while special questions are also called pronominal questions.

communicative goal, and affirmative and negative considering the presence or absence of negation.¹⁵ Dušanka Mirić (2014) makes a distinction between interrogative statements with a total proposition (corresponding to general or total questions) and interrogative statements with a propositional function (corresponding to pronominal questions), and also identifies tonal questions, where intonation is the only indicator of interrogativeness.

b. Expressiveness and interrogative sentences

Expressiveness is a set of semantic and stylistic features of a linguistic unit, which enable a given linguistic unit to transfer the subjective attitude of the speaker to the content of the statement or the addressee in the speech. Expressiveness is thus closely related to the terms of emotionality, affectivity, and intensity, so it is a sort of manifestation of the speaker's personality,¹⁶ close to the category of evaluation, figurativeness, and stylistic colouring.¹⁷

Although expressiveness is not a categorial and differential feature of interrogative sentences, it can certainly be an important feature. Interrogative sentences are, first of all, communicative units, since in the relation speaker-proposition-interlocutor they should convey an interrogative type of information, i.e., they stand out as a particular group precisely according to the criterion of the communicative goal of asking for unknown information. In the secondary form, the semantic transposition of such a role occurs very often, i.e., the interrogative sentence 'activates one of its indirect communicative functions, where a construction with a non-interrogative meaning – of a declarative or exclamatory character functions as its semantic equivalent'.¹⁸ More precisely, an interrogative sentence can be used to ask for confirmation of information while expressing doubt, disbelief, astonishment, and the like.¹⁹ Similar to M. Babić,²⁰ we believe that such a communicative deviation into a non-interrogative

¹⁵ Piper Predrag and Ivan Klajn, *Normativna gramatika srpskog jezika* (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 2013), p. 422–425.

¹⁶ Stana Ristić, *Ekspresivna leksika u srpskom jeziku* (Beograd: Institut za srpski jezik SANU, 2004), p. 15.

¹⁷ Compare Apresyan, p. 9.

¹⁸ Milanka Babić, 'Komunikativna vrijednost upitnih rečenica u jeziku štampe', in *Radovi Filozofskog fakulteta, Filološke nauke*, 16, 1/1 (2014), 51–72 (p. 69).

¹⁹ Nataša Radusin-Bardić, *Interogativni modalitet u francuskom i srpskom jeziku* (Novi Sad: Filozofski fakultet, 2019), pp. 35, 36.

²⁰ Compare Babić, p. 53.

meaning is influenced precisely by the expressive function of language, with the modality of intensification and emotionality as subcategories, and that 'deviation from the communicative goal is the source of the stylistic marking of the interrogative form'.²¹

4. The role and distribution of interrogative sentences in journalistic language

Manifestations of interrogativeness in journalistic style are diverse, and their most specific position is certainly the one they perform in headlines, because then their main task is to contribute to the appeal, i.e., to everything that 'impacts the feelings, and thus arouses the interest of readers'.²² Titles in the form of interrogative sentences filled with expressive language elements usually appear in cases of shorter texts,²³ and then, as a rule, they do not have the characteristics of a real question, and often not even a question mark at the end. In analytical texts, on the other hand, the role of interrogative sentences is usually to cast doubt on a stance, shape an expressive claim, or refute certain statements,²⁴ while in a specific shape and form, with different communicative effects and expressive colouring, they are used within an article when the interest should be directed towards some exclusive content, or someone's words convincingly transmitted as direct speech. In addition, they are a structural part of interviews as a particular genre, and they are also found in announcements of shows, cultural content, etc. In the following, we will examine how much interrogative content is present in each segment of the media discourse and what characterises its expressive form.

4.1. Syntax and semantics of expressive questions in media texts in Montenegro

As expressiveness is primarily a characteristic of everyday speech, in an intellectual speech act – which includes journalistic language – this process can only be understood as a stylistic fact,²⁵

²¹ Miloš Kovačević, 'Sintaksa i stilistika upitnih iskaza u romanu Gospodska ulica Ranka Risojevića', in *Nauka i identitet*, 6 (2012), 67–89 (p. 81).

²² Josip Silić, *Funkcionalni stilovi hrvatskoga jezika* (Zagreb: Disput, 2006), p. 90.

²³ Miodarka Tepavčević, 'Jezičke karakteristike sportskih novinskih naslova', in *Medijski dijalozi*, 7, 20 (2014), 589–603 (p. 595).

²⁴ Compare Babić, p. 30.

²⁵ Jelena Jovanović, *Lingvistika i stilistika novinskog umeća* (Jezičke i stilske osobine novinarstva. Beograd: Jasen, 2010), p. 146.

i.e., as a product of special intentions in the construction of linguistic expression. The style of media discourse,²⁶ according to Van Dijk, can be very informative in the context of media analysis, given that relationships are often reflected through it, so the choice of lexical units has a deeper meaning as well. If we look at the research results, the first conclusion that emerges is that in the largest number of examples, interrogative sentences are dealing with socio-political issues, so it is not excluded that expressive questions, being particularly subjective by their nature, also contain the ideological stances of journalists in Montenegro.

Models of interrogative sentences with the auxiliary verb *to be* (*je*) and the particle *li* (in accented or enclitic form) in the language of Montenegrin media manifest their syntactic forms through simple, complex, and compound sentences, and much less often as parcelled forms, i.e., constructions without real status of a sentence, which would enter the field of interest of expressive syntaxes and which by their nature are more common for the realisation of interrogativeness in everyday informal communication and in the colloquial functional style. Although examples of expressive syntax are rare in the analysed corpus, this does not immediately mean that expressive models of these interrogative sentences are marginalised in our corpus, but only that the means of their construction and of establishing relations in accordance with the communicative function are different and operate primarily through lexical markers.

4.1.1. Lexical markers of expressiveness

Expressive models of interrogative structures in the language of Montenegrin media are built using stylistic lexical units. As a pronounced form of expression, achieved through a connotative semantic or a particular vocal structure, expressiveness in a strict sense usually implies the existence of components in the semantics of words which demonstrate the measure and degree of the characteristic of a phenomenon.²⁷ Jovanović²⁸ explains that it is a direct expression, exponancy, 'self-expression'. Those are usually positioned in titles, in which

²⁶ Compare Teun Van Dijk, 'Critical News Analysis. The study of news', in *Critical Studies*, 1,1 (1989), 103–126 (p. 116).

²⁷ Ristić, p. 18.

²⁸ Jovanović, p. 147.

‘striking, strong words, paraphrases, irony, contrast, paradox, slangs, various word games, etc.’ are often used.²⁹

By looking at the research material, we can firstly see a tendency to use figures of harmonious contradiction, especially irony, in sharp, exposing journalistic texts, where, according to Branko Tošović,³⁰ one strives to use as ‘lethal’ a word as possible. Cases when, with a mocking tone, ‘the intended meaning is the opposite of what is said’,³¹ are usually signalled by quotation marks, so a deeper analysis of the structure and semantics is not necessary to perceive the true meaning. We are talking about issues of a political nature, so the view that the wording of the expressive question has served as a means of highlighting the ideological stances of journalists as well is not excluded. Nominal subject or object phrases, as carriers of ironic content, in the examples observed are referentially derived and situationally independent terms:

Jesu li naši građani zamorčici da razni „eksperti” populističkim mjerama, zarad političkih poena, vrše razne eksperimente nad njima? (Analitika, 11. 9. 2022); *Jesmo li se umorili od lažnih proroka I mesija, od „velikih ideja” za koje se mora umirati, iznova i iznova?* (Analitika, 16. 7. 2022).

[Are our citizens guinea pigs for various ‘experts’ to perform various experiments on them through populist measures, for the sake of political points?; Are we tired of false prophets and messiahs, of ‘big ideas’ for which one must die, again and again?]

This type of communicative-expressive models came significantly closer to conversion into exclamatory sentences (which is a process mainly characteristic of pronominal rhetorical questions), given the specific intention to highlight the ‘affective state of the speaker and warn the interlocutor to pay attention to the content of the proposition’.³²

Sentences with hyperbole have a similar characteristic and the tendency towards subjective marking of political and social topics. Their expressive character is based on emphasising the intensity of the action, and the syntactical character is based on the gradation of clauses in compound sentences: *Jesu li za ovo tekli potoci krvi, kuće se gasile?* (CDM, 20. 12. 2022) [Did streams of blood flow and houses go out for this?], and also interrogative sentences with a

²⁹ Compare Silić, p. 90.

³⁰ Branko Tošović, *Funkcionalni stilovi* (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 2002), p. 321.

³¹ Miloš Kovačević, *Stilistika i gramatika stilskih figura* (Beograd: Kantakuzin, 1999), p. 115.

³² August Musić, ‘Pitanja u hrvatskom ili srpskom jeziku I–III’, in *Rad JAZU*, 184 (1910), 96–235 (p. 131).

copular metaphor marked in the structure of the analytical predicate. Each of the members – subject, copula, and predicate – retains a literal meaning, and their connection gives a special metaphorical meaning:³³

Je li Budućnost Mijačeva igračka? (Dan, 10. 8. 2022); *Jesu li performansi ventil za društveno nezadovoljstvo?* (Vijesti, 27. 12. 2022); *Jesu li naši građani zamorčići (...)?* (Analitika, 11. 9. 2022); *Je li ovo onaj "čaj od nan"?* (Pobjeda, 28.04.2022)

[Is Budućnost Mijač's toy?; Is performance art an outlet for social discontent?; Are our citizens guinea pigs [...]?; Is this the same 'mint tea'?]

At the formal level, a metaphor is also established when a concept with a figurative meaning is in the function of the subject, and then it is a transposed metaphor:

Jesu li tikve pobrane ili slijedi još jedna tura sađenja sa đavolom? (Analitika, 20. 12. 2022).

[Have the pumpkins been harvested or is there another round of planting with the devil coming?]

The rhetoric quality is also present in sentences with an attributive predicate of expressive modality, which 'communicates an emotional relationship emphasized by the inclusion of particular lexical means with an expressive function in the sentence'.³⁴ More precisely, the predicative focus has the form of an abbreviated comparison, and the noun with a high degree of negative evaluation carries the mark of the generalised categorial meaning of a trait: *Jesam li ja idiot?* (Analitika, 11. 7. 2022); *Jesmo li mi teroristi?* (Analitika, 15. 7. 2022). [Am I an idiot?; Are we terrorists?]. Here, communicative models are not devoid of illocutionary force, and by referencing a trait in the nominal part of the analytical predicate, a psychological assessment is provided in a combination of two types of emotional qualification: axiological-psychological and subjective-modal.³⁵ According to S. Ristić,³⁶ this is a sufficient condition for the expressiveness of the content. Distinct lexemes of negative and generally expressive evaluations actually 'break the usual expression of texts in this style, based on communicative

³³ Jovanović, p. 151.

³⁴ Predrag Piper et al., p. 647.

³⁵ Compare Ristić, p. 32.

³⁶ Ristić, p. 32.

linguistic function, precisely because we do not expect them, but also enrich the informative value of the message by introducing affectivity'.³⁷ The inclusion of the subject in the above-mentioned questions – emotional responses without the real syntactic-semantic need for it also has a stylistic, amplified character, striving for the attractiveness of the expression, and the personal, i.e., auto-illocutionary component comes to the fore.

Along with the above, we point out that the informal conversational form and the phraseological units of negative evaluation in the structure of the interrogative sentence attract the reader's attention, make a deviation from the 'expected' and thereby add an expressive language function to the communicative one, 'refresh the style and enter new contexts',³⁸ e.g., political or social spheres, as in excerpted questions. In terms of function, sentences with phraseologisms in our case are a part of the predicate (the first two examples) or have a function to complement the central notion (the third example).

In the first case, they describe the content of the proposition more vividly, while in the second, 'the idea of the way in which something is accomplished is in the foreground', 'gradation in the form of equativity', meaning 'in the same way':³⁹

Je li Kina upravo zabila nož u leđa Putinu? (Gradski, 15. 11. 2022); Jesu li Crnogorci baš nule od ljudi? (Pobjeda, 1. 1. 2022). Je li najtrofejniji crnogorski klub postao Mijačeva igračka, sa kojom može da se igra kao dijete sa zvečkom?! (Dan, 10. 8. 2022)

[Did China just stab Putin in the back?; Are Montenegrins really zero people?; Has the Montenegrin club with the most trophies become Mijač's toy, with which he can play like a child with a rattle?!]

Phraseologisms, expressiveness of which is based on periphrasis, in isolated interrogative sentences are not characterised by a modified structure, i.e., the feature of replacing or omitting some of their structural parts, which according to Lana Hudeček and Milica

³⁷ Milanka Babić, 'Sintaksički oblik retoričkog pitanja sa riječcom "zar"', in *Zbornik za srpski jezik, književnost i umjetnost*, II/2 (2002), 181–195 (pp. 182, 183).

³⁸ Lana Hudeček and Milica Mihaljević, *Jezik medija: publicistički funkcionalni stil* (Zagreb: Hrvatska sveučilišna naklada, 2009), p. 149.

³⁹ Predrag Piper and Ivan Klajn, p. 510.

Mihaljević,⁴⁰ is a significant feature of the use of idiomatic phrases in journalism. As simultaneously communicative and expressive models, which both transmit information and introduce expressiveness, they are not uncharacteristic of the journalistic word – in fact, they bring it closer to everyday informal communication, and they point the reader-recipient to the selected content more vividly, convincingly, directly, and interestingly, but they are also ‘a form of automation of linguistic means’⁴¹ in the media discourse.

The enclitic interrogative form achieves its very frequent position in sentences with a nominal predicate with a demonstrative pronoun in the subject argument and in the type of question – resolution. The fact that in all the examples observed the explicated form behind the interrogative particle retains the same morphological form (neuter singular) and the function of the first argument, introducing at the same time identical nuances of irony, doubt, or review of the content of the proposition which is figuratively close to the speaker – leads us to conclude that the construction *je li ovo* (is this) has a consistent, almost phraseological structure:

Je li ovo ona stara Šešelj-Vučić želja da će "Crna Gora, bit' obala srpskog mora" (...)? (Dan, 27. 9. 2022); *Je li ovo to „pomirenje“ o kojem neprestano govori nova parlamentarna većina?* (Dan, 5. 7. 2022); *Je li ovo patriotizam?* (RTCG, 7. 8. 2022); *Je li ovo sada svojevrsna katarza koja bi trebalo da nas pročisti od prošlosti?* (Analitika, 11. 5. 2022); *Je li ovo sve za nas?* (Vijesti, 26. 5. 2022); [*Je li ovo kraj Borisa Džonsona?*](#) (Gradski, 19. 1. 2022).

[Is this that old Šešelj-Vučić wish that ‘Montenegro will be the coast of the Serb Sea’ [...]?: Is this the ‘reconciliation’ which the new parliamentary majority constantly talks about?: Is this patriotism?: Is this now a kind of catharsis that should cleanse us of the past?: Is this all for us?: Is this the end of Boris Johnson?]

Here, the function of the pronominal subject is just to fill the position of the grammatical subject, and it can be also said to have an expletive-phoric (anaphoric or cataphoric) character.⁴² We notice that the examples which are particularly stylistically coloured and

⁴⁰ Hudeček and Mihaljević, p. 137.

⁴¹ Compare Jovanović, p. 297.

⁴² Strahinja Stepanov, 'Parcelacija u pripovednim i književnopublicističkim delima iz gračkog opusa Ive Andrića (1923–1924)', in *Grački opus Iva Andrića (1923–1924)*, (2010), 413–427 (p. 418).

emotionally and expressively marked are those when the phraseologised form *is this* (*je li ovo*) is directly connected to another explicit pronoun (*je li ovo ona* - is this she, *je li ovo to* - is this it, *je li ovo onaj* - is this that), because by this procedure, as a rule, the already existing referring and affective nature of the proposition is intensified. Unlike other examples that retain the character of 'confirmation' of the expressively reduced variant, the procedure of doubling, i.e., accumulating demonstrative pronouns, translates the given sentences into one of the more expressive interrogative forms observed in Montenegrin media texts. In addition, the synonymous relationship between the signifier (*ovo* - this) and the paraphrasing descriptor is more prominent in those cases, while in the other examples, a relationship closer to the typical syntactic relationship between the subject and nominal predicate is built. We also notice that the pronominal lexeme here also has a 'cataphoric function because it is a deictic and substitutive unit of nominal postcedents'.⁴³

The following feigned syntactic questions with accented forms for the first person have the character of a claim or resolution with a heightened emotion of exasperation due to a certain situation:⁴⁴

Jesam li ja dobro razumio da Abazović ruši Vladu zbog mene i Spajića? (Analitika, 29. 1. 2022)
Jeste li vi svjesni da možete da odgovarate? (Analitika, 13. 6. 2022)

[Have I understood correctly that Abazović is toppling the government because of me and Spajić?; Are you aware that you could answer for this?]

The apodoses from the above examples have a phraseologised structure and in our case, they are explicated by an object supplementary clause. The personal character of the subject-predicate construction is built by pronominal determination of the speaking person, although it is already clearly discernible on the basis of the auxiliary verb in the initial position, so the function of this syntactic duplication is the stylisation of the expression of modal character.

⁴³ Vera Đevriz Nišić, 'Komunikativna i poetska vrijednost distributivnog modela kumulacije', in *(Srpski) jezik u komunikativnoj funkciji*, I (2016), 201–210 (pp. 205, 206).

⁴⁴ Compare Babić (2002), p. 187.

4.1.2. Expressive interrogative negation

The analysed expressive interrogative sentences also have forms with negation. These are so-called dubitative questions ‘by which a stance is considered with suspicion, and the speaker does not necessarily expect an explicit answer to such questions; he would perhaps be satisfied with just a hint’.⁴⁵ These forms would belong to the class of questions – expressive negation:

Nije li onda takvo površno promišljanje jedne epohe i svojevrsni nedostatak samosvijesti, nipodaštavanje sebe? (AntenaM, 5. 11. 2022); *Jer, nije li i to jedna geografska ideologija?* (Gradski, 16. 10. 2022); *Nije li bolje, časnije i pametnije nestati zajedno sa njim?* (RTCG, 7. 11. 2022). *Nisu li to te „emancipatorske“ vrijednosti ka kojima težimo?* (Dan, 5. 7. 2022)

[Isn’t then such a superficial consideration of an era also a kind of lack of self-awareness, and of self-deprecation?; Because, isn’t that also a geographical ideology?; Isn’t it better, more honourable. and smarter to disappear with him?; Aren’t these the ‘emancipatory’ values we are striving for?]

The characteristic suggestiveness and distance of the speaker in relation to the content of the proposition, and according to Pranjković,⁴⁶ the ability to express conviction in something that is contrary to what the semantics of the sentence suggests – together build highly expressive models, which in themselves include an emphatic character. Therefore, we consider it correct to interpret⁴⁷ interrogative structures with *nije li* (*isn’t it* or *isn’t that*) as negated forms of rhetorical questions with an unambiguously affirmative meaning. Without harming the semantic side of the expression, the mentioned model can be replaced by the particle *zar*, which is normally used for ‘questions to which an affirmative answer is expected if the question is in negative form’.⁴⁸ The transformation would require a negative form of the copular or full verb in the predicate:

⁴⁵ Mirić, p. 214.

⁴⁶ Ivo Pranjković, ‘Upitno, pojačajno, namjerno i uvjetno li’, in *Pismo*, časopis za jezik i književnost, 10. 1, (2012), 33–43, p. 37.

⁴⁷ Compare Babić (2002).

⁴⁸ Piper, Klajn, p. 215.

Zar nije onda takvo površno promišljanje jedne epohe i svojevrsni nedostatak samosvijesti, nipodaštavanje sebe? (AntenaM, 5. 11. 2022); Jer, zar nije i to jedna geografska ideologija? (Gradski, 16. 10. 2022); Zar nije bolje, časnije i pametnije nestati zajedno sa njim? (RTCG, 7. 11. 2022)

[Isn't then such a superficial consideration of an era also a kind of lack of self-awareness, and of self-deprecation?; Because, isn't that also a geographical ideology?; Isn't it better, more honourable, and smarter to disappear with him?]

4.1.3. Vocative in expressive questions

Monolexemic or bilexemic vocative models in front of the interrogative particle are also stylistic variants, often uncharacteristic of the informative character of journalism in a strict sense, bearing in mind that they expressively apostrophise individuals for 'a more expressive, lively and intimate presentation of information'.⁴⁹ The material observed shows that the questions constituted in this way are syntactically diverse, but on the semantic level, they show a uniform expression of dissatisfaction and protest⁵⁰, explicated through the ironic character of the proposition:

Ljudi, je li moguće da nakon martovske, moramo da čekamo aprilsku sjednicu Glavnog odbora o Socijaldemokratskoj partiji, a onda majsku o Socijaldemokratama? (RTCG, 17. 4. 2022); Suada, jesi li Crnu Goru ikad voljela? (Analitika, 1. 8. 2022); Brit, šta se dešava, jesi li dobro? (CDM, 2. 12. 2022); Tužilaštvo i policija, samo da provjerimo, jeste li tu? (Pobjeda, 22. 4. 2022).

[People, is it possible that after the March session of the Central Committee, we have to wait for the April session on the Social Democratic Party, and then the May session on the Social Democrats?; Suada, have you ever loved Montenegro?; Brit, what's going on, are you ok?; Hey, prosecutor's office and the police, we are just checking if you are there?]

The expressive function of the vocative includes a relatively sympathetic⁵¹ attitude of the speaker towards the interlocutor and brings emotional reactions and an activist component

⁴⁹ Compare Jovanović, p. 290.

⁵⁰ Compare Babić (2014), p. 62.

⁵¹ Compare Babić (2015) p. 227.

into the questions, so here the vocative is transferred from the communicative to the stylistic plane.⁵² We notice that the vocative in the sentences excerpted from the media texts is not an independent means of conveying an expressive message, but that additional stylistic markers are used along with it: inserted clichéd interrogative or informative expressions (*je li moguće, šta se dešava, samo da provjerimo*) [*is it possible, what's going on, just checking*] and linguistic sentence modifications created by the mechanism of the word play, the so-called 'figure of distortion'. Due to their nature, the mentioned models cannot be classified into just one type of expressive questions, as they contain components of both questions – stimuli and questions – emotional reactions.

4.1.4. Procedures of expressive syntax

Syntactic conversion, created due to the disturbed correlation between the formal and semantic structure is a typical tool in the journalistic language, so its appearance in mentioned positions is not unusual, but a lowered frequency of distribution of ellipsis as an important mechanism of expressive syntax is surprising. But, even in those isolated examples a significantly reduced figurative character may be noted, because the ellipses observed 'are the result of reduction or elimination of redundancy in the statement',⁵³ so that ellipsis is predominantly grammatical, and less expressive:

Mi smo protiv ugnjetača i njihovih pomagača. Jesmo li? (CDM, 20. 12. 2022); *Zvučite kao da ste se razočarali u Abazovića u političkom smislu. Jeste li?* (Pobjeda, 2. 9. 2022); *Samo rijetki će pronaći mačku na fotografiji za deset sekundi, jeste li među njima?* (CDM, 21. 12. 2022).

[We are against the oppressors and their helpers. Are we?; You sound like you are disappointed in Abazović in the political sense. Are you?; Only a few will find a cat in a photo in ten seconds, are you one of them?]

The anaphoric textual connection is not disturbed by the separation of the content into separate sentences, because the separated total-supplementary segments are only used to ask for confirmation of a certain formulation of the informative part that precedes it. The reduced contents of the noun or verb predicate from synsemantic sentences can be grasped

⁵² Babić, p. 227.

⁵³ Katnić-Bakaršić, p. 94.

from the context of the preceding informative part. They actually rely semantically on the already existing predicate of the apodosis. By repeating the sentence elements of the apodosis, the supplementary question (pr. *Mi smo protiv ugnjetača i njihovih pomagača. Jesmo li protiv ugnjetača i njihovih pomagača?*) [e.g., *We are against the oppressors and their helpers. Are we against the oppressors and their helpers?*] would be interpreted ‘as unnecessarily extensive, redundant, unnatural, from a rhetorical perspective non-figurative, and communicatively wrong’.⁵⁴ Katnić-Bakaršić states for identical elliptical cases that complete explication and duplication of content can sometimes have an expressive character, because such an expression is created by the mechanism of expressive syntax – the addition operation. In addition to the above, we also note cases when the interrogative form in the supplementary position is not elliptical but a genuine subject-predicate structure. Then its function is to supplement the presented wording and not to confirm, as in the previously mentioned cases:

Volio bih da kaže otvoreno ko su moje kolege, jesu li oni nešto nečestito uradili? (Dan, 19. 10. 2022);
Na primjeru Svača vidimo da oni traju kontinuirano, već decenijama, kroz brojne druge oblasti. I tako dolazimo do pitanja – jesmo li oslobođeni? (Analitika, 16. 4. 2022)

[I would like him to say openly who my colleagues are, have they done something dishonest?; On the example of Svač, we see that they last continuously, for decades, through numerous other areas. And so, we come to the question – have we been freed?]

Parcelled forms are detected in specific cases of independence of the interrogative part: *Jer, nije li i to jedna geografska ideologija?* (Gradski, 16. 10. 2022). [Because, isn't that also a geographical ideology?] An example with an inserted pronoun has a similar character: *Pa šta, jesi li ga upucao ili nešto?* (Dan, 4. 12. 2022) [So what, did you shoot him or something?] The initial position in front of the interrogative marker in the first example is provided by the parcelling procedure, and the inserted conjunction should highlight the causal context rather than anticipate a part of a sentence. The additional expressiveness of the parcelling here – if we rely on the views of Marina Katnić-Bakaršić⁵⁵ – is also the result of the rhythmic and intonational separation of the parcelled form from the base structure, but also of its initial segment from the rest of the parcelled content, with a comma. Such ‘autonomisation of sentence parts for the purpose of emphasis and expressiveness creates a greater focus on

⁵⁴ Katnić-Bakaršić, p. 98.

⁵⁵ Katnić-Bakaršić, p. 96.

them in the readers'.⁵⁶ In the second sentence with an intensified particle, more emphasis is on the 'echo', the supplementary character of the question, characteristic of conversational sequences, such as the above example. Like Pranjković,⁵⁷ we are of the opinion that such segments have a contrasting accent and that they are a kind of preparation for the question.

i. Attention-grabbing questions

The expressive character of models with an auxiliary verb 'to be' and particle 'li' is achieved even in cases where they appear in the titles of texts of analytical or research nature. It is a class of questions to attract attention. Then the expression is not lexical, but predominantly intonational and contextual, and the question is posed to the reader as an imaginary interlocutor with the aim of an expressive and emphatic opening of the topic.⁵⁸ The extracted material confirms the interpretation⁵⁹ that the content of the article that follows is structured as a macro-answer, of a distributive nature, which confirms or denies what was stated in the interrogative sentence from the title. We note that in the texts of the Montenegrin media, such examples are predominantly shorter formulations, expressive forms, reduced to basic sentence elements, effective and linguistically economical:

Jesam li izbjegao kovid i šta to znači? (Vijesti, 7. 12. 2022); *Jesmo li blizu izlaza iz institucionalne krize?* (Vijesti, 18. 11. 2022); *Jesmo li dosta trpjeli?* (Gradski, 11. 6. 2022); *Jesmo li sljedeći na redu?* (Gradski, 27. 3. 2022); *Jeste li znali kako je i zašto nastalo rukovanje?* (Analitika, 14. 1. 2022).

[Did I avoid Covid and what does that mean?; Are we close to getting out of the institutional crisis?; Have we suffered enough?; Are we next in line?; Did you know how and why the handshake came about?]

In addition to the above, these sentences have some other variants. Forms with introductory questions form a special group. These are interrogative sentences that have the role of starting the topic of the article. We note those examples not only in the title of the text, but also at the

⁵⁶ Miodarka Tepavčević, 'Žena na kamenu: parenteza i parcelacija', in *Andrićeva pripovijetka*, Vol. 14, (2022), 723–734 (p. 725).

⁵⁷ Compare Pranjković, p.36.

⁵⁸ Babić (2014), p. 58.

⁵⁹ Babić (2014), p. 61.

beginning of the article. Jovanović⁶⁰ believes that this is the easiest way for a journalist to introduce the reader to the text. The question is immediately followed by the answer to the rhetorical question:

Je li podbacila sezona u Budvi? Dok iz Vlade tvrde da jeste, lokalne turističke vlasti kažu da će opet donijeti najviše novca u državnu kasu. (Vijesti, 23. 07. 2022); Je li vaša veza zdrava? Jeste, ako izgradite ovih pet stvari. (Vijesti, 4. 4. 2022)

[Did the season in Budva fail? While the Government claims that it did, the local tourism authorities say that it will again bring the most money to the state coffers; Is your relationship healthy? It is if you build these five things.]

Numerous questions-announcements of the most interesting content of the television program have a related nature and function to attract attention:

Boje jutra: Je li otvaranje auto-puta doprinijelo boljoj posjećenosti sjevera? (Vijesti, 19. 07. 2022); Je li zbog gledanja u ekran sve više kratkovidne djece? Kako sačuvati vid? (Vijesti, 9. 2. 2022); Jesu li svi putevi prohodni za saobraćaj zbog obilnih padavina? (Vijesti, 22. 11. 2022)

[Colours of the morning: Did the opening of the highway contribute to more visits to the north?; Is looking at the screen the reason for more and more myopic children? How to preserve vision?; Are all roads open to traffic due to heavy rainfall?]

Since, as Babić⁶¹ says, they are a form of connection between two types of media, these expressive questions have a time limit, and after a certain period they are no longer relevant. If interrogative forms are used consecutively, i.e., they are cited one after the other, the analysis shows that then the *je li* models are combined with other interrogative forms to meet the aesthetic requirements of the journalistic style, but also to announce the content of the program more fully. With that, the expression comes to the fore. Using some of the above sentences as an example, it looks like this:

⁶⁰ Jovanović, p. 290.

⁶¹ Babić (2014), p. 59.

Je li zbog gledanja u ekran sve više kratkovide djece? Kako sačuvati vid? (Vijesti, 9. 2. 2022); Problemi na samom početku: Hoće li se mijenjati način isplate dječjeg dodatka? Jesu li svi putevi prohodni za saobraćaj zbog obilnih padavina? (Vijesti, 22. 11. 2022)

[Is looking at the screen the reason for more and more myopic children? How to preserve vision?; Problems at the very beginning: Will the method of payment of child allowance change?; Are all roads open to traffic due to heavy rainfall?]

The frequency of expressive models of interrogative sentences with the verb *jeste* and particle *li* can be justified by their attachment to those parts of journalism that are closer to the conversational functional style, but it can also be stated that they extend their field of use to all other levels of media discourse, becoming an important feature of its language.

5. Conclusion

We conclude that the expressive models of interrogative sentences with the auxiliary verb *to be (jeste)* and the particle *li* are expectedly frequent in media texts: out of 101 registered questions with some variant of the form of the auxiliary verb *to be (jeste)* + particle *li*, half (51 examples) are expressively marked. The most expressive questions are those that contain expressive vocabulary, especially hyperbolised or ironic lexemes. The analysis has shown that such examples are thematically related to social and political issues in Montenegro, which does not exclude the possibility that interrogative sentences are also a means of expressing the ideological views of those who create media discourse. A deeper analysis of this issue would require the inclusion of a methodology of discourse analysis as a separate discipline, an interesting aspect for future research.

The observation of the material has confirmed the assumption that expressive interrogative sentences in the media are often uncharacteristic of what we consider to be the typical features of that discourse in a strict sense. The analysis has detected their distribution in both genuine expressive and transitional expressive-communicative variants. It is interesting that the procedures of expressive syntax (ellipsis, parcellation, etc.) are not primary tools in the construction of stylistic models of interrogative sentences. The basis of expressiveness is made up of lexical tags, that is, of 'evocative power of linguistic units'⁶² (incorporation of metaphors,

⁶² Jovanović, p. 137.

irony, phraseologisms, lexemes of negative evaluation, etc.). More precisely, taking into account Jovanović's⁶³ views on the types of expressivisation, we point out that the expression in the examples analysed is formulated as direct (i.e., expository), and also by the method of labelling, by transferring qualifications from certain terms, by a sentimental tone, colloquialisation, and somewhat less often by the correlation of incompatible language units. Expressive models of sentences with *auxiliary verb to be + particle li* are often formed by using tropes, the most frequent of which is metaphor and various variants of periphrasis. On the level of meaning, they usually concern confirmation, expression of doubts, suggestions, etc. It was also noticed that the informative character of the question is considerably reduced where stylistic markers are more prominent.

Expressive levels of interrogativeness in journalistic language actually always have one clear goal – to attract the attention of the readership and ensure the attractiveness of the expression.

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⁶³ Jovanović, p. 147.

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