

FACULTY OF MASS MEDIA COMMUNICATION

University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovakia

MEGATRENDS AND MEDIA

DIGITAL UNIVERSE



Zuzana Bučková
Lenka Rusňáková
Martin Solík
(eds.)

Faculty of Mass Media Communication
University of SS. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava

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Conference Proceedings
from the International Scientific Conference
16th – 17th April 2019
Congress Hall of the Slovak Academy of Sciences
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MEGATRENDS AND MEDIA

Digital Universe

International Scientific Conference, 16th – 17th April 2019
Congress Hall of the Slovak Academy of Sciences
Smolenice, Slovakia

Megatrends and Media is an international scientific event organised by the Faculty of Mass Media Communication at the University of SS. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava (FMK UCM). The conference is supported and attended by media theorists, media scholars, social scientists, media and marketing researchers, as well as media professionals from Slovakia and many other countries. Regardless of the conference's main topic that changes on yearly basis, its goal always remains the same – to present, critically discuss and disseminate current theoretical knowledge and practical experience related to media and the latest development trends in media production and consumption.

The 14th annual international conference *Megatrends and Media* (the conference's main title has been used since 2011, the event had previously been called *On Problems of Media Communication*, later *Mass Media Communication and Reality*, and then *Media, Society, Media Fiction*), took place on 16th – 17th April 2019 at the Smolenice Castle.

The discussion sessions were divided into four sections as follows:

- Section 1: *“Across the Universe” / Media Production*
- Section 2: *“Lost in (Hyper)Space” / Media Education, Literacy and Language*
- Section 3: *“No Man’s Sky” / Playful Media*
- Section 4: *“Interstellar” / Innovative Marketing and Advertising Practices*

The conference's Scientific Board and Organising and Programme Committee were proud to welcome many regular and new participants, as well as esteemed foreign guests from the Czech Republic, Croatia, China, Poland, Russia and Ukraine.



Conference website:

<https://fmk.sk/megatrendy-a-media/>



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Facebook account of FMK Conferences:

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(All photos from the conference can be seen here)

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PREFACE

Dear Colleagues, Dear Scientific Community,

Let us present conference proceedings associated with the 14th annual international scientific conference *Megatrends and Media*, organised by the Faculty of Mass Media Communication, University of SS. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava (FMK UCM). Looking back at the last year's Preface, we find it quite hard to use the appropriate words or rather any different expressions to state the same – that many scholars, researchers and professionals attending *Megatrends and Media* and publishing their papers in these proceedings are no longer 'only' our colleagues. They are our friends, partners; that is why we invest so much of our time and attention in the publication you are reading.

So, why this year's title 'Digital Universe'? It may seem that the term is supposed to react to the undeniably renewed general interest in space exploration. We do not have to think hard to name the most obvious displays of this fascination – feature films promoting cosmic endeavours and technological miracles, impatiently awaited commercial space flights, the Space X project, the repeated efforts to explore the Moon, the futuristic ideas of colonising Mars, not by robots, but by people instead, and so on. However, these current affairs are associated with the public sphere as a whole and thus they influence the general social discourse. It is quite understandable that addressing them is way beyond our scope, knowledge and competence. On the other hand, what we can and want to discuss is the given course of matters in relation to media.

The Organising and Programme Committee members share the idea that it is necessary to reflect on the wide-ranged media presentation of these topics, as well as on using the expressions "universe" or "galaxy" in terms of media production. As we presume, seeing broadly branched media narratives or products of franchise filmmaking as 'universes' is not exactly surprising; after all, space exploration and solving mysteries associated with laws of physics have fascinated us for centuries, and today's situation is not too different. Moreover, a similar amount of the same fascination can be identified in case we talk about digital media 'universes'. Some of our humble attempts to expand the existing body of knowledge on these communication phenomena are available in these proceedings.

The basic line of thought behind the topic called ‘Digital Universe’ results from the fact that many influential groups of media producers and media conglomerates, which create globally available entertainment, currently see (and present) the results of their work as ‘universes’. Individual products and stories are intertwined on basis of narrative continuity and/or licensing. That is why we continue to encounter e.g. *the Star Wars Universe*, *the Marvel Cinematic Universe* or their key competitor, *the DC Extended Universe*. The outlined communication situation inevitably leads to scholarly discussions on the contemporary media production and its characteristic traits. The future belongs to license agreements and franchises, which make popular stories available for new ways of media presentation – transmedia narratives, ‘worlds’ or ‘universes’. As we believe, we have to do our best to promptly react to the dynamic development of the digital media entertainment – including the fantastic stories to continue that often take place in their own ‘galaxies’. Contrary to the past, at least some of these ‘galaxies’ are no longer far, far away – they are close to our everyday lives, ordinary reality and hearts. An international exchange of knowledge is a must if we are to be successful, or leastwise partially successful.

‘Digital Universe’ represents a new era of media production and hi-tech culture that is oversaturated by exceptionally refined entertainment and expansive storytelling. These narratives result from fierce competition involving all media producers operating on a global scale. Media audiences all around the world thus, willingly or unwittingly, establish emotional bonds with the fashionable, trendy topics of these colourful products, or rather with the fictional ‘universes’ where the never-ending personal stories of their heroes take place. Ongoing creation of ‘media universes’ fulfils two important purposes – the need to differentiate own products from the competition (leading to long-term profit) and the desired change of the ways we consume media contents. It seems that these efforts have been successful so far – global media audiences devour fantastic tales about superheroes and space explorers and are fascinated by the ‘universes’ their fictional idols live in.

Keynote speakers attending this year’s *Megatrends and Media* presented different perspectives of the issue in question. The main plenary programme included lectures given by renowned scholars from Slovakia and abroad. Professor Bai Yin, Dean of the College of Literature and Journalism at the Central South University Changsha in Hunan, China,

talked about the generation of speech ethics in digital media. He was followed by Associate Professor Martin Kasarda, the renowned Slovak media theorist, who discussed the problems resulting from destruction of the public sphere caused by virtual environments. Martin Strižinec, then a journalist and a lecturer working at the Comenius University in Bratislava and now a spokesman of Slovak President Zuzana Čaputová, offered his view on podcasting and its commercial purposes. Associate Professor Juraj Rusnák from Prešov presented some notes on the carnivalesque character of today's media production, while Marcela Havrilová working for Microsoft Slovakia shared interesting ideas on digital transformation of the modern university environment. The main plenary speeches also included appearances of Dr. Jana Radošinská representing the Faculty of Mass Media Communication, who talked about *the Marvel Cinematic Universe*, and Ivan Biel from the Czech Film and Television Union – the speaker focused on intermedia as seen from the perspective of audiovisual producers.

The main topic of this year's conference was divided into four sections, i.e. in accordance with partial problems we aimed to address. Expressing our obvious inspiration with popular media products that somehow represent the discussed issues, all four sections were named a bit metaphorically:

1. "Across the Universe" / Media Production
2. "Lost in (Hyper)Space" / Media Education, Literacy and Language
3. "No Man's Sky" / Playful Media
4. "Interstellar" / Innovative Marketing and Advertising Practices

Conference participants from Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Croatia, China, Poland, Russia and Ukraine presented more than 80 discussion contributions. The conference proceedings include 54 best contributions written in English that have been reviewed and carefully selected to represent the conference's complexity and scholarly objectives.

We cannot forget to mention the tradition we foster, the *Marián Matyáš's Pomegranate*, which is a very personal and touching award ceremony that is held annually during the conference *Megatrends and Media*. The award is named after Marián Matyáš (1978 – 2007), a media theorist and a highly successful young scholar, one of the first graduates of the Faculty of Mass Media Communication (2002), and a lecturer at the same institution (2002 – 2007). Later, being one of FMK's

Vice-Deans, he helped set our current ambitions and the principles we respect today and will always respect in the future. *The Pomegranate* was first awarded in 2008, i.e. approximately a year after Marián's untimely passing. The award is presented annually to our students, graduates or colleagues, whose scholarly accomplishments or important media-related performances contribute immensely to the development of our faculty and thus honour Marián Matyáš's extraordinary professionalism and personality. This year's *Pomegranates* were awarded to Peter Lančarič (in the student category) and Martin Frimmer (in the graduate category). Dr. Peter Lančarič, then our student and now our colleague, was awarded for his long-term creative activities related to series of photographic documents uncovering everyday lives of people from socially marginalised communities, as well as for his daring, sensitive and at the same time poetic photographic portraits. Martin Frimmer's *Pomegranate* is related to his remarkable professional activities in relation to brand management, television and film production and event management.

Furthermore, we proudly introduced our key and most successful scientific journal *Communication Today*. Throughout its existence, the journal has excelled in becoming an internationally recognised scholarly publication indexed in several prestigious databases (ESCI – Web of Science, Scopus, and many more). Moreover, after the last year's announcement of new scholarly journals published by our faculty, *Acta Ludologica* focusing on digital games, virtual reality and gaming environments, and *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, a scholarly journal that aims to offer a discussion platform for scholars specialising in media education, various types of literacies and related inquiries, we celebrated the second year of their existence by presenting their new issues, notable accomplishments and hard-working editorial teams.

Dear members of scholarly communities, dear friends; as usual, we would like to express our immense gratitude towards all FMK people and domestic as well as foreign scholars who are affiliated with the Scientific Board of *Megatrends and Media* and/or with its Organising and Programme Committee. Their professionalism and enthusiastic efforts prove that the words "hard-working" and "creative" are not contradictory. We would also like to thank all media theorists, researchers and professionals who contributed to *Megatrends and Media 2019* by attending, discussing 'Digital Universe' and publishing

their papers in the proceedings we are now pleased to present. Their kind support allows us to encounter new interesting ideas to elaborate, but also to confront various concerns, express critical remarks and share inspirational concepts on an international scale.

*JUDr. PhDr. Martin Solík, PhD.
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CONTENTS

PREFACE	10
“ACROSS THE UNIVERSE” / MEDIA PRODUCTION	21
FROM NEWS TO FAKE NEWS AND BACK.....	22
<i>Ljubica Bakić Tomić – Lordan Prelog – Mateja Popović</i>	
CATCHING THE IT DEVELOPMENT TRENDS: WHAT ARE THE ODDS?.....	34
<i>Ivana Bestvina Bukvić – Ivana Đurđević Babić</i>	
FEATURES OF HIP-HOP MUSIC VERBALIZATION IN SOCIAL NETWORKS.....	55
<i>Max Demchuk</i>	
MAINSTREAM MEDIA VERSUS ALTERNATIVE MEDIA IN RELATION TO POLITICAL PARTIES IN SLOVAKIA.....	63
<i>Matúš Jankoľa</i>	
THE TRUTH OF PASSION: ABOUT THE DESTRUCTION OF PUBLIC DISCUSSION BY VIRTUAL SPACE.....	80
<i>Martin Kasarda</i>	
THE SPECIFICITY OF THE INTERACTION BETWEEN PEOPLE AND INTERNET SPACE IN THE VISEGRAD COUNTRIES (FOR EXAMPLE, THE USAGE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS AND THEIR APPLICATIONS MESSENGERS IN UKRAINE AND POLAND).....	89
<i>Andrii Kutsyk</i>	
CREATING A NEW CINEMA REALITY: “BAD MOVIE REVIEW” GENRE.....	104
<i>Arina Medvedeva</i>	
STORYTELLING METHOD IN POPULAR SCIENCE JOURNALISM	112
<i>Svetlana Paniukova</i>	
AUTONOMY VS INSTRUMENTAL NATURE OF THE MEDIA.....	119
<i>Sławomir Soczyński</i>	

TOOLS MANAGING THE PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN TECHNOLOGICAL CORPORATIONS AND INTERNET USERS LEADING TO RESTRICTING THE FREEDOM OF CUSTOMERS	132
<i>Zbigniew Widera</i>	
MEDIA AESTHETIC FEATURES OF NEWSLETTERS.....	143
<i>Marina Zagidullina</i>	
“LOST IN (HYPER)SPACE” / MEDIA EDUCATION, LITERACY AND LANGUAGE	155
MEDIA EDUCATION THROUGH THE CONCEPT OF LEARNING-BY-DOING	156
<i>Lubica Bôtošová</i>	
THE THEME OF HEALTHY LIFESTYLE IN CHILDREN’S MAGAZINES AS AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO THE PREVENTION OF MORBIDITY IN THE WORLD’S POPULATION.....	175
<i>Danuša Faktorová</i>	
LEARNING A LANGUAGE AS PART OF LIFE – HOW TO LEARN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN THE DIGITAL AGE.....	186
<i>Anna Hurajová</i>	
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN SERVICE OF MEDIA.....	192
<i>Andrej Kóňa</i>	
HUMAN CONNECTION IN AGE OF DIGITAL ABUNDANCE.....	200
<i>Denisa Kralovičová</i>	
LINGUISTIC AND DISCURSIVE MEANS OF DISTORTING INFORMATION	208
<i>Maksym Kushnirov</i>	
AWARENESS OF THE FUNCTIONING OF MEDIA MESSAGES AND THE ABILITY TO RECOGNIZE FAKE NEWS BY POLISH STUDENTS	217
<i>Dorota Marquardt – Anna Losa-Jonczyk</i>	

THE DIGITAL GOD	230
<i>Radek Mezuláník</i>	
ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND CLIMATE CHANGE IN MEDIA DISCOURSE	242
<i>Juraj Skačan</i>	
THE TRUTH IN THE MEDIA – THE NECESSARY CONDITION, BUT STILL SUFFICIENT?.....	257
<i>Rafał Śpiewak</i>	
NON-VERBAL MANIPULATION IN THE AUDIOVISUAL LANGUAGE OF JOURNALISM	275
<i>Anton Szomolányi</i>	
COMPARISON OF SELECTED ANALYTICAL TV PROGRAMS.....	291
<i>Alžbeta Straková – Marek Šimončič</i>	
SOFT SKILLS IN THE DIGITAL AGE	301
<i>Norbert Vrabec</i>	
INFLUENCE OF DIGITAL MEDIA ON YOUNG GENERATION’S SOCIAL AND MORAL COMPETENCES.....	315
<i>Katarzyna Ziębakowska-Cecot</i>	
“NO MAN’S SKY” / PLAYFUL MEDIA.....	329
DIGITAL GAME AS A PHENOMENON OF MASS AND POPULAR CULTURE	330
<i>Zuzana Bučková</i>	
THROUGHOUT THE OCEAN OF FREE SOUND (ON SOUND DESIGN, FREE RESOURCES, SOUND LIBRARIES, AND CREATIVITY)	354
<i>Tomáš Farkaš</i>	
ENHANCED REALITY, COMPUTER-AIDED DESIGN WITH PHOTOSHOP	366
<i>Robert Halenár</i>	

THE OMNIPRESENT DISNEYLAND: SOME NOTES ON WILLIAM GIBSON'S NOVEL IDORU.....	372
<i>Martin Charvát</i>	
GAME JAMS AS A SOURCE OF CREATIVITY IN PROMOTING ECO-INNOVATIONS	386
<i>Zdenko Mago – Michal Kabát – Alexandra Alföldiová</i>	
DEVELOPMENT OF VIDEO GAME INDUSTRY IN SLOVAKIA AND EMPLOYABILITY POSSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS STUDYING THEORY OF GAME STUDIES	399
<i>Monika Porubanová</i>	
PLAYING DIGITAL GAMES BY MIDDLE YEARS CHILDREN (6-10 YEARS OF AGE) AND ITS POTENTIAL.....	420
<i>Monika Porubanová</i>	
GENRES VS. TAGS: PROBLEMS WITH TAXONOMY OF DIGITAL GAMES.....	435
<i>Ivan Rokošný</i>	
“PROTEUS EFFECT” – POSSIBILITIES OF TRANSFORMATION AND SELF-PRESENTATION OF PLAYERS IN DIGITAL GAMES AND SOCIOCULTURAL REALITY	448
<i>Lenka Rusňáková</i>	
“INTERSTELLAR” / INNOVATIVE MARKETING AND ADVERTISING PRACTICES	468
CONSUMER INNOVATIVENESS OF THE ELDERLY. DO GENDER AND NATIONAL CULTURE MATTER? EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON THE CONSUMERS AT THE AGE OF 60 AND OVER IN CENTRAL EUROPE	469
<i>Sylwia Badowska</i>	
SPECIFIC NATURE OF VALUES IN CONTEMPORARY ADVERTISING BASED ON THE NARRATION ABOUT HOME-COMMUNITY.....	488
<i>Klaudia Cymanow-Sosin</i>	

PERSONAL SALES AND ITS PLACE IN COMMUNICATION OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.....	501
<i>Slávka Gracová – Lubica Bôtošová</i>	
TOWARDS FULLY-FLEDGED CONCEPTUALIZATION OF CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE.....	508
<i>David Havíř</i>	
(DIS)ADVANTAGES OF TOURISM IN THE CONDITIONS OF SELF-GOVERNMENT AND WAYS OF ITS EFFECTIVE PROMOTION.....	531
<i>Kristína Hoghová</i>	
ANALYTICAL VIEW OF THE CHOICE OF GOODS AND SERVICES PURCHASED ON THE INTERNET	557
<i>Jakub Horváth – Mária Oleárová</i>	
ANALYSIS OF GLOBAL CONSUMER PREFERENCES IN THE E-COMMERCE PROCESS.....	569
<i>Jakub Horváth – Mária Oleárová</i>	
CHANGE THE WORLD THROUGH THE ARTS (REVIVING THE ARTS EXPERIENCE FROM LATVIA)	579
<i>Jana Skubeňová Hubinová</i>	
MARKETING COMMUNICATION STRATEGY TO DEVELOP AN AUDIENCE ON INSTAGRAM SOCIAL NETWORK.....	595
<i>Martin Kuchta – Monika Stanková</i>	
THE USAGE OF ONLINE TOOLS AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL.....	615
<i>Lenka Labudová – Denisa Jánošová</i>	
THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN NEWS CONTENT AND NATIVE ADVERTISING – IS IT CLEAR?.....	628
<i>Gordana Lesinger – Iva Buljubašić</i>	
POLITICAL TALK SHOWS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF BALANCE OF REPRESENTATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN 2018.....	645
<i>Matej Martovič</i>	

SPECIFIC CONSUMER CONDITIONS IN THE VYSEGRAD FOUR COUNTRIES ON THE USE OF MOBILE PHONES IN A PURCHASING PROCESS.....	654
<i>Mária Oleárová – Jakub Horváth</i>	
VIDEO CONTENT AS A DOMINANT ONLINE MARKETING COMMUNICATION TOOL	666
<i>Mária Oleárová – Jakub Horváth</i>	
COMMERCIAL MEDIA LANSCAPE CHANGES WITH THE ARRIVAL OF THE INTERNET IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC.....	681
<i>Dušan Pavlů</i>	
BIG BANG AND GLORY OF ECO-INNOVATIONS IN THE DIGITAL ERA.....	692
<i>Monika Rezníčková – Anna Zaušková</i>	
MARKETING OF EDUCATION AND ITS SPECIFICS IN MODERN SOCIETY.....	713
<i>Romana Schunová</i>	
WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO PROMOTE CONSUMERS’ „ECO-FRIENDLY“ BUYING BEHAVIOUR	735
<i>Jarmila Šalgovičová</i>	
A STELLAR HASHTAG AS A SOLUTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS	748
<i>Martin Vanko – Anna Zaušková</i>	
NEW “FEMALE” MARKETING AND PR STRATEGIES	764
<i>Yvonne Vavrová</i>	
EDITORIAL POLICY.....	772

“ACROSS THE UNIVERSE” / MEDIA PRODUCTION



**MEGATRENDS
AND MEDIA**

DIGITAL UNIVERSE

FROM NEWS TO FAKE NEWS AND BACK

Ljubica Bakić Tomić – Lordan Prelog – Mateja Popović

ABSTRACT:

Disinformation and propaganda have become the 'heritage' of modern society, but the concept of 'fake news' has been introduced into the everyday language during and after the United States presidential election in 2016, first and foremost thanks to the current president Donald Trump. Mass circulation of fake news is the reason why more and more EU citizens are beginning to doubt the credibility of the traditional media such as press and television and choose instead to turn to the internet, i.e. various portals and social networks. In March 2019, an online research has been conducted in the Republic of Croatia on the sample of over 150 citizens. The aim of the research has been to examine the citizens of the Republic of Croatia's opinion and attitude toward fake news, as found in the media and on the internet. In our modern digital age, thanks to the technology development and the omnipresence of social networks, disinformation has assumed new, alarming shapes. The public prefers the information sources found on the internet, whereas the media literacy and critical opinion are underdeveloped. Such a situation may be difficult to change in due time, whereas the impact of fake news is a growing threat to the media credibility and democracy.

KEY WORDS:

fake news, internet information reliability, media credibility

1 Introduction

The 'fake news pandemic' has become a superior media - political phenomenon in a very short time span, first and foremost due to American president Donald Trump who keeps 'pushing' the term he often uses to etiquette the media that critically report on his presidency. Keyword analysis in Google Trends and Google Scholar display significant growth of the number of searches of the term 'fake news', especially since 2016. Still, only a select few can elaborate actual meaning of the oxymoron, which has been elected as the word of the year in 2017 by Collins Dictionary. There are various definitions of the term 'fake news' since it has different connotations which depend on the context as well as the narrative. Some researchers define it as "fabricated information that mimics news media content in form but not in organizational process or intent. Fake-news outlets, in turn, lack the news media's editorial norms and processes for ensuring the accuracy and credibility of information. Fake news overlap with other information disorders, such

as misinformation (false or misleading information) and disinformation (false information that is purposely spread to deceive people).¹ Most Croats as well as Europeans are often confronted with fake news in the media, especially on the internet. According to the Eurobarometer 464 survey ‘Fake news and disinformation online’² conducted in February 2018 on more than 26.500 people, the subjects in 28 countries in Europe are less likely to trust news and information from online sources than from more traditional sources. The majority of subjects totally trust or tend to trust news and information they receive through radio (70%), television (66%) and printed media (63%).

Table 1: Different types of trust

Sort of news	Slovakia	Croatia	Denmark	The Netherlands	Finland
News overall	34%	39%	56%	59%	62%
News I use	45%	40%	62%	67%	72%
News in search engines and portals	32%	32%	22%	33%	29%
News in social networks	18%	29%	12%	22%	18%

Source: *Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2018*. Released on the 14th of June 2018. [online]. [2019-02-22]. Available at: <<http://media.digitalnewsreport.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/digital-news-report-2018.pdf?x89475>>.

Other Eurobarometer survey ‘Media pluralism and democracy’ from 2016. showed that Europeans are worried about the independence of the media and that the levels of trust in media are low. According to the results of the survey, both radio and television are equally considered the most reliable media in Croatia.³ The results of two polls conducted in the USA by Knight Foundation and Gallup in March and September 2018. are interesting when compared to similar research outcomes in Europe. Overall, U.S. adults estimate that 62% of the news they read in

- 1 LAZER, M. J. D. et al.: The Science of Fake News. In *Science*, 2018, Vol. 359, No. 6380, p. 1094.
- 2 *Fake News and Disinformation Online*. Released on the 27th of April 2018. [online]. [2019-02-22]. Available at: <<https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/2d79b85a-4cea-11e8-be1d-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>>.
- 3 *Media Pluralism and Democracy*. [online]. [2019-02-17]. Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/image/document/2016-47/sp452-summary_en_19666.pdf>.

newspapers, see on television or hear on the radio are biased. They think the news media mostly provide accurate information, but still estimate that 44% of what they see is inaccurate. And they believe that more than a third of the news they see in these channels is misinformation (false or inaccurate information that is presented as if it were true).⁴ The Gallup survey showed that trust in the mass media differs significantly by age - in the conducted survey, 53% of those aged 65 and older trust in the news media, compared with just 33% of those under age 30. Research established that younger adults live in an era marked by partisan media and fake news, while older Americans' trust may have been established long ago in an era of widely read daily newspapers and trusted television news anchors. The results also show that Americans are even more critical of the news they see on social media which 64% of respondents considers inaccurate and 65% of the people who participated in survey considers as misinformation.⁵

The results of another survey conducted by Pew Research Centre showed that two-in-three U.S. adults (64%) think fabricated news stories cause a great deal of confusion about the basic facts of current issues and events. Though they sense these stories are spreading confusion, Americans express a fair amount of confidence in their own ability to detect fake news, with about four out of ten (39%) feeling very confident that they can recognize news which is fabricated and another 45% feeling somewhat confident. Overall, about a third (32%) of Americans say they often see political news stories online that are made up.⁶ Reuters institute research 'Digital News Report 2018 carried out on more than 1000 people in Croatia shows that for Croatian television remains a critical source of news (78%). Trust in news overall (39%) remains low, reflecting other

4 *Americans' Views of Misinformation in the News and How to Counteract It*. Released on the 20th of June 2018. [online]. [2019-04-12]. Available at: <https://kf-site-production.s3.amazonaws.com/publications/pdfs/000/000/254/original/KnightFoundation_Misinformation_Report_FINAL_3_.PDF>.

5 *Media Use and Evaluation*. Released on the 12th of October 2018. [online]. [2019-03-10]. Available at: <<https://news.gallup.com/poll/1663/media-use-evaluation.aspx>>.

6 *The Future of Truth and Misinformation Online*. Released on the 19th of October 2017. [online]. [2019-03-22]. Available at: <https://www.pewinternet.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2017/10/PI_2017.10.19_Future-of-Truth-and-Misinformation_FINAL.pdf>.

survey research, which shows that interpersonal trust in Croatia is below the EU average. The most trusted news sources tend to be radio and television outlets rather than digital sources.⁷ The Eurobarometer 464 survey results in regards to the recipients' encountering fake news showed that 85% of the subjects often 'stumble upon' fake news on the internet portals, whereas 60% check their validity via internet. The subjects claim that fake news spread most quickly via social networks and that they play at the emotions of the readers, whereas 35% subjects claim that it is very hard to differentiate between fake and real news.⁸ In addition, one half of the subjects in Croatia (47%) says they come across fake news every day, and a further 29% say that this happens at least once a week. Furthermore, a majority of respondents in every country are confident in their ability to identify fake news - more than 80% of the subjects in Croatia claim they can detect fake news which is more than average result in Europe (77%).

There are many documented and researched cases of disinformation campaigns which had enormous reach on targeted audience and one of them is the 'story' of Gupta brothers whose orchestrated fake news disinformation activities earned them lucrative business opportunities in South Africa in 2016. This network of fake news was organized with help of London PR agency and international firms like KPMG, McKinsey, and SAP - by the time they were 'busted', the Guptas may have drained the treasury of South Africa of as much as \$7 billion. The organized group produced at least 220,000 tweets and hundreds of Facebook posts to confuse the public between July 2016 and July 2017. It was the first large-scale fake news propaganda war in South Africa, and it has adversely affected the country's politics and economy.⁹ Considering the

7 *Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2018*. Released on the 14th of June 2018. [online]. [2019-02-22]. Available at: <<http://media.digitalnewsreport.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/digital-news-report-2018.pdf?x89475>>.

8 *Fake News and Disinformation Online*. Released on the 27th of April 2018. [online]. [2019-02-22]. Available at: <<https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/2d79b85a-4cea-11e8-be1d-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>>.

9 *The African Network of Centres for Investigative Journalism (ANCIR), The Guptas, Bell Pottinger and the Fake News Propaganda Machine*. Released on the 4th of September 2017. [online]. [2019-03-29]. Available at: <<https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/south-africa/2017-09-04-the-guptas-bell-pottinger-and-the-fake-news-propaganda-machine/>>.

above, it sounds optimistic that, as well as in other European countries, a vast majority of Croats think that the existence of fake news is a problem in their country (86%) and represents a problem for democracy in general (80%).¹⁰

2 Method

The aim of our research was to examine the public's behaviour towards the truthfulness of news in the media and online portals and to examine how subjects behave when they come across fake news.

Research sample – the survey has been conducted in March 2019 on 168 Croats chosen by random selection.

Research method – the research was conducted by surveying. The questionnaire was drawn up by authors according to the model for the research conducted in the EU over the last few years and tailored to the Republic of Croatia. The questionnaire had 21 multiple choice questions and was distributed through the Google Forms tool.

Four hypotheses have been set for this research. Below is an overview of the hypotheses and the results of the research that hypotheses confirm or not.

3 Results and Discussion

There were more women in the sample (65%), younger population (aged 21-40) and highly educated people (master degree 45.90%). Research sample characteristics show exactly which population is most interested in the truthfulness of the news and finds the appearance of fake news in the media and on the internet portals, these are younger educated women.

10 *Fake News and Disinformation Online*. Released on the 27th of April 2018. [online]. [2019-02-22]. Available at: <<https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/2d79b85a-4cea-11e8-be1d-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>>.

Table 2: Structure of the Sample (gender, age and qualifications of subjects)

Variable		Percentage
Gender	Female	65.00%
	Male	35.00%
Age	21 – 40	73.90%
	41 - 60	22.09%
Qualifications	High school	28.70%
	Bachelor	18.50%
	Master	45.90%

Source: own processing

- **Hypothesis 1: The subjects search for news on the internet more than in traditional media (newspapers, TV and radio).**

Recent research conducted by Ipsos concluded that the Internet is the most used medium considering the frequency of use. Furthermore, the information that comes from the internet participants perceive as unique and more reliable than information published in other media. Also, the survey conducted on more than 1,000 people in Croatia in January this year showed that print media has smaller reach than electronic, and that reading of newspapers is done on internet portals owned by specific newspaper company.¹¹

4. Which of the following is your primary information source?

168 responses

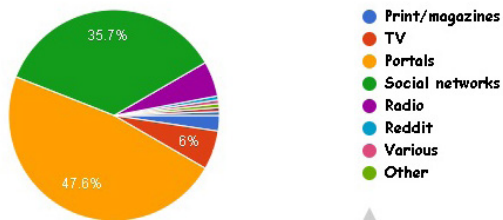


Chart 1: Subjects' primary information source

Source: own processing

11 *Media Habits in Croatia*. [online]. [2019-04-10]. Available at: <https://showcase.24sata.hr/2019_hosted_creatives/medijske-navike-hr-2019.pdf>.

The participants in this research, as well, most often search for news on internet news sites (47,60%) and on social networks (35,70%). The internet is the primary news source for more than 80% of subjects.

Hypothesis is accepted.

- **Hypothesis 2: Subjects have more trust in traditional media than in online portals.**

Subjects' trust was equally divided between portals, whereas the majority of them has their own print edition (circa 20% of the subjects for each portal). Croatian radio television channel HRT1 news is the least trusted source of information for 50,60% of subjects, and newspapers 50%. According to the results from Graph 2, it is apparent that subjects have equal trust in newspapers, TVs or portals. Interestingly, they rank among the social networks, which was not the case with the Eurostat survey for the past year. The reason for doing so in Croatia is not listening enough, that is, mostly only programs that have music that are not primary news. From the results of Eurobarometer 2018., the most trusted source of news is radio (circa 90%) because there are still no fake news detected in that media by the subjects. **Hypothesis is partially confirmed.**

5. What is your most trusted source of news?

158 responses

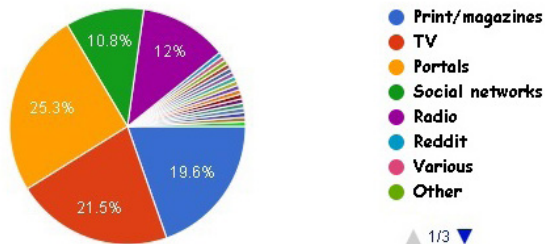


Chart 2: The most trusted news source

Source: own processing

- **Hypothesis 3: Are there fake news in the media and on the internet and how do the subjects recognize them?**

Internet platforms have become the most important and primary conduits of fake news. People nowadays can themselves create a website that mimics a professional news organization and it can be done with no significant expenses and in a short time period. The internet not only provides a medium for publishing fake news but offers various tools to actively spread and promote dissemination.¹²

There are three criteria according to which subjects evaluate the truthfulness of the news (there are results for more than 90% of subjects):

- the news cannot be checked online;
- the news have a sensationalist title;
- the news are not logical.

When asked how often they come up with fake news and where do they find them most often, the most significant answers were the following:

- I encounter fake news very often (claims 64% of subjects).
- I encounter fake news on social network sites (claims 50% of subjects).
- I encounter fake news on various internet sites (claims 35% of subjects).

We can conclude from the above-mentioned answers that the hypothesis is corroborated.

- **Hypothesis 4: Fake news have a negative effect on the public opinion.**

More than 80% of subjects claim that fake news affect their emotions. 76% of subjects claim that fake news represent a threat to democracy and freedom of speech. However, 90% of subjects claim they check suspicious news they find on the Internet. We can conclude from the above mentioned answers that **hypothesis is accepted**.

12 LAZER, M. J. D. et al.: The Science of Fake News. In *Science*, 2018, Vol. 359, No. 6380, p. 1096.

13. Do you agree with the claim that fake news appeal on emotions?

168 responses

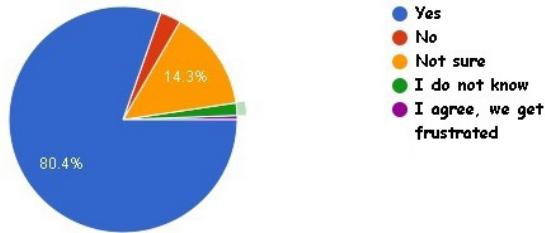


Chart 3: Fake news appeal on emotion

Source: own processing

Various sorts of fake news definitely affect people's emotions and that has been confirmed in this research. It is certain that false information and fake news are causing negative emotions such as anger, feeling of insecurity, distrust, and sometimes a sense of disorientation and loss. In the research of differential diffusion of all of the verified true and false news stories distributed on Twitter from 2006 to 2017, Vosoughi, Roy and Aral concluded that false news can drive the misallocation of resources during terror attacks and natural disasters, the misalignment of business investments and misinformed elections. Unfortunately, although the amount of false news online is clearly increasing, the scientific understanding of how and why false news spreads is currently based on ad hoc rather than large-scale systematic analyses.¹³

13 SOROUS, V., ROY, D., ARAL, S.: The Spread of True and False News Online. In *Science*, 2018, Vol. 359, No. 6380, p. 1146.

24. Do you consider that fake news pose a threat to democracy and freedom of speech?

168 responses

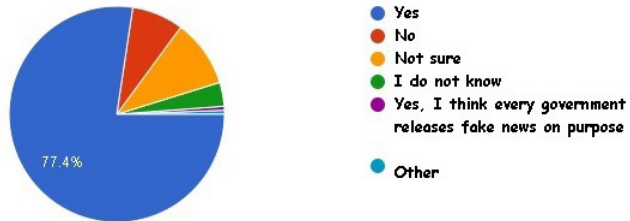


Chart 4: Fake news pose a threat to democracy and freedom of speech

Source: own processing

The research conducted in Croatia in March 2019. Shows similar results as the Eurobarometer from last year. As the Internet is available to everyone in today’s digital age, the likelihood of greater differences among peoples in the EE is minimal, although each country has its own media, but news has become global and the media’s desire to manipulate them.

Conclusion

The purpose of fake news is harassment and intimidation of the individuals as well as deceit, propaganda and manipulation of the general public. There is a whole industry producing fake news in the world, and such organisations are often financed by major corporations or politicians. Today, there is a real war in the media with fake news. The public should be educated to accept news they encounter with reservation - dubious news which are served to us by the media should be verified by another sources. In the future, investigative journalism should be intensified and taught by journalists in order to have honest and high-quality reporting that reveals the truth. The research conducted in Croatia in March 2019 indicates that:

1. The public likes sensationalist news even though they negatively affect them.
2. The public has developed various criteria to identify fake news and how and where to check them, which in 90% of cases they do (double check suspicious news on other portals and online sources).

3. The least confidence the public has in national television news and in social networks.
4. The radio as media has not yet been contaminated by fake news.

It is up to the governments to organize and enforce curricula of media literacy classes, updated on regular basis, within the educational system of every country in the world. We need to create a healthy news environment and make the truth and the promotion of honesty universal values of the society because children should learn in school that information on the Internet should be fact-checked and they also need to be taught who they can trust and why.

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The Future of Truth and Misinformation Online. Released on the 19th of October 2017. [online]. [2019-03-22]. Available at: <https://www.pewinternet.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2017/10/PI_2017.10.19_Future-of-Truth-and-Misinformation_FINAL.pdf>.

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CATCHING THE IT DEVELOPMENT TRENDS: WHAT ARE THE ODDS?

Ivana Bestvina Bukvić – Ivana Đurđević Babić

ABSTRACT:

The development and innovations of the Information technology (IT) sector influence on development dynamics and success of all other industry sectors and economy on a global level. This phenomenon is particularly emphasized in the media sector where new achievements are inducing the changes in existing business models. Tracking IT sector progress and the development of digital products today becomes a prerequisite of companies' financial success and it can be even a question of its survival. As of the importance of this sector, this article analyses the development trends in the IT industry on the level European Union members and in Croatia, as a developing country and according to 2018 European Scoreboard, moderate innovator country. This topic is being analysed through two perspectives: The existing gap in development trends of the IT sector on the developed and developing markets and observing the economic key factors which are influencing the development of this sector. The aim of this paper is to identify whether the IT sector in developing markets can follow the market trends in developed countries or are they, even in this sector lacking behind. For the aforementioned, the authors conducted an analysis of reports published through the Eurostat and Statista platforms as well as information of financial success of 298 small, medium and large Croatian IT companies during the last five years.

KEY WORDS:

developing countries, economic development trends, ICT sector, information technology

1 Introduction

Information technologies (IT) today have a major influence on the global level. They affect development trends of the global economy and entire society, much more becoming the media and not just a tool or an object in a human activities.¹ As well, they are „mediators of social knowledge and cultural pleasures”,² information sharing and social changes. As it is clear that IT industry development is essential to reach the satisfactory level

1 According to: HIRSCH, E., SILVERSTONE, R.: *Consuming Technologies: Media and Information in Domestic Spaces*. London : Routledge, 2003, p. 1-20.

2 HIRSCH, E., SILVERSTONE, R.: *Consuming Technologies: Media and Information in Domestic Spaces*. London : Routledge, 2003, p. 19.

of economic growth the aim of this paper is to identify whether the IT sector in developing countries can follow the market trends of developed ones or is it lacking behind. This paper is giving the review of relevant literature and analysis of reports published through the EU, Eurostat and Statista platforms. As well, the work analyses the IT sector development trends and development obstacles with the aim of determining the future possibilities of the IT sector in the developing countries. The findings presented in this paper can be used as a basis in the creation of the recommendations for the policy-makers, especially in the developing countries. Here the authors presume that although positive trends in developing countries' IT sector can be found, it is proportional or achieves even smaller growth rate in comparison with the growth that developed countries are achieving. Unfortunately, these dynamics could be insufficient for the developing countries to reach significant results in IT sectors which, in the end, affect the efficiency of their economies, in comparison to the developed countries. In this paper, the development trends were measured by total sales, EBITDA, the number of employees and Information and communication technologies (ICT) services export in total services.

The paper is being organized as follows: next three chapters are giving the literature review, an overview of the EU and global market trends of the ICT and IT industry and the results of the analysis of financial results (sales and profitability) of computer programming sector in Croatia (including SMEs' and large companies) during the last five years. The last chapter is giving discussion and conclusion remarks.

2 Literature Review

Media and information literacy today is inseparably connected to the possession of information technology skills.³ Not only in a social context, information technology influences the individual business sectors and the economy as a whole.⁴ Per example, in the media sector, the new achievements influence the development of new media business models.

3 LIVINGSTONE, S.: Media Literacy and the Challenge of New Information and Communication Technologies. In *The Communication Review*, 2004, Vol. 1, No. 7, p. 3.

4 FARHADI, M., ISMAIL, R., FOOLADI, M.: Information and Communication Technology Use and Economic Growth. In *PLoS One*, 2012, Vol. 7, No. 11, p. 13. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3495961/>>.

As well, it „affects the tourism system in numerous and complex ways, with mixed outcomes for sustainability.”⁵ Gössling states that IT sector potential is still not in full use and its reaching would lead to considerable changes in the tourism sector. This applies not only on media and tourism sectors but equally on all industry sectors, services, etc. where, in the case of the production businesses, it would require a high level of sophisticated adjustments as “business ICT and factory equipment to be deeply integrated.”⁶ in order to achieve “flexible and connected production”.⁷

All of stated above, indicate the importance of the IT sector, as a part of ICT, in the socio-economic development and in all industries and economies, regardless of their size, market position and economic strength. The question arises, whether the development of IT on the global scale affects economic growth and growth in production in all countries equally. Avgerou analyses the ICT and socio-economic changes interconnection in developing countries where the author states that for developing countries „ICT is necessary in order to participate in the emerging global economy, but not adequate to create economic growth“,⁸ instead it can support diversity in order to enable competitiveness and development.⁹ Farhadi, Ismail, and Fooladi state that every country needs to „increase their ICT use index through increasing the number of internet users, fixed broadband internet subscribers and the number of mobile subscription per 100 inhabitants in order to boost economic

5 GÖSSLING, S.: Tourism, Information Technologies and Sustainability: An Exploratory Review. In *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 2017, Vol. 25, No. 7, p. 1024.

6 ROLANDBERGERSTRATEGYCONSULTANTS,BDI-FEDERATIONOFGERMAN INDUSTRIES: *The Digital Transformation of Industry*. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <https://www.rolandberger.com/publications/publication_pdf/roland_berger_digital_transformation_of_industry_20150315.pdf>.

7 ROLANDBERGERSTRATEGYCONSULTANTS,BDI-FEDERATIONOFGERMAN INDUSTRIES: *The Digital Transformation of Industry*. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <https://www.rolandberger.com/publications/publication_pdf/roland_berger_digital_transformation_of_industry_20150315.pdf>.

8 AVGEROU, C.: How Can IT Enable Economic Growth in Developing Countries? In *Information Technology for Development*, 1998, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 15-28.

9 BAHRINI, R., QAFFAS, A.: *Impact of Information and Communication Technology on Economic Growth: Evidence from Developing Countries*. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <<https://www.mdpi.com/2227-7099/7/1/21>>.

growth¹⁰ Following this statement, it seems that the IT development and in fact most of economic development could be, to the greatest extent, be generated by domestic market consumption. Media sector as some other subsectors of cultural and creative industries (CCI) „are most affected by the digital shift, e-skills are of great relevance for the competitiveness of the industry. Skills needed include knowledge of state-of-the-art ICT, media literacy and copyright knowledge.”¹¹

In order to foster the innovation and to keep up with fast-growing world economies such as China, Japan and U.S.A. the EU is planning to develop the Innovation Union and to continue investments and actions in the education, research and development, innovation and ICT sector, where, according to the official EU documents,¹² the overall aim of the EU actions is to enable interoperability and foster innovation of the European companies and European economy in dynamic global market. The recognition of the importance of these domains confirms the statement that even during financial crises „such investments should where possible not only be protected from budget cuts but should be stepped up“.¹³ Even in 2008 in the document *New Skills for New Jobs Anticipating and matching labour market and skills needs* the EU predicted a shift in professional skills which will be needed in the next decade. In the year 2017 European Commission reported that 44% of the EU citizens' between 16 to 74 years have an insufficient level of digital

10 FARHADI, M., ISMAIL, R., FOOLADI, M.: Information and Communication Technology Use and Economic Growth. In *PLoS One*, 2012, Vol. 7, No. 11, p. 23. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3495961/>>.

11 AUSTRIAN INSTITUTE FOR SME RESEARCH AND VVA EUROPE: *Boosting the Competitiveness of Cultural and Creative Industries for Growth and Jobs*. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/content/boosting-competitiveness-cultural-and-creative-industries-growth-and-jobs-0_en>.

12 European Commission, Brussels, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions (see: *Europe 2020 Flagship Initiative – Innovation Union, SEC (2010) 1161, Brussels, 2008*). [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52010DC0546&from=en>>).

13 *Europe 2020 Flagship Initiative – Innovation Union, SEC (2010) 1161, Brussels, 2008*. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52010DC0546&from=en>>.

skills¹⁴ and it recognizes that these skills will be in the future essential to prepare the EU members for the continuation of the economic growth. Here, the importance of the knowledge economy is especially emphasized, where it is stated that „in particular, the diffusion of ICTs and nano-technologies offer great potential for the creation of sustainable jobs”.¹⁵ As well, the combination of managerial skills in the IT industry and digital skills in all other industries, especially in services are needed.¹⁶ With its strategies and action plans the EU is planning to use economic potentials of a Digital Single Market (COM(2016) 0180) with emphasis on digital transformation in order to empower innovative start-up companies. To manage to be successful in this endeavor, it has to deal with issues of funding, ICT standardization, big data, and skills.¹⁷

2.1 The GDP and ICT Development

In the year 2016 „with about 4% of GDP, the ICT sector in Europe represents an important share of the economy employing more than 6 million people. The value added of this sector in the EU (production of digital goods), spanning from components to software products is above 580 B€ and represents close to 10 % of the added value of industrial activity overall”.¹⁸ By analysing the ICT service exports in European

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- 14 EUROPEAN COMMISSION: *Digital Single Market*. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <<https://ec.europa.eu/epale/en/content/nearly-half-europeans-dont-have-basic-digital-skills>>.
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- 17 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: *Fact Sheets on the European Union – 2019*. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ftu/pdf/en/FTU_2.4.1.pdf>.
- 18 COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES: *Communication from The Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Digitising European Industry Reaping the Full Benefits of a Digital Single Market, SWD (2016) 110*

Union (presented by Table 1) it can be seen that there is no connection to the income group (by the classification of the World Bank) and the change of ICT service exports in EU members. The top five countries (Ireland, Finland, Belgium, Sweden and Germany) remained the leading positions in the last six years. Some of the other, especially less developed countries (Bulgaria, Slovakia, Latvia) as well, made a huge progress, considering their starting point in the year 2010. In the same time, there are few countries that, although achieved modest growth (like Ireland and Sweden) had leading positions that they managed to keep as of extremely high results in 2010 in comparison to other countries. Therefore modest growth did not jeopardize their high starting point as of huge difference in relation to other, especially developing countries. At the other hand, Croatia was left on the margin with the rise of only 2% and achieved 13% of ICT service exports in total country service exports.

Table 1: ICT service exports¹⁹ in European Union members (% of total service exports)

	2010	2016	Index 2016/2010 (relative)	Index 2016/2010 (percentage)	Income group ²⁰
Ireland	64.9	65.8	0.90	1%	High income
Finland	39.6	48.9	9.30	23%	High income
Belgium	37.6	47.5	9.90	26%	High income
Sweden	46.4	46.6	0.20	0%	High income
Germany	36.6	40.7	4.10	11%	High income
France	34.4	40.6	6.20	18%	High income
Romania	35.0	39.1	4.10	12%	Upper middle income
Netherlands	34.3	34.7	0.40	1%	High income

Final, 2016. [online]. [2019-04-26]. Available at: <<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/policies/digitising-european-industry>>.

19 ICT service exports include exports coming from communications services and computer and information services (remark by the author).

20 The World Bank is classifying economies as low, middle or high income countries by criteria of gross national income (GNI) per capita. The criteria of countries by income groups, which is shown by the Table 1 is a result of World's Bank classification (for more information, see: THE WORLD BANK: *How does the World Bank Classify Countries?* [online]. [2019-04-26]. Available at: <<https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/378834-how-does-the-world-bank-classify-countries>>).

Czech Republic	27.8	33.6	5.80	21%	High income
Poland	33.0	33.3	0.30	1%	High income
Austria	25.0	31.6	6.60	26%	High income
Italy	30.8	31.4	0.60	2%	High income
Slovakia	19.9	29.7	9.80	49%	High income
Hungary	28.6	29.4	0.80	3%	High income
Estonia	25.8	29.2	3.40	13%	High income
Latvia	20.3	28.4	8.10	40%	High income
Spain	-	27.8	-	-	High income
Bulgaria	16.1	24.7	8.60	53%	Upper middle income
Malta	19.1	24.2	5.10	27%	High income
Slovenia	21.0	22.4	1.40	7%	High income
Luxembourg	17.3	22.0	4.70	27%	High income
Portugal	18.4	22.0	3.60	20%	High income
Denmark	-	18.8	-	-	High income
Lithuania	9.7	13.6	3.90	40%	High income
Croatia	12.8	13.0	0.20	2%	Upper middle income
Greece	7.6	10.1	2.50	33%	High income
Cyprus	8.7	-	-	-	High income
Average	26.83	31.12			
Median	25.8	29.55			
Standard deviation	12.80	12.22			

Source: authors work on the basis of the information published by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank: The Little Data Book on Information and Communication Technology, 2018

The Information Technology & Innovation Foundation has found that ICT tax tariff rates have a significant influence on this sector development. It was found that the tax tariffs are significantly varying depending on country income level where the taxes are decreasing as country income increases. The lower income countries have more than double the taxes of the middle-income countries which further slows down the development of the ICT sector in developing countries in relation to developed ones. With a base tax of 25%, Croatia is among 50 top nations

by ICT-specific taxes and tariffs as a percentage of the total costs.²¹ This influences the business profitability and does not motivate the business sector to invest and keep their operations in developing countries. Further, this influences on the level of innovation. As it was already mentioned, the level of innovation depends on the quality of ICT skills, ICT infrastructure, education and investments in research and development. Following, the EU gives the classification of the EU countries according to the level of innovation. In defining a level of innovation the EU is, among other indicators, analysing the mutual innovation cooperation between SMEs. Here it states that complex innovations, especially in the ICT sector and the Cultural and Creative industries are depending on the ability of SMEs to generate the information, knowledge or have the collaboration abilities.²² As well, the EU is reporting on enterprises providing ICT training as one of the important facts in the advancement of the innovation level. Here it was found that approximately 20% of companies provide such trainings (Chart 1).

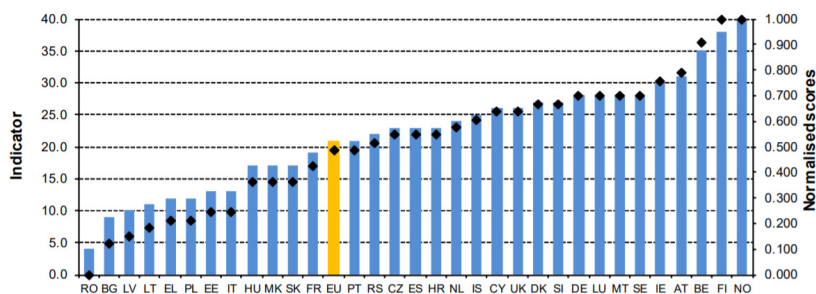


Chart 1: Enterprises providing ICT training

Source: EUROPEAN COMMISSION: *Directorate-general for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs: European Innovation Scoreboard 2018: Annex B – Performance per Indicator*. [online]. [2019-04-10]. Available at: <<https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/30082/attachments/1/translations/en/renditions/native>>.

21 THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION FOUNDATION: *Digital Drag: Ranking 125 Nations by Taxes and Tariffs on ICT Goods and Services, 2014*. [online]. [2019-04-10]. Available at: <<http://www2.itif.org/2014-ict-taxes-tariffs.pdf>>.

22 For more information, see: EUROPEAN COMMISSION: *2018 European Innovation Scoreboard*. [online]. [2019-04-10]. Available at: <<https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sites/growth/files/infographic-innovation-scoreboard-2018-map-full-size.png>>.

Chart 1 indicates that mainly the developing countries can be found on the bottom of the list which shows the analysis results of the enterprises which are providing ICT trainings. At the other hand, Farhadi, Ismail and Fooladi conducted the research on a sample of 159 countries and showed that “ICT use has significant effect on the economic growth”²³ Therefore, the ICT training becomes the necessity for the modern businesses. As well, the ICT use index is having a strong effect on GDP per capita in the developed countries and, as Farhadi, Ismail and Fooladi are stating, low in developing countries. Following, the authors state that governments should bring the development measures and policies with the aim of increasing ICT use in order to improve their GDP.²⁴

3 An Overview of the EU and Global Market Trends

The ICT development index, which is combining eleven indicators, is used to monitor and compare developments in information ICT among countries.²⁵ The report presented the top 20 countries for the proceeding year, where Iceland, Republic of South Korea, Switzerland, Denmark and United Kingdom were the countries with the highest score for the year 2017. According to Bitkom, there are five major actors on the Global market: USA, EU, China, Japan and Germany where it is expected that Germany will lose its competitive advantage in comparison to other major players. As well, it is expected that China will take over a leading role by the year 2025 where the dominance of the leading developed countries will remain in comparison to the rest of the world. The question is: what is the chance that the developing countries will compete with the development of global market leaders in this sector measured by the share of their total production or by the share of total exports?

23 FARHADI, M., ISMAIL, R., FOOLADI, M.: Information and Communication Technology Use and Economic Growth. In *PLoS One*, 2012, Vol. 7, No. 11, p. 13. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3495961/>>.

24 FARHADI, M., ISMAIL, R., FOOLADI, M.: Information and Communication Technology Use and Economic Growth. In *PLoS One*, 2012, Vol. 7, No. 11, p. 13. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3495961/>>.

25 STATISTA: *Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Development Index Ranking Top-20 Countries in 2017*. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <<https://www.statista.com/statistics/267083/top-20-countries-in-ict-development-index/>>.

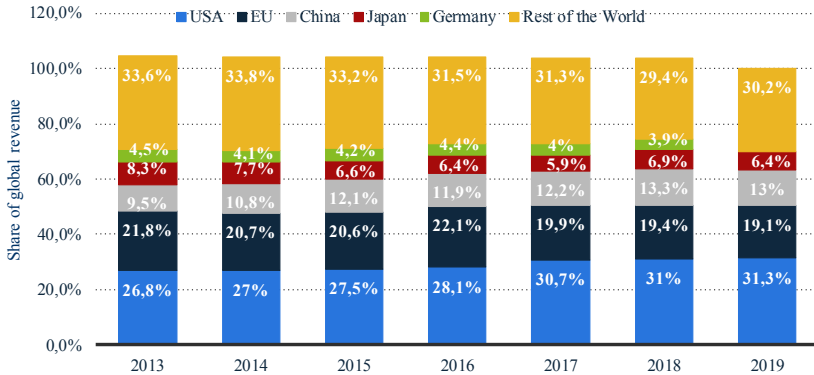


Chart 2: Global market share of the information and communication technology (ICT) market from 2013 to 2019, by country/region

Source: STATISTA: *Global Market Share of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Market from 2013 to 2019*. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <<https://www.statista.com/statistics/263801/global-market-share-held-by-selected-countries-in-the-ict-market/>>.

The projections of future trends presented by Chart 2 show that after decline through the years starting from 2014 to 2016, the analysts are expecting the continuation of the IT market growth in the following period where the share of IT and enterprise software will continue to grow, while the communication services will continue to grow with somewhat slower dynamics and therefore will not reach the level that it had in years before the year 2014. The total IT market consisting of data centre systems, devices, enterprise software, IT services and communication services will reach almost 4,000 billion U.S. dollars by the end of the year 2020. This growth gives numerous possibilities to the developed and to developing countries as well to participate in the market and strengthen their position measured by the market share but more significant in the GDP coming from ICT products and services in the total GDP. The importance of this is in the fact that ICT growth indirectly leads to the higher efficiency of all other industry sectors.

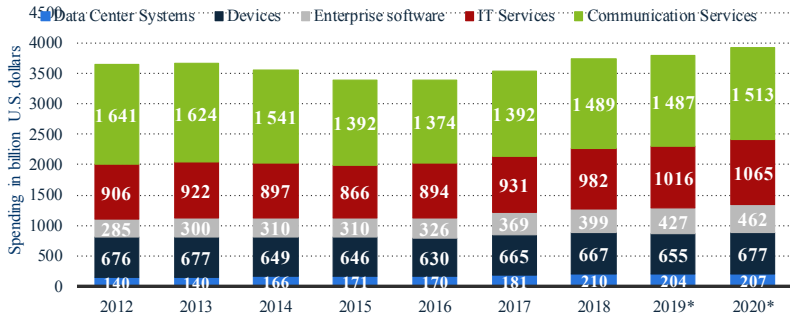


Chart 3: Information technology (IT) spending forecast worldwide from 2012 to 2020, by segment (in billion U.S. dollars)

Source: STATISTA: *Information technology (IT) spending forecast worldwide from 2012 to 2020, by Segment (in Billion U.S. Dollars), 2019*. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <<https://www.statista.com/statistics/268938/global-it-spending-by-segment/>>.

The EU documents and Chart 2 are confirming that EU is lagging behind the U.S. ICT market, in the level of investments and in research and development, where there are large discrepancies if observing the large companies and SMEs. It is stating that although every member state is responsible for attracting investments this issue should be dealt with on the EU level actions.²⁶

4 The Analysis of the Croatian IT Market

To analyse how developing countries are dealing with the challenges of the digital market that are already recognized by the European Union, the authors are giving an overview of the IT sector development in the Republic of Croatia. According to Eurostat (information published by Statista) the number of companies in the Croatian IT sector in the period from 2008 to 2016 grew for 58.42 %, starting from 2,489 in the year 2008 to 3,943 in 2016. Chart 3 is giving an overview of the Computer programming activities revenue in Croatia from the year 2010 to 2022.

²⁶ COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES: *Communication From The Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Digitising European Industry Reaping the Full bBenefits of a Digital Single Market, SWD (2016) 110 final, 2016*. [online]. [2019-04-26]. Available at: <<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/policies/digitising-european-industry>>.

The revenues achieved from computer programming activities show constant growth where the growth of 23 % in the period 2010 to 2016 was achieved. By the Statista projections, the growth of 48 % is expected to be achieved until 2022. Although in comparison of developed countries the presented revenues are rather modest, it has to be taken into consideration that the distinctive development programs or ICT sector development policy are nonexistent or are in the development phase, therefore, it is hard for the sector to expect to make strong and fast growth. Nevertheless, it has to be emphasized that by ITU publication Croatia reached the EU level by ICT penetration.²⁷

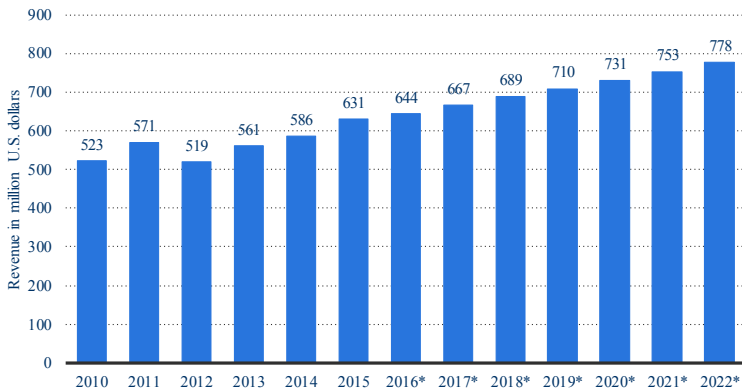


Chart 4: Computer programming activities revenue in Croatia from 2010 to 2022

Source: STATISTA: *Computer Programming Activities Revenue in Croatia from 2010 to 2022*. [online]. [2019-04-26]. Available at: <<https://www.statista.com/forecasts/919398/computer-programming-and-consultancy-revenue-in-croatia>>.

Chart 5 is presenting the total sales and EBITDA trends of the Croatian IT firms. The analysis includes the companies that have met the following conditions in the year 2017:²⁸

27 INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION: *Measuring the Information Society Report 2017 – Volume 2 ICT Country Profiles*. [online]. [2019-04-15]. Available at: <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/publications/misr2017/MISR2017_Volume2.pdf>.

28 For more information, see: EUROPEAN COMMISSION: *User Guide to the SME Definition*. [online]. [2019-04-12]. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/conferences/state-aid/sme/smedefinitionguide_en.pdf>.

Enterprises categorised as SMEs by Accounting Act, published in National Gazette No. 78/15 where two of three conditions must be met:

- Number of employees (more than 10) and/or;
- Annual turnover (more than 2 million EUR) and/or;
- Annual balance sheet total (more than 2 million EUR).²⁹
- Companies are registered in the business activity of Computer programming, consultancy and related activities (NACE code J62).
- Companies are operating and registered in the Republic of Croatia.
- Companies are not in the process of liquidation.

By these conditions, 298 companies were selected with primary business activity computer programming. These firms were in 2017 employing 11.325 employees that is rise for 44% in comparison to the year 2013 when they were employing 7.842 employees. It should be stated that 51 % of the companies from the sample has less than 20 employees, while there are only 12.4 % of the companies with more than 100 employees. As well, the major number (90.3 %) of the companies from the sample are categorised as small companies, 8.3 % as medium companies and the rest, large companies. Chart 5 shows the total sales and EBITDA of the companies from a sample in a period of 2013 to 2017.

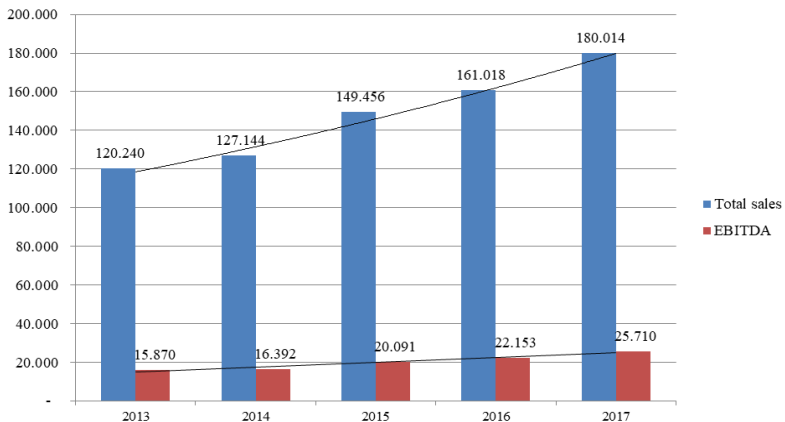


Chart 5: The trend of total sales and EBITDA of the companies from a sample in the period of 2013 to 2017

Source: own processing

29 REPUBLIC OF CROATIA: *Legal Act Accounting*. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <<https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/search.aspx?sortiraj=4&kategorija=1&godina=2015&broj=78&rpp=10&str=0&qtype=1&pretraga=da>>.

Through the observed five-year period, the companies from the sample achieved 50 % of the total sales growth and 62 % of the growth of EBITDA. Presented information show that even during the long-lasting economic crises that in Croatia ended in the year 2015, the sector was achieving the constant and stable growth of revenues and profitability but in large part as the result of the rise of the exports that was doubled in observed period (from 27.6 mil USD i.e. 23 % of total sales in year 2013 to 55.6 mil USD to 31 % of total sales in 2017). If comparing to the information given in Table 1 it seems that the industry export service revenues were growing but not as fast as the services in the other industries, i.e. tourism (the World Bank reported only 2% of the growth of the ICT export services in total export services). The average gross profit margin in the year 2017 was achieved at the level of 22.2 % that can be evaluated as satisfactory. Similar to other ICT markets „a few companies tend to dominate segments within the industry, and there are thousands of smaller companies. Although almost any talented individual with a computer can enter the industry, there is a very high rate of failure.“³⁰ As the rest of the EU countries where it was found that „40 % of companies have difficulties finding ICT specialists and it is expected that there will be 500,000 unfilled vacancies for ICT professionals by 2020“³¹ the Croatian IT firms have the similar challenges. Although the investments in tangible assets could be evaluated as modest, taking into consideration that this is a young sector which mainly consists of the small companies (90.3 %), it can be concluded that the investment trends are satisfactory as well as the investments were more than doubled and reached a 10.1 mil USD in the year 2017. These investments were primarily financed from owners' capital, with a low level of national or EU grants utilization. The reason for this could be found in the fact that this is a dynamic sector with huge and fast changes that need constant business modifications, investments, and knowledge upgrade in order to stay competitive.

30 SLAUGHTER, S. A.: *A Profile of the Software Industry Emergence, Ascendance, Risks, and Rewards*. New York : Business Expert Press LLC, 2014, p. 53.

31 EUROPEAN COMMISSION: *Digital Single Market*. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <<https://ec.europa.eu/epale/en/content/nearly-half-europeans-dont-have-basic-digital-skills>>.

5 Discussion

The importance of the ICT industry is indisputable and visible in numerous global reports, EU strategic documents, scientific and professional papers. According to Žitnik³² Croatian IT industry, today is facing numerous challenges starting from internal, organization issues, changing business environment, lack of government development strategy towards the problem of keeping up with the strong competition on a global scale. According to the analysed information, the Croatian IT sector is developing and achieving continuous growth, measured in terms of financial results in the observed five-year period, number of employees, exports, etc. The Conclusion of ITU report for Croatia states “Croatia has a well-developed telecommunication infrastructure and state actors as well as the private sector; continue to invest in its modernization. ICT household penetration is relatively high and the number of people using the Internet is increasing.”³³ That can be evaluated as a good base for further sectors’ growth.

Nevertheless, in comparison to developed EU countries, it seems that Croatian IT sector is not growing fast enough and therefore lagging behind the IT in developed countries. The reason for this could be found in the non-stimulating business environment, the low level of available financial support utilization - the inadequate institutional framework, the inadequate number of high-skilled employees,³⁴ etc. For solving the issue of fostering the IT growth in the developing countries Bahirini and Qaffas are proposing: investments in mobile infrastructure, upgrading and expansion existing ICT infrastructure, establishing e-government, stimulating the diffusion of ICT in the private sector (tax reduction, subsidies, promoting e-commerce) and public-private

32 See: ŽITNIK, B.: *Trendovi u hrvatskoj IT industriji*. Zagreb : TeleDom, Open InfoTrend, Hrvatska IT industrija, 1995.

33 INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION: *Measuring the Information Society Report 2017 – Volume 2 ICT Country Profiles*. [online]. [2019-04-15]. Available at: <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/publications/misr2017/MISR2017_Volume2.pdf>.

34 BESTVINA BUKVIĆ, I.: Impact of Business Environment on the Development of Regional IT Sector: Case Eastern Croatia. In TONKOVIĆ, M., CRNKOVIĆ, H. (eds.): *7th International Scientific Symposium Economy of Eastern Croatia – Vision and Growth*. Osijek : Faculty of Economics in Osijek, 2018, p. 10-21. [online]. [2019-04-15]. Available at: <<https://www.dropbox.com/s/9mqurqla6jl8kq/GIH%202018.pdf?dl=0>>.

partnerships in the development of ICT infrastructure and services.³⁵ Here, the expectation of high involvement of state through subsidies and infrastructural investments can be seen. The similar expectations can be found on the EU level where IT sector is considered a bearer of digital transformation in all sectors, where if „the European manufacturing sector misses out on the digital transformation, the sum of 605 billion could be at stake in the years ahead. This potential loss is calculated from the continuing increase in the share of gross value added accounted for by information and communications technology.”³⁶

Therefore, it is of great importance for the national economies and EU as a whole to adopt the measures and programs that will enforce the sector, which in developing countries mainly consists of micro, small and medium companies. The question is whether the state measures could make a significant difference or „too much state intervention could stifle innovative capabilities in this rapidly-changing technological environment.”³⁷ Nevertheless, the question of modality for fostering the IT growth in developing countries and catching the IT sector in developed ones still remains unanswered and the odds seem unpromising. If the IT sector in developing countries doesn't reach faster growth, i.e. the growth higher than realized by developed countries the significant changes cannot be expected. In this constellation, the developing countries often remain consumers of the IT sector products in significant measure produced by leading countries in trying to sustain the competitiveness in other industry sectors.

35 BAHRINI, R., QAFFAS, A.: *Impact of Information and Communication Technology on Economic Growth: Evidence from Developing Countries*. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <<https://www.mdpi.com/2227-7099/7/1/21>>.

36 ROLANDBERGERSTRATEGYCONSULTANTS,BDI-FEDERATION OF GERMAN INDUSTRIES: *The Digital Transformation of Industry*. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <https://www.rolandberger.com/publications/publication_pdf/roland_berger_digital_transformation_of_industry_20150315.pdf>.

37 ROLANDBERGERSTRATEGYCONSULTANTS,BDI-FEDERATION OF GERMAN INDUSTRIES: *The Digital Transformation of Industry*. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <https://www.rolandberger.com/publications/publication_pdf/roland_berger_digital_transformation_of_industry_20150315.pdf>.

Conclusion

The research showed that on the global level IT sector is showing positive trends, except in the years 2014 to 2016 when the decline in total spending was reported, the overall trends are promising. Unfortunately, the developing countries are having difficulties in keeping ahead with global trends and although reaching the positive results, without strategic approach will hardly manage to make significant changes in comparison to the position that they are having today. Similar as in rest of the developed EU countries the developing countries should give strategic long-term perspective approach to the development of the national IT sectors and continuation of the digital transformation of state administration and industry, in order to give a positive influence to national IT sector competitiveness. Here, it is important to harmonize state instruments, measures, and funding of industry development activities, monitor progress and timely correct possible deviations from the defined strategy in order to reach expected results. The limitation of the research is that this paper is not examining the situation in all EU developing countries but basically analyse the case of Croatian IT sector. As well, it doesn't analyse all sectoral sub-activities but analyses the IT sector as a whole and in some cases on the level of the ICT sector as of availability of information, although it is clear that the sub-activities could have a different focus. The paper is not presenting the data for a longer period of time that could give an incomplete overview. Therefore, future research should be led for a longer time span and analyse more detailed reports on the IT sector in other EU developing countries. By using the method of focus groups or the in-depth interviews future research should shed more light on specific issues and problems of the IT sector.

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FEATURES OF HIP-HOP MUSIC VERBALIZATION IN SOCIAL NETWORKS

Max Demchuk

ABSTRACT:

This study examines the posts published on the public pages of the track blog E: music (hip-hop dedicated) on the social network VKontakte for the period from September to November 2018. In our opinion, the key specific feature of reviewing hip-hop music is not the description of the composition itself or the creation of a metaphorical chain that might interest new listeners, but drawing attention through appealing to the personal life of the performers. The hypothesis considered is that hip-hop, acting in the postmodernism paradigm, namely, translating traditional content bases in different traditional forms, uses the personality of the musician as the main element of music verbalization. An attempt to answer questions whether we can talk about music as such is made. If it is almost impossible to analyze and verbalize it by generally accepted methods, and because the actual hip-hop musical work is difficult to analyze in the framework of a music review.

KEY WORDS:

hip-hop, mass media, mass music, music review, music verbalization, musical aesthetics

1 Theoretical Approaches to the Problem of Musical Aesthetics Verbalization

In recent years, there has been an increase in scientific interest in the phenomenon of transmediality in the context of which the process of verbalizing musical aesthetics takes place. Despite the fact that this phenomenon is not new, there is practically no fundamental research on it, and those works that exist either very quickly lose relevance due to the rapid changes that are constantly taking place in the music world, or are general philosophical works, not giving an understanding of this process in detail. Back in 1885, Doctor of Art History Edward Hanslick wrote about the verbalization of music. According to him, unlike visual art, music can be described solely with the help of professional terms used in musical discourse or by means of metaphorical keys.¹ Another classical researcher of musical aesthetics verbalization is considered to

1 For more information, see: GANSLIK, J. E.: *O muzykal'no-prekrasnom: Opyt pereosmyslenija muzykal'noj jestetik*. Moscow : URSS, 2012.

be Czech structuralist musicologist Vladimir Karbusitsky, who wrote about the idea of “inexpressible”, according to which any attempt to verbalize music is only “a useless attempt to express musical concept free from any concepts”.² The basis for it was a steady stereotype about the absolute subjectivization of music.

Despite giving music semiotics the status of practically pseudoscience, the study of the verbal interpretation of musical structures became widespread in the middle of the last century in the Soviet Union and Germany. A number of psychologists and musicologists tried to prove not so much the possibility, as the validity of the verbalization of music, to prove the baselessness of the clichés about musical subjectivization. An authoritative researcher in this field was Doctor of Art History V. Medushevsky, who presented the hypothesis that the basis for the process of verbalization of the content of musical structures is the listener’s understanding of the characteristics of rhythm-intonation-temporal modeling of emotions in music.³ The important remark made by him was the idea that this mechanism only works if the listener has not superficial, but deep experience comparing musical means of expression, combined in rhythm-intonation complexes, with emotions. In the process of perception of a musical work, a person reflexes, verbally indicates, structures the direction and character of the movement of emotions in his mind and on the basis of this comes to a holistic understanding of the emotional and imaginative content of music. Thus, the grammar of musical expression of emotions forms the system of a person’s intuitive ideas about the structure and dynamics of his personal emotions. A similar point of view was expressed by G. Pankiewicz, who wrote that the musical techniques that make up music are significant not only as material for creating images, but also in the sense in which the word is significant as a concept. Much attention in his works was paid to the fact that all understanding relates to the word, since it is precisely the way out into human thinking.⁴ A curious idea was put forward by B. Teplov. According to it, each note mark is a graphic designation of a certain word, and the composer offers the listener not sound images, but

2 See: KARBUSICKY, V.: *Verbalisierung musikalischer Sinngehalte: Zwischen «schlechter Poesie» und dem «Gemachten am Werk»?* Graz : Wien, 1989.

3 See: MEDUSHEVSKIJ, V.: *O zakonomernostjah i sredstvah hudozhestvennogo vozdejstvija muzyki.* Moscow : Music, 1976.

4 See: PANKEVICH, G.: *Zvuchashhie obrazy: V muzykal'noj vyrazitel'nosti.* Moscow : Knowledge, 1977.

rather their emotional-conceptual designation, which in the long term means the ability to rewrite any musical notation with words. However, the difficulty in this case lies in the fact that the content of the musical work is not directly the sound fabric, but the intertwining of emotions, which does not contradict its original thesis, since, despite the fact that any emotions are difficult to express in words, they nevertheless lend themselves to adequate universal verbalization.⁵

One of the key researchers of the verbalization of music in Europe of the last century, G. Eggebrecht, wrote several theses, consistently reflecting the relationship between verbal and musical.⁶ He took the characteristics and functions of the language as a basis and began to project them onto music. Thus, its main position was the idea that the language speaks, but music is not capable of speaking, which levels out the basic function of the language, verbal. However, he focuses on the fact that music cannot only talk about specific things, it is not able to indicate and define, but always sets communication as its primary goal, the expression of something, is a coded message, goes into the metalanguage. And this is her only significant difference from a verbal language. T. Adorno held similar views held. In his works he repeatedly pointed out the metaphoric nature of music: music is like a language, but at the same time it is not. Consequently, the function of information transfer must be understood in relation to the musical language also metaphorically. Modern researchers write about this problem exclusively in the context of related topics. Thus, a number of researchers agree that the aesthetics of form, which plays a significant role in the verbalization of music, becomes an important aspect of the analysis of modern music. According to B. Kramer,⁷ numerous streaming services provide users with individual musical proposals, thereby creating a new taste-forming paradigm based not on the interaction of people and verbalized judgments, but on situational emotional preferences and form aesthetics. This is also indicated by A. Hagen,⁸ who

5 See: TEPLOV, B.: *Psihologija muzykal'nyh sposobnostej*. Saint-Petersburg : Publisher APN RSFSR, 1947.

6 EGGBRECHT, H.: Musik als Tonsprache. In *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft*, 1961, 1/1961, p. 73-100.

7 KRAMER, B.: Online Music Recommendation Platforms as Representations of Ontologies of Musical Taste. In *Communications*, 2018, Vol. 43, No. 2, p. 259-281.

8 HAGEN, A.: The Playlist Experience: Personal Playlists in Music Streaming Services. In *Popular Music and Society*, 2015, Vol. 38, No. 5, p. 625-645.

asserts that playlists that form the basis of music streaming services are constantly being developed and demonstrate new ways of collecting musical information through streaming services, as a result of which they constantly shape and correct the musical tastes of their owners.

A. Edelman and V. J. Moor⁹ believes that the more formal theory of culture has been developing in the course of the last two decades due to the fact that the audience has ceased to perceive meaningful concepts. Continuing this thought, it can be assumed that the audience listens exclusively to cells or clusters torn from concepts, without perceiving the entire piece of music. This means it is not the content that serves as the product, but only the form. A. Bennett,¹⁰ exploring the empirical study of music in Great Britain in the aspect of the concept of the neo-tribes of Maffesoli, wrote that bright, but quickly “fading away” precedents will be the basis of popular music. At the moment we can say that this hypothesis was confirmed. Rapidly changing and extremely fluid eclectic almost completely eliminated any taste statics, thus giving rise to many disputes about the stagnation of mass music, the relevance of the postmodern paradigm to the sphere of music and the dominance of hip-hop music as the main platform for conducting formal and meaningful experiments and forming a new music aesthetics. Proceeding from this, it is important to clearly realize that the axiom of knowledge, which is worth repelling when studying the verbalization of music, should be the metalinguistic and metatext mechanism of music perception, since the discursive environment for the reflection of music is the space of visual-verbal images. In this case, the main task is to determine the degree of adequacy of the metalanguage and understanding of how the modern audience perceives music at the emotional-figurative level when the basic mechanisms of the effects of sounds on consciousness change (domination of rhythms over melodies, intentional merging of many figurative, semantic, historical and cultural plans within one musical work).

9 EDELMANN, A., MOHR, W. J.: Formal Studies of Culture: Issues, Challenges, and Current Trends. In *Poetics*, 2018, No. 68, p. 1-9. [online]. [2019-03-12]. Available at: <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0304422X18301323>>.

10 BENNETT, A.: Subcultures or Neo-tribes? Rethinking the Relationship between Youth, Style and Musical Taste. In *Sociology*, 1999, Vol. 33, No. 3, p. 599-617.

2 Problems of Verbalization of Hip-Hop Music in Social Networks

According to Nielsen for 2017, hip-hop became the most popular genre in the Americas, with a margin of 12% ahead of the total number of albums sold and listening to streaming services from rock and pop music, which every year lose their positions more and more.¹¹ This trend is also present in Russia. One of the main moderators of the largest network of music groups in the social network VKontakte, E: music, claims that users have become less disdainful about unfamiliar music associated with this genre, and the number of subscribers in thematic public pages is growing rapidly.¹² In Russia, most of the songs in the social network VKontakte are freely available and are not blocked by copyright holders. However, the audience finds ways to circumvent the blocking even those compositions that were removed from the social network. This note is important because it directly relates to the specifics of text blocks of posts. VKontakte is filled with all sorts of advertisements that create a number of restrictions when listening to music without a paid subscription, the most important of which is the restriction on listening in the background on a portable device (no more than 30 minutes a day). A paid subscription appeared a year and a half ago (04.10.2017), however, this service is not very popularity, and we see quite obvious logic in this. Firstly, social networks offer music in MP 3 format, moreover, without the ability to check the bitrate of a particular composition, while the transition to the era of HI-RES, a format superior to even official CDs, is gaining momentum. Secondly, all kinds of streaming services offer much more features in terms of listening to music for the same money. In this regard, we can assume that the music public pages are in the process of changing the strategy of their existence, because in order to survive in the new conditions, they need to change the tasks. This may explain the key reason that music public pages increasingly focus on the textual component, which is expressed in increasing its size. In VKontakte, playlists are less and less listened to, which turns public pages with

11 LYNCH, J.: *For the First Time in History, Hip-hop Has Surpassed Rock to Become the Most Popular Music Genre*. [online]. [2019-03-11]. Available at: <<http://www.businessinsider.com/hip-hop-passes-rock-most-popular-music-genre-nielsen-2018-1>>.

12 ARNI, A.: «*Рјеп — јето новјј панк*». *Pochemu ruskij rjep stal takim popularnym*. [online]. [2019-03-15]. Available at: <<https://medialeaks.ru/1508sts-txt-rep-eto-novyy-pank-pochemu-russkiy-rep-stal-takim-populyarnym/>>.

music content into a collection of recommendations that can interest the audience so much that they will find the offered content on a third-party platform and listen. In fact, public pages administrators compete with automated playlists of streaming services.

From the 189 analyzed posts, only one post that is not related to hip-hop music (40 posts) has only the contextual, expressed through the description of the personality of the musician. In all the others, regardless of the genre orientation, all three groups are present, with the first and second predominating. It is much easier to interest an unprepared listener, to create in him a certain emotional picture of what he is offered to listen with aesthetically correct artistic techniques (depending on the style) chosen to describe music (Post-metal with a strong influence of doom and elements of shoegaze), technical features (in a simplified form) (Dreamy and multi-layered melancholic journey through the inner and outer worlds of dark ambient) than those who wrote it when and where (Recorded it in December 2017 when new guitarist ...). Of the forty analyzed texts, the object of which is hip-hop, twenty posts have only contextual elements, six have only the first and third elements, six more have all three, but with an extremely weak expressed second, and eight have more or less all three groups, but, again, with a predominance of the third. It is important to note the fact that the functionality of the contextual group of elements in terms of hip-hop is reduced to ordinary facts from the public life of the musician and information about who participated in the recording (After a 5-month absence on digital platforms nothing, nowhere. returns with the new song "dread". It is dedicated to his own spiritual problems; Two or three years ago, Lindoyer along with Elmo Kennedy were the personification of a huge layer of popular hip-hop music). The absence of the first two groups, or their weak presence, can be explained both by low figurativeness and dominance of rhythmic structures, and by the fact that hip-hop is probably the only genre in which the almost complete fusion of the performer and lyrical hero takes place.

The dominance of hip-hop musicians in the media field is obvious. The social network VKontakte has such large public pages that review hip-hop music and the personal life of rap artists like Fast Food Music (480,931 subscribers) or NR (4,801,286 subscribers), who have no direct competitors in the number of subscribers among the pages which review music of other genres. Hip- H op music also dominates the news music agenda, often with some personal stories (last year's Kanye West's

admission to a psychiatric clinic and the subsequent declaration of love for President Trump, which provoked a series of shocking interviews). Under such conditions, music, in comparison with the personality of a musician, becomes a secondary factor that does not require any verbalization, since the musician himself begins to play this role. As soon as he released his new album, he immediately became a sales hit, but not because of the music, but because of the event that was behind it. Personal context begins to dominate the work of art. The key feature of hip-hop music, and at the same time, modern musical aesthetics, is the deliberate fusion of many figurative, semantic, historical and cultural plans manifested at different levels of perception of the text and, more importantly, perceived differently by different members of the audience, depending on their cultural background. Thus, hip-hop, acting in the postmodern paradigm, namely, translating the traditional substantive foundations in the synthesis of various traditional forms (Jacques D erida, Roland Barth) uses the personality of the musician as the main element of the verbalization of music. Contextual description becomes the only way to describe music of this genre, and therefore the problem of verbalization of such a complex and at the same time simple in a structural understanding of the genre, like hip-hop, remains relevant.

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MAINSTREAM MEDIA VERSUS ALTERNATIVE MEDIA IN RELATION TO POLITICAL PARTIES IN SLOVAKIA

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ABSTRACT:

The overall image of the political environment in Slovakia is created, among others, also by the media sphere. Strong competition among individual politicians, as well as among media for viewers – potential voters, gives way for alternative media to inform in a significantly more objective manner. Media owners, advertising, but also negative campaigns have a tendency to strongly polarize society. A voter often has a choice of several alternative sources; disinformation and reinterpretations of information of different kinds occur, and this directly influences socio-political situation in the country. Communication through social networks significantly influences the communication of individual political parties and candidates and puts emphasis on more sophisticated campaigns and communication of political subjects. The paper will address the strategies of forming media content by individual news portals by analysing particular websites and media social channels, which tend to influence opinions of the society.

KEY WORDS:

alternative media, mainstream media, media, political parties, Slovak Republic

1 Mass Communication and Alternative Media

Mass communication through various types of media became very popular at the beginning of the 20th century. Its rise has been caused by several factors such as, for example, technological development, sophisticated transmission of information, as well as rapid changes in mass communication theories. Newspapers and magazines of traditional character are currently on the decline and are being replaced mostly by the media of mass character. The definition of this term could be based on the essence of the words “mass” and “communication”, as, for example, in the context of providing freely available information to an unknown audience.¹ Reifová has described mass communication as one of the means of social communication reproduced by mass media. This one-way and constant media motion is characterized by a dispersed audience and contains a communicator (the creator of the

1 O’SULLIVAN, T.: *Key Concepts in Communication and Cultural Studies*. 2nd Edition. London, New York : Routledge, 1994, p. 367.

message or information), a message (adjusted in substance and in form), communication channel (type of media, in which the information is reproduced and communicated), and a receiver (recipient, i.e. the society or an individual). If we were to summarize some features of this type of communication according to the author, they would concern, for example, formalized rules and legal existence of a given type of organization, activities aimed at large groups of recipients, heterogeneity of recipients, as well as an establishment of a parallel contact with a certain group of society that does not necessarily share the same geographical distance.²

Defining alternative media is not that simple and it brings many problematic points, which do not coincide within the same definition framework. Downing states that speaking of alternative media is an oxymoron, as everything is, at some point, alternative to something else. In his words, alternative media are supposed to provide radical and often anti-capitalist opinions, which frequently address ideological differences.³ Media of an alternative character could be regarded as representatives of challenging the hegemonic status quo or the present political platform and using the transformation of existing roles, signs, or routines to “fight” for a sub-cultural style.⁴ The author Lewis in his book *Alternative Media: Linking Global and Local* gives a very accurate definition of alternative media and asserts that they can be distinguished from other media on the basis of some features relating to their motive, sources of funding, regulatory dispensation, organizational structure, message content, and relationship to audience. *Motive* is regarded as rejecting commercial motives, pursuing ethnical goals, etc. As regards *the sources of funding*, alternative media refuse state and municipal grants, as well as income from advertising. Their *regulatory dispensation* is connected to their independence and supervision of various institutions and *the organizational structure* is of a horizontal and participative character. *The message content* supplements dominant discussions; or they offer alternative visions and perspectives. Other features would include *the composition of the audience* and *the range of diffusion* that points out the focus of geographical status of a local, regional, or even national character.⁵ Alternative media can also be viewed from the aspect of four approaches, which point out problematic areas of their functioning. The

2 REIFOVÁ, I.: *Slovník mediální komunikace*. Praha : Portál, 2004, p. 100-101.

3 ATTON, Ch.: *Alternative Media*. London : Sage, 2002, p. 7.

4 ATTON, Ch.: *Alternative Media*. London : Sage, 2002, p. 15.

5 LEWIS, P.: *Alternative Media: Linking Global and Local*. Paris : UNESCO, 1993, p. 12.

first one is *the community serving* which shows the relationship between the transmitter (medium) and the society or community. The objective in this case is to allow and facilitate participation of individuals, who share similar socio-demographic and economic characteristics.⁶

The second area approached is *forming an alternative to mainstream media*. This concept asserts that alternative media are perceived only as a supplement to media of mainstream character, and therefore one of their roles is also a so-called interpretation of the world-view, as well as proposing and complementing topics insufficiently covered in the mainstream media. According to the author, the reason for this is the state, where mainstream media have power to construct media content and programme structure in such a way that creates ideological profiles, gives priority to certain social and political actors and private companies of various kinds over the views of disfranchised minorities.⁷ The next approach takes into account a *connection of alternative media with the civil society*. The state cannot be separated from the society and, despite high fragmentation of the society, some groups are able show their own social identity, which cannot be seen in mainstream media to such an extent. Viability of democracy and the ability to access information is one of the intellectual needs of the society. Overcoming the idea of media neutrality and impartiality is what alternative media provide according to this approach. Micro-participation enables individuals to adopt civil attitudes and to contribute to processes of democratization in the country.⁸ The last approach sees *alternative media as a rhizome*, which, in practice, means the growth of the community that follows this type of media sphere. This approach is based on three important aspects, which contain, for example, variability of civil society, conflict between the state and the market (form the point of view of the alternative in mainstream society), and identity formation. It is the formation of identity, which is not normalised, that allows only a low rate of controllability, which results in their independence in a relative view.⁹

6 BAILEY, O.: *Understanding Alternative Media*. Maidenhead : McGraw Hill/ Open University Press, 2008, p. 14.

7 BAILEY, O.: *Understanding Alternative Media*. Maidenhead : McGraw Hill/ Open University Press, 2008, p. 16.

8 BAILEY, O.: *Understanding Alternative Media*. Maidenhead : McGraw Hill/ Open University Press, 2008, p. 25.

9 BAILEY, O.: *Understanding Alternative Media*. Maidenhead : McGraw Hill/ Open University Press, 2008, p. 29.

We can include alternative press, alternative internet media, and blogs among alternative media. *Alternative press* provides, similarly to the other types, a different stream of information of radical or dissident character. The phenomenon of this kind of press has primarily been noticeable in the USA; however, with the passage of time we can encounter it also in the Eastern Europe. These media used to be mainly of a weekly periodical type and their common feature is the criticism of traditional media and various socio-economic aspects and inequalities. These weekly newspapers from the American background get their income mostly from advertising. These papers are often bought by large corporations and they adjust their content to the political and ideological profile of the owners. In the USA, the region of California is dominant and sets trends in the American alternative industry.¹⁰ The second type is the *alternative media on the internet*, through which users are able to democratically mobilise, participate, and, most importantly, globalize their opinions abroad. This way of presentation is often used by political parties and becomes a dominant means of introducing their interests to the public sphere. The classical political communication system is on the decline, as the diffusion of this kind of communication simultaneously allows the formations of strong opposition groups.¹¹ The development of public debate and the spread of other than mainstream opinions can lead to efforts of social change from below. The society usually accepts their non-commercial character and uses the open access in practice. The internet users can easily search for the available content and also generate their own according to their wishes. Based on this, they can share information with a community of people with similar interests. The first such media were the anarchistic periodicals, which were available exclusively on the internet. This was the case of the journal *Practical Anarchy* online, which has replaced its printed version.¹² Another, currently very popular, means of alternative communication are *blogs*. This type of participatory communication forms a certain kind of opposing power against current journalistic practices, such as responsibility, transparency, as well as objectivity, but, at the same time,

10 WALTZ, M.: *Alternative and Activist Media*. Edinburg : Edinburg University Press, 2005, p. 112.

11 BAILEY, O.: *Understanding Alternative Media*. Maidenhead : McGraw Hill/ Open University Press, 2008, p. 97.

12 COYER, K., DOWMUNT, T., FOUNTAIN, A.: *Alternative Media Handbook*. London : Routledge, 2007, p. 59.

transforms modern journalism across the media sector.¹³ A blog contains contributions, which usually come from one editor and are displayed chronologically on one website. An author is called a blogger and their writing serves as an alternative platform for sharing information; they distance themselves from professional journalism and articles are aimed mostly at personal experiences of individuals, events, and reporting information. It is considered to be a very individual kind of alternative journalism, distorting mainstream practice. This undermining of mainstream is connected to a direct interaction between the blogger and the society, mostly through conveying messages and events directly. As an example, we can use war blogs, which described e.g. the war in Iraq and opposed the dichotomy of the Iraqis or the dictatorship victims. An example of such blogging is Samal Pax, who criticised the Iraq war and his criticism has been published in a book form.¹⁴

In comparing alternative media with the media of a mainstream character, it is necessary to note different realities, which could define this difference very clearly, such as for example the relationship to organizational principles, participation, corporatism, and domination. Looking at the characteristics of mainstream media according to Hajek, this type is established exclusively by business elites, they are market-oriented; they have a restricted user control and a tendency to sustain present political relationships. From the view of journalistic rules, they are strict, respect their potential readers or viewers, and limit the extent of articles, mainly on the basis of their popularity.¹⁵ By way of comparison, alternative media have a specific community role, where their diversity is respected, they are independent from both the state and the market, they are not structured hierarchically, and the content of information shared is not aimed only at dominant, interesting topics, on the contrary, they are the carriers of discourses that often highlight the importance of representing an individual.¹⁶ Alternative media are presently being researched mainly in connection to media of traditional mainstream

13 KENIX, L.: *Alternative and Mainstream Media: The Converging Spectrum*. London : Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 2011, p. 97.

14 BAILEY, O.: *Understanding Alternative Media*. Maidenhead : McGraw Hill/ Open University Press, 2008, p. 75.

15 HAJEK, R., CARPENTIER, N.: Alternative Mainstream Media in Czech Republic: Beyond the Dichotomy of Alternative and Mainstream Media. In *Continuum. Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, 2015, Vol. 29, No. 3, p. 377.

16 BAILEY, O.: *Understanding Alternative Media*. Maidenhead : McGraw Hill/ Open University Press, 2008, p. 18.

character. A large proportion of literature pays only a little attention to the issue of alternative media and that is why this area remains unexplored to a significant extent. One of the authors, who address this topic and conduct research into alternative media, is Christian Fuchs, who asserts that the alternative media do not have sufficiently strong status in the area of social sciences. This author researches the issue in a critical way. In his work *Alternative Media as Critical Media* he sees a strong link with an anarchistic perspective of their use. In his words, it is necessary to regard these media not only as anarchistic, but also as media of Marxist ideology. He does not find anything wrong with the criticism from the side of these media, on the contrary, this kind of events presentation falls within their competence. These antagonistic contents are, according to him, an alternative to heterogeneity and, at the same time, a reflection of rules of capital, racism, sexism, or nationalism. By trying to overcome censorship and not filtering news, as the mainstream does, they provide a service to the society and fight against monopoly on information. He also describes them as non-commercial and financed from private sources. He states that this theory was presented in past by Marx in his collected works on the press. According to Marx, the press should distance itself from business to be free and the writer must earn money in order to be able to live and to write, but he must by no means live and write for the purpose of making money.¹⁷ Alternative media appeal to an increasingly widening audience especially because of their spontaneity and the opportunity to participate. This trend is visible not only in the USA, but world-wide. The audience size, however, is an irrelevant factor in measuring success of a give medium. If we take abstract measurements into consideration, these numbers are inessential due to the specificity of the communities that these media address. In profiling the audience in comparison to the mainstream media, their community could be regarded as relatively active, with mobilising tendencies in creating various socio-political projects.

2 Methodology

The article has an objective to compare media agenda of selected media of alternative character with those of a mainstream character. For this purpose we have chosen a method of content analysis. We covered the period from 10th May to 20th May on the selected websites. The reason for

17 FUCHS, K.: *Alternative Media as Critical Media*. In *European Journal of Social Theory*, 2010, Vol. 13, No. 2, p. 179-181.

choosing this short period of time was the topicality of the contributions, as well as a tendency of the internet portals to maintain a similar programme structure throughout the whole year. Internet portals have been selected according to their relevance and rate of visits on the portal medialne.sk. The selection of the websites was followed by a coding process, which, in the first phase, coded the posts relevant to us, i.e. those concerning domestic politics. The posts included those that informed about domestic political circumstances, statements about situations in Slovakia, but also those informing about the murder of a journalist Ján Kuciak, as this topic has recently become considerably politicized. After these posts had been singled out, we carried out a thematic coding, during which the posts were divided into particular topics. With regards to the current events, four thematic groups, among which the web posts were included, have been formed. We have named these groups news (all articles and politicians' statements about topical themes outside the other selected thematic groups), draft laws (proposals, vetoes, and amendments of the laws), murdered journalist (a strong topic of a current political situation; not included in the thematic group news), and reports (misdemeanours of politicians, criminal complaints filed, press releases with this theme). Finally, the political parties were coded, but we also included the president Andrej Kiska and the future president Zuzana Čaputová, who are both publically well-known and have a tendency to influence the course of events in Slovakia. We considered a post relevant in regard to a political party, if a mention of it in a singular, or as a part of more political subjects, amounted to at least 0,25 % of the whole article. We have included not only statements of the politicians on the topics in question, but also themes that directly concerned them in a certain way in this category. The results show the political activity of the websites in the covered period, the themes of politically oriented posts, and within them, the occurrence of political parties.

3 Comparison of Media Content of Alternative Media and Mainstream Media

Media content can to a significant extent influence public moods. As we have mentioned in the theoretical part of the article, mainstream media are able to adjust this content according to its attraction and, contrariwise, alternative media try to “swim against the tide”. This part of the paper will point out the differences in topics of individual web portals and mainly the appearance of political representatives in concrete posts.

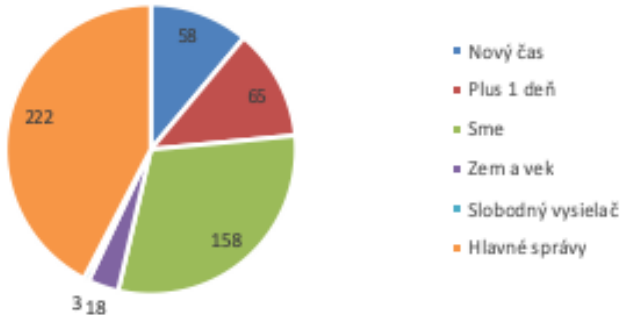


Chart 1: The number of politically oriented posts on the portals

Source: own processing

In terms of the number of posts during the covered period, the most active portal was Sme; at the other end the portal Hlavné správy. These portals do not considerably sort out their media content, as they publish many pieces of news from the news agency SITA and also from TASR. In terms of the number of posts, it is on average 20 posts a day for Sme and 15 posts a day from Hlavné správy. We cannot say that in case of Hlavné správy this is due to a better selection of content, the more likely reason being a smaller number of employees and thus a limited time to add posts. Among the least active portals we can find Slobodný vysielateľ. Its character is different from its competitors, as it provides information primarily through its radio waves. However, it could be stated that, generally, mainstream media publish a significantly larger volume of news, which could be caused by the factors of content selection, low credibility of a portal, lack of interest from the society, lower funding, as well as probably a smaller number of editors.

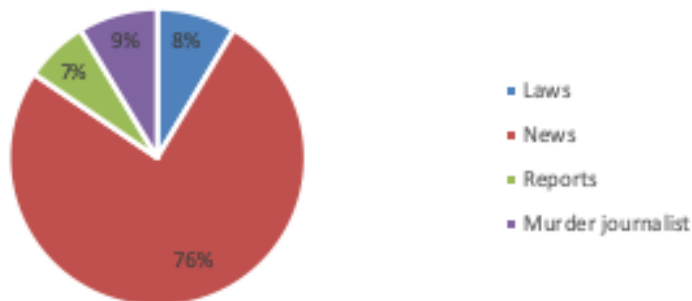


Chart 2: Thematic division of the posts of the internet portal Nový čas

Source: own processing

Looking at the thematic division, topics aimed at current socio-political situation in Slovakia dominated in the articles of Nový čas. They amounted to as much as 76%, the second most mentioned topic was the murder of the journalist due to an ongoing investigation of this case and the statements of the people involved. The least represented topic was the reports, where mostly Bašternák and his financial fraud were mentioned. As it is close to a parliament summer recess, the laws only make 8% of the overall number of articles.

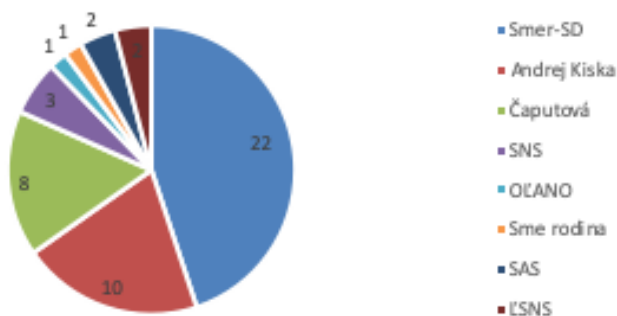


Chart 3: Media mentions of political parties and public figures on the portal Nový čas

Source: own processing

The governing party Smer-SD dominated the posts, but the president Andrej Kiska together with the newly elected president Zuzana Čaputová came second and third in media coverage. The reason for this increase could be the president's entry into party politics and many discussions about his support for Zuzana Čaputová. Opposition parties were not given much space by this portal in the observed period.

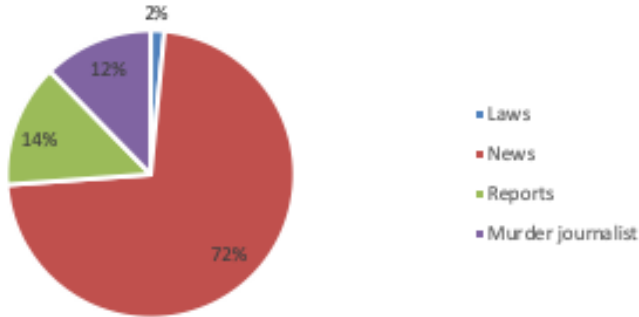


Chart 4: Thematic division of the posts of the internet portal Plus 1 deň

Source: own processing

Again, similarly to the portal Nový čas, news was the dominant topic; the least covered posts were those concerning proposing, vetoing and amending laws. Articles addressing the murder of the journalist Ján Kuciak and the reports were almost identical in quantity. The percentage of news is lower by 4% compared to Nový Čas.

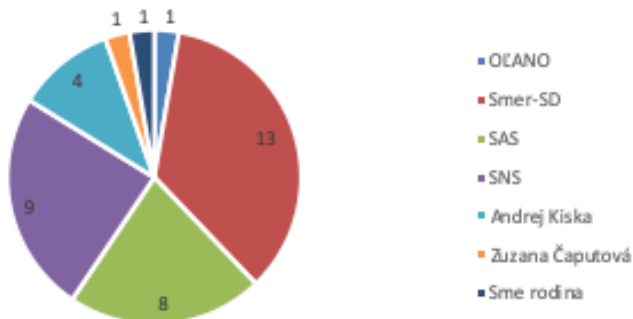


Chart 5: Media mentions of political parties and public figures on the portal Plus 1 deň

Source: own processing

In relation to the presentation of politicians and public figures, Smer-SD predominated, coalition party SNS was the second most covered party. The president Andrej Kiska and the future president Zuzana Čaputová were not given a significant portion of the coverage. The opposition parties occurred in the posts only sporadically.

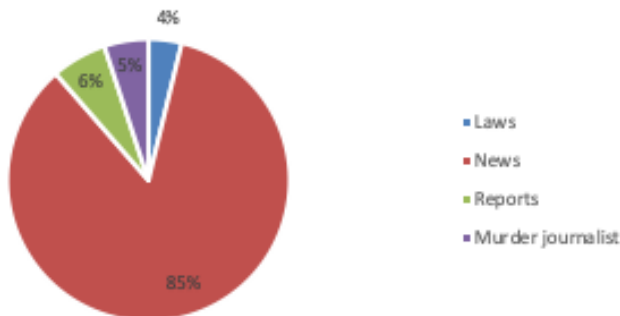


Chart 6: Thematic division of the posts of the internet portal SME

Source: own processing

The same tendency for variety of topics can be seen on the portal SME. Articles of a news character represented 85% of the media coverage and the other topics were presented only sporadically. In this case, all three mainstream media coincide and gave the same proportion, the lowest of the analysed media, to the current changes of laws.

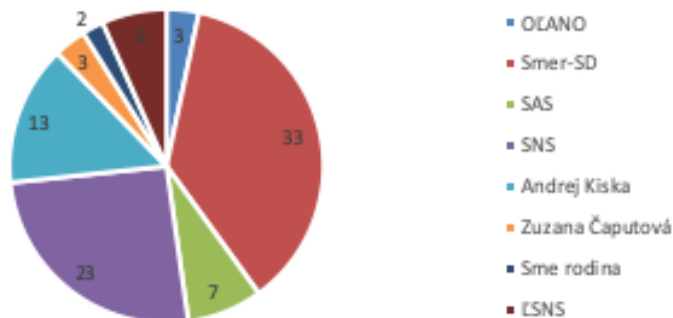


Chart 7: Media mentions of political parties and public figures on the portal SME

Source: own processing

The governing party Smer-SD received the largest share of coverage also on the portal SME, the second most frequently mentioned party was again SNS. The current president Andrej Kiska was repeatedly given space in the articles; his presentation was mostly connected to vetoing laws. An increase in coverage of opposition political parties, the largest proportion given to the parties SAS and LSNS, is also visible on this portal. The future president Zuzana Čaputová together with the current president Andrej Kiska were mentioned 16 times, which is less than half of the mentions that the governing party SMER-SD received. In the daily paper *Nový čas*, they were given 18, i.e. here, they were repeatedly active in the media.

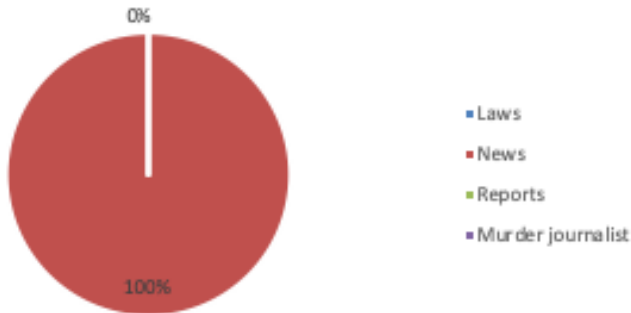


Chart 8: Thematic division of the posts of the internet portal Zem a vek

Source: own processing

Zem a vek is a specific portal that is primarily published in a printed format. It proves this also by its activity on the website. Its articles strongly differ from those of mainstream media; they do not address laws, murder of the journalist, or any reports. They primarily criticise the current state of affairs, offer new perspective on things, and mainly comment on socio-political situation in Slovakia in a negative and conspirative manner. In this case, all the thematically oriented topics fall into a category of news, with a negative undertone.

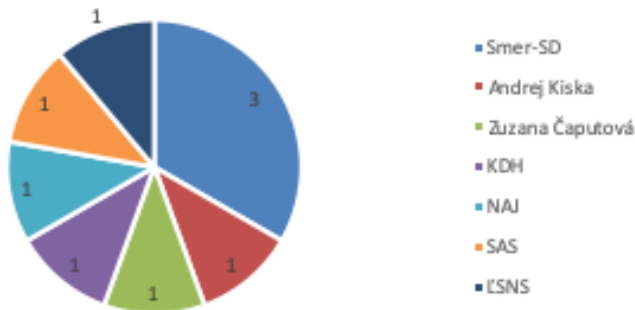


Chart 9: Media mentions of political parties and public figures on the portal Zem a vek

Source: own processing

In terms of media coverage of the politicians, SMER-SD is the dominating party again, but only on a quantitatively small sample. The portal also gives space to a non-parliamentary party NAJ, but in comparison to coalition and opposition (+ the president and the future president), the proportion of posts is lower in the covered period of time. The reason is the critical attitude of the portal against the present governing coalition. In this case, they do not deviate from the characteristics of alternative media; however, it could be interesting to take a look at the printed medium, which has not been examined.

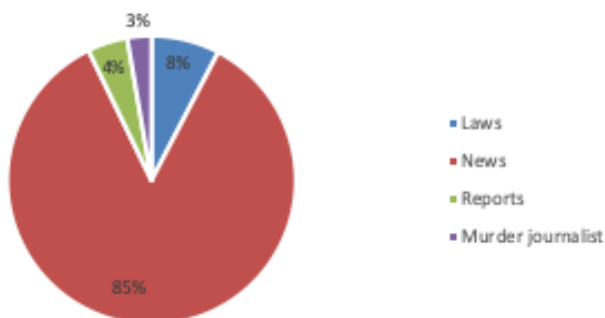


Chart 10: Thematic division of the posts of the internet portal Hlavné správy

Source: own processing

Hlavné správy were the most active from all the analysed subjects. Thematically, they are similar to other portals; however, their activity substantially exceeded that of the other, similarly oriented, analysed media. The reason for this media coverage is the fact that the character of this medium is no longer purely alternative. Its income comes from advertising and from website visits; it publishes news from news portals and also provides its own content. Therefore, it can be classified as being on a borderline of alternative and mainstream media. 85% of news demonstrates this fact, when, despite the high quantity of posts, it reacts to all topics and events of socio-economic life in Slovakia.

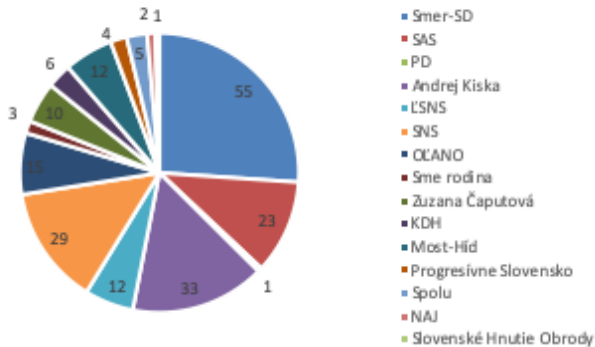


Chart 11: Media mentions of political parties and public figures on the portal Hlavné správy

Source: own processing

Also in this case, the party with the highest media coverage was Smer-SD with 55 mentions. The governing party was followed by Andrej Kiska with 33 mentions and Slovenská národná strana with 29 mentions. However, it could be stated that, generally, opposition and non-parliamentary parties, together with the president, received larger space in the medium than the parties of the governing coalition. Difference in this ratio was, however, not very pronounced, as the governing parties were mentioned 96 times and the other subjects 115 times in the observed period. In this case, relatively new political parties Progresívne Slovensko and Spolu, which are trying to profile themselves before the parliamentary election and make no secret of their cooperation, were also covered. They were mentioned 9 times. The newly elected president together with the current president got 43 mentions.

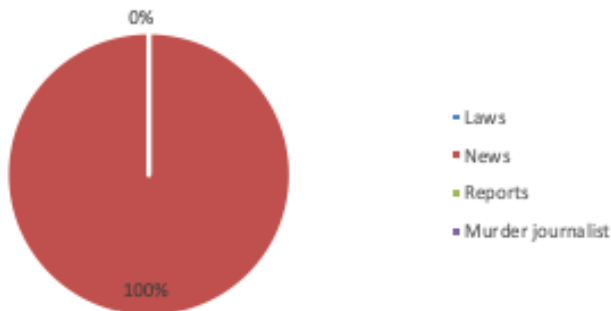


Chart 12: Thematic division of the posts of the internet portal Slobodný vysielateľ

Source: own processing

Slobodný vysielateľ is an extremely specific portal that is primarily aimed at online-radio information transmission. This is also what its media presentation and the selection of web posts is based on. Although its website is relatively well-designed, its content stagnates compared to its radio broadcasting. They publish news only sporadically and refer to the website slobodnyvyber.sk. In the period we had observed, these posts were often critical of the present political orientation of Slovakia and covered international and domestic politics outside our research. As an example, we could mention a critical article by Sichtarova that talks about a totalitarian thinking in the country.



Chart 13: Media mentions of political parties and public figures on the portal Slobodný vysielateľ

Source: own processing

The poor composition of the posts had, logically, manifested itself in the media coverage of politicians. The posts addressed no one in particular except one mention of Zuzana Čaputová. She was referred to in quite a conspirative undertone as a person, who had been provided with an extreme space in media and who is a convenient choice for a young euro-voter in Slovakia. This mention shows the topic-orientation undertone of the portal in question.

Conclusion

Media and online portals currently offer a simple and direct access to information. The article compared the portals of alternative and mainstream format. From the theoretical concepts point of view, we can make the following conclusions: Mainstream media give more space to the governing party SMER-SD and its coalition partners than the media of alternative character. The charts show that the ratio in alternative media is different and more positively inclined towards opposition and non-parliamentary political subjects, who are in our case also linked to public figures of the president and the future president. In terms of quantity, alternative media do not have such a wide content scope. They do not have sufficient funds to provide personnel agenda, thus restricting their productivity in publishing articles, which leads to a significant selection of the chosen information. The portal Hlavné správy can be considered an exception, as it chooses different type of news tendentially, has a different form of funding, and also a greater social impact. The other interesting fact is that despite a contrasting orientation of the portals, the topic of news could be seen in a high percentage. There could be two reasons for this fact. The first might be the period of time covered, when the portals could have focused on current situation in domestic politics in Slovakia, the second a wide variability in the topic of news. However, if we had fragmented this thematic section, a large number of relatively similar results, which would not have reflected the differences between individual portals, would have occurred. Alternative media, however, should not be considered inferior, as they influence and provide information to concrete groups of citizens and the tendency to support them is growing.

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THE TRUTH OF PASSION: ABOUT THE DESTRUCTION OF PUBLIC DISCUSSION BY VIRTUAL SPACE

Martin Kasarda

ABSTRACT:

Virtual space as a free, open playground infantilizes us emotionally and decivilizes us. The deposition of cultural habits, conversational correctness and the need for argumentation in dialogue is lost and is replaced by the affectability of expression and the simplistic abbreviation of aggression. The emptiness of vocabulary, the spreading of absurd lies, unverified information and non-facts in social networks, becomes the source of information in the public media space. The professional and deliberate dissemination of information - prepared in the grey zone of pre-media professionals (from PR agencies through press services and secretariats of political parties or domestic and foreign segments of so far hardly identified, "secret" services and vaguely funded "alternative" media components) - causes the public space destruction, erosion of democracy and its institutions, the rise of extremism, populism, and the victory of marketing over responsibility.

KEY WORDS:

data universe, facts, internet, media manipulation, no-facts

1 The Vision of Open Cyberspace

The passion for the truth - undoubtedly the intellectual fuel of humanity - has been transformed into the truth of passion in recent years. It has been due to the digital space. Actually it is the virtualized space, from which its creators expected free and open access to information¹ that has changed our behaviour. In a way it languishes and decivilizes us. The digital universe changes our mental patterns, it makes us freer, but, unfortunately, not more responsible. Finding information today is extremely fast. We are dwarfs standing on the shoulders of the giants - to paraphrase Sir Isaac Newton, who wrote this bonmot in 1675 in a letter to Robert Hook.² Respectively, Bernard of Chartres who stated it

1 GOLDSMITH, J., WU, T.: *Who Controls the Internet? Illusions of a Borderless World*. Praha : Argo, 2008, p. 25-37.

2 NEWTON, I.: *Letter from Sir Isaac Newton to Robert Hooke*. *Historical Society of Pennsylvania*. [online]. [2019-04-25]. Available at: <<https://discover.hsp.org/Record/dc-9792/Description#tabnav>>.

five centuries ahead, as documented by the medieval English priest and politician Johannes Parvus known as John of Salisbury in 1159 in his *Metalogicon*, entitled *The Metalogicon of John of Salisbury*, which was published by the University of California thanks to Daniel D. McGarry in 1955.³ Perhaps it may have been different, as Umberto Eco writes in his 2001 essay on the *Shoulders of the Giants*, which states that this example can be found in early medieval specimens.⁴ This is also what the digital universe can offer today - within seconds you can get to the information that thirty years ago you had to look for in the libraries, temples, and esoterically inaccessible knowledge. However, Google has opened us to knowledge, so we can find information within seconds of searching. But are they true? So let's go to the subject of truth and passion in a virtual space.

2 Politics as a Fight

If there is something that can trigger passions in social networks, it definitely will provoke passion. We live in a time when our world order is falling apart. We are stepping into a post-democratic world in which the political struggle of several concepts of society has ceased to be at the level of ideological combat, but has become a show. Instead of discussing the ideology of vision and truth, we follow the shouts of politicians on Twitter. The British absurd humour from the BBC series entered Westminster. Passion wins: zenithiness, the desire to build walls, not to lead a dialogue or argue passionately about the truth. And us? We all know our home situation. Political struggle for voters and, naturally, the associated resources from the state treasury, led to the destruction of the debate. The ethos of the leader of the nation-the state, does not exist. The Politics has turned into a marketing-media struggle with the aim of attacking, offending, humiliating, casting in an unpleasant light. Can you remember any politicians that has introduced some meaningful, conceptual, long-term program of state development in recent years? Or education? We see politics as a panoptic of characters who argue. Passionately, with disgust, with enthusiasm we are commenting on it in our social bubbles of the digital universe. We ignore the mistakes of those we support, and we enjoy more the mistakes and fouls of our opponents.

3 MACGARRY, D. D.: *The Metalogicon of John Salisbury: A Twelfth-century Defense of the Verbal and Logical Arts of the Trivium*. Berkeley : University of California Press, 1955, p. 167.

4 ECO, U.: *On the Shoulders of Giants*. Praha : Argo, 2018, p. 18-19.

Politics has become a show of programs in which we, the audience, have forgotten that we do not choose a Miss Universe or a singer, but our representatives in parliament. It is shocking that even political and ideological concepts such as liberalism or conservatism have become vulgarisms, curses. Christian extremists praising Slavic gods are advocating National Socialism, the moral libertarian is advocating for the traditional family, the right and the left in the traditional political sense de facto does not exist. From this point of view, the virtual space resembles a computer game in which groups of determined fighters throw mud of insult on each other. The political debate in the public space of social networks has turned into a slander. The insults and humiliation often go beyond tolerance and significantly affect the public opinion. Today, being a hero and an anti-hero of the anonymous space is fun.

3 Amputation of the Consciousness

What happened that the passion for truth - the passion of searching, discussion, dialogue has turned into the truth of passion? For thousands of years people have been struggling, looking for soul, consciousness, liberated from the body. However, we are not in the class of history of philosophy. The relationship between our self-consciousness and the cyberspace has already been studied by the founder of cyberspace Norbet Wiener.⁵ The Internet and social networks have responded to this question radically. The social networks simply amputated our consciousness, separated it from our body. We entered the digital space consciously, but we have left the body on the computer interface. Our consciousness has dematerialized in the network. And it began to behave differently when in comparison in the body. Each of us lives in a physical space. One of the expression of our conscious being is, of course, communication. However, with the arrival of information technology, there is a visible double track of our body and consciousness. Visionary Marshal McLuhan talked about automutation, that is, the state of cutting the soul from the body. It is a possible construct in which we temporarily leave the body and become part of the media world.⁶

5 See: WIENER, N.: *Cybernetics in Hist the Humanuse of Humanbeing: Cybernetics and Society*. Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 1954.

6 See: McLUHAN, M.: *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. California : Gingko press, 2013.

It is not one version of the cyborg, the body associated with the data and the conscious transference of myself and the data sphere, and it is still the same self, only enriched with exogenous components to adapt to the new environment. Our consciousness, our self, has started to behave differently in the data universe. As if deprived of social conventions, taboo, reflection, critical judgment. Unexpectedly, we became children on a virtual playground. Unexpectedly, we can rummage, express passion or defiant behavior, ridicule everything, and scold everyone. This is not possible in the physical body with real people in real contact. The data sphere does not contain under our name such self that is identical to our real body self. In social networks we are bolder, more courageous, more disputatious and more ridiculous. More emotional, passionate. Here we have an audience that applauds us and “likes” our statements. Have you noticed that in the social networks we do not express consent, but “likability”, emotionality? We don’t agree or disagree with one’s opinion, but we like or dislike one’s observation. It is a shift from rational to emotional, from adult to infantile. Something that we didn’t expect happened in the data sphere. We have become immortal we have become free. We can behave the way we want, because we are free from physical contact or punishment. We can be anonymous, without the mask of a civilized society, without the rules of decency. We can exist virtually without our physical presence. The unity of the body and soul, an indivisible entity, has vanished. It is the being that the physical body in fact marginalizes. Thus the liberated soul unexpectedly celebrates its freedom by searching for the boundaries where it can go. But it does not always go to the heights, not always climbs on the shoulders of giants. Suddenly, in the digital world, we meet with the shouting, loud rattle that is to attract our existence. Not the call for truth, but the power of the passion. The truthful is the one who is the noisiest, who shocks the most. The one who has the most clicks and likes, the one who doesn’t fit the average and goes to the extreme. The digital universe wants to seize our virtual self with passionate noise. And, often, we are subject to it due to its sophisticated strategies.

4 No-facts (No-facts)

We make new facts every day. We often encounter information that is falsified in favor of certain aims, benefits and influence of the public. Often these are not lies or fiction, but otherwise interpreted facts. Certainly, you have also come across information, confirmed by scientific studies, that eggs are healthy and also that eggs are not healthy. It depends on

which expert team examined the effects of eggs and who sponsored the research. Non-facts are information that is considered by part of a society as facts and clearly shows the attributes of the facts. In a certain context, at certain time, in a certain state of knowledge, they are considered to be facts, they behave like facts, and the media space can perceive them as facts. It is really nothing special, each of us “believed” non-facts for some time. Not lies and fiction, but facts that arose from a convincing passionate commitment. The absolute facts are not fun, they do not have an emotional charge. But in the cold digital world, our amputated consciousness wants nourishment of fun, passion, defiance, and so they want to turn facts into something emotional. The reality of the real world in the digital universe is subject to the fascination of passion. Defending incomplete facts, non-facts in this passion can turn into a struggle for life. Let’s see how it works in a social network. I’ll point to two problems where passion for truth has truly turned into the truth of passion. The facts turned out to be non-facts, they gained emotional charge, but their advocates triggered a fuss. This passionate cry through social networks and the digital space affects the real society, significantly.

Anti-vaccination agenda or so-called Parental Alienation Syndrome (PAS) shows how seemingly marginal themes can, through socio-networking bubbles, create life-threatening situations for society as a whole, or devastate interpersonal relationships, supported by passionate social networking discussions. The vaccination is one of the greatest achievements of medicine, it is based on thousands of researches. Vaccination is safe, although isolated cases of undesirable effects may always occur. Despite of this for decades, opponent groups of vaccination have appeared, who do not hesitate to rely on the life stories that primarily involved correlation and not causality – the timing that does not mean causality. While in the days before the Internet, it was only marginal islands for anti-vaccination, the social networks have caused their worldwide rise. As they have caused the rise in popularity of alternative non-medical information and the promotion of non-facts on health. The conspiracy theories are based and grow as a cancer on these non-facts.⁷ The most well-known anti-virus case is the “Wakefield case”, a study by former doctor Andrew Wakefield who claimed that MMR vaccination (measles, mumps, rubella) causes autism.⁸ This study

7 We wrote more about vaccination as part of the authorial team in the monograph: OLEÁR, V. et al.: *Chapters from Vaccinology*. Banská Bystrica : PRO, 2014.

8 See: GOLDCARE, B.: *Bad Science*. London : Fourth Estate, 2008.

was full of non-facts. It was not pure lies, just a deliberately wrong stated resources, which were appropriately confirmed. In a simplified terms – all autists are vaccinated, so vaccination causes autism.

This study has provoked a panic that has brought the anti-virus movement around the world, not forgetting to use the media that is searching for sensations. The same goes in our country. And the result? After years, when Slovakia wrote 0 regarding the measles, today there are hundreds of cases and thousands of unvaccinated children that represent a serious health risk for the whole Europe, where more than 12 thousand people were infected last year.⁹ The biggest problem was and is the spread of non-facts in the internet social bubbles through hate attacks on pharmaceutical companies, doctors, twisting information from leaflets and spreading scary stories about children who have been affected or died by vaccination. Passionate advocacy of delusions supported by dozens of “scientific” references and non-factual claims that mercury is in the vaccines has its activists also on the Slovak internet.¹⁰ They manipulate information on discussion sites from others where they twist true and non-factual information into horrific conspiracies. And the arguments? They do not accept them, but passionately reject with the mantra of the simple spells of “pharmaceutical lobby” and the conspiracy of money against children and parents. Vaccination is the most prominent and relatively well documented medical story, but non-facts, misinformation also appear in the more delicate environment of human relations, especially the relationships of children and parents.

The Slovak judicial practice is also influenced and is trying to be influenced by the idea so-called Paternal Alienation Syndrome, whose author is American psychiatrist Richard A. Gardner.¹¹ The Paternal Alienation Syndrome sounds terrible. Gardner defined a behavioral disorder in children that arises almost exclusively in divorce and in child disputes. According to Gardner, one of the parents manipulates the child to hate the other parent. The child then becomes an active participant and joins the manipulative parent with his own “slander” scenarios.

9 *Immunization Diseases Measles*. [online]. [2019-04-25]. Available at: <<https://www.who.int/immunization/diseases/measles/en/>>.

10 KASARDA, M.: The Media Environment and Anti-vaccination Movement. In *International Journal of Communication and Health*, 2013, No. 2, p. 34-36

11 VILATA, R., NODAL, M. W.: *On the Myth of Parental Alienation Syndrome*. [online]. [2019-04-25] Available at: <<http://www.papelesdelpsicologo.es/English/2843.pdf>>.

The courts, according to this theory and on the basis of this syndrome, are to ensure that both parents have sufficient due diligence, even if the child does not want it. However, an objective examination of Gardner's claims has led institutions such as the American Psychiatrist Association to refuse to include this syndrome among psychiatric diagnoses, to reject this hypothesis as a pseudo theory based on passion, stifle and disrespect for the child's personality and it attempts to promote the interests of one parent over the interests of the child and against the will of the child. Likewise, the European Court of Human Rights has rejected this manipulative hypothesis as biased because it inappropriately requires the court to support one of the parents who feels Rejected. Although it has been repeatedly shown that the "rejected" parent was the perpetrator of the domestic violence that led to the break-up of the family. Although this hypothesis has proven to be unfounded and has been rejected by Slovak institutions,¹² it has become the basis for the emergence of several movements, civil associations and activists. Those pseudo theories created by Gardner, a psychiatrist that did not hesitate to advocate child pedophilia, are pushed and promoted through social forums or on sites of activist groups. The movements for both of these pseudo-scientific theories, whether anti-vaccination or the idea of Paternal Alienation Syndrome, do not accept the arguments of the other party, they are simply right. They rely on social bubbles in the digital universe of like-minded fans. They are repeatedly and passionately attacking in an attempt to defend their claims not allowing the lapse on their side, just the lapse of majority.

Conclusion

The Evil is not a meteorite that would fall into a good society. Evil is a mildew that invades the entire society for a long time. When it appears somewhere and we see it, or remove it, it does not mean that the evil mildew has not caught itself somewhere else. For example, in the digital universe. Passion for truth, so enlightened, replaces by the truth of passion. This is due to the body's amputation and the passage of our self into the data sphere. Unexpectedly, the truth does not matter to us, what matters is the defense of our opinions and our strange honor of our virtual debtor. Maintaining a conversational and accessible tone

12 *Ministry of Justice, Slovak Republic*. [online]. [2019-04-25]. Available at: <<https://www.justice.gov.sk/Stranky/aktualitadetail.aspx?announcementID=2093>>.

of factual discussion on the Internet is virtually impossible, because of the “colloquial” language on social networks is sensational, afflicted by deliberate wit, black humor, eye-catching and vulgarity. The loss of the body is actually a dehumanizing act. Our soulfulness, detached from the limitations of real physical existence, deprives us of physical boundaries. Physicality is limited, but we do not have boundaries in the data sphere. Maybe it’s a Quixotic struggle with the windmills of incorruptible human stupidity. The problem is that windmills on social networks are rotating at the speed of fans cooling data disks of virtual networks.

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THE SPECIFICITY OF THE INTERACTION BETWEEN PEOPLE AND INTERNET SPACE IN THE VISEGRAD COUNTRIES (FOR EXAMPLE, THE USAGE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS AND THEIR APPLICATIONS MESSENGERS IN UKRAINE AND POLAND)

Andrii Kutsyk

ABSTRACT:

The article examines the impact of social networks and their messengers' applications on political, educational, and routine life in Ukraine and Poland. The statistics of the number of users of social networks and messengers in Ukraine and in Poland are shown and analyzed. Also, the article shows social networks that are getting new users, and other ones that are losing. It is shown how social networks, as instagram and youtube have become a tool for the financial independence of the younger generation. The political aspect of the network is highlighted, namely, how politicians use social networks for their own purposes. It was also noted how the facebook social network was used to organize people during the «Revolution of Dignity» in Ukraine and in the further development of civil society. The role of facebook and instagram in the presidential election campaigns of 2019 in Ukraine has also been demonstrated.

KEY WORDS:

elections of the president of Ukraine, political and civil life, Revolution of Dignity, social networks

Introduction

Today, the Internet space is an indispensable factor for the development of any society, and social networks are an integral part of it. With their help you can embody business interests, carry out financial activity, use networks for domestic, social, educational and political purposes. The relevance of the study is based on the integration processes in Ukraine, namely its rapid movement into the cultural and economic space of the European Union. And Poland, as a neighboring country of Ukraine, has numerous sections in the historical and cultural background and accepts a large number of people for study and work, together with Ukraine acts as a object for research. Currently, the Internet user in Poland and Ukraine uses the network for education (social networks act as the official media between the teacher and the student), in everyday life (used on a communicative level for contact with a family, friends living abroad or at

a distance) and in politics (used during the preparation for the election, the voter's involvement is mainly due to political advertising in social media). Also, through social networks, intercultural communication takes place and the barrier of cultures is practically disappearing. The world is globalized, and the foundation of this globalization is the Internet space and social networks. In the scope of this article I will try to analyze the Ukrainian and Polish users of social media and their messengers using statistical data, scientific papers, related issues and their own observations. So, according to a study by We Are Social and Hootsuite,¹ which aimed to show the total number of Internet users in the world, about 40 million Internet users live in Ukraine, 17 million of which are social network users.



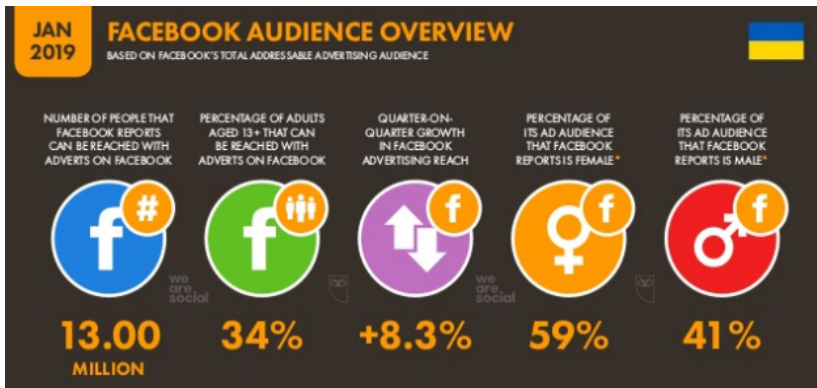
Picture 1: Statistics of the Ukrainian Internet user for 2018

Source: *Statistical Portal*. [online]. [2019-04-21]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/blog/2019/04/the-state-of-digital-in-april-2019-all-the-numbers-you-need-to-know>>.

After analyzing this statistics you can immediately note the high percentage of users of social networks, and mobile messenger applications as well. This suggests that social media provides a platform for various activities and the ability to escape from the closed world of reality to the open virtual, which is now enjoyed by the youth of the two above mentioned countries. In support of my words, one may draw

1 KEMP, S.: *The State of Digital in April 2019: All the Numbers You Need to Know*. [online]. [2019-04-25]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/blog/2019/04/the-state-of-digital-in-april-2019-all-the-numbers-you-need-to-know>>.

the opinion of Jaron Lanier, an American scientist who introduced the concept of virtual reality into the scientific circle; he believes that «Young people report all the details of their lives on networks like Twitter not in order to show off, but to get away from the closed door of the bedroom, the empty room, the screaming vacuum of the isolated mind».² These two features of the social network help it to receive more and more new users with each passing year. When analyzing a Ukrainian user, it should be noted that the most popular social network is the Facebook, which, according to these statistics, compared with 2017 rose in the number of users by 71 %.



Picture 2: Statistics of the Ukrainian facebook user in 2018

Source: *Statistical Portal*. [online]. [2019-04-21]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/blog/2019/04/the-state-of-digital-in-april-2019-all-the-numbers-you-need-to-know>>.

It should also be emphasized that in the list of social networks of Ukraine there is no Russian network Vkontakte, which was blocked in accordance with the decision of the Council of National Security and Defense of Ukraine dated April 28, 2017.³ This blockage is carried out within the framework of Ukraine’s sanctions against Russia, imposed for the annexation of the Crimea and aggression in the Donbass and aimed at ensuring the security of Ukraine. Since then, users of the

2 LANIER, J.: *You Are Not a Gadget: A Manifesto*. New York : Alfred A. Knopf, 2010, p. 43-44.

3 *Decision of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine*. [online]. [2019-04-28]. Available at: <https://www.president.gov.ua/storage/j-files-storage/00/40/30/6f76b8df9d0716da74bb4ae6a900d483_1494864914.pdf>.

Ukrainian segment Vkontakte gradually began to switch to the network of facebook. Facebook as a social network has received its user, and the user in turn has received a certain platform, where he can take all the information himself, and also share his own. The negative thing is that the thought of a minority or news that has thousands of comments and repositions is perceived as the truth that others have to hear. The danger here is also the comments made by the published article or news, which may appear not as a separate comment of the individual, but as public opinion. In support of my theses, it is worth mentioning words Eun-Ju Lee, a professor in the department of communication at Seoul National University, which is for internet publication The New York Times said so, «Comments can shape individual readers' opinions, of course, but more interestingly, they can also shape how a reader interprets public opinion more broadly. The extreme beliefs of a few can be interpreted as a reflection of the beliefs of the general public – distorting perceptions of reality».⁴

Having highlighted and analyzed the statistics of the Ukrainian segment of the social network, it is also worthwhile to inquire about what the Ukrainian user is interested in, what he/she is following, and also what is most discussed and commented. Thus, according to the research of the analytical platform VoxUkraine and the scientist of the Kyiv School of Economics Yevgeniya Kuznetsova, which was aimed at obtaining statistics on the most popular pages in the section «Society» (the section includes pages on the following topics: politics, government organizations, media, corporations, NGOs and professional associations), Ukrainians are most interested in entertainments. Also, among the top 20, there are relatively many media pages and even one FB page policy. In Ukraine among the top ten top pages - six belong to political figures). Together, these pages received more than 60% of the total number of top 20 lits.⁵ This may indicate a very strong politicization of society on the one hand, and on the other hand, citizens are trying to track and monitor political figures,

4 LEE, E. J.: *Despite Flaws, Comments Are Good for Public Discourse*. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <<https://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2016/04/18/have-comment-sections-on-news-media-websites-failed/despite-flaws-comments-are-good-for-public-discourse>>.

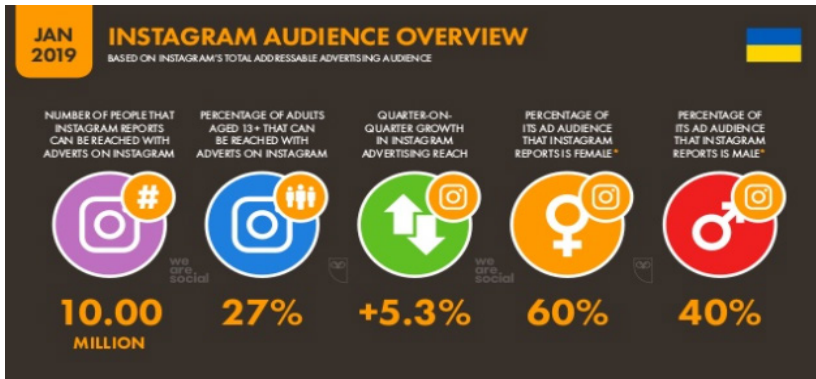
5 *Eugenia Kuznetsova Facebook and the Media: How Do Ukrainian Media Use Social Network Number 1, and How Facebook Changes Media?* [online]. [2019-01-18]. Available at: <<https://voxukraine.org/en/facebook-ta-zmi-yak-ukrayinski-media-vikoristovuyut-sotsmerezhu-1-a-yak-facebook-zminyuye-zmi/>>.

and if necessary, to highlight the social activities of the illegal activities of one or another policy. Also, a researcher Yevgeniya Kuznetsova, explains that personal pages of politicians are more popular in the Ukrainian facebook than the pages of political parties. Almost all political forces, except for «Self-help», the number of hits on the leader page far exceeds the number of likes actually political forces. From foreign organizations to the top Ukrainian interest only NATO has made it.⁶

These studies also indicate a certain interest of people in specific personalities, and hopes for personal communication with a political leader through the profile of the social network. After all, the usual office communication goes back to the past. Social networks provide an opportunity for a new kind of communication – virtual, which in this case becomes an empirical reality that shows people the importance of their person in shaping the political system, the financial sector and, in general, involves a person in the formation of a civil society. Describing the largest social network in Ukraine – facebook, the task is to highlight the main features and give a description to other popular social networks in Ukraine – Instagram and video hosting YouTube. It should be noted at the outset that the instagam and YouTube perform somewhat different functions. If facebook is focused on receiving and distributing information, then the instagram focuses on high-quality and fast photo and video products. Also, many people started using instagram to meet their business interests and financial activity using themselves and their personal blog as an object for advertising with tips on how to travel better, how to make high-quality make-up or how to make high-quality photography. Having a large number of subscribers, the user receives a large number of offers for the advertisement of certain products, and for this he receives cash dividends. Today, such activities are becoming very popular among young people. If we talk about the number of users of instagram, then we will give statistics for a better understanding of the Ukrainian segment of this network. So, according to We Are Social,⁷ we can see the following data:

6 Eugenia Kuznetsova *Facebook and the Media: How Do Ukrainian Media Use Social Network Number 1, and How Facebook Changes Media?* [online]. [2019-01-18]. Available at: <<https://voxukraine.org/en/facebook-ta-zmiyak-ukrayinski-media-vikoristovuyut-sotsmerezhu-1-a-yak-facebook-zminyuye-zmi/>>.

7 KEMP, S.: *The State of Digital in April 2019: All the Numbers You Need to Know*. [online]. [2019-04-25]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/blog/2019/04/the-state-of-digital-in-april-2019-all-the-numbers-you-need-to-know>>.



Picture 3: Statistics of Ukrainian user instagra for 2018

Source: *Statistical Portal*. [online]. [2019-04-21]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/blog/2019/04/the-state-of-digital-in-april-2019-all-the-numbers-you-need-to-know>>.

From these statistics it follows that the social network of instagram has almost half of its users than facebook, but on the other hand it is a network that is focused mainly on young people and is not as widely functional as facebook. If the social network of instagram is based on the production of photo content, then it's like it, but already with the video content is the YouTube platform – which launched a video blogging system. For now, this video hosting has become a real and highly paid place of work for people, you can even call it a phenomenon of the 21st century because if you do not like office work and want to set up your own work schedule, which allows you to determine when to relax, and when to work, than the platform YouTube offers these opportunities. Here, we can observe how people leave their usual places of work (as an example of an office) to do creative work, creatively improve themselves and simultaneously help them to feel financially secure. So, anyone, regardless of gender, age, or nationality, can create their own YouTube channel, and there's a video blog for any subject, receiving an advertising fee. Ways of receiving the cost of advertising on the YouTube platform is described in detail by the blogger of the Studway site in Ukraine Anna Mikhailovskaya, in her article «How to Make Money on YouTube». The author writes: «video blogger gets money from advertising, if the viewer sees the commercial for more than 30 seconds or clicking on the banner. Also, the blogger adds that some authors use a different method, first «collect» enough folks, and then «inadvertently» mention the names of promotional products during the video, after which they receive money

directly from the advertiser».⁸ This video hosting has become so popular that many journalists who worked on different channels and censored their products have now got an uncensored platform and the ability to make a quality product, in some cases for higher fees (which comes mainly from advertising). Today, too, it can be argued that television goes online, and it can be predicted that approximately 10 years ago, the Internet and YouTube completely absorb television.

Particular attention should be paid on the topic of the social network in Ukrainian politics, because through social networking accounts, election campaigns are taking place, revolutions began and information that changed the country's geopolitical vector was heard. In the period of election campaigns, facebook and instagram have become the same indispensable factor in the PR and publicity of candidates, as previously familiar clips on television, radio, newspapers. It should also be noted that for the first time we could see the role of social networks in the political and public life of the society during the Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine in 2013. The events of that revolution have clearly shown how one publication in the social network can unite millions of people in the struggle for the idea. People's Deputy of Ukraine Mustafa Nayyem on November 21, 2013 published a post on his facebook and twitter: «We meet at 22:30 under the monument of Independence. Wear warm clothes, take umbrellas, tea, coffee, and friends. The repost is highly welcomed!».⁹ From the aforementioned post, the revolution that began in the course of several months in the eyes of millions of Internet users, showed the impact of social media on society, and vice versa, because then every person became the creator of the product-content for the media mentioned. Also, these events have shown the importance of social networks as a tool for rallying, and sometimes and even the formation of civil society. Analyzing the above-mentioned things, one can speak about the positive influence of social networks on political and civil processes both in Ukraine and abroad. But the opposite side of this process is propaganda, which is presented from public pages of politicians on the network, as well as the use of social networks by special services of one country as an information warfare with another state (on the example of the Russian social network Vkontakte).

8 MIKHAILOVSKA, A.: *How to Earn on YouTube*. [online]. [2019-04-21]. Available at: <<https://studway.com.ua/zaroblyati-na-youtube/>>.

9 *Mustafa Nayyem*. [online]. [2019-04-21]. Available at: <<https://twitter.com/mefimus/status/403599728904241153>>.

In support of my words, the thesis of the American media researcher Niall Ferguson in his work «Squares and towers. Social connections from Freemasons to facebook» he says that social networks should have become a platform for free expression of opinion, but became a powerful mechanism in political games. Also, the scientist states: «We were naive and believed that the Internet world would be wonderful, that all there will be connected and equal. I believed Zuckerberg also insisted on this. However, it turned out that the tools that social networks have, can be used for completely different purposes, for example, to intervene in the Brexit referendum or American elections. This should not happen».¹⁰ If we return from the events of 2013 to the present, during the election campaign of the President of Ukraine in 2019, then we can observe a completely different aspect of using social media in order to achieve political goals. At this time, society was already fully dictating, and most of the candidates for the Ukrainian President actively covered their activities in social networks, and one of the candidates, Volodymyr Zelensky, conducts his election campaign exclusively exploiting networks. Creating page profiles on YouTube, Instagram and Facebook, the main task of this full featured targeting is to try to get the support of the youngest voters. According to the Ukrainian edition of the Ukrainian Pravda, Volodymyr Zelensky's team wants to go further in the chosen direction of dictating the society and will implement the program «Country in the Smartphone», namely digitizing ID-cards, medicine, tax and business, thus refuting the bureaucratic system that is rooted in Ukrainian society.¹¹ Analyzing the phenomenon described above, it should be emphasized that the example of the Ukrainian segment of the social network can be seen as social media becoming an integral aspect of everybody's life and society as a whole, influencing the definition of the geopolitical course of the country.

After describing and analyzing the Ukrainian user of the Internet space and social network, we will try to analyze in the same way how to characterize and identify the excellent and similar aspects of the Polish social media segment and its user. Thus, in comparison with the Ukrainian Internet user, in Poland according to the statistics of the organization

10 PATRIKIEVA, N.: *Neil Ferguson on Why the World Will Save Network of Like-minded People*. [online]. [2019-04-21]. Available at: <<https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/29315428.html>>.

11 *Ukrainian Pravda. Zelensky's Team. Who Are These People*. [online]. [2019-04-19]. Available at: <<https://www.pravda.com.ua/articles/2019/04/19/7212658/>>.

«We are social» there are 30 million total Internet users, and 18 million – social network.¹² The fact that there are considerably more Internet users and consumers of social networks in Poland is the evidence of this statistics , this is with a larger total population of Ukraine. Similar to Ukraine, a high percentage of social network users in Poland shows that society is in great demand precisely in the functions offered by the social network, in the constant rapid communication, the search for new acquaintances, the possibility of obtaining information from various sources through hyperlinks, the placement of their information (blog, article, note on your personal page). All these social media functions are very necessary for persons of both Ukrainian and Polish society, and when analyzing this component of the Internet there are practically no differences. For a better understanding of the statistics above, we also give the graphic statistics.

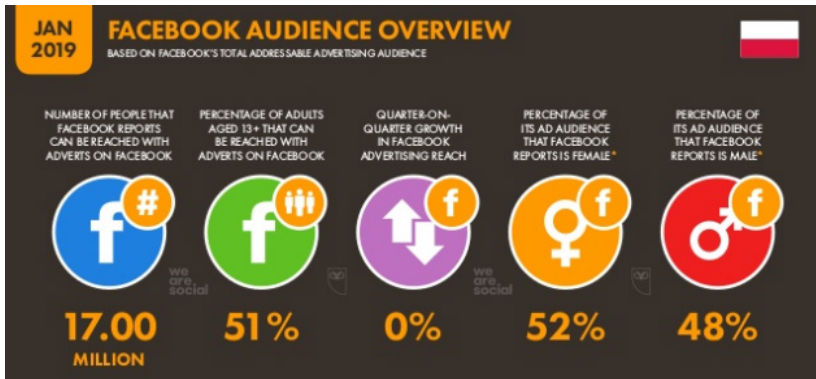


Picture 4: Statistics of the Polish Internet user in 2018

Source: *Statistical Portal*. [online]. [2019-04-21]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/blog/2019/04/the-state-of-digital-in-april-2019-all-the-numbers-you-need-to-know>>.

In Poland as in Ukraine, the social network of facebook, which has 17 million users, remains the most popular social network. For a better visual perception of the Polish user of facebook, we give graphic statistics of the study and try to characterize it.

12 KEMP, S.: *The State of Digital in April 2019: All the Numbers You Need to Know*. [online]. [2019-04-25]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/blog/2019/04/the-state-of-digital-in-april-2019-all-the-numbers-you-need-to-know>>.



Picture 5: Statistics of the Polish facebook user in 2018

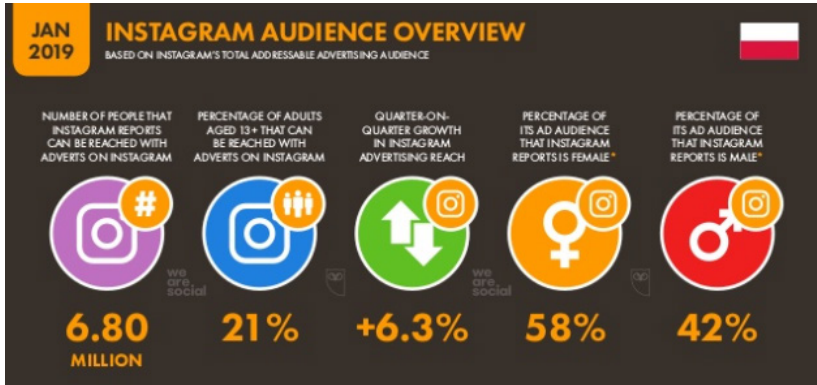
Source: *Statistical Portal*. [online]. [2019-04-21]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/blog/2019/04/the-state-of-digital-in-april-2019-all-the-numbers-you-need-to-know>>.

So, analyzing these statistics, it should be noted that compared to 2017, the number of users increased by 13%, the most interesting of which is that most use Facebook via mobile applications, as well as the Polish facebook user is mostly young people aged 25-34 and 18-24. For a better understanding of the usage of facebook among Polish people, let's take a look at the research of the company VoxUkraine,¹³ which tried to portray the Polish consumer of the social network. The statistics of the most popular pages in the section «Society» shows that in Poland in the first ten pages on social issues – two accounts of politicians. Poles also are interested in business pages the most, followed by entertainment pages.¹⁴ By pointing the statistics of the Polish facebook and analyzing its user, in order to cover the full picture of the portrait of the consumer of the social network, it is also necessary to provide statistical data and analyze the other big and popular social network in Poland – instagram. As in the previous characteristics, we will be using the statistics of the company «We are social».¹⁵ Give statistics and try to characterize it.

13 *Eugenia Kuznetsova Facebook and the Media: How Do Ukrainian Media Use Social Network Number 1, and How Facebook Changes Media?* [online]. [2019-01-18]. Available at: <<https://voxukraine.org/en/facebook-ta-zmi-yak-ukrayinski-media-vikoristovuyut-sotsmerezhu-1-a-yak-facebook-zminyuye-zmi/>>.

14 *Ibidem*.

15 KEMP, S.: *The State of Digital in April 2019: All the Numbers You Need to Know*. [online]. [2019-04-25]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/blog/2019/04/the-state-of-digital-in-april-2019-all-the-numbers-you-need-to-know>>.



Picture 6: Statistics of the polish user instagers for 2018
















Source: *Statistical Portal*. [online]. [2019-04-21]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/blog/2019/04/the-state-of-digital-in-april-2019-all-the-numbers-you-need-to-know>>.

Thus, according to these data, the Polish segment of the Instagram has about 7 million users, a percentage significantly less than the facebook, almost 10 million, but it is necessary to remember, as in the case of a Ukrainian consumer of this segment, a Polish user of instagram is mostly young people who oriented to fast content of sharing, that is, to quickly make a photo, process and upload in a the instagram profile. It all happens automatically and the person no longer feels when she is online. Also, the boundary between work, study and rest is blurred, because when someone can create his/her own blogging profile, they can start earning money from it. To support the above mentioned, i will share the thought of the Polish-English researcher of globalization processes, Sigmund Baumann, who in the context of this problem says that the new digital reality completely destroyed the division between private and public time, work and leisure. He notes: «The time was previously divided into private and public, on working hours and rest periods. Now the division between leisure and work, between public and private, collapses».¹⁶ Describing the Polish user of social media, one should emphasize the fact that in Polish society there is no such strong politicization of the Internet space as in the Ukrainian case, there is no such dedication of this process as we can observe it in Ukrainian realities. Although it is worth

16 *Kristina Noga We Are Moving Into an Era at The Exact Time*. [online]. [2018-09-10]. Available at: <https://zaxid.net/mi_ruhayemosya_v_eru_tochkovogo_chasu_bauman_n1293124>.

noting that personal pages in Facebook are popular in Poland, they serve as official sources of communication with citizens and voters, while also analyzing pages of Polish politicians, one can find out who is popular, whom voters support, and who is an outsider. Below is a table to confirm the above information.

Facebook Trends Polska Styczeń 2018

Profile	Fani		Przyrost
1 Janusz Korwin-Mikke	773 548		-0.4%
2 Andrzej Duda	651 705		-0.1%
3 Zbigniew Stonoga	649 805		-0.5%
4 Robert Biedroń	433 622		2%
5 Paweł Kukiz	420 618		0.1%
6 Ryszard Petru	236 999		-1%
7 Przemysław Wipler	204 677		-0.5%
8 Marian Kowalski	198 799		-1%
9 Bronisław Komorowski	198 607		0%
10 Beata Szydło	187 440		0.3%
11 Adam Andruszkiewicz	167 954		7%
12 Lech Wałęsa	155 309		1%
13 Patryk Jaki	148 840		6%
14 Stanisław Tyszka -...	143 651		-0.3%
15 Marek Jakubiak	132 808		0.1%

Picture 7: An Analysis of Facebook Politicians' Favorites for January 2018

Source: *Articles from Wirtualnemedi.pl*. [online]. [2019-03-03]. Available at: <<https://www.wirtualnemedi.pl/artykul/sotrender-politycy-na-facebooku-styczen-2018-ranking-top-20>>.

On this table, we created the site Wirtualnemedi.pl for the article Politycy na Facebook: Korwin-Mikke, with the largest number of fans, Members of the Najbardziej angażuje (TOP20), we can see the popularity of the policy, the number of people who follow him.

Conclusions

For better understanding and perception of the above information, in the conclusions we give a comparative table of the Polish and Ukrainian users, as well as summarize the analysis of his portrait.

Table 1: Internet user statistics in Poland and in Ukraine

	Number of population	Number of Internet users	The number of Facebook users	Number of users Instagram
Poland	38.07 mln	30.07 mln	17.00 mln	6.80 mln
Ukraine	43.90 mln	40.91 mln	13.00 mln	10.00 mln

Source: own processing

Therefore, based on the above data, it can be noted that the total number of Internet users in Ukraine is higher than in Poland, but in Poland there is a greater number of users of Facebook social network, which is simultaneously the most popular in Poland and Ukraine. It can also be concluded that the social networks that emerged as the basis of freedom of communication, the speed of the transmission of information, today became an instrument for conducting commercial activities, and also became a powerful engine in the political and civil society. Making a conclusion on the two largest social networks - facebook and Instagram, it should be noted that, as in Ukraine as well as in Poland, facebook has more consumers, but on the other hand Instagram are mainly proliferated among youth, and the application is almost not used by people at 50+. However, facebook includes the audience of both – young and old generation. It is also worthwhile to mention that the facebook user is focused on the ability to get information, analyze it and comment rather than focused on the contents of photos or videos. In case of Instagram user in both countries – Poland and Ukraine, is focused on the rapidly receiving of photo and video content, on advertising itself, and receiving cash dividends from their instagram accounts. In regards to the attention to political influence and social media, we can conclude that it is much more deeper in the Ukrainian Internet space, because a revolution took place through the prism of social media, the geopolitical vector of the country changed, and the political aspect is deeply intertwined in election campaigns. For example, the election campaign of the President of Ukraine in 2019 was completely infused with the dictating of society, in fact the main election slogans, official information from the candidates, all this could be heard on the pages of facebook and

instagram. With regard to the Polish component of political advertising in social media, it is more pragmatic, which is based on the creation of profile pages in the facebook, where everyone can enjoy his policy, ask questions or express some kind of dissatisfaction. In Polish society, there is no such politicization and recklessness that we can observe in Ukraine reality.

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CREATING A NEW CINEMA REALITY: “BAD MOVIE REVIEW” GENRE

Arina Medvedeva

ABSTRACT:

This article, supported by the grant of the RSF 18-18-00007, describes the method of visualization of the critical function used by the blogger Evgeny Bazhenov, the author of the Bad Comedian YouTube channel. The article is devoted to the analysis of videos in the genre of “bad movie review” on the Russian YouTube channel “Bad Comedian”. This channel was chosen due to its influence on the society: because of the devastating reviews from Bad Comedian, checks were made on the expediency of using budget funds to create domestic films. With the help of media esthetic analysis, the main artistic techniques were revealed that allow the blogger to create a new reality instead of the existing one in the framework of the analyzed film. This is reflected in the copying of cinematographic techniques used in the film itself, or the appearance of a blogger in the plot. We believe that the use of such techniques are fundamentally parodic and contribute to blurring the line between criticism and the object of analysis. An important fact is the fact that an increasing part of the audience creates impressions of the film with the help of a review, rather than watching the movie itself. Thus, the criticism does not complement the impressions of the film, but completely levels its main idea, offering instead a new one – with parody and absurd.

KEY WORDS:

media esthetics, video blogging, visualization, YouTube

1 Introduction

YouTube as a communication field based on social and network interaction of users, creates the conditions for the flourishing of hybrid forms of communication, where pragmatics are constantly changing their focus. For YouTube content, an important component remains precisely an entertainment trend with the aim of attracting a mass audience. Film critic, on the one hand, has been developed in the format of video essay, or reasoning on the material of mass films (and sometimes vice versa, elite). On the other hand, we are dealing with the phenomenon of journalism genre transformation, when a separate self-sufficient genre of “bad movie review” grows on the basis of a film review. We can observe such transformations on the Russian YouTube-channel Bad Comedian. We believe that the actual review ceases to perform the functions of review and criticism as such. So the original formula of

commentary to the already given reality of the art-object turns into a parody genre. Following the thought of Keti Chukhrov, who interprets the work of Clement Greenberg, writes that for the emergence of new methods in art and culture, a radical decrease in the value of something is necessary, but also the preservation of this aesthetics,¹ we can say that in the case of YouTube culture the importance of genre traits in general is being reduced with the aim of reconstructing them, creating a new genre on their basis, which is essentially a parody, a remake of the formerly sustainable genre.

A pioneer on YouTube in genre «bad movie review» is blogger Doug Walker, who, together with his brother, launched the project Nostalgia Critic, where old and poorly made films became the subject of review. Within the framework of this project, the basic techniques were also born, which were subsequently used not only in the film review, but also in any version of the review. Such can be considered the use of segments from other films (in the future becoming independent memes), expressive speech and cultural references, mainly manifested in the format of sketches within the review. In Russia, the “bad movie review” genre was largely based on the Nostalgia Critic format, but it has undergone significant changes. The main change is connected with the analysis of not only the film, but also the modern realities of the country. The analysis of the film becomes a reason for criticism of modern laws, changes in social life. At the moment, the most popular blogger working in this genre is Evgeny Bazhenov, author of the Bad Comedian channel. He was involved in a number of cases where his videos as a result not only formed a certain opinion from a regular audience, but also directly influenced the creators and sponsors of films that became the subject of his criticism.

2 Media Esthetics as a Condition for the Transformation of a Journalistic Genre

As we have said, in the case of the Bad Comedian channel, we can observe the transition of a review to the category of an independent genre, where film reality becomes the object of parody. In this connection, we observe an interesting phenomenon, when watching the film to watch the review on it becomes unimportant. The viewer does not need to watch

1 CHUHROV, K.: *Estetiki nikogda ne bylo, ili Adorno vs. Krauss*. [online]. [2019-04-29]. Available at: <<http://moscowartmagazine.com/issue/19/article/270>>.

a movie that the blogger will review. So the task of the video blogger is to save the viewer from the director's vision of the film and criticize him. The only danger is that instead of taking the director's vision, the viewer fully adopts the opinion of the blogger and transmits it to the film. Due to a number of comments under each Bad Comedian review in the spirit of "I didn't watch the movie, but I liked the review very much", we can assume that such prevalence of the blogger's opinion over any alternative one is still present. There are a number of precedent cases when the criticism of a film for the viewer becomes more convincing than the alternative opinion formed during the course of watching a film. This example can be the situation with the movie "Moving up". After the release of the review, the fans brought down the rating of the movie on Kino Poisk (Russian platform for movie rating). We can say that the negative reaction to the film is associated exclusively with the negative review of the film. There is no comparison between the opinion of the blogger and viewer's own impression of the film. Therefore, the original function of the commentary is transformed into the prevalence of the blogger's opinion over the opinion of the recipient and, by the way, over the director's vision itself. Under such conditions, the question naturally arises: how did the commentary genre transform into the genre of a full-fledged self-contained statement?

We believe that such a transformation is associated with the aesthetics of immersiveness. We are used to the fact that in the media this means 360 degree shooting, virtual reality glasses and so on. However, the aesthetics of immersiveness may involve the use of hybrid forms, especially on YouTube. Johnston noted that [many] YouTube stars use direct interaction methods, so, although it seems like a blogger sounds and looks like a viewer, the values of video production influence the perception of a YouTube star by the viewer as a significant person, that is the blogger transcends celebrity status, transforming into a person that the audience fully trusts.² In addition, Berryman and Kavka formulated the importance of getting close access to the life of the YouTube user and a huge impact on it.³ This is largely due to the stereotype that bloggers work for ideas, not earning money. YouTube became the object of a study

2 JOHNSTON, J.: Subscribing to Sex Edutainment: Sex Education, Online Video, and the YouTube Star. In *Television and New Media*, 2017, No. 18, p. 85.

3 BERRYMAN, R., KAVKA, M.: "I Guess a Lot of People See Me as a Big Sister or a Friend": The Role of Intimacy in the Celebrification of Beauty Vloggers. In *Journal of Gender Studies*, 2017, Vol. 3, No. 26, p. 307-320.

by L. Hollebek, who considered two strategies for user interaction with medical content: based on clicks (participation) or simple viewing and reading (consumption).⁴ Video hosting initially provided an opportunity for self-expression of any kind, however, with the influx of audience, the requirements for content provided on the channel also increased. The resource has long gone beyond entertaining, more and more educational channels appear, a lot of analysts of various directions (cinema, books, philosophy, etc.). An important point is the fact that the bloggers themselves have to take into account the interests of the mass audience, since this directly affects the number of subscribers on the channel. Thus, even if a blogger sets himself an educational task, he is in one way or another inclined to include in his videos an entertainment component that will attract new viewers. YouTube is a form of media (so-called user-generated media, where content is generated by regular users, not by professionals). When we talk about aesthetics, we are more accustomed to thinking about objects of art: painting, cinema, literature. However, in the past century with a sharp jump in the development of media, there was a need for a closer look and other forms of expression of aesthetic impact. It is important to understand that now many media have become a means of not only communication, but also aesthetic communication. The media has its own aesthetic style and its own aesthetic strategy. Media convey not only information, but also experience, emotion, idea.

The concept of aesthetics undergoes changes associated with the emergence of the media, the Internet, etc. J. Dewey's classic work "Art as an Experience"⁵ examines the aesthetics of pragmatism, arguing that art and life (in a broader sense – the experience of mankind) are inextricably linked to each other and do not constitute opposition. J. Dewey believed that any sphere of production under appropriate conditions generates artifacts, turning into the field of art (the boundary between production and art, outlined by V. Benjamin,⁶ is erased). In this logic, we can consider YouTube as a production sphere whose task is to generate aesthetic objects. In order to increase the impact and guarantee that the thesis gets into the consciousness of the audience, the blogger uses different ways

4 HOLLEBEEK, L.: Exploring Customer Brand Engagement: Definition and Themes. In *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 2011, Vol. 7, No. 19, p. 555-573.

5 For more information, see: DEWEY, J.: *Art as Experience. The Later Works of John Dewey, 1925 – 1953*. Illinois : Southern Illinois University Press, 1987.

6 See: BENJAMIN, W.: *Proizvedenie iskusstva v epohu ego tehnikeskoy vosproizvodimosti*. Moscow : Medium, 1996.

of presenting the same information. Serious statements with rigorous arguments, analogies from culture in the form of memes or sketches, and frankly comic playing around of plot situations from the film can be used as arguments in order to bring any film-making mistake to the absurd level in order to level its possible significance for the viewer. That is, if we understand aesthetics as a form, a package for a concept, a sense, then in the case of Bad Comedian, aesthetics packs meanings, but the sublime aesthetic understanding of beauty is reduced to absurd, parody and satirical aesthetics, the essence of which is not to hide meanings (forcing recipient to search for truth), but in order to use the greatest number of ways so that the blogger's thesis becomes obvious to the recipient, so that he can understand and accept it exactly.

In the context of multimodality, Bad Comedian's reviews appear as complex text, in which different moduses complement each other to enhance perception. In recent years, interest in multimodal theory⁷ has greatly increased. The theory of multimodality allows you to look at various semiotic resources, such as language, images and music, in their combinations and interactions. The term "modus" is defined as "socially shaped and culturally given semiotic recourse for making image"⁸. Examples of multimodal text types are combinations of images, graphics and text (for example, in newspapers, brochures or on web sites), combinations of speech, gestures and combinations of moving images, speech and background sound in video and movie. We can say that it was the multimodality that became the determining factor in the transformation of the genre. We can say so in connection with the addition of visual modus, first of all. It's one thing to describe, another thing is to visually show, visualize a new cinema reality. As soon as the review has its own aesthetics, it ceases to be just a comment, and claims self-sufficiency.

7 Compare to: KRESS, G., VAN LEEUWEN, T.: *Reading Images: Grammar of Visual Design*. 2nd Edition. London : Routledge, 2006; O'HALLORAN, K. L.: *Multimodal Analysis and Digital Technology*. In BALDRY, A., MONTAGNA, E. (eds.): *Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Multimodality: Theory and Practice*. Campobasso : Palladino, 2010, p. 10-21; BATEMAN, J. A.: *Multimodality and Genre: A Foundation for the Systematic Analysis of Multimodal Documents*. New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

8 KRESS, G.: *Multimodality. A Social Semiotic Approach to Contemporary Communication*. London : Routledge, 2010, p. 60.

3 Media Esthetic Tools of the Blogger

If we follow the logic of immersiveness, then the important issue for us is the method of including and immersing the recipient into the reality constructed by the blogger. We believe that the main way of immersion is the media aesthetic tools of the review. To create a visual modus, designed to create a new reality, the blogger uses the following techniques: sketches, parody of cinematographic techniques, the introduction of the figure of the critic into film reality. They contribute to the formation of new cinema reality. Sketches most clearly represent the author's position, being a product of the blogger's own creativity. Basically, using of sketches is connected with the direct ridicule of any elements of the plot, the logic of the film itself or the personalities behind the creation of the film. There are many variations of these sketches. They contribute not only to the formation of a new reality, but also to its expansion, the creation of an extra semantic field. That is, the story that the blogger suggests to the viewer appears in a certain background (mainly due to sketches on the subject of creating the film being watched). For the sketches of Evgeny Bazhenov, a certain brutality due to the exerting the strongest influence on the viewer. For example, in a review on “Viking” after cutting the laudatory speeches of historians about the historical authenticity of the film, the blogger shows a sketch where a pistol is held at their mouths and shout: “Carefully treated with historical material, yes? Carefully?!”, to which they get a scared answer “Yes, yes, of course!”. A rather rigid image is necessary in this context precisely in order to illustrate the blogger's idea of pressure from the federal channels on the opinion of the recipients.

Another important element of aesthetics is the use of cinematographic techniques in the review in the form of parody. The blogger borrows cinematic language tools for review in order to demonstrate its accessibility and ridicule the film itself by bringing to the absurdity of individual film receptions. For example, in a review of the movie “Hack Bloggers”, made in the style of screen capture and using computer animation, the blogger himself uses the same techniques to provoke the viewer's question: “Was this movie really worth \$1 million?” A variety of this technique can be called the incerpction of the blogger in the film picture. This is manifested by “inscribing” the figure of the critic into the plot of the film (directly, using graphics or by re-sounding the characters of the film). With the help of this introduction, the “critic-artwork” border itself is eliminated. A blogger wedges into the plot in order to change the

cinema reality itself in order to visually demonstrate to the viewer the absurdity of the plot or characters. The familiar order of things is broken and transformed under his influence, acquiring a new context. What should have been presented as a fact is changing under the pressure of a blogger.

Conclusions

The videos in the genre of “bad movie review” strive to create their own reality. The original functions of film critics, though preserved, but in a distorted form. There is no desire for objectification (although this is a controversial issue in the context of the analysis of works of art) and attempts to respect the director’s vision. Especially noticeable is the transformation of the line “the viewer – the critic – the cinema”, where the distance between them is reduced to the maximum by the visual introduction of the figure of the critic into the cinema space. Within the framework of the “bad movie review” genre itself, such transformations seem logical. The viewer does not come for an objective review, but for the art of criticism in an entertaining way.

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STORYTELLING METHOD IN POPULAR SCIENCE JOURNALISM

Svetlana Paniukova

ABSTRACT:

In this study, the storytelling method and its type - digital storytelling is considered. These are the classic techniques used in the media for a long time. In this case, we are investigating the use of digital storytelling in an atypical segment - Russian popular science journalism. At present, this media field is going through a stage of active development. Journalists and bloggers who have devoted themselves to the topic of science are looking for new formats and techniques for creating high-quality content for a mass audience. The research material is 38 videos of popular Russian channels "Utopia Show" and "Topless", published on YouTube video hosting. The analysis of these sources helps to conclude on the frequency of use of the digital storytelling method in modern popular science materials, to formulate its main functions and advantages of integration into the content.

KEY WORDS:

digital storytelling, popular science blogging, popular science journalism, video blog, YouTube

1 Popular Science Journalism in Russia

Today we can observe an increasing level of interest in scientific information from a mass audience, as a rule, of a rather young age, not directly related to the scientific world. The growing interest in the materials of the popular science format is confirmed in their work by Russian media researchers. For example, M. Litke¹ and S. Simakova.² There are several reasons for the popularization of scientific thematics in Russia in recent years. Firstly, this is the striving for the development of science in Russia, which is propagandized and financed at the state level. New research centers and laboratories are opening, organizations engaged in scientific and educational activities are being sponsored (for example, branches of the Atomic Energy Information Center in

1 LITKE, M.: Epistemological and Communicative Attitudes of the Authors of the Magazine "Around The World". In *Vestnik Tomskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta, Filologiya*, 2013, Vol. 21, No. 5, p. 118.

2 SIMAKOVA, S.: Visual Content on the Page of the Magazine "Around The World" as a Means of Broadcasting Popular Science Information. In *Znak: Problemnoye pole media obrazovaniya*, 2016, Vol. 29, No. 4, p. 21.

many cities of the country organize free mass educational events). And although the level of development of science in Russia and some of the initiatives in this field are subject to criticism, it is necessary to note the qualitative, systematic work in this area. Secondly, it is a natural change in the anti-scientific trend that swallowed up the country in the 90s. Researcher A. Tertychnyi noted that the main danger for Russian science lies precisely in the replacement of critical thinking by pseudoscientific myths.³ Gradually, this problem is overcome, and belief in paranormal forces (healing, conspiracies, evil eyes), global conspiracies (theories about flat earth and the dangers of vaccination) are replaced by scientific knowledge. Thirdly, scientific and educational activities become a platform for the self-fulfillment of creative, talented and active young personnel who want to change the lives of others for the better, but who do not have entry points to the political world. They actively implement their ideas in popular science work by developing new community projects. The influence of this factor in his public lectures was also noted by scientific popularizer G. Tarasevich, creator of the “Schrödinger’s Cat” publishing.

All the factors mentioned above suggest that in recent years the scientific sphere has ceased to be the prerogative of a highly educated part of society, it becomes interesting and accessible to a mass audience. It confirms the popularity of new educational projects, popular science media, resources and blogs (Open University, Schrödinger’s Cat, Guttenberg’s Smoking Room, TED, Post-Science, arzamas.academy, nplus1.ru). The audience of these projects requires transmission of specific knowledge from various scientific fields in a convenient form and in a modern language. At the same time it is necessary for the form of information presenting to be fascinating. The creator of popular science content must combine both entertainment and education. One of the techniques that helps to achieve such a combination of functions is use of the digital storytelling format. Both professional journalists and bloggers use it in their work.

2 Transformation of Storytelling to Digital Storytelling

At the moment, there is no single generally accepted definition of the term “digital storytelling”. In this paper we will focus on the variant proposed by Alena Anyukhina: “this is a method of consistent presentation of

3 TERTYCHNY, A.: Whether to be Popular Science Journalism. In *Vestnik VGU. Seriya: Filologiya. Zhurnalistika*, 2013, No. 2, p. 216-217.

history in the Internet space using all modern types of media”.⁴ And although some researchers do not associate the emergence of this multimedia format with the development of computer technology, we believe that digital storytelling can only exist in the digital space. It should be noted that traditionally storytelling is a “narrative” communication – a “story” appealing to a myth or using mythological images and scenarios to solve any socially significant problem.⁵ The scenario of the story can be presented as follows: introduction, description of the problem, its solution, conclusions. The necessary components are: the character, important changes, emotional intensity, reality and concreteness of the event (some facts). However, unlike the classic storytelling, digital allows authors to “tell” the story not only with the help of verbal means (text, speech), but also with modern visual, audio and audiovisual formats like video, podcasts, photos, illustrations, infographics, timelines, maps and other. It is important that these traditional and digital elements in aggregate complement each other and work to build a single story. Such a synthesis helps to keep the attention of readers for a longer time, because it makes it possible to change the types of information consumption. In addition, it helps to convey the details of the story more accurately and precisely, since the author chooses the most appropriate formats for the realization of various aspects of his story. For example, it is always easier to offer your reader a look at the map, rather than trying to verbally describe the location of an object or a route. It is not surprising that, for all its advantages described above, the digital storytelling method is often integrated into materials of a popular science nature.

3 Using the Digital Storytelling Method in Popular Science Video Blogs

As part of this study, we paid attention to the most famous Russian-language popular science YouTube channels: “Utopia Show” and “Topless”. The YouTube video hosting platform was not chosen by chance. First of all, this is the most popular video platform in Russia, and representatives of the scientific world recognize its importance in the formation and maintenance of audience requests for entertainment and informational content. Secondly, this resource provides an opportunity

4 ANYUKHINA, A.: The Phenomenon of Multimedia Longrid and Digital Storytelling in Online Media. In *Znak: Problemnoye pole media obrazovaniya*, 2017, Vol. 30, No. 2, p. 16.

5 FADEYEVA, O.: Storytelling as a Symbolic Information and Communication Technology. In *Politicheskaya lingvistika*, 2015, Vol. 4, No. 4, p. 151.

to implement the most non-standard ideas, since most of the popular content producers are not represented here by media industry professionals, but by amateur bloggers who have a fresh approach to this activity. Channels “Utopia Show” (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8M5YVWQan_3Elm-URhz9w) and “Topless” (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2Ru64PHqW4FxoP0xhQRvJg>) attracted our attention because they are the most popular (over two million subscribers on each channel) blogs of popular science topics. They cover various issues related to the fields of humanitarian and natural science knowledge. At the same time, the authors of the channel reject the utterly scientific nature of their content and inject entertainment elements into it: sketches, jokes, precedent texts, and so on. Also named bloggers are shooting content in different locations, depending on the topic, using graphics and chromakey. It helps to diversify the video, make it dynamic and make transitions between various semantic blocks of videos more smooth. Storytelling is one of the commonly used methods that implements two main functions on these channels (entertainment and education) at once. The format of the Internet video distributed in social networks and presence of the verbal and non-verbal component when telling a story allows us to designate this type of storytelling as digital. On both resources, the frequent use of the storytelling method was revealed regardless of the topic being discussed and the format of the video: the channels used this media in 34 out of 38 published works for 2018.

Let us consider an example of the use of digital storytelling on the Topless channel. In the video “Can I Erase Memory?” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhhMjjPnezU&t=151s>) dated November 6, 2018, the possibility of modern medicine, psychology and cybernetics to erase memories is explored. The host begins the video with a personal story from his childhood about the loss of his father, which he tells viewers while walking around the cemetery. Both the visuals and the words of the author act as a transition to the topic: with the help of an emotional story, the question is posed and its relevance is substantiated. Further, in addition to the disclosure of the main topic, there is a gradual development of the history stated at the beginning. The host returns to it and she concludes the video with it. His hero goes through different stages and comes to the acceptance and reflects on the power of memories in the formation of personality. Through this story, viewers do not get acquainted with the new factual scientific material on the topic, however, they get the opportunity to look at the situation

differently, become emotionally attached to the host, receive additional motivation to watch the video to the end to find out how it all ended. And also the personal history of the presenter acts as a clear example of the theoretical material described.

In the video clips of the Utopia Show video blog, most often several small digital stories appear during the release. Let us consider the “HIV / AIDS = CONSPIRACY?” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NbVuM2GH7fY>) clip dated July 27, 2018, in which a conspiracy theory about these diseases non-existence is dispelled. In this video, the format of digital storytelling is used four times. Unlike the described example from the “Topless” channel, the stories here are not divided into several parts, they are told in one piece. However, they do not look so large-scale and fundamental to the concept of the video. Here, stories are more likely to act as an evidence or argument for the voiced scientific facts. The first story is based on the personal experience of the author and is placed at the beginning of the video. In this story blogger talks about how he learned about popular myths on the subject, believed in them, and then came to scientifically reasoned knowledge. In this case, the analyzed method is used to lead the viewer to the topic, to intrigue him, to establish a trusting relationship between the author and the audience. The second story is based on scientific sources and is intended to acquaint viewer with the origin of the virus, the emergence of HIV and AIDS. This element provides scientific information to the audience in an entertaining way. The third and fourth stories are based on the experiences of specific people. They demonstrate the negative consequences of treatment of HIV and AIDS refusing and visually illustrate the frightening statistics of deaths from these diseases, voiced by the author of the video. So, in this case, all the used digital stories are based on various sources, are accompanied by additional visual elements (photographs, video clips, infographics, scenery, music inserts) and perform several functions of an entertainment and educational shape. As we can see from these example, the reason for the popularity of storytelling among these bloggers lies in its broad functionality within the framework of popular science discourse.

The use of storytelling allows to solve several tasks at once: to provide high-quality translation of knowledge in an entertaining form, to form a trusting relationship between the host and the audience (if the “story” is based on the personal experiences of the host), to simplify understanding and memorizing the topic of the video, to give the opportunity for the viewer to compare theoretical knowledge with his everyday life

experience. We also found out that storytelling is mostly used at the beginning (as an intriguing approach to the topic or a demonstration of the usefulness of the material for the audience) or in the middle (as an explanation, proof or refutation of the voiced theses) of the analyzed videos. Among the main specific features of the popular science storytelling, the following can be singled out: intentional “simplification” of the story (its structure and volume of events), mostly playful or ironic tone, expressive narrative style (using slang language and common language) and sound.

Conclusion

In his research, the Russian philologist A. V. Kolesnichenko said that even if the future of journalism is behind the storytelling, most likely, it will be impossible to achieve this in Russia only because of lack of resources.⁶ There is not enough time for journalists to work on the visual component, to embed elements of storytelling into basic texts. After all, such quality work takes time, and most online media are not willing to sponsor such experiments and give them the necessary amount of effort and time. However, now we see that the digital storytelling method, on the contrary, has become actively used in Russia not only in its traditional fields, like advertising and PR for example, but also in non-typical fields, including popular science journalism. And this is done not only by large media, such as PostScience or the Internet portal oLogy.sh, but also by amateurs. Without having special professional resources, they not only find and process theoretical material, but also integrate interactive and entertaining elements into it. And although we are used to the fact that journalists writing about science more often appeal to rational thinking of the audience and give priority to educational rather than entertainment functions, now it is increasingly possible to see the synthesis of these elements in the materials of popular science media. It can be concluded that recently, digital stories are more and more often successfully integrated into popular science content through the fusion of traditional and multimedia technologies. This allows you to visually and attractively show information that the reader could previously visualize only through their own imagination. Perhaps that is why this format is so convincing and emotionally attractive for a modern audience, which is more familiar

6 KOLESNICHENKO, A.: Long Texts (Longreads) in the Modern Russian Press. In *Mediascope*, 2015, No. 1, p. N/A. [online]. [2019-04-05]. Available at: <<http://www.mediascope.ru/1691>>.

and more comfortable to visually perceive information. The extensive capabilities of digital history make it possible to use it for information and entertainment purposes, as well as a powerful educational tool that can facilitate the process of learning or the formation of general scientific knowledge.

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AUTONOMY VS INSTRUMENTAL NATURE OF THE MEDIA

Sławomir Soczyński

ABSTRACT:

Autonomy of the media and their instrumental character. Both the media and politics or business are subsystems that are part of the general social system. The relations between them are not free from mutual attempts to exert influence. Trends present in the world of politics and in the business world for the domination of the media and their instrumentalization for non-media purposes are a problem that is not new and still valid. They result to a large extent from a different understanding of the scope of media autonomy by individual entities of the social system. This article attempts to indicate the scope of media autonomy, and more specifically, to determine what autonomy decides about this autonomy. The basis for the analysis will be two theories of the system – Niklas Luhmann and Talcott Parsons – differently captivating autonomy of the elements belonging to it and the relations between them.

KEY WORDS:

business, media, media autonomy, media management, politics, social system

Introduction

The concept of autonomy undoubtedly has positive connotations nowadays and autonomy itself has become a goal in many areas of social life and activity. In the context of the media, autonomy is also discussed with reference to politics, economy or subjective attitudes of journalists. It is often understood as absolute and rejecting all forms of external interference. The strife for autonomy may have various underlying motives, depending on the entities that postulate their own autonomy. The legitimacy of the media autonomy is usually justified by the freedom of speech, the wish to present the truth about the reality around us, the wellbeing of the addressees and by the subject of the media message, as well as by justice etc. – it is therefore generally linked to higher values. At the same time, what is increasingly observed is the significance of the media as an instrument used both to meet the social or cultural need for information and as a tool for introducing changes in attitudes or behaviour of the addressees. The persuasive function of the media, which entails their considerable effectiveness, nowadays results in the tendency to narrow down the function of the media to their instrumental role, so that they are used virtually only for pragmatic and optimisation

purposes – for example for social modernisation and adaptation to new economic patterns. The interest in the instrumentalization of the media, i.e. using the media for one's own purposes, is observed mainly among politicians and representatives of the world of business, but also among people acting on behalf of non-government organisations, educational or religious organisations etc., while each of these groups sets its own goals and treats the instrumentalization of the media as a means to an end. This process is often received with disapproval; you will hear voices that the instrumentalization of the media will deprive them of the possibility to fulfil their inherent functions properly and that as an institution designed to provide objective information about the reality, the media will ultimately lose reliability. This begs the question: what kind of autonomy do we expect of the media? And what is more important, what marks the boundary between autonomy and instrumentalization?

1 Media Autonomy

The very notion of autonomy is complex and ambiguous. As far as etymology is concerned, "autonomy" is a combination of two elements: *auto* – 'self, for yourself', and *nomos* – 'law'; another term to be used for this would be 'self-determination'.¹ Within individual fields of social sciences, there is an individual and adequate way of defining autonomy, so as to match the studied area. Generally speaking, autonomy – which can be referred to our considerations of the media autonomy – is understood as a concept related to independence, self-determination and being driven by one's own laws,² so broadly speaking, autonomy means freedom from external influence. Media autonomy, therefore, means considering the media as a separate entity, independent of others; this entails perceiving the media as a certain social fact and considering their autonomy with reference to other social phenomena: political, economic, ideological, religious, philosophical context etc. Interactions between the abovementioned social areas may refer to various aspects. The first and most widely discussed is institutional autonomy of the media as a certain social area, manifested in the absence of external influence on the media as a whole system or individual institutions within the system. Autonomy

1 SAFJAN, M.: *Wyzwania dla państwa prawa*. Warsaw : Wolters Kluwer, 2007, p. 91.

2 See also: *Autonomia*. In MARYNIARCZYK, A. (ed.) et al.: *Powszechna encyklopedia filozofii*. Lublin : Polskie Towarzystwo Tomasza z Akwinu, 2000, p. 423.

of the media also refers to the autonomy of the actions of the media creators, who independently determine their own rules, which are also independent of the structures of the newsroom or agency they work for. Last but not least, media autonomy can also refer to the message itself, which means perceiving the media activity as unrestrained creation, independent of other factors – this refers to communicational autonomy.

Each of these levels of autonomy is headed in a different direction and faces different types of challenges on its way. In practice, though, they are often combined and interdependent, which is why the starting point for the analyses in all these areas is the need to determine the scope of the media autonomy and, if possible, to point out the elements that constitute it. First of all, the question is whether the autonomy should be complete or limited, and if there is a boundary, how do we define it? What will be helpful in these considerations are the two system theories: one by Niklas Luhmann, whose understanding of the autonomy of subsystems was rather radical, and the other one by Talcott Parsons, who underlines constant interaction and interpenetration between the subsystems.

2 Radical Autonomy

The media system may be described as an intrinsically complex entity. It includes both institutions and organisations, as well as a set of organisational rules, norms and regulations together with the message produced by the media. Among the elements that make up the system we can also mention the autonomy of the media.³ The media system is a subsystem of a larger social system within which it functions and therefore it has certain characteristic features of it. The degree of its autonomy with regard to other subsystems – political, economic, legal, ethical or religious– undoubtedly affects the process of sharing information and relations within the system. As mentioned before, one of the radical concepts related to the autonomy of individual systems, including the media, is the systems theory by Niklas Luhmann. The media and other subsystems are in this theory understood as an “autopoietic”

3 Daniel C. Hallin and Paolo Mancini define the level of professionalism observed in journalist cultures in different systems i.a. on the basis of the independence of journalists of any external entities (see: HALLIN, D. C., MANCINI, P.: *Systemy medialne. Trzy modele mediów i polityki w ujęciu porównawczym*. Krakow : Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2004, p. 114).

system, i.e. a system capable of reproducing and maintaining itself and nearly completely independent of other systems. According to Luhmann, modern society has a very low level of internal integration. It is composed of functional subsystems, which “are constituted and maintained by creating and maintaining a difference between themselves and the environment.”⁴ These subsystems are largely autonomous (unrestrained production of information about the system) and have a limited ability to communicate with one another. Communication takes place primarily within rather than between the subsystems. This is because each of the subsystems (be it economy, science, politics, religion or the media) has its own code which cannot be translated into the codes of other systems. With reference to the society, Niklas Luhmann uses the concept of “Polykontextualität”,⁵ which means that, for example, the world of economy is made of elements (exchange rates, shares, financial indices, forward and futures contracts etc.) different from those present in the world of law (norms, codes, procedures), science (atoms, formulas or concepts) etc. These worlds are not only different perspectives of the common reality, but also separate realities, for which there is no place in the reality of other systems, except when they are translated into other categories, although all the time these realities affect one another. Despite the lack of communication, the systems receive information from the outside and absorb it, which leads to the phenomenon of resonance. This phenomenon produces certain changes in the system.⁶ However, the reception of information is selective – only this information is accepted that is necessary in order to maintain the balance within the specific system.

According to Luhmann’s theory, the media system and its organisation enjoy a nearly complete autonomy with regard to the outside world. The manner of internal organisation and transformation of the structures are introduced without the participation of external factors. Institutional autonomy comes in the form of complete independence of other subsystems, including political and economic subsystems, even though all of them together make up the state system; nevertheless, being part of

4 LUHMANN, N.: *Systemy społeczne. Zarys ogólnej teorii*. Krakow : Zakład Wydawniczy Nomos, 2012, p. 23.

5 LUHMANN, N.: *Die Wissenschaft der Gesellschaft*. Frankfurt am Main : Suhrkamp Verlag, 1990, p. 666.

6 LUHMANN, N.: *Systemy społeczne. Zarys ogólnej teorii*. Krakow : Zakład Wydawniczy Nomos, 2012, p. 34.

a common system involves setting certain boundaries so as to constitute the subsystems and separate the system from the external world. In this respect, external world is everything that is not included in the media system. Consequently, the system relation is a relation between the system and whatever is outside, rather than the relation between subsystems. Therefore, the system is clearly distinguishable from the external environment rather than just existing within or outside of a certain environment. Such an autonomy in fact means that there is no integration between the media system and the external system. As Luhmann claims, there is no single central point which would enable any shared perspective of the environment.⁷ Each system creates its own image of the reality around it – also the media reality is autonomous with regard to other realities. Such a radical understanding of autonomy breeds a lot of controversy and criticism.⁸ The comments refer mainly to the fact that the media system is closed to the reality around it, which has adverse effects. These effects are particularly painful as regards the message generated by the media system. On the one hand, this guarantees that the media will not be treated instrumentally or be subject to any undue influence by other subsystems, but on the other hand, it makes the messages about reality a media construct rather than an objective description of reality.

According to Niklas Luhmann, each subsystem, also the media, produces a certain type of communication based on the same type, as a prerequisite for further communication, which may be generated only in this subsystem, based on its own criteria and procedures.⁹ With this manner of generating a message, there can be no mention of more or less correct descriptions, incomplete portrayal or distortion, or even manipulation or deception, yet at the same time the message shared by the media cannot be verified in any way. If we accept the fact that the media message is autonomous – closed – and creates its own reality, which is in a way detached from the outside reality, then we deprive

7 LUHMANN, N.: *Teoria polityczna państwa bezpieczeństwa socjalnego*. Warsaw : Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1994, p. 33.

8 See: ZOLO, D.: Autopoiesis: Un paradigma conservatore. In *Micromega*, 1986, No. 1, p. 129-173; ZOLO, D.: L'ultimo Luhmann: La sociologia come teoria generale dei sistemi autoreferenziali. In *Rassegna Italiana di Sociologia*, 1986, No. 27, p. 533-550.

9 LUHMANN, N.: *Die Wissenschaft der Gesellschaft*. Frankfurt am Main : Suhrkamp Verlag, 1990, p. 22.

ourselves from the opportunity to refer these messages to the outside reality that is subject to description. The danger of this situation is that “in the face of the multitude of information coupled with limited operational resources (perception, pace of processing information etc.), without reaching for detailed sources outside of the media, which would allow us to verify all the data, we are only left with naive faith in the information received from the media, while the research shows that we mostly continue to believe what we hear or see in the media.”¹⁰ Favouring the closed system, completely independent of the outside world, deprives us of the ability to verify the message, but it also poses certain questions about the source of the description of the reality as offered by the media. A completely autonomous message would have to be only a figment of imagination of its creators. If the purpose of the autonomous media were to create the media reality, then such autonomy would be desirable, but when we speak of the media autonomy, the intention is mainly for the communicated presentation of the world to include real events and situations.

It seems necessary, therefore, to define boundaries for the media autonomy. Being open to other systems makes it possible to create an image of the reality around us, which might be partially subjective, unclear and fragmentary, but offering an opportunity to combine and verify various perspectives, which allows us to form a more complete image. Full autonomy, understood as a complete detachment from the external reality, is problematic and does not lead us towards the goal understood as objective truth, which is or should be the ultimate purpose of the media autonomy. The autonomy of the media is not an absolute principle, because autonomy as such is not the ultimate goal of the media. The goal is mainly to provide objective information to the society and to build the platform for the exchange of ideas and this is what the media autonomy is supposed to promote. The legitimacy of this autonomy ends when a more important obligation arises. Such a limitation will be for example the need to verify the communicated content, which would be impossible with absolute autonomy. Luhmann’s concept, despite setting out to explain and justify the autonomy of the media, deprives the media of certain important functionality, which is being an intermediary between social systems. “Luhmann has built his

10 CYMANOW SOSIN, K.: Perswazja i manipulacja jako zjawiska kontekstowe na przykładzie reklam sektora usług instytucji rynku finansowego. In *Naukowy Przegląd Dziennikarski*, 2015, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 51.

own, autonomous notional system, which is highly abstract. His thinking style is very unique: its structure is simple, but the terminology is abstract. Luhmann's theory can be classified as a super-theory, pertaining to be highly universal as a result of a holistic tendency to include the entire reality within a homogeneous system. This is rather about the material universality and the ambitious intention to explain all the conceivable social and media processes within one theoretical construct.”¹¹

3 Instrumental Nature of the Media and their Limited Autonomy

If we accept that full autonomy of the media is not only unnecessary, but undesired, and therefore there may and should be a degree of interaction between the media and other systems, the following questions will arise: where are the boundaries of the media autonomy? What marks the boundary and what reality lies beyond? Is the nature of the media really instrumental? If so, when and or whom may the media become an instrument used to achieve one's own vested interests? The feature that makes it possible to discuss the instrumental nature of the media is the purposefulness of the media actions. Actions taken within the media system are intentional and subject to evaluation with reference to their effectiveness. Since these actions can be used to achieve a certain predefined goal, which may be unrelated to the media reality, we can speak about their instrumental nature. In order to present an outline of Talcott Parsons' structural and functional concept of system, we can say that it includes social system as composed of multiple individual subjects, which are interconnected and engaged in mutual relations, and performs instrumental as well as purposeful functions. A characteristic feature of the social system in this theory is that the actions taken within this system are not accidental. These actions are performed in accordance with the adopted social norms. The assumption behind the system is to remain in a state of balance with other subsystems. Parsons does not assume that the system is fluid and variable, but that it strives to remain in balance with other systems.

A necessary condition for a system to exist in this theory – just like in Luhmann's concept of an autopoietic system, based among others on Parsons' findings – is the phenomenon of a boundary. Parsons, as

11 DROŹDŹ, M.: *Logos i ethos mediów. Dyskurs paradymatyczny filozofii mediów*. Tarnów : Biblos, 2005, p. 286.

opposed to Luhmann, believed that the boundary must accept certain relations and a degree of interpenetration between the systems and their surroundings. The “functions of the subsystems always include a direction and contribution: a specific function surrenders something to «something else» and makes a contribution «towards something». It is the outlet of a specific ‘giving’ system.”¹² The performance of individual functions is the responsibility of subsystems involved in mutual interchange. This is done with the use of specific means. The adaptive function of the system is inherent to the economic subsystem, which makes use of money. This is how the whole system is adapted to the variable external and internal environment. The function related to achieving objectives is assigned to the political subsystem. It defines the goal and the mission, and the means used by this subsystem is power enforced in the form of coercion. The integrative function in the system is attributed to the society, which relies on authority. The last subsystem, whose function may be defined as cultivating patterns, is culture. It is responsible for developing and observing certain patterns of behaviour, norms and rules. The means of interchange in this case in the involvement in pursuing values characteristic of a specific system. Open nature of the systems, as Parsons describes them, results in certain links between them, although autonomy is preserved all the time.¹³

4 Instrumentalization of the Media and Its Effects

The possibility for interaction between individual subsystems that make up the social system and perceiving the instrumental nature of the media by individual subsystems results in the media being used also in order to achieve the goals of other subsystems, distinct and separate from the very media system. We perceive the actions in everyday practice: the economic system uses the media for promotion and advertising in order to boost the turnover and trade in goods; the political system uses the media information and persuasion to reinforce its political power; the cultural subsystem uses the ambitious artistic work to encourage respect for the values, whereas the social system uses the media to popularise certain

12 ACKERMAN, Ch., PARSONS, T.: Der Begriff „Sozialsystem“ als theoretisches Instrument. In PARSONS, T. (ed.): *Zur Theorie sozialer Systeme*. Opladen : VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 1976, p. 76.

13 FLEISCHER, M.: *Teoria kultury i komunikacji*. Wrocław : Dolnośląska Szkoła Wyższa Edukacji Tow. Wiedzy Powszechnej, 2002, p. 145.

models and shapes the sense of identity.¹⁴ The very fact that the media is treated instrumentally by individual subsystems is not widely accepted, but often desired. Depriving the media of complete, unrestrained autonomy will enable the verification of the message shared by them, which was not the case in the autopoietic system, and will prevent the media from assuming a dominant position with regard to other systems. What arouses certain controversy, though, is any activity that treats the media instrumentally and results in preventing or hindering their basic, proprietary goals. The main role of the media in the social system is to guard the balance in the system through appropriate socialization, control and creating a space for dialogue. The media ought to focus on the adaptation and integration of individual subsystems by regulating the relations between them. The absence of appropriate autonomy of the media with regard to individual subsystems would be conducive to disintegrating the whole system. It is therefore important to find a proper place for the boundary limiting the autonomy of the media, which will prevent the instrumentalization thereof. The coexistence of the systems should provide both independence and symbiosis. Interactions and interferences between individual systems should maintain balance within the system and guarantee its proper functioning.

5 Culture as an Element Constituting the Boundary of the Media Autonomy

In Parsons' theory, human actions are understood as a long chain of choices, determined by the goal and culture-related value criteria. The American sociologist distinguishes them from human behaviour and characterises them using four criteria; action is therefore: a) goal-oriented, i.e. it proceeds with reference to anticipated conditions to be fulfilled, b) inclined to proceed in specific situations, c) regulated or governed normatively, and d) requires certain energy or motivation.¹⁵ Therefore, within various roles and social positions, diverse rights and obligations are exercised – however, the related actions do not go beyond the valid system of values.¹⁶ Achieving the goals through the media is in

14 See also: MROZOWSKI, M.: System medialny. Struktura i zasady działania. In BAUER, Z., CHUDZIŃSKI, E. (eds): *Dziennikarstwo i świat mediów. Nowa edycja*. Krakow : Universitas, 2012, p. 41.

15 PARSONS, T., SHILS, E. A.: *Toward a General Theory of Action*. Cambridge : Mass, 1951, p. 53.

16 GOLKA, M.: *Kultura jako system*. Poznań : Ośrodek Wydawnictw Naukowych, 1992, p. 26.

accordance with certain norms and directives related to the values, all of which constitute the culture of the media system. Among elements that complement the cultures we can mention mandatory customs and practices, and “understanding other cultures means a lot more than just learning certain patterns of behaviour to be used in contact with representatives of specific ethnic groups.”¹⁷ The scope of the media autonomy is, therefore, a consequence of the valid media culture. This culture is at the same time shaped and verified by the culture of the system which includes the specific media subsystem, because there are in fact no boundaries between them, which would hinder interpenetration. Actions taken within the system are in any case culturally conditioned, but at the same time also formed by culture.¹⁸

A media culture is created within a specific environment and is correlated with its culture. The system of values and patterns of behaviour accepted by the environment and constituting its culture become significant when it comes to setting boundaries for the media autonomy. While fulfilling the normative and axiological function, culture regulates behaviour and sets boundaries between the autonomy and instrumentalization of the media. From the perspective of culture, and more specifically, with reference to its values, we can also evaluate whether a specific action disregards the autonomy of the media and constitutes the instrumentalization thereof, or is just an instance of instrumental use of the media, whereas the latter is not opposed to the nature of the media. If we consider the Western system of values, the instances of restraining media autonomy will include actions conducive to the restriction of the freedom of speech, which is a value resulting from personal dignity. The boundary related to respecting the autonomy of the media will therefore mainly refer to the abovementioned freedom of speech, except for those situations, where such freedom entails any personal harm. The media are primarily supposed to serve people and assist in maintaining the rule of justice in the society.

17 DRAĞ, K.: Warunki skutecznego przyswajania kompetencji międzykulturowych w procesie szkoleniowym. In *Perspektywy Kultury*, 2017, Vol. 18, No. 3, p. 95.

18 See also: BAUMHAUER, O.: Kulturwandel. Zur Entwicklung des Paradigmas von der Kultur als Kommunikationssystem (Forschungsbericht). In *Deutsche Vierteljahresschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte*, 1982, No. 52, p. 104: FLEISCHER, M.: Podstawy konstruktywistycznej i systemowej teorii kultury. In HABRAJSKA, G. (ed.): *Język w komunikacji*. Łódź : Wydawnictwo Ahe, 2001, p. 100.

6 The Need to Maintain Proper Autonomy of the Media

Nowadays, it is hard to say how the original theories by Luhmann and Parsons function. “Rather than only considering a personal system structures in the media, we need to analyse the media system with the consideration of the people functioning within; rather than discussing only a personal communication systems, we have to analyse the communication processes together with any personal interactions resulting from informed decisions and actions of people participating in the process. Last but not least, media systems cannot be treated as autonomous and autopoietic structures; instead, they should be analysed as heteronomous, autopoietic structures, open to diverse external influences, and their analysis must be interdisciplinary and methodologically correct.”¹⁹

Maintaining a proper degree of the media autonomy is ultimately not an action that only favours the media. It also impacts the internal functioning of the whole social system. The autonomy is only possible when all the subsystems work towards maintaining their own autonomy, at the same time striving to guard the autonomy of other subsystems. What underlies the instrumentalization of the media is the tendency of other subsystems – such as business or politics – to dominate them, which overrides the norms and models adopted by the system. The media will maintain proper freedom from the pressure of other subsystems provided they observe the values valid for the whole system in their own actions, at the same time fulfilling their inherent role of controlling other participants of the system. Respect for the autonomy of a specific entity means not only recognising its right to its own views, choices and actions consistent with the values of the specific culture, but also protecting this autonomy from threats coming from the outside and from the inside of one’s own system. Tendencies for domination, which appear in the whole system or among certain participants, manifested through political or economic power and destructive for the media autonomy, will ultimately ruin the balance and order of the whole system. The principle of respecting the autonomy of the media is not an absolute rule, because autonomy as a value does not enjoy the fundamental status. The need to respect this autonomy follows from the role assigned to the media and the obligation of the media towards a person. Ultimately, it is the wellbeing of a person

19 DROŹDŹ, M.: *Logos i ethos mediów. Dyskurs paradymatyczny filozofii mediów*. Tarnów : Biblos, 2005, p. 294.

and respect for personal dignity that set the boundary for human actions, including the actions of the media. The autonomy of the media must be limited if it were to become a threat to human dignity.

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TOOLS MANAGING THE PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN TECHNOLOGICAL CORPORATIONS AND INTERNET USERS LEADING TO RESTRICTING THE FREEDOM OF CUSTOMERS

Zbigniew Widera

ABSTRACT:

Author's intention was to engage in a discussion on the growing threat of using the tools of technology by IT corporations to limit the freedom of Internet users. It is not only the restriction of freedom but also the manipulation of the offer so its marketing dimension seems extremely attractive to the user, while at the same time, it conceals the practice of multiple use of acquired customer information without their informed consent. Practices adopted by IT corporations are not sufficiently legally protected, i.e. in such a way so as not to create threats to the customers. It often stands in sharp contrast to the principles of ethics. Media content analysis method was used to analyze the conduct of IT corporations, especially Facebook. The analysis included statements quoted in articles, opinions of journalists and the results of research conducted by academic centers. The negative phenomena described in the article were confirmed by the author's research.

KEY WORDS:

creative monopoly, Facebook, Google, restriction of freedom, social services

Introduction

Quoting theories that do not result directly from the achievements of the academic community is controversial in their scientific value assessment, both as to the merit of the expressed views, as well as their justification. They do not have the support of a thoroughly conducted research.¹ These theories result from business practice of their authors, and in the case when this practice is manifested in global business success, they seem necessary to be noted. The author of the "Theory of Creative Monopoly", P. A. Thiel, is an entrepreneur, manager (in 365th place in the Forbes 400 ranking in 2010), an active venture capital

1 WIDERA, W.: *Pozycja konsumenta na rynku na tle. Teorii Kreatywnego Monopolu Petera Andreasa Thiela*. Sosnowiec : Zeszyty Naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Humanitas Zarządzanie, 2017, p. 105-117.

investor. Together with Elon Musk and Max Levchin, he co-founded the Pay Pal company. He is also a shareholder of Facebook and one of its first investors. P. A. Thiel in his book “Zero to One”,² when describing various paths leading to a monopoly, points out the most spectacular examples of business success of companies and strategies that lead to it, e.g. Amazon, eBay, LinkedIn. P. A. Thiel, questioning the importance of competition as the basic mechanism of pro-development market, states: “Creative monopoly means offering new, useful products and lasting profits for their creators.³ A spectacular example on which he bases his theory is the Google corporation, which gained a monopolistic position among its competitors on the market adhering to the principle of “Do no harm”, has been developing on the market in the most innovative way and it offers products of the utmost usefulness to the customer.⁴ Do global technology corporations which base their market functioning on their presence in the Internet, especially those with a dominant position, optimally meet the needs of their customers? When they implement marketing in the process of company management do they truly act in accordance with customer interests and declared corporate values? Do they play an honest market game in which the purchasing customer has an equal position to the offerer?

2 WIDERA, W.: *Pozycja konsumenta na rynku na tle. Teorii Kreatywnego Monopolu Petera Andreasa Thiela*. Sosnowiec : Zeszyty Naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Humanitas Zarządzanie, 2017, p. 105-117.

3 See: LUBOMSKA KALISZ, J.: *Zastosowanie tradycyjnych strategii konkurencji przez współczesne przedsiębiorstwa*. Szczecin : Studia i prace Wydziału Nauk Ekonomicznych i Zarządzania, Uniwersytet Szczeciński, 2015, p. 12; WIDERA, W.: *Pozycja konsumenta na rynku na tle. Teorii Kreatywnego Monopolu Petera Andreasa Thiela*. Sosnowiec : Zeszyty Naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Humanitas Zarządzanie, 2017, p. 105-117.

4 Compare to: KRAJČOVIČ, P., ČÁBYOVÁ, L.: Influence of Selected Factors on the Effectiveness of Print Media Advertising. In: *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2017, Vol. 13, No. 6, p. 133-144; SOLÍK, M., MINÁRIKOVÁ, J.: Social Recognition on a Global Scale: Opportunities and Limits of Media Reflection. In: *Communication Today*, 2014, Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 21-31; RADOŠINSKÁ, J.: Omnivore vs Univore: A Reflection on the Current Knowledge on Cultural Taste and Cultural Consumption. In: *European Journal of Media, Art and Photography*, 2018, Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 98-109; MISTRÍK, M.: Discipline and Punish? In: *Communication Today*, 2014, Vol. 5, No. 1, p. 5-9.

1 Freedom or Restriction of Freedom in the Global Network?

Progress in the technology industry based on pro-development innovations develops it in the most dynamic way compared to other traditional industries which also use its products, especially in the process of managing the area of building relations with customers. The customer's presence in the Internet not only brought him closer to the providers of specific products and services, but also gave him an unrestricted access to information, apparently not related to making transactions. An easy, valuable, unlimited access, seemingly free of charge. This problem concerns a huge number of Internet users. Internet users are currently 77.6% of Poles, which is as many as 23.5 million inhabitants (NetTrack survey), including 58.69% from Facebook (Kant Millwardsurvey), i.e. 16.3 million people over thirteen years of age. 29% are users aged 25-34. 23% of people aged 18-24, and people aged 35-44 about 20%. Furthermore, it can be pointed out that 52% of Facebook users are women and 48% - men (data from NapoleonCat.com). Google, on the other hand, is used by as many as 96.3% of Internet users in Poland. Second in popularity among the Polish Internet users is Youtube.com (18.5 million users and 73.5% of reach) and Google Maps (10.6 million users and 42.2% of reach). More and more perfect tools facilitating activity in the network are promoted one-sidedly, and concentrate on their advantages in order to provide the offerers a growing number of customers, learning their habits and shopping motives. The customers are made to believe that a certain product is an absolute must-have. The effectiveness of these processes is unequivocally proven by the number of users of the devices and the intensity of activities carried out through them, by men and women alike.

Observing the development of the Internet, more and more often there are comments about harmful activities of technological companies which, unlike pharmaceutical corporations, do not warn their customers about the negative side effects of using their products. In marketing management they use tools of mass surveillance, hidden reselling of customers to other companies, trade in their data, up to the undisclosed process of gathering traces of their activity in the Internet for years and years. Supported by ever more perfect methods of introducing into the mentality of users dangerous habits they lead to co-dependence and permanent cyber addictions. Addictions seem to prove more efficient, replacing the need for customer relationship marketing (CRM) which has been clearly characterized by the idea of applying ethical principles.

These undescribed, or poorly described academically new practices are not legally protected and often unrecognized. What is more, they are completely ignored as a subject of media commentaries. The media, which are essentially business enterprises, benefit from the spreading addictive behaviors of Internet users. The virtual world of the Internet enables not only contact with the user but also gaining knowledge of his habits and activities in the web. In fact, this process is not only used by profit-oriented organizations. It is also used by politicians and related institutions. Perhaps the lack of effective legal protection of network users is, in this context, a deliberate measure. Paradoxically, also the academic community does not construe the newly arisen threats clearly enough. The described phenomenon is rarely the subject of academic research. And the number of hours people spend in the web is on the rise.

In 2017, in Davos, at the International Economic Forum, which was also a political forum, a well-known businessman and philanthropist, George Soros, harshly criticized the business conduct of Facebook and Google, stating that the tools used for marketing management of these companies constitute a threat to the development of civilization. He pointed out that they use aggressive techniques affecting the human mind, which directly threatens democracy, especially during elections to various government ranks. Facebook and Google, in his opinion, implement the strategy of making Internet users dependent on their products, which in consequence allows them to uncompromisingly pursue sales goals. Addiction inducing techniques, known from the business activities of gambling companies, are the foundation of developing cyber addiction. Their use is motivated solely by maximizing their own financial profit. Susana Flores, a clinical psychologist, in her book called “Facehooked”, clearly accuses Facebook of addiction inducing activities, placing the so-called FAD syndrome (Facebook Addiction Disorder) in one group with alcoholism, drug addiction, gambling or anorexia. What is more, the author proves that the image in the minds of Internet users, created by their experience in the web, is identified by them as events in which they participated in the real world.⁵

5 *Facebook zniszczył nam życie?* [online]. [2018-02-02]. Available at: <https://menway.interia.pl/styl-zycia/po-godzinach/news-facebook-zniszczył-nam-życie,nId,2372503#utm_source=paste&utm_medium=paste&utm_campaign=other>.

The results of the research on the group of students aged 22 to 26 have shown that the entire group of respondents use social networking sites. The research group consisted in 81% of women and 19% of men. More than a half of the sample (52.1%) stated that they could not have imagined daily life without presence on social media sites, whereas 47.9% would be able to refrain from using it permanently. Moreover, the results indicate that almost one third (31%) of responders confirmed the feeling of anxiety and frustration when they cannot use the social media services when they want to. As much as 66.7% of responders prefer to use, as a mean of contact with their relatives and friends, social network services instead of direct conversation. The vast majority of the group claimed that this form of communication motivates them for more frequent contact with friends. In fact, the direct meetings are preferred only by 18.8% of respondents. The second motive relates to a need of entertainment. In terms of time rates, less than a half of respondents (43.8%) spend about 3-5 hours a day on social networking sites, 12.5% is online twenty-four hours a day. The majority of respondents (89.6%) indicated Messenger as the most popular service, while 79% voted for Facebook. As far as negative effects of use of social networking sites are concerned, 35.4% of respondents stated that they became addicted. Furthermore, as much as 39.4% declared the lack of concentration, 14.5% indicated the feel of isolation and 6.3% reported physical pain. Nearly half of the sample (41.7%) became the victims of hate, 43% became victims of fraud, 12.5% suffered from identity stealing and 8.3% experienced data stealing. To conclude, the conducted research confirms the negative phenomena indicated in the text of the article.⁶

Companies operating in the Internet, especially social media, base their financial revenues on providing advertising services to users. They act as intermediaries between companies offering products and services and the recipient of advertising. It is a type of activity that is visible to Internet users. However, in the pursuit of financial gain, these companies break ethical standards by selling their customers to other companies without informing them about it. The independence of Internet users ends where the interest of companies operating in the Internet begins. It is hard to disagree with George Soros's view who links the loss of control over the

6 Research conducted at the University of Economics in Katowice in 2019 with the participation of fourth year students of Journalism and Social Communication (remark by the author).

Internet users’ activities in the web with the manipulation applied with impunity by IT corporations. All the more so as the number of cyber addicts is growing day by day. The “freedom of thought” considered by John Stuart Mill as to be the highest value is becoming merely symbolic. What is worse, the effects of cyber addiction, devised by corporations selling their services, permeate the sphere of political activity of the society. Companies cooperating with politicians use algorithms that allow them to determine political preferences and demeanor, and as a result, to manipulate voters. The author of the statement emphasizes that such a threat is not a problem of the future. He points out that it has already played an important role in the presidential elections in the USA in 2016. Moreover, it also played a fundamental role in Brexit, activating opponents of Britain’s presence in the European Union.

Asked by a politician, a supporter of Brexit, a representative of a technology company that declared its help in a referendum, what interest it has in supporting the opposition’s activities, he said that although his company has an influence tool at its disposal, it does not have a large enough research sample to test its tool. As a result, the research sample, which was the number of people entitled to vote, was determined and the results of the referendum confirmed unequivocally that political campaigns are increasingly moving away from the use of posters and billboards, television and radio, towards the use of tools suitable for communication via the Internet. This example not only proves the power of IT companies, but also the close links between this sector and politicians. The pursuit of gain combines the interests of politicians and technology corporations. This statement is not an exploratory thought. It touches the problem of what is currently being realized on a scale and on a level unknown so far. Moreover, it raises serious doubts as to whether the boundary between democracy and manipulation has already disappeared. Referring to important aspects of technological corporations and their impact on economic and, more importantly, social processes, it is necessary to indicate a few additional, important aspects. The aforementioned IT corporations have a monopolistic position on the market, which does not mean that there is no ongoing competition between them; fights for a leading position on the market, provided that they have no capital ties to common interests, which cannot not be excluded. In a report published by the New York Times, the publishing house pointed to Facebook’s dealings which are an example

of a degrading demeanor towards its competitors and people who speak negatively about it; among others:

- suggesting and appealing to journalists that the subject of their articles be George Soros's alleged relationship with the anti-Facebook movement;
- discrediting opponents of Facebook, and labelling them as anti-Semites;
- commissioning the publication of articles discrediting the competition.

In the New York Times report there is also an indication that Facebook has commissioned dozens of articles that put Apple and Google in a bad light. Another aspect of the disgraceful conduct of Facebook was its alleged entering into agreements with companies producing telephones, and which companies were to pass on the data of their users. The only defence of the company was not to justify these practices but only the indication that other IT giants like Google do so as well.⁷ The business practices of Facebook seem to optimally reflect the personality of its owner and the genesis of his controversial idea which, using human features, has grown so much. The vast resources at their disposal have a key impact on their taking over the initiative and technological inventions, as well as the most knowledgeable human resources. The common benefits that technological companies derive from their relations with politicians mean that the need to protect citizens against the negative effects of their actions is not reflected in the regulations and their authorization. Unlike the American market, the solutions adopted and implemented in the European Union are far more advanced. This is primarily related to the different definition of the concept of monopoly. An interesting aspect of the comparative analysis of both regulatory systems is, as George Soros pointed out, that the use of doctrine in the USA is connected with the measurement of harmful activities in relation to the increase in prices of services provided. It is absurd in its essence because the vast majority of IT corporations' services is offered free of charge.⁸ The system of

7 *Kontrowersyjne praktyki szefów portalu Facebook pod lupą amerykańskiej prasy.* [online]. [2019-03-14]. Available at: <<https://zmianynaziemi.pl/wiadomosc/kontrowersyjne-praktyki-szefow-portalu-facebook-pod-lupa-amerykanskej-prasy>>.

8 PIRCE, R.: *Soros atakuje Facebooka i Google'a: Szkodzą demokracji i stanowią przeszkodę na drodze do innowacji.* [online]. [2018-02-02]. Available at: <<https://businessinsider.com.pl/technologie/nowe-technologie/facebook-i-google-zagrozeniem-dla-spoleczenstwa-george-soros/qhgxvqm>>.

earning money on users does not consist in charging them a fee but in benefiting from advertising and, what has already been indicated and is much more reprehensible, on multiple sales of network users data to companies that use the knowledge of Internet users' shopping preferences. The breadth and significance of corporations provokes the question to what extent the object of their activity and position on the market gives them the features of a public utility organization. The answer to this key question will determine the imposition of stringent legal regulations aimed at protecting organisations competing with them. A good example of corporate discipline can be the initiatives introduced by the Commissioner for Competition in the European Union, Ms Margrethe Vestager.

Conclusion

George Soros' views, clearly in opposition to the theories of another prominent businessman, P. A. Thiel, seem necessary to be transferred to the area of academic discourse, that is to the environment that is expected to have an objective view of reality and future events, especially with regard to facts socially relevant. Will Soros' radical views arouse as much controversy as Thiel's statements glorifying IT corporations? At this point it is worth asking to what extent is the importance of the views of practitioners in relation to scientific research growing? Especially in view of the fact that the progress of civilization takes place in parallel through the achievements of academic centers but also the results of work of the corporate research laboratories. The validity of Soros' views seems to be clearly confirmed by the recent actions of the German Office of Competition and Consumer Protection (UOKiK), the anti-monopolistic institution that has implemented the proceedings which were to expose the way in which Facebook used its communication tools with its 2 billion users. On the basis of proving Facebook's business dealings, enabling the positioning of advertisements provided by offerers of goods and services, based on the data on the Internet users' activity in the web. The German institution has shown that the American company explicitly forces its social network users to authorise the company in such a way that it can collect and use countless amounts of data obtained from third party users and connect them with its customers on the portal they use. In practice, this situation occurs not only when users visit websites with the Facebook "Like" button on them but also when they do not use it.

In response to the allegations, a Facebook spokesperson provided an explanation not so much as why this is the case but that many websites and applications follow similar practices. As Financial Times reported, one of the possible consequences of the current investigation is that the German government becomes aware that Facebook has been exploiting its monopolistic position on the market. It is worth recalling that in May 2017 the European Commission has already fined Facebook €110 million for transferring by employees of the American company inaccurate data related to obtaining consent to take over WhatsApp messenger. This sum however, is so insignificant in relation to the revenues of the penalised company that it will certainly not discipline its conduct. The German antitrust authority warned that Facebook may be banned from collecting data from sources other than its own.⁹ This warning seems absurd in view of the company's evident and used practices, which have long since ceased to be undisclosed. The form in which the socially harmful activities of Facebook were addressed may clearly indicate its importance on the political market whose actors speak of the wrongful practices very sparingly. The politicians are fully aware that an attack on leading corporations may threaten their position because Facebook has a real influence on the electorate. How paradoxical, in this context, sound the words of Marek Zuckerberg, whose dream is to reach all inhabitants of the globe. With an unambiguous idea, to lead to such a situation that all users of the portal can actively interact with others. The goal is to have as many friends as possible. For that reason Facebook suggests that users share their contacts from their phone or email accounts, and do so by taking just a few simple steps. And voilà! And then Facebook starts scanning all contacts, making its fans overjoyed with a miraculous multiplication of their Facebook friends.¹⁰

What is more, Facebook, beyond its vast possibilities to draw people into its cyber world makes the Internet users co-dependent, sells them, and does direct harm to them. Researchers Holly B. Shaky from San Diego University and Professor Nicholas Christakis from the Yale University, conducted a research involving 5,208 adult Facebook users. They

9 *Niemcy chcą zahamować zbieranie danych przez Facebooka.* [online]. [2018-02-02]. Available at: <<https://businessinsider.com.pl/firmy/facebook-w-niemczech-w-sporze-z-tamtejszym-uokik-o-dane/6fvqp7z>>.

10 *Facebook wie o nas więcej, niż nam się wydaje. Każdy użytkownik ma „czarną skrzynkę” danych.* [online]. [2018-02-02]. Available at: <<https://businessinsider.com.pl/technologie/nowe-technologie/co-wie-o-nas-facebook/8ztzpdy>>.

analysed the impact of their Internet activity on their level of wellbeing. The results of the study were clear and indicated that frequent use of Facebook is harmful.¹¹ Moreover, research conducted by Stony Brook University in New York indicated that teenagers who spend a lot of their time on this portal chatting “about life” are much more depression-prone. It is also worth mentioning that social networking sites, as well as other publicly available portals, serve to slander and defame people anonymously, often ruining their lives. A Suzan Flores’ statement fully illustrates the behavior of Facebook users: “Facebook and other social media have a notification function that makes us grab our phones voraciously, like a child would grab a box of candies. This compulsive behavior leads to obsession and other anxiety-related symptoms. People who are constantly looking at their phones look as if they were suffering from the obsessive-compulsive disorder.”¹² The question arises as to whether Zuckerberg’s product, which was supposed to cure the world from loneliness, should not have the warning label: “Before use, read the package leaflet or consult with your physician or pharmacist, as any “medicine” taken incorrectly can cause harm to your health or life.”

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11 *Naukowcy ostrzegają: Facebook szkodzi samopoczuciu i więziom społecznym.* [online]. [2019-03-13]. Available at: <<http://www.pch24.pl/naukowcy-ostrzegaja--facebook-szkodzi-samopoczuciu-i-wieziom-spoecznym-51276,i.html#ixzz5i5IIYv8t>>.

12 *Facebook zniszczył nam życie?* [online]. [2018-02-02]. Available at: <https://menway.interia.pl/styl-zycia/po-godzinach/news-facebook-zniszczył-nam-zycie,nId,2372503#utm_source=paste&utm_medium=paste&utm_campaign=other>.

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MEDIA AESTHETIC FEATURES OF NEWSLETTERS

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ABSTRACT:

In this paper, the author analyses an increasingly popular form of journalism – newsletters. Journalistic (non-marketing) newsletters are considered from a media aesthetic angle (following Manovich’s and Böhme’s understanding of the aesthetic side of contemporary communication). The material of this article are two American newsletters (*Brain Pickings* and *The Hustle*). Four media aesthetic features are described: the template of newsletters (as a combination of usability and attractiveness); the design of newsletters as a form of “aesthetic pleasure of recognition” of media consumption); the personalization of newsletters’ style (an “intimate” epistolary-like discourse); “the immersive style” of newsletters. The “renaissance” of retro-forms of media consumption is analyzed from their technological, cultural and psychological perspectives.

KEY WORDS:

Brain Pickings, informational behaviour, Maria Popova, media aesthetics, media consumption, newsletters, Sam Parr, The Hustle

1 Introduction

The current situation with professional (or institutionally organized) journalism in its “classical” forms is considered in this article in its relationship with the present-time “crisis” (see, for example, the jubilee issue of the highly-rated international research journal “Journalism”, January 2019).¹ But at the same time researchers appear to be not attentive enough to popular “new old forms” of journalistic production (such as newsletters, for example). It is difficult to collect research literature on this type of journalistic interaction with “digital publics”, and one can find just a few articles about the specific features of newsletters. The proposal of this article is to contribute to the investigation of contemporary newsletters as a relatively recent successful journalistic form. The media aesthetic aspect of newsletters helps us understand the reasons of their success in a dense media environment.

1 TUMBER, H., ZELIZER, B.: Special 20th Anniversary Issue: The Challenges Facing Journalism Today. In *Journalism*, 2019, Vol. 20, No. 1, p. 5.

1.1 Newsletters as a Subject of Research

Newsletters have been well researched as marketing tools (in the field of economy and marketing). There are a number of manuals, practical advices and research articles devoted to newsletters with respect to their influence on mass consumption and users' loyalty to brands. But in journalism and in the mass communication field one cannot find investigations concerning the revival of newsletters in contemporary information exchanges. We can mention a few works that provide some data on newsletters popularity. Firstly, one can find Charlotte Fagerlund's investigation (London School of Economics and Political Sciences).² This researcher compiles the very first email-newsletters of the early internet-era. She describes the trajectories of their development and the main characteristics of newsletters as a journalistic channel. Fagerlund demonstrates in her investigation how email itself has been promoted from an "outdated technology" to "an efficient information channel" during the 2010's.³ Analyzing newsletters as a journalistic tool, she stresses their specific features (following users' and producers' opinions): "less spam", "people read more of your content", "short and digestible", "a way to get around Facebook", "easy", "personal", "mobile", "good target group for ads". In this article, one can also find statistical data and surveys of newsletters edited by the major USA newspapers. In research literature, newsletters have become a subject of exploration

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- 2 FAGERLUND, C.: *Back to the Future – Email Newsletters as a Digital Channel for Journalism*. Released on the 1st of November 2016. [online]. [2019-04-29]. Available at: <<http://www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/Polis/documents/Back-to-the-future---Email-Newsletters-as-a-Digital-Channel-for-Journalism.pdf>>.
 - 3 It is useful to mention here some articles of the professional journalists (from the article of Charlotte Fagerlund): STAMPER, J.: *Is Social Networking Killing Email?* Released on the 30th of March 2011. [online]. [2019-04-29]. Available at: <<https://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/the-staggers/2011/04/email-atos-electronic>>; CARR, D.: *For Email Newsletters, a Death Greatly Exaggerated*. Released on the 29th of June 2014. [online]. [2019-04-29]. Available at: <<https://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/30/business/media/for-email-a-death-greatly-exaggerated.html>>; FINLEY, K.: *Sorry Ello, the Real Anti-Facebook is Good Old Email*. Released on the 25th of September 2015. [online]. [2019-04-29]. Available at: <<https://www.wired.com/2015/09/sorry-ello-real-anti-facebook-good-old-email/>>.

as a part of national media systems. For example, Mandlenkosi Mpfu analyzes the role of e-newsletters in the shaping process of Zimbabwe’s public sphere.⁴ Some research is devoted to the specific characteristics of newsletters as messages.⁵

1.2 Media Aesthetics as a Point of View in Media Research

One can find fruitful research work in the early 2000’s on the media aesthetic approach to current communication generally (and to mass communication, journalistic practices, in particular). The position of Lev Manovich is especially important for our investigation: according to him, “postmedia aesthetics” replaces the traditional view on aesthesis as a general phenomenon. Nobody can use the term “Internet-aesthetics” in its original sense, for example, because “Internet” is a space with thousands of softwares, each of which has its own specific and particular conditions of “human-machine” interactions. These conditions (and conventions) determine the aesthetic features of this “postmedia reality”. Manovich stresses that “site” and “email” are totally different spaces with different rules and coordinates.⁶ Developing the thesis of “postmedia aesthetics” relatively to newsletters, we can emphasize the following: (1) the technical conditions relative to reading the newsletter (i.e. how newsletters appear in the email-box, how the user can see their content before opening them, how the newsletter authors compete with other emails for the user’s attention), (2) the cultural “weight” of newsletters (references to cultural backgrounds, traditions, “old-fashion” practices as a sort of bridge between “traditional” and “novel” cultural practices) – this idea is especially important because the “email” itself can be considered now as an “outdated” technology; (3) the design of newsletters related to cultural practices (to keep the interest of users despite the potentially boring repetitive appearance of the newsletter). Gernot Böhme suggested the terms “atmospherity” and “affect” when

4 MPOFU, M.: Internet Public Spheres, Civil Society Organisations and the State in the Zimbabwean Crisis: A Case Study of Kubatana. Net’s E-newsletters. In *African Journalism Studies*, 2016, Vol. 37, No. 4, p. 25-44.

5 See: HARTEMO, M., SUOMI, R., HAKALA, U.: Towards Improved Performance: A Model for Testing Email Newsletter Design. In *Journal of Electronic Commerce in Organizations (JECO)*, 2016, Vol. 14, No. 3, p. 1-16; KUMAR, A., SALO, J.: Effects of Link Placements in Email Newsletters on Their Click-through Rate. In *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 2018, Vol. 24, No. 5, p. 535-548.

6 MANOVICH, L.: *Postmedia Aesthetics*. [online]. [2019-04-29]. Available at: <<http://manovich.net/index.php/projects/post-media-aesthetics>>.

explaining current communication features.⁷ His ideas can shed light on the nature of newsletters consumption, (they are related to the thesis of “aesthetic pleasure of recognition”, based on Aristotelian *Poetics*).

2 The Material of Research: *The Hustle* and *Brain Pickings*

For this article, we chose two successful newsletters (USA): *The Hustle* and *Brain Pickings*. These two newsletters are dissimilar, their audiences are different, so the analysis of their features can be useful to understand the reasons of their successes.

2.1 Brain Pickings: A Mono-Project

Brain Pickings is a “mono-project” by an American writer (with Bulgarian origins) and blogger Maria Popova (born in 1984). She stresses the singularity of her project when addressing to her public: “I spend innumerable hours and tremendous resources on it each week, and every little bit of support helps enormously.”⁸ Each week she prepares one long story. The themes of her stories are mostly related to past “classical” (or intellectual) European culture (the creativity of Austin, Dickinson, Nietzsche, and so on), with some references to current cultural events and projects related to what she tells in her story. Each story includes many images, pictures, reproductions. All materials can be found on Maria Popova’s site (<https://www.brainpickings.org>), but her main access to the public is the newsletter (one email every week to 10 million subscribers). Her project has been running since 2007 (when she started to send a weekly email to seven of her friends).

2.2 The Hustle: A Team-Project

The Hustle is a “team-project” by Sam Parr (born in 1986) and his occasional Airbnb host in San Francisco, John Havel. They started with the Hustle Constartup (TED-like meetings on popular and hot business topics), and then gradually realized that the emails (which they sent to inform the participants of these conferences) had their own value: “Emails allow us to scale quickly. It’s cheap, allows us to build an

7 See: BÖHME, G.: *Atmosphäre: Essays zur neuen Ästhetik*. Berlin : Suhrkamp Verlag, 2013.

8 All quotations from newsletters are from the emails received by this article’s author (remark by the author).

audience, and it’s intimate.”⁹ In 2016, immediately after launching the newsletter, they had 100000 subscribers. In 2019, celebrating the three years jubilee of their project, *The Hustle* informed they had reached one million subscribers. Their audience is “business-millennials”, and the unique style of *The Hustle* can be described as an “informal communication with bros”. The topics of *The Hustle* are related, among other things, to the different aspects of current business, economy, successful (and unsuccessful) projects. The subscriber of *The Hustle* can read about an artificial “orgasm-tool” startup on one day, and about new trends in education business – on the next day. This diversity allows the founders of *The Hustle* to maintain the interest of million subscribers to their newsletters.

3 Email-Box Constraints as a Stimuli of Media Aesthetics of Newsletters

3.1 Organizing Newsletters Among Emails

Firstly, when speaking about media aesthetic features of newsletters, one must stress the importance of the technological conditions of their dissemination: it is in their electronic mail boxes, that subscribers can find the “body” of the “fresh” newsletter. The reader using a smartphone¹⁰ can access her/his newsletters in two steps: she/he first opens his list of “unread” mails (where she/he will only see one title or information about the topic of this newsletter), and then she/he views the “body” of the newsletter which is limited in size due to the small screen, with miniature fonts and pictures, and which she/he will scroll down. Hence, the media aesthetics of newsletters must match the following conditions: the “body” of the text must be organized as a “narrow scrolling column” allowing the reader to quickly “grasp” not only the main sense of this text but also its main “mood” (intention, intonation). So the organization of newsletters provides the order of the text viewing and reading. In *Brain*

9 BRACKEBUSH, J.: *How the Hustle Built a 100,000 Subscriber Email Newsletter for Millennial Bros*. Released on the 1st of July 2016. [online]. [2019-04-29]. Available at: <<https://digiday.com/social/hustle-built-100000-subscriber-email-newsletter-millennial-bros/>>.

10 See investigation of C. Fagerlund: A big survey shows that nearly all users open their email-boxes on their smartphones. The same researcher stresses that people are “fed up” with apps which are not very useful and always need too many actions to be opened (remark by the author).

Pickings the title of the newsletter (that the subscriber can see in her/his “unread mails”) always contains the name of the hero of this newsletter (“Dickinson”, “Morrison”, “Seneca” and so on, see Picture 1).

» Brain Pickings by M.	Входящие	Earth Day special: Beautiful wisdom on our shared ecological responsibility from the woman whose courage inspired the ...
» Brain Pickings by M.	Входящие	Seneca on how to live with presence and balance the existential calculus of time, Emily Dickinson on spring, physicist Fre...
» Brain Pickings by M.	Входящие	The Universe in Verse livestream - resources into Brain Pickings, which remains free and ad-free, and is made possible by...
» Brain Pickings by M.	Входящие	Nobel-winning physicist Wolfgang Pauli on science, spirituality, and our search for meaning, how Eleanor Roosevelt revol...
» Brain Pickings by M.	Входящие	Timeless advice on love from a forgotten 19th-century genius, Virginia Woolf and the fate of all technology, a poetic cele...
» Brain Pickings by M.	Входящие	Annual special: Announcing “The Universe in Verse” 2019 (April 23, NYC) - resources into Brain Pickings, which remains fr...
» Brain Pickings by M.	Входящие	Alain de Botton’s lovely letter to children about why we read, Lincoln’s approach to criticism, decoding the song of the unl...
» Brain Pickings by M.	Входящие	Remembering W.S. Merwin with the greatest advice on creative work ever committed to words, a Nobel-winning physicist...
» Brain Pickings by M.	Входящие	Patti Smith on creativity and William Blake, the stunning natural history illustrations of 18th-century artist Sarah Stone, Jil...
» Brain Pickings by M.	Входящие	Toni Morrison on wisdom in the age of information, a lyrical illustrated meditation on loneliness, Anne Gilchrist’s stunning...
» Brain Pickings by M.	Входящие	Hannah Arendt on love and how to live with the fundamental fear of loss, Hermann Hesse on solitude, courage, and how t...
» Brain Pickings by M.	Входящие	Thoreau on change, Romanian philosopher Emil Cioran on the courage to disillusion yourself, and more - newsletter by M...
» Brain Pickings by M.	Входящие	Neil Gaiman’s stunning ode to the courage of speaking truth to power, Iris Murdoch on art as resistance, Melville’s electri...
» Brain Pickings by M.	Входящие	Remembering a dear friend, the story behind one of the loveliest, profoundest poems ever written, what a mountain teach...
» Brain Pickings by M.	Входящие	“If equal affection cannot be, let the more loving one be me.” - newsletter by Maria Popova. If you missed last week’s dige...
» Brain Pickings by M.	Входящие	Tonight, free livestream from Brooklyn: Figuring with Elizabeth Gilbert - , like Brain Pickings, they rely on patronage from L...
» Brain Pickings by M.	Входящие	“Figuring” (my book) is out today. - years of Brain Pickings and the most beautiful, difficult, disorienting experience of my ...

Picture 1: Brain Pickings in the email-box: the title is a the subject

Source: The author’s email-box; the results of the search with “Brain Pickings”, 19th of April, 2019.

Maria Popova’s audience consists of people with high intellectual standards and expectations, this is why her “motto” is “only meaningful stories”. *The Hustle* uses a different strategy. They address their intellectual product to the “millennials-bros” (and provide an informal style of communication). Here, in the email-box, one can just about guess the content of the “fresh” newsletter. Titles such as, for example, “Busy bee-llionares”, “A deal lost at sea”, “The ol’bread and butter” and others, “allude” to the main story but the latter cannot be fully “predicted” by simply reading the title, see Picture 2.

➤ The Hustle	Входные	Mueller Mania - ... The Hustle Sponsored by Clarivate Analytics The Hustle Daily Email" /> Mueller Mania is in full swing, a...
➤ The Hustle	Входные	Ya-hooooooooooooo - plan to the commercial's star. This edition of The Hustle was brought to you by The Farmer's Dog... ..
➤ The Hustle	Входные	Put on your party hats, folks - The Hustle Sponsored by Linode The Hustle Daily Email" /> The Hustle's Newsletter Turns 3...
➤ The Hustle	Входные	The \$50 burger - ... The Hustle Sponsored by Zoom The Hustle Daily Email" /> EDITOR'S NOTE: Hey, gang. The Hustle new...
➤ The Hustle	Входные	Apple's caught in antitrust purgatory - ... The Hustle Sponsored by Radius Bank The Hustle Daily Email" /> Editor's note: Ye...
➤ The Hustle	Входные	Busy bee-llionaires - ... The Hustle Sponsored by Skillshare The Hustle Daily Email" /> The world's at war over the workwee...
➤ The Hustle	Входные	A deal lost at sea - ... The Hustle Sponsored by monday.com The Hustle Daily Email" /> Djibouti dispute: A London court or...
➤ The Hustle	Входные	Inside Amazon's fake review economy - weeks in the underbelly of Amazon's fake review economy and emerged question...
➤ The Hustle	Входные	(Stock) tlers for fears - ... The Hustle Sponsored by botkeeper The Hustle Daily Email" /> To stay in control after their start...
➤ The Hustle	Входные	The ol' bread and butter - ... The Hustle Sponsored by Rituals The Hustle Daily Email" /> Dream Market will shut down at th...
➤ The Hustle	Входные	The spoils of oil: part deux - ... The Hustle Sponsored by Eight Sleep The Hustle Daily Email" /> All according to plan: Inves...
➤ The Hustle	Входные	A squeal of a deal - ... The Hustle Sponsored by Quip (B2B) The Hustle Daily Email" /> Mobile home investing is hot for Wa...
➤ The Hustle	Входные	Spotify has new competition - ... The Hustle Sponsored by Haven Life The Hustle Daily Email" /> Africa's Boomplay is bec...
➤ The Hustle	Входные	The world's richest dogs and cats - Fluffy using the money? This edition of The Hustle was brought to you by Outreach... ..
➤ The Hustle	Входные	Barneys gets bailed out - ... The Hustle Sponsored by DigitalOcean The Hustle Daily Email" /> Not even retail giants can af...
➤ The Hustle	Входные	A gram-worthy moment - , and the advertising industry remains fickle, but first... The Hustle Sponsored by Lola.com The ...
➤ The Hustle	Входные	Ex-FL - Discovery hits the road, but first... The Hustle Sponsored by Felix Gray The Hustle Daily Email" /> 2 foam fingers d...
➤ The Hustle	Входные	Oil! - to rewrite the net, but first... The Hustle Sponsored by monday.com The Hustle Daily Email" /> ExxonMobil investors ...
➤ The Hustle	Входные	Lyft is (April) finally (Fools) profitable! - Soup For the Soul, and Wells Fargo CEO decides it's time to roll, but first... The Hu...

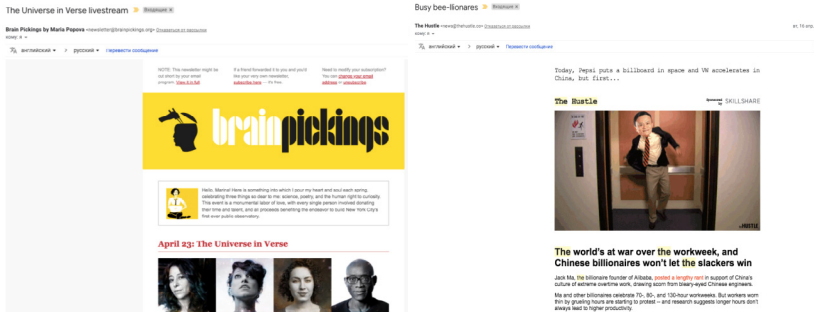
Picture 2: The Hustle in email-box: the title is the intrigue

Source: The author's email-box; the results of the search with "The Hustle", 19th of April, 2019.

These two different strategies (to catch public attention through intellectual stories or with intriguing pun-filled allusions) can be considered as an aesthetic answer to the email-box constraints and limitations: when the user reads the title (information on the subject) she/he gets an impulse to be involved in the story. We are speaking here of aesthetics (rather than semiotics, meanings, intellectual side of this type of communication); in each of the two cases studied here we observe an exploitation of the readers' feelings and sensations. For *Brain Pickings* it is an appeal to the feelings of love, belonging, moral suffering and sadness (for example: "Remembering a dear friend, the story behind one of the loveliest, profoundest poems ever written, what a mountain teaches about time and transcendence"; the "-iest" suffixes provoke an expectation of a touching story). For *The Hustle*, it is irony that hides the important and triggering facts about the "hottest startups" and business-ideas (and affairs also; see, for example: "A squeal of a deal" or "Oil!"). When we read all the titles-subjects on one page (Pictures 1, 2) we can feel what Gernot Böhme called the "atmosphere" of the newsletters, their "spirit". The "template" of newsletters is organized as a simple and open tool that provides to the users fast pre-information about the newsletter's content and at the same time "an atmosphere" of the newsletters' texts, attracting thus the users' attention.

3.2 Design: Attractiveness of Recognition

The design of newsletters is related to the principle of an “aesthetic pleasure of recognition”: the newsletter combines a “recognizable design” (like a “retro-newspaper” where the same font as in the title is used, the order of rubrics etc.) and the novelty of each issue is based on the multimedia tools and on the elements of their content. When she/he opens the newsletter in her/his email-box, the user can see a picture (see Picture 3). *The Hustle* minimizes its own title and always uses the same organization of the newsletters’ headlines: an advertising (mentioning brands and sponsors), a GIF-animation, which is related to the “intrigue” of the title but does not provide a clear explanation of the article’s topic, and finally the full title of the text (discovering the intrigue). The GIFs become a “visiting-card” of the newsletter: each time they need to be “guessed upon”, they function as a “retro-caricature” helping users to understand the “second level of meaning” of the text. The *Brain Pickings* always starts with a title and a direct speech by its’ creator, Maria Popova (with her portrait). After this speech (asking for a donation) one can read the full title of the journalistic material and, after scrolling down, see the first picture. Here, we can also see how the organization of the newsletter depends on the email-box technical conditions: *The Hustle* uses its smart GIFs to get the reader involved in the consumption of the texts, while *Brain Pickings* stresses the importance and uniqueness of its production (asking for a donation first), and only after scrolling down can the user see the illustrations and the other parts of the text. In both cases, the newsletters organize their material by including a picture (or chart, or other non-textual fragment or image) in each of the “screen-scrolling” steps. This strategy supports the users’ interest and motivates them to further scroll down the letter.

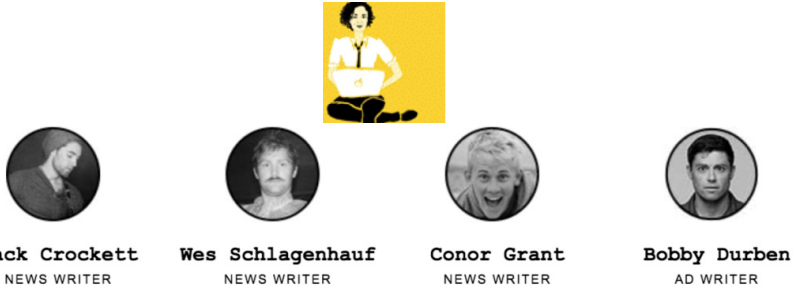


Picture 3: The Hustle and Brain Pickings: recognizing elements

Source: The author's email-box, 19th of April, 2019.

3.3 Personalization of Newsletters' Style

Sam Parr described email communication as “intimate”, and this is significant for the newsletters’ style. The name of the subscriber appears in each of Maria Popova’s newsletters (even if the user knows that the naming is an algorithm work and this is all part of Popova’s “intimate strategy”). The texts of *The Hustle* sometimes (not often) start with “Hey, gang” or similar expressions. The personalization of the newsletters’ style is also embodied in their “paratext” (which groups some elements of the newsletters’ design and is a sort of “frame” of the content). For example, at the end of each issue of *The Hustle* one can find a link for unsubscribing: “Never want to hear from us again? Break our hearts and unsubscribe”. In *Brain Pickings*, it is stressed that the donation is a way to obtain extra opportunities (“the privileged readers”). In *The Hustle*, one can be a paying subscriber (and she/he will become “an ambassador” of the project). It is important for both projects to constantly personalize the authors of newsletters (Maria Popova, as it was mentioned above, uses her portrait – a drawing – in each issue; *The Hustle* does the same at the end of each newsletter – see Picture 4). On the third anniversary of *The Hustle* the GIF-animation was devoted to the whole team – smiling and positive faces (drawing-like pictures, see Picture 5).



Picture 4: The Hustle and Brain Pickings' faces

Source: The author's email-box, 19th of April, 2019.



Picture 5: The Hustle's team celebrates 3 years of the newsletter

Source: The author's email-box, 19th of April, 2019.

Conclusion – Immersivity: How To create “Anatmosphere” and to Support Permanent Interest

Immersion or immersivity as a goal of mass-media production was well described in the early 2010-s.¹¹ Applying the term “immersivity” to our material, we can suppose that the email channel opens the opportunity to reanimate “outdated” ways of communication (“mass media” approach) in this type of “interpersonal communication”. These communication tactics were quite popular during mass media past history. The new features of the same tactics can now be described as a combination of technically advanced design and “vintage” style communication.

11 See the bibliography of this topic: NOVIKOVA, A. A., KIRIJA, I. V.: Transformations of Journalism in the Context of Cultural and Communicative Practices. In BEREZHNAJA, M. (ed.): *Estetikaz hurnalistiki*. Sankt-Peterburg : Aleteja, 2018, p. 39-52.

“Immersivity” (or even “dependence” to this or that media consumption) works because “old-fashion” technologies can be accepted as “top-fashion”. An email-box, where the user can find what she or he likes, is a “material evidence” of connectivity and inclusion in “common life”, and at the same time the way to organize one’s personal and unique world. When reading and watching the newsletter, the user gets an experience of total immersion (she/he becomes completely involved in the text). Traditional newspapers always used this approach (in analytical articles, for example, with a detailed investigation of the topic). But in “paper newspapers” many articles competed for the reader’s attention. In newsletters, there is one story and one plot (and even if there are several stories, they are combined by a special style which provides the immersivity effect). Analyzing newsletters, one can see how this style is “made” from the retro-aesthetic of mass-media, which is reanimated in these “column-like” texts and images in the subscribers’ email-boxes.

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“LOST IN (HYPER) SPACE” / MEDIA EDUCATION, LITERACY AND LANGUAGE



**MEGATRENDS
AND MEDIA**

DIGITAL UNIVERSE

MEDIA EDUCATION THROUGH THE CONCEPT OF LEARNING-BY-DOING

Lubica Bôtošová

ABSTRACT:

Theoretical scientific study called Media Education through the concept of learning-by-doing describes the theoretical background in the field of media education, school and student media as a form of implementation of the concept of learning-by-doing in informal education in the field of media education. Furthermore, it deals with the definition of school and student media, in which these terms are different and what they have a general definition. School magazines are an integral part of practical training and therefore we focus on their occurrence in educational institutions and classify them in high school and university journals or e-magazines. At the end of the thesis we present their characteristics, but also the challenges they face and the particularities of these media.

KEY WORDS:

learning-by-doing, medial education, school magazines, school media, student media

1 Introduction

The study focuses on the concept of learning-by-doing as a form of applying media education to the educational process at secondary schools and universities in Slovakia. The main goal is to define the terminology of student media as a means to educate media education through practical learning - learning-by-doing. We are looking for answers to the differences in two at first sight synonymous terms: school and student media. One of the most frequent media in secondary schools and universities is the magazine, so we decided to give them space in this scientific study. We will deal with the characteristics of high school and university magazines. We will point out the differences that exist between them. In the preparation of a scientific study, we focused primarily on the area of magazines in print form at secondary schools, we are working with data from the slovak national competition of secondary school students and university students in journalism called Štúrovo pero. It is a nationwide competition that celebrates its 25th anniversary in 2019 and that is the reason why we consider the 2018 registered journals as a relevant source of information. Since Štúrovo pero has a

long-term high number of registered journals and journalistic speeches in several categories. In developing a scientific study we use logical procedures such as induction, deduction, generalization, comparison and categorization. We will use the knowledge gained from the literature in the following comparison with information about magazines from the competition Štúrovo pero. The study summarizes the relevant literature so far. It is based on available scientific knowledge about media education, the concept learning-by-doing, student media and information about secondary school and university journals. This issue is widespread because of different types of media exist in educational institutions. They are linked not only with media education but also with extracurricular activities in schools – spare time activities circles. We find several forms of media-active groups in schools. They include, for example, magazines, radios, televisions, online content on a school website or on its own online platform or blogs. Due to the wide range of issues we have decided to focus primarily on magazines.

It is important to determine the exact terminology for students or school media, what is the difference between them and what term is used in practice. The issue of student media is also interesting because of finding differences. What topics they deal with, how the editorial offices are organized and which issues they are dealing with. It is these findings, that should help educational institutions find out the importance of implementing the concept of learning-by-doing in media education.

1.1 Media Education

The process of assigning media education to the educational process in Slovakia began gradually in the 1960s.¹ M. Brestovanský describes the term media education as an education for media literacy, which should teach an individual to interpret and create messages, select media for communication and express their opinion on their outputs. Media Education seeks to raise social awareness of the media and the media world. One of the two basic goals is to teach a person to critically approach the media and help them to orient themselves in the mass media.² N. Vrabec defines media education as follows: *„It is a systematic and comprehensive process that aims to develop a qualitative change in*

1 VRABEC, N.: *Mediálna výchova: Teoretické východiská a trendy*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2013, p. 33-34.

2 BRESTOVANSKÝ, M.: *Úvod do mediálnej výchovy*. Trnava : Pedagogická fakulta Trnavskej Univerzity, 2010, p. 16.

*the individual, referred to as media literacy.*³ Media Literacy Week says media education is not looking for the right answers, it is looking for the right questions. As media problems are complex and often contradictory and controversial, the role of the educator is not to spread knowledge, but to facilitate the process of their analysis and dialogue.⁴ From this, we conclude that media education is a tool to address the mass media issue. It helps media recipients to critically analyze media content and, based on media literacy, understand or respond to it. Currently, in the Slovak Republic, media education is classified as a cross-cutting topic in accordance with applicable school legislation. It is a compulsory part of education. It is realized in three forms:

- In the first form, media education is a separate subject. One of the causes of the minimal use of this form may be the lack of qualified teachers and the absence of teaching and methodological materials.
- In the second case, media education occurs as a cross-cutting theme embedded in the content of other subjects. Given the widespread teaching of media education as a cross-curricular curriculum within the Slovak Language and Literature, V. Kačínová also mentions the issue of youth magazines. The teaching objective of this subject at the lesson is to reveal manipulative elements in magazines that impose a certain image of the ideals of girls and boys. It also includes critical assessment of content and expression, selection and responsible access to specialized periodicals.⁵ This form is compulsory for all schools. Because of the poor awareness of the issue, teachers are not giving attention to that. There are no trainings or courses.
- The third way is practical training, so-called learning-by-doing concept. It can be implemented in the media education in a form of a project, course or other practical media activity. Pupils can work on a specific media project. We also include in this category activities such as creating student magazines or creating a broadcasting for school radio, making videos for the school website, etc.⁶ Practical learning is realized in Slovakia through the active participation of students in the preparation of a content for a certain medium.

3 VRABEC, N.: *Mediálna výchova: Teoretické východiská a trendy*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2013, p. 46.

4 *What Is Media Education?* [online]. [2018-01-05]. Available at: <<https://www.medialiteracyweek.ca/about/what-is-media-education/>>.

5 KAČINOVÁ, V.: *Teória a prax mediálnej výchovy: Mediálna výchova ako súčasť všeobecného školského vzdelávania*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2015, p. 153.

6 VRABEC, N.: *Mediálna výchova: Teoretické východiská a trendy*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2013, p. 39.

1.2 Concept Learning-by-Doing

The penetration of media into the households has led to the emergence of learning-by-doing concept. At that time, it was supposed to minimize the uncritical attitude of the audience and their active participation in communication. An individual acquires information about the quality of social relationships, standards and values through the media. V. Kačínová states that the media are also a mean of informal education. The recipient chooses, accepts or rejects the media pattern. She also adds that school education in the form of media becomes a lifelong process, that is part of human life. Thus, an individual gains knowledge, skills and attitudes about the media through interaction with the media.⁷ M. Brestovanský states that media education should work on a critical-reflective basis. It should be devoted to formal learning, along with practical media training. This is called learning-by-doing or practice learning. In Slovakia, this form of education is used rather than informal learning, which is practiced besides the teaching process. Media education in this case belongs to the competence of teachers, but also of educators or social educators.⁸ At first sight, it seems that it is preferable to use only practical or experience learning form. However, it is extremely important to set up an effective and interesting strategy during classroom lectures in the form of a well-chosen concept of lessons, methods and a way of teaching. In media education, this strategy combines motivating or so-called authentic learning. It includes creative thinking, a connection with the real world, talks about important things. The basic methods of authentic learning include a trip, role playing, project teaching, reading or writing.⁹ The theoretical training of pupils and students is also important in media education. There are two principles of education, which should be combined in a critical-hermeneutic concept together and a practical one. Within the media sphere, experience is extremely challenging, especially because media is a rapidly changing area. It is also more difficult to train teachers or educators. N. Vrabcac also highlights the practicality and usability of learning-by-doing in a non-formal education, in which participants develop key competences. These include all types of practice, such as individual or group activities. The result can be the

7 KAČINOVÁ, V.: *Teoretické východiská učenia (sa) o médiách*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2018, p. 9-12.

8 BRESTOVANSKÝ, M.: *Úvod do mediálnej výchovy*. Trnava : Pedagogická fakulta Trnavskej Univerzity, 2010, p. 5.

9 PETRANOVÁ, D., VRABEC, N.: *Mediálna výchova pre učiteľov stredných škôl*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2011, p. 205-206.

promotion strategies of the institution on social networks or the creation of some form of an artwork - film or photography.¹⁰ The concept of learning-by-doing is applied to the teaching of media education through personal experience or the pupil's experience with specific media work. It can develop different life skills¹¹ and students can be used them not only in a media sphere, but also in other areas with different approaches.¹²

Productive media education is a current trend in extracurricular activities and school practice. It focuses on a learning about the media. It consists of the principle connected with a practical self-realization in the media in school. The key to getting to know it is a life-based learning, based on your own experience. However, practical work is not an automatic process. It needs to follow the teaching concepts and methods of media education.¹³ It is said in all areas, that we need to link theoretical knowledge to those empirical. University graduates without experience are uninteresting for the employer. The main reason is the speed of time and the employer does not have time to teach elementary things the applicants at work. Because of all this, there are created various school projects that are focused not only on the media sphere, but also on the development of economic or marketing skills.¹⁴ Maybe also for this reason, the learning-by-doing concept is being discussed. The idea of the concept is based on the need to acquire skills through practical experience. V. Kačínová states that the media in school education intervene in two ways:

1. as a separate subject area of media education and thus learning and teaching about the media;

10 VRABEC, N.: *Médiá a informácie v práci s mládežou*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2013, p. 46.

11 Life skills include, for example, flexibility, integrity, cooperation, responsibility, etc. (remark by the author).

12 Compare to: HUDÍKOVÁ, Z.: Current TV Production Trends in Slovakia. In: *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2017, Vol. 13, No. 6, p. 197-208; SOLÍK, M., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J., LALUHOVÁ, J.: Media as a Tool for Fostering Values in the Contemporary Society. In: *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2013, Vol. 9, No. 6, p. 71-77.

13 KAČINOVÁ, V.: Produktívne zameraná mediálna výchova ako súčasť výchovného procesu na slovenských školách. In PETRANOVÁ, D., SOLÍK, M. (eds.): *Megatrendy a médiá 2016: Kritika v médiách, kritika médií I: médiá a gramotnosť: Médiá a kreativita. Conference Proceedings*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2016, p. 94-95.

14 See the student firm: *GymCorp Gymnázia v Prešove*. [online]. [2018-01-08]. Available at: <http://www.gk2-po.sk/www/studentska_firma.html#>.

2. in the form of making available educational content from which teaching is direct or through technical equipment. In this way, the media are perceived as didactic means supporting the teaching process. It is the process of teaching and learning from the media through using the media.¹⁵

It also points out, that media as a subject of media education analysis is necessary to know on a practical level. It says about a cross-curricular teaching, where pupils can clarify media content, messages, as well as formal aspects, through the appropriate use of different types of media and practical work with them. Learning-by-doing can take the form of self-production of media content and products that cannot be provided with theoretical explanation in media education lectures. As part of the preparation and participation in practical training, students and pupils have to react creatively, individually and quickly to the emerging situations. When processing individual media content, they must select, argue, but also seek information and its context.¹⁶ This concept comes out of assumption that students are informed in the best way about the media, when they are involved in its creation. Based on the above, we believe that learning-by-doing is based on practical experiences, where students can prepare a school magazine, a short TV report, a radio program, a short video or a blog.¹⁷ Examples of practical projects involving pupils in this concept are also provided by the International Media Literacy Center (IMEC) website at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication of the University of St. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava. Students and teachers can share their ideas through the *Best Practice Examples of Media Education Teaching at Primary and Secondary Schools*¹⁸ organized by IMEC.

15 KAČINOVÁ, V.: Problém ponímania médií ako edukačných objektov verzus prostriedkov v kontexte školskej výučby. In KRÁLIK, J. (ed.): *Evropské pedagogické fórum 2017: Koncepcie vzdělávání a psychologie: Sborník příspěvků z mezinárodní vědecké konference*. Hradec Králové : Magnanimitas, 2017, p. 214-215. [online]. [2018-01-08]. Available at: <http://www.vedeckekonference.cz/library/proceedings/epf_2017.pdf/>.

16 PETRANOVÁ, D., VRABEC, N.: *Mediálna výchova pre učiteľov stredných škôl*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2011, p. 156-157.

17 *Learning-by-doing*. [online]. [2018-01-08]. Available at: <<https://medialnavychova.sk/learning-by-doing/>>.

18 The original name is *Najlepšie príklady dobrej praxe výučby mediálnej výchovy na ZŠ a SŠ* (remark by the author).

1.3 School Media

Terminological definitions, which are key to the professional analysis of the issue, represent elementary prerequisites for its success. In terms of terminology relating to school and student media, it may be assumed that these are synonymous statements. In this part of the study, we will examine and analyze their individual characteristics on the basis of literature and examples of practical use of media in an educational institutions abroad, as well as in Slovakia. School media refers to all print, audiovisual, digital and technology platforms and resources available to schools in the learning process. This includes books, e-documents, DVDs, various software platforms and systems, as well as other IT and Internet-based resources. These resources are often found in a school library, computer classroom or school media center.¹⁹ School media can be characterized as different kinds of platforms that are used by people from the school environment and are intended primarily for the internal audience. V. Kačínová states that various types of media are used in educational reality, which serve as educational resources or objects. In the past, the media in the school environment were considered to be modern and didactic teaching methods. Their task was to acquire knowledge deeper, to develop the skills and abilities of pupils. In education, it is not enough to use the media as teaching mean, they should be the subject of learning. In the process of school and non-school education, we distinguish the following types of media:

1. Print media - books, printing;
2. Auditory Media - Radio, CD;
3. Audiovisual media - film, TV, DVD;
4. New Media - Internet, digital TV, tablets, PCs and mobile phones.²⁰

The individual types of media help determine the learning process, results and effect in practice. From this, we conclude that school media refer to a whole range of activities, resources and opportunities to improve teaching in all subjects, but it is also a form of innovation of the learning process initiated by the teacher. The teacher is an important distinguishing element in this case. When teachers engage students in making media production with video cameras or computers, they can stimulate students' interest in the subject. They build communication

19 *School Media*. [online]. [2018-01-07]. Available at: <<https://teach.com/what/teachers-know/school-media/>>.

20 KAČINOVÁ, V.: *Teoretické východiská učenia (sa) o médiách*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2018, p. 28.

skills and critical thinking, support political activism or personal and social development.²¹ B. Goldfarb suggests that the potential strength of such a form of teaching and media supports students and increases their level of interactivity and critical thinking. „*Media production is an important means of creating student engagement in the creation of agencies, authorities and knowledge, and the main goal is to support a concrete pedagogical approach that maximizes student media production potential in addressing gender, sexuality, national and cultural identity.*”²² To sum up, practical or better said experience education benefits students not only in the field of media education, but also in elementary life competences. It can contribute to enriching their skills and competences in social, economic, marketing, as well as psychological areas and many others.

1.4 Student Media

Student media is listed individually on publicly available school or university web portals. This means that they present different types of media at school or university. To illustrate this fact, there are examples of foreign universities: „*New York University (NYU) is proud to host a large mix of student media - from traditional magazines and independent newspapers to robust online publications and a full radio station.*”²³ In addition, for example, the University of Alabama in Birmingham (UAB): „*UAB students run all types of media. Articles, news reports and opinions are exclusively publications of students, producers, editors, DJs, etc. They do not reflect the opinion of the university, its administrators, or student media advisors.*”²⁴ Bowling Green State University v Ohio (BGSU) states: „*These organizations will help you complement your classroom experience with real-world experiences, make friends, and create professional contacts. You can join BGSU as a freshman or an exchange student.*”²⁵

21 HOBBS, R. A.: Review of School-based Initiatives in Media Literacy Education. In *American Behavioral Scientist*, 2004, Vol. 48, No. 1, p. 42.

22 GOLDFARB, B.: *Visual Pedagogy: Media Cultures in and beyond the Classroom*. Durham, NC : Duke University Press, 2002, p. 13.

23 *Student Media*. [online]. [2018-01-07]. Available at: <<https://www.nyu.edu/students/getting-involved/clubs-and-organizations/student-media.html>>.

24 *UAB Student Media. Knowledge That Will Change Your World*. [online]. [2018-01-07]. Available at: <<https://www.uab.edu/studentmedia/>>.

25 *Student Media*. [online]. [2018-01-07]. Available at: <<https://www.bgsu.edu/arts-and-sciences/media-and-communication/journalism-and-public-relations/student-media.html/>>.

When we talk about the form of media presentation in Slovak schools, the situation is a little more varied. They mark them on the official home university website as faculty media,²⁶ student media,²⁷ but in several cases media belong under the media centers. Their site does not more precisely define them as school or student.²⁸ From the above, we can say that student media act as a complement to the classroom learning process. Through this form of teaching, students can gain insight into the work of the media, beginning from the work of an editor, technician, moderator to the position of dramaturge, graphic designer or marketing specialist. In this way, they expand their knowledge, in the form of acquiring experience from the media practice. In addition, they are learning to work with colleagues and often make contacts with experts or relevant respondents during their studies. Student media does not have to be school. They can work alongside schools, student or university dormitories, student organizations, or student groups with similar interests. In these media are primarily young people, who may or may not be led by a school teacher or a person in charge of the school media. They are not officially subject to leadership control, but the institution is not responsible for student content creation. The responsible person should only direct the operation of the periodical, broadcast or content in the medium. A. Burn and J. Durran use the term „school media production“ in this context. These are non-commercial communication platforms in printed, digital or audiovisual form. Their primary audience are students and teachers of the relevant school, and on the second place, but larger one, is the local community. The prerequisite for a true audience is the fact that the participants predict the interests, needs and desires of the audience. They should learn to conceptualize the audience as social groups that distinguish them from the closest contexts of media consumption, especially family and peers.²⁹ In this aspect, there can be a fundamental difference between the term school media and student media.

26 *FMK UCM*. [online]. [2018-01-05]. Available at: <www.fmk.sk>.

27 *Katedra komunikačných a mediálnych štúdií*. [online]. [2018-01-05]. Available at: <<https://www.unipo.sk/filozoficka-fakulta/ismks/katedry/komunikacne-medialne-studia>>.

28 *Mediálne centrum*. [online]. [2018-01-05]. Available at: <<https://www.paneurouni.com/pevs/sluzby/medialne-centrum/>>.

29 BURN, A., DURRAN, J.: *Media Literacy in Schools: Practice, Production and Progression*. London : Paul Chapman, 2007, p. 59.

2 Results

The most frequent way of the learning-by-doing concept of media education in schools is to create a magazine from and it is also caused from a historical perspective. The advantage is easy availability and the possibility of unlimited time-space usage. In didactics, magazines are also distinguished by making it easier to remember it, because they can be retrieved later. Newspapers are a collection of information from different areas of social life that reaches readers at regular intervals (when we talk about periodicals). In addition, participants in this form of learning-by-doing concept will learn critically access and evaluate content from media education. By creating and preparing news and journalistic contributions, students can understand the essence of the journalistic profession in printed periodicals in practice.³⁰ There is no complete database of school magazines in Slovakia with their specific media outputs. We consider this issue to be unexplored, and for this reason, we are dealing with it in this scientific study. As a primary indicator and form of processing of existing magazines operating at secondary schools and universities, we consider the database of participants of the journalistic competition called Štúrovo pero 2018.

On the website of the Regional Library of Ľudovít Štúr in Zvolen it is stated, that it is a nationwide journalistic competition of secondary school students and university students, which was founded in 1993. The founder of the competition Štúrovo pero J. M. Pinka was based on the fact that Ľudovít Štúr was an excellent speaker, writer and journalist. Because of this reason, Štúrov Zvolen was enriched by a journalistic competition for young journalists - Štúrovo Pero. The Regional Library in Zvolen has been coordinating this project since 1994. It is supported by many partners, from a financial, professional and organizational point of view. The competition has become the most prestigious event for secondary schools and university students in Slovakia.³¹ It is announced annually in several categories. The positive fact is that the contestants are not only imaginatively measuring journalistic skills in individual categories. They can send their journalistic speeches or articles to the competition and get a feedback from jurors during the evaluation. In 2018, 72 schools with

30 KAČINOVÁ, V.: *Teoretické východiská učenia (sa) o médiách*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2018, p. 30-31.

31 *Štúrovo pero*. [online]. [2018-01-05]. Available at: <<http://www.kskls.sk/stranka/sturovo-pero/o-sturovom-pere/>>.

their magazines from all over Slovakia entered the category of secondary school magazines. Last year, the jurors were P. Vitko, P. Herman and L. Diko. They created a document summarizing the year 2018. According to them, editors can express their opinion, process news and journalistic outputs from various areas - schools, towns, school events and trips. In school magazines, the jury also highlighted the journalistic genre of the interview, where the editorial office deals with problematic issues related to the school. They are thematically oriented towards regional politics, important Slovak personalities, anniversaries, but also topics such as extremism and student protests. The most frequent topics are: young people's lives, their interests, journeys and professors.

The jury also stated in its opinion an example of problematic areas of school media and that is providing a proper graphic design. The magazine *S3GA* from Nitra had a graphic design from professional company, but the jury evaluated it as non-student. They also criticized the ambition of educators, in the case of the *VITA* magazine from Prešov, who contributed more to the magazine than students. They urged them to give the creative work to students.³² Internet is also connected with the creation of magazines. Internet connection has expanded in Slovak schools in recent years. However, for a learning-by-doing teaching concept this is not enough. It is necessary to buy software for wrapping and graphic design for the creation of a classic magazine in print form. In addition, it is a challenge for educational institutions to ensure the cost of printing a periodical. If the school decides to publish the online form of a magazine, these costs are lost. The advantage of online publishing is the ability to update content, add videos, surveys, and hyperlinks.³³ There are several e-magazines in Slovakia, which are presented in Chart 1. It is important to note that there may exist some more in Slovakia, but there are not mentioned in our table. We present only the registered school platforms at the Štúrovo Pero 2018 competition. We are giving them as an example in the category of e-magazines, as proof that this form of media output also gets into the Slovak school environment.

32 *Vyhodnotenie celoslovenskej novinárskej súťaže stredoškôľakov a vysokoškôľakov štúrovo pero 2018*. [online]. [2018-01-05]. Available at: <<http://www.kskls.sk/stranka/sturovo-pero/o-sturovom-pere/>>.

33 PETRANOVÁ, D., VRABEC, N.: *Mediálna výchova pre učiteľov stredných škôl*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2011, p. 156-157.

Table 1: List of electronic media at secondary schools and universities in Slovakia registered at Štúrovo pero 2018

TITLE	ADDRESS	LINK
BONUS	Business Academy, Šurany	http://bonus.skolskenoviny.sk
Gaudeo	University of ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Faculty of Mass Media Communication	www.gaudeo.sk
Genezis	Secondary School of Mass Media and Information Studies, Bratislava	www.Genezis.sk
GrössLink	Secondary Grammar School, Ul. Grösslingova 18, Bratislava	http://grosslink.gamca.sk/
Heuréka	Secondary Grammar School of P. J. Šafárik, Rožňava	http://heurekagpjs.eu
INTRÁK	Sports Gymnasium, School Domitory, Trenčín	www.sportgymtn.sk
Nofiny	Private Secondary Art School of Film, Košice	http://nofiny.online/
Nový Blesk	Sports Gymnasium of J. Herdu, Ul. J. Bottu 31, 917 87 Trnava	www.novyblesk.sk
Občas nečas	Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra,	obcasnecas.ukf.sk
Rozhľad TV	Secondary Grammar School, Považská Bystrica	https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDPE36E7YdIafmCrvwNNLhQ
Unipo Press	The University of Prešov, Prešov	http://unipo-press.sk/

Source: Regional Library of Ludovít Štúr in Zvolen

According to A. Tušer, the main mission of school magazines is to satisfy the side of information, thematic, interest, opinion, rest, but also recessistic interests of the recipients.³⁴ From the organizational point of view, the term school media means a group of people creating media content intended primarily for recipients from the educational institution. Pupils are involved in the creative process to prepare the media content designed for informing their classmates or teachers on a voluntary basis. The basic motivational rating can be some acquired skills, competencies, but also the creation of an image of the functioning

34 TUŠER, A.: *Vydávame školský časopis*. Zvolen : Krajská knižnica L. Štúra vo Zvolene, 2005, p. 3.

media in a real life, as well as their problems encountered in practice. Students can also consider the national competition Štúrovo Pero as a motivational assessment. Magazines also work at universities. Of these, participants in the 2018 contest featured Erasmus + themes as they celebrated the 30th anniversary. In university magazines, they deal with both social and student themes, but they are solving them in a different way. In 2018, university magazines also dealt with graphic design issues at a professional level. Interestingly, the jury composed of L. Milan, V. Kulichová and J. Bednár highlighted the quality of non-professional journalistic school magazines. It is said to be comparable, if not better.³⁵ In Chart 2 you will find a list of enrolled schools. Neither of them was given the first place. The second place was won by *Farmakoviny* – a magazine of the Slovak Pharmacy Students Association. The editorial staff maintains a high standard not only in graphic design, but also in a content. Contributions are often very professional, they are also attractive for lay people. At the same time, they provide practical and professional information to students of pharmacy. In this way, it fulfills the role of a school magazine because it answers the questions the students want to hear. The third place was taken by the *atteliér* – the journal of the Faculty of Mass Media Communication UCM in Trnava. *Atteliér* has a high quality, even professional theme processing, uses infographics, adheres to journalistic standards and maintains the main topic of the exact issue in all content. *ZUMAG* – a magazine of students of the Faculty of Arts of the KU in Ružomberok – also won the third place. This magazine won for thematic and genre diversity, mastering journalism, as well as adhering to the main theme in a majority of the whole content.

Table 2: Category of university journals registered in Štúrovo pero 2018

Title of the magazine	University
<i>atteliér</i>	University of ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Námestie J. Herdu 2, 917 01 Trnava
<i>Corpus Delicti</i>	University of Trnava, Faculty of Law, Ul. Kollárova 10, 917 01 Trnava
<i>farmakoviny</i>	Slovak association of Pharmacy students, Comenius University in Bratislava, Faculty of Pharmacy, Ul. Odbojárov 10, 832 32 Bratislava

35 *Vyhodnotenie celoslovenskej novinárskej súťaže stredoškólkov a vysokoškólkov štúrovo pero 2018*. [online]. [2018-01-05]. Available at: <<http://www.kskls.sk/stranka/sturovo-pero/o-sturovom-pere/>>.

<i>Občas NEČAS</i>	Student Parliament of Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Trieda A. Hlinku 1, 949 01 Nitra
<i>Radikál</i>	Slovak Technical University in Bratislava, Faculty of Chemical and Food Technology, Ul. Radlinského 9, 812 37 Bratislava
<i>ŠKRT</i>	Slovak Technical University in Bratislava, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Námestie slobody 17, 812 31 Bratislava
<i>Univerzál</i>	Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice, Ul. Šrobárova 2, 040 59 Košice
<i>Zumag</i>	Catholic University in Ružomberok, Hrabovská cesta 1B, 034 01 Ružomberok

Source: Regional Library of Ľudovít Štúr in Zvolen

3 Discussion

Based on the study of the professional literature and critical evaluation of individual definitions from various authors, together with an analysis of the actual form of formal websites, on which school media are presented, we concluded that school media differ from students in several factors. The main features are summarized in these points:

1. The school media represent all the print, audiovisual, digital and technology platforms and resources available for schools in the learning process. Teachers and pupils use them, for example, to demonstrate issues related to a given lesson or subject, to develop practical skills, etc.
2. The school medium can be seen as any innovative form of education, not just in the media field. These may be use for non-commercial or commercial communications and technology platforms in printed, digital or audiovisual form, particularly for the educational process in a school environment.
3. Student media are non-commercial communications platforms in printed, digital or audiovisual form. Their audience primarily consist of the students and teachers of the relevant school, and the larger community in the secondary.
4. Student media represent a form of school or extracurricular student activity. They work alongside schools, student dormitories, student organizations, but also in an extracurricular environment where they are covered by initiative groups of students with similar interests.

5. The student media is made up of students who may or may not be led by a teacher or an authorized person from the school environment. They are not officially subject to leadership control, but the institution is not responsible for student content creation. The responsible person should only direct the operation of the periodical, broadcast and content in the medium.
6. The common characteristic feature of school and student media is the learning-by-doing experience concept, in which participants can learn the issues of the area by their own experience. The diversity of functions and competences that students can acquire also has a positive impact.

This division answers the first research question that was given in the introduction of this scientific study. The second was dedicated to the characteristics of journals operating at educational institutions. Based on the generalization of the acquired theoretical knowledge and the analysis of materials from the national competition Štúrovo pero, we have found that among the characteristics of secondary school magazines we include:

- that in practice, in the area of school magazines, the mentor of a teacher or a responsible person is appreciated, not the interference with the content by teachers and members of the teaching staff;
- sometimes less means more; graphic processing that does not match the quality and character of the periodical is not a good choice;
- student topics are very popular in the content of the school magazines: events, trips, school problems, etc;
- magazines are gradually getting more information from the city, region, social issues;
- students also pay attention to genres such as: reportage, review and interview.

Talking about university magazines, evaluation criteria, but especially the processing, and the focus is different. It is necessary to pay attention to the graphic design, to analyze the topic and also to focus on the main topic of the given number so that its readers can understand it. The jury in the competition appreciates the genre and thematic variety. This fact tells us about the necessity of a journalist to know basic journalistic genres and to apply them in practice. By comparing the two categories of magazines, we can say that the topics are similar. They are dedicated to student or student life, topics, trips, school events. The difference is in their processing quality and depth. It is evident that the secondary school

magazine lacks better orientation in journalistic genres, as university students had this positively highlighted in the evaluation. In secondary school magazines we can talk about the need to alert the teacher to his / her position as a mentor and not a contributor to the magazine. We realize that using data from the Štúrovo Pero 2018 competition, may not be enough, but there is no information about participants from previous years on the library website. We appreciate the positive evaluation of the jury's comments from the competition, and on the basis of theoretical knowledge, together with those practical ones, we redefined the characteristics of secondary school and university magazines. They also have different characteristics based on the different needs of the generation of students at secondary schools and universities. Student media should also be an object of interest in the future. Primarily, because we are not terminologically and also practically able to comment the real functioning of the editorial office in schools, the form of distribution of the printed version of the magazines and the method of remuneration. Many questions also arise in a relation to other student media, such as the school radio. It can be an information medium operating at the educational institution, but also a student medium serving students or pupils to implement practical teaching. We can only wonder, under which conditions school radio will become a student radio studio. The methodology of working with student media is extremely challenging because schools can but also do not have to present them on their website. The only option is to watch competitions, whether country, regional or national in various categories (radio, television and magazine) and to find out how many and what student media in Slovakia exists.

Conclusion

The presented scientific study focused on the concept of learning-by-doing as a form of applying media education to the educational process at secondary schools and universities in Slovakia. The main goal was to find out the terminology of student media as a means of educating media education through practical learning-by-doing. Student media is a form of informal learning, or extracurricular activities that work alongside student organizations, dormitories, schools. Officially, they are not subject to leadership control, but responsible persons or educators, for example, can choose to help them select topics, respondents' recommendations, and so on. Student media is also used for the external presentation of the educational institution in the online space. For the concept of learning-

by-doing within media education, we can use the term school media, which is a generalized form of student media. As a school medium, we can consider any innovative form of education in printed, digital or audiovisual form, for the sole purpose of teaching. It serves during the educational process and is used as a mean of demonstrating the problem by teachers. In a practice, however, the term „school magazines“ is well established. Because it is already named on the basis of a name in community media, which talks about the problems of a group of people gathered in an educational institution - school.

The study summarizes the relevant literature so far, which was addressed in Slovakia in a connection with media education by N. Vrabec, D. Petranová, M. Brestovanský. Authors who are dedicated to this topic from abroad were A. Burn and J. Durran, B. Goldfarb and R. A. Hobbs. The issue of student magazines and everything around them is dealt with for a long time by A. Tušer. We consider the publication „We publish a school magazine,“ because it is a guide for students with advice and guidance or examples, how to properly create this student medium. Štúrovo Pero is a competition that has in 2019 a tradition of twenty-five years in Slovakia. Therefore, we considered the 2018 subscription journal a relevant source of information. Based on the evaluation documents in the individual categories and the analysis of the awarded magazines, we found common and different features in secondary schools and university magazines. The topics students deal with are similar. Student life, trips, events, topics that are currently resonating in society. The difference is in their quality of genre purity and depth of processing. In secondary school magazine, the person responsible - the teacher can get into the content creator, but this has to be regulated. Student media are not school ones. Content creates a group of students. In this contribution we have characterized the basic features of school and student media in a relation to the concept of learning-by-doing. In practice, the term „school media“ is used as a general characteristic, but if we are talking about a certain group of media that belongs to an educational institution, they are student media. We also dealt with the issue of magazines at secondary schools and universities, primarily paying attention to the participants of the Štúrovo pero 2018 competition. We identified the differences between the two categories and briefly mentioned the issues that the editors have to address in the core of the work. It is, for example, the financial difficulty of printing, graphic processing and the lack of professional experience of the responsible person, poor technical equipment of the school or the absence of software for graphic design

of the magazine. Let us also remind the frequent fluctuation of students at secondary schools. Student media is an important part of life in educational institutions. It is crucial to know how the theoretical level overlaps with the practical one. They also have an irreplaceable role as a form of teaching or complement to classical theoretical interpretation.

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THE THEME OF HEALTHY LIFESTYLE IN CHILDREN'S MAGAZINES AS AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO THE PREVENTION OF MORBIDITY IN THE WORLD'S POPULATION

Danuša Faktorová

ABSTRACT:

According to world experts, obesity is currently a more serious problem than malnutrition. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), more than 1.9 billion adults were overweight in 2014, of whom 600 million had obesity that is considered a chronic disease which achieves epidemic proportions. The same WHO report states that in Europe overweight in children under 5 is 12.4%. WHO has set a worldwide target for reducing the number of obese persons by 2025 to the levels of the year 2010. The aim of this article is to pursue an interdisciplinary approach to prevention and health protection. The main objective in this context was to analyse children's magazines, to what extent they do or do not play a role in disease prevention and promoting a healthy lifestyle. The research was conducted on a sample of 107 European and some non-European children's magazines. Research suggests that only 8,41% of children's magazines publish articles on the topic of health and healthy lifestyle. Another research that focused on reading frequency of various texts shows that 40% of respondents and almost 16.7% of readers read articles with the subject matter. Research has shown that there is a big difference between the low interest of children's magazine editors to publish articles on the subject of health and a healthy lifestyle and the strong interest of readers in these topics. Researches give information and, consequently, opportunities for practice, to include articles on children's health and healthy lifestyle in children's magazines, thereby engaging in an interdisciplinary approach to addressing global health.

KEY WORDS:

disease prevention, healthy lifestyle, children's magazines, reading frequency

1 Situation According to the World Health Organization

A healthy lifestyle is not a fashion hit, but a necessity. According to world experts, obesity is currently a more serious problem than malnutrition. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), more than 1.9 billion adults were overweight in 2014, of whom 600 million had obesity that is considered a chronic disease which achieves epidemic proportions. The same WHO report states that in Europe overweight in children under 5 is 12.4%. WHO has set a worldwide target for reducing the number of

obese persons by 2025 to the levels of the year 2010. «The prevalence of obesity, type 2 diabetes, and metabolic syndrome has increased over the past half a century in an enormous way. While 130 years ago 1.7% of the fortyish were overweight, today it is 60% and the same proportion has diabetes mellitus of type 2. The proportion of obesity in children has risen to 20%.¹ Experts see “non-alcoholic liver disease as one of the most common causes of liver disease and liver fibrosis.”² To put it simply: Not alcohol, but fat most often threatens the liver as one of the most important organs in the human body. However, overweight and obesity are also damaging to other vital organs - particularly the heart and vessels. “Half to $\frac{2}{3}$ of the population today are dying from the wrong nutrition, lack of exercise, excessive stress, ignorance of the need for targeted relaxation or social absence of knowledge of all this. “³ And where to seek for knowledge? In which stages of life? Questions should be asked whether it is the most effective to inform adults who can knowingly influence their behaviour, including eating or movement; or is that even children who need to be informed and influenced, the habits and attitudes of which are still being formed. It is also important to answer the question which are the information channels the way to health and a healthy lifestyle leads through.

2 Children’s Magazines in European and Some Non-European Countries and Their Attitude to Health and Healthy Lifestyles Themes

According to P. Šturák, the basic educators of personality development include: school, family, church, child and youth organizations, social groups and mass media.⁴ He thus points to the importance of mass media in personality shaping. At the same time, it should be emphasized that

1 SZÁNTOVÁ, M.: NAFLD a metabolický syndróm. In *Interná medicína. Recenzovaný, postgraduálne zameraný odborný lekársky časopis*, 2015, No. 7-8, p. 359.

2 FAKTOROVÁ, X., SZÁNTOVÁ, M.: Neinvazívne skórovacie indexy fibrózy u pacientov s nealkoholovou tukovou chorobou pečene. In *Recenzovaný zborník príspevků Mezinárodní Masarykove konference MMK 2018. Conference Proceedings*. Hradec Králové : Magnanimitas, 2018, p. 1134-1142.

3 SZÁNTOVÁ, M.: NAFLD a metabolický syndróm. In *Interná medicína. Recenzovaný, postgraduálne zameraný odborný lekársky časopis*, 2015, No. 7-8, p. 361.

4 ŠTURÁK, P.: Výchovné činitele rozvoja osobnosti. In *Theologos: Teologická revue*, 2005, Vol. 6, No. 1, p. 187-199.

“to be effective means to effectively and efficiently use journalistic time and space in the newspaper area, to obtain (or activate) the recipient for his or her editorial intent with the quality of the journalistic expression.”⁵ This is true for journalist acts or editorial work in general. However, it is as early as in the childhood where a man gains the most of the habits and attitudes in. A positive and active attitude towards sport, health and a healthy lifestyle is created mainly in the family, school, but the important role can also be attributed to the mass media in accordance with P. Šturák. In this context, an important question arises - whether publishers and editors of children’s magazines are or are not interested in publishing themes focused on healthy lifestyle. We have subjected 107 mainly European but also some non-European children’s magazines to a quantitative and qualitative analysis. We have followed themes of sports, healthy eating, health and a healthy lifestyle in them. We have quantified their scope within the analysed journals.

Table 1: Topic of sport, health and a healthy lifestyle in European and some non-European children’s magazines

MAGAZINE NAME	STATE OF ISSUE OR DISTRIBUTION	ISSN / ISBN / IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	NUMBER OF PAGES	SPORT AND HEALTH
Barbapapa	Belgium	N/A	36	0,00%
Nickjr.doeboek (Denksport)	Belgium	8710835815947	52	0,00%
Speelboek (Denksport)	Belgium	8710835813783	100	0,00%
Arti	Bulgaria	ISBN: 977-131-276-411-9	44	0,00%
Baraban	Bulgaria	N/A	24	0,00%
Brborino	Bulgaria	ISSN: 1312-2851	40	0,00%
Maša i Mečoka	Bulgaria	ISSN: 2367-6604	24	0,00%
Pčelica	Bulgaria	ISSN: 1312-5303	28	0,00%
Zanimavko	Bulgaria	N/A	16	0,00%
Xekoykoy	Cyprus	5282967004953	16	0,00%
Čtyřlístek	Czechia	ISSN: 1213-0141	28	0,00%
Materídouška	Czechia	ISSN: 0025-5440	48	0,00%
Matýsek	Czechia	ISBN: 121-358-100-9	36	0,00%
Pastelka	Czechia	ISSN: 1212-646003	50	0,00%

5 TUŠER, A.: *Ako sa robia noviny*. Bratislava : Eurokódex, 2010, p. 179.

MEGATRENDS AND MEDIA

Sluníčko	Czechia	ISSN: 0231-7222	44	0,00%
Ribica	Monte Negro	ISBN: 977-18-4582-300-0	36	0,00%
Anders and junior	Denmark	ISSN: 1904-6510	36	0,00%
Kvik kids	Denmark	ISBN: 570-892-100-230-5	52	0,00%
Winx	Denmark	ISSN: 1901-2128	68	0,00%
Filly	Finland	ISSN: 2242-1963	36	0,00%
Moviestar planet	Finland	ISBN: 488-501-908-6	36	0,00%
Pets	Finland	ISSN: 1798-6060	36	0,00%
Astrapi	France	ISSN: 0220-1186	48	0,00%
P'tit Loup	France	ISSN: 0997-3745	76	0,00%
Titi	France	ISSN: 1964-9150	36	0,00%
Wapiti	France	ISSN: 0984-2314	52	0,00%
Filly	Greece	ISBN:977-179-286-500-9	36	0,00%
Bobo	Netherlands	ISBN: 871-084-152-003-3	24	0,00%
Plus Penny	Netherlands	ISBN: 871-086-510-103-4	44	0,00%
Sesamstraat	Netherlands	ISBN: 871-084-162-002-3	28	0,00%
Tina	Netherlands	ISBN: 871-084-122-004-9	40	0,00%
Zapp Lente	Netherlands	ISBN: 90-77119-17-5	52	0,00%
Bojanka	Croatia	nie je uvedené	20	0,00%
Dječji klub	Croatia	ISSN: 1330-1349	52	1,92%
Dječji zabavnik	Croatia	ISBN: 977-184-782-300-8	76	5,26%
Junior Extra	Croatia	ISSN: 1332-3881	68	0,00%
Škrinjica	Croatia	ISSN: 1334-8080	28	0,00%
Zagonetke	Croatia	ISBN: 977-133-470-200-7	20	0,00%
Paw Patrol	Ireland	ISSN: 2396-9555	44	0,00%
Bing	Ireland	ISSN: 2056-3590	36	0,00%
Mebae	Japan	ISSN: 4910010570294	96	2,08%
Bitute	Lithuania	ISSN: 1648-0880	36	0,00%
Dambo	Latvia	ISSN: 1407-0464	36	0,00%
Kipars	Latvia	ISSN: 2029-2945	24	0,00%
Spicite	Latvia	ISSN: 1691-0540	32	0,00%
Peppa Pig	Luxemburg	M 05779-6-F	40	0,00%
Ablakképek	Hungary	N/A	32	0,00%
Dormogo Domotor	Hungary	ISSN: 0230-1032	36	0,00%

Kifestó	Hungary	N/A	35	0,00%
Dóra	Hungary	ISSN: 2062-4433	28	0,00%
Kis Fules	Hungary	ISSN: 0239-1457	100	0,00%
Mia and Me	Moldova	ISBN: 978-606-651-110-0	26	0,00%
Neposeda	Moldova	ISSN: 1991-0568	32	0,00%
Basteln mit Kindern	Germany	ISBN: 419-626-530-250-1	48	0,00%
Benjamin Blumchen	Germany	ISBN: 419-855-650-230-009	36	0,00%
Bummi	Germany	ISBN: 419-912-700-230-4	40	0,00%
Diddl	Germany	ISBN: 419-541-490-250-0	52	0,00%
Lowenzahn	Germany	ISBN: 419-511-840-230-6	36	0,00%
Pettersson und Findus	Germany	ISBN: 419-585-670-240-9	36	0,00%
Pumucki	Germany	ISBN: 419-489-490-260-406	36	0,00%
Rätsels pas	Germany	ISBN: 419-613-760-199-2	34	0,00%
Tabaluga	Germany	ISBN: 419-484-130-230-3	44	4,55%
Wissens Rätsel	Germany	ISBN: 378-861-322-X	36	0,00%
Dora	Norway	ISBN: 702-306-021-815-7	36	0,00%
Moshi monsters	Norway	ISBN: 978-820-241-659-1	20	0,00%
Naucz mnie mamo	Poland	ISBN: 978-837-316-731-5	16	0,00%
Truskawkowe Ciastko	Poland	ISSN: 2083-1234	24	0,00%
Zabawy z Tygryskiem	Poland	ISSN: 1640-2286	32	0,00%
Trabalhos manuais	Portugal	ISBN: 772-710-101-5	36	0,00%
Comunicare	Romania	ISBN: 973-706-082-2	42	0,00%
Incepe meciul!	Romania	ISBN: 978-606-602-579-9	20	0,00%
Benny	Romania	ISSN: 1843-5947	36	0,00%
Cei trei purcelusi	Romania	N/A	36	0,00%
Playmobil	Romania	ISSN: 2501-1421	36	0,00%
Jocuri creative	Romania	ISBN: 978-837-962-387-7	28	0,00%
Trolii	Romania	ISSN: 2451-4632	32	0,00%
Maleńkie akademiki	Russia	ISSN: 2313-4666	20	0,00%

PoniMaška	Russia	ISSN: 1995-8145	28	0,00%
Uchtyška	Russia	ISSN: 2412-3617	36	0,00%
Maxík	Slovakia	ISSN: 1336-5029	32	3,13%
Zvonček	Slovakia	ISSN: 1336-6963	24	4,17%
Boni	Slovenia	ISBN: 977-185-401-800-8	48	0,00%
Cicido	Slovenia	ISSN: 0350-8870	36	0,00%
Duhec	Slovenia	ISBN: 977-131-891-001-5	52	0,00%
Junior extra	Slovenia	ISSN: 1332-3881	70	0,00%
Zmajček	Slovenia	ISSN: 1318-7449	64	0,00%
Boomerang	Serbia	ISSN: 1820-2772	76	1,32%
Igraonica	Serbia	ISBN: 977-133-473-400-8	28	0,00%
Zabavnik	Serbia	ISSN: 2217-4265	68	2,94%
Animais	Spain	ISSN: 2014-8976	36	0,00%
Peppa	Spain	ISSN: 2254-9358	36	0,00%
Pettson och Findus	Sweden	ISSN: 1652-6147	24	0,00%
Pyssel & Knap	Sweden	ISBN: 738-824-740-390-1	68	0,00%
Giocolandia	Italy	ISSN: 1972-4020	48	0,00%
Pico	Italy	ISSN: 1973-6428	36	0,00%
Caillou	Turkey	ISSN: 1309-7652	28	0,00%
Cocuk	Turkey	ISSN: 1301-2797	52	0,00%
Panini	Turkey	ISSN: 2148-8444	36	0,00%
Kenguru	Ukraine	ISBN: 482-013-047-016-2	60	0,00%
Girls	USA	ISSN: 1535-3230	68	2,94%
Favourites	Great Britain	ISBN: 977-14-6163-000-6	32	0,00%
Fifi	Great Britain	ISSN: 1747-437X	24	0,00%
Mizz	Great Britain	ISBN: 977-095-501-199-4	84	0,00%
Princess	Great Britain	ISSN: 1462-7345	32	0,00%
Art	Great Britain	ISSN: 977-175-759-602317	36	0,00%

Source: own processing

An analysis of 107 magazines for pre-school and younger school children shows that only 8, 41% of them publish the topic of sports, health and healthy lifestyle. In those journals that publish the topic of health, the amount of space allocated to it ranges from 1.32 to 5.26%. Up to 91.59%

of the analysed magazines for children are not interested in spreading a healthy lifestyle awareness and thus contributing to the health of the population.

3 National Action Program

National programs are being developed in different countries following the information and objectives of the World Health Organization. A document called National action plan for prevention of obesity for the years 2015 - 2025 has been elaborated in Slovakia.⁶ “Recent estimates show that there is approximately 2.8 million deaths annually as a consequence of causes related to overweight and obesity in the EU.”⁷ The results of the EHES study - European Health Examination Survey - Health Detection of the Europeans in the Slovak Republic in the adult population in 2011, 13-15% of children aged 11 to 15 years suffered from obesity in Slovakia, 20% in the age group of 18-24 years from overweight, 41.74% of people from 55 to 64 years from obesity, 25.6% of the group from 18 to 64 years are suffering from obesity and 36.2% from overweight.⁸ At the same time, a healthy lifestyle can significantly reduce these alarming figures. The national plan for the prevention of obesity for the years 2015 - 2025 sets out goals, objectives and priority areas to reduce overweight and obesity and promote healthy lifestyles. It brings to participation several resorts in the implementation of it - ministries of education, agriculture, transport, health. However, the Action Program does not foresee such an important and influential instrument as children’s magazines. We can mention for illustration only, while the Counternarcotics Fund provided subsidies to Slovak editorial staff on drug-related topics in children’s magazines, they were regularly published there. When the financial support of such columns finished, the columns disappeared from children’s magazines. We will show in the following section the extent of success of sections promoting the protection of health and healthy lifestyle by readers.

6 *Uvzsr.sk - info*. [online]. [2019-04-04]. Available at: <http://www.uvzsr.sk/docs/info/podpora/NAPPO_2015-2025.pdf>.

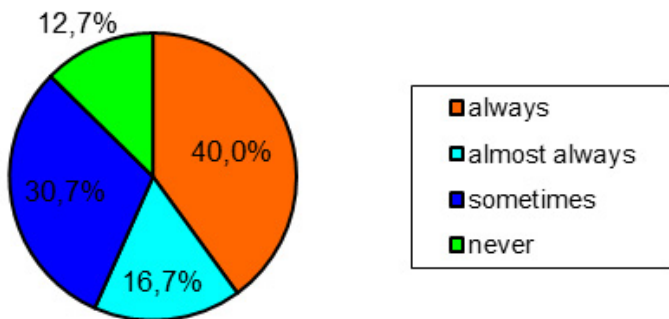
7 *World Health Organization. Global Status Report on Non-communicable Diseases 2010*. [online]. [2019-04-04]. Available at: <http://www.who.int/nmh/publications/ncd_report2010/en/>.

8 EHES – European Health Examination Survey – Zisťovanie zdravia Európanov v Slovenskej republike u dospelej populácie vo veku od 15 do 64 rokov – 2011 (remark by the author).

4 The Real Impact of Children's Magazines on Creating a Positive Relationship to a Healthy Lifestyle

If the editors publish a topic, there is a potential presumption of its influence on the addressees. More importantly, however, is whether or not readers read the processed topic and thus whether its content is perceived by the addressees. Real reading frequency indicates the effect of the article on the addressee. In March 2017, a survey of the reading frequency of the rubrics in the magazine *Maxík*, whose readers are children of the younger school age, was conducted. The questionnaire was completed by 1 692 respondents. They answered questions about how they read each section and choose from four options: always, almost always, sometimes, never. They evaluated a number of sections, a section titled Interesting about the human body being among them. The section describes the human body parts, individual systems and organs, processes in the body, information on how they work and what happens if they are affected by negative effects. The column pointed out by this how to live healthy, not harm the organism and how to eliminate the negative effects on the human body and health.

Interesting about a human body

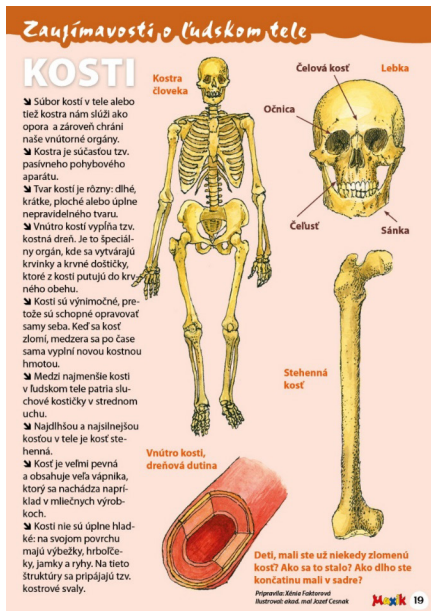


Graph 1: Reading frequency of the health and its protection column

Source: own processing

As shown in the graph, up to 40% of the readers always read the above column, 16.7% almost always and 30.7% sometimes. Only 12.7% never read it. Thus, the column gains a great deal of interest from readers, and thus it is capable to affect their consciousness and to form their attitudes towards health and protection. The importance of its influence is enhanced by the fact that *Maxík* is used in elementary schools as part

of the teaching process. There are several magazines for pre-school and younger school-age children in Slovakia that are used in nursery schools and elementary schools in the form of bulk orders. They are thus a significant means of acting on the child’s addressee. As there is no official support for publishing articles aimed at promoting a healthy lifestyle, it is only up to the initiative and attitude of the editorial staff of children’s magazines whether they publish this topic or not. Therefore, the frequency of healthy lifestyle texts is relatively small.



Picture 1: An example of graphical processing of the column

Source: own processing

In addition to the column Interesting about the human body in the magazine Maxík, the topic of health also went to other children’s magazines. For example, Zornička published interviews with prominent athletes⁹ that could motivate child readers to sport. The interviews in this magazine tied up to Your Life column, which was funded by the Counternarcotics Fund. An article, which informed about one type of sport in each issue has always been published on the same page as Your

⁹ Published in the magazine Zornička from September 2002 to June 2004 (remark by the author).

Life column.¹⁰ Zvonček Magazine, which addresses children aged 4 to 7, has published the Healthy - Playfully column right since its birth.¹¹ It has been changing and innovating its content and form over the course of four years. In ten editions¹² humorous hyperbolized stories were published, in which the main character ignored his health, but the neighbourhood children helped him to live healthy. These texts were published in a book, first in Slovak language¹³ and in 2019 they were translated and published in Esperanto.¹⁴

Conclusions

The research was conducted on a sample of 107 European and some non-European children's magazines. Research suggests that only 8,41% of children's magazines publish articles on the topic of health and healthy lifestyle. Another research that focused on reading frequency of various texts shows that 40% of respondents and almost 16.7% of readers read articles with the subject matter. Research has shown that there is a big difference between the low interest of children's magazine editors to publish articles on the subject of health and a healthy lifestyle and the strong interest of readers in these topics. Researches give information and, consequently, opportunities for practice, to include articles on children's health and healthy lifestyle in children's magazines, thereby engaging in an interdisciplinary approach to addressing global health.

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10 These articles were published in the magazine Zornička from September 2001 to June 2002 (remark by the author).

11 It was published in the Zvonček magazine from May 2005 to June 2008 (remark by the author).

12 From September 2006 to June 2007 (remark by the author).

13 See: DRAGULOVÁ FAKTOROVÁ, D.: *Príhody uja Hrmotku*. Bratislava : DAXE, 2008.

14 See: DRAGULOVÁ FAKTOROVÁ, D.: *La aventuroj de sinjoro Bruetulo*. Ústí nad Labem : Espero, 2019.

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LEARNING A LANGUAGE AS PART OF LIFE – HOW TO LEARN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Anna Hurajová

ABSTRACT:

Teaching languages in the 21st century is changing rapidly. Nowadays, new possibilities and tools to support students in their process of learning a foreign language are offered by the Internet and new technologies. It is vital for language teachers to follow the latest trends, to learn and get trained about new apps, web sites and digital resources to assist them in their job and to make it more effective and appealing for students. Based on the fact that the teaching environment is changing due to the onset of digital technologies, mobile devices and online resources, new methods and approaches to foreign language teaching and learning have emerged, taking into account the need of the digital era we are living in. The article provides an overview of new approaches which use digital devices and applications in teaching practice in the digital age.

KEY WORDS:

apps, digital age, Duolingo, e-learning, foreign languages, language coaching, m-learning, post-method era

1 Introduction

When speaking about “learning a foreign language in the digital age”, two words will draw our attention – “language” and “digital”. The technological sophistication has recently become the most significant drive for change in almost every area of our lives, not to mention education where the development of new media and tools has been a promising start in raising our efficiency, offering new appealing topics and delivering them through novel, up-to-date forms of technology. Digital tools rightly impress us. Teaching and learning in the 21st century is not about the four walls of the classroom anymore. There were times when a student had to rely purely on what was happening behind these walls. Although they had an opportunity to watch films, read books or newspapers, or watch BBC World Service in order to come into contact with a foreign language, in this case English, the role of a teacher still remained crucial. But this was before the arrival of the digital age. Thanks to the Internet and digital media, there is a move away from the traditional way of language teaching and it is time that teachers were enthusiastic about adopting their new roles. The role of the teacher has

become marginalized. Teaching has always adapted to circumstances – either methodologically or physically: from frontal teaching to pair work; from grammar-translation method to communication method; from slate to whiteboard, etc. Why is change inevitable? The reason is quite modest – because our students have needs and interests that run far beyond the classroom. If we spark that interest, we will spark the motivation as well. Even if we try to offer students the best lesson we can we must accept that time spent with us in the classroom is limited as compared with the exposition to English which can be experienced in everyday life. We can neither control the English our students will come into contact with, nor can we be instrumental to help them understand everything.

2 The Post-Method Era

The 20th century witnessed the emergence of various language teaching methods and approaches, such as the Audio-Lingual Method, Communicative Language Teaching or the Natural Approach.¹ Do methods still have a place in the 21st century language teaching? To answer the question whether methods can survive the 21st century language teaching and learning, an international survey was carried out in summer of 1999.² The results of the survey on the sample of 448 teachers indicated that the Communicative Language Teaching Approach had the highest rate in use and preference among teachers in general but on the other hand, the Grammar Translation Method is still used in EFL classes and with learners at low proficiency levels.³ Currently, differences between methods are blurred and it is hard to say whether teachers use this or that method. After the “century of methods” a new era, so-called “post-method era” seems to have come, in other words, an era that is not based on any specific methods. Many experts express their doubts about the uncritical use and enforcement of individual methods in education systems. The system applied in the 1970s and 1980s which is based

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- 1 LIU, J.: Methods in the Post Methods Era. Report on an International Survey on Language Teaching Methods. In *International Journal of English Studies*, 2004, Vol. 4, No. 1, p. 137-152.
 - 2 LIU, J.: Methods in the Post Methods Era. Report on an International Survey on Language Teaching Methods. In *International Journal of English Studies*, 2004, Vol. 4, No. 1, p. 137-152.
 - 3 LIU, J.: Methods in the Post Methods Era. Report on an International Survey on Language Teaching Methods. In *International Journal of English Studies*, 2004, Vol. 4, No. 1, p. 137-152.

primarily on the use of a textbook, the same types of exercises and on grammar does not seem to be effective in today's digital era and actually, it does not work. Undoubtedly, the school form of teaching does work for many people and they are able to learn a language this way. However, it would be a pity not to enrich this conventional form of teaching by way of remaining methods that are available mainly thanks to the Internet.

2.1 Which Methods Are Currently Popular?

Currently, the methods using a language in real-life situations are extremely popular meaning that we are moving from classes to real life. As communication is crucial, this includes for example simulation of real-life situations using a foreign language in classrooms. Furthermore, we are witnessing the rise of methods which take advantage of latest technologies or – in other words – they use classical elements of teaching and combine them with the technologies. Those are teachers who transform methods. School surveys show that even though teachers claim to teach by a certain method, its principles appear only marginally in the lessons, the different methods are implemented in the same way in teaching, or the same methods are implemented in different ways, and most teachers create their own effective teaching practices that cannot be attributed to any method. Based on the fact the teaching environment is changing due to emergence of digital devices and applications, teacher should:

- Get an overview of the latest trends in foreign language teaching and the most significant new technologies;
- Learn about the best apps, websites and Internet resources for learning foreign languages;
- Get to know about the use of digital flashcards to revise and increase vocabulary;
- Learn how to use and create multimedia content to teach a foreign language;
- Learn how to use digital games to support and stimulate foreign language learning;
- Learn how to use ICT tools to make learning of a foreign language more effective and appealing for students;
- Get familiar with e-learning and blended learning;
- Get familiar with mobile language learning and m-learning.

2.2 Foreign Language Learning Via the Internet

Thanks to the Internet, there are many non-traditional ways of acquiring and practicing a foreign language. Opportunities for distance learning have become more and more popular and the education market has seen a massive increase. Applications such as Babel, Duolingo or Memrise have developed innovative new strategies to attract and retain users. A study conducted in 2012 showed that approximately 34 lessons in Duolingo are necessary to learn the equivalent of a curriculum in one semester. Even individuals develop their own ways of learning a foreign language. Social media websites are full of recommendations from people regarding online or computer-supported learning opportunities. Other practical examples of new forms of collaboration include online games such as Minecraft where learners communicate and play with people from a foreign country and learn terms in the game in this language. This kind of collaborative learning with all types of board games and it is possible to learn new words and phrases easily. Another popular application, Italki, has had 3 millions of students learning in 112 languages this year. As Ramírez Montoya states, mobile language learning is a direct successor of e-learning which is generally any type of learning supported by electronic resources. M-learning, in particular, uses online resources which can easily be accessed by a mobile device.⁴ Bearing this in mind, apps like Duolingo or Anki can be accessed either through the web on a computer or through a mobile phone. These applications can complement formal language teaching in a classroom that moves beyond a course's requirements. Research has indicated that being determined and having a goal are a prerequisite for using online websites and apps independently.⁵ One of the most popular social media sites for education which is widely used in Slovak classrooms is Edmodo.⁶

4 MONTTOYA, M. S.: Recursos tecnológicos para el aprendizaje móvil (mlearning) y su relación con los ambientes de educación a distancia: Implementaciones e investigaciones. In *Revista iberoamericana de educación a distancia*, 2009, Vol. 12, No. 2, p. 57-82.

5 AHMED, H. B. E.: Duolingo as a Bilingual Learning App: A Case Study. In *Arab World English Journal*, 2016, Vol. 7, No. 2, p. 255-267.

6 RIGO, F.: Edmodo as a Communication Tool in Teaching English. In *Megatrendy and médiá 2018. Conference Proceedings*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2018, p. 273-281.

2.3 Informal Language Education

Language coaching is considered to be one of the methods used in informal language education. It can be characterized as a method that helps to find motivation and ways of teaching tailored to the needs of students. The aim of language teaching should be a rapid development of language skills. The method uses the principles of neuro-linguistic programming and it is one of the types of non-frontal teaching. A coach does not tell a client what to do but lets them choose, asks them questions and they search for their way together while meeting on a regular basis, for example once a month – a coach is a guide rather than a teacher. What is crucial is to recognize motivation and set the right goals using very concrete steps to achieve them. All in all, language coaching is not a teaching method, it is not a private foreign language lesson conducted by a language coach, but a search for a certain degree that the client seeks to provide them with joy of learning. To certain degree, every teacher is a coach. However, not everybody is ready to teach and learn languages this way. There are many factors influencing the choice of method. Teachers involved in language coaching must be sensitive and good observers and based on this, they should adjust the form of language coaching. On the other hand, however, not everybody is suited for this type of approach. Some students need a healthy dose of stress to be motivated and a strong hand to feel challenged.

Conclusion

One of the challenges of teaching a foreign language in the digital age is moving outside the four walls of the classroom and extending the exposure of learners to the target language beyond lessons. Using mobile devices and social media as well as approaches typical for informal learning, such as language coaching, may foster foreign language learning outside the classroom. Due to interest in foreign languages, the offer of formal, non-formal and informal education is wide, most often language education is implemented within formal education at primary, secondary and higher education. In addition to formal education, there is a wide range of non-formal education. Everyone who is interested in foreign languages has great opportunities, especially thanks to modern technologies and mobile devices, the Internet, TV-screened media and almost continuous possibilities to be online. Apart from traditional language courses, so-called e-learning courses and language coaching

have emerged recently. To sum up, language learning is closely linked to lifelong learning, and if one begins to learn a foreign language, it is likely that one has to devote his or her life to it if he or she wants to reach a certain level of communication.

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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN SERVICE OF MEDIA

Andrej Kóňa

ABSTRACT:

In 1967 at the Expo 67 in Montreal a new film was introduced entitled *Kinoautomat* (subtitled: *One Man and his House*). *Kinoautomat* was conceived by Radúz Činčera and it was shown in a specially adapted cinema screening room where each chair had been equipped with two control buttons - one red and one green. During the screening, the film was interrupted several times and a moderator on stage asked the audience to cast their votes and choose between two alternative scenarios for each scene. Subsequently, the scenario that received more votes was played. Regardless of what scene the audience chose, it didn't affect the film's ending. Can this be considered the first ever use of artificial intelligence in the media, in which the recipient was given the opportunity to modify the content according to his own personal perception? How do we perceive the link between artificial intelligence and the media today? To what extent has it become a subconscious perception?

KEY WORDS:

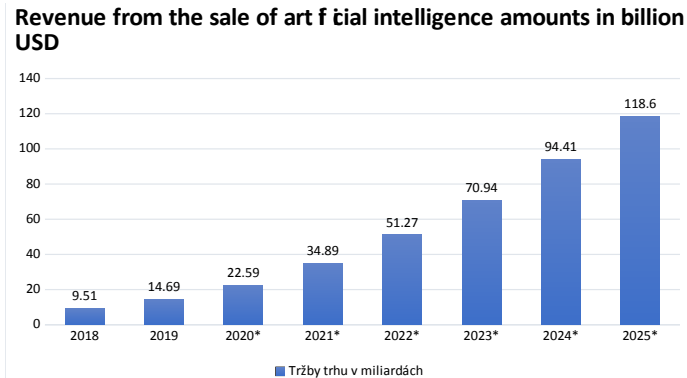
artificial intelligence, film, full text search, machine learning, media, the entertainment industry

1 The Future of Artificial Intelligence

The Media & Entertainment (M&E) industry represents a sector consisting of multiple segments including film, television, and multimedia broadcasting. The US M&E industry is estimated to reach \$759 billion in revenues by the year 2021, increasing the Compound Annual Growth Rate by 3.6 percent.¹ Despite the expected increase, it is anticipated that revenues in traditional segments are going to decline. Therefore, several analysts claim it is necessary to focus on improving user experience.² Artificial intelligence ranks among technologies that can positively affect and improve its poor prospects.

1 *PwC's Entertainment & Media Outlook Forecasts U.S. Industry Spending to Reach \$759 Billion by 2021*. [online]. [2019-05-20]. Available at: <<https://www.prnnewsire.com/news-releases/pwcs-entertainment--media-outlook-forecasts-us-industry-spending-to-reach-759-billion-by-2021-300469724.html>>.

2 *PwC's Entertainment & Media Outlook Forecasts U.S. Industry Spending to Reach \$759 Billion by 2021*. [online]. [2019-05-20]. Available at: <<https://www.prnnewsire.com/news-releases/pwcs-entertainment--media-outlook-forecasts-us-industry-spending-to-reach-759-billion-by-2021-300469724.html>>.



Graph 1: Revenue from the sale of artificial intelligence (AI) software worldwide for 2018 through 2025 (amounts in billion USD)

Source: CLEMENT, J.: *Number of Social Media Users Worldwide from 2010 to 2021 (in Billions)*. [online]. [2019-05-20]. Available at: <<https://www.statista.com/statistics/278414/number-of-worldwide-social-network-users/>>.

1.1 The Connection Between AI and E&M

E&M is reaching the peak of its rapid transformation, whereas digital media is coming into focus in all of its segments, such as: television, news, films, commercials, animations, games, radio, music etc. Thus, digital media is becoming perceived much less as a distribution platform and is now being seen as a means of generating income, whereas in many segments, this represents the primary income for organisations. A client is becoming the focus of attention more than ever, and cannot be ignored. If organisations want to thrive, it is necessary for them to be aware of their customer needs, as well as the way they tend to make decisions. That is where AI, able not only to recognise, but also serve the particular customer in the short term, comes in. Linking AI to the E&M segment is becoming a top priority in many organizations to succeed in a competitive market. AI within the E&M interconnects mainly in the following three categories:

- Marketing and Advertising - e.g. in the making of movie trailers and advertising design.
- Personalisation of the user interface - via AI it is necessary to create personalised content based on collected data and user behaviour.
- Optimisation of search results - e.g. media content, creators use AI to improve the production process and modify visual resources.

Customer analysis is a driving force regarding not only the transformation of customer data, but also the making of programs focused on such initiatives by the organisation in relation to their customers, these programs are made to keep existing customers as well as to empower new acquisitions, possibly to support cross-selling, up-selling, and targeted marketing campaigns.

1.2 Practical Examples

In August 2016 FOX, in cooperation with IBM Watson, (a supercomputer) announced the release of a trailer for 20th Century Fox's new horror movie entitled "Morgan". The trailer was designed by AI and the process was based on classifying individual scenes of a 100 classic horror movies. AI was simultaneously monitoring the audio along with the audiences' response to both elements (which the audience saw and heard). Subsequently, AI analysed the Morgan film itself, and used the data to create the trailer. By means of a supercomputer, AI has created the trailer in less than 24 hours, the same process, which under normal circumstances takes 10 to 30 days. Production costs of the film were \$8 million and it earned \$7.3 million in cinemas. Consequently, thanks to this cooperation, the AI by means of the Watson supercomputer were used in other areas of tele-recording as well as creating sport television broadcasts. At present AI is being used to carry out more tasks, or fill in professional positions, as it has proven to be able to handle them more effectively. For example, animators do not have to draw every single frame manually; the advanced algorithm automatically renders the necessary visual effects. This gives the animators more time to devote themselves to other tasks and creativity. However, there are more than 2.6 billion active users of social networks.³ The internet is filled with offers and among these, there are not only current, but also potential clients. AI is created in pursuit of targeting these customers and winning them by creating a more effective marketing strategy, a communication strategy, and working with social media. Traders at present use ROI (Return of Investments) to calculate the profitability of AI. By 2021 it is expected that more than \$57 billion will be spent on AI platforms worldwide.⁴

3 CLEMENT, J.: *Number of Social Media Users Worldwide from 2010 to 2021 (in Billions)*. [online]. [2019-05-20]. Available at: <<https://www.statista.com/statistics/278414/number-of-worldwide-social-network-users/>>.

4 FRAMINGHAM, M.: *Worldwide Spending on Artificial Intelligence Systems Will Grow to Nearly \$35.8 Billion in 2019, According to New IDC Spending Guide*. [online]. [2019-05-20]. Available at: <<https://www.idc.com/getdoc.jsp?containerId=prUS44911419>>.

Numerous sectors, including marketing and the media sector, use AI in connection with ML (Machine learning). Amazon, Netflix and Spotify have built their product offers through personalization and content optimization. For marketing purposes, AI uses the data collected from user profiles and demographic data that customers publish on the internet. AI adjusts the selection and range of offers to suit customers in real time.⁵ The company Sky has (via the interconnection of AI and ML) implemented a model that delivers an offer to customers based on their current mood. Customers discuss their opinions on individual trademarks on different social networks, traders follow these conversations and use this data to target their campaigns more effectively. AI helps them analyse conversations, create segments, and quickly solve emerging threats. With the release of the new Samsung S8, customers noticed a red shade on their displays. They started writing about it on social networks, and thanks to AI which Samsung uses, the company was able to quickly figure out the problem and remove it. Personalization is no longer a luxury, but a direct customer demand. Netflix itself has been working on personalization algorithms for providing accurate video content to its customers since mid-2016. Up to 73% of consumers prefer a brand that takes into account their personal preferences and expectations. According to research, companies which use personalisation have a return on their investment of up to 8 times and a 10% higher sales rate than their non-personalised competition.⁶

Personalization isn't used exclusively with products and services for adults, but also for children. It can also effect an application that is aimed at improving pronunciation and the ability to read in children.⁷ Initially AI observes the vocabulary and the child's reading skills. Afterwards, it analyses data and makes recommendations for educational exercises for each child individually. As the child improves, the application is updated to accommodate the child's pace. Or what about being welcomed by a

5 GOLDBERG, L.: *A Brief History of Artificial Intelligence in Advertising*. [online]. [2019-05-20]. Available at: <<https://econsultancy.com/a-brief-history-of-artificial-intelligence-in-advertising/>>.

6 ARIKER, L. et al.: *How Marketers Can Personalize at Scale*. [online]. [2019-05-20]. Available at: <<https://hbr.org/2015/11/how-marketers-can-personalize-at-scale>>.

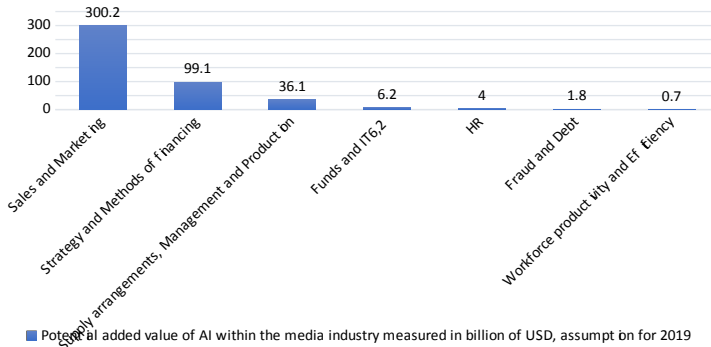
7 KING, R.: *Sesame Workshop Trying a New Teaching Tactic With IBM Watson*. [online]. [2019-05-20]. Available at: <<https://fortune.com/2017/06/06/sesame-street-workshop-ibm-watson/>>.

robot that meets guests' requests? The Hilton Hotel has a meter tall robot called Connie, who greets guests, answers questions, and gives them personalised recommendations for places to visit.⁸ This advancement is progressing and, like Nutrigene, which sends their customers liquid vitamins tailored to the customer's lifestyle and DNA profile, it is clear that automated personalization is present in many areas. Machine learning in connection with data, (whether text, spreadsheet, or visual) can be accomplished via the Zorroa platform. This platform is able to search through vast databases of various types and link and create new data - information. The system can recognize faces, classify images, and create image sets according to specified categories or classifications. It is, undoubtedly, astounding how internet users can get the most relevant results through searches in seconds. AI governs search engines and algorithms to help them adjust their websites' ranking. Within the bounds of internet searching, AI represents one of the most important variables in this area. For instance, if the algorithm concludes that a particular website ought to be generated in third position in the search results but users click on the website more than on the higher ranked search, the algorithm learns from this user behaviour and re-evaluates the relevance of the website and its appropriate position in the search results list.⁹ In this process, two properties of the algorithms are used, namely: optimality and completeness. The optimality feature signifies that AI is guaranteed to find the best possible solution. If the search algorithm has the completeness feature, it means that if there is a solution to the problem, the algorithm will find it.

8 TREJOS, N.: *Introducing Connie, Hilton's New Robot Concierge*. [online]. [2019-05-20]. Available at: <<https://eu.usatoday.com/story/travel/roadwarriorvoices/2016/03/09/introducing-connie-hiltons-new-robot-concierge/81525924/>>.

9 BURGESS, C.: *From Rank Net to Lambda Rank to Lambda MART: An Overview*. [online]. [2019-05-20]. Available at: <<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/research/publication/from-ranknet-to-lambdarank-to-lambdamart-an-overview/?from=http%3A%2F%2Fresearch.microsoft.com%2Fpubs%2F132652%2Fmsr-tr-2010-82.pdf>>.

Potential added value of AI within the media industry measured in billion of USD, assumption for 2019



Graph 2: Areas in which Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be beneficial to the media

Source: FELDMAN, S.: *Where Media Could Benefit from A.I.* [online]. [2019-05-20]. Available at: <<https://www.statista.com/chart/16784/ai-media-value/>>.

For AI to be valuable to the E&M it needs to provide value. It’s not only about creating content and sorting information, but the current media also needs to sell the content they offer. In this case, AI also comes in handy as owing to automatic algorithms, it can manage digital content monetization strategies. We can now see a shift of the EM focus from a “one to many” business model pattern to a “one to one” model pattern. However, there are still only a few “pioneers” who use these methods. The problem with these methods is that at the beginning of the process people need to classify the data for the algorithm to understand the model and be able to learn it. This is the reason why many companies find themselves in a vicious circle, constantly analysing data without getting the necessary outputs. The input costs of ML represented by the initial costs of data classification, from which the AI algorithm is created, are very high. And not every organization reaches the return on the investment they were aiming for.

Conclusion

We currently have more data storage space than ever before. At the same time, there are more computers and supercomputers that are capable of greater performance than ever before in history. Simultaneously, more intelligent software and broad-spectrum ML tools are being developed. This trend opens up opportunities for broad-spectrum use of AI, which may result in new, previously unknown utilization methods of the M&E sector. In conclusion, it is also necessary to note that under the influence of AI, job opportunities tend not to disappear. On the contrary, thanks to AI many new professional positions and opportunities are being opened.

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HUMAN CONNECTION IN AGE OF DIGITAL ABUNDANCE

Denisa Kralovičová

ABSTRACT:

This paper deals with communication, while emphasising human approach in terms of both, online and offline communication. Its main goal is to point out responsibility of each individual to use social media meaningfully. There are some partial goals directly connected with the main one, which are as follows: positive and negative effects of online and offline communication, psychological approach dealing with this topic, civic media literacy and basic rules to be followed, case of a famous kid blogger Martha Payne from Scotland and last but not least some well-known global initiatives dealing with media literacy.

KEY WORDS:

blog, global initiatives, human approach, impact of social media, media literacy, online and offline communication

Introduction

Social life nowadays is mediated, people are connected online and offline as well. Comparing to past, communication becomes more and more the mater of online world, full of information, words, messages, pictures, but not emotions. There are two different perspectives we would like to emphasize in this paper. The first is using online environment as a platform to support positive social impact and second - using it as emotionally flat background, denying any human psychological approach and offering considerable space for subsidiary psychological problems. What we want to emphasise is necessity of media literacy. Our aim is to support young citizens as well as the older ones to use media meaningfully. We will also deal with some specifics of online and offline communication as it is considered to be an integral part of human connection in both, online and offline environment.

1 Online and Offline Communication

“Social networks have become a phenomenon of the beginning of the 21st century and have changed the way we communicate.”¹ Comparing online and offline communication, face-to-face communication is much

1 RIGO, F.: Edmodo as a Communication Tool in Teaching English. In SOLÍK, M., RYBANSKÝ, R. (eds.): *Megatrends and Media 2018: Reality and Media Bubbles. Conference Proceedings*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2018, p. 273-281.

more emotional and direct. We live in 21st century, we are surrounded by modern advances in science and technology, dominated by virtual communication, materialism and pseudo-values. Why is it so? How it all affects a man? Do today's modern communication media facilitate or degrade communication between people? Do they support human connections and humanism itself? Let us think about it. Well-known Slovak writer Dominik Tatarka used in his novel *The Wicker Chairs* in the 1950s of 20th century, the wicker armchairs - a symbol of communication and harmony in interpersonal relationships and leather armchairs - disruption in interpersonal relationships and inability to communicate. We agree that communication is crucial in today's hectic time. What we find to be pretty important is information exchange, as well as human approach in terms of communication. Communication without human approach becomes just pure exchange of facts, without any emotional dimension. Personal communication also offers a chance to reveal the sincerity or impermanence of the communicant. Virtual communication in the leather chairs is impersonal and sharing new information with hundreds of friends is one-dimensional. There are various advantages of online communication, which are as follows:

- simplicity, speed, availability;
- removing the time and distance barriers;
- relatively low technical requirements;
- absence of social incentives resulting in more democratic communication;
- a new “multilog” communication model; an interactive written discourse that does not require the discussion participants to rotate;
- easier communication for a closed type of people;
- speed and efficiency;
- communication log (it can be recorded to review what was discussed).

There are various disadvantages as well, which are as follows:

- abruptness in writing;
- absence of emotional component (emotional hidden meaning is replaced by emoticons) resulting in a possible misunderstanding of the message;
- high demands on technical equipment for communication supporting audio-visual elements;
- demanding controllability of the published information;
- necessity of computer literacy dealing with electronic communication of participants;
- lack of relationship building.

Summing up the previous lines, its goal was to emphasise human approach as much as possible, while emphasising necessity of both, online and offline communication.

2 Psychological Point of View

More time the youths spend online, more isolated they feel, more and more mental problems dealing with this phenomenon appear. This is an important issue to study. "In 2014, Primack and his colleagues sampled 1,787 U.S. adults ages 19 through 32, using questionnaires to determine time and frequency of social media use by asking about the 11 most popular social media platforms at the time: Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Google Plus, Instagram, Snapchat, Reddit, Tumblr, Pinterest, Vine and LinkedIn."² „On average the participants used social media a total of 61 minutes per day and visited various social media accounts 30 times per week. More than a quarter of the participants were classified as having "high" indicators of depression. There were significant and linear associations between social media use and depression whether social media use was measured in terms of total time spent or frequency of visits."³ This example demonstrates negative impact of online communication. Except for this example, there are much more negative effects caused by using online media, which lead to losing „human connection in terms of communication,“ which are as follows:

- depression and anxiety;
- cyberbullying;
- FOMO (fear of missing out);
- unrealistic expectations;
- negative body image;
- unhealthy sleep patterns;
- general addiction;
- exposing bad parenting strategies.

Summing it up, negative effects of social media are both, physical and mental. We can not avoid using the Internet and social media at all as there are various positive effects in our lives. What we have to learn is

2 *Social Media Use Associated with Depression among U.S. Young Adults.* [online]. [2019-04-20]. Available at: <<https://www.upmc.com/media/news/lin-primack-sm-depression>>.

3 *Social Media Use Associated with Depression among U.S. Young Adults.* [online]. [2019-04-20]. Available at: <<https://www.upmc.com/media/news/lin-primack-sm-depression>>.

using it carefully and reasonably to have more profits than lost. Starting practicing „digital detox“ is a good starting point to become more responsible for ourselves and others too, becoming more human beings than machines. Of course, media literacy is crucial to be noticed at this point, as it is an important tool of becoming well-informed and more responsible for our online behaviour. The following paragraphs deal with some interesting facts regarding this topic.

3 Media Literacy in Action

According to Paul Mihailides, from the School of Communication at Emerson College in Boston, MA, USA, there are three basic rules dealing with civic media literacy, which are as follows:

- gives priority to process over technology;
- gives priority to people over products;
- gives priority to values over skills.

The following example demonstrates exploring civic media literacy in action. It deals with youth documenting school lunches, using the media in quite positive way. This example reached both, national, as well as international attention, influenced the citizens to participate in civic life. This story prioritizes equity and social inclusion, supports civic media literacies, promoting tolerance and justice. Those are universal values, and ones that should not be decimated to make a point about how these approaches to media literacy and civic participation can be undermined.

3.1 Case - Martha Payne: Never Seconds

Martha was 9 years old child, a student of elementary school at Lochgilphead Primary School in Western Scotland, who grew up at the farm. She started writing a blog called Never Seconds in 2012. This project started as a kind of homework writing exercise with her father. She documented the school lunches, using photos and rating system to mirror their daily food. It reflected to her father why she was hungry after school every day. Her blog quickly became popular, having 100,000 unique visits to her site after a few weeks. She also started to receive a lots of pictures from children all around the world, sharing the daily meals with her. „Martha asked her community at this point to donate to Mary’s Meals, an organization that provides healthy food options to underserved schools across Africa. Quickly her community donated £2,000 to Mary’s Meals. In addition, after two weeks of posting, her school began serving unlimited

bread, fruits, and vegetables - a policy in place but not enacted in years. She was building a movement, and using media to develop awareness and ask for better school lunch options for many around the world.⁴⁴ She was called to her principal's Office because of this increased attention, article in the newspaper and because of the blog itself. She was told to stop writing to this blog immediately. She wrote goodbye to all her followers. This activity immediately mobilized this community. A social media campaign began in less than 12 hours, around the hashtag #MyLunchforMartha. Pressure was put on the council to reinstate the blog, thousands of comments went up on Martha's blog, and celebrities such as Jamie Oliver and Neil Gaiman asked their millions of followers to Tweet at media and the council to raise awareness for Martha. Major news outlets including the BBC, Wired, the New York Times, Time magazine, the Telegraph, and the Daily Mail, published stories about Martha's blog, detailing the council's vote to stop the blog. Councils decision was rescinded within a few short days. „She ended up raising over £140,000 for her cause and visited the school in Malawi where her kitchen was built.”⁴⁵ She continued posting until 2014. She also wrote a book dealing with this experience. The following pictures demonstrates Martha Payne, sharing her blog *Never Seconds* and book she wrote with her father David Payne. There is famous cook Jamie Oliver too, as this story grabbed international attention and he went up for Martha 's blog.



Picture 1: Never Seconds (sharing blog and book)

Source: *NeverSeconds*. [online]. [2019-04-20]. Available at: <https://www.google.com/search?q=Case+-+Martha+Payne:+Neverseconds&client=firefox-b-d&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewjOn_WMus7hAhXIZVAKHfjmAM8Q_AUIDigB&biw=1920&bih=966#imgrc=cEU2Poi8gQROwM>.

- 4 MIHAILIDIS, P.: *Civic Media Literacies*. New York, London : Routledge Taylor & Francis, 2019, p. 131.
- 5 MIHAILIDIS, P.: *Civic Media Literacies*. New York, London : Routledge Taylor & Francis, 2019, p. 131.

This story is interesting because it started a global movement. It demonstrates the power of voice and identity in launching civic initiatives. Regarding media literacy theory, there are three crucial elements, which are worth to be noticed at this point. These are follows: voice, agency and participation. What’s worth mentioning in this connection is normative approaches to civic media literacies. Regarding these approaches, they focus on what media should do, not only on what they actually do. Regarding this article, we will not discuss it much more in details, as this is the topic suitable for another separate article to be written.

4 Media Literacy Global Initiatives

Daniel Allen with her team at Harvard university developed “**10 Questions for Change Makers.**” These were developed due to help young people interested in social change create a strategy and check if they do maximum to get maximum impact. By following these questions, the young people get smarter in terms of using media tools and platforms for their specific purposes. These principles also help us to understand motivations and intentions to actuate action taking. The following table illustrates the above mentioned 10 questions model:

Table 1: 10 Questions for Change makers



Source: *Action Frame*. [online]. [2019-04-20]. Available at: <<https://ypactionframe.fas.harvard.edu/action-frame-0>>.

These are 10 basic questions dealing with making a change. The basic principles are as follows: emphasising social responsibility, thinking as a part of unit, not individually, thinking about impact dealing with actions of each and every individual, taking responsibility for content written etc. Summing it up, thinking as a human, following the human approach to the extent possible. There are various international initiatives that help people of all ages embracing media tools and platforms to participate in local, national and global communities. Organizations such as UNESCO, the Newseum, the Poynter Institute, and the Journalism Education Association offer their own curricula promoting more engaged citizenship for young people. Powerful voices for kids (PVK) was launched in 2010. It was designed to support children's ability to think for themselves, communicate effectively and use their powerful voices to participate in their families, communities, schools and all around the world. Learning About Multimedia Project (LAMP) launched in 2017, helped 22 million young people to be heard and participate effectively in local elections in 2020. The News Media project was launched in 2016. It launched „Checkology“ and designing online classroom, which helps students to improve skills and check credibility of information. There are much more global as well as national initiatives dealing with media literacy. The above noticed were used due to demonstrate some practical examples dealing with the subject matter. There are various projects in Slovakia focusing on media literacy too, which is the topic for another paper to be written too.

Conclusion

Summing up the previous lines, the article deals with online and offline communication, while emphasising human approach. We have also focused on psychological approach, but mostly on media literacy point of view. Regarding psychology, we have described one research in the USA, as well as some negative effects caused by using social media. Regarding media literacy, we described three basic rules dealing with civic media literacy, one interesting case of the young girl from Scotland, who was able to use social media in a very positive way, not only locally, but globally too. We have also emphasised 10 questions model for change makers, as well as some international initiatives supporting media literacy. In conclusion, we would like to point out responsibility of each individual to use social media. It is only on each and every individual to use it for general well-being. It is only on every single one of us to use it within reasonable limits and do not forget to communicate in “the wicker armchairs.”

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LINGUISTIC AND DISCURSIVE MEANS OF DISTORTING INFORMATION

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ABSTRACT:

The aim of this paper is to systemise the most frequently encountered linguistic and discursive means of distorting information that appear in the texts of political media discourse. Conducting linguistic analysis of media discourse texts as a tool of distorting information presupposes identification of the corresponding linguistic means at all hierarchical levels of language structure, discursive means, application of the various linguistic and interdisciplinary discourse theories, etc. Among the linguistic and discursive means that are used with the purpose of distorting information, are various expressive means, stylistic devices, discourse markers, etc. The most frequent stylistic devices include euphemisms, hyperbole, etc. There are certain grammar and syntactic structures that mostly appear in mass media. Application of the categorisation-oriented vantage theory and the Overton window or window of discourse is also effective. These and numerous other linguistic and discursive means may be used with the purpose of the facts contortion and influencing the addressee's point of view. They are analysed when studying the pragmatic potential of media discourse texts. The findings of the study could be of value to linguists, political analysts, media analysts, sociologists and general public.

KEY WORDS:

discourse analysis, discourse markers, discursive means, distorting information, linguistic means, media discourse, Overton window, political discourse, vantage theory

Introduction

The overwhelming information space is characterized by the continuous development of mass media. Information itself is considered to be a main resource and product of information society. Being the pivotal element in creating and spreading information, mass media have already turned out into the efficient tool of shaping public opinion. Numerous modern researches are aimed at studying the pragmatic potential of mass media. Manipulative and suggestive functions of political media discourse are analysed. At the same time, linguistic aspect of information distortion remains understudied. Therefore, studying linguistic and discursive means of distorting information is of a great importance. Conducting linguistic analysis of media discourse texts as a tool of distorting information

presupposes identification of the corresponding linguistic means (at all hierarchical levels of language structure), discursive means, application of the various linguistic and interdisciplinary discourse theories, etc. The most commonly encountered linguistic means of distorting information are as follows: the usage of euphemisms and dysphemisms, hyperbole, litotes, etc. The other means are labelling, application of the insider/outsider concept, usage of rhetorical questions, etc. Among various linguistic and interdisciplinary discourse theories are cognitive, perceptual-oriented, categorisation-oriented and lingvorhetoric ones. The categorisation-oriented vantage theory, which is mainly used with the purpose of the facts contortion and influencing the addressee's point of view, should be single out. Another interdisciplinary discourse theory that is applied with the purpose of distorting information is the Overton window or window of discourse.

1 Information Distortion and Political Media Discourse

Modern linguistic studies are characterized by their interdisciplinary nature and strong anthropocentric tendency with continuously increasing application of information and communications technologies. There is a shift from the purely theoretical to the applied and case studies. Special attention is given to studying the language of mass media communication. The current stage of the development of society is described by the move from industrial to information relations. The total amount of information increases permanently. It consequently results in the growing influence of information on both a certain person and society as a whole. These changes lead to the formation of new information society. The collocation “information society” (jap. jōhōka shakai, 情報化社会) was used for the first time in the early 1960th in Japan. However, the problem of the authorship of the term remains to be unsolved.¹ At the same time, an Austrian-American economist Fritz Machlup (1962) have suggested a term “knowledge industry”,² which was described from the perspective similar to the notion of information society. Later he was credited with popularizing the concept of the information society. It can be said that information is simultaneously a resource and a product

1 KARVALICS, L.: Information Society – What Is It Exactly? (The Meaning, History and Conceptual Framework of an Expression). In PINTER, R. (ed.): *Information Society: From Theory to Political Practice (Coursebook)*. Bugapest : Gondolat – Új Mandátum, 2008, p. 29-30.

2 MACHLUP, F.: *The Production and Distribution of Knowledge in the United States*. Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1962, p. 44.

of information society. Mass media, in its turn, provides a wide range of means for exchanging, transmitting and spreading information. The continuous interrelation of the processes of producing information and mass media development gives an impetus to the transition from industrial to information society.

As of today, mass media have become a deeply integrated part of our life. Irrespective of the means (whether it is Internet, television, radio, printed material, or etc.) it serves as a highest way of transmitting information from author to wide public. Therefore, mass media has become a major component of a spreading information process. However, not all the media spread precise information. Numerous sources are used to transmit the distorted information and serve as instruments for shaping public opinion or gaining the desirable effect. The issues of language and information interinfluence are studied in the works of G. Pocheptsov, Teun A. van Dijk, P. Chilton, R. Lacroff, G. Adler, D. Bolinger. The problem of information distortion have already reached an international level. It is addressed by the various organisations. For instance, the European Commission have created a High Level Expert Group on Fake News and Online Disinformation. The HLEG recommends a multi-dimensional approach to counter the problem of information distortion. This approach is based on a number of interconnected and mutually reinforcing responses:

1. enhance transparency of online news, involving an adequate and privacy-compliant sharing of data about the systems that enable their circulation online;
2. promote media and information literacy to counter disinformation and help users navigate the digital media environment;
3. develop tools for empowering users and journalists to tackle disinformation and foster a positive engagement with fast-evolving information technologies;
4. safeguard the diversity and sustainability of the European news media ecosystem, and
5. promote continued research on the impact of disinformation in Europe to evaluate the measures taken by different actors and constantly adjust the necessary responses.³

3 MACHLUP, F.: *The Production and Distribution of Knowledge in the United States*. Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1962, p. 44.

The necessity to study the linguistic and discursive means of distorting information increases due to the growing influence of the media on the way of presenting, processing and obtaining information. Linguistic analysis can be applied to identify the means of information alteration and to verificate the accuracy of information. At the same time, the phenomenon of information distortion remains under investigated in linguistics. Discourse analysis allows conducting a comprehensive analysis of political media texts. Considerable attention should be paid to the identification and analysis of the linguistic and discursive means of distorting information.

2 Linguistic and Discursive Means of Distorting Information

Based on the foregoing, we can assume that language can be used to reach certain goals and bring to life personal communicative intentions. Speakers can not only share but also distort information using sloppy language, inaccurate terminology, etc. For this purpose, they use various linguistic and discursive means. In this chapter, we are going to dwell on the most commonly encountered linguistic and discursive means of distorting information. Studying the information distortion phenomena within linguistics presupposes conducting a linguistic analysis, including:

1. identification of the linguistic means at different language levels (phonological, morphological (grammatical), lexical, syntactic, textual);
2. identification of the discursive markers and their pragmatic function;
3. conducting a general pragmatic and critical discourse analysis;
4. application of the tools of the various linguistic and interdisciplinary discourse theories (cognitive, perceptual-oriented, categorisation-oriented, lingvorhetic, etc.);
5. identification of the communicative strategies and tactics of distortion of information, etc.

Implementation of these tasks gives a possibility to reveal the cases of information distortion in political media discourse texts.

2.1 Linguistic Means of Distorting Information

The linguistic analysis of texts presented in the media of mass media involves the study of the language of the text at various linguistic levels

- phonological;
- morphological (grammatical);

- lexical;
- syntactic;
- textual.

Analysis of the political media texts as an instrument of distorting information requires identification of the certain linguistic means that make information unclear and distorted to a lesser or greater degree. The most encountered linguistic means of distorting information are euphemisms, dysphemisms, hyperbole, lithotypes, etc. Among the other methods are labelling, application of the insider/outsider concept, usage of cues, usage of rhetorical questions, etc. Among the other stylistic means of deliberate but not misleading distortions of facts are satire and parody.⁴

2.2 Discursive Means of Distorting Information

Discourse markers are the lexical items that are used to connect and organize speech. Müller (2005), based on Laurel J. Brinton (1990), have proposed a classification of functions that are performed by discourse markers:

- to initiate discourse,
- to mark a boundary in discourse (shift/partial shift in topic),
- to preface a response or a reaction,
- to serve as a filler or delaying tactic,
- to aid the speaker in holding the floor,
- to effect an interaction or sharing between speaker and hearer,
- to bracket the discourse either cataphorically or anaphorically,
- to mark either foregrounded or backgrounded information.⁵

Discourse markers do not possess referential meaning. It means that a sentence has the same truth value irrespective of the presence of discourse markers.⁶ The semantic meaning they possess is defective

4 *A Multi-dimensional Approach to Disinformation. Report of the Independent High Level Group on Fake News and Online Disinformation.* [online]. [2019-04-15]. Available at: <<https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/6ef4df8b-4cea-11e8-be1d-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>>.

5 Ibidem.

6 MÜLLER, S.: *Discourse Markers in Native and Non-native English Discourse.* Amsterdam, Philadelphia : John Benjamins, 2005, p. 9.

and is revealed only when discourse fragments are correlated.⁷ At the same time, discourse markers add a subjective meaning that reflects the speaker's opinion.⁸ This particularly characteristic of discourse markers endues them with a certain pragmatic power.

2.3 Application of the Discursive and Interdisciplinary Theories

To conduct a qualitative linguistic analysis of the media text it is necessary to make use of the various linguistic and interdisciplinary theories of discourse, such as cognitive, perceptual-oriented, categorisation-oriented, lingvorhetic, etc.

2.3.1 Vantage Theory

Vantage theory is a model of categorisation that is utilized in different studies and sciences. It was formulated by an American anthropologist and linguist Robert E. MacLaury.⁹ It should be noted that it was primarily aimed at studying the problem of providing linguistic labels for various colour shades in Munsell chart. Later, the range of its application in linguistics was expanded up to studying the usage of articles.¹⁰ It can be also applied in the process of discourse analysis with the purpose of identifying certain pragmatic components of the various texts. Vantage theory deals with the processes of categories transformation and movement of their elements.¹¹ The principle of functioning of Vantage theory is based on the model of the Munsell colour system proposed by Albert Henry Munsell, an American painter and teacher of art.

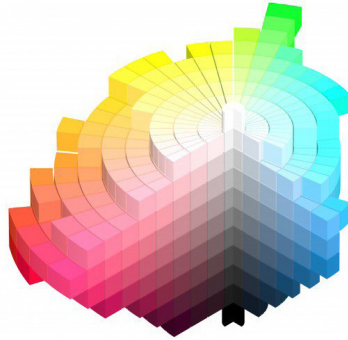
7 MURPHY, M. L.: Discourse Markers and Sentential Syntax. In *Studies in the Linguistic Sciences*, 1993, Vol. 1, No. 23, p. 163-164.

8 VOLKOVA, L.: Pragmatic Markers in Dialogical Discourse. In *Lege Artis. Language Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow*, 2017, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 384.

9 MAR, G. C.: *Discourse Marker*. [online]. [2019-04-22]. Available at: <<http://www.ub.edu/diccionarilinguistica/content/discourse-marker>>.

10 MACLAURY, R. E.: *Color and Cognition in Mesoamerica: Contrasting Categories as Vantages*. Austin : University of Texas, 1997, p. 14.

11 GŁAZ, A.: *Extended Vantage Theory in Linguistic Application: The Case of the English Articles*. Lublin : Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 2012, p. 15.



Picture 1: Three-dimensional representation of the Munsell colour system

Source: *Color Solid Cylindrical Coordinates*. [online]. [2019-04-04]. Available at: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Munsell_1943_color_solid_cylindrical_coordinates.png>.

The Munsell colour chart (Picture 1) systemises colour shades and shows the way transition of one colour to another. Vantage theory, in the case of its linguistic application for discourse analysis purposes, gives a possibility to show the way of changing the speaker's point of view, alteration of facts, information distortion, etc. In the other words, it reveals the process of recategorisation of the subject of communication. Vantage theory allows identification of gradual recategorisation, which is gained by using certain linguistic means. Two major types of vantages are singled out depending on the direction of the vantage shift: dominant vantage (assimilation directed to the centre of the category, towards the focus) and recessive vantage (dissimilation directed from the centre of the category, towards the margin). In other words, dominant vantage pays more attention to similarity and recessive vantage maintains interest in difference.¹²

2.3.2 Overton Window

The Overton window is another interdisciplinary theory that is utilized in linguistics with the purpose of studying information distortion and information manipulation. It is a model of ranging ideas based on the possibility of accepting them within a society. The original model was

¹² BIGGAM, C. P.: *The Semantics of Colour: A Historical Approach*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2012, p. 160 161.

proposed by Joseph Overton, an American scholar and Senior Vice President of the Mackinac Center for Public Policy. It was subsequently complemented, reinterpreted as a manipulative political technology and named in his honour. The original model had the form of a graph consisting of a two-way vertical axis “more free” ↔ “less free”. The vertical image was chosen to avoid association with the horizontal political scale “right” ↔ “left”. The author himself called this model “the window of discourse”. Later, in 2006, the US political journalist and politician Joshua Trevigno have proposed the augmented variant of a model in the form of the six-step scale (“Unthinkable – Radical – Acceptable – Sensible – Popular – Policy”). This model gained wide recognition under the name of the “Overton window”. The “Overton window” allows distorting information with further influence on the addressee’s opinion. It enables bringing out tabooed topics to a generally acceptable level and vice versa.

Conclusion

The aforeanalysed linguistic and discursive means can be used with the purpose of distorting information. Analysing texts by means of Vantage theory and the “Overton window” help to identify the pragmatic aim of political media discourse texts including the distortion of facts, influencing the attitude of the addressee to some facts, manipulation opinion, etc. These and other means can be used both in a one text or within the entire discourse of a speaker or organization (political party, movement, etc.) serving as instruments for achieving certain communicative goals.

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AWARENESS OF THE FUNCTIONING OF MEDIA MESSAGES AND THE ABILITY TO RECOGNIZE FAKE NEWS BY POLISH STUDENTS

Dorota Marquardt – Anna Losa-Jonczyk

ABSTRACT:

False information spreading in the Polish media space affects many aspects of social life, including democracy, civic education of young people, journalism, business, and public health. It seems particularly important to build awareness of the functioning of media messages in the world of post-truth and the ability to recognize false or manipulated information by young people who function and will make important decisions based on media information that reaches them. The article will address the issue of the ability to recognize false information by young people and an attempt to diagnose to what extent the theoretical knowledge about the functioning of factual news translates into the ability to recognize them. Exploratory research will be interpreted against the background of national and European research on the awareness of the functioning of media broadcasts and the impact of fake news on the society.

KEY WORDS:

awareness of the functioning of media messages, fake news, recognize false information, young people

1 Introduction

In the modern world, the phenomenon of fake news is highly widespread and does not cease to increase. The introduction of new solutions associated with i.a. the development of artificial intelligence, influence¹ the fact that what was a rare and hard to create phenomenon in the past, is now commonplace. Today, through social media and the ability to comment on nearly every portion of content in the internet, the creation of fake news and its spread is possible for a single user. The phenomenon of fake news is used largely both by politicians and by the intelligence agencies of various countries – it has become an element of cyberwarfare and disorientation. It is also used in favor of the interests of various

1 *Openai Blog*. [online]. [2019-02-26]. Available at: <<https://blog.openai.com/better-language-models/#sample1>>. Openai Blog created by the creators of the CPT-2 algorithm, thanks to which the program is able to generate coherent and correct texts of the given subject (remark by the authors).

organizations and individuals. Fighting such a phenomenon is difficult and for that reason it is of utmost importance for young people, who will most likely function in such a media world, to be able to distinguish true information from the fake or manipulated ones. Due to the specific manner of using media (mainly internet media), young people function in so called information bubbles. The information they receive are in line with their view of life, and are shared in social media by their peers who are often chosen using criteria such as common interests and common reality interpretations. In the circumstances of such media utilization and the lack of access to (will to access?) other information sources, the society functions in a more atomized way, thus making the verification of information even more difficult. The problem of fake news has been noticed several years ago and has been a subject to scientific analysis since. Research associated with this issue is also conducted in Poland.

2 Research on Fake News in Poland

False information spreading in the Polish media space affect many aspects of social life, including democracy, civic education of young people, journalism, business, and public health. Fake news spread in social media and traditional media mislead voters. According to scientific research and journalistic analyses, 79% of Poles (46% – “definitely yes”, 33% – “rather yes”) consider this a real threat to democracy.² False information affects how Poles vote.³ In Poland there are attempts to fight against false information in public space,⁴ but some activities of organizations and institutions that declare that they fight against fake

2 *Eurobarometer*. [online]. [2019-02-05]. Available at: <<https://www.wirtualnemedi.pl/artykul/fake-news-jak-dziala>>. The pan-European “Eurobarometer” survey was conducted by Kantar Public on behalf of the European Commission on 7-9 February 2018 using telephone interviewing technology (CATI), on a representative sample of 26.6 thousand inhabitants of 28 European Union member states aged 15 and over. In Poland, 1,000 people participated in the survey (remark by the authors).

3 STRAWIŃSKI, P.: *How to Log Out of Fakebook*. [online]. [2019-02-05]. Available at: <<http://www.forbes.pl/biznes/fake-news-w-sieci-zagrozenie-dla-demokracji/n37gzvx>>.

4 See the websites: *Demagog*. [online]. [2019-02-05]. Available at: <<http://demagog.org.pl/>>; *Oko press*. [online]. [2019-02-05]. Available at: <<https://oko.press/>>.

news are used as a pretext for censorship.⁵ The problem of the influence of fake news on democracy, as shown by research conducted at the University of Oxford, concerns mainly those countries where a high level of political polarization can be observed, and Poland belongs to such countries.⁶ That is why it is so important to educate on how to recognize and deal with new facts in such countries. In many schools in Poland, elements of media education are introduced, but as research carried out under the EU Kids online project shows, in Poland only 34% of children and adolescents aged 9-16 can recognize false information. The majority of students (65%) declare that they have never or almost never talked to a teacher about online activity.⁷ False information appearing in business can be divided into two groups: those that influence what decisions are made by the leaders of individual companies and those that hit the company's image, are part of unfair competition or black PR. These problems affect an increasing number of Polish companies.⁸ Information on medical topics related to the treatment of specific diseases and treatment prophylaxis (e.g. vaccination of children) is another area where news fake brings a lot of damage. In Poland, the internet is the first and basic source of information for people using different therapies (e.g. alternative therapy in the treatment of cancer), and false information reduces the effectiveness of treatment.⁹

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- 5 For more information, see: *Statement of the Public Defender of Rights*. Released on the 28th of May 2018. [online]. [2019-02-05]. Available at: <<https://www.rpo.gov.pl/pl/content/mowa-nienawisci-fake-news-propaganda-wspolniwrogowie-demokracji>>; *Research of the Civic Institute*. [online]. [2019-02-05]. Available at: <<http://www.institutobywatelski.pl/27334/komentarze/polityka-komentarze/demokracja-w-czasach-fakenews>>.
 - 6 NEWMAN, N. et al.: *Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2017*. [online]. [2019-03-04]. Available at: <<https://ssrn.com/abstract=3026082>>.
 - 7 PYŻALSKI, J. et al.: *EU Kids Online 2018; Polish Part*. [online]. [2019-02-03]. Available at: <<https://www.opi.org.pl/Dzieci-w-sieci-EU-Kids-Online-2018.html>>.
 - 8 *Fight against Fake News in Business Version. How to Protect a Company from Attack?* [online]. [2019-02-01]. Available at: <<https://www.forbes.pl/biznes/fake-news-w-biznesie-jak-ochronic-firme-przed-atakiem/4xnkq5e>>.
 - 9 WASZAK, P., KASPRZYCKA WASZAK, W.: The Role of the Internet and Web 2.0 in Public Health – A Brief Review of Basic Tools and Recent Polish Experiences. In *Hygeia Public Health*, 2018, Vol. 53, No. 3, p. 213-220. [online]. [2019-02-02]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328042669_Role_Internetu_i_Web_20_in_health_forum_review_basic_narzedzi_and_statutory_Polish_experiences>.

Journalism in Poland has long struggled with the problem of fake news. Emphasis on the immediacy of information publishing and the pressure associated with editorial policy is not conducive to accurate checking of information. A survey conducted among Polish journalists of national and regional media shows that almost half of the respondents admitted that in the last month they happened to believe in false information. The most frequent sources of information verification are the Internet (67%), direct contacts (63%) and experts and national media (54% each). The respondents believe that the reasons for the publication of fake news are most often: tabloidization of the media (67%), competition and willingness to be the first to publish information (66%) and lack of time to verify messages (53%). Over 90 percent all respondents claim that the phenomenon of news fake will deepen.¹⁰ As can be seen from the research cited above, in Poland the influence of factual news on social life is very large. Fake news shapes a false image of the world, both among businessmen, voters, and children and young people. That is why it is so important to educate: journalists, who provide and prepare information, to stand as if on the front line in the fight against false information; entrepreneurs who make strategic business decisions; and young people, so that they can recognize which of the information they receive is worth trusting. Poland's participation in the European cooperation training project on fake news and data journalism may have strategic significance for democracy in Poland, public health (false information on vaccination, treatment of various diseases, etc.) and media education. Good practices of dealing with false information in strategic areas of social life developed in various European countries would help in the fight against fake news in Poland. The benefits of Poland's participation in such a project would involve both the transfer of ready solutions, adapting them to the Polish socio-cultural specifics, as well as the development of new, effective solutions to dealing with the problem of fake news.

10 *Fake News from the Perspective of Polish Journalists*. [online]. [2019-02-02]. Available at: <<http://www.proto.pl/aktualnosci/raport-fake-news-z-perspektywy-polskich-dziennikarzy>>. This research was conducted by Public Dialog agency research, carried out by ARC Rynek i Opinia. The survey was carried out using the CATI method on 24-28 April 2017 and involved 154 journalists from various types of media, both local and national (remark by the authors).

3 Definitions of Fake News and Research Methodology

3.1 Definitions of Fake News

Taking into account the study on the phenomenon of fake news, it is important to define that notion. However, this task is not easy due to the phenomenon’s complexity.¹¹ The English-language bibliography shifts away from the notion of fake news in favor terms such as deception¹² or misleading information.¹³ Fake news were initially simply understood as false information spread by means of media. It turned out, however, that some information are partially true and partially false. Furthermore, there also occur news that utilize factual information to mislead the reader. Initially, the assumption was that fake news were created on purpose, therefore one could find features characteristic of deceitful messages in their structure (usually these are elements unintentionally placed in the text that reflect different manners of processing information while lying and while uttering/writing the truth).¹⁴ False information that aimed to acquire the most views (clickbait) were created in a similar way¹⁵. However, the public space experiences the occurrence of more and more information conveyed in good faith, where the authors are convinced that they write or provide the truth and are unaware of the fact that they spread false information. When it comes to such information, it is more difficult to recognize the elements indicating falsehood (although it is

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- 11 RUBIN, V. L. et al.: *Deception Detection for News: Three Types of Fakes*. [online]. [2019-02-02]. Available at: <<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1002/pr2.2015.145052010083>>.
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 - 14 See: ANTAS, J.: *O kłamstwie i kłamaniu*. Kraków : Universitas, 2013; NEWMAN, M. et al.: Lying Words: Predicting Deception from Linguistic Styles. In *PSPB*, 2003, Vol. 29, No. 5, p. 665-675; ENOS, F. et al.: *Human Detection of Deceptive Speech*. [online]. [2019-02-02]. Available at: <file://Human_Detection_of_Deceptive_Speech.pdf>; HANCOCK, J. et al.: Lying in Online Data Profiles. In *CHI 2007*. San Jose, California, USA : CHI, 2017, p. 13.
 - 15 For more information, see: CHOPRA, S. et al.: *Towards Automatic Identification of Fake News: Headline-article Stance Detection with LSTM Attention Models*. Stanford : CS224d Deep Learning for NLP Final Project, 2017.

sometimes possible).¹⁶ For the purpose of this paper it was assumed that fake news will be defined as false information spread through the media. In order to recognize any information as fake news it is sufficient that a part of it is untrue. It was also assumed that the information considered in this paper and provided to the group of respondents will be limited to internet news.¹⁷ Furthermore, due to a similar effect on the society, the decision was made not to distinguish whether the given information was created as fake on purpose or in good faith. Its influence on the recipients may be equally big.

3.2 Research Methodology

The aim of this paper is to verify the awareness of Polish high school students associated with fake news and whether they can differentiate the true information from the false ones conveyed through the media. The research was conducted by means of a survey and its results were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively using i.a. the line by line coding method.¹⁸ When engaging in the research, several hypotheses were formulated. (A) On the basis of the studies presented earlier, where the journalists (usually individuals with higher education and experience in communication) admitted that they sometimes publish false information, it was assumed that the effectiveness in the recognition of fake news by students (as less experienced media users) oscillates between 50 and 60 percent. (B) The quantity and quality of the information the students possess on the subject of fake news and the ways of their recognition will translate into the ability to recognize false information. The survey based research was conducted in the Mikołaj Kopernik comprehensive high school in Krosno. The school is perceived as a prestigious one and it was selected as the place for a pilot survey due to the assumption that this type of schools is attended by students that are quite well acquainted with the issues associated with modern media.¹⁹ Therefore, one may

16 In some cases it is very difficult or impossible. If false information is provided as true e.g. by government agencies, and most of the information sources confirm it, the verification may be impossible, cf. e.g. the case of chemical weapons in Iraq or the Babczenska case (remark by the authors).

17 See: OLSZAŃSKI, L.: *Media i dziennikarstwo internetowe*. Warszawa : Poltext, 2012; WOJTAK, M.: *Gatunki prasowe*. Lublin : Wyd. UMCS, 2004.

18 See also: GIBBS, G.: *Analizowanie danych jakościowych*. Warszawa : PWN, 2011.

19 The University of Economics in Katowice cooperated with this school; the school students participated in journalism workshops, where the subject of fake news was raised (remark by the authors).

assume that the research results may exceed the average for high school students across the country. The authors of this paper consider this a good reference point for further studies.

100 students participated in the study. The respondents were given a survey questionnaire with a task was to indicate which of the five pieces of information are true and which are fake. The false information were chosen in such a way that there was no discussion in the mainstream media about whether they were false. This is due to the fact that the researchers aimed to verify whether the students are able to recognize if the information is true independently and based on the information (and its structure) itself. All pieces of information were formed as info news constructed in such a way that the elements indicating that the given information is fake were clear, e.g. many words were emotionally charged, the subject was improbable, lack of coherence between the title, the lead and the content, etc.²⁰ All pieces of information were taken from internet websites. The survey contained two factual pieces of information and three fake news. Moreover, the students were asked to indicate the characteristics which, according to them, rendered the given information piece as fake news. The survey also included a query on the ways of recognizing false information on Facebook (one of the news that the students were to analyze and determine its truthfulness was published on Facebook). The students did not select the fake news characteristics from any list, but they suggested them themselves. That is the reason the decision was made to code the results using the line by line coding method.

4 Research Results

100 students participated in the study, out of which 85 surveys were analyzed (the remaining 15 were left blank or were not completed sufficiently enough to conduct their analysis). The first part of the survey focused on recognizing fake news and the latter part verified the theoretical knowledge on that subject. This order was dictated by the authors' intent to verify how the students recognize fake news before they consider the fake news indicators. In other words, they wanted to verify how well is the knowledge established and how well it translates into the ability to recognize false information.

20 Cf. indicators that aid in the determination of the probability that the given information is fake (see: MARQUARDT, D.: Linguistic Indicators in the Identification of Fake News. In *Mediatization studies*, 2019, 1/2019, p. 13).

4.1 Fake News Recognition

18% of students were able to indicate which information are factual and which are false with 100% accuracy. One may assume that these students are able to recognize false information (at least those that contain many elements indicating falsehood). There were no individuals that provided an incorrect answer in all questions and there was 1 person (1%) that made 4 mistakes in 5 questions. In line with the probability, the number of people that made 2 mistakes was the highest (37% of respondents). Were the student responses random (not based on knowledge), the probability of such a selection would be similar and 31% of the students would provide such answers. However, the probability of the selection of 3 incorrect answers should be identical and be equal to 31%, and yet only 9% of the students provided such answers. Four correct answers were provided by 35% of the surveyed individuals. This means that more than half of the students (53%) are able to recognize fake news. Figure 1 presents the comparison of the research results with the normal distribution. More than half of the students have shown the ability to distinguish true information from the fake ones.

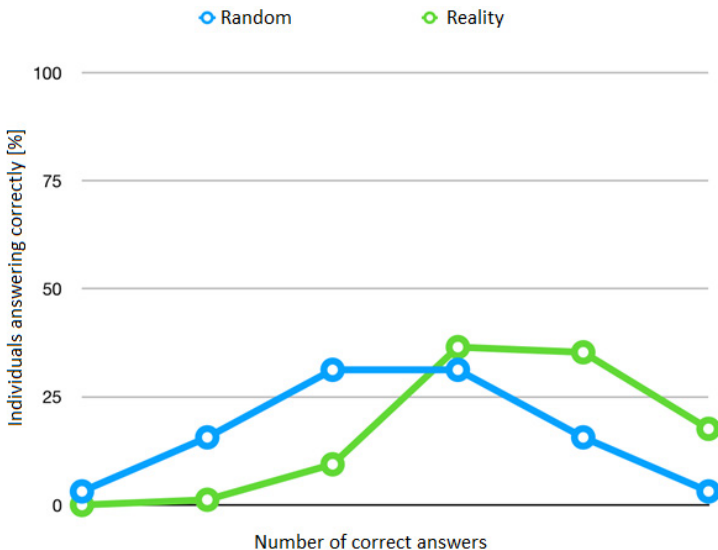


Chart 1: Research results compared to the normal distribution

Source: own processing

4.2 Knowledge on the Factors Indicating That the Information Is False

Most of the students provided answers to the question associated with the fake news characteristics (2 respondents did not provide an answer) – the respondents could provide any number of traits (the suggested number was 8). The students most commonly turned their attention to the fact that fake news often provide general information, their authors do not focus on details (35 students indicated this characteristic) and that there are no information sources or that the sources are unreliable (24 respondents). 18 individuals claim that the sensationalism trait is the element that influences their decision on the truthfulness of the information. 11 individuals pointed out language mistakes and 12 persons – overly expressive language. The content, especially the low probability of the occurrence of the described events caught the attention of 24 respondents- a number similar to the group that pointed out the lack of logic in the text, including the contradiction of certain information pieces (24 persons). 9 of the surveyed individuals indicated modified and/or unclear photographs, and 5 – radical views. The remaining characteristics occurred 3 times at maximum. Table 1 presents all codes present in the answers along with their occurrence frequency.

Table 1: List of codes appearing in the respondents’ answers about the fake news characteristics

Code name	Occurrence frequency
General information, lack of details	35
Phrasing indicating uncertainty of information	1
Information stripped of context	3
Sensationalism, controversy	18
Excess of information	3
No sources	24
Unclear or modified photos	9
Improbable events	24
Lack of logic, chaotic message	24
Extreme, radical views	5
Colloquial language	2
Humour, irony	4

Pathos	1
Language errors	11
Overly expressive language	12
Headers unrelated with the article content	2
Clickbait header	2
Message negativism	1

Source: own processing

4.3 Knowledge on the Subject of False Information on Facebook

When characterizing untrue information published on Facebook, part of the students (25 persons) did not provide any features or stated that they do not know how to recognize false information in social media. Some declared that being intelligent is enough. Those that indicated the features focused mainly on the credibility of the profile/person that publishes the information – 18 of the surveyed individuals. 12 respondents would turn their attention to the manner of the reactions of other users of that portal. The form of a chain letter was mentioned as an important indicator by 4 people, and 6 individuals pointed out the modification of photographs or their quality. Furthermore, similarly to the previous question, the respondents indicated the lack of sources (5), the improbability of the occurrence of the given event (8) and incorrect language (5). Table 2 presents all codes mentioned in the answers to the question on how to recognize fake news on Facebook.

Table 2: List of codes appearing in the respondents' answers on the subject of the methods of fake news recognition on Facebook

Code name	Occurrence frequency
Credibility of the person sharing the information (including the time since the account was created, anonymity, etc.)	18
Chain letter form	4
Lack of information sources	5
Several versions of the same event shared by various profiles	1
Reactions of other users of the portal	12
Frequency of commenting by bots and dummy accounts	2
Information exaggeration	1
Language errors	5

Unclear or modified photographs	6
Improbable events	8

Source: own processing

Conclusions

When it comes to the recognition of fake news that contained numerous falsehood indicators, the students of the prestigious high school coped better than expected, however almost half of the respondents could not satisfactorily indicate which information are factual and which are not. The students indicated many features of fake news, however the knowledge does not translate evenly into the ability to recognize false information. Despite the fact that many of the students were able to enumerate the significant characteristics of fake news, they were not able to identify the false information sufficiently enough. However, when it comes to the recognition of fake news in the social media (with the example of Facebook), the students' knowledge is definitely smaller. Due to the increasing phenomenon of the influence of fake news on the social life in Poland, the role of the media literacy should be greater. It should be an education that translates into practical abilities to cope in the complex media environment. Media literacy should be supported by organizations and institutions that verify the most important information e.g. from the political or public health space. Due to the amount of information that would require checking, it may be necessary to seek the aid of the programs created and improved (often based on artificial intelligence) to verify information (they most commonly indicate a certain probability of the information being true).

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THE DIGITAL GOD

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ABSTRACT:

Also did you find paradoxical that God created man, but man invented God? So now for a moment forget about Jesus, Allah and Buddha and imagine that you are faced with the difficult task of devising modern deities that worship most of today's population regardless of religion. God of money and business with really sharp elbows? The goddess of sex and pleasure that pulls with God of money and business? The God of Surplus and His Dismissed Brother God of poverty and lack? Even nobody has to worship them, but their influence on our lives is more than substantial.

KEY WORDS:

digital media, God, Church, internet, spirituality

1 Introduction

Omnipresence, omniscience....omnipotence? Are you reading the latest news on the Internet? It is at this moment that you are surrounded by God's presence. Do you cook Sunday lunch according to your Facebook friend's recipe? It is at this moment that you are surrounded by God's presence. Are you lying in the dust under the car and calling your friend to help you fix it? It is at this moment that you are surrounded by God's presence. Do you sit with a iPad connected to wifi and write an email to your husband with a purchase? It is at this moment that you are surrounded by God's presence. And so we could go on and on. GOD IS EVERYTHING, you can't go anywhere where God is not (Psalm 139: 7-12) God is everywhere. How does this work for you? Does this consciousness of God's presence reassure you at every moment of your life at any place, or rather disturbing? Try now for the word God to install NET. An interesting experiment has recently taken place in Brussels. In the middle of the square, they built a large white tent and, under the pretext of filming a TV show, invited the passing people to enter and had their minds read by the famous illusionist Dave. The participants were shocked at what Dave had said about their privacy. He knew about their personal life, about work, about what they did not like, even what they had spent the last month on their money. They were not surprised and many were horrified. By the last moment they had no idea that Dave had not read "information" from their minds, but from the Internet. After

each “reading of the thoughts”, a tarpaulin covering a large screen with a Facebook profile and a volunteer internet communication in the tent fell. Or: Outraged parents have come to complain to the marketing department of a well-known supermarket that their underage daughters are sending promotional offers to pregnant women. “The software assessed us based on your daughter’s shopping behavior through the club card. Ask her.” - was the answer. The daughter at home had to go out with the truth. According to a recent Microsoft survey of 75% of corporate HR (Human Resources) executives and recruitment agencies, they say they are conducting online examinations of potential candidates online in their new recruitment procedures. Such a survey typically involves entering jobseekers’ names in search engines, searching for their posts on blogs, browsing online photos, and publicly available comments on popular Facebook, Twitter, and so on. However, there is a risk that an unthinking online post may undermine the candidate’s chances of being offered a job. The fact that 70% of US HR specialists admitted that they have already rejected some job seekers because of their online past, that recruitment agency consultants do not take public records of online applicants lightly. Most often, these were inappropriate or compromising photos, controversial views in online forums, or membership of “inappropriate” online communities. Yes – it’s scary. Many deal with it in their own way.

2 Seven Modern Gods

The imagination of Katarina Kratochvílová’s illustrator has brought to life seven modern Gods whose whims depend on our comfort. Born in the 21st century, they cross the boundaries of different religions, they are young and very similar to us.¹

2.1 WIFI Goddess

The central goddess of the series is the WiFi Goddess. May a strong and stable signal never deny us, and we as her servants will not deny our neighbour access to their WiFi. We will not hurt him with a hard slogan. Like Mary, a normal woman, she gave birth to Santa Claus, so normal mortals created WiFi and now the will of God.

1 KRATOCHVÍLOVÁ, K.: *Sedm digitálních bohů*. [online]. [2018-09-21]. Available at: <<https://www.google.cz/search?q=katarina+kratochv%C3%ADlov%C3%A1+digit%C3%A1ln%C3%AD+b%C5%AFh&tbm=isch&source=hp&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwj02ch5g5XjAhWMUIAKHcWuDK4QsAR6BAGlEAE&biw=1252&bih=564>>.

2.2 Goddess of Headphones

Without earphones and daily music, a lot of people can't imagine the day. Long tram journeys and a few hours standing at the offices in silence would be a complete divine punishment.

2.3 GPS God

Without navigation, we would probably not even hit Santiago de Compostella today. Whoever believes, the GPS will show the way, not let him go astray and go astray. And because Gods know everything about us, then he is the one who knows where, Goddess WiFi knows when and God of social networks with whom we are now and what we do together.

2.4 God of Social Networks

The God of Social Networks looks innocent, yet has immense power. Given the amount of personal data he collects about us every day, he writes at least the second part of our sins book. The god of social networks is all seeing. And we blindly pray to him that as many loves as possible will land on his profile through his followers. Because how many fans you have, so many times you are human.

2.5 God of Computer Games

Put the crown of thorns together with the headphones and the first mouse click and worship. Many players forget everything. For food, sleep, life beyond the walls of the gaming temple. Modern asceticism. You give your real life for many gaming. Amen.

2.6 God of Antivirus

The fittest among Gods. A hero who pulls it with WiFi Goddess, because that, especially when it is free, needs its protection more than anyone else.

2.7 God of Smartfouns

The God of smartfouns knows, even if we don't know. He knows the answers to all our questions and holds a protective hand over our display. His favor is fragile and the disgust is manifested by a crack on our screen.

3 The Digital Pond

One thing about which fish know exactly nothing is water, since they have no anti-environment would enable them to perceive the element they live in.

Marshall McLuhan

- In the Digital Age, modern man, self-hypnotically staring into the reflective screen of his i-tool, is truly the 21st century Narcissus. The tool he grasps, made of silicon instead of stone, is himself in extension. If perchance he loses his gadget or it loses power or internet connectivity, he feels tragically lost. Disconnected from his gadget, he is disconnected from his self. In his solitude he hears “phantom rings” calling² to him from the ether like Echo to her un-requiting lover. It is the mind conjuring a phantom of its own extension, just as the mind conjures a phantom limb for an amputee, or a phantom husband for a widow. Like Narcissus, Digital Man cannot be drawn away from the reflection of his self-extension. It becomes not only his mirror, but his obsession, his idol, his god-and we become the unwitting “servomechanisms” to these gods-unwitting because our senses are numbed and stultified by the digital media itself.³
- A fish in a pond cannot perceive the water he is immersed in. It has no “anti-environment” with which to contrast his environment. Therefore, it cannot perceive the ground of its own existence. Similarly, Narcissus cannot perceive that it is himself that he is gazing at when he looks onto the reflective surface of the pond. Like the fish, Narcissus is so immersed in his media that he cannot perceive the effect of the media itself-the ground-he can only perceive the figure that is projected on the glossy surface of the ground.
- The name “Narcissus” is derived from the Greek word “narcosis”. Narcissus was narcotically numbed by the constant stimulation of his own extension, the reflection of himself, the media that he had become narcotically addicted to. Similarly, we are becoming numb to the constant stimulation of digital media, the extensions and reflections of our own minds. Like Narcissus, our senses have adapted to the constant stimulation of our extensions by numbing

2 ONG, W. J.: *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. London : Routledge, 2013, p. 32.

3 SCRIBNER, S., COLE, M.: *The Psychology of Literacy*. Cambridge, MA : Harvard University Press, 1981, p. 5.

themselves, so that we become a “closed system”, unable to perceive anything outside of the all-enveloping digital network, and unable to see the effect of the digital network itself on our own minds.⁴ Like Narcissus, our extensions have a narcotic effect – we are addicted to our own media – and have no intention of ever not using.

- The i-tool is both an extension and a reflection of the self. Holding his i-tool, gazing at his digital reflection in the guise of “selfies” and “re-tweets”, Digital Man becomes what he beholds. Like the shadows on the Platonic cave wall, he sees his Facebook profile as his own identity, his Twitter feed becomes his voice, his Instagram his eyes. He is sucked into the virtual world of the internet, which he perceives as being outside of himself; but in actuality, it is a digital hall of mirrors, an endlessly reflecting mirror image of himself. He has become numbed to the virtual world and blind to the real world. As a “closed system”, he’s only able to reflect upon himself, without even the awareness that he is gazing at is, in fact, himself. The outside world of real sights and sounds and living physical people now seem to him as foreign and unfamiliar, as distant and indistinct, as the voice of Echo, or the shadows on the Platonic wall. And the illusions, the narcissistic shadows on the wall—the extensions, reflections, and projections – become more real than reality. Narcissus, McLuhan reminds us, fell in love with an image that he did not recognize as himself. The extension, the i-tool, has the same hypnotic power that “Nemesis bestowed upon Narcissus pool. It entrances us with an image that we do not recognize as ourselves. What holds our attention with a narcotic force is the unconscious identification with the uncanny external subject, the being that is simultaneously recognized as “I” and “not-I”, resulting in the self gratifying indulgence of gazing, hour after hour, upon our own reflected image.
- The Digital Age places us in a narcissistic hall of mirrors. The more we try to see the Other, the more we merely encounter ourselves in reflection. The more individual uniqueness we try to express, the more we flounder in mass conformation. Until, at last, there is no more Other. There is just the Digital I—the “i”-like Narcissus, capable only of perceiving itself; alone in a de-animated world of “its”. If God exists in this kingdom of its, he can only be a Digital God, for the only thing that is truly revered, the only thing that gives the “i” a sense of wonder and awe, a sense of connection with something outside of

4 SCRIBNER, S., COLE, M.: *The Psychology of Literacy*. Cambridge, MA : Harvard University Press, 1981, p. 11-14.

itself, is the media technology itself – the latest i-tool or videogame - that self-reflecting “it” for which millions will wait days in line for, as man and woman did in days of old, when the oracles at Delphi still spoke for Apollo, and the temples still sacrificed to the gods.⁵

4 Spiritual Networking

Spiritual experiences of God are intrinsically different than relational experiences with other people and things. Spiritual perception, unlike other modes of perception, generally comes from a quiet, introspective, inner space. The function of meditation, for instance, is to systematically shut off the external senses, so that one could focus on that which is not conscious, not sensory, and not physical. When people pray, they often shut their eyes. Even in church or temple, the deepest prayer is always a silent prayer. Spiritual perception, unlike other forms of perception, is paradoxical, because it is sensed from within, rather than from without. The modern world, however, is a place that is becoming increasingly overloaded with external sensation, a place that is perpetually flooded with sensory stimulation, a place where everyone is perpetually “online”. For many people, being connected to the internet at every moment has become a psychological necessity, an existential lifeline. “Internet addicts” feel the disconnection when temporarily offline as a painful, unbearable experience. At the risk of sacrilege, it could be compared to the agonizing feeling of spiritual disconnection from God expressed in the Psalms. But while disconnection from the internet or from media or even from other people can be remedied by simply increasing the total quantity of digital, sensory, or interpersonal stimulation, a sense of disconnection from God is not so easily remedied. We can’t just multiply the quantity of God, or reshape the perceptual experience of God to better fit our digital sensibilities... or can we? If spiritual perception is an innate function in humans, then it is likely to adapt to the new environment of digitality. Historically, cognitive changes resulting from new media affect spiritual perception, and oftentimes inhibit it, but they never extinguish it. If internet dependence is perceived as a modern trend rather than a behavioural disorder, perhaps the intrinsic drive towards transcendence can be channelled through the digital media? The internet has already been compared to God. Like the monotheistic God, it is abstract and distant; yet, simultaneously, it can be personalized and contextualized

5 INDICK, W.: *How Technology Will Reshape Spirituality*. Jefferson, North California : McFarland Company, 2018, p. 157.

into the present. In its own way, the internet shares with God the same divine qualities of omniscience, omnipresence, and possibly even omnipotence. It is quite possible that the internet will give rise to a new form of spiritual perception.....a Digital God.

In the Digital Age, we are immersed in a sea of media that creates a virtual world around us. We have digital friendships rather than physical landscapes, we hear digital music through earphones rather than hearing or making physical acoustic music.... Like McLuhan's fish who cannot conceive of water, we are unaware of our own environment, because we are immersed in it so completely. We unwittingly, isolate ourselves within our own perceptual prisons. The new environment of spiritual networking may help to free us from these prisons. My main argument in this chapter has been that the relationship with God that is purely conceptual and symbolic is less rich in sensory and emotional experience than the relationship with God that is based on personal meetings with God, in which God's presence is felt as a real sensory experience. Digital media did not create our inhibition in the ability to perceive a "real" God, rather than just conceiving of a conceptual God. This inhibition was created by the media of verbal language, and in particular, by literacy. Digital media, however, can reverse this trend. God is a virtual other. Spiritual perception is the experience of a relationship with this virtual other. In religious rituals, symbols and symbolic acts are used to facilitate spiritual perception - the sensing of this virtual other. Digital media, similarly, creates a virtual world of virtual others comprised of images, sounds, and symbols that we sense directly and that we use to interact with the presence of virtual others. In this way, it seems that God, spiritual perception, and digitality are perfectly suited to one another. They are all virtual realities. As life continues to be experienced more-and-more online, spiritual life will also be uploaded into the digital world. If the digital experience of spiritual perception is hooked up to the internet, we can conceive of an interactive virtual world connecting billions of users, a spiritual cyberspace in which people can share their spiritual perceptions with others, and open their minds to the experience of other peoples' spiritual symbols, images, myths, fantasies, dreams, and beliefs. Like the World of Warcraft, virtual spirituality could cross continents and bridge ethnic and religious barriers; but for the purpose of love, peace, and understanding, rather than war, death, and destruction. The Digital God will not have one face, but billions.

Virtual spirituality will begin with a digitally fostered exploration within the individual’s mind for the experience of unitive spiritual perception.... the digital dream. The next step will be the projection of mental imagery outwardly from the mind of the individual into a digital media system. Given this technology, the mental images seen in dreams could be recorded and watched later, and then programmed into the media system to be projected into future dreams. The images could even be digitally enhanced or edited. More significantly, the images could be shared with others. If this technology is combined with internet gaming technology, then an entire new dimension of the digital dream is opened up. It can be a social experience, an online interactive network, in which people enter into other people’s dreamscapes, and encounter and interact with other people’s spiritual archetypes. The connective force of the internet can also provide communal spiritual experiences that would be experienced simultaneously as an inner cognitive perception for each individual, as well as an outer social experience – a communal dream of a shared divine myth – all within the virtual realm of a digitally structured spiritual encounter. Clearly, the age of the Digital God is at hand.

5 The Digital God

Some computer scientists suggest that in the not-too-distant future, we will reach the “technological singularity”, the moment in time when technological innovation occurs instantaneously and automatically. What happens then? That may be the moment when technology becomes “smarter” than human beings. But what does that mean? Nobody knows what it means because it’s impossible to predict. Time is moving so fast that we cannot even see a few years ahead of us. A century ago, Henri Bergson could predict that the speed of everything will continue to double; but at the same time, he couldn’t predict what the perpetual doubling would entail: computers, satellites, the internet, iPhones, etc. It took as much a million years for us to get from mimetic gestures and animalistic grunts to the spoken word, in the took at least 50 000 years to get from the spoken word to the written word, and then another 4 500 years to get from the written word to the printed word; but in the past 175 years alone, we have progressed from the printed word to the telegraphed word to the telephoned word to the radio broadcasted word to the television broadcasted word to the satellite transmitted word to the digitally transmitted word. For us, because Time has been speeding up at an exponential rate, the next century will be here before the next decade. We can predict the change, but we cannot predict what

the change will entail. Furthermore, if the change entails a “singularity”, we cannot even predict the dimension of change that will occur. It might be stupendous, it might be insignificant. Only God knows.

Some have predicted that the “singularity” will result in an “intelligence explosion”. One way in which this could occur would be if our computers become so intelligent that they could create better computers than we can, resulting in computers that are even smarter than their computer creators, and so and so on, and all at the speed of light. Another possibility is that, as a function of the ever-increasing human/computer digital interface, human brains will become so intertwined with computer brains that our minds will evolve into cyber-brains, complete with neural implants wirelessly hooked up to an external computer brain. Digital machines linked by the internet to satellites in space and computers all over the world currently control most of the day-to-day functioning of the world. When the cyber-brain of the post-Singularity takes form, it will be like God: omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent. Perhaps our cyber-brains will perceive a Digital God in our own reflected image? Or maybe the computer generated computers will process a Digital God, a Creator created for us by our own creations, who will appear to us as a phantom of the ether, a digital ghost in the machinery of information, who can be accessed online and provide instant virtual comfort in response to infinite spiritual needs. Perhaps the Singularity will result in a Unity between our inner need for God and our ability to project and even create God – a manmade image of God, reflecting the Digital Man in his own image – but perceived as a sentient Other - a Digital God.

The once laughable notion of “global telepathy” becomes eerily possible once we equate human brain processing with digital processing, an equation that will be solved once we reach the Singularity, when information processing potential becomes infinite. At that point, we will see the rise of the true cyber-brain—a digital brain capable of consciousness – that interacts seamlessly with human brains. The only factor we’ll need to complete the equation would be some system that could facilitate instant and infinite communication between billions of cyber-brains (but we already have that.....it’s called the “internet”). Global telepathy will come to pass – brought to you by digital media – but the idea of a mystical union of all minds is by no means novel. It is, in fact, one of the oldest ideas in existence. When preliterate tribes enter the “Sacred Time” of spiritual ritual, they are uniting their consciousnesses with the minds of their gods. When nuns pray, they achieve the “Unio Mystica”

with God, Jesus, or Mary. When we dream, according to Jung, we perceive archetypal symbols from the “collective unconscious”, a communal frame of mind shared by everyone who ever existed. When a Buddhist meditates, he transcends his individual consciousness to merge with a global consciousness. God

Meditation as a mode of consciousness, when taken to its fullest potential, is flipped into its antithesis: Integral awareness. Meditation, for example, systematically detaches the sense of self from consciousness until a point of maximum detachment is reached, at which point the process flips back onto itself and the self merges with consciousness into a unified state of integral awareness, an episode of cognitive or spiritual unity. Digital computation is the most detached and abstract form of expression that human beings have ever created. For instance, this is how you say the word “love” in binary code: “01101100011011110111011001100101”. But at the point of infinite processing potential, the technology of ultimate abstraction flips back onto itself by producing for its users the potential for integral awareness. When digital media reaches its fullest potential, it can create a virtual world that feels just as real – if not more real – than the “real” world it’s fabricating. We are currently on the verge of reaching the point of infinite processing potential. When this occurs, infinite abstraction will facilitate integral awareness. Digital simulation will create super-lucid virtual reality. Technological complexity will create mystical simplicity. The serpent will swallow its own tail. The Singularity may have an unexpected counter-intuitive effect. Perhaps when humanity grasps the final tool in the shed, he will turn that tool inwardly upon himself. Is it possible that after thousands of years of outward gazing, that Narcissus will one day recognize himself in his reflection, and break free of this hypnotic trance? If so, what will be seen, and how might it occur? How will the tool change us? Will we psychically merge with the tool, or will the tool force us to reconsider the utility of tools en toto? Will the Singularity somehow facilitate the unity of self that the mystics seek, or the unity with the eternal infinite of which the spiritualists preach?

Language was the wheel that set the vehicle of consciousness evolution in motion. Literacy was the engine that powered the vehicle forward with ever-increasing velocity. Print was the wing that freed it from the prison of the ground and gave it air to flight. Electronic media was the jet that rocketed the ship upwards at blinding speed. The tumult of the 20th century was the sonic boom. The ship has now broken free of the

atmosphere. Unfettered by gravity or air, it shoots headlong into the infinite unknown. Digital media is the nuclear accelerator that doubles our speed at ever-decreasing intervals. What will happen when the ship reaches warp speed? Will there be a light speed equivalent to a sonic boom – a luminous boom – a second Enlightenment? Will there be yet another century of unparalleled change, revolution, und tumult? Will history repeat itself; or will history have no precedent upon which to repeat? Will we meet our Maker? Perhaps we will make our meter...at last constructing a “measure of man” that realizes our fullest potential? If digitality is the medium that will push the evolution of consciousness beyond the light barrier, then the spirit beckoning us from the other side of the opaque screen of an unknowable future is truly a Digital God.⁶

Conclusions

The permanent presence of the Internet is a complication not only for the present generation, but also for the future, as it can be said without any exaggeration that the content of the Internet remains with us forever. In the past, you did not have to think too much about your misconduct or verbal whims because you could rely on the limited capacity of human memory or could move in some cases and “start over.” But the modern internet problem is the fact that our footprints we leave on it are not 100% completely erasable. Psalm 139: 7 describes God’s omnipresence as follows: “Where do I go before your spirit, where will I flee from your face?” God sees me everywhere, knows about me, knows every thought, intent. For someone disturbing fact, but at the same time the driving force of Christian vigilance, not to fall asleep on their own “perfection”.⁷ ATTENTION - God and NET know about me. PS: “Think B4 U Post” program invites young Internet users to think well about the potential consequences of publishing some information or comments on the Internet in the future. More information about this program can be found at <http://www.saferinternet.org/web/guest/safer-internet-day>.

6 INDICK, W.: *How Technology Will Reshape Spirituality*. Jefferson, North California : McFarland Company, 2018, p. 253.

7 MEZULÁNÍK, R.: Theology of Communication and Media Theology. In *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2017, Vol. 13, No. 6, p. 25.

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ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND CLIMATE CHANGE IN MEDIA DISCOURSE

Juraj Skačan

ABSTRACT:

The necessity of considering the mass media and a broad spectrum of their effects on social and cultural processes in reflecting any current phenomenon can hardly be challenged. Environmentalism and climate change are among those topics that have begun resonating in the media ever more frequently in recent years. Although scientific findings on climate change quite often become victims of post-truth, the mass media do reflect on this issue and so they shape the public discourse significantly. Similar passions as seen with media theorists reflecting on the power of the media and their role in public discourse can also be witnessed with eco-philosophers pointing to an alarming situation of the environment. Meanwhile, average recipients acquire most information on environmental issues and possible solutions to these problems from news and documentary forms of presentation by the media. It is obvious therefore that the way of how the media deal with environmental issues requires a thorough reflection, particularly considering the vital importance of many environmental problems.

KEY WORDS:

anthropocene, climate change, ecology, environmental issues, media discourse, public discourse

1 Environmental Thinking and Climate Change

Climate change is one of the topics that have been finding their way to establish themselves as part of public discourse in recent years. Nevertheless, it needs to be noted that this does not only include those who point to a growing alarm with the current environmental situation, calling on relevant bodies to take action, but also sceptics challenging the issue. At times of hoaxes, cheap conspiracy theories and ill-founded scaremongering, those who point to the necessity of changing people's behaviour in order to preserve life on Earth often face accusations of fooling others, being excessively negative and acting on behalf of global powers. Nevertheless, climate change seems to be the single most serious problem that concerns ecology and climatology, with climatologists alerting to some of its effects already visible, while warning that further consequences to come can be even more serious.

Before broaching the question what environmental thinking actually is, let us stop for a while with terms ‘ecology’ and ‘environmental science’. These two terms are frequently used as interchangeable, with the lay public more often than not viewing them as synonyms. Granted, they are closely related, but in an expert discussion we need to beware of mixing them up. Several definitions of ecology have appeared; we have selected one by the British Ecological Society: ecology as a biological study examines the “distribution and abundance of organisms, the interaction between organisms, the interaction between organisms and their environment, and structure and function of ecosystems”.¹ It deals with various levels of biosphere. Meanwhile environmental science can be defined as an “interdisciplinary academic field that draws on ecology, geology, meteorology, biology, chemistry, engineering, and physics to study environmental problems and human impacts on the environment”.² Environmental science focuses on individual aspects of environment, mainly concerning effects of human behaviour on environment. It primarily concentrates on human effects on natural environment and humans’ position towards environment. With negative anthropogenic effects on natural environment having prominence in this field of study, environmental science does not merely passively reflect on individual phenomena, but also encourages taking specific action to protect nature and natural resources. These activities are closely related to ‘applied environmental science’.³ Environmentalism being a related term, which does not differentiate from it in principle, we nevertheless assume a certain shift in the meaning here, as Encyclopaedia Britannica defines it as a “political and ethical movement that seeks to improve and protect the quality of the natural environment through changes to environmentally harmful human activities; through the adoption of forms of political, economic, and social organization that are thought to be necessary for, or at least conducive to, the benign treatment of the environment by humans; and through a reassessment of humanity’s relationship with nature. In various ways, environmentalism claims that living things other than humans, and the natural environment as a whole, are deserving of consideration in reasoning about the morality of

1 *What Is Ecology?* [online]. [2019-04-01]. Available at: <<https://www.britishecologicalsociety.org/about/what-is-ecology/>>.

2 *Environmental Science*. [online]. [2019-04-12]. Available at: <<https://www.britannica.com/science/environmental-science>>.

3 *Vysvetl'ujeme si pojmy*. [online]. [2019-04-01]. Available at: <<http://www.enviromagazin.sk/enviro0/vysvetlu.html>>.

political, economic, and social policies".⁴ It is widely acknowledged that the environmental movement was unfolded in two main waves: the first one beginning in the 19th century as a reaction to industrialisation, and the second wave emerging in the first half of the 20th century.⁵

The movement became increasingly radical in the next few decades. Richard Šťáhel, who continues in the tradition of the Nitra school of critical environmental thought, presents a view of environmental science as transcending the ethical and social viewpoints, by involving bold political decisions that are needed to get us out from the present situation, which seems to be pretty bleak. He considers environmental science as a "branch of current political philosophy, which is based on the reflection of causes and possible effects of the global environmental crisis as one of the gravest threats for the existence of current economic and political system and even global civilisation as such".⁶ For the sake of simplification, we further will not focus on fine details making up differences between environmentalism and environmental science, also considering that environmental science under the term 'environmentalistika' is peculiar for the Slovak and Czech language areas, while it does not have an exact equivalent in English.⁷ It also holds that theory, sooner or later, needs to be applied in practice, while environmental problems not only motivate people to consider and persuade relevant figures to achieve desired changes, but also to implement specific strategies in promoting these goals. Terms such as ecological and environmental crisis have also appeared as related to the aforementioned ideas, with a majority of texts treating them as more or less synonymous. In view of how we have defined ecology, environmental science and environmentalism, though, we will attempt to present slightly differing interpretations of the two terms. We could broadly view ecological crisis as a misbalance in mutual relations between organisms and between them and their environment, while assuming that the environmental crisis is largely linked to the human role.

4 *Environmentalism*. [online]. [2019-04-01]. Available at: <<https://www.britannica.com/topic/environmentalism>>.

5 GUHA, R.: *Environmentalism. A Global History*. London : Longman, 2000, p. 3.

6 ŠTÁHEL, R.: Environmentalizmus ako politická filozofia pre 21. storočie. In *Filozofia*, 2018, Vol. 73, No. 1, p. 3.

7 Meanwhile, *environmentalism* stands for 'environmentalizmus' (remark by the author).

According to J. Coates, “through the environmental crisis the Earth is reacting to human behaviour and is warning us – perhaps beseeching us – to respond”⁸ The environmental crisis is a name for deterioration (degradation) of the environment due to human activities. This entails the worsening of living conditions, loss of life comfort in many respects and an overall decline in welfare. It also contains a sort of drama – we think here of a radical, rapid and truly dramatic decay, with these effects being entirely beyond what is seen in ordinary and natural processes.⁹ The present environmental crisis is being indicated by climate changes, which we perceive as shifts in climate patterns within a certain time frame, typically within several decades, with the phenomenon of climate change being not only down to natural processes, but chiefly to human activities.¹⁰ According to the UN, the main characteristics of climate change include increases in average global temperature (global warming); changes in cloud cover and precipitation particularly overland; melting of ice caps and glaciers and reduced snow cover; and increases in ocean temperatures and ocean acidity – due to seawater absorbing heat and carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.¹¹ These challenges require increased attention not only from relevant political bodies, but also society at large, including each individual. One implicit message of current environmental thought is not to make this issue merely an ‘entertainment’ activity for theorists, political speakers and environmental activists, who are seen as distant from the rest of society. The key goal of environmental education is not only to inform about the situation at hand, but mainly encourage to activity and emotional engagement. P. Krchnák summarises the main content of environmental thought by stating that the current situation requires “not only knowledge ‘of’ environment ... but also, and more

8 COATES, J.: Exploring the Roots of the Environmental Crisis: Opportunity for Social Transformation. In *Critical Social Work*, 2003, Vol. 4, No. 1, p. 10. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<http://www1.uwindsor.ca/criticalsocialwork/exploring-the-roots-of-the-environmental-crisis-opportunity-for-social-transformation>>.

9 TAYLOR, M. S.: Innis Lecture: Environmental Crises: Past, Present, and Future. In *Canadian Journal of Economics*, 2009, Vol. 42, No. 4, p. 1241.

10 *Climate Change and Resource Sustainability. An Overview for Actuaries*. Toronto : Canadian Institute of Actuaries, Climate Change and Sustainability Committee, 2015, p. 7.

11 *Climate Change: Impacts, Vulnerabilities and Adaptation in Developing Countries*. New York : United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 2007, p. 8.

importantly, our thinking ‘for’ environment”.¹² The preposition ‘for’ stands for our care about the object of our ideas, our will and readiness to contribute towards improving the state of things, to help and behave so as to be able to achieve the desired outcome. There is a difference between thinking *of* something that I have – or I believe that belongs to me – and thinking *for* something, i.e. pondering about what I am and what I am part of. Meanwhile, the media environment serves as a key platform for nurturing a relevant debate on the issue. While it holds that everyone should begin with themselves, it is also true that individuals would not have any chance to achieve anything in many respects without the introduction of generally binding measures.

2 Ecology and Environment in Media Discourse

Media discourse in our context is considered as one taking place in the media environment, i.e. a mediated discourse, with individual topics being mediated, presented and interpreted.¹³ We consider the media space as a framework for a great part of public discourse, which currently does not evolve independently, but under a considerable influence of media communication and mass media – an issue that makes it difficult to find a dividing line between current media and public discourse.¹⁴ Everything that becomes part of *public discourse* usually becomes part of *media discourse*, which has had a central position in public debate since the so-called third information explosion. Any phenomenon related directly or indirectly to human society currently needs to be reflected in the context of mass media. Mediacentric theories are based on a postulate that the mass media have considerable effects on society, its development, decisions and changes within it. The mass media also incite to the introduction of changes in how society works. We also have in mind here people’s tendency to adjust the environment to their needs. Media discourse is not only a source for simple information; it is far more powerful, playing its role also in decision-making processes of various institutions, state agencies, as well as individuals in their private sphere. When it comes to media discourse, most people (not only) in Slovakia currently pay attention to migration and the economic situation, viewing

12 KRCHNÁK, P.: Environmentálne a(lebo) ekologické myslenie? In ŠPIRKO, D. (ed.): *Filozofia, kultúra, environment 2016*. Nitra : UKF, 2016, p. 85.

13 MORAVČÍKOVÁ, V., SKAČAN, J.: *Náboženstvo a médiá v súčasnej mediálnej kultúre*. Nitra : UKF, 2018, p. 41.

14 MORAVČÍKOVÁ, V., SKAČAN, J.: *Náboženstvo a médiá v súčasnej mediálnej kultúre*. Nitra : UKF, 2018, p. 42

particularly sensitively social and financial issues, while failing to take note of many environmental problems, which are – it needs to be noted – frequently not properly addressed even by creators of media content. Ecological and environmental issues are being side-lined, probably in the belief that they do not immediately concern our present.

The mediation of any issue, including environmental problems, entails two key perspectives: production of media content (input from media creators) and reception (also involving interpretation) of media output by recipients. It seems that Slovaks are still not ready for active perception of environmental risks that could even pose a real threat to their lives. Though, Slovak mass media appear to be similarly ill-prepared, as they most certainly do not compete with each other in presenting these themes – albeit individual circumstances concerning this fact could be the topic for a broader debate. There could be several causes for the omission of pressing environmental problems by creators of media content; one of them being economic and marketing strategies, as commercial media houses work as profit-oriented companies. R. Šťáhel believes that the public-service media and alternative media cannot, due to various causes, counterbalance massive consumer marketing policies of the commercial media sphere.¹⁵ Maxwell T. Boykoff points to further reasons for the feeble presence of environmental content in the mass media, while it can be observed that many of these reasons are again closely related to the aforementioned economic considerations: editorial preferences, publisher’s pressures and limited funding for investigative journalism. In terms of quantity of coverage in developing countries, he points to a lack of journalist training for specialised environmental reporting.¹⁶ Apart from that, we realise along with him that environment-related news stories are not so attracting for ordinary consumers of media content, who are more concerned about their own living standards and people’s personal fates, crime, jobs and sensationalist news.¹⁷ Still according to Boykoff, these facts clash with fundamental norms of ethics in journalism,

15 ŠŤÁHEL, R.: Climate Change and Social Conflicts. In *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology*, 2016, Vol. 15, No. 5, p. 489-490.

16 BOYKOFF, M. T.: We Speak for the Trees: Media Reporting on the Environment. In *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, 2009, Vol. 34, p. 445. [online]. [2019-04-08]. Available at: <https://sciencepolicy.colorado.edu/admin/publication_files/resource-2788-2009.49.pdf>.

17 BOYKOFF, M. T., ROBERTS, J. T.: *Media Coverage of Climate Change: Current Trends, Strengths, Weaknesses – Human Development Report 2007/2008*. New York : United Nations Development Programme, 2007, p. 34.

including objectivity, fairness, accuracy and other elements playing an important role for (especially commercial) journalists – personalisation, dramatization, novelty and authority-order bias, i.e. a tendency to ask an political authority for statement that is supposed to restore order and calm the public.¹⁸ These are significant factors for the way of whether and how environmental issues would appear in the media, with some of these circumstances reducing the presence of these themes and other having bipolar effects, i.e. acting as double-edged sword. For example, the effort for objectivity, as one of the fundamental principles of journalistic ethics, can really support public discourse on environmental problems, as an author pays attention to effects of specific human actions on environment. Nevertheless, for the sake of balance, the author also provides scope for different views, which can entirely deny any negative effects of human actions on environment, while some of these opinions can be motivated by commercial purposes. As a result, such an unbiased journalistic approach can (rather unintentionally) hamper public discussion on environmental problems, with a certain percentage of recipients ending up siding with the ‘other’ opinion. This creates a faction that challenges the problem and upsets public reflection of environmental issues. As stated earlier, some journalistic norms – actually designed to contribute towards positive development of public discourse on individual issues – entail certain risks of mutilating this discourse. This can be rooted in the fact that journalism as part of mass media communication will never be able to guarantee the way of how the presented content is interpreted by end consumers and behaviour they take up as a result.

Our judgement on effects of news media on public discourse concerning environmental problems as being stimulating or adverse will certainly depend on specific circumstances. Nonetheless, the role of mass media in creating public (and media) discourse needs to be viewed as constitutive, considering their position of effective mediators in the relationship of science-politics-public.¹⁹ Under science, we consider ecology and

18 BOYKOFF, M. T.: We Speak for the Trees: Media Reporting on the Environment. In *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, 2009, Vol. 34, p. 446. [online]. [2019-04-08]. Available at: <https://sciencepolicy.colorado.edu/admin/publication_files/resource-2788-2009.49.pdf>.

19 BOYKOFF, M. T.: We Speak for the Trees: Media Reporting on the Environment. In *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, 2009, Vol. 34, p. 434. [online]. [2019-04-08]. Available at: <https://sciencepolicy.colorado.edu/admin/publication_files/resource-2788-2009.49.pdf>.

environmental science in this context; under politics, we consider measures carried out by government; and under public, we consider people living their own lives in these circumstances. Meanwhile, all three elements of the string are part of mutual communication via the media, i.e. media communication. This actually concerns a sphere sometimes labelled as cultural politics, i.e. “the way that culture – including people’s attitudes, opinions, beliefs and perspectives, as well as the media and arts – shapes society and political opinion, and gives rise to social, economic and legal realities”²⁰ This involves a conflict for meaning, which entails the creation of ‘common sense’ and subsequent attacks against it. Cultural politics of environment refers to processes involving how meaning is constructed and negotiated across space and place with respect to individual environmental and ecological phenomena.^{21, 22}

3 Anthropocene and Environmental Migration

As part of our considerations on the presentation of ecological and environmental topics in the mass media, we will now turn our attention to two phenomena that do not appear particularly frequently in what is anyway scarce appearance of these issues in the Slovak media space. We assume that, at least in the first case, this is largely due to the absence of a broad consensus among scientists. Conversely, a less impactful nature of the issue, comparing to other, more attractive forms of the phenomenon, plays a key role in the second case. People’s immediate reactions to natural disasters involve their considerations of fatal tragedies produced by nature, with natural forces and laws being identified as sources of these events. However, people often fail to realise that they themselves contribute towards many of the pathological changes in their environment. This point is being dealt with by a relatively new concept

20 NEWELL, S.: *What is Meant by “Cultural Politics”?* [online]. [2019-04-12]. Available at: <<https://blogs.sussex.ac.uk/dirtpol/2014/04/01/what-is-meant-by-cultural-politics-by-prof-steph-newell/>>.

21 McCANN, E. J.: The Cultural Politics of Local Economic Development: Meaning-making, Place-making, and the Urban Policy Process. In *Geoforum*, No. 33, 2002, p. 387.

22 LUEDECKE, G., BOYKOFF, T. M.: Environment and the Media. In *The International Encyclopaedia of Geography*. New York, London : John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2017, p. 10. [online]. [2019-04-12]. Available at: <https://sciencepolicy.colorado.edu/admin/publication_files/2017.04.pdf>.

considering Earth as a comprehensive and organic system,²³ with its individual elements blending together and human beings acting as “primary emergent geological force[s] affecting the future of the Earth System”²⁴ This concept, still considered as controversial, was presented for the first time by P. Crutzen in 2000, while he also introduced a new term (not only) for environmental science – the *Anthropocene*,²⁵ as an epoch loaded by anthropogenic effects, which has replaced the Holocene and dates from around the mid-20th century. Even though the Anthropocene has not widely been accepted as a geological epoch, the concept dealing with this term has nonetheless brought about a new attitude towards environment and it has even motivated several scientists to reconstruct the environmental theory of sustainable development in this context.²⁶

L. Sklair has researched the media occurrence (including the context) of the term Anthropocene in around a hundred countries and regions. The sample revealed that climate change as such, and selected and isolated elements of the Earth’s system, i.e. partial ecosystems seem to be more attractive to the media than the phenomenon of Anthropocene. Meanwhile, as mentioned earlier, partial ecosystems are not considered as isolated elements by the concept of Anthropocene. If the theme of Anthropocene really appeared in the media, it was presented rather in optimistic terms (either as part of natural development offering new opportunities, or as a certain risk for the planet that can be avoided, however). Only a tiny fraction of the media understood the situation properly and called on the need of changing behaviour of society, overcoming capitalism, abandoning consumerism and introducing the

23 SKLAIR, L.: The Anthropocene Media Project. Mass Media on Human Impacts on the Earth System. In *Visions for Sustainability*, 2018, No. 10, p. 8. [online]. [2019-04-15]. Available at: <www.ojs.unito.it/index.php/visions/article/view/2740>.

24 FOSTER, J. B.: Foreword. In ANGUS, I.: *Facing the Anthropocene. Fossil Capitalism and the Crisis of the Earth System*. New York : Monthly Review Press, 2016, p. 9.

25 ANGUS, I.: *Facing the Anthropocene. Fossil Capitalism and the Crisis of the Earth System*. New York : Monthly Review Press, 2016, p. 57.

26 Accent is being placed especially on accepting the fact that the so-called hybridisation results in a gradual loss of autonomy by nature vis-à-vis humankind, in other words: nature and society cannot be considered as two isolated elements any more, as they increasingly interfere with each other (for more information, see: ARIAS MALDONADO, M.: The Anthropogenic Turn: Theorizing Sustainability in a Postnatural Age. In *Sustainability*, 2016, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 9. [online]. [2019-04-12]. Available at: <<https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/8/1/10>>).

ideal of de-growth. According to Sklair, this confusion is down to the fact that science has not defined a final and broadly accepted concept concerning Anthropocene, either. So, the media face the option of either appearing as ‘merchants of fear’, or ‘merchants of doubt’. Due to their commercial background, however, it is not surprising that they end up “downplay[ing] the risks of the Anthropocene”.²⁷

Migration, as a major issue of the past few years, is not infrequently also the result of adverse climate conditions in the countries of migrants’ origin. Local environmental crises often make life difficult or even utterly impossible in a given area, so the local people seek better conditions for life as part of what is termed environmental migration.²⁸ However, the Slovak media reflect on such causes of migration rather scarcely, paying instead more attention to armed conflicts and destitution that they breed. This stirs up much more passion with mass Slovak viewers, who are still only learning to tolerate other cultures, while we also need to bear in mind that this particular point of view involves confrontation with a demonised religious otherness. A document of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) states that “despite widespread claims in the media and mostly grey literature, there is almost no reliable evidence on the effects of environmental factors (statistically controlling for other influences) on out-migration”.²⁹ Nevertheless, S. Trent, director of the Environmental Justice Foundation, claims that weather-related hazards have displaced more than 21 million people each year since 2008.³⁰ Environmental migration becomes an issue in the media mainly in relation to major natural disasters and far less frequently as a result of gradual climate changes. Meanwhile, environmentalists have been

27 SKLAIR, L.: The Anthropocene Media Project. Mass Media on Human Impacts on the Earth System. In *Visions for Sustainability*, 2018, No. 10, p. 8. [online]. [2019-04-15]. Available at: <<http://www.ojs.unito.it/index.php/visions/article/view/2740>>.

28 LACZKO, F., AGHAZARM, Ch.: *Migration, Environment and Climate Change: Assessing the Evidence*. Geneva : International Organization for Migration, 2009, p. 14.

29 LACZKO, F., AGHAZARM, Ch.: *Migration, Environment and Climate Change: Assessing the Evidence*. Geneva : International Organization for Migration, 2009, p. 171.

30 TRENT, S.: *Hovorme o klimatických utečencoch: 59 600 ľudí za deň, 41 za minute*. [online]. [2019-04-13]. Available at: <<https://euractiv.sk/section/spravodlivost-a-vnutro/opinion/hovorme-o-klimatickych-utecencoch-59-600-ludi-za-den-41-za-minutu/>>.

warning that these slow gradual changes have far deeper and lasting effects on environment and human existence than onetime disasters, which capture more attention by the media and their audience.³¹

Conclusion

In chapter two we reflected on the fact that some ethical standards in journalism, if pursued recklessly, can actually backfire. If a disinformation source gets as much space as real facts, as a consequence of efforts to present an unbiased report, recipients get it more difficult to sort the facts. C. Hamilton has described the situation with a metaphor – democracy has defeated science.³² This could happen not only as a result of bona fide actions, but also due to deliberate agenda setting,³³ promoted by business companies that perceive green environmentalism as a threat. Quite a strong wave of scepticism towards climate change that has surged recently is an obvious upshot of this, as it is also being encouraged by some political leaders³⁴ – who often deliver pretty aggressive statements – as well as by conspiracy theorists, self-appointed scientists, people making logically flawed conclusions, those resorting to arguments based on what they call inability to foresee individual climate phenomena, and people’s selective approach towards facts.³⁵ Many environmental problems thus become hostage, if not outright victims, of post-truth. The present era of post-truth has revived the fundamental postulate of ancient sophists: anything can be declared true, while it is only about one’s ability to defend and justify the contended claim. An uncontrolled proliferation of social media and media channels seems to have the ever more intense dissemination of fake news as an inevitable consequence.

31 LACZKO, F., AGHAZARM, Ch.: *Migration, Environment and Climate Change: Assessing the Evidence*. Geneva : International Organization for Migration, 2009, p. 29.

32 HAMILTON, C.: *Why We Resist the Truth About Climate Change*. [online]. [2019-04-15]. Available at: <https://clivehamilton.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/why_we_resist_the_truth_about_climate_change.pdf>.

33 COOK, J.: Understanding and Countering Climate Science Denial. In *Journal & Proceedings of the Royal Society of New South Wales*, 2017, Vol. 150, Part 2, p. 209.

34 HAMILTON, C.: *Why We Resist the Truth About Climate Change*. [online]. [2019-04-15]. Available at: <https://clivehamilton.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/why_we_resist_the_truth_about_climate_change.pdf>.

35 DIETHELM, P., MCKEE, M.: Denialism: What Is It and How Should Scientists Respond? In *European Journal of Public Health*, 2009, Vol. 19, No. 1, p. 2-3.

Apart from fake news, we also observe another phenomenon – the public giving a cold shoulder to climate change and environmental problems in general. This can be related to people’s selective concentration on their own welfare, insufficient environmental literacy and, for that matter, also insufficient media literacy, as we suppose that they get most information on the issue from the mass media. Meanwhile, we believe that both media and environmental literacy need to be in a symbiosis, both being ever more necessary competence of any citizen of any country. Such a comprehensive literacy includes the awareness of what has already been sown by humankind, and while the fruit necessarily needn’t be reaped immediately, it is almost certain that the time of harvest will come at a certain point. Until then, people as consumers live in an anthropocentric belief that their right of unrestrained consumption is superior to anything, including the amount of natural resources. They do not realise – and the media do not mention it, either – that if their behaviour and the prevalent cultural paradigm remain unchanged, some of the more fundamental rights than that of boundless consumerism (restrained only by people’s own purchasing power) can be unavailable to them, including the freedom of movement and the right of residence, and perhaps even the right to life.

We believe that the mass media should act more responsibly in this issue by involving the public as much as possible in the debate on environmental problems and usher in remodelling the anthropocentric worldview, built for centuries, into ecology ethics, “respecting not only natural human rights, but also natural rights of nature”, according to J. Šmajš,³⁶ thus ensuring that people are not viewed as the exclusive subjects of moral worth. So, a revolutionary shift in the way of how people think seems to be necessary, but many eco-philosophers concur that if untackled by what might now be considered utopian efforts, the Anthropocene can be the final geological epoch experienced by humankind. The expected role of the media in alerting to these facts seems to be pretty obvious, but it does not appear that they have understood it properly. Nevertheless, we also notice that it is quite complicated for them to call for change more insistently, considering the current distribution of financial resources. This reveals a vicious cycle, with the media being part of the very cultural, social and economic system that needs to be changed.

36 ŠMAJŠ, J.: *Ohrozená kultúra. Od evolučnej ontológie k ekologickej politike*. Banská Bystrica : PRO, 2006, p. 141

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TRENT, S.: *Hovorme o klimatických utečencoch: 59 600 ľudí za deň, 41 za minute*. [online]. [2019-04-13]. Available at: <<https://euractiv.sk/section/spravodlivost-a-vnutro/opinion/hovorme-o-klimatickych-utecencoch-59-600-ludi-za-den-41-za-minutu/>>.

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THE TRUTH IN THE MEDIA – THE NECESSARY CONDITION, BUT STILL SUFFICIENT?

Rafał Śpiewak

ABSTRAKT:

The truth is without any doubt a condition of a reliable and efficient communication and it is a necessary postulate regarding all the media. In the world of “liquid modernity” of which the most frequently dominant category is the notion of the “post-truth”, the opportunism and commerce, the communication of the truth in its classical meaning becomes a big and urgent challenge. The truth is a necessary condition to retain credibility of the media and hence the functioning of the society in the democratic system. Notwithstanding this fact, it seems that communicating true pieces of information does not constitute a sufficient condition. There occur, however, certain conditions when publishing the truth in an inappropriate way may not only violate but also destroy the dignity of a person. Moreover, there may occur situations where publishing the contents in accordance with the truth would put in danger for instance countries and their citizens. This issue calls for more profound analysis and an attempt to demonstrate the additional criteria when information sharing will be not only in agreement with the truth but also reliable, honest, secure and respecting the dignity of another person.

KEY WORDS:

ethics, human dignity, media, society, truth

Introduction

The front of the struggle for the truth today seems to move towards every area of life, both individual and social. Everything depends on the results of this struggle. Even though in different situations and in many different ways there appears the following sarcastic query “so what is the truth?”, despite deliberate or sometimes sincere sarcasm, and unfortunately despite the frequently appearing tendentious cynicism toward the truth, it will never stop asking for its appropriate status.¹ The truth only arranges our lives and gives them meaningfulness and profundity. John Paul II in his speech for scientists on 9 June 1987 in Lublin, undertook a profound reflection on the place and conditions of truth in the contemporary culture. One of his listeners was then a Polish

1 AUSTIN, L. J.: *Mówienie i poznawanie*. Warsaw : Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1993, p. 156.

notable scientist, Professor Klemens Szaniawski who, thanks to the John Paul II's thoughts, undertook contemplations on the meaning of truth in different contexts. In this way he wrote an article *About the Ethos of the Truth*. Its author not only raises the subject of the significance of truth in the social life but also draws attention to its ethical value.² His contemplations contain many valuable observations which may be referred to the functioning of the media and journalism. Analysing the meaning of truth, he places it in the wider axiological context, among other equally important values. His contemplations contain essential postulates in reference to the contemporary media and journalism.

We know, from our own common experience, that communicating the truth has a fundamental meaning for the building of human relations. The betrayal of this principle violates the essential role of communication, it undermines confidence. Even though we know that the truth communicated in a wrong, crass or partisan way also does not build a relation yet it destroys it severely. The truth given in an inappropriate form can offend, injure and ruin the confidence between and among the people. In direct contact, face to face, it is easier to notice. Having a person in front of us and knowing a difficult truth we face serious dilemmas. What to do with the truth that we have learnt about, how to communicate it? These dilemmas become even more important when it comes to the mass media and journalism. The nature of the media creates the situation in which one cannot see the faces of the recipients of the contents. One cannot always grasp the consequences of giving true information. The truth is not always equally accepted. The truth must be well analysed, its different contexts and the consequences of its publishing, we need to measure it with different values. Thus, in the name of the autonomy of the truth it cannot be used instrumentally or, what is worse, mercantile for achieving some other goals.

1 Which Truth Do We Think About?

In an attempt to contemplate the postulate of communication of the truth in the mass media we approach a difficult dilemma to solve. It is necessary to formulate many different definitions which will aim to create order with the entire discussion about truth and which will facilitate achieving the target of these contemplations. The first issue is the meaning of

2 SZANIAWSKI, K.: *O nauce, rozumowaniu i wartościach. Pisma wybrane*. Warsaw : Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1994, p. 540.

truth. It is an old issue continuously raised and it is defined in a vast variety of ways on an epistemology basis.³ Let's take only the classical definition of truth by Aristotle and St Thomas, which is the agreement of the thoughts with the reality, yet it still causes difficulties when it comes to the mass media. For instance, the participants of the same event would describe, from their subjective points of view, burdened by various emotional states and knowledge, a different condition of perception and understanding of the reality. As a result, their descriptions might stand in stark contrast with one another. Consequently, who can decide which of them is true? Even if they vary, are they all true? And perhaps none of them is true, since fragmentary and subjective. Tomasz Goban-Klas says, "Respective messages can never be »objective«, i.e. grasp the reality, for the decision of communicating something is always simultaneously a decision of omitting everything else (which may also be important). Hence, the message itself contains a value-laden factor – that draws attention to this one and not that one constituent of the reality."⁴

Is it possible to reveal the truth from a multitude of descriptions about a person, an event or some reality? It is not without the bounds of possibility, but it causes another difficulty, as the pluralism of views, and therefore in a certain sense of evaluating ratings, may lead to epistemic relativism and hence in the consequence also to axiological relativism. From the vast variety of descriptions and interpretations of the same realities, phenomena or behaviours, it is not difficult to accept that all of them have equal authorisation. Therefore, every person claims, basing on the report, that he or she knows the truth even though each of them knows something different. The problem occurs much more complicated when it comes to human dignity in the mass media, as we need to define both the concept of a human being and his or her dignity. Its meaning is not unambiguous and obvious. In the field of anthropology there are different definitions of a human being and his or her dignity.⁵ Again,

3 TARSKI, A.: *Pisma logiczno-filozoficzne. Prawda*. Warsaw : T1, 1995, p. 14.

4 GOBAN-KLAS, T.: *Media i komunikowanie masowe. Teorie i analizy prasy, radia, telewizji i Internetu*. Warsaw : Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2009, p. 203.

5 For more information, see: INGARDEN, R.: *Księżeczka o człowieku*. Cracow : Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1999; GRANAT, W.: *Osoba ludzka. Próba definicji*. Sandomierz : Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski, 1961; SUCHODOLSKI, B.: *Narodziny nowożytnej filozofii człowieka*. Warsaw : Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1967; GRANAT, W.: *Godność człowieka i jej współczesne uzasadnienia*. In BEJZE, B. (ed.): *O człowieku dziś*. Warsaw : Wydawnictwo Sióstr Loretanek, 1990, p. 223-256.

contemplating these issues becomes a serious, laborious and complex intellectual activity. Even the pure association of the truth with the human dignity in the media is a serious challenge, taking into consideration that the mass media today are not only a human domain but also most often the domain of artificial intelligence. At this point, we arrive at another dilemma, namely who is the subject in the media? Can we still recognise a human being a main subject in the communication, or as a sender or receiver? Between a sender and a receiver there appears an enormous mass media machine armed with the vast spectrum of complex digital tools.⁶

And just this digital world, created by human intelligence, that is aimed to serve effective communication, begins to get out of control even from those who have created it. It was a significant fact when the creator of Facebook gave a speech in the European Parliament, in the speech he expressed his apology for the lack of control and coordination within his own media and at the same time he promised to try to control the situation. The question is if he manages, and if so, for how long? Or maybe, in a long perspective we are bound to fail as the very complex and often unreachable technological mechanisms, algorithms in the transformation of the reality will more often get out of control from human intelligence? Who do we have to address the postulate of the respect of human dignity to? To a machine that does not feel nor express emotions and does not take into account ethical values since it is not a human being? Jean Lohisse in his dispute on the future of the digitalised culture puts a following question: "Will the relation of the real world and the world of imagination put some another mental form? If, in the uncertain future, the digitalisation of the society leads to the onset of a new system of social communication."⁷ When we search for an answer to the question, we first think of the truth in its classic meaning, as of a reflection of the real world in the knowing mind. What will happen if in the social mentality the borders between the real and virtual fade?

6 See: BURSZTA, J. W., KULIGOWSKI, W.: *Sequel. Dalsze przygody kultury w globalnym świecie*. Warszawa : Muza, 2005; LEVINSON, P.: *Miękkie ostrze. Naturalna historia i przyszłość rewolucji informacyjnej*. Warszawa : Muza, 1999.

7 LOHISSE, J.: *Przyszłość kultury z informatyzowanej*. In GODLEWSKI, W., MENCWEL, A., SULIMA, R. (eds.): *Antropologia słowa. Zagadnienia i wybór tekstów*. Warszawa : Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2004, p. 662.

What will become a criterion of the veracity in the world created by digital technologies? What will become a criterion of the truth in the cyberspace? J. Lohisse puts forward a moderate optimistic viewpoint. “One can think that cyber technologies will still integrate with our daily reality, assimilated into average intelligence via common teaching and reduced to a cliché in gesture automatisms through many different activities. We can keep alive the hope that the still greater confluence of these technologies will not wean us away from the will to understand the manipulation which is realised beyond the awareness. We can claim that the specialists will save the keys which allow to open “black boxes” to advanced technologies. But what will happen if humanity loses all the keys?”⁸

The next dilemma which emerges from the reflections on the truth in the media is of a legal nature. The mass media space is regulated by codes in the broad sense.⁹ There are laws directly regarding the media but also the full spectrum of laws that regulate the functioning of a company, the economy and political systems. All of them together form the spaces and trajectories where the media and journalists can move. Someone makes these laws. Even though, he or she takes into consideration the truth, it will remain only in the aspirational and not in the normative sphere. Can the law guarantee the truth at all? And if so, in which way will it be enforced in the mass media? Let me add that in the contemporary media, i.e. in the pan medial reality, life often enough avoids legal regulations. The truth of life is often merciless for the law and vice versa. There is evidence that the law may be constructed on different levels so that the pluralism of the media and hence the possibility of getting to know the reality from different perspectives can become a sheer illusion. It may happen especially when, not only economical systems but also digital systems, will be controlled by political systems, state systems or even supranational systems (ACTA, ACTA 2). So the postulate of the truth itself in the media seems inefficient. It is necessary to grasp a wider context and conditions of the postulate.

8 LOHISSE, J.: Przyszłość kultury z informatyzowanej. In GODLEWSKI, W., MENCWEL, A., SULIMA, R. (eds.): *Antropologia słowa. Zagadnienia i wybór tekstów*. Warszawa : Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2004, p. 662-663.

9 BARTA, J., MARKIEWICZ, R., MATLAK, A.: *Prawo mediów*. Warszawa : Prawo mediów, 2005, p. 10.

2 The Truth Autonomy and Its Use

The role of the media is, above all, informing, enlightening, raising public awareness and warning the society. It is possible only when one tries to discover and reveal the truth in a very careful and conscientious manner.¹⁰ Regarding this important role of the mass media and the journalism, the risks are that not only when lies, manipulation, fake news, post truth occur but also carelessness, superficiality and precipitance. Klemens Szaniawski, who agrees with the thesis on the validity of the truth in the epistemological aspect, speculates upon its axiological aspect. The point is not only in the possibility of getting to know the truth, the necessity of getting to know it but also how do we use the acquired knowledge and what do we do with it. He says: "Generally speaking, the truth should be respected for its own sake and not as a result of utilitarian calculations. These calculations do not have to represent the truth, at least in the perspective ad hoc. However, if to respect the truth, we will search for axiological motivation and its profits, and if from this profit we will equate the status of the truth in our private or public lives, the result will be changeable like the function of circumstances and the number of direct profits and losses."¹¹ So it is connected directly to a journalist and especially to the reasons which guide him in the process of getting to the truth and then to publishing it. Respect for the truth would require the purification of the intentions of the activities, which we undertake, from all the mercantile motives.

The obvious threat for the truth is a lie in its different forms and uncovers. The brightest examples of a system lie are censorship interferences, silences, and also, as Szaniawski notices, "tendentious factsheet, implicit changing of the word meanings and a so called lie with the help of the truth".¹² At the same time, he provokes a thought from a poem *Child Of Europe* by Czesław Miłosz who characterises the nature of this false and perverse mechanism in an accurate way:

- *Grow your tree of falsehood from a single grain of truth.*
- *Do not follow those who lie in the concept of reality.*

10 Compare to: DRÓZDŹ, M.: *Prawda w mediach*. Tarnów : Wydawnictwo Diecezji Tarnowskiej BIBLOS Tarnów, 2010; REWERA, M.: *Prawda w mediach*. Tychy : Maternus Media, 2009.

11 SZANIAWSKI, K.: *O nauce, rozumowaniu i wartościach. Pisma wybrane*. Warsaw : Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1994, p. 541.

12 SZANIAWSKI, K.: *O nauce, rozumowaniu i wartościach. Pisma wybrane*. Warsaw : Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1994, p. 543.

- *Let your lie be even more logical than the truth itself.*
- *So the weary travellers may find repose in the lie.*¹³

Such a way of acting in the field of journalism and the mass media brings terror and fear. It undermines the fundamental role of the media and the mission of journalism. Even Szaniawski considers such attitude as blind and short-distance, but he also thinks that in a longer time perspective such attitude turns against the perverse liar who loses in the confrontation with the objective truth and human judgement. “Negative effects of the loss of trust to the sources of information will eventually reveal themselves, even though very often we need to wait for this moment quite a while.”¹⁴ Szaniawski’s optimism, from the perspective of years, should be considered excessive, since in the result of a dynamic development of media technology and the nature of communication processes the given pieces of information are rapidly no longer up to date. The announced information arrives to the receiver as quickly as they fade away in his or her memory to make way for the new *news*. Hence their verification becomes very difficult and sometimes even impossible. It would demand from us consciousness, great vigilance and it would be connected with the necessity of documentation of specific materials to be able to compare and analyse them.

Another serious and discrediting factor about the truth is its arbitrary and ruthless use which undermines its strength and glare. The mass media of today functions as a company. They are subject to all the rigours of the market and economy. One of the more important factors is commerce, which influences seriously its functioning. The focus on profits, games of interests, flirt with power or other influential groups causes many dilemmas. When the media based on the commercial principles must earn, truth becomes the goods and stops being given gratuitously. When everything is to sell, truth is not the absolute value and risks being used with many manipulations. Zbigniew Widera, bearing in mind the notable economist Noam Chomsky, concludes: “Noam Chomsky has an opinion that the authentic independence of the media, that is their neutrality, is not possible, since in their essence they remain a tool of the capitalism. The media depend on the state and corporation information politics

13 SZANIAWSKI, K.: *O nauce, rozumowaniu i wartościach. Pisma wybrane.* Warsaw : Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1994, p. 541.

14 SZANIAWSKI, K.: *O nauce, rozumowaniu i wartościach. Pisma wybrane.* Warsaw : Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1994, p. 542.

and become the prolongation of respective structures responsible for shaping this politics within the state and financial organisations. Together with Edward S. Herman, Chomsky describes in the book *Manufacturing Consent* the so called propaganda model, which explains the mechanisms of the functioning of the media in the contemporary capitalist democracy. According to this model, there are five filters which influence the form of the news presented by the official media."¹⁵ And he mentions the following filters: 1) the ownership of the media in the hands of rich elite, 2) the dependence of the media from advertisers, 3) the usage of the state institutions as a major source of information, 4) dissatisfaction, protests by the state institutions and 5) the influence of ideology (especially free-market and anti-communist).¹⁶

Since the media are specific, they take part of both political and economical market. Because the truth in the media is dependent on economy, market and politics, there is a danger of instrumentalisation of the truth, playing with it, blackmailing and stimulating of public opinion. When it comes to the motives and intentions of journalists there are many doubts since truth can be passed only gratuitously, whereas the functioning of a company does not have to be passed this way. On account of that, is it possible to solve this conflict or are we doomed to it? Publishing of the truth is contextually bound and requires taking into consideration different rights and foreseeing the consequences. Every human being has a right to the truth but there are borders of intimacy or downright security. We protect certain truths against making them public to watch over our own dignity or the dignity of others. Accordingly, it is important not only what is published but also what is not published in the media. Such an aspect may be, for instance, cruelty, depraving from intimacy, sensitive or strategic information. When the criterion of the profit evokes shock, scandal, emotional manipulation, what is the value of the truth? In such a situation the value of the truth is examined not only in the moral categories but also economical.

15 WIDERA, Z., SARNA, P.: *Komunikacja medialna placówek oświatowych jako instytucji usług publicznych – studium przypadku*. Katowice : Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny w Katowicach, 2015, p. 6.

16 WIDERA, Z., SARNA, P.: *Komunikacja medialna placówek oświatowych jako instytucji usług publicznych – studium przypadku*. Katowice : Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny w Katowicach, 2015, p. 6-7.

When truth in the media becomes only goods and is subordinated to economical, political and ideological interests, the axiological autonomy of truth is brushed aside. In this situation it is necessary to find out a principle that introduces an order. It seems that defining common good might be of help. The goodness is integrally related with the truth; the truth ensures and protects it. Hence, in the name of truth the wider hierarchy of values must be taken into account, its holder often finds himself or herself in a situation of a dilemma, if not a conscience conflict. Szaniawski describes it in this way: “Saying this I cannot, of course, deny the existence of value conflicts, where the truth is only one of the parties. The second aspect of the conflict might be other values such as for instance mercy, the name of which the truth is concealed or even negated.”¹⁷ As an example he gives a situation of a doctor together with the closest family member of a hopelessly ill person to whom they do not reveal the full truth. Without any doubt there are many controversial statements regarding such a situation and Szaniawski refers to them in the following way: “I do not think it is possible to solve this kind of questions in a convincing and general way according to some recipe which once and for ever determines the hierarchy of values included. It rather happens that the solution depends on individual situation features which cannot be specified in advance.”¹⁸ The dilemma of a similar nature like patient-doctor is faced by many journalists. It should be emphasised that it is an unavoidable burden of a responsible journalist mission. “We are doomed to our own insight into the matter, and I do not use without reason the words »doomed to« – Szaniawski explains-. After all, each of us knows this painful feeling of perplexity which is associated with a decision to sacrificing one value instead of the other.”¹⁹ Do we need to write everything and at all costs? An important feature of a publisher of the truth in different sorts of media is the ability to have empathy and a sufficient level of emotional intelligence.²⁰

17 SZANIAWSKI, K.: *O nauce, rozumowaniu i wartościach. Pisma wybrane.* Warsaw : Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1994, p. 542.

18 SZANIAWSKI, K.: *O nauce, rozumowaniu i wartościach. Pisma wybrane.* Warsaw : Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1994, p. 542.

19 SZANIAWSKI, K.: *O nauce, rozumowaniu i wartościach. Pisma wybrane.* Warsaw : Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1994, p. 542.

20 GOLEMAN, D.: *Inteligencja emocjonalna w praktyce.* Poznań : Media Rodzina, 1999, p. 433.

3 Out of Respect for Truth and Men

The question of empathy is also correlated with moral conditions of an author of published contents. Ethical codices can be of help, for example a *Polish Media Ethic Card*.²¹ The principle of the truth has the first priority, which says that the published contents must be in accordance with the truth, given without deformations, over interpretations and silences. And in case of a mistake a quick correction must be done. The second is the objectivity principle that demands from an author presenting the reality in a distance from his own viewpoints. Moreover, the principle of separating the information from the commentary, the principle of honesty, respect and tolerance, then the principle of the priority of the receivers' good and the principle of liberty and responsibility. All of the principles should be considered together. I would like to note, however, the coexistence of the principle of the respect and tolerance with the principle of the priority of the receivers' good. The first one refers to the respect of human dignity, laws, and personal goods and especially the privacy and reputation and the second one is connected with the receivers' good. In *the Card* we read: "The principal readers, viewers and listeners rights are superior to the editorial office, journalists, editors, producers and senders."²² However, the people to whom it is written but also the people about whom it is written have the dignity and the laws. A journalist who aims at reaching the truth has a dilemma of respecting the dignity of the person who his or her material is about and on the other hand the receivers good, public interest and also the editorial office where he or she is employed. Playing the truth from mercantile, economic and merciless reasons may be a risk. The risk is still bigger as the media in the contemporary world function as an enormous company, as it was mentioned before, and quite often are influenced by elusive world of politics or the forces of ideologies. Furthermore, the world of journalists to be able to function in this very complex machine may have a tendency of losing certain ethic borders which are difficult associate with specific codes and laws because of their complexity. It depends a lot on moral sensibility of individual journalists.

21 GOBAN-KLAS, T.: *Media i komunikowanie masowe. Teorie i analizy prasy, radia, telewizji i Internetu*. Warsaw : Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2009, p. 183.

22 GOBAN-KLAS, T.: *Media i komunikowanie masowe. Teorie i analizy prasy, radia, telewizji i Internetu*. Warsaw : Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2009, p. 183.

Zygmunt Bauman makes a question, in his book entitled *The Chances Of Ethics In The Globalised World* which may be associated also with the world of media, journalism, their morality and experiencing their mission “(...) if the ability and inclination to morality and responsibility for Another Person as a specific Face will become capacious and strong enough and also adequately determined and vital to consider the responsibility for » Another Person as such«: non specified and anonymous (because he or she is melting in the mass of »others others«)? Is it possible to transplant the ethics, which is born and is developed within the *moral party of two*, into »an abstract community« of the human society and even further into an abstract global human community? To put it bluntly: does the moral education which we receive in various *moral party of two*, prepare us to live in the world?”²³ This question directs the truth to a personal viewpoint. It is a question not only about the possibility a journalist has to be willing to reach the truth but also what he will do with this truth when he or she has reached it?²⁴ When and how will he or she communicate it? It may happen that because of the complexity of gaining the truth it is far easier to gain it than publish it in the mass media suffering all the consequences. Perhaps before doing it one has to not only face an anonymous receiver but come face to face with the watcher, listener and reader. That is, one needs to have a look at the face of Another Person who is both the potential receiver and the one who the published material is about. Hence, Bauman continues: “We understand why the tools and habits developed in a two person relationship need to be rebuilt and supplement to make a triad in function.”²⁵ The principles which appear in the direct contact with another person may be faded away or overvalued through the mechanisms that rule in the world of the media.

Because of the influence of the dynamic technological media changes the way of journalism has been changing, therefore it is urgent to follow the changes with an axiological reflection. The goodness of the society will depend not only from the technological advancement but also and above all from moral condition of its entire beneficiary. Only professional and

23 BAUMAN, Z.: *Szanse etyki w zglobalizowanym świecie*. Cracow : Znak, 2007, p. 25.

24 CHYLIŃSKI, M.: Mechanizmy odpowiedzialności dziennikarstwa i mediów. In DRÓŻDŻ, M. (ed.): *Prywatność w sieci. Dobro osobiste czy społeczne*. Tarnów : Etyka Mediów 13, 2016, p. 277.

25 FRANCIS, H.: Piszecie „pierwszą wersję historii”. In *L'Osservatore Romano*, 2016, No. 10, p. 51.

moral journalists will be a major pillar of this complex system which will provide vitality and liberty of the pluralistic society. On the other hand, professionalism cannot be limited to the capacities of the technical nature but it should consider most of all ethic qualifications. The codes cannot predict all the ethic possibilities, however. To prevent a dangerous process of dehumanisation of the media and pervert the mission of the journalism, Pope Francis proposes taking into consideration several key demands. He defined them during his speech for journalists on September 22, 2016 in the Clementine Room in Vatican. At the beginning he underlined that the issue has a fundamental meaning because the fact that many professions have an enormous impact on the society such as journalists. Since their activity plays an important role it has to also be connected with enormous responsibility. The Pope noticed: "In a way you write »the first version of history«, presenting the news in a specific order and suggesting people some interpretation of these events."²⁶ Appreciating the big role of the media and journalism, the Pope shares his reflections on certain aspects of this profession and vocation. With regard to the materials published by journalists he distinguishes both the contents and the way of giving the message. He says: "For all of us it is an essential thing to be willing to consider what we do and how we do it."²⁷ The contents, which are related with the accordance with the truth, for him does not constitute a sufficient criterion, though. In the media, it is important the way of providing information as well.

From Pope Francis' whole message for journalists one can extract three clear postulates: the love of the truth, living in a professional way and respecting human dignity.

1. The love of the truth. Determining the journalist mission, Pope Francis strongly concludes: "their mission is to reach the facts as closely as possible and never say nor write things one knows in his or her consciousness to be false".²⁸ Nonetheless, the Pope understands a journalist's love of the truth in a broader manner. In his perception, a journalist is not an officer, neither the one whose job is to proclaim the truth, but a person who lives the truth. He should be a bearer of harmony and unambiguousness. This integrity of the action and life comes down to journalist honesty. One should not exercise this

26 FRANCIS, H.: Piszecie „pierwszą wersję historii”. In *L'Osservatore Romano*, 2016, No. 10, p. 51.

27 Ibidem.

28 Ibidem.

profession and professionally search for the truth and fail to follow the same motifs in the private, personal life. It is important to stress that according to the Pope the principle has a universal value. It is especially related to the believers, even though the Pope does not aim at discrediting in this way the unbelievers. He realises that the declared Catholic faith of a journalist may sometimes, against a certain challenge, be ineffective. Its lack does not indicate that someone will not act in a decent or noble way. The Pope says: “The point is not focused on whether the person is a believer or a non-believer. The point is if one is an honest person toward himself or herself and toward others.”²⁹ For Pope Francis, the communication is defined in a relational context, building of relationship equals staying in relationship, supporting the relationship, repairing and healing it. The destruction of relationship is a denial of communication, its perversion and antithesis. It is not difficult to conclude that in the intention of a journalist every truth should be communicated (published) so that its form and contents would keep its building and purifying character. The Pope claims that “no relationship can last and be permanent if it is not based on sincerity”.³⁰ And at the same time, sincerity cannot mean the lack of delicacy, prudence and self-restraint. A danger may appear when the laws of the market decide about everything. The ruthless information trade may favour the objectification of a person, making his life shallow, trivialising his or her fate. It may result in the reduction of life to certain of its aspects, such as unjust generalisations, passing judgements, bias and superficiality. The Pope says: “I realise that in contemporary journalism – the uninterrupted flow of facts and events, described throughout 24 hours, 7 days in a week – it is not easy to arrive to the truth or at least to get closer to it.”³¹ He does not by any means intend to relativize it, but he aims at underlining the seriousness of the situation. Thus, prudence is necessary toward the decisions of publishing information, especially as notices Francis, “life is not black or white”.³² Therefore, the truth is important and necessary, but one needs to approach it with humility. Reaching it is a very arduous process and most often we are doomed to subjectivism

29 FRANCIS, H.: Piszecie „pierwszą wersję historii”. In *L'Osservatore Romano*, 2016, No. 10, p. 52.

30 Ibidem.

31 Ibidem.

32 Ibidem.

and mistakes. The Pope adds: “even in journalism one needs to be able to distinguish the shades of grey in the events which we need to tell about”.³³ Any human activity, especially in the controversial situations, demands from us enormous intellectual vigilance. Social life, as much as its mechanisms are complicated, contains an area full of apparent rights. Reaching the truth and its deep analysis on who is right and who is not is extremely difficult to recognise. The truth is not biased, that is, it does not side with any particular direction, it is in-between. The confrontation and sometimes a conflict come from this very difficulty of achieving the synthesis of different stands. As it come to the sphere of political or social life the Pope claims that in professional journalism it is important not only information, nor publishing but also synthesising and searching for deeper justifications, reasons and meanings of different phenomena. He means a certain noble form of curiosity, a reflective curiosity which is contrary to searching for sensation, bigger news and provoking a shock.

2. **Journalist professionalism** according to Pope Francis is “the interiorisation of the deepest sense of one’s own work. It is a necessity in defining the fundamental motivation of being a journalist or an employee of the media”.³⁴ Only a just defining of vocation and journalist mission may protect a journalist from yielding to opportunism and various particularisms.³⁵ The Pope mentioning the experiences of different dictatorships states that “the dictatorships independently from the orientation and «colour» – they always intended to control the media and impose on professional journalists new rules”.³⁶ Only an interior freedom and correctly formed conscience can guarantee that the journalist mission will not be included in the logics of the economical interests. The role of a journalist, and I dare to say his vocation, is the development of the social dimension of a human being, facilitating of the building of a real citizenship.³⁷ The truth in the media is, for him or her, a necessary condition and at the same time a sufficient condition. The result of a journalist activity should always be the common good and not individual, the creating of a community that is the civil society.

33 FRANCIS, H.: Piszczenie „pierwszą wersję historii”. In *L’Osservatore Romano*, 2016, No. 10, p. 52.

34 Ibidem.

35 Ibidem.

36 Ibidem..

37 Ibidem.

3. **The respect of human dignity.** The respect of human dignity is the third component that sorts out a journalist's work that the Pope Francis mentions. It is an important task in every kind of profession, but in the case of a journalist, according to the Pope, plays an essential role. For this reason bearing only the criterion of the truth is insufficient, “because behind the press report feelings and emotions are hidden, and in the end human lives”.³⁸ The Pope underlines not only the building force of the truth but also the one that destroys. “I have often said that a slander is »terrorism«, and that one can kill with words. (The truth can kill). If it regards singular persons, within a family and at the workplace, all the more it regards journalists, for their voice can reach all the people and it is powerful weaponry. Journalism must always respect personal dignity. This article is published today and tomorrow it will be replaced by another one, but the life of a person who has been unjustly defamed may be destroyed forever.³⁹ The Pope confirms that in the name of the truth any criticism is important and is entitled and even necessary. It is significant to call a spade a spade but it must be always done with the respect of another person – his or her life and feelings. Therefore the Pole claims that: “journalism cannot become »a weapon of mass destruction«”.⁴⁰ It also should not be a tool of emotional manipulation, escalating fear and anxiety. Journalism must be a tool for spreading cultural meetings. “I do hope that journalism will be more often and everywhere a building tool, a factor in creating the common good, a component that accelerates reconciliation processes, and that journalism will be able to reject a temptation of conflict exasperation through the usage of language which provokes divisions and become in favour of creating the culture of a meeting.”⁴¹

Conclusion

The truth regards ethic principles and moral goodness. John Paul II puts it in this way, “The truth about moral goodness expressed in the intellectual law in practice and in a context of a specific situation is recognised by

38 FRANCIS, H.: Piszecie „pierwszą wersję historii”. In *L'Osservatore Romano*, 2016, No. 10, p. 52.

39 Ibidem.

40 Ibidem.

41 FRANCIS, H.: Piszecie „pierwszą wersję historii”. In *L'Osservatore Romano*, 2016, No. 10, p. 53.

conscience judgement which leads to accepting the responsibility for good and bad deeds; if a human being allows evil, the just conscience judgement lasts within him or her as a testimony of universal truth about goodness and what is more it makes him or her aware of the evil that results from his or her wrong choice".⁴² A journalist has to not only pay attention to getting to know the truth and provide it by the means of the media but he or she has to also pay attention to the truth about the moral qualification of his or her own decisions, their deepest motifs and the effects which they can cause. Accordingly, it is essential not only a reliable search for the truth on the base of methodological and ethic criteria but also the question of moral qualification of an act such as publishing of the collected information. Ethic codes postulate it. However, as Pope Francis notes, ethic codes and the parliament law will not be able to specify all the criteria in each case. Thus it very much depends on the care of the condition of the conscience. This statement from Pope Francis is in accordance with the John Paul II's views, who specifies: "One cannot confuse an incorrect »subjective« opinion about the moral goodness with the »objective« truth shown to a reasonable human being as a way to achieve a goal nor claim that a deed done under the influence of honest conscience has the same value as his or her deed which is done following the judgement of false conscience."⁴³ One needs to remember that conscience, as a judgement of a deed, is not free from an error danger.⁴⁴ Thus, every journalist should take a humble approach and special caution because of the great importance of his social mission.

The role of a journalist is not gossiping, causing sensation but is building the common good with the respect of every person's dignity. Hence, in the case of dilemmas we need to ask for an intention, basic right, what is this piece of information for? What is this publication for? It is not only about the truth as stating the facts but about the necessity of their understanding. For this reason, a more profound reflection and help is needed to grasp all the "shades of grey" in the complex reality. In a world dominated by new media, in the name of the truth, responsibility for technology is essential. When the mass media rely on commercial principles, they must earn and the truth becomes merchandise and stops being given gratuitously. Taking into account that the media today function as a company where an essential role is commerce, profit

42 PAWEŁ, J. II.: *Veritatis splendor*. Katowice : Encyclicals, 1993, p. 92.

43 PAWEŁ, J. II.: *Veritatis splendor*. Katowice : Encyclicals, 1993, p. 95.

44 PAWEŁ, J. II.: *Veritatis splendor*. Katowice : Encyclicals, 1993, p. 93-95.

gaining, interest plays and close cooperation with the authorities or other influential groups, the truth can be determined in many different ways. That is why the motifs of information publishing which go in accordance with the truth require additional taking into consideration of a pragmatic criterion, who does it serve? Whose interest does it represent? What kind of goodness comes from publishing this or other contents, who do they serve and who do they build? It is important both common good and also respect toward human dignity. In view of the fact that it is also possible to tell lies thanks to true sentences, we have not only two possibilities such as the truth and the lie but also many various manipulation forms: intentional distortions, understatements, avoiding of certain contexts. The truth has an autonomic value but one can juggle it in a free way. It is difficult to deny the statement that through the truth one can heal, build (create), protect and also destroy and kill. Everything is connected with the way it is conveyed. Above all it should be always published from the purest motivations – with the respect of every person’s dignity.

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NON-VERBAL MANIPULATION IN THE AUDIOVISUAL LANGUAGE OF JOURNALISM

Anton Szomolányi

ABSTRACT:

Audiovisual expression have several forms in contemporary journalism. In television journalism is usually a literary or verbal report, which will be transformed into the language of audiovisual communication. Transforming a text into image and sound follows its own rules of communication, which we will attempt to define. For audiovisual expression human psycho-sensory perception is reliant on merely two senses, eyesight and hearing. They allow us to perceive image and sound, which can be recorded on a camera, a purely sensory instrument of the physical type. This involves the spatial pre-camera reality of authentic space, which is recorded on camera as the area of the final image. The resulting sensation depends on a number of semiotic relations involved in the communication process between the author of the report or information and its recipient.

KEY WORDS:

communication, composition, connotation, interview, news (reports), news coverage or reporting (newscast), semiotics, TV form

Introduction

An audiovisual report and its transformation from a written text directly entails the change from one form of expression into another in terms of communication. In order for audiovisual content to be perceived and believed by the recipient, audiovisual content needs to find its way into psycho-sensory perception. “The screen and the loudspeaker” become a sort of an open window to the world of information we perceive. The perception of audiovisual content is limited to two senses: eyesight and hearing. If we say that in the real world we are able to perceive more information through vision than hearing, it does not apply in this case. Regarding the language of expression for audiovisual content, the image stands on an equal footing with sound, while in the narrative the dominant role in the expression shifts from one to the other or the two are in mutual harmony. An audiovisual recording is not just a technical recording of image and sound. Each audiovisual expression also involves semiotic relations – the use of signs. It is only the assumption of “technocratic videographers” that everything recorded on camera is

the real truth. The moment we turn on the camera and turn it off, we get another reality, a new one – a shot that is a technical recording, but also a new reality that is subject to all semiotic relationships, such as area composition, motion in filmic space, shot duration, the continuity and rhythm of the audiovisual sequence, the relationship between sound and image, the dominance and readability of individual content components, and so on.

This is due to the very nature of audiovision, which uses digital technology as the basic instrument of communication for conveying the news. In the final result the digital technology represents a system of lights and shadows in the area of the screen and it is the recipient who on the basis of mental analysis of their consciousness has to transform this image related to sound into a concept of information, which they received without any influence from the author. He or she already did their part when creating the report. When passing basic information through an audiovisual report, we speak of two basic elements – image and sound. When one of the components of content expression becomes too dominant, the content becomes mostly monotonous and may induce passivity in the viewer when perceiving it. It can happen that if the report is precisely told in verbal form, it might not move the recipient or appeal to them. The establishing of a language of expression as the basic means of communication between the author of the content and the content's recipient is determined by the form we use to express ourselves and this form constitutes the change of dominance between image and sound and possibly their occasional unity. By unity we mean the duplication of information unambiguous expression of image and sound. This function is unsustainable in the news narrative, in one of the components of image or sound expression. We encounter this issue on a daily basis when watching evening news in our countrywide media.

1 Main Text

The news is as if trying to mobilise the viewer with its important content. It brings to the viewers content that should mobilise them, if only because it concerns the viewers themselves, or because they receive information that has a direct impact on their lives, or the viewers – the recipients stay passive and the programme is there just to complete their daily schedule (“I am watching the news”). The creator and recipient of the news have not found a communication language and the expression through audiovisual language has not been understood or has been

misunderstood or disregarded. Why is that so? We will not attempt to find the cause not in the content but in the formal language of the audiovisual narrative. Through research and analysis of the countrywide reporting in or news coverage in Slovakia we will attempt to raise the issue concerning the quality of the audiovisual content's form. Regardless of whether the broadcaster is private or public, the standard figure of a newscast is the news presenter as the main carrier of the news. This person introduces the topic and conveys it to the viewer. A simple framework of the introduction, where we see his or her face: pre-camera utterance, illustration images throughout which the presenter continues speaking, a formal authentic feed with a respondent, then again shifting back to the newscaster who will add information to the report under the “illustration image content”, where some of the shots from the beginning may be repeated, and concluding the report in a pre-camera message introducing the author, the presenter of the report. This is roughly the basic form of a newscast regardless of whether it has a crucial political content, or whether it is about a car accident or a cultural event or some other type of audiovisual information as part of the news coverage.

The viewer typically receives a lot of information from the text, the narration of which is like a race against time and the aim is to verbally communicate as much as possible. The image is usually just a passive carrier of some illustration information from a specific environment with recurring shots, or the emphasis of the image is placed exclusively on the presenter and their expression in a false dramatisation or their looks, for instance their hairstyle and clothes. A substantial part is also to place the author in front of a background which should evoke the gist of the verbal report. In reporting we rarely see an image composition system, a system in the arrangement of the form and the readability of that form in relation to the support of the content and intention. If one of the creators tries to prepare a visually interesting report, it usually falls through the cracks under a flood of image chaos and deadwood. It may seem cruel, but the viewers in Slovakia are moved by the news of the brutal death of a journalist, but in all these years they were indifferent to the compelling content this journalist shared in writing. So we arrive at the conclusion that this is the way it works in Slovakia. Yet it is not the case. Audiovisual content is deemed to have the highest ratings, they certainly get more attention than written news coverage. The use of film language in reporting is often on a chaotic level and it is necessary to think about the cause of that. The system of the means of expression in the non-verbal and verbal part of a narrative is very rich and the success

in the communication with the recipient of the news lies actually in the suitable form and the combination of using means of expression in audiovisual language. What matters is to pass the information. The narrative elements of a story cannot be refused. After all, journalism and the so-called realistic record, as mentioned above, is actually a narrative expression in audiovisual content.

It does actually matter how the presenter is incorporated into the image area. If the presenter stands in the centre and is shot from a slight view from below with a dramatic expression and communicates significant information, with which they want to attract the viewers, it suffices that a tree branch is in the background making the person look as if they had horns on their head, or if an electrical wire from the background “passes through his or her eyes”, the whole meaning of a dramatic report is ruined in the subconscious of the viewer by perceiving contradictory information. The told and the shown was not in unity, but in a contradictory position. The recipient of the report, the viewer, even if they are unable to define it, gain a chaotic perception. The news becomes ambivalent for them and they are in a passive position – time passes, everything goes according to the daily schedule, where watching TV news in classic media fits perfectly. At this point I have described just one case. The number of formal errors in our creative space is inexhaustible, when speaking exclusively of news coverage – television journalism. The presenter occupies a paramount position – he or she is the carrier of the news, often actually its main character and the way how he or she is shot by the camera matters. If the awareness of the form of the image and sound expression is at the level of creating a written text, the audiovisual expression loses its meaning and the effect of conveying the message is reduced. If the maker of an image is a “videographer or recorder”, or a camera operator, who does not know or use the visual means of expression, communicating the news becomes passive when perceived by the recipient. Many broadcasters currently have minimum demands on the profession of a cameraman. They are often not even mentioned in the newscast credits. During our analyses it sometimes seemed that what mattered was that the cameraman has a driver’s licence, that they are able to fill in for the sound technician, to turn the camera on and above all that they are able to work quickly and without technical problems. This is a bit too little in this time of fierce competition of information, where not only the content matters in communication, but also the form. The power of information undoubtedly depends entirely on the audiovisual order of shots and the soundtrack. The viewer’s activity is conditioned by

the ability of this audiovisual sequence to communicate and to establish contact with the viewer.

The form of the audiovisual content of reports may be given firstly by the genre itself, and for example by its cyclical classification within a medium with predefined formal criteria, and secondly by the creator of the report or by a set of creators within the production staff involved in content creation. Z. Hudíková emphasizes that “the main purpose of news is to provide information. Television news gives the viewer information through various news genres (TV news, TV report, interview). Today, in an effort to attract and keep TV viewers as long as possible, the fun feature of this factual format is becoming increasingly dominant. Stories and emotions prevail over austere and factual processing, the form of processing is more relaxed.”¹ If we divide the audiovisual newscast into three basic elements of expression, we can define in each of them the formal specification of the expression:

1. **Pre-camera utterance of the presenter – stand up.**
2. **The respondent’s utterance.**
3. **Visual account through a set of shots connected to the news topic.**

In the following three parts we attempted to define individual expressions in the connotation, designation and denotation through semiotics analysis.

1. Regarding the **pre-camera utterance of the presenter, the newscaster** or the news anchor /the person who communicates in front of the camera, they may be called differently in various parts of the world/ in formal terms we speak of the person of the presenter and the space he or she is incorporated into.
 - a) **The expression of the television anchor, the news presenter or newscaster** is the basic means of communication in semiotic expression. The credibility of the news and its reception by the recipient is communicated eye to eye. This means that the news presenter looks directly into the camera thus maintaining eye contact with the recipient. A long, maintained direct eye contact without interruption is regarded as impolite in personal communication. In television journalism breaking the

1 HUDÍKOVÁ, Z.: Emotions a Key Element of News Reporting. In *Current Issues of Science and Research in the Global World. Proceedings of the International Conference*. Leiden : CRC Press, 2014, p. 164-165.

eye contact is up to the viewer and their decision. Excessive dramatization and acting in the journalistic conception does not have to be correctly evaluated. However, speech articulation and pace are important, as the presenter communicates from the screen directly with the recipient of the news. A too fast pace and flow of information is tiring, and it distracts from the content's essence. The break and pauses are necessary for evaluating pieces of information and establishing their mutual connection. The news anchor or presenter should not overshadow the content by their expression. The news is important, not the person commenting on it or communicating it to the viewer, yet this does not rule out the possibility that the recipient of news may find the presenter appealing, nor does it go against the presenter's journalist status.

- b) The position and height of eyes with regard to the view angle of the camera** is one of the main formal expressions. The type of the news and dramatisation may determine the position of the eyes in relation to the camera height. If the height of the lens is equal to the eye height, we can consider it the basic position and the newscaster's look into camera is neutral. A slight view from below, which means that the camera lens is lower than the presenter's eyes, makes him or her more important. If the newscaster also raises his or her chin, their expression becomes dominant. The view angle should be carefully considered. The presenter is merely the carrier of the news, not the news itself. They do not take part in the story they talk about, they are merely observers. The top view or the view from below usually cannot be maintained throughout the whole report. However, it can attract attention when moving on to the report. Excessive work with the view angle brings the observer to an unwanted connotation and it can distract him from the report's substance.
- c) The light in which the message is created** – the lit space forms the basis of the presenter's expression. The low light level implies technical insufficiency for the colour and light tonal settings of the camera. A statement given in direct sunlight at high noon creates a shadow from the superciliary arches and the eyes are not visible. The light located on the camera makes the face look flat and often leads to a colority different from the surroundings. "Artistic" or artificial light with a strong light-shadow ratio on the presenter can ruin the content of the report and distract from its substance. The newscaster in the shadow

with too much backlight may seem “ripped out” of the shot.

- d) **The optical expression of the camera view** represents the distance of the presenter from the camera: This also determines the size in which he or she is shot. A close-up shot of the newscaster amplifies him or her as a person and separates them from the space in which the statement is made. The space around the newscaster in a wider shot helps define the geography of the shot and the time constituting authenticity. If the camera is too close and the view of the camera is in wide focus, the presenter’s figure may be deformed. A long focus with an adequately adjusted f-number through a low depth of field can separate undesirable artefacts in the background. With a close-up on the presenter, a too low depth of field can bring artefacts of unsharpness into the shot. These may disrupt the perception.
- e) **Face structure and eye expression** means readability of the utterance. Nowadays we have a high definition image system, which entails a high ability of transmitting face structure details. Unpleasant artefacts on the face represent negative connotations and disrupt the meaning of the message. Light makeup, which should be unobservable, is appropriate. Unpleasant skin defects may be eliminated by a wider shot. The eye expression and the eyes’ authenticity is enhanced by the light in them. A speck of light in the eyes placed on the side rather than in the middle inspires trust.
- f) **The presenter’s clothes** constitute the impression of the news substance. Not dominance. A report is not about modelling, but about the news communicated by the presenter. If the viewer remembers the clothes and not the news, something is wrong. If presenters have a scarf during the feed and the scarf is moving in the wind it causes distraction. A model displaying clothes attracts attention with clothes, the presenter attracts attention with the news. The clothes should be appropriate to the theme and not distracting.
- g) **The colour and the colour design** is determined by the formal nature of the programme. The colour style of a newscast as a coherent programme is the domain of developed media and constitutes their uniqueness. The report itself should form a compact whole with regard to the colour set-up. The face tonality is in a uniform tone. The observer is the most sensitive to skin tones. Therefore white balance is key. Pronounced coloured

elements such as a coloured tie may form a connotation to the theme that does not have to be told and the viewer stays confused and may get lost in the information he or she was supposed to gain.

- h) The presenter's movement and choreography** in relation to the camera is another element of meaning-making communication. Movement must have its justified meaning. It should have its beginning and end. Excessive dramatisation of spoken text in combination with movement may look stilted and ridiculous. A slight movement into a circle may for example enable an impressive introduction of the background. The movement of the newscaster in the frame without the camera moving must have its space. The emphasis on gesture or head movement should have a specific meaning in connection with the theme. Many of the presenter's movements distract from the spoken word and it is up to the careful consideration of the creators, how much of presenter's or news anchor's movement during their utterance will be included in the report.
 - i) The background behind the presenter** is one of the most serious compositional expressions and brings about semiotic meanings. In the image, the structure of the background space is joined into an area with the actual core of the shot – the performer. If we do not perceive the conspicuous elements in the background, for example the tree branch which in the image appears to “come out of the ear”, the horizon line which “goes through the eyes” and many other artefacts, which are subconsciously evaluated by the observer who then loses contact with the substance of the news. Sometimes these artefacts may even devalue or change the meaning of the message content.
2. **The respondent's utterance** or the pre-camera interview brings the authenticity of place and time to the report. The significance of content's credibility is confirmed by the authentic respondent. Their position in the report is on the same level with regard to significance as the reporter's position.
- a) The respondent's look** is aimed at the news anchor and not into the camera. It depends on how far the respondent's look is from the camera's axis /the axis between the camera and the respondent/. If the reporter who is asking the question is too far from the camera's axis, the respondent gets into an unpleasant profile and the expression loses authenticity. The dramatic

effect is heightened by the proximity of the look to the axis of the camera. If the look is not only aimed at the presenter, but also passes on other people we do not know about and do not identify them in the shot composition, the viewer is distracted by identification and the content of utterance goes unnoticed.

- b) **The respondent's composition** is often risky in the optical expression, because the microphone held by the reporter is usually in the shot and the camera is close to the respondent. Using short focal length and a wide-angle shot may deform the face. The deformation is also highlighted by the forward move of the respondent. The space above the head as well as the placing of the eye height in the shot creates meaning and it is necessary to work with them actively. The same applies to the composition of the respondent as what was mentioned in the points in part 1.
- c) **The height and the view angle of the camera** expresses the attitude to the respondent, if the cameraman is tall and looks at the respondent from the top close-up view, it plays down the respondent's social significance. In this case the basic position of the camera height is also at eye height regardless of how tall or short the respondent is. The change of the view angle from the basic camera position at eye height brings false in semiotic expression.
- d) **The shot size** of the respondent is dependent on the image form of the report, but mainly on the links to the shots of the presenter. The shot size is also determined by the foreground constituted by the presenter and his hand holding the microphone. The space with the respondent forms the denotation of the meaning into which the respondent is incorporated. *The laws of dynamic composition*² for the moving image apply. The active space in the direction of the figure's look and passive behind the figure. "Artistic" compositions and compositional experiments do not work in a report. Searching for their meaning distracts from the content's substance.
- e) **External characteristics of the respondent** such as clothes, face structure, but also speech are elements of semiotic meaning. Not every person who we find suitable because of their speech fits our theme in that given moment. The utterance is one thing, but the other thing is external visual characteristics that

2 SZOMOLÁNYI, A.: *Dynamic Composition in Motion Picture*. International Team : LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2018, p. 23-28.

can ruin that utterance. If we leave the respondent on screen with a pronounced flaw such as the tie being askew or a spot on the shirt and so on, the viewer is subconsciously tied to this imperfection and the meaning of the utterance is ruined. If an unpleasant facial defect like a wart is highlighted by a big close-up or some other pronounced feature is amplified, this can also distract the viewer from the content of the utterance regardless of how important that information is.

- f) **The light in which the interview takes place** also plays a vital role. The lighting framework must conform to the professional convention, which primarily involves technical quality and quick readability of meaning-making visual elements. The light in the eyes adds vividness to the person. The face must be unambiguously readable. For interiors it is useful to define a dominant light source. Various low-quality light sources, usually stage lights, produce an incomplete light spectrum, low light level and inconsistent colour temperature. The respondents can thus be in various colours, which bring about undesirable connotations. If the light does not correspond to the light quality of the shots of the presenter, the respondent's loses its significance and the meaning is suppressed. If the camera light located on the newscast camera shines brightly into the eyes of the respondent along the axis of the camera, it is a disturbance. We have to work carefully with its intensity. Television journalism is often about the race against the clock and uses authentic light sources that need to be respected by selecting the adequate technical setting of the camera.
- g) **The suitability of the character for giving a statement** can also mean that not everyone can be included in the report. If we shoot an authentic figure, who has a speech impediment, a cosmetic defect, or does not capture the social essence of the report and so on, it is left for consideration how and, if the person is merely an additional factor, whether to shoot with that person at all. If the aim is not to degrade the respondent and to stoop to a tabloid level or to vulgarity, it is good to soberly consider what respondent to choose and what shooting method to apply. The verbal output can be disrupted by physical or mental details of the person. Visual and sound semiotics are crucial to the utterance. The respect for the person is very important and the value and quality of information depends on it.

- h) The comprehensibility of the utterance and the acoustic space** is a key condition for communication. The presenter has a trained voice and knows how to work with a microphone. The respondent is usually “new” to the camera and the microphone, they mostly do not understand recording technology. The utterance loses its effect if the space for the interview is not acoustically clean or if the intensity of the voice and the comprehensibility of the speech is not respected. If the respondent makes long sentences, which are then abruptly cut and unfinished, this gives rise to associations degrading the utterance.
3. **A visual account in a newscast segment** can support the text with a set of shots or it can possibly function as a self-sufficient unit, which informs in a parallel system of audiovisual order of shots. The support of text information can be duplicated in the image, meaning that the elements of the visual information overlap with the sound information, or the image can offer untold parallel information that is linked to the topic and complement the sound with its semiotic meaning. These two types of visual message can alternate. If we only stick to one of them, the report may be dull or even incomprehensible and the recipient of the information remains passive.
- a) The cameraman is inspired by the theme** as well as by the substance of the account. The visual order provides a visual concept of the theme. It adds authenticity and credibility to it. The information about the structure of visual elements that are indescribable with text is a visual framework of shots. If shots get in the theme which are not related to the content in semiotic meaning, they are a distraction. Attributing information from the text to the image and vice versa is crucial to semiotic perception. The image of a recorded reality is like a puzzle. Individual shots must become a whole. If they do not the image of reality is incomplete.
- b) Time, place and space**, for the visual account it is important to set the theme geographically, to engage the observer in the space of the theme and to define the time when the report was shot and when the event occurred. The orientation in space and time is very important for the recipient of the news. If suddenly in the set of shots an evening shot appears which is highly significant for the theme and we say that it is day, the effect of the message is ruined. The space and time is usually determined

by the whole content. Their place in the report is important: if information comes late, it can lose its meaning.

- c) **The system of alternation of shot sizes**, every shot has its follow-up and is very important in the report. *Even though it may be beautiful or very meaningful, a single shot gains effect in the logical order of shots, where the shot sizes in the system of dynamic composition. One shot follows the other, if they have mutual compositional counter-weight and diversity.*³
- d) **Repetition of shots in reports** is quite often used. This is for several reasons. One of them being that the creators of a report simply have more text than shots. At this point the significance of the image and its semiotic expression in relation to sound is disrupted. If there is a different sound information under the same image stimulation should create a new sign. And that is really the case. However, there is some other substance and that is the time in which the recipient has to evaluate the given relationship. In a report there is usually little time for creating a new significant. If its position within the shot composition has a different connection with the previous and the next shot, the recipient of the news searches for some context connection and their sensitivity to the textual part is reduced. The semiotics of one content in several meanings in the shot order brings about chaos.
- e) **One amazing shot does not make up a report**, if it is not supported by the given report text. Even though it captures a unique unrepeatable moment, a shot does not have to trigger an appropriate response in the viewer, if not supported by a shot order. The dramatisation of the moment during shooting does not have to be transferred into the final recording. For instance, if we manage to shoot "a bomb explosion", the emotional experience from shooting is huge, whereas the result for the recipient of the news may be minimum. Somewhere in the distance, smoke appeared and the audio features overmodulated, technically unusable sound. Only the shot narration that follows can add to the drama and intense image message off this one shot.
- f) **Illustration shot** is used for covering the text with shots. The role of illustration shots is to fill the image space. They usually do not have much in common with context of the news defined

3 SZOMOLÁNYI, A.: *Dynamic Composition in Motion Picture*. International Team : LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2018, p. 23-28.

from the text. Such image composition is applied only if for some reason it is not possible to film shots linked to the theme, or if the maker of the visual part does not have a concept and does not know how to create a meaningful shot order. Unrelatable shots often distract from the content and reduce its effect. *The recipient of the content constantly tries to connect the dots between image and sound. If he or she does not find any connections, the information stays untold and the recipient is passive: his activity in the psycho-sensory perception diminishes.*⁴

- g) The length of shots or it all goes back to maths.** The transfer of information in a report is very fast and dynamic. The length of individual shots is counted in seconds and the image offers authenticity and information supporting the text. Many shots in the report are determined by the length of the contribution and the rhythm of narration. It is important to have enough shots. If shots are edited for example in an approximately three-second rhythm, we need them for one minute and twenty seconds. The shot of the presenter or news anchor usually does not exceed six seconds. If we do not have enough visual documents or the order of shots is not planned in advance, it leads to chaos. The fast pace of creating reports does not really help. Long, repeated shots, illustration shots, meaningless shots from the archives induce passivity in the perception of the news recipient. The role of the image is to engage the viewer in space, create mental authenticity and credibility of the report.
- h) Colour and light** recorded by the camera has various possibilities in formal expression. By setting the digital camera, one can create an image style. However, this style must adhere to the form of the programme itself. One report is part of the whole formatted system of the broadcaster. The newscast segment by the creator of the report should fit the whole programme format. The actual creator is not important in this case. What matters is the content and its communication. The colour setting and light needs to respect that. The setting of the dynamic range as well as working with the camera's sensitivity and the colour space can be effectively used for newscast cameras, but it must not go against the intended format of the broadcaster.

⁴ SZOMOLÁNYI, A.: *Kamera! – běží... Aneb několik moudrostí, jak tvořit pohyblivý obraz*. Praha : Citadela, 2016, p. 84.

These were just mentioned formal shortcomings in audiovisual language communication. But there is one more serious matter when the perfect narrative form is abused for manipulation. This is what we are doing with the sources of the so-called world media or the media-forming media that make up the service of politics. **The shot as evidence or narrative storytelling and stylisation in a report** – what is truth. In the digital world the truth is the final report, the way how the theme was communicated through the report. The transfer of reality – of the truth as well as the substance to recipient of the information. We had the opportunity to shoot in Afghanistan, in a war zone in the Logar Province.⁵ It is virtually unreal to imagine that someone arrives in this area and to film a project at their own discretion. Although it is possible to get off the usual plane in Kabul and go to shoot in a city, in the countryside or the mountains as a “tourist journalist”, the probability of managing such an adventure with no health damage is very small and borders on being hazardous. Therefore, a sensible journalist acts the way to be able to finish his or her work and file a report. It is true that journalists all over the world risk their lives every day in order to bring the news and the truthful media content and for doing this they are owed gratitude and honour. However, the wars are created more by media than by soldiers these days! In terms of the image of war, i.e. the fiction or illusion on the TV screen. The reality is often completely different from either side of the conflicts and often with no specification from which side the particular truth is being communicated. If they manage to film an explosion from afar, you can see the smoke, the sound is distorted and the whole impression is “non-dramatic”. But that’s where some people died! The current media, especially global media, need to turn this event into shocking news, topped with the apparent politically directed illusion of the particular political interests. The reality is significantly helped by all the expressive means of film language, by arranging reality and by inducing a desired emotion providing that this emotion is really shocking news with the necessary political impact. When in the semantically convincing position, semiotics may create a perfect illusion of audiovisual news. Let’s describe a short example from the real setting in Afghanistan. A helicopter lands at a military base and brings a film crew with a prepared scenario. They do a dramatic stand-up in the safety of the base, while several dramatically moving soldiers are arranged in the background. Then the convoy sets off to a more less similar site of our “non-dramatic” shot, a few locals are hired, some pyrotechnically successful explosions are made – suitable

5 A film by author: *In the Shadow under Hindu Kush*. [online]. [2019-04-04]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5rYnZXMQtxU>>.

for the zoomed-in filming, and the picture of reality or illusion is ready. It is alright as long as the journalist responsibility to tell the truth and not an illusion of the truth, exists. If we inform what the situation really is and seek the reality in terms of the journalist responsibility and don't just follow the steps of the earlier prepared scenario. If we are not able to record reality in the given time, we try to pass the news to the audience the most truthful way possible, using the technical-creative means. I reckon that a realistic recording of the complex of events in an extremely difficult and dangerous environment is nearly impossible. Yet, the search for the connections and approaching the truth is possible by the creation of such illusion by means of the picture and sound. The result should be the realistic outlook and passing the true information.

In journalistic TV programs and in documentary films, the concept of manipulation with images, semiotics and content occurs very often. Film director and screenwriter Y. Vavrová says in her contribution: *“Very often, the concept of truth is discussed in the documentary film. What is the true? The real true is what the director shoot without the protagonist's consciousness and so-called he “steals” his identity, or what the hero says about himself? Documentary director Treštková claims that the director must never “steal” the truth against the will of his protagonists. The director should not idealize or deliberately traduce just because he wants his testimony to be negative. The only litmus paper of mutual tolerance is the protagonist's approval.*⁶ The expressive means of film language and their semiotic meanings should cater exactly to this kind of truth. Of course, hats off to everyone passing this true news without depending on their ordering person or commissioner, who along with the order, provided a scenario with a vision of the illusion reality. Even the most realistic shot gets a different information quality, or poor quality, in the moment of being shot by a camera, cut and put together with other shots.

Conclusion

With our research we tried to derive the semiotic meanings of the audiovisual language in television journalism. We picked only parts of the meaning creative elements as examples. We analysed the miscommunication expressive elements of the audiovisual language,

6 VAVROVÁ, Y.: Krehké hranice pravdy a lži dokumentárneho filmu. In *Pravda a lož. Sloboda prejavu v kontexte moderných technológií*. Bratislava : Paneurópska vysoká škola, 2018, p. 191.

which diminish the news value. In the last part of our text we mentioned a practical example of the research referring to particular work of the author of "In The Shadow Under Hindu Kush". A traditional television report competes today with the new media in the speed and quality of passed information. Television brings in high communication quality in the perfect picture and sound, unlike the internet news, where the form does not seem to be important. And this is the competitive ability of the traditional media communication offering not only the content quality, but also the quality of form and ability to communicate intensively with the audience even on the emotional level. And this is possible only with the full and qualitative awareness of the semiotic meanings of the audiovisual language.

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COMPARISON OF SELECTED ANALYTICAL TV PROGRAMS

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ABSTRACT:

Subject of this paper is to specify communication style in selected analytical TV news programs and to define their typical features. This paper focused on following TV programs: *Správy a komentáre* and *Události, komentáre*, which are broadcasted by national public service broadcasters RTVS and ČT.

KEY WORDS:

analytical, content, program, television

1 The Picture on Television

The picture on television unlike in the press is dynamic, vivid, moving. By assembling individual shots a logical and visual composition unit is created.¹ “*The image is a result of the action in a certain space, movement and time. It has its content, length, and inner structure.*”² The moving image is a creative product that displays phenomena, events, or facts in their external form that can be captured by sight.³ The word and image are considered prime and equivalent components on television. However, according to J. Rončáková,⁴ this is not entirely true, as it is the image that amplifies the sound and therefore the dominant feature of television broadcasting. For pictorial content is typical reportage method of recording an event. It is typical component of news report. It is characterized mainly by the versatility of image, authenticity, immediacy, documentary material and so on. It is necessary that the event or phenomenon itself be recorded as accurately and faithfully as possible in order to avoid misinformation, distortion of reality, or ambiguous explanation of the mediated information.⁵ The speech and thus the

1 RONČÁKOVÁ, T.: *Žurnalistické žánre*. Ružomberok : Verbum, 2011, p. 101.

2 KOŠČO, J.: *Žurnalistické žánry v televízi*. Praha : Novinář, 1984, p. 23.

3 CHUDINOVÁ, E.: *Televízna tvorba*. In TUŠER, A. (ed.) et al.: *Praktikum mediálnej tvorby*. Bratislava : Eurokódex, 2010, p. 196.

4 RONČÁKOVÁ, T.: *Žurnalistické žánre*. Ružomberok : Verbum, 2011, p. 101.

5 See also: HUDÍKOVÁ, Z.: *Current TV Production Trends in Slovakia*. In: *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2017, Vol. 13, No. 6, p. 197-208; MISTRÍK, M.: *Discipline and Punish?* In: *Communication Today*, 2014, Vol. 5, No. 1, p. 5-9.

spoken form of language, is a creative means that serves to express facts and events in terms. Strengthens the link between images, combining images, thus significantly affecting the quality of the audio-visual work.

It is very important that the image and the word are balanced, as it is important for the clarity of the whole contribution, for its unambiguous and correct understanding by the viewer.⁶ It is important to observe the principle that what the viewer sees is not to be said. The spoken form of the language, its lexical, grammatical, phonetic and phraseological means of expression make it possible to verbally describe the external features of phenomena, facts, objects, but also their relationships with other objects or facts. In addition to the aforementioned description of the external features of phenomena, objects, facts or relationships between them, spoken speech provides the viewer with other details, assessments as well as spatial and temporal localization of the displayed reality. It may be e.g. monologic, dialogical and combined, and in terms of preparedness, speech can either be improvised, partially prepared, or prepared entirely. M. Lokšík⁷ states that the relationship between image and sound is of great importance in television news. Along with real sounds, they complement each other to create a functional whole. As far as perception of sound and image is concerned, what the viewer hears does not have to see it, but what he sees, he should also hear. In the news, music does not occur unless it is part of a recorded event. However, it is used in the composition of news programs as a compositional or stylistic element. It is used in chants, divisions, headlines and also in the form of musical drawings. News intelligence eliminates the monotony of news reports and provides them with rhythm and dynamism

2 Analytical TV Programs

The paper deals with the definition of typical elements of news-analytical programs *Správy a komentáre* and *Události a komentáre*. These are similar programs that are broadcast by public television in Slovakia and the Czech Republic and may thus influence two very close public – Slovak and Czech. Attention is drawn to the characteristics of the

6 LOKŠÍK, M.: Televizní zpráva a televizní zpravodajství. In OSVALDOVÁ, B. (ed.) et al.: *Zpravodajství v médiích*. Praha : Nakladatelství Karolinum, 2001, p. 76.

7 LOKŠÍK, M.: Televizní zpráva a televizní zpravodajství. In OSVALDOVÁ, B. (ed.) et al.: *Zpravodajství v médiích*. Praha : Nakladatelství Karolinum, 2001, p. 76.

communication styles of the sessions. Given that we used in-depth, very detailed qualitative content analysis, we decided to analyse a total of 6 sessions (3 times *Správy a komentáře*, 3 times *Události a komentáře*) in the period 04/09/2017 to 06/09. 2017, which are available in the archive on RTVS and ČT. Then we chose the coding units - the characters we noticed in the individual reports and which were the basis for the evaluation of the entire realized research. We have analysed and interpreted a total of 60 messages. *Správy a komentáře* is program that is broadcast on public service TV channel RTVS called Dvojka. This program offers classic news, interviews and analysis on important topics. Invited competent persons clarify facts, analyse, evaluate, comment, offer their own opinions on the whole issue and so on. *Události a komentáře* is program that is broadcast on public service TV channel ČT called ČT24. This program offers an analytical session that brings news from home and abroad every working day. Processes the topics that the whole society lives and discusses with its actors, experts, and respondents via teleconference from around the world.

2.1 Program Comparison – Technique

If we focused on the studio looks, both programs, the tables were in a moderate half-round, which made an open impression. This “openness” was supposed to act not only on the respondents in the study, but also on the viewers at the screens, who could have a feeling of participation in the discussion. Studio colour tuning looked better in the *Správy a komentáře* section. It was more modern, relaxed, fresh. Similarly, choosing one table instead of two may be more satisfactory for the respondents, because when they sit “behind one table” they are in some ways closer to each other in that discussion, their mutual communication is more open and direct and together with the moderator create equal partners in the discussion. On the audio side, both programs had sounds that were dynamic in character. This can make the viewer feel certain of the urgency, the importance of the news. The jingles of both programs separated the messages from each other during the broadcast and were essentially identical to the sounds of the sessions. However, they naturally lasted slightly shorter, on average 3-4 seconds. In the course of jingles there were present spiralling globes.

Three different moderators accompanied *Správy a komentáře* program for three days. 1 woman (Zuzana Hanzelová) and 2 men (Miroslav Frindt and Martin Stržinec). Three, but only male moderators (David Borek,

Daniel Takáč and Lukáš Dolanský) took turns in *Události a komentáře* section during the three analysed days. One of them (always D. Takáč) reported on the news exclusively in short news blocks. The remaining two presenters addressed the more urgent reports of the day and interviewed the respondents in the studio. The way the program was conducted by two moderators took us a little more. On the one hand, it was professional, that everyone had essentially his or her position in the program, and on the other hand, the viewer could build a habit of always getting shorter, perhaps less urgent, interesting information with the presenter, while the next moderator will see important topics together with their analysis directly in the study. The headlines were easy to read in one and the other program, and we have no reservations about them. Certainly, the constantly changing headlines in *Události a komentáře* are very interesting and also enriching.

2.2 Program Comparison – Content

Choosing themes was mostly up-to-date and appropriate in the aired shows. Topics were devoted to important reports of the day, which audiences should be informed about in order to gain insight into what is happening in society. However, it has happened a few times that the broadcast message was merely ancillary to other important news of the day. The same themes were also processed on these days. Both programs were devoted to pre-election debates in Germany (both sessions on May 5, 2017). The topic was also discussed with experts - *Události a komentáře*, a German journalist was invited to the discussion via teleconference, and a lecturer from the Department of International Relations and Diplomacy commented on the topic. However, we consider the choice of topics to be satisfactory, and of course the sessions have adapted to their time broadcasting options. In the Slovak program dominated by news from the field of politics, the Czech program gave them much less attention. We can thus assume that *Správy a komentáře* focuses more on policy topics than *Události a komentáře*. On the other hand, this may be affected by the different duration of sessions. Given the greater time space for *Události a komentáře* this program can also be more dedicated to home events, which are not enough time left in *Správy a komentáře* after processing major policy topics. We can also see this in occasional reports, where *Správy a komentáře* commentaries do not increase the time and therefore they process them very rarely, for that the events, comments can fill their eventual redundant time with less interesting and less important news. At the same time, however, it should

be noted that domestic and foreign news broadcasts were on average almost the same - *Události a komentáře* had twice as long broadcasting time, as well as broadcasting about 2 times more domestic and foreign news.

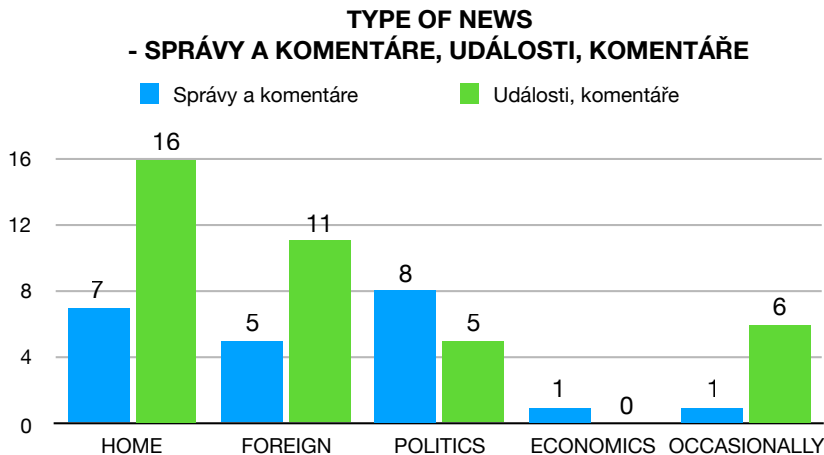


Chart 1: Comparison of broadcast message types in the programs

Source: own processing

In one and the other programs, the news was heavy news - *Správy a komentáře* 16 hard news and 6 soft news *Události a komentáře* 27 hard news and 11 soft news. Hard news has been broadcast more than double the news. We consider this ratio satisfactory. It is important that hard news dominated, bringing up-to-date and important topics that audiences should be informed about. she was able to make full use of the broadcasting time. On the other hand, however, it also broadcast more soft news on average, but it was very short news. All genres were on average longer in the *Události a komentáře* section. If it goes about percentage, here the situation is changing. While the picture message is less represented in *Správy a komentáře*, the combined message and journalistic interview had a larger percentage of the Slovak program broadcast time than the Czech program. However, this was due to the fact that the events, the comments also contained a reportage report, which waved an average of almost two and a half minutes and thus took a percentage of the broadcast time of the show.

**AVERAGE NEWS LENGHT IN
- SPRÁVY A KOMENTÁŘE, UDÁLOSTI, KOMENTÁŘE**

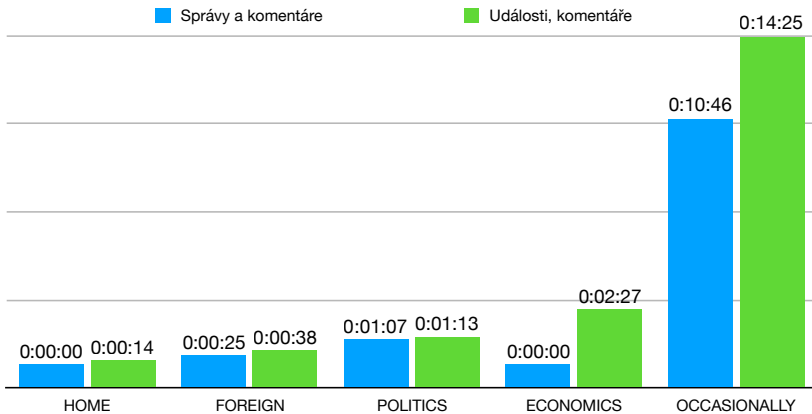


Chart 2: Average news length in the programs

Source: own processing

Both programs were saturated with information only in journalistic interviews. Other reports lacked new and interesting information that would not bring another medium and which could thus enrich our knowledge of the subject being processed. Usually, the news only brought basic information, answers to basic news questions, respondents' briefings, and illustrations. Sometimes the news was also enriched with infographics or reportage footage. Some of the news reports in *Události a komentáře* section have also fulfilled the information saturation, especially by reporting on the subject by competent people. In particular, the journalistic interviews, which we consider to be a groove of selected intelligence-analytical programs, were elaborated in depth. In both programs, they were led by experienced and well-prepared moderators who had the right direction and tried to get the audience to get as much explanation, analysis, evaluation, opinion, commentary and so on. Although we also consider the journalistic interviews of *Správy a komentáře* to be saturated with information, the Czech program has been able to offer somewhat more enriching information thanks to more time. Three types of genres were broadcast in *Správy a komentáře*: picture report, combined report, and journalistic interview. *Události a komentáře* in addition to these three types also used a reportage report and a one-time report. *Správy a komentáře* broadcast the most combined reports - 11, which were in third place in the other program. times.

Journalistic interviews were 6 times in *Správy a komentáře*, 11 times in *Události a komentáře*. However, a significantly smaller number of combined *Správy a komentáře* events is due to the fact that the show also broadcast 6 reportage reports that were not represented in the other program. However, we can say that due to the broadcasting space of the sessions, the news and journalistic interviews were on average almost as much as we appreciate, because we consider journalistic interviews to be the most important genre of these sessions, because they process themes in depth, analyse, evaluate, explain and so on.

The individual news headlines were exclusively informative in both programs and were therefore news headlines. However, not all reports used the introductory form of subtitles. *Správy a komentáře* never used the headline during publicist interviews - apparently because the conversation seemed to follow and respond to the previous broadcast combined message or picture message. We consider it a mistake. The viewer must continuously see what is being discussed in the study. On the other hand *Události a komentáře* did not list the headline again in any other report except for journalistic interviews in the studio and through teleconference. Even during the interviews, several subtitles were replaced at the same time, depending on the topic in question. We consider this method very suitable because the viewer always knew what the respondents were discussing and, moreover, these headlines were present in the picture during the whole interview. We can say that as far as the headlines are concerned, the programs could inspire each other. Where one has a subtitle session, the other has no, and vice versa. We are of the opinion that headlines, headlines, questioning of respondents is a very important part of the news and without it the viewer cannot easily orient himself in the report.

Except for a few details, the broadcast messages were comprehensible enough, had a logical cut, the text was related to the text and used simple means of expression. For example, we considered the problem use of foreign words because they are news programs that are also watched by older viewers, it would certainly be appropriate, even necessary, to translate these foreign words. In addition, we encountered incomprehensibility only a few times during the journalistic interviews in the studio, when respondents with the moderator began to jump into speech. However, we do not assume that this is something significant. Rather, it was a mutual verbal attack among respondents. The last drawback is the sometimes cut question in the combined *Správy a*

komentáře reports. It was not always clear for the first time what the respondent was saying. We would therefore propose either to leave the question directly in the report, or a better cut, which would perhaps give us a more complete answer. The errors mentioned, respectively, however, the shortcomings did not disturb the clarity significantly and therefore we can say that the broadcasted messages were understandable.

The interviews were only present in the studio or through teleconference in both programs. They did not appear in the image, combined and reportage reports themselves, there were only cuts of respondents' answers to questions that were cut out of the report. The interviews conducted at the studio were of a very good standard - the moderators had studied the topics discussed, had an overview of them, and could ask competent respondents the appropriate questions to direct the conversation in the right direction. As a result, viewers were able to learn more about the topic than just a short report, in which only basic information is summarized. Both programs included open and closed questions. However, moderators have usually said something, clarified something, approached it, and asked the question based on it. The answers tried to give the respondents the same space, and we did not see only one of the participants in the discussion. In *Správy a komentáře* we could see 36 respondents - 9 in the study and through teleconference and 28 in each report. *Události a komentáře* were offered by 63 respondents - 21 in the study and through teleconference and 42 in processed reports, combined or image reports. We can say that as the *Události a komentáře* is approximately 2 times as long as *Správy a komentáře*, the number of respondents was therefore almost the same on average. *Události a komentáře* waved more respondents present. While *Správy a komentáře* up to 2, *Události a komentáře* up to 4. Possible absence of respondent was in *Události a komentáře* often replaced by at least indication of the source from which they obtained the information - usually as a source published by ČTK (Czech Press Office). Based on this fact, we can consider messages in the *Události a komentáře* more trustworthy.

Conclusion

Based on the research conducted and the comparison of the communication styles of the television programs, we have defined their common and different features. Both programs were broadcast from TV studios. Studio of *Události a komentáře* however, was more modern in appearance, it was lighter in colour and there was only one table in the table, whereas in *Správy a komentáře* there were two tables - one for the moderator and one for the respondents. Jingles and sounds were dynamic in both sessions and evoked a certain sense of urgency and importance of the show, as well as the individual messages. While there were *Události a komentáře*, there were always two moderators present, the *Správy a komentáře* program was always moderated by one moderator. Topic selection was mostly appropriate and up-to-date in both programs. There were no differences between them. The program dealt with topics that resonated in society and were therefore of interest to the audience. On average, the programs handled almost the same number of domestic and foreign news. However, they differed in the broadcasting of political messages that were more used in the *Správy a komentáře*. While political reports were the most widely used type of news in their section, *Události a komentáře* focused more on home news. This is due to the different broadcasting time of the programs examined. Because *Události a komentáře* has twice as long broadcasting time, it can be more dedicated to news from home as well as occasional news. In both analysed programs, hard news was significantly higher than soft news. As far as information saturation is concerned, in both programs only the journalistic interviews in the studio and through the teleconference that were provided by the analysis, evaluations, explanations, opinions and attitudes of the respondents were deeply processed and enriched. The remainder of the broadcasts contained only basic information providing mostly answers to basic news issues. Message content was understandable in both programs. Minor deficiencies have been observed only a few times, e.g. when not explaining a foreign word or overlapping individual respondents.

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SOFT SKILLS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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ABSTRACT:

The paper deals with current trends and changes in the requirements for knowledge, skills and attitudes in the digital age. According to research by Roland Berger Strategy Consultants, Slovakia is a country that, compared to other European countries, has a below average level of human resources readiness for the most important Industry 4.0 challenges. The expected consequences of these socio-economic challenges should be radical changes in the character and organization of work and jobs. Successful orientation and application in the digital world puts new demands not only on the core expertise in the relevant field of work, but especially on soft skills such as self-decision-making, teamwork, flexibility, creativity, communication skills, critical thinking and more. The aim of the paper is to clarify what are the current trends in the demand for soft skills, especially in the context of current labor market requirements in the Slovak Republic.

KEY WORDS:

artificial intelligence, automation, digital age, digital skills, digitization, employment, Industry 4.0, labor market, robotics, soft skills

1 Introduction

One of the key features of today's society is digitization, which affects all areas of life and directly affects not only all sectors of the economy, but also individual citizens' lives. The current trend, which will be constantly gaining momentum, is the significant changes in the character of individual job positions as well as the organization of work itself. Informatisation and cybernetization of all processes is not a phenomenon that affects only the sphere of industry, but also the whole service sector, the functioning of all institutions and last but not least the labor market. These processes will lead to changes in the structure of jobs, which requires an urgent need to predict and consistently consider the specific social impacts of these changes on society and individuals. „To transform is to go beyond current form. This means growth, creation and evolution, an expansion of consciousness. When education serves transformation, it helps take us beyond the mold of categories, the current limits of social structure, the pull of cultural conditioning, and the box of self-definition; in thus going beyond, we ride the crest of the wave of creation, a wave

that constantly collapses and rises into new forms.¹ Defining new ways of orientation and navigation in this area is an essential requirement for academic research and education policies. In the event of neglecting or ignoring these challenges, we can expect in the near future a significant mismatch between the level of individual preparedness and the reality of social and economic changes that many citizens may find unprepared and unable to face radical changes. These changes in the first line will concern the labor market, which responds intensively to the general trend of moving towards a knowledge-based society. The changes in the structure and character of most professions will require completely new types of skills for which the education system, employers and individuals are not sufficiently prepared.

According to a study by Roland Berger Strategy Consultants, which assessed country readiness for the onset of industry 4.0, the Slovak Republic is among countries with a high share of industry, but only below average level of citizens' readiness to cope with the expected challenges of digitization, computerization and cybernetization.² On the one hand, there are hard skills that mainly relate to the knowledge and skills necessary to control new technologies and the overall functioning of industry and services in the Industry 4.0 era. This implies a wide range of IT competencies at both user and developer levels, as well as the ability to use various digital systems and platforms competently. These systems and platforms are penetrating an increasing number of industries and jobs, and their management is already an important prerequisite for successful employment in the labor market. „More and more, employers are therefore also seeking workers with new skills from further afield to retain a competitive edge for their enterprises and expand their workforce productivity.“³ It is important to note that the ability to navigate and engage in the digital era cannot be done without traditional soft skills such as „... communication, collaboration and creativity, and unique human traits such as empathy, relationship building, cognitive abilities, curiosity and desire to learn. Personality

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- 1 HEART, T.: *From Information to Transformation: Education for the Evolution of Consciousness*. New York : Peter Lang, 2001, p. 149.
 - 2 See: SIEPEN, S. et al.: *Industry 4.0. The Role of Switzerland within a European Manufacturing Revolution*. Zurich : Roland Berger Strategy Consultants, 2015.
 - 3 LEOPOLD, T. A., RATCHEVA, V. S., ZAHIDI, S.: *The Future of Jobs Report 2018*. Geneva : World Economic Forum, 2018, p. 6.

strengths are skills that will complement the possibilities of technology and reduce the threat of human labor replacement.”⁴ There are already highly valued individuals in the labor market with communication skills, problem-solving skills, communicating, organizing and collaborating. The importance of factual knowledge, to which the education system still places the highest emphasis, is diminishing. Successful employment of a graduate in the labor market is increasingly dependent on his / her ability to learn and also depends on his / her motivation to continuously acquire new knowledge, skills and knowledge. Key competencies and soft skills are becoming increasingly important and valued personality quality that has the highest potential to handle the challenges of a rapidly changing world. The effects of digitization on all areas of social life are reflected in the need for interdisciplinary knowledge, combining communication skills, project thinking, the ability to face new challenges and changes, as well as creativity and critical thinking.⁵

Most European countries strive to adapt to these processes in a timely manner through the preparation of strategy papers and action plans to predict future developments and define the most important measures to adapt society and individuals to the expected changes. According to the Proposal of the Intelligent Industry Action Plan, a decline in employment in some sectors is expected in connection with automation and process optimization. However, this decline should be continuously saturated with new professions, many of which are still emerging. The problem is that the education system in the Slovak Republic is not able to respond adequately to the requirements of practice, not only in the area of demand for specific professions, but also in soft skills of human resources. Within OECD countries, Slovakia has one of the highest disproportions between the requirements of practice and what the education system produces.

4 PRISING, J. et al.: *The Skills Revolution*. Milwaukee : Manpower Group, 2018, p. 10.

5 Compare to: MISTRÍK, M.: Discipline and Punish? In: *Communication Today*, 2014, Vol. 5, No. 1, p. 5-9; RADOŠINSKÁ, J: Omnivore vs Univore: A Reflection on the Current Knowledge on Cultural Taste and Cultural Consumption. In: *European Journal of Media, Art and Photography*, 2018, Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 98-109; SOLÍK, M., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J., LALUHOVÁ, J.: Media as a Tool for Fostering Values in the Contemporary Society. In: *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2013, Vol. 9, No. 6, p. 71-77; HUDÍKOVÁ, Z.: Current TV Production Trends in Slovakia. In: *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2017, Vol. 13, No. 6, p. 197-208.

The Action Plan identified the following major barriers that can stand in the way of successful adaptation of individuals to these societal challenges:

- An inefficient system of lifelong learning involving less than 3% of adults in Slovakia, while the EU average is 10.8%.
- Discrepancy between acquired knowledge during formal study and labor market needs.
- The education system has insufficient knowledge of the labor market needs.⁶

Artificial Intelligence represents the intelligence shown by machines or software and "...can be associated with almost every sphere of human activity."⁷ Robotization and automation are already replacing especially those professions that are routine in nature and those that are primarily associated with low qualifications. In this context, the notion of self-expression is also relevant "to the specific personality characteristics and traits of the creative people."⁸ This trend mainly affects industry, but is also gradually penetrating other sectors of the economy, including service, retail, and the like. According to research (Impacts of digitization on the labor market in the Czech Republic and the EU), the most threats to professions include administrative workers, especially those who perform routine tasks easily replaceable by automated systems.⁹ Other professions whose performance usually does not require a high level of soft skills have a similar value to the digitization index (Table 1).

6 *Návrh akčného plánu inteligentného priemyslu SR*. Bratislava : Ministerstvo hospodárstva SR, 2018. [online]. [2019-03-03]. Available at: <<https://www.mhsr.sk/uploads/files/8U6RKSS5.pdf>>.

7 PELEA, I. C.: The Relation between Artificial Intelligence, Human Communication and Ethics. A Futuristic Perspective: Utopia or Dystopia? In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2019, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 39.

8 FICHNOVÁ, K., WOJCIECHOWSKI , L. P., SZABO, P.: A Reflection on the Citizens' Attitudes to the Political Situation (and Their Creative Renditions). In *Communication Today*, 2019, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 78.

9 See: CHMELARĚ, A. et al.: *Dopady digitalizace na trh práce v ČR a EU*. Praha : Úřad vlády ČR, 2015.

Table 1: List of professions with the highest digitization threat index

Name of profession	Threat Index digitization
Numerical Processing Officers	0.98
General administrative staff	0.98
Motorcycle and Car Drivers (excluding Freight)	0.98
Cashiers and ticket vendors	0.97
Skilled workers in forestry and related areas	0.97
Blacksmiths, toolmakers and related workers	0.97
Other officials	0.96
General Secretaries	0.96
Operation of mobile equipment	0.96
Animal keepers for the market	0.95
Auxiliary workers in agriculture, forestry and fishing	0.95
Operation of equipment for mining and processing of mineral resources	0.94

Source: CHMELARŮ, A. et al.: *Dopady digitalizace na trh práce v ČR a EU*. Praha : Úřad vlády ČR, 2015, p. 9.

The least replaceable will be those jobs that require a high level of qualification, creative invention and empathy, as well as those professions that are associated with immediate contact with another person (especially in health, social services, education, management, etc.) (Table no. 2).

Table 2: List of professions with the lowest digitization threat index

Name of profession	Threat Index digitization
Managers in retail and wholesale	0,000
Doctors (except Dentists)	0.001
Nurses and midwives specializing	0.002
Managers in education, health, social and others areas	0.002
Managers in business, marketing, research, development, advertising and public relations	0.005
Teachers at universities and colleges	0.008
ICT Managers	0.008
Managers in accommodation and catering services	0.010
Managers in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and the environment environment	0.011
Other health care specialists	0.011
Specialists in electrical engineering, electronics and electronic communications	0.015
Specialists in databases and computer networks	0.021

Source: CHMELARŮ, A. a kol.: *Dopady digitalizace na trh práce v ČR a EU*. Praha : Úřad vlády ČR, 2015, p. 10.

2 Objectives and Methodology

The aim of this study is to map current requirements for soft skills in the Slovak Republic. Knowing what knowledge and skills are expected from job seekers is an important prerequisite for analyzing the current demand of employers for soft skills and at the same time one of the indicators of future requirements for the education system at individual levels. The research methodology was based on the results of research conducted by Manpower Group and Infocorp, which in October 2017 carried out quantitative research among 19718 employers across six industries in 42 countries.¹⁰ In addition to Slovak companies, the research sample included companies from Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, China, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Greece, Guatemala, the Netherlands, Hong Kong, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, South Africa, Hungary, New Zealand, Germany, Norway, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, United Kingdom, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Italy, Turkey and the USA. Data analysis was done by the Reputation Leaders Agency. Research has focused on identifying the expected impact of automation and digitization on employment and employers. One part of the research questions was also devoted to what soft skills employers most appreciate and which soft skills have the greatest difficulty for employers to gain in the labor market. An overview of the most important soft skills is given in Graph no. 1, which shows that the most desired soft skills required by employers are: communication skills, collaboration, problem solving, organizational skills, customer service, leadership, management skills.

10 For more information, see: PRISING, J. et al.: *The Skills Revolution*. Milwaukee: Manpower Group, 2018.

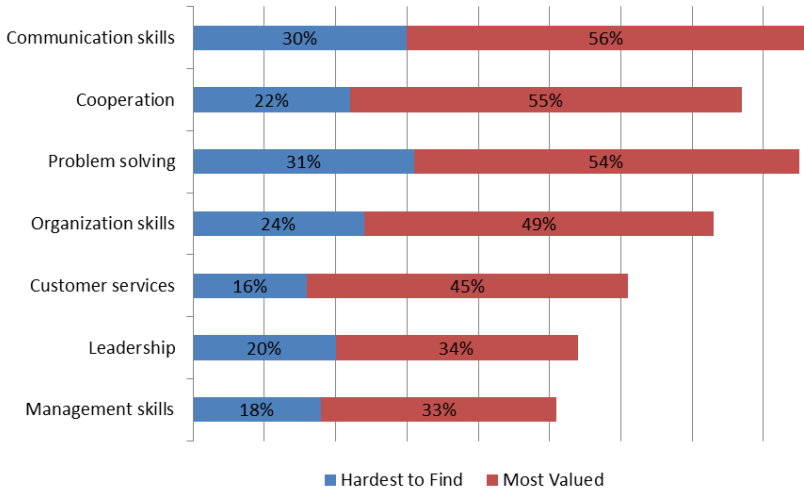


Chart 1: Most Valued Soft Skills in Digital Age

Source: PRISING, J. et al.: *The Skills Revolution 2.0 Robots Need Not Apply: Human Solutions for the Skills Revolution*. Milwaukee : Manpower Group, 2018.

To analyze the current demand for soft skills in Slovakia, we used a freely available database of the company Profesia, which is the largest online portal for employment placement in the Slovak Republic. We conducted a content analysis of job offers published on the portal from 11 March 2019 to 11 April 2019. In total, we analyzed 16 299 job offers that were placed on the portal. As a selection criterion for data analysis we used the following keywords describing soft skills:

- Communication;
- Cooperation;
- Problem solving;
- Organization skills;
- Customer services;
- Leadership;
- Management skills.

The obtained data were subsequently analyzed by means of quantitative content analysis, through which we surveyed the number of demand for individual soft skills among employers in the Slovak Republic.

3 Research Results and Discussion

As a result of the quantitative content analysis of job offers, flexibility is the most desirable personal property of all soft skills. Of the total number of 16,299 personal advertisements, there were 3211 cases, representing 19.70%. Similarly high demand is for employees with communication skills (3180 job offers, representing 19.51%). Given the growing share of the service sector, it is logical that employers are also looking for staff with the ability to provide customer service (1452 cases, 8.91%). Surprisingly low is the current demand for soft skills, which are expected to grow dynamically in the near future. The problem solving ability as soft skill occurred in only 3.89% of ads. The ability to collaborate as a soft skill only appeared in 4.45% of jobs (Chart 2).

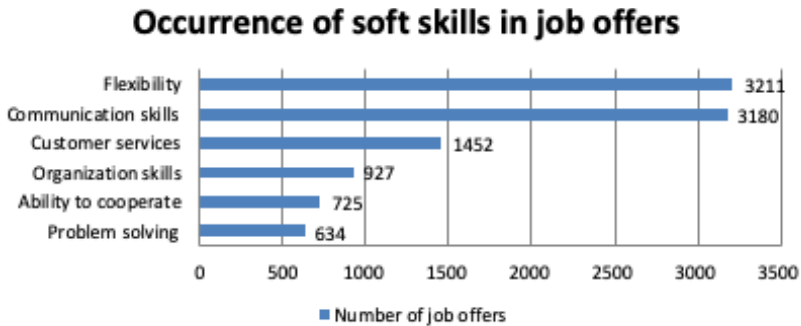


Chart 2: Occurrence of Soft Skills in Job Offers at profesia.sk.

Source: own processing

As part of the analysis of the presence of soft skills in job offers in Slovakia, we were also interested in what is the distribution of demand for individual soft skills in various sectors of the national economy. The results showed that there is the greatest interest in flexible employees in the commerce, administration, transport, forwarding and logistics sectors (see Chart 3). Data analysis showed that employers prefer time flexibility in particular (ie willingness to adapt their day to the employer's requirements - ie to work in overtime, weekends, etc.). So far, employers clearly do not appreciate flexibility as a property of thinking. This suggests that the lowest share of flexibility requirements was seen in the information technology sector, where thought flexibility is a very important personal feature.

Soft Skill: Flexibility

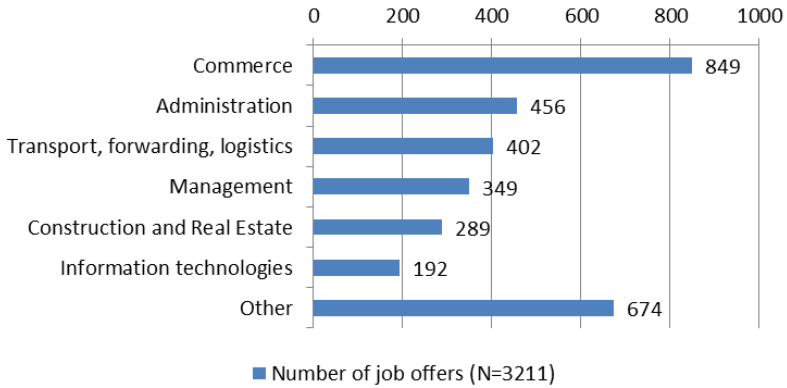


Chart 3: The degree of interest in flexibility as a soft skill across different sectors of the national economy

Source: own processing

Of the total of 16299 job ads we analyzed, the requirement for communication skills was 3180 cases. Commerce, administration and management organizations have the greatest interest in communication skills. There is a similar situation in the demand for soft skills, which relate to the ability to provide customer service. (Chart 4 and Chart 5).

Soft Skill: Communication

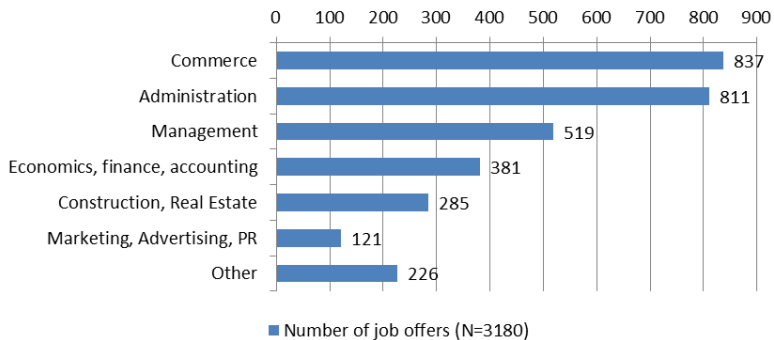


Chart 4: The degree of interest in communication as a soft skill across different sectors of the national economy

Source: own processing

Soft Skill: Customer services

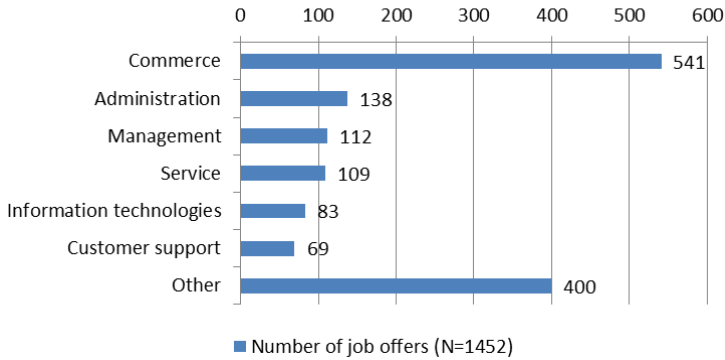


Chart 5: The degree of interest in customer services as a soft skill across different sectors of the national economy

Source: own processing

For employers, organizational skills are a very important personal competence. It is a soft skill that is especially required for workers with a higher level of educational attainment as well as management positions - from low to high. Organizational skills were found 927 times in HR advertisements, most in management, administration and business positions (Chart 6).

Soft Skill: Organization skills



Chart 6: The degree of interest in organisation skills across different sectors of the national economy

Source: own processing

An interesting category of soft skills is Problem solving. This personal competence is part of high-level cognitive skills. It is therefore logical that the highest demand for workers with this soft skill is in the information technology sector (185 cases) and management (93 cases). The distribution of demand for this soft skill for individual types of employers is illustrated in Graph no. 7.

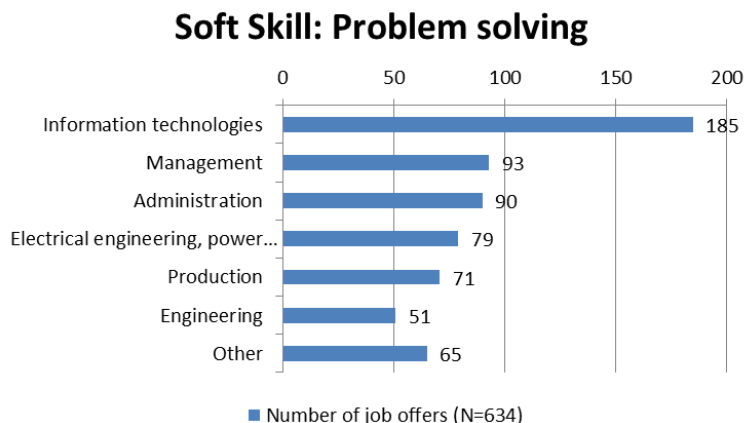


Chart 7: The degree of interest in customer services as a soft skill across different sectors of the national economy

Source: own processing

Conclusion

“At the core of the Fourth Industrial Revolution is the union of a virtual cyber world with the world of physical reality. This also brings with it significant interactions of these systems with the whole society, that is, the social world.”¹¹ Current labor market trends can be a useful indicator pointing to current and future demands for soft human resources. These trends can be followed in several ways, but one of them could be a comprehensive analysis of job offers collected on job portals. Personnel adverts also include requirements for the future employee in terms of his / her soft skills. These data and their quantification can become a useful indicator pointing to the areas in which jobs are being created and

11 MAŘÍK, V. et al.: *Iniciativa průmysl 4.0*. Praha : Ministerstvo průmyslu a obchodu, 2015. [online]. [2019-03-03]. Available at: <<https://www.mpo.cz/assets/dokumenty/53723/64358/658713/priloha001.pdf>>.

disappeared, as well as what the employers value most. These data are important for current and future labor market applications as well as the identification of potential gaps in this area. „Last fifty – sixty years in mankind development is marked with several revolutionary changes - many technological, mainly communication and information systems have brought disruptive energy and led to the overall improvement of the lives of human beings; making it easier, but at the same time more interconnected and removing previously known barriers – borders and political systems.“¹² Coping with the upcoming challenges of digitization, informatisation and cybernetization will require the ability to adapt and flexibility in the personal and social life of each individual. “An individual should be, at the personal level, competent to lead a self-sustaining, reasonable and responsible life.”¹³ It is only through major changes in education and social policy that it is possible to prepare members for these key changes. On the one hand, the education system must respond to the demands of employers, but at the same time it should not only remain in the position of public policies responding to the acute problems of today. Educational systems should work as much as possible not only with predictions of expected demand for specific professions, but also with the future demand of employers for soft skills. A wide range of personal and professional flexibility and adaptability can only be achieved if the education system prepares motivated and thoughtfully flexible graduates, with sufficiently developed critical thinking, ability to work in the team, solve problems and adapt to increasingly frequent changes in the individual and social context.

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13 KAČINOVÁ, V.: Media Competence as a Cross-curricular Competence. In *Communication Today*, 2018, Vol. 9, No. 1, p. 42.

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INFLUENCE OF DIGITAL MEDIA ON YOUNG GENERATION'S SOCIAL AND MORAL COMPETENCES

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ABSTRACT:

Nowadays children and teenagers shape their sociomoral skills mainly in the cyberspace, relying deeply on virtual relations. To avoid many potential ICT threats (addictions, cyberbullying) it is strongly recommended to support the youth in properly developing their personality, social competences, system of values. The media literacy needs thoughtful contribution both from teachers and parents, e.g. by implementing many actions engaging families and school together.

KEY WORDS:

digital media, children, moral competences, social competences, socialization

1 Introduction

The latest core curriculum in Poland establishes as key tasks for kindergarten and early school education supporting children in developing their individuality, personal relations and partnership, understanding emotions, learning social norms and values.¹ This may help them in shaping social and moral competences which are crucial in successful functioning in schools, both in relations with peers and in learning. These competences refer to cognitive and emotional skills and social behaviours which determine someone's potential in adopting to the community. This kind of social experience implies a future stable social development, independence and autonomy to external influences, particularly those hazardous in the adolescence phase. Yet during the preschool education in the socialization process a child learns various groups, behavioural patterns related to social roles and thus develops its own norms, activities, rules.² However, modern technologies imply

1 MEN: *Rozporządzenie Ministra Edukacji Narodowej w sprawie podstawy programowej wychowania przedszkolnego oraz podstawy programowej kształcenia ogólnego dla szkoły podstawowej*. [online]. [2019-04-04]. Available at: <<http://prawo.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/DocDetails.xsp?id=WDU20180001679>>.

2 KIELAR TURSKA, M.: Średnie dzieciństwo. Wiek przedszkolny. In HARWAS NAPIERAŁA, B., TREMPAŁA, J. (eds.): *Psychologia rozwoju człowieka. Charakterystyka okresów życia człowieka*. Vol. 2. Warszawa : PWN, 2000, p. 113.

changes in social functioning of children and adults. On the one hand, there are noticed a seeming “distance reduction” between members of different communities and the accessibility almost all day long. Nevertheless, the negative influence is estimated as overwhelming the advantages of contemporary ICT. Digital media foster limiting the direct contacts which visibly impedes the development of social competences yet among the youngest children who use smartphones, tablets and laptops with the knowledge of their parents or caregivers.³

2 Socialization of the Young Generation

Contemporary children and adolescents, born in the mid-1990s and later, form the generation known in the literature as ‘iGen’⁴ which refers to their immersive usage of the Internet, mostly since the early age. According to the survey “Safe smartphone for a child” run in Poland in 2017 (406 parents) 97% of primary schools pupils in grade 1-3 use the Internet, where 80% do it with their own smartphones.⁵ The vast majority of Polish older pupils, who took part in the research “Teenagers 3.0” in October 2016 (1394 students of middle and high schools), are online almost all the time, while 30% declare to connect with the Net for more than 5 hours a day (the average time for girls is higher).⁶ Every day pupils in the cyberspace use social networking sites (78%) or instant messengers (69%), listen to the music or watch movies (68%), while only 37% for doing homework. Thus they feel comfortable with the digital and mobile technology, interact generally in social media. The research on iGen adolescents run in the United States of America by J. Twenge proved that their lifestyle differs from the preceding cohorts – they seem to be less interested in activities concerned as typical for the adolescence. Thanks to the modern technology iGen representatives, often referred to as ‘Z generation’, do not feel any necessity to go out if they want to meet and talk to friends, relatives. Smartphones, tablets and laptops

3 DEPTUŁA, M., MISIUK, A.: *Diagnozowanie kompetencji społecznych*. Warszawa : Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2016, p. 7.

4 See: TWENGE, J. M.: *iGen. Why Today's Super-connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy – And Completely Unprepared for Adulthood – And What That Means for the Rest of Us*. New York : Atria Books, 2017.

5 GŁOMB, K.: *Smartfon jako osobiste narzędzie edukacyjne ucznia*. [online]. [2018-11-15]. Available at: <www.kometa.edu.pl>.

6 NASK: *Raport z badania Nastolatki 3.0*. [online]. [2018-09-25]. Available at: <www.nask.pl>.

seem to provide them with every social activity, but that is the delusion. The more they are dependent on social media the less satisfaction they get from life. This results in frequent diagnoses of depression, suicidal thoughts and loneliness. Moreover, nowadays Z generation spends vast amount of leisure time with digital media which is called their ‘screen time’. Skilled with navigating those devices they seem to function easier in the virtual reality than to socialize in the real life. However, this may be very hazardous since limiting interactions only to the virtual world might lead to ‘cyberrelationship addiction’, a form of Internet addiction disorder when real relationships are disturbed.⁷ The virtual living is very appealing for teens because of its attractiveness, diversity and easiness. The numerous known and anonymous persons met in the cyberspace, easy to contact with 24 hours a day, may be treated as a solution or a remedy for many peer problems concerning loneliness, bullying, alienation and isolation. When a child or an adolescent feels lonely and lost in the real world the boundaries between real and imaginary realities become vague, indistinctive. Then the virtual world is perceived by young generation as the primary, the main one.⁸ Children and youth, unlike their parents – digital immigrants, do not see the Internet as the separate entity or different reality. “Cyberspace [...] is becoming a new, everyday reality and part of life, or let us say – existential dimension of human. Cyberspace and human coexist in a mutual relation.”⁹ Ubiquitousness and interdependence of real and virtual worlds for young people make them live in the cyberspace and with it. They may not notice the division into reality and virtuality. Such a view seems for them as a fault one because the reality is treated as an entity without any space or time borders. That is why it is hard for teenagers to control their screen time, they use new media almost ceaselessly and thus easily become addicted to Internet.¹⁰

7 YOUNG, K. et al.: Cyber-disorders: The Mental Health Concern for the New Millennium. In *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 2000, Vol. 3, No. 5, p. 475-479.

8 ANDRZEJEWSKA, A.: Dziecko w świecie rzeczywistym i wirtualnym. In BĘBAS, S., PILCH, J., BEDNAREK, J. (eds.): *Patologie w cyberświecie*. Radom : WSH Radom, 2012, p. 44-46.

9 GÁLIK, S.: On the Problem of Identity and Difference Between Online and Offline Existence. In PETRANOVÁ, D., RYBANSKÝ, R., MENDELOVÁ, D. (eds.): *Marketing Identity. Online rules. Part I. Conference Proceedings*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2017, p. 79.

10 ZIĘBAKOWSKA CECOT, K.: Współczesna rodzina w immersyjnym świecie mediów cyfrowych. In MORBITZER, J., MORAŃSKA, D., MUSIAŁ, E. (eds.): *Człowiek – Media – Edukacja*. Dąbrowa Górnicza : Wyższa Szkoła Biznesu w Dąbrowie Górniczej, 2015, p. 424-433.

Pedagogues, psychologists and sociologists warn that yet pre-schoolers and young pupils show less interest in appropriate social relations than in new technological devices which attract their attention and occupy leisure time. The youngest should be stimulated by varied stimuli to assure a proper environment for developing. Without it they may lack skills to communicate¹¹ and build peer or cross-generational relations and function successively in the society.¹² The limited and insufficient experience during the childhood may impair the process of the adolescence and the level of someone's maturity in the future which is a bad prognostic for any society. It also has a strong influence on mental and moral spheres. Thus social and educational systems all around the world should consider ways of implementing the most effective methods for a proper social development of children and youth who are immersed in the cyberspace.

3 Redefining "Self" and the Privacy

The cyberspace is a completely modified environment for everyone which may act as the accelerating factor for some dysfunctions of the psychological mechanisms.¹³ In the cyberspace users can create multiple representations of their 'online self' by having various specific user accounts and digital 'online' personas. These 'digital identities' or 'digital selves' have also an effect on the physical 'self' in the offline space since we derive personal identity from numerous active memberships and social groups we belong to. It is particularly noticeable in using social media. By sharing digital 'identities' with other users one can achieve their (re) confirmation.¹⁴ In the contemporary age of the Internet it seems that the way we are perceived and assessed 'online' by the others becomes the main factor for constitution of the 'offline self'. Many young people believe that their identity (both 'offline' and 'online') is mediatized,

11 GÓRNA, H.: Do widzenia, urzędzenia. In *Blżej Przedszkola*, 2018, Vol. 10, No. 205, p. 28-31.

12 LANGIER, C.: Cyberdziecko – nowe wyzwanie współczesnej edukacji wczesnoszkolnej. In *Edukacja – Technika – Informatyka. Education – Technology – Computer Science*, 2018, Vol. 25, No. 3, p. 224-232.

13 ROWIŃSKI, T.: Virtual Self in Dysfunctional Internet Use. In *Studia Psychologica*, 2008, Vol. 8, p. 107-130.

14 GÁLIKOVÁ TOLNAIOVÁ, S.: Construction of "Online" Identity, Body in the Perspective of Hyper-consumption Culture. In PETRANOVÁ, D., RYBANSKÝ, R., MENDELOVÁ, D. (eds.): *Marketing Identity. Online rules. Part I. Conference Proceedings*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2017, p. 84-85.

shaped mainly pictorially by pictures, videos, avatars, music or blogs they share or like in the cyberspace. This trend is also maintained by widely available and popular cult of body, physical attractiveness, bunch of celebrities whose general contribution is being ‘pretty’, having ‘the very body’. Therefore, many children and adolescents, lacking resilience, self-esteem and self-determination, try to build their new identities by creating a new or false image of themselves in the cyberspace. It may bring them new colleagues, ‘likes’, comments, more ‘fame’ but on the other hand it might be destructive.

Without coherence of the ‘self’ teenagers can later suffer from mental and social problems. They can receive more arguments for admitting that their ‘real self’ is unattractive, meagre, uninteresting, pitiable. Moreover, as J. Arnold stated, young people “have spent their growing years using several different personas or ‘avatars’ in various imaginary worlds [...], [thus] we should not be surprised that they come to hate themselves. This leads to desperation, depression, and in all too many cases, suicide.”¹⁵ Being online brings 5C pentad of threats for everyone, especially for children and adolescents. Internet users should be aware of the impact of content, conduct, contact, confidentiality and commercialisation in each situation happening in a digital world.¹⁶ Quite often the privacy becomes the cost for using Internet services. This fact is usually neglected and underappreciated by those connected to the Web. The trigger for this great social revolution in redefining the privacy before the age of Internet was a reality television begun in the 1990s with MTV’s ‘The Real World’ and the Dutch ‘Big Brother’ series. This might give a signal for children and teenagers that pretending to be someone different, open and deprived of social and moral rules, selling own privacy may earn the audience, some approval and a certain sympathy. The cyberspace quickly followed the new trend in the real television. With the evolution of blogs, videoblogs, YouTube channels, other social media young Polish Internet users could ‘sell’ their privacy by joining e.g. rating sites like HotOrNot.com abroad or Fotka.pl site launched in Poland. Usually surfers can rate person’s attractiveness which encourages many teenagers to present more and more private or provocative photos or streamed live shows before the webcam.

15 ARNOLD, J. Ch.: *Their Name is Today. Reclaiming Childhood in a Hostile World*. Robertsbridge : Plough Publishing House, 2014, p. 49.

16 FUNDACJA UNIWERSYTET DZIECI: *Jak zadbać o bezpieczeństwo dziecka w sieci?* [online]. [2018-03-10]. Available at: <www.scenariuszelekcji.edu.pl>.

The vast number of children and teenagers, impulsive social media users, share and give access to personal and sensitive data which seems for them as a negligible act, without any impact. They are not educated enough about being safe online. Teenagers behave as if having forgotten the fact that what we publish on the net stays there forever – on some servers, private or public hard and flash discs, in the cloud. The tragic example of such an unreasonable act was the story of Amanda Todd, Canadian teenager, who was stalked and blackmailed by the online attacker and paedophile after her incident with sexting. Although parents supported her, the police was informed about many frightening situations, the girl felt alone and helpless, became the victim of bullying at schools and cyberbullying on the Internet. After some years of struggle she committed a suicide at the age of 15.

4 Questioning the Values

The Internet offers access to a huge pile of information, easy to get at every moment. This stands as a great advantage of the cyberspace but on the other side it provides also many fake news which are misleading or false. “This brings a serious epistemological problem that is not just about selection and verification of information, but chances for knowing the truth.”¹⁷ Therefore, our perception is influenced by the content perceived from media resulting in redefining what is good or what is bad.¹⁸ When people change the concept of good then it results in setting new values and superseding the old ones (e.g. truth, God, family, friendship, wisdom). Values refer to everything what is precious and important for individuals and represents their human aims, desires. They are the source of motivating factors, beliefs, activities and determine people’s self-esteem and perception of the others. In our time the most powerful and influencing medium of promoting values is the global Net which was proved by many research. In Poland in 2018 M. Barabas asked 69 first-year students of pedagogy specialisation to point out the most exposed issues in the Net which get to children and teenagers. The representatives of iGen mentioned in the following order: money (84%),

17 GÁLIK, S.: On the Problem of Identity and Difference Between Online and Offline Existence. In PETRANOVÁ, D., RYBANSKÝ, R., MENDELOVÁ, D. (eds.): *Marketing Identity. Online rules. Part I. Conference Proceedings*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2017, p. 80.

18 SOLÍK, M., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J., LALUHOVÁ, J.: Media as a Tool for Fostering Values in the Contemporary Society. In *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2013, Vol. 9, No. 6, p. 71.

material assets (82%), fun (78%), violence (74%), intolerance (72%), lies (72%), cult of beauty (71%), lack of respect (70%), hate (66%), consumerism (59%). The issues related to universal values were minor, mentioned as less important (freedom – 51%, professional success – 47%, love – 39%, tolerance and health – 23%, sensitivity and altruism – 15%, religion – 14%, family happiness – 14%, respect and justice – 9%, truth – 8%, responsibility – 3%).¹⁹

Values are the foundation of living for the society, the community, as well as for the individuals. Nowadays this ground is unstable and weak since various generations in the information society share different, incompatible and incoherent goals. This makes our lives more complicated, brings new generational, existential and cultural gaps, evokes stress and unease. Moreover, the crisis of moral norms is enhanced and elicited by e.g. unemployment or poverty which are the ‘product’ of current economic and social transformations. The previous ethical standards give place to calculation and the cult of money. According to Z. Bauman, in the modern society some contemporary people would be excluded if they do not act like faithful consumers or are unhappy. ‘Being happy’ or showing some kind of pretended happiness (e.g. smiles, duck faces on photos uploaded in social media) become an unwritten rule for everybody. Unfortunately not everyone can ‘accomplish this task’ which results in a feeling of sadness, despondence, and failure. This problem concerns specially the young generation.²⁰ Moreover, children and teenagers are committed viewers of advertisements which can adversely affect their attitudes and life patterns (by promoting consumptionism, aggressiveness, gluttony, erotization of imagination). The cyberspace consists of numerous ‘bubbles’ (discussion groups, fora, blogs, videoblogs, social media profiles) which attract teenagers with various interests, hobbies, convictions, and ways of living. Values, beliefs and attitudes presented by Internet users sometimes are labelled as ‘cyber-culture’. There is a specific similarity, collective identity, among Internet community members visible in shaping personal types and patterns of behaviour, seeming to them as proper.²¹ However, it is often

19 BARABAS, M.: Wartości uniwersalne w Internecie. In *Edukacja – Technika – Informatyka. Education – Technology – Computer Science*, 2018, Vol. 25, No. 3, p. 208-209.

20 BAUMAN, Z.: *Życie na przemiał*. Kraków : Wyd. Literackie, 2004, p. 122, 24-25.

21 JANIKOWSKA, O.: The Cosmopolitan Identity in the Era of the Knowledge Society and the Internet. In *Studies in Global Ethics and Global Education*, 2015, Vol. 4, p. 3-17.

different from the social standards but as a kind of culture with its values may influence individual's socialization process.²² Thus the young generation is very specific and distinguished from the predecessors. One of the main feature in their characteristic is the fact that they have deformed values and self-reflection which induces many acts, deeds perceived in the society as unethical, immoral, socially wrong, inappropriate, and fatal. The value system held by some media users should be openly and sincerely named as anti-social, even harmful. The great danger concerns the fact that things forbidden and persecuted in the real life may be appreciated and transferred into virtual reality. As an example we can consider the live streaming arranged by people acting in the improper, unsocial way (e.g. cursing, binge drinking, fighting). The pathological streamers, often called in Poland as 'pathostreamers', are followed by thousands of Polish internet users, both the juvenile and adults, who financially donate them to commit another bad deeds. For pathostreamers this could be a business, while for the young a way of successful living, full of fame and wealthy, which is generally a delusion.

5 iGen as a Social Phenomenon

Indisputably the changes concerning teenagers' morals, values, attitudes and behaviours are shaped by the digital revolution. It is thus recommended to constantly monitor the educational environment of children and adolescents who are particularly sensitive to any disorders potentially detrimental to their development and upbringing. Many research run all over the world imply new challenges for parents, educators and other persons involved in the educational system. This way it is more possible for responsible adults to support and provide young generation with the emotional skills and digital literacy necessary in the cyberspace, given that all involved generations share different views and pedagogical background. Why do other generations not express the similar effects of virtual living on their direct real relationships and opinions? In contrary to iGen, born and grown up with the immersive role of ICT, deeply relying and believing in online messages (sometimes even indiscriminately following the fake news), older people have relatively low confidence in information published on the Web. Also some adults, described by M. Prensky as 'digital natives' or named in the literature as 'generation Y' or 'millennials', born between 1980 and

22 TARGAMADZĚ, V.: The New Generation at the Crossroad of Cultures: Socialization Aspect. In *Multicultural Studies*, 2016, Vol. 1, p. 65-76.

1990, share a limited trust to Internet life and all services offered in the cyberspace. According to the survey conducted in May-June 2018 by Pew Research Center in U.S.,²³ 42% Facebook users aged 18+ took a break from checking their status for a couple of weeks or more, while 26% deleted the Facebook application from their smartphones. Moreover, the latter act was done by 44% of younger users aged 18-29.

6 Social Advantages of Digital Media

Digital media are often considered by specialists as tools for destructing real personal relations, inducing aggression and hate speech (cyberbullying), redefining true values. Fortunately, creative teachers can find many interesting ways of implementing new media in the educational process to help students in developing social skills and gaining new peer experience. Social media offer particularly various opportunities fostering social skills: participation, collaboration, interactivity, communication, community-building, sharing, networking, creativity, distribution, flexibility, customisation.²⁴ They enable learning with other ICT users according to the idea of connectivism, which no longer occurs within the individual.²⁵ There are apps which can be used in the classroom to control pupils' behaviour, learning and reporting about it to parents. The example application is a free accessible ClassDojo. This application enables educators to respond to students' activities by providing them with comments and feedback. Teachers can upload pictures taken during the lessons and thus inform parents immediately about good or challenging behaviours which need to be discussed at home and eventually corrected.

Digital media are especially needed and advantageous when children cannot attend a school and meet with their colleagues. Some students require individual or special education, e.g. when they suffer from serious disease, disability. The biggest problem for a child as well as for a teacher is impossibility to assure direct contacts with classmates.

23 PERRIN, A.: *Americans are Changing Their Relationship with Facebook*. [online]. [2018-09-05]. Available at: <www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/09/05/americans-are-changing-their-relationship-with-facebook>.

24 POORE, M.: *Using Social Media in the Classroom*. London : SAGE, 2016, p. 3-4.

25 SECORE, S.: Social Constructivism in Online Learning: Andragogical Influence and the Effectual Educator. In *e-Mentor*, 2017, Vol. 3, No. 70, p. 6.

Sometimes it may result in marginalisation or exclusion of such a pupil. To avoid this kind of situations a teacher can suggest using electronic mail or instant messengers, creating blogs, meeting on Skype. It facilitates exchanging information, reporting on important events and adventures, showing progress in different fields of study. For a child located away from the class and the school ICT can be the real advantage – it makes the friendship last and colleagues not forgotten.²⁶ It is very significant to emphasize the fact that digital media may positively impact the disabled persons. E. M. Minczakiewicz did a research with 90 people (aged 20-35) with a diagnosis of conjugated disability to assess if ICT usage can enrich and enhance their social contacts and influence shaping the identity. Respondents using accessible media functioned socially on a higher level than those staying ‘off-line’. The gained skills concerning using ICT guaranteed them a sense of perpetration, self-confidence, personal independence.²⁷ Digital media can also act as motivators for pupils and their families in deeper contribution to the school climate. In 2013-2015 chosen primary schools and kindergartens in Radom (Poland) and Sefton (Liverpool, UK) participating in Comenius Regio “New Skills: Learning for Success” project invited children’s families to attend special meetings/clubs where ICT assisted the upbringing process. One of the goals was developing media literacy 2.0 by presenting pros and cons of a digital space and ways of preventing the ICT threats. Moreover, a particular purpose of all actions was to engage and support adults in their parental tasks during leisure time (cooking, outdoor events, reading). In the post-test parents appreciated better communication in diads: child-parent and parent-teacher, which was a great success taking into account that many participants represented vulnerable families reluctant in the past to cooperate with any educational institutions.²⁸

26 OKUNIEWSKA, J.: Jak prowadzić TIK-owe nauczanie indywidualne? In *Trendy. Internetowe Czasopismo Edukacyjne*, 2013, Vol. 4, p. 24-29.

27 MINCZAKIEWICZ, E. M.: Media w kształtowaniu tożsamości młodzieży z diagnozą sprzężonej niepełnosprawności. In BOJANOWICZ, J., ZIĘBAKOWSKA CECOT, K. (eds.): *Przygotowanie nauczycieli do nowych wyzwań edukacyjnych. Problemy współczesnej edukacji*. Radom : Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Technologiczno-Humanistycznego w Radomiu, 2018, p. 10-21.

28 ZIĘBAKOWSKA CECOT, K.: Współczesna rodzina w immersyjnym świecie mediów cyfrowych. In MORBITZER, J., MORAŃSKA, D., MUSIAŁ, E. (eds.): *Człowiek – Media – Edukacja*. Dąbrowa Górnicza : Wyższa Szkoła Biznesu w Dąbrowie Górniczej, 2015, p. 424-433.

Conclusion

Nowadays adults play a key role in presenting the cyberspace to children and teenagers as the educational environment, not another technological novelty. ICT tools are perfect for quick and influencing communication. They give many possibilities for users concerning the youth’s upbringing and shaping their attitudes. This raises many important questions, with the key one – Are teachers ready to be a supporter, facilitator of implementing ICT into pupils’ education? According to the research done by U. Ordon on a group of 128 early school education teachers in Silesian and Subcarpathian voivodeships (Poland), the respondents mentioned ICT-media competences among the 3 rarest competences achieved on the good level (with communicative-linguistic and psychological-pedagogical ones, sic!).²⁹ In case of elementary education the key issue for teachers should be particularly adjusting and choosing the ICT devices and services corresponding with the developmental abilities, skills and experience of their pupils. Moreover, following M. Prensky’s definitions of ‘digital natives’ and ‘digital immigrants’, the methods used by teachers must respect the new challenges, not their own educational experience. Thus didactics based on the constructivist approach, involving coding and peer cooperation (e.g. webquest, eTwinning projects), should be strongly promoted. Parents and teachers have a very demanding task if they want to help children and teenagers cope with challenges placed by the new technology. Adults can implement Kimberly Young’s idea of ‘Screen Smart’ in families and schools³⁰ to make the young more immune to digital addictions. Also activating social competences, including empathy, resilience, self-control, according to IMPACT model (Interdyscyplinary Model Przeciwdziałania Agresji i Cyberprzemocy Technologicznej (in Polish) = Interdisciplinary Model of Preventing Aggression and Cyber Terror (in English)) may help in preventing aggressive behaviours among teenagers.³¹ However, setting limits, defining rules may not be enough.

29 ORDON, U.: Nauczyciel edukacji wczesnoszkolnej wobec współczesnych przemian oświatowych. In *Edukacja – Technika – Informatyka. Education – Technology – Computer Science*, 2017, Vol. 22, No. 4, p. 121-122.

30 See: YOUNG, K. et al.: *Internet Addiction in Children and Adolescents. Risk Factors, Assessment, and Treatment*. New York : Springer Publishing Company, 2017.

31 BARLIŃSKA, J., LALAK, D., SZUSTER, A.: Jak skutecznie ograniczyć cyberprzemoc rówieśniczą? – O efektywności metod aktywizujących kompetencje społeczne ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem empatii. In *Dziecko Krzywdzone. Teoria, badania, praktyka*, 2018, Vol. 17, No. 1, p. 68-95.

There is also a great need to provide the young generation with 'white space' which refers to organizing them some 'offline' time, encouraging and engaging in 'real' and practical activities and relations with other people, not only their 'unreal' online images.

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“NO MAN’S SKY” / PLAYFUL MEDIA



**MEGATRENDS
AND MEDIA**

DIGITAL UNIVERSE

DIGITAL GAME AS A PHENOMENON OF MASS AND POPULAR CULTURE

Zuzana Bučková

ABSTRACT:

The issue of digital games can currently be considered a highly relevant topic. Media theoreticians subject the phenomenon to a constant research, paying their attention not only to its negative or positive impact on users, but also analysing the occurrence of heterogeneous cultural expressions (e.g. presence of violence, sexism, narcissism, or stereotypes in digital games etc.) in the discussed type of media production. Others, mainly representatives of cultural anthropology, within the stated context, accentuate a significant fact that the game taking place in an every-day life reality could be regarded as a determinant of the culture itself. However, a new phenomenon – digital game, has established itself alongside the development of media, or media reality. According to the previous theory, videogames, together with other media, have influenced an emergence of a different kind of culture – media culture, which can be elementarily categorized as mass and popular. The main objective of the paper is, therefore, to clarify the cultural basis of selected digital games, with regard to their classification as products of either mass, or popular culture. For these purposes, we use mainly logical-conceptual methods of text analysis, while the issue of the presence of mass and popular culture characteristics in the dimension of digital games has become a subject of discourse analysis. The ambition of the study is also to define the basic terminological apparatus, or the terms “digital game”, “media culture”, “mass culture”, and “popular culture”. Special attention is given to a case study aimed at mapping the presence of mass and popular culture characteristics within the selected digital games.

KEY WORDS:

Cuphead, digital game, Limbo, Mafia III, mass culture, media culture, popular culture, Tomb Raider

Introduction to the Issue

Culture represents an inherent part of life of society. It contains a countless number of expressions and phenomena that define it (e.g. customs and traditions, institutions, material objects, life-style, language, religion, etc.). It could be stated that life of an individual has an apparent cultural essence, as cultural elements could be found in elementary human activities like, for example, in communication, way of greeting, clothing, eating habits, and others. However, with the development of media, culture has assumed a new, specific character – mass and popular. Thanks to the media (press, radio, television, and multimedia), various cultural codes have been able to be spread fast among a heterogeneous and diverse audience. Presently, within the stated context, media content characterized by probably the highest rate of interactivity – i.e. a digital game has become the centre of theoreticians’ interest. Because this media communication unit can not only be used, but also modified or created from the scratch, our ambition is to clarify its essence, i.e. the occurrence of mass or popular culture characteristics. Therefore, the main goal of the submitted study is to identify features of mass and popular culture in the dimension of digital games. We are mainly interested in the reflection of the characteristics of the discussed types of media culture within the narrative structures of the selected digital games and the overall presentation of the assigned media products.

The text also aims to inform the readers about the basic terms connected to the addressed issue, concretely a closer specification of terms “digital game”, “mass culture”, “popular culture”, or “media culture”. The stated terminological axis clearly declares an obvious connection of digital products with culture, especially the media culture. The second part of the paper includes a presentation of a case study conducted on heterogeneous types of digital games, aiming to clarify the presence of mass and popular culture characteristics in the given type of media products. Within the theoretical reflection, we will build mostly on the works and partial studies of authors like D. McQuail, E. Shils, A. Kloskowska, D. Strinati, J. Fiske, R. Williams and others; while in the analytical part, the author questions the application of the presented theoretical postulates in practice, specifically in the digital games dimension.

1 Culture of the Late Modern Society – Theoretical Reflection of the Researched Issue

Contemporary society “carries” the equivalent of the late modern, or post-modern, society. Typical features of the late modern society could be discontinuity, inconsequentiality of actions of individuals, or fragmentation and episodicality of different spheres of human activity.¹ Thus, we are comprehensively talking about a sphere of an omnipresent, commodified, hybridized, and personalized culture lacking boundaries between the types of media, genres, and areas of social activities.² Post-modern society and the connected post-humanism literally blur the boundaries among human beings and build a relationship with technologies³, or various media contents, digital games currently being a natural part of these. Therefore, a digital game nowadays can be considered a firm part of culture of contemporary society. **Digital game** as a modern-day phenomenon is determined mainly by the rules, variable and quantifiable character of the game results, their value, players’ effort, their feelings about the activity, and, finally, the impact of this media communication type on the life of their users.⁴ The presented thesis equally corresponds with the character of the game, which takes place in an every-day experienced social reality. Technical-technological development, as well as the influence of computerization, has, however, separated the digital game from the socio-cultural game mainly through the essence of environment in which the discussed phenomenon takes place, i.e. the virtual reality independent from everyday reality. The aforementioned transmedia phenomenon representing contemporary society is, therefore, characterized mainly through the release of surplus energy, being a place dominated by expressions of general exuberance, promoting libido, sexuality, player’s aggression or anxiety, imitation of lives of others, desire for curiosity and experimentation, socialization or an opportunity for easier self-expression.⁵ Therefore, it is not just

1 BAUMAN, Z.: *Úvahy o posmoderní době*. Prague : Sociologické nakladatelství (SLON), 1995, p. 25.

2 McGUIGAN, J.: *Modernity and Postmodern Culture*. Maidenhead : Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 174.

3 SIM, S.: *Lyotard a nelidské*. Prague : Triton, 2003, p. 15-18.

4 JUUL, J.: The Game, the Player, the World: Looking for a Heart of Gameness. In COPIER, M., RAESSENS, J. (eds.): *Level Up: Digital Games Research. Conference Proceedings*. Utrecht : Utrecht University, 2003, p. 34.

5 SALEN, K., ZIMMERMAN, E.: *Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals*. London, Cambridge : The MIT Press, 2004, p. 309.

a content realized through digital technologies with an ambition to experience a multimedia pastime,⁶ but also a convenient place for reflection of desirable cultural codes or symbols.

It is the **mass culture** that could be considered the most wide-spread and sought out symbolic culture of our times.⁷ In connection with the mass culture, the theoreticians sometimes talk about a so-called “consumer culture⁸ or even an industrially produced culture. It is a culture of low quality, often interpreted as a “kitsch”, representing an artistically low, aesthetically inferior, socially-psychologically deceitful, and sociologically negatively functioning artefacts, which are fundamentally just an imitation of an original work of art, or exciting emotions through the most elementary and least difficult means.⁹ D. McQuail, the mass-media theoretician, however, explicitly defines mass culture as a mix of stories, images, information, thoughts, entertainment and shows, which constitute a typical content of communication channels and are aimed at mass audience. Despite the aforementioned, this term is elementarily connected to negative associations of cultural preferences of uneducated people incapable of critical thinking.¹⁰ According to U. Eco, mass culture is simply a means of entertainment, thinking, and images meant for the masses in a form of industrially and serially produced, constantly offered statements, mass-spread through communication media and consumed on the basis of the laws of supply and demand.¹¹ By a permanent examination of media and cultural studies, the theoreticians have come to certain attributes determining the type of culture concerned:

- Mass culture is not traditional – hereby, we are not talking about culture attached to a certain limited community of people bound by social ties, which means that its need is not a result of a necessity of users, at which it is aimed. Although users take it in, they do not

6 JUUL, J.: The Game, the Player, the World: Looking for a Heart of Gameness. In COPIER, M., RAESSENS, J. (eds.): *Level Up: Digital Games Research. Conference Proceedings*. Utrecht : Utrecht University, 2003, p. 30-45.

7 McQUAIL, D.: *Úvod do teorie masové komunikace*. Prague : Portál, 1999, p. 127-128.

8 For more information, see: ADORNO, T.: Cultural Industry Reconsidered. In MARRIS, P., THORNHAM, S. (eds.): *Media Studies. A Reader*. 2nd Edition. Edinburg : Edinburg University Press, 1999, p. 31-37.

9 PETRUSEK, M.: „Kýč“. In REIFOVÁ, I. (ed.): *Slovník mediální komunikace*. Prague : Portál, 2004, p. 120.

10 McQUAIL, D.: *Úvod do teorie masové komunikace*. Prague : Portál, 1999, p. 62.

11 ECO, U.: *Skeptikové a těšitelé*. Prague : Nakladatelství Svoboda, 1995, p. 26-29.

create it and, therefore, this type of culture does not stem from their traditions.¹²

- Mass culture is not elitist – this means that it is not intended for a narrow, specific group of citizens having a significant economic background and higher education, or cultural awareness (i.e. for the elite). Its target users are heterogeneous wide groups of people regardless of age, gender, economic background, or education. It simply cumulates users on the basis of their mutual interests and experiences.¹³
- Mass culture is mass-produced – this is the most important characteristics of this form of culture, i.e. its mass coverage and production, which is usually attained either by a great amount of products (reproductions) or receivers allowing a reception of sounds, images, or signs transmitted from one source to many places at once.¹⁴
- Mass culture is commercialized – i.e. produced by big companies paying attention mainly to their own profit, not to enriching the cultural life of people.¹⁵ In this type of production, the real value of cultural products is suppressed by their market exchange value.¹⁶ The commercialization of mass culture, however, does not negate its popularity among recipients. Hollywood movies or digital games produced exclusively for the reason of profit, but still being the most popular products among users, are a proof of this.
- Mass culture is standardized – or simplified and adjusted to be received by a diverse, anonymous audience, needs and tastes of which the producers of cultural industry have no precise knowledge of. The discussed type of culture simply uses the proven methods of production, successful genre templates, simple aesthetic schemes and attractive effects, repeated plots, and stereotyped characters, which it applies throughout the whole spectrum of different cultural products. Mass-culture production thus evokes a set of serial

12 SHILS, E.: *Mass Society and Its Culture*. In BOYD-BARRETT, O., NEWBOLD, Ch. (eds.): *Approaches to Media. A Reader*. London : Arnold, 1995, p. 81.

13 MacDONALD, D.: *A Theory of Mass Culture*. In ROSENBERG, B., WHITE, D. M. (eds.): *Mass Culture. The Popular Arts in America*. Glencoe : The Free Press of Glencoe, 1953, p. 62.

14 KLOSKOWSKÁ, A.: *Masová kultura. Kritika a obhajoba*. Prague : Svoboda, 1967, p. 70.

15 McQUAIL, D.: *Úvod do teorie masové komunikace*. Prague : Portál, 1999, p. 130.

16 STRINATI, D.: *An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture*. 2nd Edition. London, New York : Routledge, 2006, p. 51.

industrially manufactured products, being used as long as they are demanded or until a new type of product replaces them.¹⁷

- Mass culture is homogenized – which represents a gradual assimilation of elements of different levels, which are deliberately cleared of their original context, becoming syncretistic, in order to create a homogeneous mixture, “easy to interpret”, for the widest possible audience. A difference between “high” and “low”, “profane” and “sacral” is thus being eliminated.¹⁸ In this connection, we can talk also about a production of simplified works of art of high culture.¹⁹
- Mass culture stimulates mass behaviour – which could be a result of individual’s participation on products or forms of mass-culture entertainment. Through diverse media contents, the recipient can psychologically relate to a large group of people (a mass) and get rid of feelings of anxiety due to isolation by obtaining a group identity, lose sense of their individuality, be carried by a wave of excitement, possessed by an impression of invincibility, feel relief.²⁰

However, the term “mass culture” has gradually ceased to reflect media practice in creating and distributing industrially produced culture and was not sufficient for the purposes of its actual theoretical reflection. Media theoreticians have started to note presence of different types of products on media market, which they started to cover under a term “popular culture”. **Popular culture** is not defined by either its quantitative characteristics like the mass culture (it is not mass-produced or mass-consumed), or qualitative characteristics (we do not identify it as a culture of low aesthetic level and morally problematic content). It is defined mostly by the relationship of heterogeneous populations with it. According to G. Turner and J. Fiske, it is a “well-liked culture” or a “culture of people”.²¹ Consumers do not passively accept this type of

17 LANG, K.: Mass Appeal and Minority Tastes. In ROSENBERG, B., WHITE, D. M. (eds.): *Mass Culture. The Popular Arts in America*. Glencoe : The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963, p. 379.

18 KLOSKOWSKÁ, A.: *Masová kultura. Kritika a obhajoba*. Prague : Svoboda, 1967, p. 214.

19 RANKOV, P.: *Masová komunikácia, masmédiá a informačná spoločnosť*. Levice : L.C.A., 2002, p. 42.

20 ČERNOUŠEK, M.: Masa. In REIFOVÁ, I. (ed.): *Slovník mediální komunikace*. Prague : Portál, 2004, p. 129-130.

21 See: TURNER, G.: *British Cultural Studies. An Introduction*. London : Routledge, 1996, p. 64; FISKE, J.: *Understanding Popular Culture*. London, New York : Routledge, 2006, p. 23.

culture, but actively create it from the available cultural supply. They are not dependent on concrete cultural products, but are able to use those, which best correspond with their social experience.²² Therefore, we are talking about mass-communicated statements with limited intellectual and aesthetic requirements and content, which are (in the same way as the products of mass culture) designed to entertain and engage the media audience.²³ Popular culture cannot be described as the opposite of high culture (as typically the mass culture is), but more as culture which fulfils a different function as high culture.²⁴ J. Fiske has described its basic specific features and states the following:

- Popular culture is created by its users – and, therefore, establishes itself in an environment where the products of cultural industry penetrate into their every-day life and is created among them. Popular culture is not a passive mass-consumption, but an active process of creation and circulation of meanings and pleasures in a social system.
- Popular culture serves the interests of different subjects – meaning that it beneficial for both its producers and consumers. On one hand, it fulfils economic needs of mass media and producers of cultural industry and, on the other hand, it fulfils cultural needs of its users.
- Popular culture has multiple meanings – or its cultural products do not contain just one simple meaning, but are a source of a whole spectrum of thought contents, which are being updated on the basis of specific cultural interests of its users, while these temporarily fix the meaning for a particular reason through their cultural competences. The more levels of meaning the cultural products and forms of entertainment contain, the more likely it is for them to become popular.
- Popular culture is intertextual – which means that the meanings in popular culture are not included in a single cultural product (“text”), but originate and are moulded in a mutual interconnection with many other products. The contents of popular culture circulate intertextually in three forms:
 - as “primary texts” (original cultural products),

22 See also: FISKE, J.: *Understanding Popular Culture*. London, New York : Routledge, 2006.

23 DeFLEUR, M., DENNIS, E. E.: *Understanding Mass Communication*. 6th Edition. Boston : Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998, p. 283.

24 WILLIAMS, R.: ‘Mass Communication’ and ‘Minority Culture’. In MARRIS, P., THORNHAM, S. (eds.): *Media Studies. A reader*. 2nd Edition. Edinburg : Edinburg University Press, 1999, p. 46-48.

- as “secondary texts” (advertisement, press information, reviews and critiques, etc.),
- as “tertiary texts” (conversation, way of dressing, living, shopping, style of dance moves from music videos, and others).
- Popular culture brings pleasure – which, however, is not included in the actual cultural products, but emerges only in the moments of their consumption. The user can feel popular pleasure either as joy of creating their own, alternative meanings, or as a physical delight induced by cultural products and entertainment.
- Popular culture is a source of socially relevant meanings – and, therefore, products of popular culture must be related to an everyday experience of their users. If the users could not find some correlation to their lives in them and could not create their own meanings and understanding of their own social situation, these products would not be popular.
- Popular culture strengthens its users – in the sense of their pleasure from creating their own, opposing meanings, which enhances their self-confidence and builds a sense of freedom. Popular culture simply enables them to construct their social identity more independently; outside the mechanisms of social control (it can also inspire them to try to change their social situation).²⁵

Both closely specified terms can, however, be generally classified under the term “media culture”, which has (in)directly influenced the emergence of two different cultures – mass and popular. D. Kellner states that **media culture** is a type of industrial culture, which operates on the basis of the model of mass production and is created for mass audience.²⁶ E. Moravčíková further asserts that the origination of media culture was determined mainly by the human need to be entertained through heterogeneous media products.²⁷ The late modern society, and the connected media culture, however, refuses the idea of superiority of one media product over another. Media culture regards anything created by the society as valuable. It removes a distinction between “real” reality and media, i.e. fiction. It is a producer of images and representations and

25 See: FISKE, J.: *Understanding Popular Culture*. London, New York : Routledge, 2006, p. 23, 28, 49-56, 68-69, 124-125, 130-131; BARKER, Ch.: *Slovník kulturních studií*. Prague : Portál, 2006, p. 114.

26 KELLNER, D.: *Media Culture. Cultural Studies, Identity and Politics between the Modern and the Postmodern*. London, New York : Routledge, 1995, p. 1-2.

27 MORAVČÍKOVÁ, E.: *Vybrané megatrendy v súčasnej mediálnej zábave*. Nitra : Univerzita Konštantína Filozofa v Nitre, 2013, p. 13.

judges itself as authentic reality, while being fictional reality – media, or virtual.²⁸ H. Pravdová however, complexly speaks of media culture dated back to the second half of the 20th century as a phenomenon, which is produced and spread by the media. She categorizes it into two constitutive spheres – within the first sphere, we could see it as a production of media products, including the creators as well as movies, books, music, print media (media culture). The second sphere is represented by “the usage” of media products by an audience – spectators, listeners, and readers (popular culture).²⁹ Currently, products of media culture could, among others, also include digital games and their alternations, i.e. contents implying a new group of media audience – players.

2 Presence of Mass and Popular Culture Characteristics in the Dimension of Digital Games

The basis of the second submitted chapter is to clarify the presence of elements of mass and popular culture in concrete media products – digital games. It is also the author’s ambition to present the findings not only within the context of mass-produced games, but also within the works of independent game developers.

The first object of analysis, or research material, is the digital game *Tomb Raider*.³⁰ For the first time, it appeared on the media market in 1996 and its last edition entitled “Shadow of the Tomb Raider” was distributed last year (2018). This digital product is available on almost all platforms (PlayStation, Xbox, PC, Sega Saturn and others) and, from the point of view of digital games theory, it could be included in the action-adventure genre. The reason for examination of the game is its narrative structure, or the actual theme of the game, the main protagonist being a woman, a British archaeologist Lara Croft. Her primary ambition is to search for,

28 BANDUROVÁ, L.: Postmoderná estetika, médiá a mediálna kultúra. In BOČÁK, M., REGRUTOVÁ, L., RUSNÁK, J. (eds.): *Médiá a text 5*. Prešov : Filozofická fakulta Prešovskej univerzity v Prešove, 2015, p. 8-12.

29 PRAVDOVÁ, H.: Mediálna kultúra. In GAŽOVÁ, V., SLUŠNÁ, Z. (eds.): *Acta Culturologica. Kultúra a rôznorodosť kultúrneho*. Bratislava : FF Univerzity J. A. Komenského v Bratislave, 2005, p. 68.

30 CRYSTAL DYNAMICS, EIDOS MONTRÉAL, FERAL INTERACTIVE, UNITED FRONT GAMES, NIXXES SOFTWARE BV: *Tomb Raider*. [Digital game]. USA, Kanada, London : Crystal Dynamics, Eidos Montréal, Feral Interactive, United Front Games, Nixxes Software Bv, 1996-2018.

obtain, and subsequently protect ancient artefacts of various cultures against possible abuse. The central character represents a certain form of a female superhero, which had been an unprecedented thing in “the gaming world” until the emergence of the discussed game series. From the point of view of mass culture elements, the observed game seems to be an obvious product of mass production. Firstly, it can be clearly stated that **it is not a traditional product** that would stem from some tradition of a particular society. We are talking about a mass product distributed and consumed within various different societies around the world (including Slovakia) and aimed elementarily at entertaining its users. An impulse for its creation was not some cultural need of the players, but mainly profit of game developers (exceeding several hundreds of millions dollars) based on an innovative theme. Similarly, **it cannot be regarded as being of an elite character**. The series of digital games Tomb Raider is not designed exclusively for a specific group of recipients, who have a higher education or an enormous economic power. It is proved by the affordability of individual editions (from approximately 6 € to 40 € for an episode), as well as a clearly comprehensible build-up of the story, and requirements for player’s intellect (explicitly stated assignments within the game). The target group of the analysed products is considerably wide, from the players of an adolescent age (from approximately 13 years old) to adult individuals of working age³¹, who share mainly common interests and experiences. The aforementioned information clearly shows that this series fully meets another characteristic of mass culture, i.e. **that it is mass-produced** (this statement is proven not only by multi-million sales of individual copies, but also its availability on heterogeneous gaming platforms like e.g. PlayStation, Xbox, PC, or Sega Saturn). Similarly, it could be asserted that the digital product Tomb Raider **is highly commercialized**, which means that it is produced by big and well-known production companies, whose main goal is to generate profit. World-wide significance of gaming companies (in this concrete case Crystal Dynamics, Eidos Montréal, Feral Interactive, United Front Games etc.) has therefore definitely determined also the more notable sales of the mentioned game (it could be assumed that many users have bought some of the games mainly for the reason of preferring a certain gaming production company). This factor, however, does not directly exclude an apparent popularity or demand of the players for the game Tomb Raider, which also represents one of the aspects of enormous

31 SAPIEHA, Ch.: *Tomb Raider*. [online]. [2019-03-06]. Available at: <<https://www.commonsemmedia.org/game-reviews/tomb-raider>>.

sales of the examined game series. Digital game Tomb Raider also **is**, from the view of its narrative structure, **a standardized product**, as individual editions regularly incorporate proven methods of production, or attractive effects (like video sequences, sound effects evoking feelings of suspense etc.), desirable plots (e.g. good versus evil, where good always wins), stereotyped characters (main character is a woman with a physically attractive identity) and others into the stories. Due to its evident innovativeness, the analysed game has consequently influenced creation of similar works, like e.g. games entitled *Remember me* (Nilin Cartier-Wells), *Resident Evil* (Claire Redfield), *Portal* (Chell) and many others. The aforementioned feature is connected also to the **element of homogenization** of the media product, when the stated works start to look strikingly alike – they are easier to interpret for the audience and, logically, subsequently mass-consumed. In conclusion, it could be stated that the game series Tomb Raider **stimulates mass behaviour**, in the sense of existence of various user forums, multiplayer mode, etc, thanks to which the players share their feelings and opinions, allowing even an introverted user to eliminate feelings of anxiety from possible isolation.

As regards the characteristics of popular culture, **it cannot be stated that the digital product Tomb Raider is created by its users**. Production of individual episodes is determined mainly by the commercial purposes of the game developers, who base the production on passive mass consumption of previous episodes of the game. We do not, however, deny the essential fact that the game Tomb Raider **obviously serves the interests of various subjects** – it generates profit for its producers and satisfies its recipients'entertainment and cultural needs in the form of overcoming different obstacles, solving logic problems, getting to know historical places, etc. Likewise, it could be stated that the observed product **has heterogeneous meanings**, directly addressing large number of recipients (e.g. a need to fight against evil – enemies trying to abuse various cultural artefacts for their economic benefits; rejecting stereotypical image of a submissive position of a woman). The game series Tomb Raider **is, however, definitely intertextual** – similar meanings are encoded in various different media products, like movies (released in 2001, 2003 and 2018); comics (distributed since 1999); books (published in 2004, directly following up on the video games); fan sites, or game sequels and DLC products (i.e. contents freely downloadable from internet). The observed type of product also **brings pleasure to its users**, mainly in the form of physical delight caused by the entertaining elements presented in the narrative structure of the game (opportunity

to fight, solve puzzles, interaction with characters not under the control of the player, etc.) Finally, we are talking about a product which **is a source of socially relevant meanings**, as many situations happening in the game correspond to real-life moments (not an ideal relationship with parents, or father; an ambition to prevent abuse of valuable artefacts, or criminal conduct; physical fight against enemy, etc.). Furthermore, the analysed type of digital game **“strengthens” its users in some areas**, mainly in the sense of improving their logical thinking or faith in the ability to reach desired goals in different life situations.

The second deliberately selected media product is the game *Mafia III*.³² However, the object of research is exclusively the third release of the game, because it is characterized by the most evident change, the main protagonist being of black race. The last version of the game was released in 2016 under the game development studio Hangar 13. In terms of game genre classification, this game could be categorized as a third person action game or an action-adventure game. Narrative of *Mafia III* takes place in the city of New Orleans and is dated to 1968. The main character Lincoln is setting up his own crime organization with an aim to take revenge on Italian mafia. The protagonist fulfils set objectives and communicates with non-playable characters intending to reach the primary goal – building his own empire and transforming the city where he lives. In terms of mass culture characteristics, **we could, to a certain extent, talk about the presence of traditional culture**. The storyline of the examined game clearly presents lives of criminal gangs and their members in the 20th century in the USA. Despite this, *Mafia III* has been spread around the world and consumed by different cultures, which has disrupted its (un)intended traditional character and, on the contrary, has supported the commercial intentions of the producers. The examined game version, however, **certainly does not fulfil an elite product character**, as it is perceived by heterogeneous users, diverse in age, gender, education, etc. It could be asserted that the target group is almost identical to that of the game series *Tomb Raider*.³³ **As regards mass production**, despite only three versions of this game having been released so far (specifically in years 2002, 2010, and 2016),

32 HANGAR 13: *Mafia III*. (Playstation version). [Digital game]. California, Brno, Texas : Hangar 13, 2K Games, Aspyr Media, 2016.

33 *Parent Reviews for Mafia III*. [online]. [2019-03-06]. Available at: <<https://www.common sense media.org/game-reviews/mafia-iii/user-reviews/adult>>.

approximately 10 million copies have been sold (together with two previous series). The examined product has also become available on various platforms, like Microsoft Windows, PlayStation 4, Xbox One and others. Within this context, we want to add that **the game version of Mafia III was produced by well-known gaming companies**, concretely Hangar 13, 2K Czech, or Aspyr Media, which have released commercially equally successful games like Hidden & Dangerous, Wings of War, Call of Duty, or BioShock Infinite. Again, it could be stated that the real user value of cultural products is suppressed by their exchange value on the market. **The feature of standardization is undoubtedly applied in the analysed digital product** – the whole third series uses a simple narrative structure and repeating plots (the main character helps his ally by killing all of their enemies), while each available mission progresses completely identically, the only change being the non-playable characters. The only unique, unconventional, element is probably the main protagonist of black skin (with positive character traits); the designers thus countering several stereotypes connected to this race. **Assimilation of elements of different levels is typical also for this type of examined game.** Game theoreticians in this case unambiguously agree that digital games Mafia I-III closely build on the game series GTA (mainly the game structure – the presence of missions, for which the main hero gains a financial reward and territory, although the game Mafia is oriented more on the story in the form of more frequent and extensive video sequences, longer dialogues of the characters, etc.). Finally, we must point out **the absence of any incentives for the recipients to mass-behave.** The researched game does not have a multi-player mode, thus reducing communication and interaction of the players to game discussion forums and fan sites.

Similarly, to the first case, **users have not participated on the production** of the researched digital game. The game developers probably cooperated during the creation of the game, expecting its possible commercial success, as the game markedly copies the game series GTA, which has a substantial user base. This thesis is declared also by the mass consumption of the product in a form of multi-million sales of its copies. Despite this fact, the digital game Mafia III **represents a benefit not only to its producers** (as millions in profit), **but also to the players**, as it illustrates the life of organized crime groups through its uncomplicated game character and fills the player's spare time by completing supposedly simple tasks, representing the basis of entertaining function of a media product. Despite its obvious elementary character, in the sense of its playability, **it presents several meanings**

aimed at heterogeneous groups of recipients (e.g. the battle between “the lesser evil” and “the greater evil”; value of friendship; countering the stereotypical notions about negative character of black individuals; value of family support, etc.). **Intertextuality**, i.e. cultural codes included in various products, **can in connection to the game Mafia III be seen** in the book related to the second product of the discussed gaming company (i.e. Maria II); in comics; collector’s editions (e.g. metal packaging with a logo, bonuses that could be used directly in the game – like outfits, cars, etc.), or soundtracks, and others. However, also in this case, **we cannot talk about pleasure from creating own alternative meanings, only about physical delight** caused by playing an unalterable game story (we can modify only clothing or fight gear of the main character). Media product Mafia III, or its narrative structure, **obviously correlates with an every-day experience of its users in many cases**. In the game concerned, situations typical for current socio-cultural reality can be found (friend’s betrayal, loss of a family member, ambition to get wealthy – pursuing money, etc.). In conclusion of the analysis, we could note a certain rate of some kind of an added value of the game – **the player is able to make certain time-limited decisions in the game** building their sense of freedom and influencing their game status (most often, it is through killing an enemy instead of hiring them as an employee). The user thus improves their critical thinking and, simultaneously, is forced to learn to execute a decision-making process within a relatively short time.

Besides the products designed by the renowned gaming companies, games produced by independent game developers have also become the core of the submitted study. The centre of our attention is a digital game *Limbo*,³⁴ published in 2010 by a Danish game design company Playdead. The game representing a genre of puzzle-platform tells the story of a young boy searching for his sister, going through dangerous environments and traps. It is a journey of the main character literally from left to right, without any dialogue, dramatic music, or pompous architecture. *Limbo* is exceptional also due to looking like a distorted image of Chinese shadow theatre. The player watches shadows, silhouettes, and blurry shapes materialized by a rich and clear music expression. The essence of this digital product is mainly using logical thinking, through which the player finds their way to the end. The reason for selecting the

34 PLAYDEAD: *Limbo*. [Digital game]. Kodaň : Playdead, Xbox Game Studios, 2010.

discussed game is mainly its specificity in the sense of a unique visual and narrative design, which makes it not only a digital game, but also an artistic artefact. Because it is a product of independent designers, our first ambition was to assess the presence of mass culture characteristics in the analysed research material. The game *Limbo* at first sight **shows signs of traditional character** – it evidently represents the culture of the Scandinavian Peninsula in using black and white tones untypical for the commercial gaming world. Despite the aforementioned, the game has revitalized the genre especially by applying the monochromatic eerie horror-like atmosphere or the absence of music, thus paradoxically appealing to numerous users, who have started to mass-consume the product. However, **an elite character cannot be ascribed to it** with certainty. The observed digital product is not aimed at a specific group of players. Its target users are not only child recipients, but also adolescents and adult individuals regardless of their education, income, gender, etc. Its users have one common denominator – interest in this particular media product.³⁵ As far as the product's mass nature is concerned, the developers A. Jensen and D. Patti did not intend to create a commercial game, but rather an aesthetic digital work. However, its spreading through heterogeneous platforms (like for example Xbox 360, PlayStation 3, Microsoft Windows, OS X, Linux, Xbox One, PlayStation 4 and many others) **has determined** enormous sales of the digital product (the overall number of 6 million copies sold), or a **mass production**. Despite these contexts, we cannot speak of a product, or a gaming company, with primarily commercial aims. This is not a case of **suppressing the real media product user value for its market exchange value**. The elementary objective of the designers was to present a certain artistic style reflecting elements of film noir and German Expressionism, as well as to express personal experiences and emotions regardless of any conventions (A. Jensen himself suffers from arachnophobia and that is why spiders are the most common enemies of the main hero in the storyline; the forest areas presented in the game are similar to the forests around the farm where the author grew up, etc.). From the game mechanics point of view, we **can speak of a standardized product** – the observed media product is based on a typical “destruction” of enemies or an escape from them, combined with solving logical puzzles. The objective of the main character is also not unique from the aspect of a narrative structure (the goal is to find a lost sister, the hero being a

35 SAPIEHA, Ch.: *Limbo*. [online]. [2019-03-07]. Available at: <<https://www.commonssensemedia.org/game-reviews/limbo>>.

typically male character). However, some **nonstandard elements are also noticeable in the game**, in form of terrifying death sequences, which the developers used to emphasise the incorrect solutions and to prevent the players from repeating the same mistakes, or in the previously mentioned graphic design of the analyzed gaming product. For these reasons, it could not be stated that the product resembles a series of industrially produced goods. In regards to homogenization, the designers themselves have admitted to being **inspired by other digital products**, like e.g. games *Another World*, *Flashback*, *Heart of Darkness*, or *Prince of Persia* (the last product was the main incentive to add logical tasks). The research material in question, developed by an independent gaming company, again does not fulfil the last characteristic of mass culture – it **does not stimulate mass behaviour among its recipients**. This fact is declared by not using the option of multi-player mode, as well as not having a commercial intention, but expressing a unique visual design of an introspective probe.

In the third case analyzed, **we cannot speak of a passive mass consumption**, but of an active process of creating and circulating meanings. The authors of *Limbo* provided their users with an individual visual colouring (as the video is completely monochromatic) on one hand and a subjective interpretation of the game narrative point. The directly non-commercial character of the product, however, does not negate its **compliance with the interests of heterogeneous subjects** – the game has unexpectedly fulfilled economic needs of its developers, as well as the cultural (or aesthetic and entertainment) needs of the players. The examined media product also **synthesizes several levels of meanings** (for example fear for close family members; battle between good and evil – the main character against spiders, worms, etc.; solving problems by using logical thinking; inadequate behaviour leads to health damage, etc.). Also in this case, these meanings are not included exclusively in a single cultural product (only in the game itself). **The element of intertextuality** is represented, for instance, in special editions of the game containing artistic cards, game soundtrack, stereoscopic glasses, or the *Playdead Company*’s own brand (products with company logo or logos of concrete products, mostly on clothing). Digital game *Limbo* also **provides its users with feelings of catharsis**, not only in the form of physical delight (represented by the entertaining function of the game), but mainly in the shape of pleasure from creating their own alternative meanings supported by the unspoken elements or the abstract universe of the game (i.e. an individual creation of the storyline). Based on the

aforementioned, we can conclude that **the analyzed research material is a source of socially relevant meanings and reflects every-day experience of its users** (e.g. fear for a family member, fear for one's own life, an assumption that every problem has a logical solution, etc.). The digital game in question allows its users to find certain correlations with their lives, based on which they create their own meanings and perceive their social situation in their own way, **strengthening their ability to construct their social identity, as well as abstract and logical thinking, more independently.**

Next and also the last object of analysis is the media product – digital game Cuphead.³⁶ This game, similarly to the previous one, represents a fitting example of a relatively current digital game (2017), created by an independent gaming production of the Moldenhauer brothers. Cuphead is a classic action game based primarily on game mechanics like running and shooting. In terms of image and sound elements, it uses mainly the classic hand-drawn animations, watercolour backgrounds, and original jazz recordings. The main protagonists are Cuphead and Mugman (the player can play in the single-player or local cooperation mode), who pass through extraordinary environments of a town, acquire new guns, learn perfect movement acrobatics, and find hidden secrets, while trying to pay the debt to “the devil”, who the town in question is indebted to. The selection of this digital game also has its reasons. Besides the novelty of the media product, it also presents a unique visual design; the producers in this case have been inspired by animations and caricatures of the 1930s cartoons. From the mass culture characteristics point of view **we have found certain elements of traditional character** within the game. Visual design of the examined media product closely resembles the production of the Polish-American author M. Fleischer, founder of the American company Walt Disney Animation. On the other hand, however, the typical animations of Disney style have penetrated the European market enormously fast due to globalization tendencies, which has encouraged its mass consumption. The observed game definitely **is not of an elite character** – it covers the target group of players with the widest age range of all the selected research materials (approximately of age 10+),³⁷ which is not limited by education or economic background,

36 STUDIO MDHR: *Cuphead*. [Digital game]. Oakville, Kanada : Studio MDHR, 2017.

37 JOHNSON, N.: *Cuphead*. [online]. [2019-03-08]. Available at: <<https://www.commonssensemedia.org/game-reviews/cuphead>>.

but is inclined towards the unique game visual and fictitious narration. In this case, however, we must not forget **commercial ambition** of the game developers, which is proved by the distribution of the game through various platforms (e.g. Microsoft Windows, Xbox One, macOS and others) and the consequent sales of the product amounting to three million copies. It is **the mass production of the game** Cuphead that should have ensured the primary economic goals of the producers and only secondarily the cultural needs of its users ((this statement is proved also by the examined product being obviously inspired by the successful game (2010)). In view of the considerably wide target group (the game focuses primarily on the child recipient, but also on adult individuals), **the product concerned is evidently simplified** and adjusted to be received by a diverse, anonymous audience, whose needs and tastes the producers are not completely clear about. In the Cuphead, we can see a successful genre template (a typical action game), simple narrative structure and repeated conflict situations (elimination of enemies with an aim to reach the ideal state of society), as well as interactive effects (using animations and special music and sounds). This thesis is followed up by the issue of homogenization, i.e. **a syncretism between the game and other, not only digital, products** (e.g. the previously mentioned game Super Meat Boy, or the movie production of Walter Elias or “Walt” Disney). Finally, it can be asserted that the objective of the media product Cuphead **is to encourage mass behaviour of its audience** through the regime of offline local cooperation of the players and fan pages, or user forums, helping the players to psychologically identify with a large group of people.

Despite the fact that the game Cuphead has been produced by an independent gaming company, **users themselves** and their active work **cannot be considered its determinants**. On the contrary, the theme of the discussed media product (action cartoon game) is closely connected to a process of so-called “Americanization”, i.e. adjusting a product to values and patterns from America, implying passive mass consumption. Regardless of this, Cuphead **serves the interests of both subjects involved** – the producers (through high profit) and users (in the form of cultural and aesthetical benefits). **Multiple meanings** are clearly represented by the “battle between good and evil”; the fact that there is a reward for a job well done; the essence of equalizing the fight – the stronger the main character becomes, the more powerful the enemy he encounters, etc. **The aforementioned meanings are interlinked through heterogeneous cultural products**. The examples would be

comics, own brand of the gaming company presented on various products (e.g. clothes), or so-called hidden bonuses in the game like, for example, a black-and-white version of the game, retro music style, etc. Although as a whole, the game Cuphead **brings pleasure to its user**, it is only in the form of physical delight caused by visual design, musical component, and action narrative structure. The multiple meaning character of the product is closely **related to the existence of socially relevant meanings** in the game in question (the player realizes value of money – or gold, which can buy him more efficient guns; he tries to improve lives of the town citizens by eliminating bosses, etc.). The digital product can also be described as **beneficial for its players**, mainly in the sense of boosting their self-confidence and, consequently, their self-assurance in the form of difficult playability depending on individual selection of difficulty level.

Conclusion

Digital games currently represent one of the most analyzed media products. Media studies theoreticians pay a specific attention to this phenomenon, one of the reasons being its consumption by heterogeneous age groups of recipients, which are represented by children, adolescents, adult individuals, as well as pensioners. However, many authors, especially advocates of the discipline of philosophy, degrade the importance of using (digital) games and ascribe a solely entertainment function to them. Others, mainly representatives of cultural and media studies, or sociocultural anthropology, talk about a cultural essence of the discussed media product. With the emergence of media, or media reality, a typical form of culture – media culture, categorized as mass and popular, has established itself in the society. The submitted study has, therefore, closely addressed the cultural basis of digital production and eventually the presence of characteristics of mass and popular culture in digital games representing the production of both the commercially oriented gaming companies and the independent game developers.

Through introducing the core terminological apparatus closely related to the examined issue, we have been able to identify primary characteristics of mass and popular culture, which we have chosen as suitable coding units. Through detailed analysis, we have consequently found out the required data within both categories of media production – commercial and independent. The selected digital games produced by renowned gaming companies, specifically the game series Tomb Raider

and the game Mafia III show the characteristics of mass-oriented cultural products at a considerable rate. Despite that, some differences appeared during identifying the chosen characteristics. As far as the game series Tomb Raider is concerned, we can speak of an exclusively mass product, distributed and consumed within various societies around the world. The game Mafia III, on the other hand, has some elements of traditional character, as its story-line clearly presents life of criminal gangs and their members in America in the 20th century. Consumption of these products by a heterogeneous, diverse, and atomized audience clearly declares its non-elitist basis and consequent mass production. This thesis shows their obvious commercialization, meaning that their real user value is suppressed by their market exchange value. We have clearly noted also proven methods of production – stereotypical characters, repeated plots, etc., which make the observed games look strikingly like other media products and clearly fulfil the criteria of standardization and homogenization. Finally, the examined products differ by the level of mass behaviour stimulation, Tomb Raider allowing their users to better eliminate feelings of anxiety due to possible isolation through availability of multiplayer mode, which the digital game Mafia III does not offer to its users, thus reducing the interaction among players to game discussion forums and fan sites. From the popular culture characteristics point of view, both games are not created by their users and the production of individual works was determined mainly by commercial intentions of game developers. However, they evidently serve the interests of both their creators (by generating profit) and their players (by meeting their cultural and entertainment needs). They have heterogeneous meanings, which are coded intertextually, i.e. within various different, either primary, secondary, or tertiary, media products. In terms of pleasure, due to an absence of direct modification of game environment, users gain only the feelings of physical delight brought by the entertaining elements within the narrative structure of the game. Lastly, Tomb Raider and Mafia III are both games containing socially relevant meanings representing one of the aspects of strengthening game users. The other aspects are for example a development of logical or critical thinking.

The second part of the discursive analysis addressed mappings of mass and popular culture characteristics in the works of independent game developers. The objects were the games Limbo and Cuphead, within which we can see elements of traditional character. Both, however, cannot be described as meeting the criteria of an elite product, because its recipients are children, adolescents, and adults, regardless of their

education, income, gender, etc. We have found the difference between the observed games in their commercial orientation. While the authors of *Limbo* primarily wanted to present a certain artistic style and express their own experiences and feelings, the developers of the game *Cuphead* had exclusively commercial ambition, which is proved by the distribution of the game through various platforms, as well as by using a visual typical for American production for children (so-called Disney style). Despite the aforementioned (although for different reasons), the discussed games have been mass-produced. These products are repeatedly standardized (although the game *Limbo* contains a series of untypical elements like, for example, terrifying sequences of death or a specific monochromatic graphic design, etc.) and logically homogenized, or obviously “copying” other media products. Similarly, to two previous games, we have again found a difference in (not) stimulating mass behaviour of its recipients. While the game *Limbo* does not use a multiplayer mode, the product *Cuphead* has applied a regime of offline local player cooperation, allowing the player to gain a more intense feeling of group identity. A difference between the products of independent developers also appears in the first characteristic of popular culture. In regards to the digital product *Limbo*, we cannot speak of passive mass consumption and the game *Cuphead* cannot be considered to be determined by its users. Both digital games also serve the interests of heterogeneous subjects – producers and consumers, and they also synthesize several levels of meanings (e.g. fear for close family members or battle between good and evil, etc.). These meanings are also present in other media products (“texts”), apparently fulfilling the characteristic of intertextuality typical for the products of popular culture. Further, the discussed games provide their users with feelings of catharsis, especially the game *Limbo*, not only in the form of physical delight, but also in the shape of pleasure from creating their own alternative meanings supported by unspoken ideas or the abstract universe of the game. The analyzed research materials are, similarly to the previous two, a source of meanings reflecting every-day experience of its users, strengthening its recipients in the sense of constructing their social identity more independently, for example in the form of developing their abstract thinking, boosting their self-confidence, etc.

Based on the stated facts we can assert that, on one hand, almost all characteristics of mass and popular culture are present in the selected research objects (regardless of the form and character of their production company). However, on the other hand, it is obvious that there is no direct boundary between products of mass culture and popular culture, i.e. they

are interconnected and related cultures, and, therefore, significant parts of their content overlap. If the products are popular with its users, it does not preclude their mass production. The mass culture characteristics are mainly oriented on the essence and content of media products, while the features of popular culture describe predominantly the way of their consumption. Thanks to the obtained data, we can thus talk about two different views (mass and popular) of one form of media culture – the industrially produced culture.

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THROUGHOUT THE OCEAN OF FREE SOUND (ON SOUND DESIGN, FREE RESOURCES, SOUND LIBRARIES, AND CREATIVITY)

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ABSTRACT:

This paper presents an argument, that most of the resources in the field of creating digital games - especially their auditive aspects - once considered as inaccessible (both financially and on the level of difficulty) are now practically free and the only obstacle in making digital games is often creativity itself. The article focuses on the phenomena of sound design through the prism of its evolution and its pervasiveness, minimization of hardware and its gradual reduction to digital plugins, DAW and middleware and finally, accessibility of sound libraries itself. Following the example of the creation of a huge (royalty) free sound effects library put together with minimal-to-none investments, this paper shows how easy it actually is to create content and how to use it efficiently.

KEY WORDS:

digital audio workstation, free effects, library, middleware, software, sound design, virtual studio

1 Why Sound?

This article is supposed to be motivational. It is indeed a strange cause in the context of a scientific text, however, as we shall argue, this topic is still underrated and needs to be discussed from a different point of view. The very first question that comes to mind in this context is answering why is it sound that serves a purpose in this article. The answer is simple and complicated at the same time. Sound is everywhere and we perceive it from the first moments of our lives. Accordingly, it surrounds us for the rest of our lives and exactly as Kathrin Kalinak writes, a newborn can already recognize its mother's voice. After birth, the infant continues in a bath of aural stimulation, including and especially the mother's voice, which is experienced as music.¹ So where is the complicated part? We could say that it is well concealed in the above mentioned "simple" one. The fact that we live with the sound all our lives make us oblivious to it. We use our ears, but we don't really listen. It is not strange then, when

1 KALINAK, K.: *Film Music. A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford : UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2010, p. 29.

we see arguments like the one, that is persistent through the film history and theory - “the good sound and music is the one we don’t really notice”. There is a good chance you’ve heard this before. The problem is that quotes like this make us even more inattentive to the world of sound.

It makes for quite a bit of contrast then, when we start to investigate the true potential of sound design and its ubiquitous presence. Sometimes it feels like we all know what sound design is, but do we really? William Whittington traces the origins of sound design in Hollywood cinema to “sound montage”, which was the production credit that Walter Murch took on George Lucas’ first science fiction feature *THX 1138* (1971). Using contrapuntal editing and extensive re-recording techniques, Murch experimented with sound perspective, tape-speed modulations, audio filters, and image-sound metaphors throughout the film. He created unique montages of sound, which included dialogue exchanges between robot police officers and controllers, the whine of jet car chases, and ambient cacophonies of overpopulated cityscapes.² The actual term “sound design” was introduced by Murch as well to describe his innovative sound work on Francis Ford Coppola’s 1979 film about the Vietnam War, *Apocalypse Now*.³ Of course, it would be too simple to examine and define the origins of sound design only by means of cinema. As we mentioned above, sound design is omnipresent and if we were to define its roots, we would have to travel way beyond the discernible history. An example of this is Tony Gibb’s comment on the practice of sound design. According to him, there is a reason to believe that ancient human cultures were aware of the usefulness of sound as part of their environment and recorded history is full of support for the continued use of deliberately designed sound through the ages. One of the most common ways in which sound could be designed or manipulated in the years before electronics was through architecture. One cannot design a structure to amplify sound: the energy that is in the original voice or instrument is all that there is. [...] History has many examples of all of these practices, from the use of masks by actors in Ancient Greece, through the stage resonators of Roman theatres, to the remarkable acoustic properties of some Mayan structures that modulate sound in ways that we would normally think only possible by means of modern

2 WHITTINGTON, W.: *Sound Design and Science Fiction*. Austin : UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS, 2007, p. 20.

3 WHITTINGTON, W.: *Sound Design and Science Fiction*. Austin : UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS, 2007, p. 20.

electronics.⁴ Kevin J. Donnelly brings to mind something similar, writing about architecture. Archaeologists have found that there is a correlation between sites of strong echo and the existence of ancient cave paintings. These locations, such as Newgrange in Ireland and Camster Round in Scotland might have used the musical sound from drums and voices to create standing waves that could then be seen with the help of dust and smoke. These spaces might have constituted sound as a spirit force, as an apparition not only of mystical sound but also of *visible* sound.⁵

A sound designer (not to be mistaken for Foley artist, who performs the footsteps, props, and cloth movement of all the characters while viewing a print of the film⁶) is responsible for very specific conceptual sound effects.⁷ Just as a painter formulates a mental image when facing the canvas so, too, does a sound designer need to have an aural “vision”. If you can’t hear the sound in your head, you’ll have a hard time determining what to create and how to create it,⁸ as beautifully described by Deena Kaye and James LeBrecht. We could go further into history, or delve into decades of sound evolution in cinema regarding how young enthusiasts created the whole new world of sound effects, but that is not a purpose of this article. In the context of sound design’s pervasiveness, it is useful to step aside from cinematography and video-games (which we haven’t even touched so far) and took a broader view on this phenomena. Holger Schulze in his more cultural approach to sound design brings an idea, which is more interesting within the framework of our article. In the early twenty-first century, the globally hegemonic sound cultures are cultures of functionalized sound designs to order and to guide everyday lives. It is hence this desire for guidance that can be found at the heart of most of the designing efforts concerning sound. In contrast to any weirdly behaving, wild and untamed artifact, without clues for us as consumers or users any product with a certain functionality built in seemingly gives us hints and indices of how to use

4 GIBBS, T.: *The Fundamentals of Sonic Art and Sound Design*. Lausanne : Ava Publishing, 2007, p. 36-37.

5 DONNELLY, K. J.: *The Spectre of Sound: Music in Film and Television*. London : BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE, 2005, p. 8.

6 AMENT, V.: *The Foley Grail. The Art of Performing Sound for Film, Games, and Animation*. Burlington : ELSEVIER, 2009, p. xiv.

7 AMENT, V.: *The Foley Grail. The Art of Performing Sound for Film, Games, and Animation*. Burlington : ELSEVIER, 2009, p. 36.

8 KAYE, D., LE BRECHT, L.: *Sound and Music for the Theatre. The Art and Technique of Design*. Amsterdam : Focal Press, 2009, p. 12.

it and how to apply this product properly.⁹ Another interesting point of view is the more product-based approach, as presented by Doriana Dal Palú, Claudia De Giorgi, Beatrice Lerma and Eleonora Buiatti in their book concerning sound design in the context of the development of product identity. Intentions of creating new sounds to make them audible are of different types: the first intention is to reach efficiently a goal thanks to the sound (functionality), the second one is to produce a harmonious reaction in the environment combining satisfaction of the user (pleasantness), coherence with the product (identity), and, as far as possible, embellishment of the environment (ecology). Successful sound design should be the articulation of the different intentions in order to produce new interactions through sound.¹⁰

So where are we going again? On these examples, we wanted to display just how sound design accompany us nearly everywhere we go. Did you listen to your radio today in your car? The chances are that you just bought a new refrigerator or a coffee machine that greet you with their pleasant beeps and melodies every time they finish their work. Your children play with their new toys or even books filled with tiny electronics and speakers. Sony’s robotic dog Aibo introduced to consumers in 1999 is worthy of note, with its special sound design created by Japanese electronic music producer Nobukazu Takemura. The tiniest sound transitions and swooshes in commercials, intros to announcements in shopping malls. Any alarm you hear during the night, or even those ticking sound from traffic lights intended for blind people, all that is sound design. And all those sounds usually pass through our ears “unnoticed”. But then again, that is just one part of the story. Just like the functions of film music, the function of sound design is to control and guide us. The perfect demonstration of these functions would be digital games. Most actions that player does (in modern games, we should say *every* action) has an audible response. Not just it notices us that we actually did something (movement, win, loose, level up, power up, distant door opening, ambient atmosphere slowly changing according to the day time..), it also tells us what to do: there is an enemy close to us, our character is wounded and needs healing, puzzle is missing a piece. Everything can be illustrated by sound. It suddenly seems like a bad joke

9 SCHULZE, H.: *Sound Works. A Cultural Theory of Sound Design*. Bloomsbury : Bloomsburry Publishing, 2019, p. 12.

10 DAL PALÚ, D. et al.: *Frontiers of Sound in Design. A Guide for the Development of Product Identity Through Sounds*. Cham : Springer, 2018, p. xi.

when we read that quote about “good sound”. This chapter was thus an attempt for a very brief definition of sound design in its broader view, as well as an introduction to next chapter, in which we will argue that not only is this phenomenon all around us, but that we can also easily get to a point where we can create it with minimal resources.

2 Minimizing Everything

While the previous chapter focused on the introduction and a brief explanation of the sound design and why do we even write about it, this chapter’s main purpose is to describe, how (over the years) expensive machines slowly turned into tiny VST plugins we can download to our computers within minutes. We will also point out some of the DAWs (digital audio workstations) and further argue that even complex software needed for sound production is easily accessible. Without going too much into the history of sound recording and its modulation or too many technical details, rather we would like to outline how all of the equipment once considered as a faraway dream of many prospective to-be-sound designers and producers made its way into our homes. As written by Richard James Burgees, recording and reproduction of sound was - until 1925 - not an electrical process. An electric motor may have driven the platter or cylinder of the recording or playback machine, but the signal chain was acoustic and mechanical. Radio proved to be the catalyst for change in the record business.¹¹ A similar technology that enabled radio and electric recording also allowed for the electrification of instruments.¹² A few decades later, first - and very well known up to the present day - synthesizers appeared. The sixties and seventies saw the development of familiar names in synthesis: Moog, ARP, Oberheim, Sequential Circuits, EMS, Roland, Yamana, and more.¹³ If we jump back to the beginning of the first chapter, we can see a clear connection with the emergence of first synthesizers and the onset of sound design. But it is not just synthesizers, but sound studios in general. First studios (up to 30s) were more or less just isolated rooms where people recorded instruments. Later in the 60s, studios turned more into something we know these days - rooms with multiple devices, tape machines, and

11 BURGEES, R. J.: *The History of Music Production*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 29.

12 BURGEES, R. J.: *The History of Music Production*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 73.

13 BURGEES, R. J.: *The History of Music Production*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 78.

effects. In the 70s, so-called multi-track recording (still analog) was largely being spread and sound recording became a practice performed in acoustically “dead” and treated places where instruments and voices were recorded separately.

Today, a virtual studio is most likely to be centered on a computer with software that duplicates many of the functions of a real studio. Even the recording process stays within the computer.¹⁴ Crucial developments along this pathway included the sequencer, which could control a synthesizer or drum machine, and early samplers. The key developments along this more popular pathway to the virtual studio were nearly all direct consequences of increasing processing power and memory, together with the inventiveness of the programmers using it. The next major addition to the virtual studio, as to regular studios, has been digital signal processing (DSP).¹⁵ In other words, as Burgee’s comments, today, in terms of quality of results, it can be impossible to distinguish between a home, project, professional, and mobile studio. A studio capable of fully professional work can now be a laptop with DAW software and I/O (input/output) hardware. So what is a DAW? In very simple words, a DAW is a device that can record a live session from start to finish, which revolutionized the art of music production.¹⁶ DAWs provide a powerful fusion of sound design, audio editing, and music composition capabilities.¹⁷ Translated into more “lore friendly” language, digital audio workstations, as we know them these days, are programs, which allow its users to create music, beats, loops, chords, sequences, sound manipulation, and sound design, everything packed together, usually in a consumer-friendly interface, installed in our computers. They commonly include their own sound libraries and also digital sound effects. Some of the most notable and popular DAWs include Ableton Live, Pro Tools, Cubase, FL Studio, Logic Pro, Samplitude, Reason or Sound Forge. All of these work with sound files (such as wave, mp3, aiff..) and also with MIDI interface.¹⁸

14 NISBETT, A.: *The Sound Studio. Audio Techniques for Radio, Television, Film and Recording*. Oxford : Focal Press, 2003, p. 264.

15 NISBETT, A.: *The Sound Studio. Audio Techniques for Radio, Television, Film and Recording*. Oxford : Focal Press, 2003, p. 265.

16 BURGEES, R. J.: *The History of Music Production*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 15.

17 WALLACE, J.: *Digital Audio Editing Fundamentals*. Lompoc : Apress, 2015, p. 11.

18 MIDI – Musical Instrument Digital Interface, communicates with DAW with the use of notes that we can play on keyboard, any midi controller or just “write” them in DAWs sequencer with mouse (remark by the author).

First digital audio workstations in their present reminiscent forms started to emerge in the 1990s. Digidesign introduced its Pro Tools and a few years later, Steinberg came up with Cubase.

Around the same year, Steinberg also released the first VST (Virtual Studio Technology) format plugins. This is the moment we would like to bring attention to even more. As we argued, VST plugins can be understood as minimized versions of equipment once used purely in expensive sound studios. They usually run within a digital audio workstation (or can be run as standalone¹⁹) and they can be divided into three main types: VST instruments, VST effects, and VST MIDI effects. Instruments generate sound and very often they are recreations of famous analog synthesizers. However, we could find virtually any real instrument recreated as a VST plugin, ranging from guitars, pianos, to harps, glass harmonicas or completely abstract sound design synthesizers. Effects on the other hand process sound. They act the same way as analog/hardware processors and they include effects like delay, reverb, chorus, flanger, distortion, compressor, limiter, phaser or any sound modulation you could think of. MIDI effects process MIDI notes themselves, they can, for example, create arpeggios (using just one repeating tone in sequencer, they can change it into the complex melody with multiple tones), randomization, etc.

Why are these so important within the context of our article? Just like some of the DAWs, there are literally thousands of them completely free (we are really not talking about downloading a pirated software from torrent sites, in which case, every DAW is “free”) and most of them can do the serious job in sound creation and manipulation. If we were to return a little back in our article, these plugins are something that is a must-have for designers of digital games. Following this model of free/easily accessible resources, we would like to finish this chapter with the notion of middleware. Middleware is a software, that we could define as a “half-DAW” and half-engine. By half-DAW, we mean that within this kind of program, you can do a lot of editing and sound manipulation, just like you would expect from any DAW, but also, it is able to incorporate its projects into game-building engines such as Unity 3D or Unreal. This way, you are able not just create a specific sound design or track, but also set it in a way that it actually adapts to player’s actions by creating several layers of sound and creating an algorithm which then chooses those sounds accordingly. A simple example of this could be music in the game, that

19 That means you can run them without running any other software (remark by the author).

is calm and relaxed while exploring, but seamlessly changes into more action-oriented when the player is attacked by an enemy. This can be applied to any sound effects, such as steps, ambient sounds that change accordingly to the time of day, or any other sounds that change during the gameplay. The most important point, however, is, that some of the most popular and highly professional middlewares (such as FMOD and Wwise) and engines for creating games (like above-mentioned Unity and Unreal) are completely free as well. The only limitations are technical (they would hardly run on a 10 years old computer) and their license politics is consumer friendly up to the moment, when you start earning money (for example, FMOD is free unless your project doesn't exceed 500 000 dollars, in which case you would probably have no problems buying premium license anyway). This chapter served as a means to prove that most of the technical resources that were once considered as extremely expensive and not really reachable for people on the consumer level, are quickly accessible and many of them are free these days. Recent years has seen an emergence of another popular quote, but unlike the one we mentioned in the first chapter, this one is turning to be utterly true: we live in a golden era of audio. In the next chapter, we would like to finalize our argument by showing our own example of creating the last step of the sound design chain - creating our own sound effects library - and again, with minimum cost.

3 Building a Sound Library

There are dozens of professional sound effects libraries out there. In fact, they started to appear as soon as cinema became popular in the early years of the 20th century, although not in the form of today's sound libraries. But as soon as sound design started to be an equally important part of movies, sound effects started to be combined into packs and distributed, slowly replacing traditional Foley artists (luckily, they haven't replaced them completely so far). Some of these libraries are steadily being used in Hollywood, as well in indie cinema and owning any of them can set you for life. Sound effects libraries such as from Pro Sound Effects, Boom Libraries, Articulated Sounds or Sound Snap contain hundreds of thousands of sound files ranging from atmospheres, through abstract and science fiction sounds to the shortest cracks, squeaks, and drips of metal, wood or water. As Nisbet writes, the contents of an effects library fall into a variety of categories. Most important are crowds (including many subheadings like chatter, surprise, terror, shouting, sports crowds or footsteps). Then there are transport effects and everything connected

to the car, trains, etc., the atmosphere of location or “atmos” recordings, elements - wind, weather, water and fire, sounds of all human activity, branches, industrial sounds, animals, birds, babies, electrical sounds, etc.²⁰ The main issue here is that these libraries usually cost thousands of dollars and unless you are a filmmaker or game developer with a solid “injection” of money from a grant or anything similar, you think twice before investing money into these. Sure, online sound effect libraries like Sound Snap are based on monthly or annual subscriptions, but for a starting sound designer or game developer, even those money are too much to be spent. We are deliberately omitting free sound effects libraries such as FreeSound.org since as much of quality sounds it contains, there is a lot of bad quality recordings as well.

Of course, another option in this situation is buying a portable recording device, a reasonable microphone, investing in acoustic treatment and changing your own room into a small home recording studio. While this option can range from investing several hundred dollars to several thousand, its still a little limited alternative, since not all of us live by the sea (for the sound of sea waves or seagulls), own any kind of a welding device (for those precious electrical buzz and lightning recordings), or we simply live in a noisy neighborhood with lots of barking dogs and people all around, which would actually prevent us to record anything. What we are proposing here is as simple as it sounds. If you know where to look, you are able to get 100% legal, royalty free²¹ sound effects packs for free or for fractions of full prices as presented above. We started this as an experiment for educational purposes. The main goal was to create an offline sound library so that we could use it with students during our sound and sound design lectures at the university. Within just a few months of searching and downloading, our library exceeded 150 GB of quality sounds (foley effects, specially designed effects, as well as music packs) and includes tens of thousands of files. It’s needless to say that this experiment continues since we stumble upon new sources of sound every day. Some of the examples of this libraries include annual free sound effect pack giveaway on the web of GDC (Game Developers Conference), hundreds of exceptional quality sounds from Cymatics (many of these sample packs are free and a great deal of them are extremely cheap), big collection of sample packs on 99Sounds (again, including Foley effects as

20 NISBETT, A.: *The Sound Studio. Audio Techniques for Radio, Television, Film and Recording*. Oxford : Focal Press, 2003, p. 258.

21 That means you can use them in any commercial product, movie, music or digital game, without worrying about license (remark by the author).

well as musical samples and loops arranged into genre-themed packs), or a huge collection of sounds on MusicRadar with tons of musical samples, foley sounds and designed effects (as they state on their webpage, all the samples originally appeared on either a Computer Music or Future Music magazine cover disc). Some webs offer collections of sound packs from different sources and concentrate them on one place, such as SoundShockAudio. Many of these webs and companies also offer sound packs and libraries for money, but the strategy here is sometimes as simple as subscribing to their newsletter, creating a free account and just wait for next discounts or gift codes, which often dramatically reduce all the prices. We even observed an interesting effect we would usually criticize or close with one click right away: since the start of our search for free sound library, all the social media we use started to show up nearly exclusively advertisements for yet another source of free (or partly free) sound effects libraries and sources of VST plugins and synthesizers. Many of those were among a great number of places we overlooked before. Here we can see the positive effects of modern media - collecting cookies at its best.

However, it is very important to say that this can easily lead you down a rabbit hole. Internet is endless and if you really want to create sound design, music or digital games in general, you should know, that in this case, the more sometimes doesn't mean the better. Creative people all over the world could agree that sometimes it is actually best for you to work with what you have and focus on the actual design, rather than pursuing the creation of the limitless resources, in which, ultimately, you could get lost in - at the expense of creative freedom. Another important thing is the matter of actual sound design in terms of possibilities of sound modulation itself. If you are not new to sound editing/designing practice, you know, that there are methods how to create many different sounds from just one particular sound source. One of the fundamentals of sound design, in general, is layering sounds. In this context, mixing just two sounds creates a third sound. This sound is different than its two foundation sounds. When we combine/modulate this sound with an ever-growing number of VST sound effects, whether using just a simple equalization or a more complex transposition or pitch modulation, suddenly we can come up with 10 (or 100) new sounds, each of them sounding completely different.

That leads to our final part: the craft. You might argue that all of these resources, whether free or not, are not so simple to put in use and you need an actual skill to be able to work with them. That is true, of

course. But as everything in this article pointed out, even free courses and tutorials are easily accessible. Some companies (like Udemy or MacProVideo) offer ridiculously cheap (we are talking about roughly 20-30 dollars for the whole course when the conditions are right) video courses that can introduce you to whole new software, DAW, crafting of specific sound effects or mixing and mastering lessons. Whole another world can be found on sites like YouTube (right now, Google showed up more than 238 million videos after writing "how to sound design" search words - sure, not all of them are what we are looking for, but we would probably have to click through a countless pages to actually start seeing irrelevant results). The only real complication that could show up is our own will to create and work - or - the lack of time. But time was never really the case anyway, wasn't it?

Conclusion

What we are trying to say is the following: we really live in an era, in which creative possibilities are starting to be endless. We can easily get to nearly any resources we want to and with the right skill or a bit of experience, we are able to expand on this mile ahead. Of course, high-level professional equipment and the environment is still not a cheap matter. But thinking that we could not achieve this level by using free or cheaper equipment is like complaining that you are not going to become a good photographer without the newest and most expensive camera. The fact is that you are going to become even better when you start with that old analog camera you found in your grandfather's closet. In this article, we argued that sound design has slowly gotten into our everyday lives without us even noticing. It is thus natural to think about it as a means to explain limitless possibilities that modern media offer us. As we have shown on the example of big and expensive analog studio hardware shrinking into a few megabytes of VST plugins you can easily download and use right away, the technologies are here for us to be used now. We have tools (DAWs, middleware, game engines and much more software not concerning digital games at all) and we have materials (as shown on hundreds of gigabytes readily available for us to be downloaded online). But then again, we always had these. As we started this article, so are we going to end it. Not only we wanted to show some of the possibilities of today's era, but we wanted to motivate the readers of this article to improve and always try new things. We have never had a better time to learn and improve than now.

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ENHANCED REALITY, COMPUTER-AIDED DESIGN WITH PHOTOSHOP

Robert Halenár

ABSTRACT:

Media systems and information systems are increasingly being used in the design of systems and structures. Computer-aided design is no longer just part of the early stages of design, but accompanies product realization from first to final stage. The visual aspect is an integral part of the design, and the new design is created not only by the design of a completely new shape or structure, but also often by the addition of parts to an existing whole. This will create an old and new composite, requiring design adjustments and customizations to maintain visual integrity. As a powerful photo-editing tool, Photoshop can support this design stage.

KEY WORDS:

computer – aided design, photo – edit, Photoshop, visualization

1 Introduction

Computer aided design technology is a new technology which was born in the process of computer development. Due to the continuous development of computer technology, computer aided design of the content is constantly improving and follow up. The construction industry is concerned, in the design of the unit, the traditional drawing table, Slide Show machine has been replaced by computer and plotter; data file has been stored using a computer storage. Building digital technology not only greatly improve the efficiency of the work of the architect, but also slowly but steadily changing the way of thinking and work of the architect. Now, on the one hand the development of the construction of digital technology is very significant, and improves the engineering cost and the development to create a new image from the drawing quality and efficiency of development; on the other hand, to multiple now design of the whole process of the development from the original drawing auxiliary. Architectural digital technology plays a key role in the process of continuous thinking and expression of architects and gradually building design. The use of digital technology in the process of the research and feasibility analysis of major projects can make use of the powerful data processing ability of the computer to improve the scientific and efficiency of the process decision-making. For the planning and design, in the historical heritage protection, renewal and control planning, you can

use the GIS technology; research and analysis of body concept design in the construction units and groups, can use Max, 3ds, SketchUp and other software. Computer aided design of engineering drawing and the current project, mainly through 3dsMax and AutoCAD software, some two times the development of software for body shape design, review, special analysis, and construction drawings, documentation, economic estimate. In addition, the architectural design industry is now using computer architecture technology to represent the final results of the structure and appearance of the building, in order to show the auxiliary means of the design of the final version has not yet been finalized.¹ In practice, there is a need to process larger volumes of data and make more extensive adjustments. Consequently, it is necessary to re-evaluate whether the need for large data processing will make the change unprofitable.²

2 Augment Reality

Imagine a device which, when you use it to look at something, displays information on whatever you're pointing it at. Focus on a restaurant, and a display pops up giving a menu and customer reviews, look at a historic building, and you're told when and by whom it was built, or point towards that chap sitting opposite you on the metro, and find out this stranger's name and age. These are the sort of possibilities afforded by the new technology of **augmented reality**. In fundamental terms, the expression **augmented reality**, often abbreviated to **AR**, refers to a simple combination of real and virtual (computer-generated) worlds. Given a real subject, captured on video or camera, the technology 'augments' (= adds to) that real-world image with extra layers of digital information. Those of us who enjoy watching television coverage of sport will already have experienced a basic form of **augmented reality** in action. Picture the cricket pitch on which a logo for a well-known sponsor miraculously appears, or an Olympic swimming race where a line indicating the position of the current world record holder appears ahead of the competitors moving frantically through the water.³

- 1 TANG, Ch., ZHOU, J.: Computer Aided Architectural Design and Art Analysis based on Building Digital Technology. In *Boletin Tecnico*, 2015, Vol. 55, Issue 4, p. 368. [online]. [2019-03-26]. Available at: <<http://www.jopdentonline.org/doi/pdf/10.2341/13-295-S>>.
- 2 TRNKA, A.: Big Data for Big Marketing. In *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2017, Vol. 13, No. 6, p. 191-196.
- 3 MAXWELL, K.: *Augmented Reality*. [online]. [2019-04-06]. Available at: <<https://macmillandictionary.com/buzzword/entries/augmented-reality.html>>.

3 Using Photoshop

To use Adobe Photoshop in augmented reality there are several techniques. Adobe released Project Aero, an augmented reality (AR) authoring tool and multi-platform system that will enable creatives to design immersive content that blurs the lines between the physical and digital worlds. With Project Aero, designers will be able to create AR content using popular tools they already know such as Adobe Photoshop CC and Dimension CC. They'll be able to lay out and manipulate designs in physical spaces, making AR creation more fluid and intuitive. And they'll be able to deliver these immersive experiences to audiences on mobile devices faster and easier. Despite being a new medium, AR relies on the same principles of good design and compelling content as print, web, and mobile. We want to enable creatives who have mastered these skills and assets to take AR to the next level.⁴ Cari Jansen wrote about using of combine Photoshop and augmented reality in cover of the magazine.⁵ Other studies also illustrate the scope of use of Photoshop. Adjustments and retouching can also be used in other areas.⁶

4 Application Retouching Adjustment

As a photo editing tool, Photoshop can be used to make changes related to reality change to customize visualization of real objects to the needs of individuals and organizations. The following figures show examples of changes that we have applied in a real environment without real intervention. So the whole change is only artificial, but it will allow you to see and present real results.

4 UNKNOWN AUTHOR: *Introducing Project Aero*. [online]. [2019-04-06]. Available at: <<https://www.adobe.com/sk/products/projectaero.html>>.

5 JANSEN, C.: *Better Photoshop Techniques Adds Augmented Reality*. [online]. [2019-04-06]. Available at: <<http://carijansen.com/better-photoshop-techniques-adds-augmented-reality/>>.

6 RUSKO, M. et al.: Labeling of Products from the Context of Environment, Quality and Safety. In *Daaam International Scientific Book*. Vienna : DAAAM International, 2016, p. 419-434.



Figure 1: Photograph of the interior before and after the modification of the cable distribution

Source: own processing



Figure 2: Installation of computer network wiring for and after retouching

Source: own processing



Figure 3: Installation of engineering networks before and after treatment

Source: own processing



Figure 4: Installing the split outdoor air conditioner with and without installation

Source: own processing based on: *Midea klimaticácie Telince: Montáž klimatizácie Midea 2x2,5k W do rodinného domu v Telinciach*. [online]. [2019-03-26]. Available at: <<http://www.klimaservisit.sk/Midea%20klimatiz%C3%A1cie%20Telince>>.

Conclusion

On real-world examples, we have shown that by changing the photographic footage in Photoshop, we can present reality to our requirements without using real-world editing. These can be used to visualize objects before they are real, and reduce the cost of reconstruction, while enhancing the experience offered by virtual editing. Photographs can also be used in FPS games as an object texture that will provide a real experience without any interference. Thus, the player will not have to deal with poor-quality or temporary defects that are neither effective nor desirable for the purpose.

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THE OMNIPRESENT DISNEYLAND: SOME NOTES ON WILLIAM GIBSON'S NOVEL IDORU

Martin Charvát

ABSTRACT:

The aim of present paper is to expose a thesis about the relationship between contemporary society and digital media by Jean Baudrillard. Baudrillard stresses that our society is strongly connected to digital technologies which construct a hyperreality, a reality full of simulacra and simulated pseudo-events without any relation to "reality". This thesis is in the paper exemplified upon a reading of cyberpunk literary novel written by William Gibson. I focus on novel *Idoru* where Gibson reveals the nature of digital media production in the sphere of entertainment industry and thus presenting to audience the phantasmagorical vision of the (virtual) world.

KEY WORDS:

digital media, Disneyland, hyperreality, Jean Baudrillard, simulacra, William Gibson

1 Baudrillard on Disneyland

French philosopher and media theorist Jean Baudrillard, in his notoriously famous book called *Simulacra and Simulation*, presents a description of contemporary situation in the United States of America, he uses an image of Disneyland in order to analyze structures and processes which determine the axis of orientation of present consumer society. Baudrillard here works with two complementary outlines mixed in a specific juxtaposition: on the one hand we are, in the case of Disneyland, struck by the almost hermetically sealed space of the amusement park, which is full of fantasies and mechanical assemblages with their mechanical parts (toys, engines, dolls, and so on). This space produces an articulation of affects but is also motionless – when we enter into the park, everything what happens there are only pseudo-events or beforehand calculated sets of possible encounters, which repeats itself day after day into infinity. And there is something else present too: the flow of capital represented by the models of reality which does not have any connection to reality itself (and we will see, that for Baudrillard is rather problematic to talk about reality at all). What do people buy in Disneyland, what do people do in Disneyland is determined by the construction of the space, by the psycho-architectural combination of

multiplicity of seeing and feeling in order to fulfill the lust for joy; joy that is ephemeral and repeating itself in no-time presence. In Disneyland time is out of joint. Crowd of visitors is forced to move in pre-establish routes, the individual has no opportunity to decide for himself where to go: even though you want to buy some ice cream or the newest t-shirt with your favorite idol, the structure of deciding “machine” is always the same: you buy something, and you buy something because you are in Disneyland. On the other hand, the second outline which Baudrillard builds up, is the solitude of a parking lot. The movement of the individual there is determined only by one technology: car. And the cars, after being left alone by visitors, are becoming non-sense pieces of metal waiting to be re-used, but before that the quantity of cars sets up a vision of a post-apocalyptic world without humanity. Left alone cars are like ornaments of an era of planetary technology and are also signs of anticipation of the world which has consumed itself. What Baudrillard wants to say by this exposition is this: in Disneyland we face the frozen world of models, whereas outside the Disneyland there is nothing but void.¹

The structure of relations between artificially constructed models in artificially constructed world is by Baudrillard analyzed in his book from 1968 called *The System of objects*. Baudrillard here stresses the signification of objects of everyday life in so called consumer society. The growth of technological objects determines the dialectical human tendency towards technology: man creates technology in order to make his life easier, the man also comes up with tools for control of objects (and other beings), i.e. surveillance systems, but those products (or technological objects) are becoming so complex that they cannot be understood or comprehended in every aspect. So, the man is becoming the slave of the technology because he must use tools he create in order to satisfy his needs. Another process has taken place too: in order for technological object to become a subject of consumption, it has to become a sign, when the value of commodity is not set as its exchange value or usable value, but by its meaning as representation: the sign/object of consumption connotes luxury, style, wealth and power.² What is the consumption? For Baudrillard consumption is limitless and is

1 BAUDRILLARD, J.: *Simulacra and Simulation*. Ann Arbor : The University of Michigan Press, 2006, p. 12-13.

2 BAUDRILLARD, J.: *The System of Objects*. London, New York : Verso books, 1996, p. 200.

determined by lust,³ consumption is made possible by the fact that we are surrounded by multiplication of objects, services and material goods: we are not surrounded by people anymore and our activities are reduced to manipulation with goods and its reception.⁴

2 Mass Media and Hyperinformation

What is the place of mass media in this context? At first, we should note that Baudrillard's conception of media follows the path which has been set forth by Marshall McLuhan. Because of this Gary Genosko calls Baudrillard French and pessimistic "version" of McLuhan.⁵ The technological pessimism is also present in Baudrillard's reflection of mass media. He states that in contemporary society media do not present validated information and do not function as the watch dog of democracy. Mass media distribute flows of constructed information, hyperinformation in Baudrillard's choice of words, because these hyperinformation do not have any relationship to so called reality. They are tools for destabilization of reality and constructing a new one: the reality of simulacra. Mass media do not involve any kind of possibility for immediate reaction (which could be seen as rather peculiar because new media theory is based on the fact that the audience can express itself in real time – social media, live streams and so on). Because the hyperinformation is strictly self-referential and every reaction thus only pump iron into the world of simulacra and models – it strengthens its naturalization effects, because we do have the idea that if we can react in real time we are "doing something", for example we express our disagreement.⁶ But our disagreement with what? By expressing it by media (social media, or technology like mobile phones) into the cyberspace, we are just adding another "voice" into the flux of virtual reality and hence we participate on the process of destabilizing "everyday" reality (and nothing like that exist, because there is no need for it and it makes no sense to distinguish between virtual and "everyday" reality); we live in hyperreality.

3 BAUDRILLARD, J.: *The System of Objects*. London, New York : Verso books, 1996, p. 205.

4 BAUDRILLARD, J.: *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures*. London : Sage, 1998, p. 25.

5 GENOSKO, G.: *McLuhan and Baudrillard: The Masters of Implosion*. London, New York : Routledge, 2002, p. 3.

6 BAUDRILLARD, J.: *The Masses: The Implosion of the Social in the Media*. In BAUDRILLARD, J. (ed.): *Selected Writings*. Stanford : Stanford University Press, 1998, p. 217.

The fact that is distinctive for consumer society is that our contemporary tools of communication (mobile phones, laptops) are responsible for “dramatization of information” and “decontextualization of information” and are the ground point of newly constructed “mythology”. This mythology is paradoxically based upon the fantasy of lust for reality, truth and objectivity. So called “reality” and “truth” are presented to the audience during “live streams” or “newsrooms” and thus creating a false impression of our full presence in what is streamed.⁷ Mass media tools of communication do not transmit “reality” but only a false representation of reality in the form of signs when the denunciation of “reality” takes place – “news” and “live streams” are nothing else than combinatoric modulation of artificially constructed world. So, the content of live streams is irrelevant, main is the form (as McLuhan said). The “truth” of mass media is a neutralization of the living, singular world, which is replaced by the world of media which are homogenous and refer only to themselves. What mass media present is the ideology of infinitely visible world, the world which is always readable and ready-to-hand. The images are naturalized as “metalanguage”, but there is nothing to be comprehended as something which would “need” this meta-basis. We have been talking about hyperreality, the realm of simulacra of artificially constructed world. These remarks gain their strict meaning when Baudrillard comes up with reflection of virtual reality. New media, cybernetics and new tools for (mass) communication have made up a sign system which main aim is not to “hide reality” but to produce a reality on the basis of codes and simulacra.⁸ The virtual realm of simulacra is always present and is viral. The distinction between virtual and “real” can no longer be traced here, the flow of images is constant in a motionless space, because everything repeats itself after the structure of the code and by set-up connections present in this virtual and omnipresent world. And if in the case of Disneyland we had the image of a parking lot, in hyperreality there is none. The world is a Disneyland. It is like we are living in Disneyland all the time. There is no “outer space”.

7 BAUDRILLARD, J.: *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures*. London : Sage, 1998, p. 34.

8 See: HORROCKS, Ch.: *Baudrillard and the Millenium*. London, Michigan : Totem books, 1999.

3 Cyberpunk, Cyberspace and Digital Technology

In the beginning of the 80s a new subgenre of science-fiction novel called cyberpunk has appeared. William Gibson is often considered beign the founder of this genre, because of his novel *Neuromancer* published in 1984. The main protagonist of the novel, Case, is a hacker, cyber “vandal”, or “console cowboy”, one of the best among his kind. He lost his access to the cyberspace after the last job he did, when he kept some of the materials to himself. The revenge was almost immediate, the mafia then forced Case to undergo a certain surgery during which nodes in his brain, which has enabled him to enter cyberspace and operate there, were burned by mycotoxin. Now Case is a low-life thug with suicidal tendencies living in underworld of Chiba City filling himself with alcohol and drugs. The plot is forwarded by his meeting with Molly and Armitage who hires Case and offers him to re-enact his capacity to enter cyberspace in order to work for him. The dystopian world depicted by Gibson is full of themes that has later become main clichés of the genre. Characters live in a dystopian world full of modern technologies, economic and social inequalities, where capital lies in the hand of the government or criminal organizations. The flux of live in the underworld is full of violence, death and on the higher level of society everything is controlled by medical societies offering psychic improvements and gaining their money from commerce with DNA. It is a world full of body enhancements, full of cyborgs.

When McLuhan defines medium as extension,⁹ he still stresses the difference between human and non-human (technological). As Mark Deuze puts it in his reflections of contemporary society, there is no need for this difference: new media technology penetrates our everyday life, we are becoming the one with our extension and constitute with it the specific media-territories.¹⁰ Deuze’s exposition uses many of the cyberpunk visual representations (cities full of skyscrapers and underworld thug life) and shows that the penetration of our lives by new media is a process which cannot be stopped or even slowed. New types of biological-technological synthesis are at our hand, we are becoming cyborgs (and here we can add, that Deuze’s remarks strongly refers to

9 For more information, see: McLUHAN, M.: *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. Cambridge, Massachusetts : MIT Press, 1994.

10 See: DEUZE, M.: *Media Life*. Cambridge : Polity Press, 2012.

Donna Haraway’s *Cyborg Manifesto*,¹¹ where she designates cyborg as the character of fiction but nevertheless an ornament of contemporary tendency to merge life with technology). Case, wearing leather jacket, is a hacker, but a hacker who has different attributes than hacker in the 70s in the USA had. In the 70s, when the first microchips had been invented, and computers definitely were not something common across the population, the hacker’s ethical code was based on free flow of information and on sharing ideas about the development of computers. In the 80s, because of Gibson’s novel, we are facing different kind of representation. Hacker is an anti-establishment figure, who steals data from companies and is always responsible for breaking down the system. This dystopian motive, the motive of structurally hierarchized society, as so called by Gilles Deleuze, society of control¹² is not present only in pop-imagination, but also in computer industry. For example, let’s take the commercial for Macintosh computer by Apple from 1984, which aired during the Superbowl finals. The Orwell’s ideas are put in play here: on the big screen we can see unknown leader who speaks to the inhibited crowd and suddenly the screen is smashed by thrown hammer. The advert subsequently goes like this: “On January 24th, Apple Computer will introduce Macintosh. And you’ll see why 1984 won’t be like 1984.”¹³ It represents the one point of a view of possible future, where the society is governed by technology, and also introduces a vision that technology should not be comprehended as something dangerous.

Gibson’s *Neuromancer* also comes up with a definition of cyberspace. As Gibson put it: “[...] a consensual hallucination experienced daily by billions of legitimate operators, in every nation, by children being taught mathematical concepts... A graphical representation of data abstracted from the banks of every computer in the human system. Unthinkable complexity. Lines of light ranged in the non-space of the mind, clusters and constellations of data.”¹⁴ It is rather clear that Gibson’s description

11 HARRAWAY, D.: *A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-feminism in the Late Twentieth Century*. In HARRAWAY, D. (ed.): *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*. New York : Routledge, 1991, p. 149-181.

12 DELEUZE, G.: *Postscript on the Societies of Control*. In *October*, 1992, Vol. 59, p. 3-7.

13 *Apple 1984 Super Bowl Commercial Introducing Macintosh Computer*. [online]. [2019-04-04]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=axsnw-ygu5g>>.

14 GIBSON, W.: *Neuromancer*. New York : Berkley Publishing Group, 1989, p. 128.

is based on the notion of hallucination, consensual hallucination which connotes specific type of experience which transcends all teleological tendencies, and is constituted by traumas, sexual hyperventilations and infinite speed motionless brain-unclosure synthesis of desire and affects. Nothing like a formed and differentiated knowledge, but a flow of numerical data emerging in virtual space. The notion of hallucination could be also useful tool for reading the narrative. At first the virtual and so called “everyday” reality can be distinguished, of course in a blurry way, because Chiba is full of screens penetrating the city, because Case tends to spend his time in a bar or on the street and other characters need to connect themselves in cyberspace in special places. But as the story goes further, when Case is in the cyberspace, Gibson’s narrative technique does not make possible to determine whether described events take place in cyberspace or in reality – these two “worlds” are becoming one. When Pi  re L  vy in his book *Cyberculture* stresses the fact that there is no need to differentiate between virtual and “everyday” reality in contemporary society, he is right. But his techno-optimistic vision leads to say that the cyberspace will be very useful for gaining all kinds of traditional knowledge and will form a new type of freedom and thus will be responsible for the existence of a new type of human subjectivity – a man will embrace his full potential.¹⁵ This myth about cyberspace has not been fulfilled yet, the opposite is true (there is no doubt that we live in a society of control) as we could have already seen in Gibson’s imagery from 1984.

The description of power of Artificial Intelligence is also present in *Neuromancer*. Case finds out that Armitage is only a puppet controlled by AI called Wintermute. Wintermute stands beyond good and evil and seeks its own goals. It uses Case, it is an example of rational entity which wants to link with other AI to operate on a new level of “being”. Wintermute resembles the thesis formed by Baudrillard in *The Perfect Crime*. Computer technology is, according to him, responsible for the “crime”, making everything actual (in our case it is the cyberspace), all of our actions and thoughts are transformed into digital information and this “pure presence” of everything leads to the “vanishing of the world”.¹⁶ This is exactly the reason why we cannot distinguish between cyberspace and „everyday“ life anymore in Gibson’s novel, and the

15 See: L  VY, P.: *Cyberculture*. Minneapolis : University o Minnesota Press, 2001.

16 See also: BAUDRILLARD, J.: *The Perfect Crime*. London, New York : Verso books, 2007.

characters are not aware of the distinction either. And this is also the reason why Baudrillard tends to refer to Matrix so often. But his idea is rather pessimistic – there will come no one who would offer you to decide between two pills. We live in a world governed by technology and we have no chance to realize it.

4 Idoru, Idols and Consumer Society

But let us go back to the topic of mass media projection of hyperinformation without meaning and to the theme of pop idols and consumer society determined by entertainment industry. The influence of pop idols and celebrities is, in the genre of sci-fi (respectively cyberpunk), traced by Ballard in his famous novel *Crash*. Dr. Robert Vaughan, a friend of the main protagonist of the novel, has a fantasy about crashing a vehicle, and it will eventually happen. Ballard’s main character is on the same verge, the crash of a car is connected to the fact there will be some pop idol or celebrity “with him”, that he will end up dead during high-speed ride around the city, and the whole structure of the fantasy of the crash is enacted by the lust to replicate the crashes of famous celebrities. The crash is also connected to many sexual phantasmagorias – speeding, death and sex are intertwined in a specific doppelgänger theme: if you die in a same situation as celebrity, you are becoming one with the celebrity. Ballard speaks of a sexual desire born from fetishization of modern technology. While Baudrillard sees the cars being only ornaments of upcoming apocalyptic world, in Ballard’s case is this technology the main nod point of the alienated sex tension in a world where celebrities and their media representations (Vaughan is a Tv specialist) put to play intimate desires about death and speed. Whole projections of this inner death instinct are present in many descriptions of Ballard’s articulation of his deep desires: “[...] firemen racing towards the burning wrecks of crashed airliners might trace obscene or humorous slogans on the scalding concrete with their carbon dioxide sprays, executioners could dress their victims in grotesque costumes. In return, the victims would stylize the entrances to their deaths with ironic gestures, solemnly kissing their executioners’ gun-butts, desecrating imaginary flags. Surgeons would cut themselves carelessly before making their first incisions, wives casually murmur the names of their lovers at the moment of their husbands’ orgasms, the whore mouthing her customer’s penis might without offence bite a small circle of tissue from the upper curvature of his glans.”¹⁷ The spectacle of death and sex.

17 BALLARD, J. G.: *Crash*. New York : Picador, 2001, p. 23-24.

In another cyberpunk novel, Neal Stephenson's *Snow Crash*, main protagonist, a skilled hacker, works as a pizza delivery guy. The dystopian world is based on continual consumption of pizza and the pizza delivering industry (Uncle Enzo's CosoNostra Pizza Inc.) resembles a criminal syndicate and pizza guys must deliver the food in time. They drive fast cars, are armed with guns, they speed up on the highway and put themselves to risk all the time. The reason for fast delivery is simple: when someone is not getting their pizza in time, they sell the information to national television and in upcoming trial they can get a lot of money as a refund. The deliveries are, of course, under constant control, helicopters flying around the city and recording the deliveries in order to provide evidence that the pizza was delivered in time. Owner of the company, Uncle Enzo, is something like a pop stars or a celebrity himself. He is seen on the TV screens, and creates a myth about himself and the industry: pizza is keeping American society together. American citizen, in Stephenson's dystopian world, has only one right, and that is to receive the delivery in time. Hard-working middle class deserve to spend its free time with endless consumption, because dialectics of working and consuming is what keeps the world going.¹⁸

We can interpret these two examples as illustrations of Paul Virilio's thesis about digital technology and society. Virilio is addressing points the phenomenon of acceleration in contemporary society: thanks to digital technologies, which he calls prosthesis, we perceive and move in the world in a a mode where the images are connected so rapidly fast that we have the impression like we live in a movie. Digital media tend to present us the world through the screens, they construct cyber-optic visions of the world, which is determined by "totalitarian technocult".¹⁹ What does also digital media do is the diminishing the distinction between public and private space. In Ballard's case it is rather clear: the synthesis of the world of celebrities and intimate death drive is an ornament of a world where is everything seen-able. In *Snow Crash* even the helicopters record the act of transferring the pizza on the yard of private houses. Virilio's "telepresence" is everywhere. How can people deal with this situation? They can be numbed by it and spend their time in front of the screen, or they can vanish. In Ballard's *Crash* the tendency to vanish is connected to death. In cyberpunk (Gibson, Stephenson) the

18 See: STEPHENSON, N.: *Snow Crash*. New York : Bantam books, 2003.

19 See, for example: VIRILIO, P.: *The Information Bomb*. London, New York : Verso books, 2006.

characters vanish from “everyday” life in order to live in virtual reality (cyberspace or Metaverse). Both of these options are definitely the best ones.

Let us now focus at Gibson’s *Idoru*, because it is the lucid example of the synthesis of virtual reality, pop idols and merging virtual and “everyday” life in a multiplicity, where the technologies are the dominant factor of determining people’s life. The main character of *Idoru*, Laney, is an expert in the domain of recognizing the patterns of information in cyberspace: “Laney was not, he was careful to point out, a voyeur. He had a peculiar knack with data-collection architectures, and a medically documented concentration-deficit that could toggle, under certain conditions, into a state of pathological hyperfocus. This made him [...] an extremely good researcher.”²⁰ His talent is an extraordinary one. He is no table to say how he is doing that, but his intuition always brings great outcomes. This brings us back to the main attributes of hacker presented by Gibson in *Neuromancer*; Laney is a modern-day hacker, who works (at first) for big company in the entertainment industry. Group of scientists have hired him when he was young to gather data, but in reality they were examining him. After that Laney got a job in Slitscan. It is a company (and also a TV show) which has its power coming from agenda setting in entertainment industry: it has the power to make a “celebrity” or to put celebrities down, to destroy them: “Slitscan was descended from “reality” programming and the network tabloids of the late twentieth century, but it resembled them no more than some large, swift, bipedal carnivore resembled its sluggish, shallow-dwelling ancestors. Slitscan was the mature form, supporting fully global franchises. Slitscan’s had paid for entire satellites [...] Slitscan was a show so popular that it had evolved into something akin to the old idea of a network. It was flanked and buffered by spinoffs and peripherals.”²¹ Celebrities always cooperate with Slitscan, being aware of the fact that if they wouldn’t their fame would vanish. Not only that, Slitscan has also the newest technology at disposition which enables them to construct virtual images and movies with actors being half-made up by software. There is thus no problem at all to replace someone’s face or body in order to make a scandal or to create a pseudo-event which could then turn the whole entertainment industry upside down. This is exactly what Baudrillard said: we live in an era of hyperreality and simulation and the media are self-referential.

20 GIBSON, W.: *Idoru*. New York : Berkley books, 1997, p. 30.

21 GIBSON, W.: *Idoru*. New York : Berkley books, 1997, p. 50.

There is no more “reality”, only artificially constructed one. And when Slitscan pays for entire satellites, its power is so huge that it is penetrates every single place in the world. You cannot get rid of the Slitscan. And, like in a Disneyland, Gibson’s remarks about spinoff tends reveal the fact that Slitscan operates on the level of “pure presence”, there is no time at all, only a world of frozen models repeatably changing in their names, but the structure is always the same.

Laney’s work is to find out relevant information about some celebrity or any information which can be used for Slitscan’s goals and aims (there is, perhaps, no need to add the main goal is the cumulation of capital and power): “The relevant data, in terms of his current employability, was that he was an intuitive fisher of patterns of information: of the sort of signature a particular individual inadvertently created in the net as he or she went about the mundane yet endlessly multiplex business of life in a digital society. Laney’s concentration-deficit, too slight too register on some scales, made him a natural channel-zapper, shifting from program to program, from database to database, from platform to platform, in a way that was, well, intuitive.”²² Laney’s boss, Kathy, has a very good insight into the way of Slitscan is working: “The rich and famous, Kathy had once said, were seldom that way by accident. It as possible to be one or the other, but very seldom, accidentally, to be both. Celebrities who were neither were something else again, and Kathy viewed these as crosses she must bear: a mass-murderer, for instance, or his most recent victim’s parents. No star quality (though she always held out hope for the murderers, feeling that at least the potential was there). It was the other kind that Kathy wanted, directing the attentions of Laney and as many as thirty other researchers to the more private aspects of the lives of those who were deliberately and at least moderately famous.”²³

One day Laney has a task to dig out some information on potential mistress of one celebrity on Alison Shires. In a certain moment Laney has got the impression that Alison knows she is being watched. And Laney also has got the impression she may try to commit suicide and is tring to save her. Alison dies. Her data are not moving in cyberspace after that and Laney leaves Slitscan. He tries to go after the company, because he received proposals to take part in a new Tv show, which would reveal unethical practices of Slitscan. But nothing like that happens. Slitscan

22 GIBSON, W.: *Idoru*. New York : Berkley books, 1997, p. 31.

23 GIBSON, W.: *Idoru*. New York : Berkley books, 1997, p. 52.

made an arrangement with the producers of the supposed Tv show. And this is something what can be called double-bind: the new TV show is formed just to put another TV show down. In the end, nothing will change. Of course, here in *Idoru* we face the diminishing the distinction between private and public. Nothing like that exists anymore. After leaving Slitscan, Laney finds out a new job opportunity: he is hired by Lo/Rez company in order to investigate the situation of famous singer Rez who is going to marry a hologram, a Japanese Idroru. Rez has a specific position in entertainment industry, because he is out of the Slitscan, but still famous. This is something inconceivable for Kathy. The company which hired Laney wants to know whose idea it was to “connect” Rez and hologram, they sense some kind of conspiracy. As Cavallaro puts it: “One of the novel’s leading threads is the arrangement of an *alchemical* marriage between the synthetic star and a meat-and-bones rock star. There is also the notion that the Idroru, though artificial, carries traces of a personal history. Indeed, it is inscribed in a web of memories, vestiges of submerged life stories and fleeting glimmers of lost objects, scenes, colours and sounds.”²⁴ Idroru is a „a personality-construct, a congeries of software agents, the creation of information-designers’: a ‘synthespian’“²⁵

Most striking is the fact that the living being wants to marry artificial being. But Laney meets Idroru (Rei Toei), popular Japanese celebrity, in person and is struck by her looks. He slowly gets the feeling why would Rez wanted to become one with artificial construct. They want to unite and build up a new place in cyberspace. To star together in fully complete virtual place. To build up a meta-Disneyland of Disneyland. Because in what other world does the characters live in? If you can sit face to face to the artificial celebrity behind a meat-bone one, where is the difference? You live in amusement park, injected by the images produced by Slitscan all around the world. The outside is not there anymore. But still, he Idroru is not something like ordinary digital celebrity. Idroru is a form of pure AI. As Laney puts his description: “If he’d anticipated her at all, it had been as some industrial-strength synthesis of Japan’s last three dozen top female media faces. That was usually the way in Hollywood, and the formula tended to be even more rigid, in the case of software agents – *eigenheads*, their features algorithmically derived from some human mean of proven

24 CAVALLARO, D.: *Cyberpunk and Cyberculture: Science Fiction and the Work of William Gibson*. London : Athlone Press, 2000, p. 79.

25 CAVALLARO, D.: *Cyberpunk and Cyberculture: Science Fiction and the Work of William Gibson*. London : Athlone Press, 2000, p. 79.

popularity. She was nothing like that [...] He seemed to cross a line. In the very structure of her face, in geometries of underlying bone, lay coded histories of dynastic flight, privation, terrible migrations. He saw stone tombs in steep alpine meadows, their lintels traced with snow. A line of shaggy pack ponies, their breath white with cold, followed a trail above a canyon. The curves of the river below were strokes of distant silver. Iron harness bells clanked in the blue dusk. Laney shivered. In his mouth a taste of rotten metal.”²⁶ Laney thus uncovered there is no one behind the proposed marriage. Rez vision is a techno-optimistic one, to become one (in a metaphorical way in “everyday” life, but in strict sense in a virtual reality) with the Idoru in order to reveal new possibilities of synthesis between the man and technology/artificial. What else can you do in a world of Slitscan image-celebrity-construction of a life?

Conclusion

Idoru thus seems to be a perfect example of Baudrillard’s thesis about the character of contemporary society and its relationship to digital technologies. As Baudrillard says in *Simulacra and Simulation*, we live in the era of hyperreality where digital media provide us images full of fantasies and this “news” are derived from any kind of meaning, because the structure of digital media production is strictly self-referential. In *Idoru* Gibson reveal these ideas upon the dystopian vision of a near future, where entertainment industry is governed by company called Slitscan, which constructs a specific vision of a world. It is a motionless world perceived through digital images presenting us popular idols and celebrities. The fetishization of technology and celebrities tends to build a virtual reality full of simulacra, specific virtual Disneyland without any outer space. The Omnipresent Disneyland.

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26 GIBSON, W.: *Idoru*. New York : Berkley books, 1997, p. 230.

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GAME JAMS AS A SOURCE OF CREATIVITY IN PROMOTING ECO-INNOVATIONS

Zdenko Mago – Michal Kabát – Alexandra Alföldiová

ABSTRACT:

Global ecological issues are a current topic even within the field of communication that is looking for new ways to promote eco-innovations as well as ecology in general. Digital games might provide options, which are unavailable for most of other media, and moreover, their natural ability is to generate spontaneous participation of gamers, which is far beyond possibilities of the engagement (e.g. within social networking). The contribution is focused on examination of game jams as a possible source of creativity in the process of developing digital games aimed at promoting eco-innovations. The conclusions are based on a qualitative-quantitative content analysis of the specifically prepared and carried out game jam, and its results – digital games' projects dealing with the eco-innovative theme and implementing the SoLoMo strategy.

KEY WORDS:

digital games, eco-innovations, ecology, environmental issues, game jams, SoLoMo

Introduction

Based on the analysis of available literature and rich personal experiences with organizing and coordinating game jams, A. Kultima defines a game jam as “an accelerated opportunistic game creation event where a game is created in a relatively short timeframe exploring given design constraint(s) and end results are shared publically”.¹ Game jams, as events, can be organized both formally and informally, with various extent on local, regional, national as well as international level. One of the most popular is Global Game Jam (GGJ) that has been taking place since 2009 as a set of coordinated local jams all over the planet. In 2018, there took part 42,800 registered participants from 108 countries (including Slovakia for the first time), who created

1 KULTIMA, A.: Defining Game Jam. In LI, B., NELSON, M. (eds.): *Proceedings of the 10th International Conference on the Foundations of Digital Games (FDG 2015)*. Pacific Grove : Foundations of Digital Games, 2015, p. 6. [online]. [2019-05-27]. Available at: <http://www.fdg2015.org/papers/fdg2015_paper_21.pdf>.

8,606 games.² Majority of those game are original, therefore it is not uncommon that many of them will be later completed and published as indie games, which are valued for creativity they provide.³ A work in teams is characteristic for game jams and the “group interaction and teams can be an important source of creative ideas and innovations”.⁴ We can observe processes similar to Osborn’s brainstorming that are used to utilizing as one of creativity development techniques at the start of jams. Although, teams are usually created randomly at the place, the most of participants incline to teamwork to ensure a useful balance of skills (including communicative and cooperative skills), and knowledge necessary for developing and implementing a specific game, especially within a limited time.⁵ A limited time is considered as both positive and negative aspect influencing creativity. People react differently on a time pressure regarding creativity.⁶ For one type, the time pressure represents a stimulus or a motivation factor to high creative performance, therefore several creativity tests, like Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking, are based on a limited time as well. In the second type, time stress can cause a creative block. Additionally, a short time may eliminate incubation phase of creative process after which illumination follows.⁷

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- 2 See: FOWLER, A. et al.: The Global Game Jam for Teaching and Learning. In LOPEZ, M., VERHAART, M. (eds.): *Proceedings of the 4th Annual Conference of Computing and Information Technology Education and Research in New Zealand*. Hamilton : CITRENZ, 2013, p. 28; *Global Game Jam® History*. [online]. [2019-04-04]. Available at: <<https://globalgamejam.org/history>>; Slovakia is Finally Jammin’. In *Acta Ludologica*, 2018, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 75.
 - 3 See also: MAGO, Z.: The Concept of Timelessness Applied to Advergimes. In: *Acta Ludologica*, 2018, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 18-33; RADOŠINSKÁ, J: Omnivore vs Univore: A Reflection on the Current Knowledge on Cultural Taste and Cultural Consumption. In: *European Journal of Media, Art and Photography*, 2018, Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 98-109.
 - 4 FICHNOVÁ, K.: *Psychology of Creativity for Marketing Communication*. Noailles : Amitié Franco-Slovaque, 2013, p. 61.
 - 5 RENG, L., SCHOENAU-FOG, H., KOFOED, L. B.: The Motivational Power of Game Communities – Engaged through Game Jamming. In *Workshop Proceedings of the 8th International Conference on the Foundations of Digital Games*. Chania : Foundations of Digital Games, 2013, p. 4-5. [online]. [2019-06-11]. Available at: <http://fdg2013.org/program/workshops/papers/GGJ2013/ggj13_submission_2.pdf>.
 - 6 AMABILE, T. M., HADLEY, C. N., KRAMER, S. J.: Creativity under the Gun. In *Harvard Business Review*, 2002, Vol. 80, No. 8, p. 55.
 - 7 For more information, see: WALLAS, G.: *The Art of Thought*. New York : Harcourt Brace and World, 1926.

During the analysis, A. Kultima found out that game jams are considered as tools or even methods utilized for various purposes, among others for innovation, creativity, novel game ideas, exploration of new ideas, and especially learning for different kinds of subject matters and skills.⁸ However, it may indicate that game jams are good opportunities of collaborative learning some specific skills for jams' participants. There is also another point of view to examine – an opportunity to utilize game jams as a source of creativity within the creation of tools (games in this case) to educate directly via edutainment or at least to ease spreading the awareness about an edification (including ecology and eco-innovations) to general audience.

1 Research

Although game jams seem to be naturally associated with creativity, results of which are original digital games, it is questionable whether this claim is valid for all kinds of topics, particularly, regarding eco-innovations and their promotions. Eco-innovation is the implementation of new or significantly improved, innovated products, services, production processes, marketing or organizational solutions, which create a positive environmental benefits and progress towards the sustainable development through reducing environmental impacts or achieving more efficient and responsible use of natural resources, including materials, energy, water and soil.⁹ However, the ecology in general has been already implemented within virtual worlds and digital games,¹⁰

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- 8 See also: KULTIMA, A.: Defining Game Jam. In LI, B., NELSON, M. (eds.): *Proceedings of the 10th International Conference on the Foundations of Digital Games (FDG 2015)*. Pacific Grove : Foundations of Digital Games, 2015, p. 5. [online]. [2019-05-27]. Available at: <http://www.fdg2015.org/papers/fdg2015_paper_21.pdf>; EBERHARDT, R.: No One Way to Jam: Game Jams for Creativity, Learning, Entertainment, and Research. In *GJH&GC '16 Proceedings of the International Conference on Game Jams, Hackathons, and Game Creation Events*. New York : ACM, 2016, p. 34-37.
- 9 For more information, see: CARRILLO-HERMOSILLA, J., DEL GONZÁLEZ, P. R., KÖNNÖLÄ, T.: *Eco-Innovation – When Sustainability and Competitiveness Shake Hands*. London : Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- 10 For more information, see: ZAUŠKOVÁ, A., ALFÖLDIOVÁ, A.: Ecocommunity in the Virtual World Second Life. In ČÁBYOVÁ, L., RYBANSKÝ, R., BEZÁKOVÁ, Z. (eds.): *Marketing Identity: Digital Mirrors – part I. Conference Proceedings*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2018, p. 220-229; MAGO, Z.: Komparácia marketingových nástrojov založených na SoLoMo stratégii v rámci propagácie ekoinovácií. In MADLEŇÁK, A. (ed.): *Integrácia sociálnych médií, geolokačných služieb a*

eco-innovations are more complex due to its innovative, new character, representing potentially difficult topic for processing. The aim of the study is thus to examine game jams as a possible source of creativity within creating adequate communicates dedicated to promotion of eco-innovations. We formulated following research question (RQ): *To what extent do game jams have a meaningful creative potential usable within a promotion of eco-innovation?*

1.1 Methodology

We planned to apply a qualitative-quantitative content analysis on research material, but to acquire it, at first, we had to organize the game jam entitled *EcoInno SoLoMo Game Jam* was carried out on March 1-3, 2019 (48 hours). It was promoted as an ordinary event with open registration. During the pre-jam arrangements, 16 participants (13 male, 3 female) were randomly divided into 5 teams. Participants were tasked to create an operational prototype of digital game within the stated theme – a promotion of the optional eco-innovation. The only condition was to implement the SoLoMo strategy into game – mobile functionality was required, but location-based and social mechanics might be presented just on theoretic level of the game future completion, due to the limited time for its development during the jam. Introductory presentation with the jam theme (including the closer specification of eco-innovations) was subsequently provided to individual teams. The research material thus should consist of five digital games created by those teams, which we will qualitatively analyse within following categories: *ability to cover the issue, persuasive features, game-based learning effectivity*. Taking into account this low extent of research material, we provisionally supposed that results could not be generalized, but we could still observe important tendencies useful for future research of this topic. The degree of creativity was evaluated according to a modified creativity rating scale by Smith et al.,¹¹ carried out within seven dimensions: *originality, flexibility, synthesis, elaboration, fluence, imagination, artistic value*. Each dimension was rated up to 6 points. Results were an arithmetic mean

mobilných zariadení v záujme podpory environmentálnych inovácií. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2018, p. 86-97; MADLEŇÁK, A., GABČÍKOVÁ, A.: Digitálne hry a ochrana životného prostredia. In MADLEŇÁK, A. (ed.): *Integrácia sociálnych médií, geolokačných služieb a mobilných zariadení v záujme podpory environmentálnych inovácií*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2018, p. 98-106.

- 11 SMITH, R. E., CHEN, J., YANG, X.: The Impact of Advertising Creativity on the Hierarchy of Effects. In *Journal of Advertising*, 2008, Vol. 37, No. 4, p. 48.

of individual dimensions' points sum and then an arithmetic mean of evaluations from three researchers in order to maintain a high degree of objectivity. As already mentioned, the low extent of research material, the results could be only indicative.

1.2 Results

The game jam brought five presentations of games designed for the stated theme, entitled *Econauts*, *Forestia*, *GeoCleaner*, *TrashCO* and *Wall-T*. However, only four games were ready for testing, the game *GeoCleaner* was not operational. Overall, games covered four different ecological areas and differed in visual processing and game genres (see Table 1), apart from social and geolocation aspects, which were required by the brief.

Table 1: Games designed within the EcoInno SoLoMo Game Jam

Game title	Ecological focus	Visual processing	Game genre
<i>Econauts</i>	fossil fuels deficiency, pollution, alternative fuels	3D, third person, stylized photorealism	action, shooter
<i>Forestia</i>	reafforestation	2D, isometric, pixel-art	arcade, idle
<i>GeoCleaner</i>	enhancement of the environment	2D, single screen, stylized graphics	puzzle, simulator
<i>TrashCO</i>	waste recycling	2D, single screen, stylized graphics	arcade, physics, puzzle
<i>Wall-T</i>	waste recycling	VR, first person, stylized photorealism	VR experience, puzzle

Source: own processing, 2019

1.2.1 Econauts

The game *Econauts* belong under post-apocalyptic sci-fi action genre, using third person perspective while driving the high-tech hovercraft. Gaming experience is particularly built on multiply contrasts, e.g. between pure, white circle shape of the player's avatar and sharp, dirty industrial environment, so it is visually refined and attractive. The theme processing is focuses around a fossil fuels deficiency, a general pollution, and alternative fuels. The singleplayer mode is based on narrative. Global catastrophe in 21st century ruined the Earth and now, two fractions are battling in global conflict for the heritage – *Industrial society*, characteristic by factory steampunk, and *Eko religion*, modern, clean,

futuristic. Player controls Econonaut, who is returning on the Earth to save the world by destroying oil pumps with enviro-friendly shells from broccoli (see Picture1), and recycling destroyed structures. Social and geolocation mechanics are planned for future development of the game. They consist of in-game reward elements from battling on “non-eco” places, and prices for social interaction within multiplayer – the player could choose fraction, join the clans and compete on battlegrounds around the world. The game was presented within computer platform, thus mobile adaptation was questionable, but possible.



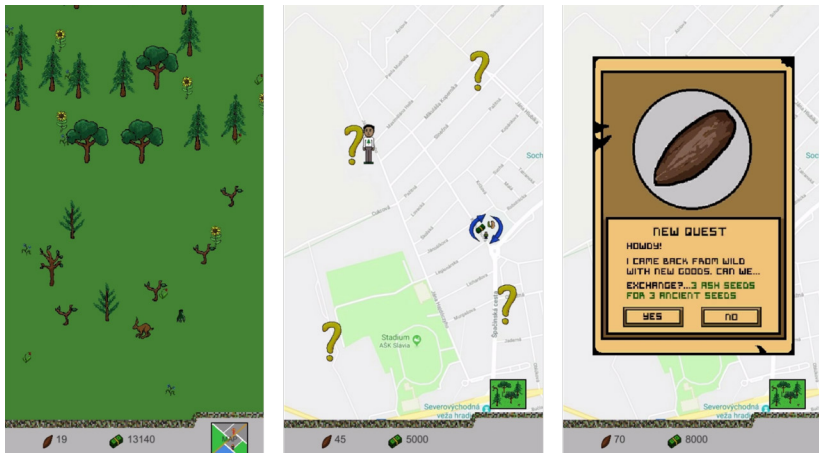
Picture 1: Gameplay of Econonauts

Source: authors' screenshots of the game presented at game jam, 2019

1.2.2 Forestia

The game Forestia is a single player mobile game that focuses on planting trees and building own forest. The genre of the game can be classified as idle, arcade game with an educational character. Although non-functional, location-based and social mechanics were implemented for illustrative purposes. The topic of reforestation is introduced to the players to stress the deforestation issues in the real world with having the opportunity to create their own forest, using their current location (see Picture 2). The game can track the players' movement and rewarding them for activity in real time in the form of a virtual currency used in the game for microtransactions. The need of movement encourages the players to physical activity. At start, the player receives a starter pack of seeds, a worker and a parcel. Based on the movement the player receives randomly generated quests, which need to be completed to continue the

game. By following the quests, the player is receiving various rewards – game money, common, rare and limited seeds, and additional workers. Having additional workers helps the player to grow their trees in an effective way with positive results. The low physical activity has a negative impact on the player, since they are not receiving quests and the process of reforestation is stagnating. The game has a trading system on a marketplace, which allows the players to exchange and trade the seeds and workers with other players and offers the option to share their progress on leaderboard and social media.



Picture 2: Gameplay of Forestia

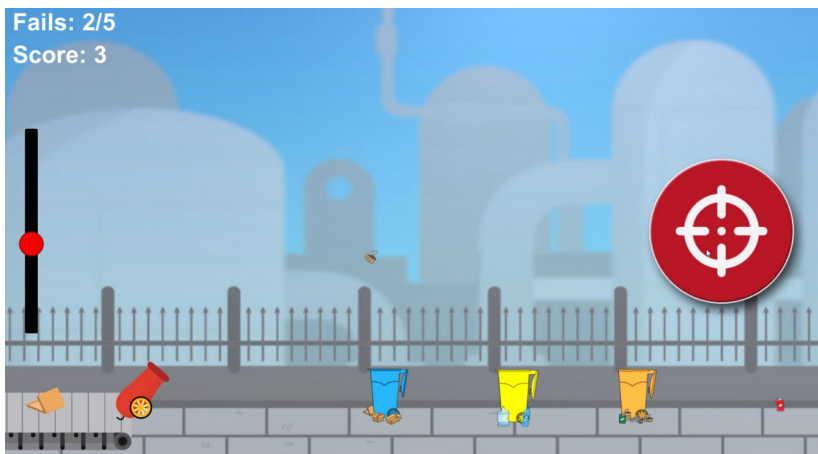
Source: authors' screenshots of the game presented at game jam, 2019

1.2.3 GeoCleaner

The mobile game GeoCleaner is a combination of the puzzle and simulator genre, focused on an issue of environment enhancement. The social and geolocation implementation were included in presentation, however, everything was just on theoretic level, because the game was not operational in order to be tested after the game jam. At the game start, the player should obtain a small area, obviously in bad condition – no greenery, some withered plants and trees, a scattered rubbish around a neglected wooden house. The players' objective is to travel on certain real locations to collect resources and upgrades necessary for area enhancement – recycling bins, a wind power plant, a care for vegetation in surroundings, etc.

1.2.4 TrashCO

The game TrashCO is a mobile arcade game based on physics with elements of logic and puzzle genres. The players control the game by a movement in real life, and based on the GPS location, they are looking for checkpoints with playable minigames called Junk Piles. After reaching the Junk Pile, they are able to “own” the Pile for one to three days, depending on the amount of played minigames and all the other players, who visit the Junk Piles, generating additional profit for their current owners. The player can set home to the place they spend the most time at, and their own waste processing factory is created there to utilize the cumulated waste. The factory is in action only when the player is located within the area and when the waste separation is finished, the player receives profit in a form of a virtual currency. The only presented minigame (one of the minigames, which would be later available at Junk Piles) requires the player to aim and shot various types of garbage from cannon into the correct colour separation trash bins. A physics affects waste shots, which are flying on parabolic track (see Picture 3), similar as birds in the game *Angry Birds*.¹² Gameplay thus requires the player both to use logic thinking to aim shots for correct bin and skill to set adequate force of cannon shots range. Once the player throws the garbage into incorrect bins five times, the game is over, and the mission is not accomplished.



Picture 3: Gameplay of TrashCO

Source: authors' screenshot of the game presented at game jam, 2019

12 ROVIO MOBILE: *Angry Birds*. [Digital game]. Manchester : Chillingo, 2009.

There were two more planned minigames. Within the waste assembly line puzzle, the player has to create a personal assembly line for separation in a limited time to distribute the waste to the assigned garbage pickups in an effective way. In the waste rain, different types of garbage are pouring from the sky and the player has to collect a specific type according to the current trash bin they control. The player must avoid incorrect waste separation, otherwise, the game is over. All minigames had an educative character targeted mainly on the issue of waste separation and being accessible on the mobile platform, it helps the youngest target group to improve memorizing of the waste separation and correct colours of the bins matching with the garbage, teaching the players the bases of waste recycling. The entire game is also connected to the social media, so the players are able to share their score through a leaderboard.

1.2.5 Wall-T

Wall-T is an extraordinary first-person mobile virtual reality game controlled by a mobile phone connected to a VR headset. It is generating a fictional 3D world full of garbage in front of the player, who is in a role of a robotic character called Wall-T, whom they control throughout the gameplay. The aim of the game is to collect and separate six main types of garbage and receive points based on the type of the collected items. Each type of garbage is evaluated a specific number of possible collectable points, which can be traded for a reward. Wall-T offers a unique experience of exploration of an island, which is dark and dirty in the beginning with eventual clearing out, depending on the skills of the player. The graphics of the game is stylized with realistic texturing and high-quality replicas of real-life items. The main purpose of the game is to raise awareness of the issue in the world and educate enthusiasts and students, who are struggling with the recognition of the correct waste recycling bins.

1.3 Creativity Evaluation

Results of creativity evaluation (see Chart 1) show that the game TrashCO is considered as the most creative with average score 31.5. The rating of this game even exceeds a top border of average creativity – 30.68 (defined as a sum of M and SD). It indicates this game could belong to high creativity. However, the current research material prevents deduction of more general and relevant conclusions, because its small size causes certain distortion. Taking into account this limitation, we can just point out that regarding creativity, TrashCO excels above other games.

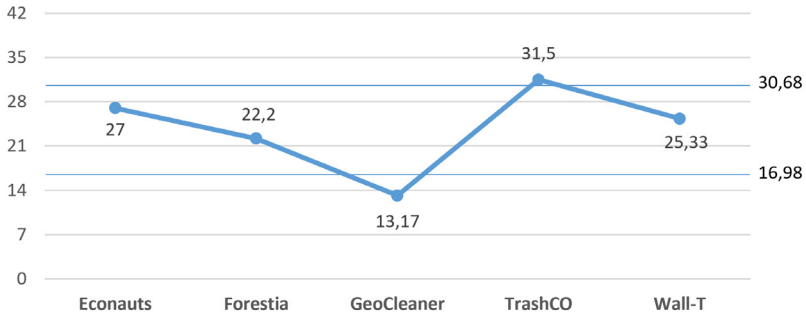


Chart 1: Creativity evaluation of games created at EcoInno SoLoMo Game Jam

Source: own processing, 2019

Conclusions

Game jams as game creation events, where participants are creating games during limited timeframe, seem to have characteristics and to utilize procedures, which let us define them as a kind of creative processes, the result of which are creative products. This led us towards investigation of game jams as a source of creativity for various purposes, especially to educate or to spread the awareness about an edification to general audience. In order to examine whether game jams have a meaningful creative potential usable within a promotion of eco-innovation, we set it as a theme of the game jam entitled EcoInno SoLoMo Game Jam, and participants were tasked to create digital game on this topic within 48 hours. Unfortunately, we had to state that there occurred a serious misunderstanding (or misinterpretation) of the game jam theme, nevertheless we provided to teams a presentation with the jam theme, containing the closer specification of eco-innovations. Participants dealt with the theme on the more general, ecological level, thus none of final games was focused on eco-innovations, just on awareness of ecological and environmental issues. Anyway, regarding the participants’ actual approach to the game jam theme, they designed five game, which covered four different ecological areas. An idea of waste recycling repeated, because we assume that it is the most universal, thus the most superficial topic for processing. Each game was unique. Besides ecological focus they differed also in game design, genre and visual processing. Based on the modified creativity rating scale, we found that the game TrashCO excelled above other games. The score even indicated that TrashCO would belong

to the category of high creativity, but due to small size research material that caused distortion of variance, we can talk just about possibility or tendency. Overall, we got available four of five designed games as original and particularly operational game prototypes (demos) for testing after only 48 hours. That is perhaps the biggest asset of game jams utilization for specific purposes. We can confirm that game jams are valuable source of creativity for promotional tools, but regarding our focus, eco-innovations, we must conclude that is the unclear and maybe slightly confusing theme. We strongly recommend to perform independent seminar or workshop focused on general clarification of eco-innovation with jam participants before the game jam itself.

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DEVELOPMENT OF VIDEO GAME INDUSTRY IN SLOVAKIA AND EMPLOYABILITY POSSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS STUDYING THEORY OF GAME STUDIES

Monika Porubanová

ABSTRACT:

This paper researches the state of video game industry development in Slovakia, the support of this industry and employability possibilities of students studying Theory of game studies at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication, University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava. We are interested in finding out what students know and think about the state of video game industry in Slovakia, if they want to work in this field and what could be done to develop it.

KEY WORDS:

development, digital games, employability possibilities, game designer, game industry, support, theory of game studies, university students

1 Development of Video Game Industry in Slovakia

The video game industry has started to develop very slowly in Slovakia. *SGDA - Slovak Game Developers Association* which associates, promotes and supports game developers *presents systematically relevant data* about the development of video game industry. According to their report about *The State of the Slovak Game industry*¹ published in 2018, approximately 580 professionals work in the gaming industry sector. 35 companies were established so far, releasing 268 digital games. The estimated turnover of Slovak computer and digital game creators reached Eur 42.7 million in that year. Surprising is the fact, that due to a lack of skilled labor force – especially computer programmers and designers, they employ professionals from abroad. The digital game industry in Slovakia is comprised mainly of small developers and mid-sized developers. The production is occurring mainly in the western part – Bratislava and in the eastern part - Košice. Among the most well known from these regions are *Bohemia Interactive* employing 45 people, *Power Play Studio* with 50 people and *Games Farm* employing 30 people. Exceptional is *Pixel Federation*, employing over 200 people in Bratislava. A typical example of a small developer is *Triple Hill Interactive* having only 4 members in Košice.

1 *The State of the Slovak Game Industry*. [online]. [2019-05-22]. Available at: <http://press.sgda.sk/SGDA_Katalog.pdf/>.

Through implementation of initiatives designed to help young people interested in digital games the *Trnava Game Guild*² was set up in 2019. Its main goals are to improve employability and offer space for mutual communication and cooperation. It has the potential to build an organized game development community, which supports co work on various projects, organizes festivals, game jams and game-related events. It will be of great help to students who are finishing their studies of Theory of digital games at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication too. Esports have become one of the fastest growing industries in the world. The first step was already done in Slovakia too, since the *Slovak Esport association* was set up in 2018 in Bratislava. It became a member of the *International Esport Federation (IESF)*. Their goal is to educate, support players and form a national representation or a national team that will represent the Slovak Republic.³ Titles range from first-person shooters to real time strategy and sports games are included too. Counter Strike, League of Legends, Call of Duty, DOTA are the most popular Esport games today. Players abroad receive high salaries and compete for prize pools. Esports are distributed through streaming communities and provide thus real estate for advertisers and sponsors, who can advertise their brands successfully. Many gamers in Slovakia are dreaming of becoming a professional player and take this category seriously. This is a field with many different career paths and with dedication and the right approach; students could develop a successful career. Unfortunately, Esports are not supported by the Slovak Government.

2 Employability Possibilities of Students Studying Theory of Game Studies

The Faculty of Mass Media Communication, University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, has approximately 300 students enrolled, who are developing skills applicable to the digital game industry. The study program called the Theory of game studies contributes to understanding of digital games and digital media and students can earn bachelor's, master's or PhD degree. A lot of students have enrolled at different universities during the last 20 years in Slovakia in computer and information technology programs that are important

2 *Trnava Game Guild*. [online]. [2019-05-22]. Available at: <<https://www.facebook.com/trnava.gg/>>.

3 *Slovak Esport Association*. [online]. [2019-05-22]. Available at: <<https://saes.sk/>>.

for the development of digital game industry as well. The digital game market has emerged in Slovakia and a lot of money is spent on buying digital games and digital games equipment in stone or online shops generating large revenues and profits yearly. The demand for digital games is growing as many children, teenagers and young adults enjoy playing them. Seeing the future in digital games, Slovak students have decided to change this passion for playing into a potential career in game development, because this is a field with many different career paths too. Students of the Theory of game studies have to try to put the foot in the door of digital game industry. The easiest option is to participate in university game jams or game festivals. The *Unicon Games Festival* is organized yearly at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication. The Faculty has joined a commercial educational program called *Butterfly effect*, which is an attractive program of practical education for digital business. Students can work in the Games lab and develop a game or in the Apps lab to develop their own app on a mobile phone. Students can receive a financial support from university, if they decide to participate in it. Another option is to get a very popular entry level job as a game tester. Many students are capable of programming little games, thus becoming indie developers. The best thing then is to post their work on discussion boards. They can be noticed and offered a job.

Variety of job positions available in the game industry splits according to the development cycle of games. The first positions belong to those who develop game concepts. They are mostly creative people, bringing new ideas. Then, they are followed by those, who develop prototypes, playable versions of game concepts. Game creation itself is in the middle. It offers positions for programmers, artists, designers and writers. The fourth stage concentrates on final design, development and testing. The last stage is focused on marketing and distribution. Upon graduation from university students can find a job in a game development studio and become a part of a team. The work of a game designer is highly specialized and requires certain skills. It always depends on individual preferences, that the designer develops during his/her studies. Most game design jobs in Slovakia are located in Bratislava and some in Košice. The number of existing companies is low and the number of new game development studios is rising very slowly. This means, that Slovak graduates will have to find their jobs abroad, which will cause brain drain. According to the Harvard *Political Reviews* - America's preeminent student journal of politics, policy, and culture, written and published

entirely by Harvard undergraduates,⁴ in spite of initial brain drain, skilled emigration prevents brains from draining away in unproductive lands. This can finally have a positive overall impact and can induce an increase in the rate of human capital accumulation of a foreign country, which is then called brain gain.

There are limited opportunities to teach game design to children and teenagers due to a lack of qualified professionals. Children at primary and secondary schools study a subject called IT, but game design and game art are not integrated into curriculum. Worth mentioning is the company *Hemisféra*⁵ from Bratislava, which offers diverse game development activities and courses for children and teenagers. Unfortunately, those activities and courses must be paid for by parents, thus they have become not available to many children. Worth considering would be the expansion of gaming education to schools, if supported by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport. Some students studying the Theory of game studies have already taken part-time jobs in this company and are very keen, that they can have this work. To successfully implement the design of computer games into context of teaching, it is necessary to place children and teenagers into roles of game designers rather than game consumers. Methodological approaches were introduced into didactics and thus could be successfully applied during lessons at schools. *Yasmin Kafai*, a Professor of Learning Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania, holding a doctorate from Harvard University has conducted a research on computational technologies. In her book *Minds in play – Computer game design as a context for children’s learning*⁶ Kafai presents a constructionist vision of computer-based learning activities in schools. In her experiment, children changed the classroom for six months into a game design studio, programming games to teach fractions to third graders. Her work has proved that children can develop their game design skills quite early and can get into coding, computer sciences and develop their drawing or managerial skills in a natural, friendly way.

4 *Harvard Political Reviews*. [online]. [2019-05-22]. Available at: <<https://harvardpolitics.com/>>.

5 *Hemisféra*. [online]. [2019-05-22]. Available at: <<https://hemisfera.sk/>>.

6 *Minds in Play – Computer Game Design as a Context for Children’s Learning*. [online]. [2019-05-22]. Available at: <<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/526b2134e4b0ed588497ad8e/t/526be783e4b07233cf8a0f80/1382803331510/Minds+In+Play+-+Yasmin+Kafai.pdf/>>.

3 The Support of Video Game Industry in Slovakia

To support the growth of this industry, the *Slovak Arts Council*⁷ has decided to subsidize the creation of digital games. The total amount of the subsidy for all projects was 350 000 EUR in 2019. Game developers can apply for non-repayable subsidy at various stages of digital game creation. The emphasis lies on artistic value, educational aspect or innovation, thus influencing the quality of digital games created in Slovakia. Nearly 100 projects have applied for funding in 2 years of its existence and more than 50 projects were supported. This support is not sufficient at all, because it focuses mainly on individual game developers. It is just a drop in the bucket, compared to money invested in the growth of gaming industry worldwide. Computer and video games are included into the sector of creative industries. According to the information published in the article *the Creative industry in Slovakia*⁸ there are almost 4 000 units identified on the Slovak market which, based on reported business activities, can fall within the creative industries. According to the report about *The State of the Slovak Game industry* published in 2018,⁹ there are only 35 digital game development companies. 35 units out of 4000 represent a truly critical number. It tells how underestimated this area is. The creative sector employs over 45 thousand people, representing about 4% of total employment in the Slovak Republic. Out of this number, only 580 professionals work in the gaming industry sector. The gaming industry represents an essential driver of advanced economies, generating billions of revenues yearly. Demand for digital game products is huge, but the poor state of the Slovak video game industry has not much to offer. This is still not understood by the Slovak Government, which is not placing an emphasis on the development of existing companies and establishing of new ones. The government could provide repayable investments, loans, tax credits or funding grants. Bratislava, Žilina and Trnava could become regional hubs, if there was will to support. Slovakia belongs to new entrants with very low industry maturity. It needs a clear vision and support for what it will look like over the next years.

7 *Slovak Arts Council*. [online]. [2019-05-22]. Available at: <<https://www.fpu.sk/en/2-nazaradene/255-slovak-arts-council/>>.

8 *Creative Industry in Slovakia*. [online]. [2019-05-22]. Available at: <<https://profil.kultury.sk/en/creative-industry-in-slovakia/>>.

9 *The State of the Slovak Game Industry*. [online]. [2019-05-22]. Available at: <http://press.sgda.sk/SGDA_Katalog.pdf/>.

4 Evaluation of the Student Questionnaire Survey

The objective was to analyze students' views on the state of video game industry in Slovakia, work opportunities, career paths and state of development. The students were offered 23 questions, which were divided into 4 sections:

1. Slovak game industry.
2. Supporting development of the Slovak game industry.
3. Employability possibilities.
4. Different career paths to consider.

4.1 Slovak Game Industry

I. We asked students what they think about the state of the Slovak digital game industry. They expressed negative views.

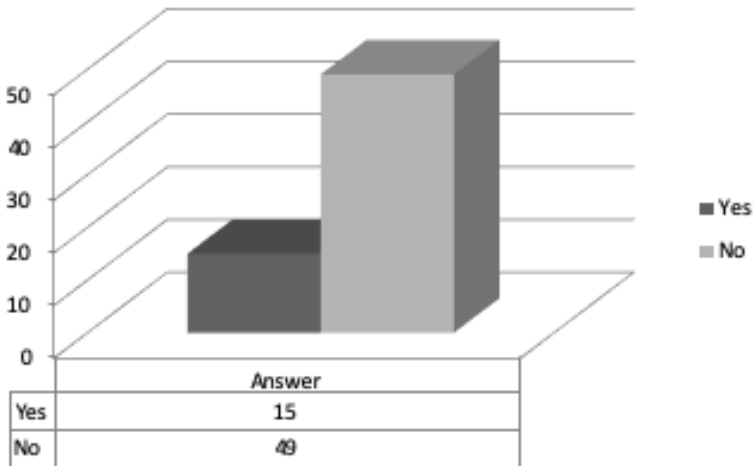
The most typical responses: underdeveloped, insufficient job opportunities, very bad situation – skilled people go abroad, needs to be developed, very poor situation, the state does not support it, bad economic orientation of the state – industry focuses on car production only, very bad – no game studio producing AAA games, in the cradle – we are 30 years behind, thanks to our great politicians, not enough qualified people, not good - never heard of any Slovak game, developing very slowly because of hammer-headed people from socialistic times.

II. We asked students what could be done to develop the Slovak game industry. They are capable of proposing possible and viable solutions. Many of them could become very inspiring.

The most typical recommendations: support game developers, inform and educate, advertise, create games, open up new schools with specialization – mentioned repeatedly, get rid of prejudices against gaming, state support is crucial, start teaching subjects related to game design, subsidize, create more funds – there is only one so far in Slovakia, create a very big project - AAA game as a kick start, attract investors, create more job opportunities, financial support for newly established companies, implement digital games into teaching.

4.2 Supporting Development of Slovak Game Industry

III. We asked students if they know that *the Slovak Arts Council* subsidizes the creation of digital games. It is 350 000 EUR for all projects in the year 2019. Majority of students admitted that they did not know about it, which shows that they are not informed. It would be good if teachers informed students during their studies, so that they could start planning earlier.



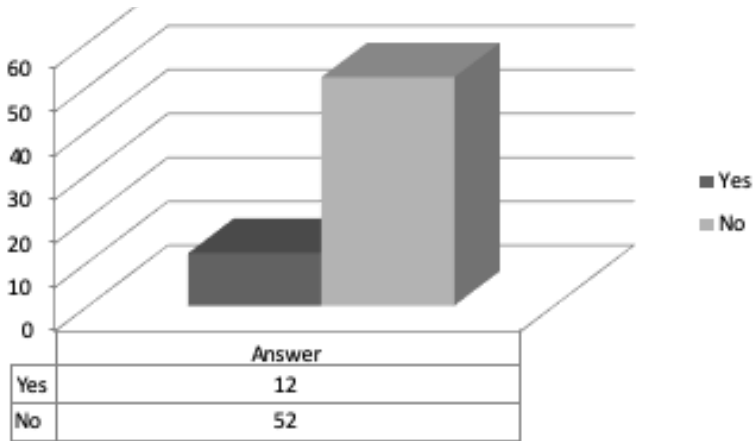
Graph 1: Students’ knowledge about the existence of *the Slovak Arts Council* subsidizing the creation of digital games

Source: own processing

IV. Even though the majority did not know about the *Slovak Arts Council* subsidy, most of them would like to ask for it. We wanted to know why they liked to ask for the subsidy in the future. They have given only a few reasons why.

The reasons why to ask for the subsidy: definitely yes – 3D software is very expensive – 5300 Euro for 3 years, it motivates, it supports development, if my project was good, if I meet requirements.

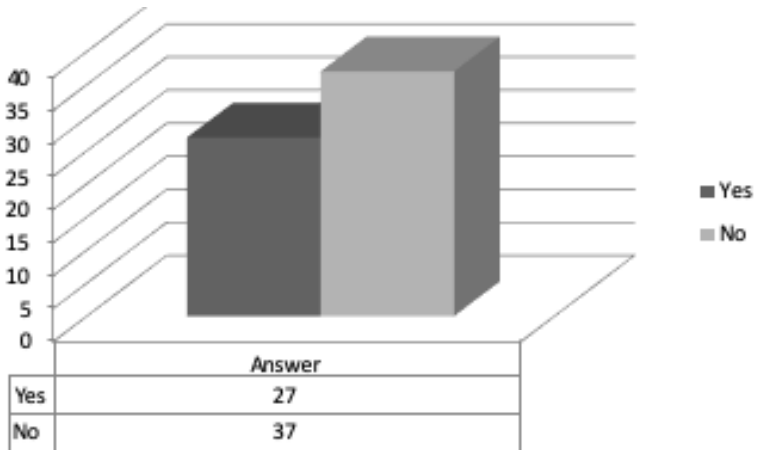
V. The *Trnava Game Guild* was set up in 2019 to support and help regional game developers. We wanted to find out if they knew. Only a small number of students knew.



Graph 2: Students' knowledge about the setting-up of the *Trnava Game Guild*

Source: own processing

VI. We wanted to know if they liked to become a member of the *Trnava Game Guild*. Less than half would like to be active this way. It is still a quite optimistic number.



Graph 3: Students' willingness to become a member of the *Trnava Game Guild*

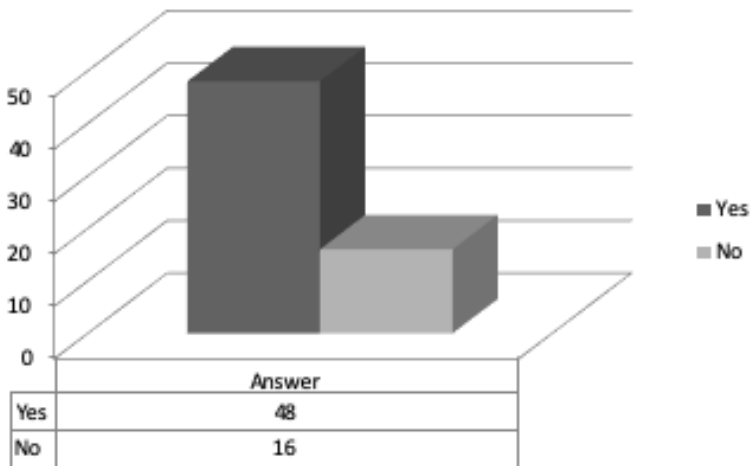
Source: own processing

VII. We asked for explanation why to become or not to become a member of the *Trnava Game Guild*. Less than half answered yes. More than half said no and almost none explained why. For those who do not know anything about the *Trnava Game Guild*, is probably difficult to understand, that it would be of great help for them.

The most common reasons they would become a member of this guild: I am already active, to support young talents, to find people with the same interest, to be supported, I wanted to help, to become informed, to learn something useful.

The most common reasons they would not become a member of this guild: I am not from Trnava, not interested.

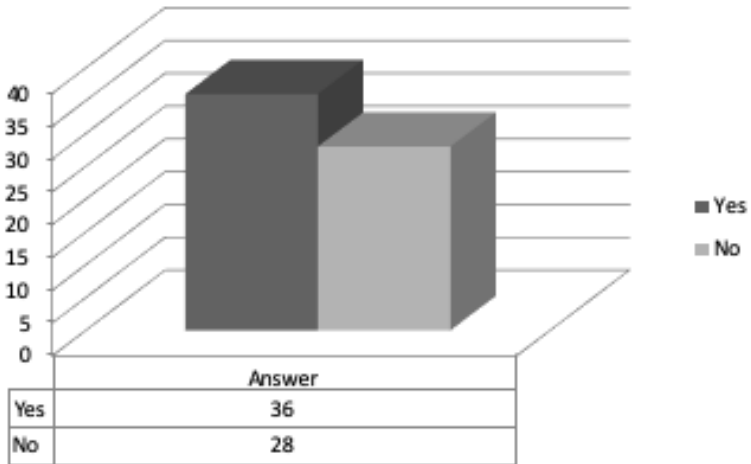
VIII. *The Butterfly effect* is a program focused on a development of a digital game. We asked students if they heard about it. Students admitted that they were informed about the program at university.



Graph 4: Students’ knowledge about the existence of the *Butterfly effect* program

Source: own processing

IX. We wanted to know if they liked to participate in the *Butterfly effect* program. More than half said yes.



Graph 5: Students' willingness to participate in the *Butterfly effect* program

Source: own processing

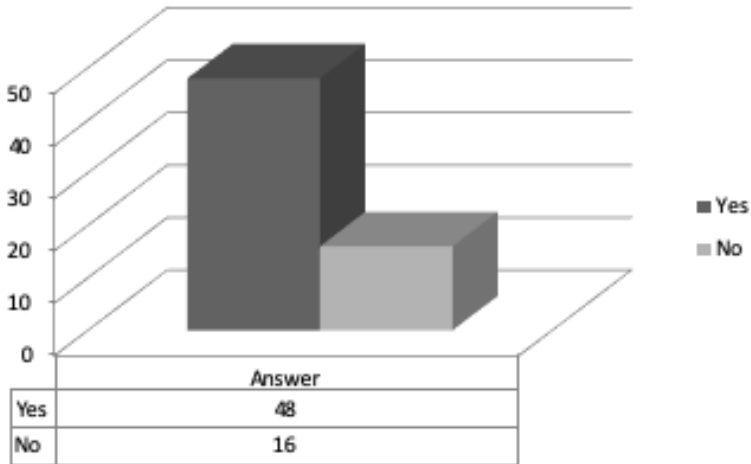
X. The most common reasons why to participate or not in the *Butterfly effect* program.

The reasons why to participate in the project: great opportunity, good experience, a good start.

The reasons why not to participate in the project: costs a lot of money, time demanding.

4.3 Employability Possibilities

XI. We asked students if they wanted to earn living from designing digital games. 75% said that they want to earn living this way. 25% said no.



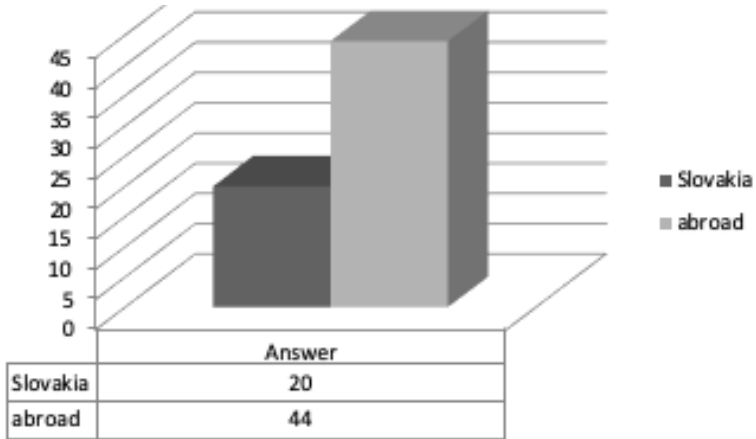
Graph 6: Students’ views on earning living from designing digital games

Source: own processing

XII. We asked students why they wanted to earn living from designing digital games. The majority of students offered various challenging motives. Those who did not want to make living from designing digital games did not give reasons at all or said that there are not employment possibilities in Slovakia.

The most common positive explanations: an interesting media enabling to spread ideas, unexplored area, digital games are my passion, my childhood dream, a field having many different career paths to pick, gaming industry has future, create my own games, joy in doing it, support the gaming industry to grow, it is a creative and artistic activity, a lot of money to earn.

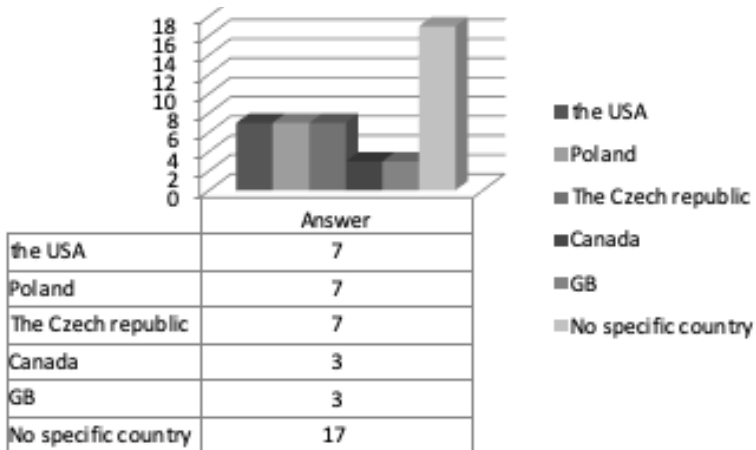
XIII. We asked students if they wanted to start working in Slovakia or abroad. If abroad, we asked to give an example of a foreign country. 1/3 of students would like to start working in Slovakia and 2/3 would prefer to start abroad.



Graph 7: Students' willingness to start working in Slovakia or abroad

Source: own processing

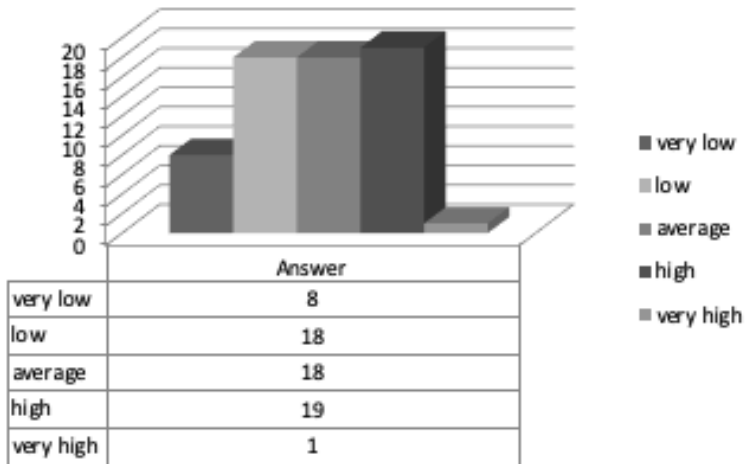
Among the most popular foreign countries are: the USA, Poland, the Czech Republic. The names of companies given by students: Blizzard Activision, CD Project Red, Warhorse Studios. More than half of students preferring to work in Slovakia mentioned only Pixel Federation.



Graph 8: The most popular foreign countries for students to start working in

Source: own processing

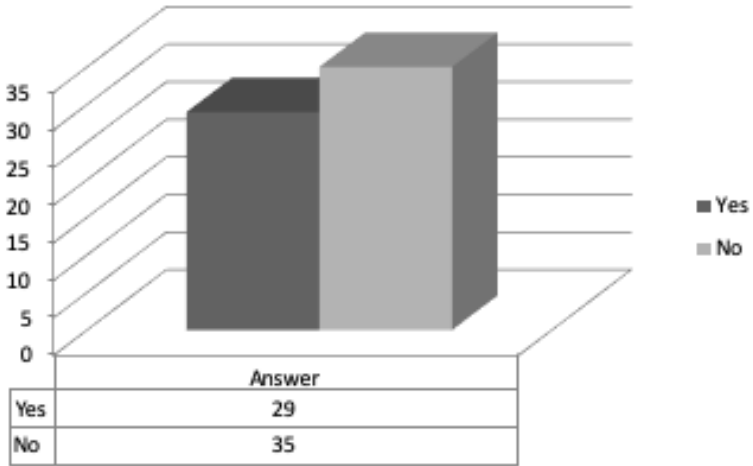
XIV. We asked students how they judge the real possibility of finding a job in the Slovak gaming industry. They had to choose one out of five possibilities.



Graph 9: Students’ judgments about the possibility of finding a job in the Slovak gaming industry

Source: own processing

XV. We asked students if they wanted to set up their own digital game company, when and how big it would be. Out of those who want to set up their own company, more than half would like to set up a small company with friends. The rest would like to become indie developers or work alone or be self-employed. Most of them want to set up their company after they get some experience, approximately in 5 years time. 55% do not desire to start their own company and 45% desire to start their own company.



Graph 10: Percentage of students wanting to set up their own digital game company

Source: own processing

XVI. We wanted to know what type of game they would like to create. The most popular genre is the MMORPG.



Graph 11: Genres of digital games students would like to create

Source: own processing

4.4 Different Career Paths to Consider

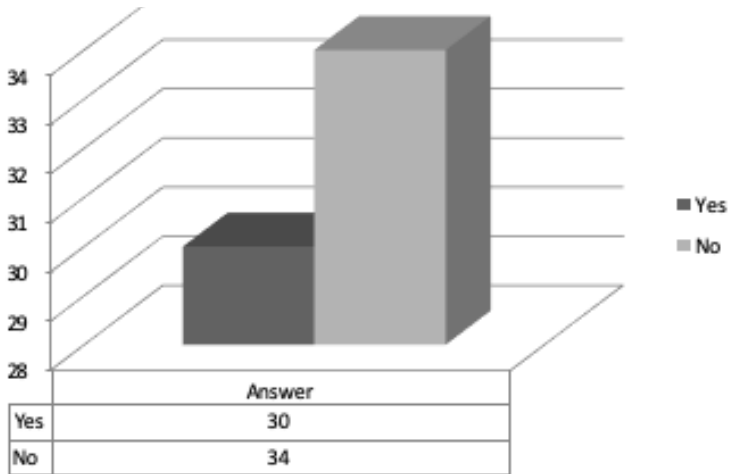
XVII. We asked students about the specialization they would like to pick in the gaming industry. Among the most popular positions are: Graphic artist/Graphic designer, Game designer and Programmer. A few students mentioned more specializations and a few mentioned none. It shows that majority of students have a clear vision about their position in the gaming industry.



Graph 12: Students' specialization they would like to pick in the gaming industry

Source: own processing

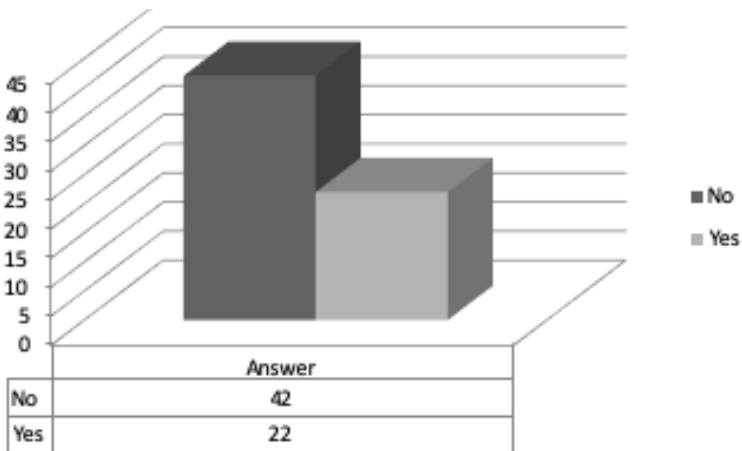
XVIII. The *Slovak Esport association* was set up in 2018 in Bratislava. We wanted to find out if they knew. Almost half of them were informed about it.



Graph 13: Students’ knowledge about the existence of the *Slovak Esport association*

Source: own processing

XIX. We wanted to know if they liked to become a professional Esport gamer? Only one third of them answered yes and two thirds said no.



Graph 14: Students’ willingness to become a professional Esport gamer

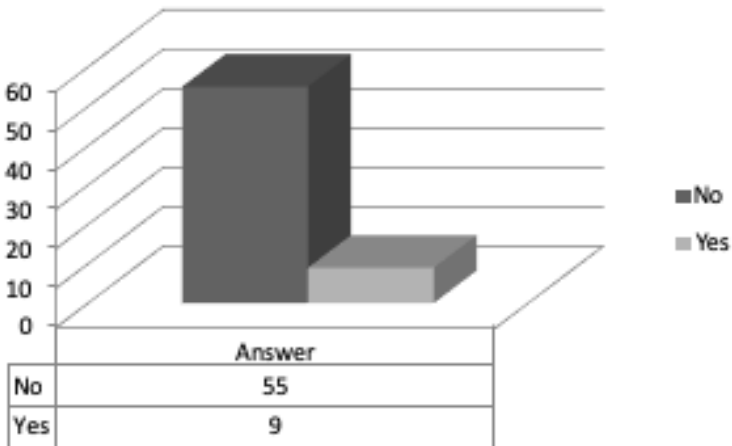
Source: own processing

XX. We asked for explanation why they liked to become a professional Esport gamer.

The most common reasons they would become a professional Esport gamer: a well paid job and one could become famous, I like it, I would like to try it out, it is a dream job, it amuses people.

The most common reasons they would not become a professional Esport gamer: it is extremely time demanding, exhausting job, not good at playing them, rather developer than gamer, no such job opportunities in Slovakia, not talented and old (20 years old).

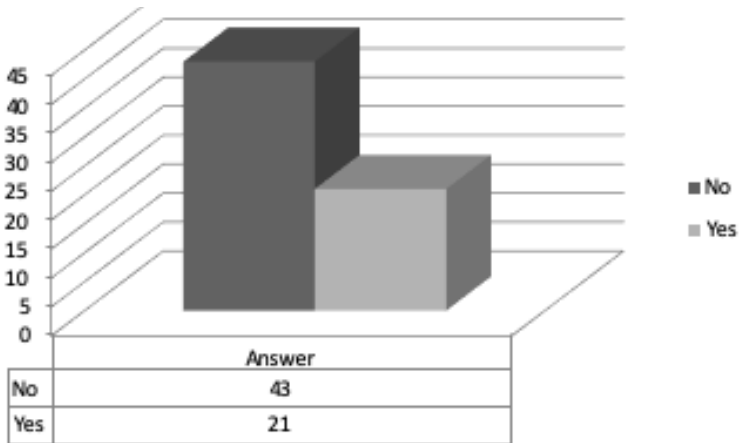
XXI. The company *Hemisféra* from Bratislava offers diverse game development activities and courses for children and teenagers. We wanted to find out if they knew. The number of students not knowing about it is really surprising.



Graph 15: Students' knowledge about the existence of *Hemisféra*

Source: own processing

XXII. We asked if they wanted to teach children and teenagers game design. One third liked this type of work.



Graph 16: Students’ willingness to teach children and teenagers game design

Source: own processing

XXIII. We wanted to know the reasons why yes or no to teach children and teenagers game design. Two thirds said no and only a few explained why. One third said yes. If students had lectures on computer-based learning during their university studies and knew how to use digital games in teaching, they would become self confident. Later on, they would maybe try it out.

The most common reasons why to teach children and teenagers game design: it would be interesting, if carried out during university studies as a voluntary activity,,, it is easier to educate children via digital games, not just by using books,,, the sooner they find out that it is easy, the sooner they can create games,,, I could use programs that I know ,, children learn faster and they are motivated,,,, to help young people to understand it,,,, as a part time job,,, I would like to do it,,,, games offer the best way how to educate,,,, I am interested in this area,,,, I could teach 2D and 3D animation, modeling, drawing, I already work a teacher in Hemisféra.

The most common reasons why not to teach children and teenagers game design: working with children is difficult, it is nerve racking.

5 Methodology of the Student Questionnaire Survey

At the end of the summer term (2nd term), the year 2019, we distributed the paper questionnaire during the English language seminars among the students. Respondents were students of the Faculty of Mass Media Communication, University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, studying the Theory of game studies. The total number of 1st year students was 77, but only 64 students participated. 49 students were male and 15 students were female. Before completing the questionnaire, the participating students received an explanation of the purpose of the questionnaire. The questionnaire contained 23 questions. The questionnaire was anonymous, but we collected data about sex and age. We focused then on coding and analysis of open-ended questions from survey data. The questionnaire was used to find out opinions and attitudes of students about given issues. Who are students of the Theory of game studies? The average student of the first study year is 20 years old. Most of them have 15 years of gaming experience. More than 30% of students spend from 1 to 10 hours weekly by playing computer games and 25% of students spend from 11 to 20 hours. More than 50% of them spend from 21 to 80 hours by playing computer games.

Conclusion

The video game industry is still evolving in Slovakia. It is comprised mainly of a few small and mid-sized developers and has a lack of skilled professionals. The Faculty of Mass Media Communication at the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius with its unique study program called the Theory of Game Studies is preparing students to start working in the area of game design. There are only a few associations supporting the development of game industry in Slovakia. Unfortunately, the Slovak government does not support the game industry development, so graduates will have to find their jobs abroad. Slovakia is a new entrant and it does not have a clear vision and support for what it will look like over the next years. Students critically judge the situation, which they view negatively, but are capable of proposing possible and viable solutions to change it. They were not well informed about the existing associations or projects supporting the existing video game industry. There are many different career paths for students to take. Majority of them have a clear vision about their position in the gaming industry. Many students consider starting up their own game development studios in the near

future. To become successful, they need to be informed and supported. Worth mentioning is Šimon Šicko, the founder of the company Pixel Federation, who became the EY undertaker of the year 2018 in Slovakia.

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PLAYING DIGITAL GAMES BY MIDDLE YEARS CHILDREN (6-10 YEARS OF AGE) AND ITS POTENTIAL

Monika Porubanová

ABSTRACT:

The paper provides insights into what is being developed by playing digital games of middle years children (6-10 years of age) in intellectual, emotional, social, moral and communication level. We would like to research the digital game-playing habits of Slovak middle year's children and discover their views on skills and knowledge they can acquire and develop during playing.

KEY WORDS:

digital games, emotional, game playing habits, intellectual, middle year's children, moral and communication development, social

Introduction

Children between ages of 6 and 10 belong into the period referred to as middle childhood. Playing digital games via computers, consoles or mobiles by children is widespread in Slovakia too. Digital games for children are appealing. However, there is not an official statistics about how much Slovak children play digital games, which digital games they enjoy most, who they play with, etc. There is very little research in Slovakia on intellectual, socio-emotional, moral or aesthetic aspects of video games for middle year's children (6-10 years of age). Current commercial or educational titles of digital games played by children are not being researched to verify their educational benefits.

1 What Do Children Learn from Playing Digital Games?

Blumberg and Ismailer present an extensive meta-analysis on this problematic in a book called *Serious games – mechanisms and effects*. Learning can occur within the context of informal leisure-based digital games playing and more formal educational games playing used during classroom learning.¹ We would like to summarize only the key findings in this paragraph, demonstrating the linkage between the playing of

1 RITTERFELD, U., CODY, M., VORDERER, P.: *Serious Games Mechanisms and Effects*. New York : Routledge, 2009, p. 131-142.

digital games and the enhancement of cognitive and perceptual skills of children:

- The attractiveness of digital games may also be based on the level of developmental tasks presented to the children who play them. Children’s attraction to a specific game may be motivated by cognitive or physical skills promoted through the playing of that game, for example refinement of spacial skills, problem solving and inductive reasoning, visual attention, reduction of gender differences in mental rotation and spatial attention.
- Similarly different game genres have been linked to the enhancement of specific skills.
- The acquisition of content knowledge may be promoted through the playing of serious games to facilitate children’s understanding of a specific topic.
- Evidence attesting to the positive ramifications of digital games for the skills they can foster and content knowledge they can impart continues to accrue.

According to the study *Digital Games as a Context for Children’s Cognitive Development: Research Recommendations and Policy Considerations* published by the Society for research in child development in 2019,² digital games may enhance some of the core cognitive abilities, such as selective attention, that underlie the ability to acquire academic content or skills of middle year’s children. An extensive study on digital games played by children named *Digital games in schools. A handbook by teachers* was written in the framework of European Schoolnet’s project which ended in 2009.³ It analyzed the current situation in 8 countries: Austria, Denmark, France, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Spain, and UK with regard to games based learning. It provides necessary information to understand educational benefits of digital games. We would like to summarize the benefits of digital games in this paragraph:

- Digital games develop cognitive, spatial and motor skills and help improve ICT skills. They can be used to teach facts (e.g. knowledge, recall, rote learning or memorization), principles (e.g. cause and effect relationship) and complex problem solving, to increase

2 *Digital Games as a Context for Children’s Cognitive Development: Research Recommendations and Policy Considerations*. [online]. [2019-06-17]. Available at: <<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/sop2.3/>>.

3 *Digital Games in Schools. A Handbook by Teachers*. [online]. [2019-06-17]. Available at: <http://games.eun.org/upload/GIS_HANDBOOK_EN.PDF/>.

creativity or provide practical examples of concepts and rules that would be difficult to illustrate in the real world.

- One of the main advantages of digital games is their ability to let players learn in a challenging environment, where they can make mistakes and learn by doing.
- Digital games promote genuine collaboration between users. Multiplayer digital games develop both competition and collaboration.
- Digital games have an emotional impact on players, increasing their self-esteem and enabling them to engage in social activities. Players feel a wide range of emotion, but in a safe and controlled environment. Emotions experienced during play can vary through empathy, anger, frustration and triumph. This succession of emotions tends to keep the players immersed. Because they induce different emotions in the players, digital games might help them to remember facts more vividly and so assist the cognitive process.

Professor Begona Gros, University of Barcelona, Department of Theory and History of Education writes about the impact of digital games on children in education.⁴ According to her, video games are among the most direct means of access that children have to the world of technology. Most children play with consoles and their first contact with computers is through a computer game. She suggests that while playing children are learning basic strategies and skills that will enable them to gain access to the virtual world. Adding fun to learning is an outstanding teaching strategy. It applies to both formal and informal learning. Games, either traditional or digital engage children, help to acquire knowledge and develop intellectual, emotional, moral, social and communication skills. Geoffrey Petty in *Teaching Today*⁵ writes about games in general. According to him, games engage children very intensively in the learning process and they can achieve levels of concentration that cannot be achieved by any other teaching method. In addition, thanks to the increased interest and motivation caused by a shorter game, pupils can gain a positive relationship to the subject and teacher that will last weeks. Games create an enormous desire to communicate and they are an excellent method used to teaching languages and communicational skills.

4 *The Impact of Digital Games in Education*. [online]. [2019-06-17]. Available at: <https://www.mackenty.org/images/uploads/impact_of_games_in_education.pdf/>.

5 PETTY, G.: *Moderní vyučování*. Praha : Portál, 2004, p. 188-202.

George Kalmpourtzis in the book *Educational game design fundamentals*⁶ stresses the importance of incorporating learner’s interest into the requirements of the task or concept educators want to teach. One of the greatest arguments of the use of the games in education is that games can actually become very efficient in attracting people’s attention when designed and presented properly.

2 Intellectual Development

The period of middle year’s children development is characterized by cognitive enhancement. A Canadian study called, *On my way. A Guide to Support Middle Years Child Development*, a comprehensive developmental framework to support children ages 6–12, offers up-to-date evidence on middle childhood development.⁷ Authors stress, that another important burst of child’s brain development occurs during this period. Various processing parts of the brain are developing and maturing, for example regions that affect vision, hearing, touch and movement. It is followed by areas related to memory and language and then the frontal regions and systems that integrate and process information and support executive functioning. What the sensory and perceptual abilities is concerned, the ability to organize visual information into meaningful patterns and understand where things are in space, improves during this period. Two dimensional visual-spatial functioning becomes fully developed. Episodic and working memory improves significantly. There is a gradual increase in inquiry, investigating, logical thinking and problem-solving. Very similar explanation of cognitive development is presented in the book *Pre-school and elementary pedagogy*.⁸ The categories, which the authors focus on, were the development of thinking, memory, perception, imagination and attention span. Children of this age can distinguish between reality and fantasy. Imagination becomes less spontaneous, but the world of fantasy has still its charm and they use it while playing and reading. It is mainly the intentional imagination, which is stimulated during the teaching process to visualize the reality. According to Piaget’s cognitive developmental theory, middle childhood belongs into the concrete

6 KALMPOURTZIS, G.: *Educational Game Design Fundamentals*. Boca Raton : CRC Press, 2019, p. 88.

7 *On My Way. A Guide to Support Middle Years Child Development*. [online]. [2019-06-17]. Available at: <<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/documents/middleyears/On-MY-Way-Middle-Years.pdf/>>.

8 KOLLÁRIKOVÁ, Z., PUPALA, B.: *Předškolská a elementárna pedagogika*. Praha : Portál, 2001, p. 219-227.

operational stage. Children can use logic actively and appropriately to solve concrete problems. At about age 7 or 8, children become capable of mental operations, of logically combining, separating, and transforming information. Concrete-operational thinking is reflected in new abilities related to conservation, classification, planning, and metacognition.⁹

3 Emotional Development

Middle year's children undergo extremely complex emotional development. It is their concept of self – how they appear and relate to others, and see themselves in relation to their culture or areas of personal interests. How they see and think about themselves is influenced mainly by parents, caregivers, cultural role models, but experience at school and peers also have an impact. It is as well their sense of competence – what they believe they can achieve. They can assess themselves with increased understanding of various areas of self-concept, for example academic, athletic, social competences, physical appearance or behavioral conduct. The increased capacity for emotional understanding and expression is being developed too. Children are learning how to identify, express and regulate their emotions.¹⁰ Children have to cope with a different range of emotional situations (upsetting, stressful, traumatic, etc.) they experience during their life. According to almost three decades of research, emotional intelligence (EI) results from the interaction of intelligence and emotion. It refers to an individual's capacity to understand and manage emotions and is consisting of five different components: self-awareness, self-regulation, social skills, empathy, and motivation.¹¹ There are practical reasons to promote the development of emotional intelligence. The EQ levels vary widely, depending on child's home environment. It is important to support children's emotional

9 *Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Childhood*. [online]. [2019-06-17]. Available at: <[https://www.macmillanihe.com/resources/CW%20resources%20\(by%20Author\)/L/Lightfoot%20-%20The%20Development%20of%20Children/Instructor%20resource%20pdf/LIGHTFOOT_IR_7E_CH11.pdf/](https://www.macmillanihe.com/resources/CW%20resources%20(by%20Author)/L/Lightfoot%20-%20The%20Development%20of%20Children/Instructor%20resource%20pdf/LIGHTFOOT_IR_7E_CH11.pdf/)>.

10 *On My Way. A Guide to Support Middle Years Child Development*. [online]. [2019-06-17]. Available at: <<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/documents/middleyears/On-MY-Way-Middle-Years.pdf/>>.

11 *The Theories of Emotional Intelligence Explained*. [online]. [2019-06-17]. Available at: <<https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/emotional-intelligence-theories/>>.

literacy needs and to support the need to talk about feelings. The message is that no emotion is “wrong”, but certain ways of expressing those emotions or acting on them are inappropriate.¹² The scientific paper, *Middle childhood as developmental phase*, published by the University of Pretoria accentuates the importance of the affective filter hypothesis, suggesting that how we feel influences what we are able to learn. Thus indicating that emotions affect how, what and why we learn. Children need to develop emotional abilities in different areas in middle childhood, namely. Self-conscious emotions: Pride motivates children to try new things, guilt prompts them to make amends and try harder. Shaming on the other hand, based on negative judgments of the child’s qualities or personality, is destructive and kills motivation. Emotional understanding: Children need to learn to appreciate mixed emotions. Emotional self-regulation: Children need to control and manage situations well, to understand their emotional experience.¹³ Once emotions occur they become powerful motivators of future behavior. They chart the course of moment-to-moment action and long-term achievements. Emotions can thus have both useful and pathological consequences for an individual, and hence need to be managed in a responsible manner once it was mastered as a developmental task.¹⁴

4 Moral Development

Children in their middle childhood years develop their understanding of values, moral behavior and fairness. It is their parents and educators who shape them and finally they accept their moral standards. According to the study: *On my way. A Guide to Support Middle Years Child Development*, a comprehensive developmental framework to support children ages 6–12, offers up-to-date evidence on middle childhood development.¹⁵

12 *Daniel Goleman’s Emotional Intelligence Theory Explained*. [online]. [2019-06-17]. Available at: <<https://education.cu-portland.edu/blog/classroom-resources/daniel-golemans-emotional-intelligence-theory-explained/>>.

13 *Middle Childhood as Developmental Phase*. [online]. [2019-06-17]. Available at: <<https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/25598/02chapters3-4.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y/>>.

14 *Middle Childhood as Developmental Phase*. [online]. [2019-06-17]. Available at: <<https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/25598/02chapters3-4.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y/>>.

15 *On My Way. A Guide to Support Middle Years Child Development*. [online]. [2019-06-17]. Available at: <<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/documents/middleyears/On-MY-Way-Middle-Years.pdf/>>.

Children begin to understand and adopt the moral standards of adult role models, and their perspectives on social conventions, law, justice and duty all deepen. Elizabeth D. Hutchinson in her book *Dimensions of human behavior. The changing life course* focuses in one of the chapters on the analysis of middle childhood. It is stated that social and emotional intelligence are key aspects of both moral reasoning and moral conduct.¹⁶ According to the scientific paper - Middle childhood as developmental phase published by the University of Pretoria, children in their middle childhood stage of development typically display “pre-conventional” moral reasoning. They thus display internalized, basic, culturally prescribed rules, governing right and wrong behavior. Children will tend to live in accordance with these rules but primarily for selfish reasons, as a way of avoiding punishment and obtaining praise for themselves. In the later years of middle childhood, children realize that morally good behaviors get attention and derive praise and positive regard from peers and adults, while morally bad choices bring about unpleasant and harmful consequences.¹⁷

5 Social Development

Kostelnik, Gregory and Soderman state that people are social beings; from birth a lifetime is spent actively engaged in others. They stress that companionship, stimulation and a sense of belonging is gained through social interaction. During middle childhood, peer friendships take on a more prominent role than ever before. Nuttal emphasizes that children in this phase want to do things by and for themselves, yet they need adults who will help when asked or when needed. They need more love, attention and approval than criticism, for their self-concept develops rapidly in these years and it is hence an important period, for specific experiences entail significant results for the development of self-concepts. Kachmar and Blair explain that children’s self-concept during the middle childhood phase continues to be refined. Children begin to make social comparisons, interpreting their own abilities and behavior in relation to those around them. The typical high self-esteem of the early

16 *Dimensions of Human Behavior. The Changing Life Course*. [online]. [2019-06-17]. Available at: <https://us.corwin.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/16297_Chapter_5.pdf>.

17 *Middle Childhood as Developmental Phase*. [online]. [2019-06-17]. Available at: <<https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/25598/02chapters3-4.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y/>>.

childhood year’s drop to a more realistic level as older children begin to incorporate feedback about their own skills and competencies in comparison to the skills and abilities of others.¹⁸

6 Communication Development

Language and communication skills increase gradually but significantly during the middle years. They can express ideas, opinions and can participate in a range of social situations. They are capable of giving reasons and explaining choices, persuading others by presenting well formed, convincing arguments for or against an issue. Their language skills improve faster if they are engaged in conversations often and are encouraged to express their feelings and ideas.¹⁹

7 Evaluation of the Questionnaire Survey

The aim was to examine the digital game-playing habits of middle year’s children (6-10 years of age) from Slovakia. We also wanted them to verbalize their opinions on how digital games support the development of their intellectual, emotional, social, moral and communicational level. The children were given 10 questions covering this problematic. We analyzed answers of boys and girls individually to find out if there are some crucial differences.

7.1 Digital Game Playing Habits

I. We asked children if they play digital games. The percentage of girls and boys is the same. It shows no gender differences related to playing digital games.

18 *Middle Childhood as Developmental Phase*. [online]. [2019-06-17]. Available at: <<https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/25598/02chapters3-4.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y/>>.

19 *On My Way. A Guide to Support Middle Years Child Development*. [online]. [2019-06-17]. Available at: <<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/documents/middleyears/On-MY-Way-Middle-Years.pdf>>.

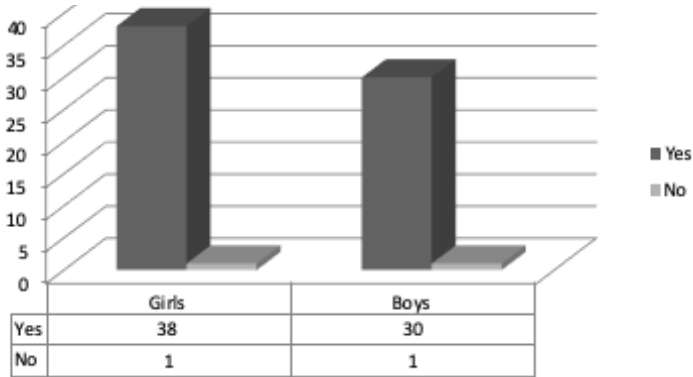


Chart 1: Middle year’s children playing digital games

Source: own processing

II. We asked children how often they play digital games. The highest number shows the preference of playing digital games either almost every day with girls or every day with boys. The major difference is only in playing 2 or 3 times in a week. Eight girls and only one boy picked this category. It shows that boys pick slightly higher frequencies of playing digital games. The number of girls and boys playing only once in a week, only during the weekend or a few times in a month was very low.

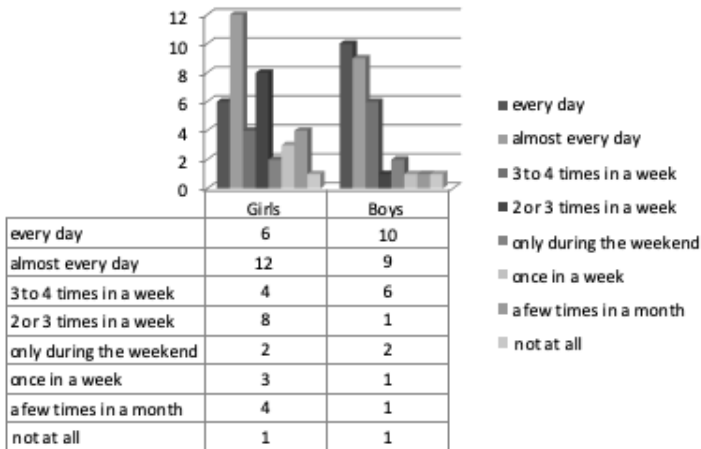


Chart 2: The freq

Source: own processing

III. We asked children how long they usually play digital games during one session. The highest number shows the preferred length of playing digital games less than 1 hour with girls and less than 2 hours with boys. The numbers of playing less than 2 hours with girls and less than 1 hour with boys were high too. We can say that both girls and boys prefer to play between less than 1 or 2 hours. It shows that there are no major gender differences related to the length of time spent playing digital games during one session.

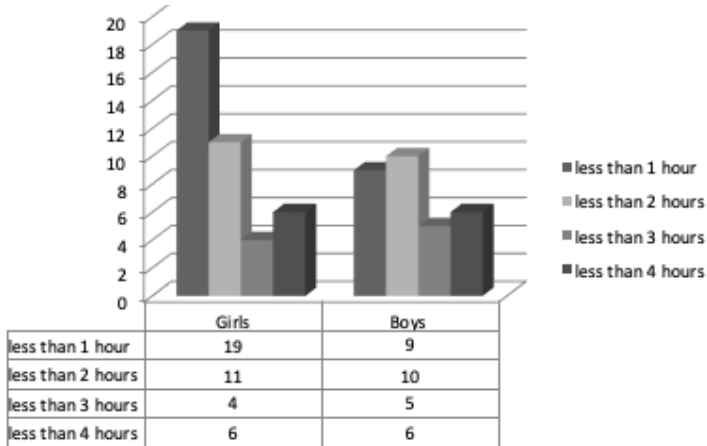


Chart 3: The length of playing digital games during one session

Source: own processing

IV. We asked children if they like playing digital games and why. Only 2 out of 70 children do not like playing digital games. 68 children expressed that they like playing digital games. We would like to present the most common explanations. Both boys and girls enjoy themselves while playing, it is fun and relax at the same time. Many of them expressed that they play, because they are bored.

The most typical explanations why they like playing digital games - Girls: enjoying oneself, it is fun, I relax this way, when I am bored - I play, some games are entertaining and some are educational, no one will be offended – everyone can play what he/she likes.

The most typical explanations why they like playing digital games - Boys: enjoying oneself, they are super, it is fun, I relax this way, when I am bored - I play, I forget about problems, I am thrown into world, where nothing is impossible.

V. We wanted to know which digital game they are playing nowadays. Half of them mentioned 1 digital game and the other half mentioned 2 or 3 digital games. Girls like mainly: Robbery Bob, Minecraft, Roblox, Evil Nun, Brawl Stars, Horse Riding Tales. They wrote altogether titles of 30 digital games. Boys like mainly: Brawl Stars, Fortnite, Minecraft, PUBG mobile, Roblox. They wrote altogether titles of 23 digital games. Girls presented a higher variety of digital games and only a few girls played the same game. Boys presented a lower variety of games but a few games were played by more boys. Both girls and boys enjoy playing a variety of different games, but there are some titles, which are more popular with boys and some which are popular with girls. Minecraft and Roblox are popular with both genders.

7.2 Digital Games Supporting Intellectual, Emotional, Social, Moral and Communication Development

VI. Whom do they play digital games with, was the next question. We offered four options and most of them picked two or three. On the first place was: alone, on the second place: friends, on the third: brother or sister and on the last place: parents. This order is the same for girls and boys. It shows that both girls and boys prefer playing either alone or with friends. Friendship is very important for children of this age. They spend all of their school time with friends and a lot of their free time with friends too. Playing digital games with friends offers space for social interaction, thus supports the development of social skills.

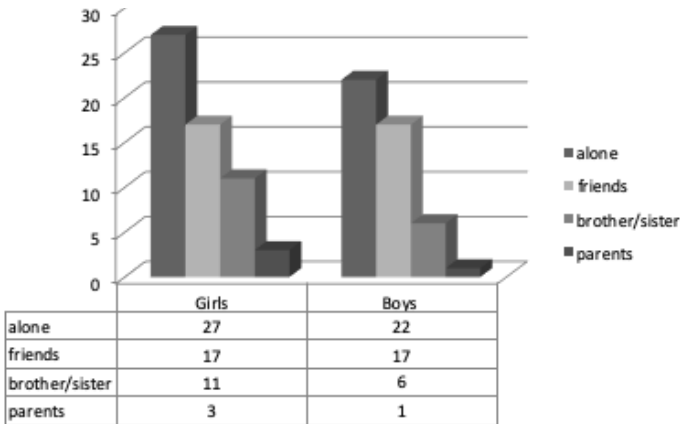


Chart 4: Whom do they play digital games with

Source: own processing

VII. We wanted to know if they talk about digital games. 38 out of 39 girls answered yes. 27 out of 31 boys answered yes and only four answered no. It shows that majority of girls and boys talk about digital games. As children are engaged in conversations about digital games, we can say, it supports language and communication skills development.

VIII. We wanted them to write what they learned through playing digital games. We would like to present the order of the most frequently mentioned skills or type of knowledge they acquired. They gave more than one answer. Of greatest importance to many girls and boys was learning the English language through playing digital games. Fighting, shooting and killing were skills that they acquired thanks to playing shooting or action digital games. Thinking, strategy, logic reflect the fact, that digital games offer space for intellectual development. Social skills as team cooperation can be developed via playing digital games too. Children of this age develop their understanding of values and moral behavior. They are capable of reflecting ethical issues across the world of digital games. It might be digital games too, that shape their moral values.

Boys: 1. English/English words, 2. Nothing 3. Shoot/Fight 4. Strategy/Team cooperation 5. Reactions/Reflexes 6. Build/build houses, 7. Ethical issues: one shall not kill/one cannot trust to anyone/everything is possible 8. Logic/Thinking/Learning to play all games.

Girls: 1. English/English words, 2. Nothing 3. Fight/ Kill 4. Win 5. Thinking/Logic 6. Strategy 7. Reflexes 8. Concentration/Perception 9. Care for an animal/Life of animals in nature 10. Better typing on the phone/Listening to more people at the same time.

IX. We wanted them to verbalize an achievement from their favorite digital game, which they are very proud of. We ordered their answers according to the frequency. They often gave more than one answer. Boys gave very brief answers, sometimes saying just yes or no. They often addressed ethical, moral issues. Girls were very eloquent, trying to explain in more detail. They are very goal oriented, ambitious, and creative.

Boys: 1. Yes, I am proud 2. Win 3. No, I am not proud of anything special 4. Get/ Create the best hero 5. I do not know 6. Kill people/Get rid of terrorists 7. Defeat the opponent 8. Rob a pyramid/bank 9. Save a princess/myself 10. Edit a game.

Girls: 1. Achieve high score/ Pass many levels as fast as possible/Achieve as many levels as possible/Get the best time 2. Win/Achieve a reward or a thing, for example: a mask, stars, a treasure, money,... 3. No, I am not proud of anything special 4. Build/Create: a house, a town, a new world 4. Jump/Do somersaults 5. Hide/Run away/Escape 6. Take care of an animal.

X. We wanted to know how they feel and what they go through while playing digital games. We ordered their answers according to the frequency. They sometimes gave more than one answer and it was usually one word. The majority of boys feel happy, thrilled, positively, good and angry. The majority of girls feel amused, thrilled, angry when not winning, happy, positively, good. Children experience different range of emotions, from positive to negative, during playing digital games. We can say that playing digital games facilitates the development of emotional intelligence.

Boys: 1. Happy 2. Thrilled 3. Good 4. Positively 5. Angry 6. Nothing 7. Fear 8. Tranquility 9. Freedom 10. Bored 11. Relaxed 12. Satisfied 13. Joy/Fun 14. Nervous 15. Fearless.

Girls: 1. Amused 2. Thrilled 3. Angry when not winning 4. Happy 5. Positively 6. Good 7. I do not know 8. Nothing 9. Fear 10. Excitement 11. Sad 12. Satisfied 13. Enthusiastically 14. Adrenaline/ Energy 15. Relaxed 16. Nervous.

8 Methodology of the Questionnaire Survey

We distributed the questionnaire among children studying at the basic school: Základná škola Dlhé Hony 1, Trenčín, during the study year 2018/2019. They were students of the fourth grade attending IV.A, IV.B, and IV.C. The sample is based on 70 children, out of this number, there were 39 girls and 31 boys. Altogether there are 73 children studying in the fourth grade. The average child is 10 years old. Before completing the questionnaire, the participating children received an explanation of the purpose of the questionnaire. The questionnaire contained 10 questions. The questionnaire was anonymous, but we collected data about sex and age. There were open-ended and close-ended questions. We focused on coding and analysis of open-ended questions from survey data. The questionnaire was used to examine digital game playing habits and opinions of middle year's children.

Conclusion

Results of the questionnaire analyzing digital game playing habits of middle year’s children are following: 98% of girls and 98% of boys were found to play digital games in their free time. There is no gender difference related to playing digital games. Girls prefer to play digital games almost every day and boys prefer to play every day. The preferred length of playing digital games is less than 1 hour with girls and less than 2 hours with boys. Almost all of them enjoy playing digital games. It is fun and relax at the same time. Many of them expressed that they play, because they are bored. Both genders enjoy playing a variety of different digital games, but there are some titles, which are more popular with boys and some which are more popular with girls. Minecraft and Roblox are popular with both genders. Digital games have the potential to support intellectual, emotional, social, moral and communication development. Both girls and boys prefer playing digital games either alone or with friends, which offers space for social interaction, thus supporting the development of social skills. The majority of girls and boys talk about digital games. It thus supports language and communication skills development. Children presented different skills or knowledge that they claim to acquire during playing. They are proud of their achievements. They experience different range of emotions, from positive to negative. We can say that playing digital games facilitates the development of emotional intelligence.

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GENRES VS. TAGS: PROBLEMS WITH TAXONOMY OF DIGITAL GAMES

Ivan Rokošný

ABSTRACT:

This article examines the problem with the taxonomy of digital games and explores the current limitations and affordances of digital game genre. Games are viewed as media, and market-based genre categories ignore fundamental parts of gaming – interaction. In the article we focus on how genre theory is shaped by traditional media, discuss our view on debate and try-outs to solve problematic taxonomy, criticize the main concept, which is very vague to such complex topic as digital games as we try to look for new solutions and ways how to redefine the taxonomical framework of digital games.

KEY WORDS:

digital game, genre theory, tags, taxonomy

Introduction

The issue with genre theory in game studies cannot be described as unknown. Since the early era of computer gaming, there were works which tried to define what digital game is, what are their components and how could be categorized. Genre classification is a traditionally used tool that helps the audience in a variety of fields – literature, fine art, film, etc. Genres categorize artifacts based on sets of stylistic criteria and affords the grouping of similar works. That makes genre very useful for producers, artists, creators and the audience – it helps to navigate throughout the field. With digital games, some of the genre borders are very vague, it challenges the traditional framework especially because games are more than their narrative components. Games are interactive, responds to action of active player and evolves within its game world together with the participant. Logically, narratively driven processes can be defined by the pre-existing formative framework but, digital games are very broad field with very limited borders and boundaries, and also, they rapidly evolve thanks to technological progress. Therefore, the categorization, genres specification and whole theory on taxonomy of digital games should be work of whole audience, researchers and producers. If genre can be seen as mutual consensus between producer and consumer, we need to look deeper on cultural roots of games as an artifact and/or as a media, with notion to future development in the field and its application in everyday life.

1 Genre Theory – Active and Passive Media

The idea of classification by genre has been in different type of media for a long time. Relatively useful tool can be used for better organization, understanding a dissecting the field of literature, film or games. The idea itself have met its difficulties, especially with defining what exactly constitute a specific genre and the fact that genre borders are not solid. On the contrary, they are liable to social and technological shifts. The whole genre theory comes with lac of formal definitions and is built on mutual understanding of different aspects of media. Genre studies differs also in any other media, especially because some core mechanics, which define the media itself. Genres are created by media and by active respondents. Thomas Schatz outlined this collaborative process in his work *Hollywood Genres*: “*Genre study may be more productive if we complement the narrow critical focus of traditional genre analysis with a broader sociocultural perspective. Thus, we may consider a genre film not only as some filmmaker’s artistic expression, but further as the cooperation between artists and audience in celebrating their collective values and ideals.*”¹ This claim could be easily applicable for the media of digital games, with substitution of few words. But as we focus at games and how their work, we cannot over-look the collaboration narrative of games. Film and literature are much more static media in comparison with digital games. Their plots can be less predictable and this cooperation deepens the relationship between author and the audience, especially by applying those values to the activity found in game play.

Digital games genres theory differs mainly due to direct participation of ‘reader’ (or player). Taking part in dealing with the central conflict of game’s world and decisions of player with direct impact on the game world distinguishes games from film or literature, and give them the status of more active media. But, with, or without participation, genres in any media can be viewed just as mutual agreement between authors (film makers, writers, game designers) and audience (viewers, readers, players) at some point. In every media, genre is shaped by patterns (technique, narrative structure, etc.), which starts to appear and are then inherited to the artistic creations, which feel familiar to the audience. That’s how specific genre film or even game can be seen. The product, created/produced to fit into specific category/genre with already

1 SCHATZ, T: *Hollywood Genres*. New York : Random House, 1981, p. 15.

existing audience. Even with major differences in each type of mentioned media, there are undoubtedly claims, which can apply for active and passive media. This is main reason, why genre theory is complex for understanding, but doesn't have its roots in bulletproof logical factors. In each media has its own group of core elements, which then can be 'borrowed' to different fields, but don't have to necessarily work. Genre theory gained much recognition in film studies, where the study goes to the direct contrast with auteur theory. Auteur is viewed as a creative entity, which has absolute power over its creation, without specific formal ties to pre-existing means of expression. The concept was invented to distinguish French New Wave filmmakers from studio-system directors that were part of Hollywood establishment.² Later on it was applied to producers of popular music as well as to video games creators. Most notable would be Japanese developer Hideo Kojima, known for his specific artistic style and narrative structure in his masterpiece - Metal Gear Solid franchise. Although, this theory was widely criticized, because of strong inclination to individualism. One of the earliest opponents of the theory was for example film theorist Pauline Kael, which in her book-long essay *Raising Kane*, reflects on American classic *Citizen Kane* (1941) and argues, that film should be seen as collaboration process. She points out on extensive use of co-writer Herman J. Mankiewicz and cinematographer Gregg Toland.³ Auteur theory basically ignores the external factors and focus only on the individual artistic expression. Focusing on digital games, auteur theory has many flaws, but works as good framework for deconstructing the games taxonomy, especially for two reasons. Firstly, it stands as opposition to standard genre theory, which feels like borrowed from previously known media for audience and secondly, because the theory looks at games as they were artistic creation and examines the relation between art and game. See games more as an art, than just media providing some information flow.

The major problem with defining genres in games are due to its almost no limitations. Looking at film, there are not many ways how to ignore core aspects. Even when this happen and due to its formal limitations, it is still considered as a film. It can be easily labelled 'experimental'. In his essay *The Idea of Genre in American Cinema*, Ed Buscombe lists three areas in which genre elements may appear in film: *Iconography, structure*

2 ANTAS, C.: *Responding to Film*. Lanham : Rowman & Littlefield, 2002, p. 18.

3 KAEL, P.: *Raising Kane*. [online]. [2019-04-28]. Available at: <<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1971/02/20/raising-kane-i>>.

and theme.⁴ Comparing with the games, iconography and theme may be applicable for narrative-driven games, but, we still need to consider other games such as *Tetris*⁵ or *Virtual Paintball*,⁶ with no narrative structure. Debate about genre taxonomy cannot be excluded of eternal debate held in game studies – the narratologist vs ludologist approach to games. If we look at Buscombe claim, structure in genre is pretty clear argument for films. Fast-paced scenes with Aristotle’s six drama elements and short takes with lots of editing can be found in numerous action films. Different structure can be found in romantic comedy, etc. Genres are built by the technique of the media. In film, there are for example factors such as editing, pacing, structure, even camera angles. Sci-fi is more just a movie set in space, or comedy is much more than the stuff that makes audience laugh. The same applies for horror as a just spooky stuff. Each of them has semiotics inherited symbols, which create genre as a consensus between all active parts of media. These power relations between how is something depicted to persuade the viewer and how it is constructed by the authors works with the passive medium. Therefore, structure of the game is something completely different.⁷ The power relations, level of action and interactivity is purely decided by the agent (player). Stealth approach to the game can be, but doesn’t have to be chosen in every game based on strategic decisions of agent. Even if we take in consideration ‘action’ genre of games, there is no necessary key elements that focus on pacing or structure itself. Every game can be considered as an action, if we take in account that there is something that player has to do (make action) in order to advance in the process.

Action movies consists of carefully structured scenes, while in action games agent is tied to sequences, where then he has to make his own way. This interactional approach completely shifts from ‘traditional’ view on action genre. As Mark J. P. Wolf claims: “*While the ideas of iconography*

4 BUSCOMBE, E.: The Idea of Genre in the American Cinema. In *Screen*, 1970, Vol. 11, No. 2, p. 40. [online]. [2019-05-01]. Available at: <https://boessen.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/buscombe-the_idea_of_genre.pdf>.

5 PAJITNOV, A.: *Tetris*. [Digital game]. Moscow : Dorodnitsyn Computing Centre, 1984.

6 DAVIS, R.: *Virtual Pinball*. [Digital game]. New York : Open Source, 1999.

7 Compare to: MAGO, Z.: The Concept of Timelessness Applied to Advergaming. In: *Acta Ludologica*, 2018, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 18-33; RADOŠINSKÁ, J.: Omnivore vs Univore: A Reflection on the Current Knowledge on Cultural Taste and Cultural Consumption. In: *European Journal of Media, Art and Photography*, 2018, Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 98-109.

and theme may be appropriate tools for analyzing Hollywood films as well as many video games, another area, interactivity, is an essential part of every game's structure and a more appropriate way of examining and defining video games genres.”⁸ This claim makes clear, that even though there are some cultural predispositions to look at the genres in games similarly than look at genres in film, or literature, there is undoubtable fact, that games have much more depth due to actions of the receiver and this ‘traditional’ genres simply doesn’t define and categorize games satisfactory. Video game genre can be defined by a set of gameplay challenges, etc. Something, which never can be done with passive media, therefore, setting or game-play content can be completely ignored, unlike in other works of fiction. This Hollywoodization of genres within a games can help the organization and categorization but, shooter game will be still shooter game, because of the mechanics which player has to follow in order to continue. It doesn’t matter if it takes place in wild west with resemblance to western, or in far future with obvious science fiction elements. Theme can be useful guidance to the game, but within genre theory it is kind of contra-productive due to ignorance of interactivity as a key element of games as such.

2 Genre Taxonomy in Game Studies

The main objective for genres is to organize better the medium. As Clearwater states: “*Genre classification is a method of categorization used to better understand or comprehend a collection of cultural artifacts.*”⁹ With rapid growth of digital games and audience, there were many attempts and models presented within a game studies. Genres are, as stated earlier, logically inspired by the film or literature. But due to active participation, only physical resemblance doesn’t fit to most of the games. Without fixed borders between them, genres can overlap. With modern games we can look at the one big game consisting of many little games, which makes this organization even more complicated. One of the first tries to categorize games were made by Chris Crawford in the work *The Art of Computer Game Design*, where he indicated two basic categories: skill-and-action games (with 6 subcategories, among them:

8 WOLF, M.: *Genre and the Video Game*. [online]. [2019-05-02]. Available at: <<http://www.robinlionheart.com/gamedev/genres.xhtml#fn3>>.

9 CLEARWATER, D.: What Defines Video Game Genre? Thinking about Genre Study after the Great Divide. In *Loading...*, 2012, Vol. 5, No. 8, p. 38. [online]. [2019-05-02]. Available at: <journals.sfu.ca/loading/index.php/loading/article/download/67/105>.

sports, combat or maze) and strategy games (also with 6 subcategories, among them: adventures, wargames or educational games).¹⁰ Of course, during the years critics and supporters claimed pros and cons of the taxonomy, and came with more advanced, detailed theories. The problem with genre in games is, that due to constant evolution and overlapping between different aspects of game play, game mechanics and responds from audience, there cannot ever be perfect genre differentiation. Games are media of experience, so defying something just by the themes is pretty vague. Especially in terms that not all games are constructed and works with storytelling. Experience in games can be split to thousands of individual factors – games can be whatever game designers, and players want it to be. Therefore, by defining game and its place, interactivity should be considered more than the imagery. Classification by imagery ignores the fundamental differences and similarities which are to be found in player's experience from the game. Looking at games as a process more than just narrative media, Wolf compares digital games to classification of dances: *"Just as different forms of dance (foxtrot, waltz, ballet, jazz) are defined by how the dancers move rather than how they look, an examination of the variety and range of video games reveals the inadequacy of classification by iconography of even narrative-based games. While some video games can be classified in a manner similar to that of films (we might say that Outlaw is a Western, Space Invaders science fiction, and Combat a war game), classification by iconography ignores the fundamental differences and similarities which are to be found in the player's experience of the game."*¹¹

In game studies, there were pretty ground-breaking ideas, which helped to categorize digital games within their own aesthetic and mechanics. In the paper proposed by Hunickle, LeBlanc and Zubek, authors came with interesting way, how are games differently approached by authors, and audience. Their MDA framework formalizes the consumption of games by breaking them into their distinct components: Rules -> System -> "Fun". And then establishing their design counterparts: Mechanics -> Dynamics -> Aesthetics.¹²

10 CRAWFORD, C.: *The Art of Computer Games*. [online]. [2019-05-02]. Available at: <https://www.digitpress.com/library/books/book_art_of_computer_game_design.pdf>.

11 WOLF, M.: *Genre and the Video Game*. [online]. [2019-05-02]. Available at: <<http://www.robinlionheart.com/gamedev/genres.xhtml#fn3>>.

12 HUNICKLE, R., LEBLANC, M., ZUBEK, R.: *MDA: A Formal Approach to Game Design and Game Research*. [online]. [2019-05-01]. Available at: <<http://users.cs.northwestern.edu/~hunicke/MDA.pdf>>.

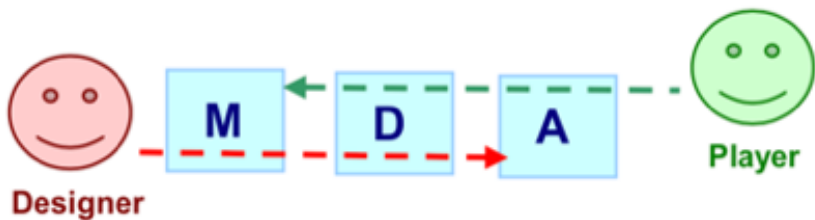
- Mechanics describes the particular components of the game, at the level of data representation and algorithms.
- Dynamics describes the run-time behavior of the mechanics acting on player inputs and each other’s outputs over time.
- Aesthetics describes the desirable emotional responses evoked in the player when she interacts with the game system.

Fundamental to the MDA framework is the idea, that games are more like artifacts than media, meaning, that the content of the game is its behavior – not the media that streams out of it towards the player. The paper brought interesting new scope to the taxonomy of games, especially with focus on games as consumable goods. In MDA framework, authors support the idea of organization via mutual consensus between player and designer, but claims, that both sides are looking at games via different scope. For better understanding, see Picture 1 and Picture 2.



Picture 1: Old vs. New Marketing

Source: HUNICKLE, R., LEBLANC, M., ZUBEK, R.: *MDA: A Formal Approach to Game Design and Game Research*. [online]. [2019-05-01]. Available at: <<http://users.cs.northwestern.edu/~hunicke/MDA.pdf>>.



Picture 2: MDA framework

Source: HUNICKLE, R., LEBLANC, M., ZUBEK, R.: *MDA: A Formal Approach to Game Design and Game Research*. [online]. [2019-05-01]. Available at: <<http://users.cs.northwestern.edu/~hunicke/MDA.pdf>>.

Although, proposed framework brought interesting ideas, the taxonomy itself had some flaws. Aesthetics were defined by authors by more directed vocabulary to 8 basic categories:

1. Sensation – game as sense-pleasure;
2. Fantasy – game as make believe;
3. Narrative – game as drama;
4. Challenge – game as obstacle course;
5. Fellowship – game as social framework;
6. Discovery – game as uncharted territory;
7. Expression – game as self-discovery;
8. Submission – game as pastime.

These identifications were pretty well organized for a broad topic of what makes game “fun”, or why player identify himself with concrete game based on gameplay. Basically, all digital games can be fitted in the mentioned categories, in paper claimed that around 3-4 categories can define the game. For example, *The Sims*¹³ can be discovery, fantasy, expression, narrative. The problem with the taxonomy is, that is very broad and compared to traditional genres is not very helpful in terms of organization or categorization especially with games such as *Minecraft*,¹⁴ which can easily fit in any of the 8 categories. Despite the flaws, proposed MDA framework redefined the categorization and doesn't stick with dogmatic theme-based genres, which only focus on theme or setting.

Many other notable game scholars contributed to the taxonomical/genre debate. Jesper Juul, Espen Aarseth and others views on genre and game studies are rather skeptical towards the traditional media. Juul argues, that genre is category that needs to be rethought with a critical perspective in mind, because current established genres accepted by the audience and industry do not take into account the complexing layering of genre that occurs within video games.¹⁵ One of the most covering paper on this topic was made by Thomas H. Apperley, who in his work *Genre and game studies: Toward a critical approach to video game genres* covered many theories, comes with 4 traditional game genres, which again take in account more interactive processes than physical resemblance. He identified as core genres: Simulation, Strategy, Action and Role-playing. Apperley argues that, all 4 have roots in pre-digital

13 MAXIS: *The Sims*. [Digital game]. Redwood City, CA : Electronic Arts, 2000.

14 MOJANG: *Minecraft*. [Digital game]. Stockholm, Sweden : Mojang, 2009.

15 JUUL, J.: Games Telling Stories? In *Game Studies*, 2001, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 10. [online]. [2018-05-03]. Available at: <<http://gamestudies.org/0101/juul-gts/>>.

games era: “simulation and role-play in pre-computer form of games, simulation in nonentertainment computer simulations and finally action, which is implicitly connected to cinema through its deployment of the terminology of that medium to mark key generic distinctions.”¹⁶ Apperley’s view again rethink the digital games as media and more works with them as cultural artefacts. While rethinking genre, he also proposes to shift the focus of genre in digital games from visual, narrative and interactive terminology to a specific focus on genres of interactivity.

Physical resemblance often works as an easy tool for navigation, but completely ignores deeper interactions between games – their differences and similarities in mechanics (how they are played, enjoyed and shaped by agent). Current very popular genre trend tends to define games just by very narrow scope. Take for example FPS genre. Shortcut for first person shooter, where the only objective to fit in to the genre category is, that game involves shooting, and camera angle is from the first person. Very popular ‘genre’ is extremely vague, but with added theme (from traditional media point of view) it can somehow work. Horror survival first person shooter can fit games and by the categorization means, it gives the audience the idea about the game. It provides more detailed division at some point, but crumbles all the aspects together just based on basic mechanics without notion to experience. Games like Portal,¹⁷ Call of Duty MW2,¹⁸ Doom:¹⁹ all of them are from first person and all of them involves shooting, but there is completely different experience from playing all of three games. All of them fulfill different fundamental needs and have different aesthetics, structure and most importantly different experience value. Genres and subgenres are fluid, but so are game mechanics. Digital games are extremely deep topic, but how we categorize them is brutally simplistic. Defined just by physical resemblance, theming, or camera angle completely ignores the depth and notion of digital games. We attach the Table 1 (collating genres are highlighted darker), with the current categorization/taxonomy of games by Steam platform, and PlayStation store.

16 APPERLEY, T.: Genre and Game Studies: Toward a Critical Approach to Video Game Genres. In *Simulation & Gaming*, 2006, Vol. 37, No. 1, p. 31. [online]. [2018-05-03]. Available at: <<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/75e7/1190071c01371ea5912f5db3725e6bc9dc7c.pdf>>.

17 VALVE: *Portal*. [Digital game]. Bellevue, WA : Valve, 2007.

18 INFINITY WARD: *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2*. [Digital game]. Santa Monica, CA : Activision, 2009.

19 ID SOFTWARE: *Doom*. [Digital game]. New York, NY : GT Interactive, 1993.

Table 1: Categorization by Steam & Ps Store

Steam	PlayStation store
Action	Action & Adventure
Adventure	Arcade
Casual	Driving & Racing & Fighting
Indie	Horror
Massively Multiplayer	Kids & Family
Racing	Party, Music & Dance
RPG	Platform
Simulation	Puzzle
Sports	Role-Playing
Strategy	Shooter
	Sport
	Strategy
	Unique

Source: own processing

As we can see, current genre taxonomy is pretty confusing and is not very helpful in organization. Other genre classifications, especially used for marketing promotions are also very vague, with every game defined simply as action, for kids, etc. Some games work, because of their pure simplicity but another has deep cultural values that overlap. Genre action adventure doesn't say absolutely anything about the game for the consumer, and is also hard regarding the creative ambitions of developers.

3 Tagging the Games

One of the new looks for taxonomy within digital games could be tagging instead of outdated categorizing inside boxes that doesn't fit. As we mentioned before, games evolved in massive cultural artefacts, which can be played and enjoyed differently. More like a single game, can be viewed as bundle of numerous games with different values, shared only by its rules and aesthetics. Tagging is a method, where instead of putting the stamp of 'action' to anything that involves player doing something in order to progress, applies keywords or labels similar to the scientific articles with easier organization. Steam already allows this function in some limited terms. Looking like beta version offers to users navigate through popular tags, which were created by community. This means, that as genres are

viewed as mutual understanding between players and developers, tags do the same job, but without the ideological limitations, which are many times outdated for current trends in gaming. With tagging, options like browsing the field via popular tags, or algorithms that helps recommend tags by players preferences (similar to recommended music on streaming platform Spotify), could completely reimagine the taxonomical framework within the digital games. With another technological advances, there is possibility to create so called visual map, which can help navigate and do the job – organize and compare similar titles. The first use of tags starts where genres are now – action still can be used as an tag, but without limitation it can be more precise, especially with more concrete subtags. But as Clarke points out, referring to the Steam try out new categorization: *“However, examining the 303 popular tags posted on Steam website (as of April 9, 2015) reveals that there are many tags representing aspects other than genre such as mood (e.g., violent, funny), themes (e.g., robots, magic), setting (e.g., modern, Rome), and visual style (e.g., hand-drawn, stylized). Additionally, when the tagging feature was first launched, users also generated noisy data representing their taste or viewpoint (e.g., “Garbage,” “Not a game”) which was later addressed by Steam as they allowed users to flag offensive, abusive, inappropriate or unhelpful tags or tags containing spoilers.*²⁰ Tagging could be very useful tool, but we still need to do a lot of testing, researching and most importantly, continue in debate on the topic. Tags shouldn’t be seen as user reviews – due to subjective nature of games tags can slip in to defying the game just on pure negative/positive experience. Even though using these labels have it flaws, it could be interesting to watch the keywords as taxonomical method in the future. More precise organization without limitations to the old boundaries is seen by author as very positive aspect of tagging.

Conclusion

Since the inception of digital games as a massive market and game studies as a scientific field, there was a discussion on genres and tries on taxonomical definitions and categorization of games. Due the nature of games, many attempts were useless, because of even over complicated

20 CLARKE, R., LEE, J., CLARK, N.: Why Video Games Genres Fail: A Classification Analysis. In *Games and Culture*, 2002, Vol. 12, No. 5, p. 10. [online]. [2019-05-05]. Available at: <<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1555412015591900>>.

division of genres/categories, or simply because of failed complex theory, especially with ignoring the complexity of digital games as cultural artifacts. It is logical, that if we view digital games as any other media, film and literature genre theories may be helpful for dividing games in categories mostly based on theme and structure. Aesthetical aspect is very important, but so is mechanics. Games are media of experience, can be very subjective, and just because they have physical resemblance to the film/novel, they can fulfill completely different fundamental needs. Exactly this is making them unique. Genre and its place in game theory is very complicated and unanswered topic, especially because there is no concrete yes or no answer to some of the questions. But sticking just to the core mechanics on one hand, or using just mildly similar theme to compare games and fitting them in to the same category shouldn't be the action for taxonomical framework of games. There are undoubtable assets, that already existing frameworks can bring to game genre studies but, openness to new ideas should be key to continue in this research question. Especially, if we consider interactivity as a key term within the games. New ideas with evolving scientific field will come and need to be examined. One method, tagging, could be helpful in understanding genre and be a much more effective way to organize already existing games without limitations for players and developers, to stick in prescribed borders, which haven't fitted since early, pre-digital era.

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“PROTEUS EFFECT” – POSSIBILITIES OF TRANSFORMATION AND SELF-PRESENTATION OF PLAYERS IN DIGITAL GAMES AND SOCIOCULTURAL REALITY

Lenka Rusňáková

ABSTRACT:

Digital games enable a player to use their virtual identity. They simultaneously use the available game mechanics to project this identity into the shape of variable characters. This raises a question whether an image created in this way influences mental and physical life of a player. Therefore, the main objective of the submitted study is to clarify the issue of a relationship between a technically conditioned environment of digital game and sociocultural reality. The basis for this study constitutes a research conducted by N. Yee and J. Bailenson in 2007 named Proteus effect, reflecting individual aspects of self-presentation and transformation of a player in digital games, as well as a more long-term impact of the Proteus effect on player's physical world. The ambition of the study is to follow up on the research – through a quantitative evaluation of a survey conducted in a form of a questionnaire, the author will acquire information about knowledge, attitudes, and opinions of selected respondents (digital games players) on the issue of projection of virtual and real images of an individual. An important role in specifying particular possibilities of transformation and self-presentation of a player in digital games according to the Proteus effect is played by the methods of logical analysis of text. The author builds their description of the discussed topic on media studies, ludology, digital games theory, philosophy, psychology, and sociology.

KEY WORDS:

cult of beauty and perfect body, digital game, experimentation with body, game (virtual) character, identity multiplication, Proteus effect, self-presentation and transformation of a player, virtual identity

1 Theoretical Overview of the Issue Instead of Introduction

Although stories of transformation of a human being into various multiplied identities can be found in ancient myths and legends, creation of multiple virtual identities has become a reality only in the 21st century. It is the Greek god Proteus and his ability to assume many different versions of himself that has given name to the “Proteus effect”, which is derived from an adjective “protean”, meaning “versatile” or “mutable”. The theory called Proteus effect was for the first time presented by

the researchers N. Yee and J. Bailenson in Stanford University in 2007 as a representation of human ability to construct multiple identities in virtual environment. This phenomenon also describes how behaviour of an individual – cyberspace participant – changes under the influence of external personality traits of their avatar.¹ Hereby, the presumption is that the users personify the desired characteristics in the represented images, while the avatar they have created has a certain impact on their behaviour in return. To enhance the Proteus effect, players often use archetypes and various stereotypical expressions (e.g. big breasts, athletic body, narrow waist). Other experts on the topic, however, claim that the position of this cult of beauty and perfect body is in decline, because players have grown tired of perfection and want to express their imagination in the game. The aforementioned, however, does not exclude the possibility that this cult is still present, but it is viewed very subjectively. The present cult of beauty is, on one hand, determined by a person’s individuality, but, on the other hand, is influenced by majority trends. It is a so-called cult of average Western beauty defined by general rules of business. The aforementioned also applies to the area of digital games, where the consumer of simulated images of beauty is not a passive viewer, but an active player in a game. It is, therefore, necessary to consider the way the game experience influences the image reception and how this image influences the player themselves in return.

The position of digital games is still set towards promoting an ideal body that is linked more to marketing than to the actual game. We support this claim by a research of B. Book. The author mentions a website *VZones*, where users can buy a body of male avatar in standard version for a price of 27.50 dollars, while the special offer containing big muscles and luxury leather and jeans clothing is offered for as much as 40 dollars. *VZones* is an interesting example of gender stereotype at work, as it promotes an idea that some kinds of body are worth more than others.² Theoreticians J. Jansz and R. G. Martis introduce surveys from years 2003 – 2005, which point out that the vast majority of one hundred and thirty analysed digital games contain various stereotypical features. Avatars are usually white; compared to male characters, women heroes are portrayed half-

1 YEE, N., BAIENSON, J.: The Proteus Effect: The Effect of Transformed Self-representation on Behavior. In *Human Communication Research*, 2007, 33/2007, p. 271.

2 BOOKS, B.: Moving Beyond the Game: Social Virtual Worlds. In *State of Play 2 Conference. Conference Proceedings*. New York : Law School in New York, 2004, p. 9.

naked or wearing sexist costumes considerably more frequently; and, most importantly – bodies of female characters are, to a great extent, portrayed in a hypersexual way.³ The game *Lara Croft (Eidos Interactive, Square Enix, 1996 – 2015)*, with the main character of a fighter Lara Croft portrayed in a spirit of an archetype “bombshell”, has become famous for its stereotypical depiction of female body in a digital game. S. E. Matrix states that the exceptional success of the game in question was caused by several factors. Lara Croft enabled the player to create a strong symbolic and emotional relationship with the main hero of the story. We talk about a strong identification with a fictitious character, mainly due to stimulation of sexual fantasy through hyper-realistic and hyper-feminine looks of the central character. S. E. Matrix supports this thesis with research that proves that the level of identification with Lara Croft is so strong that some players of the game would like to have the sex appeal and looks of this hero.⁴ The archetype “bombshell” further indicates using the motive of voyeurism and scopophilia, i.e. pleasure the subject (player) derives from looking at a perfect image of their object (game representative). When we think about it, it is no surprise that Lara Croft has become a sexual symbol and that it is men who represent the majority of players of this game title. System, on which the game is based on, indeed resembles Mulvey’s analysis of men’s desire to look at (naked) female body – it works that way in cinematography, so why not in games?

A study conducted in 2014 at Indiana University in the USA has, however, paradoxically shown that, in recent games, women are portrayed much less hyper-realistically compared to the past. Although emphasising sexuality of game characters persists, the study shows a decreasing trend in objectification of female characters looks. This phenomenon is caused mainly by a growing number of women working in the gaming industry.⁵ We can notice that women are becoming a core of research for many experts on digital games. It stems, among other things, from the fact that the majority of digital games consumers are men and virtual women arouse a fetishist feeling of an aforementioned pleasure from watching

3 JANSZ, J., MARTIS, G. R.: The Lara Phenomenon: Powerful Female Characters in Video Games. In *Sex Roles*, 2007, 56/2007, p. 143.

4 MATRIX, E. S.: *Cyberpop. Digital Lifestyles and Commodity Culture*. New York, London : Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2006, p. 129.

5 BRYAN, C.: *Women in Video Games Are Becoming Less Ridiculously Sexualized*. [online]. [2019-01-27]. Available at: <https://broadly.vice.com/en_us/article/women-in-video-games-are-becoming-less-ridiculously-sexualized>.

an ideal feminine body. Undoubtedly, we still find ourselves in times of disease of (from) beauty dominance. Based on the aforementioned, we assume that digital games play a certain role in the Proteus effect forming, in the meaning of expanding opportunities of transformation and self-presentation of a player in digital games (creating avatars with stereotypical appearance), as well as in sociocultural reality (making changes to player’s body to look more like a particular game character).

2 Research Methodology

Theoretical framework clarifying the issue of self-presentation of a player in digital games and sociocultural reality cannot be ignored, as the choice of who we are and how we present ourselves in virtual world of digital media cyberspace constitutes a basic aspect of our identity. Although the representing images – virtual (game) characters – are often perceived as results of a one-way process, we can assume that they change the way of player’s behaviour, actions, and, to a certain extent, also their appearance. Clarification of an issue of relationship between the technically conditioned environment of digital games and the sociocultural reality constitutes the content of the main objective of the submitted study. Through a quantitative evaluation of the survey conducted in a form of a questionnaire, we will acquire information from respondents about the issue of projection of virtual and real images of an individual in the sense of applying the theory called the Proteus effect. By interpreting the results, we will, among other things, identify the impact of representing images on a possible experimentation with real human body.

The research sample consists of full-time students of first and second degree of university study that are registered as students of theory of digital games study programme at the FMK UCM in Trnava, which allows us to assume that each member of the research sample plays digital games and, thus, is able to adequately express their opinion on the issue of the influence of technically conditioned environment of digital games on the projection of virtual and real images of an individual. We have based our selection of final set on the base set (the overall number of full-time students of digital games theory), which, in the academic year 2017/2018, comprised 211 individuals. Collection of data for our questionnaire was performed by a written questioning. For the final set, we have selected 137 respondents from the overall population of 221 with a 5% margin of error. Hypotheses connected to the quantitative

survey are formulated in a way that reflects the thematic orientation of the submitted questionnaire. Their wording is as follows:

- Hypothesis 1: The majority of respondents apply standardized beauty patterns in building their game character.
- Hypothesis 2: The majority of respondents consider the physical appearance of a game character a certain aspect of parasocial interaction with other virtual characters or opponents.
- Hypothesis 3: Projection of virtual and real images of an individual is, in case of the majority of interviewed respondents, primarily motivated by a desire for a better, more beautiful, and higher quality (virtual) life.
- Hypothesis 4: The majority of respondents have already created an avatar that represented an idealised version of their real appearance.
- Hypothesis 5: Respondents perceive the looks of avatars as a part of experimentation with their body.

3 Questionnaire Survey – Research Part

In this part, we present the evaluation of the questions in a form of interpretation of responses collected. In evaluating the results of quantitative analysis, we focus our attention on the collection of data concerning the issue of digital games and their relationship to the virtual identity of a player (A1 to A10) and collection of data concerning the question of digital games and their relation to real identity of a player (B1 to B6). For clarity, we have recorded the processed results in tables.

Digital game and virtual identity of a player (A)

Table 1: Respondents' attitude towards designing game characters (A1)

category	occurrence	%
yes, I consider it a key part of a digital game	29	21.20 %
it depends on the type of digital game, sometimes yes, sometimes no	86	62.80 %
it depends on my current preferences, sometimes yes, sometimes no	11	8.00 %
no, this option is not relevant or important	11	8.00 %
I can't give a definite response	0	0.00 %
total	137	100.00 %

Source: own processing

Focusing on the range of questions concerning digital games and their relation to virtual identity of a player, the first step was to determine the attitude of the respondents to designing game characters. 62.80% of the participants expressed a positive attitude; this fact is, however, dependant on the type of digital game and the game genre. Creation of avatars is considered a key part of playing by 21.20% of the respondents, regardless of the type of game, genre, or current preferences. Openness to producing virtual characters is also shown by 8% of respondents; however, their attitude to this process depends on their gaming preferences. Only 8% of the surveyed students do not consider designing their avatars an important part of a game and none of the respondents selected the choice “I can’t give a definite response”.

Table 2: Respondents’ attitude towards experimenting with the appearance of game characters (A2)

category	occurrence	%
yes, I consider it a key part of a digital game	34	24.80 %
it depends on the type of digital game, sometimes yes, sometimes no	61	44.50 %
it depends on my current preferences, sometimes yes, sometimes no	34	24.80 %
no, this option is not relevant or important	8	5.90 %
I can't give a definite response	0	0.00 %
total	137	100.00 %

Source: own processing

Almost half of the respondents (44.50%) answered the question of whether they are the kind of a player who likes to experiment with the looks of their game character (in a way of, for example, modifying its hair, body shape, clothing options, etc.) by stating that it depends on the type of digital game, i.e. that the game genre influences the way they experiment with game mechanics aimed at modifying the appearance of their virtual character. It is a key part of digital gaming for 24.80% of the participants. 24.80% of the respondents, representing an identical percentage to the previous alternative, talk about current preferences in relation to experimental construction of their avatar. This option is not relevant or important to only 5.90% of the participating students.

Table 3: Respondents' attitude towards more radical experimenting with avatars' appearance (A3)

category	occurrence	%
yes, I consider it a key part of a digital game	15	10.90 %
it depends on the type of digital game, sometimes yes, sometimes no	35	25.50 %
it depends on my current preferences, sometimes yes, sometimes no	31	22.60 %
no, this option is not relevant or important	53	38.70 %
I can't give a definite response	3	2.30 %
total	137	100.00 %

Source: own processing

In regards to the question of radical experimenting with the looks of the avatars, for example in a form of creating fantastic, monstrous, transgender, or hyper-masculine characters, the respondents' responses are considerably different. It is considered a key part of gaming only by 10.90% of the respondents. Further 25.50% of the participants approach radical experimenting with characters as dependent on the type of game and almost an identical number (22.60%) refer to their current preferences in connection to designing inhuman avatars. 38.70% of the participants find the option of a more radical experimentation with their game representative irrelevant and unimportant. 2.30% of the respondents cannot definitely answer this question.

Table 4: Using external mechanisms in changing the appearance of game characters (A4)

category	occurrence	%
yes, I have used it	92	67.20 %
no, I haven't used it	45	32.80 %
total	137	100.00 %

Source: own processing

In relation to the usage of external mechanisms (cheats, modes, or hacks) in order to change the outer look of a game character, 67.20% of the students gave a positive response. On the other hand, 32.80% of the participants have never used such a type of game mechanics configuration.

Table 5: Applying beauty standards in the appearance of game characters (A5)

category	occurrence	%
yes, I consider it a key part of a digital game	20	14.60 %
it depends on the type of digital game, sometimes yes, sometimes no	39	28.50 %
it depends on my current preferences, sometimes yes, sometimes no	43	31.40 %
no, this option is not relevant or important	34	24.80 %
I can't give a definite response	1	0.70 %
total	137	100.00 %

Source: own processing

We were also interested in the attitude of the respondents towards mainstream beauty standards and their application in the process of designing a game character. The most numerous group of the participants (31.40%) selected the option “it depends on my current preferences, sometimes yes, sometimes no”. Type and genre of the digital game as a decisive factor of how they treat the cult of beauty and perfect body was chosen by 28.50%. This option is not important to 24.80% of the respondents and 14.60% regard applying the beauty standards in designing their avatars as a key part of the game. 0.70% of the respondents could not answer this question.

Table 6: Respondents' preferences in choosing the body shape of game characters (A6)

category	occurrence	%
athletic body	37	27.00 %
average body	40	29.20 %
hyper-masculine or hyperreal body	1	0.70 %
overweight or obese body	5	3.60 %
extremely thin or emaciated body	6	4.40 %
I can't give a definite response, it depends on the game type	44	32.10 %
no, this option is not relevant or important	4	3.00 %
total	137	100.00 %

Source: own processing

32.10% of the respondents could not answer the question of what body shape they prefer in designing their avatar; according to them, it depends on the type of the game. The option “average body” was selected by 29.20% of the participants. We also registered the response “athletic body” (27.00%). The alternatives “extremely thin or emaciated body” (4.40%), “overweight or obese body” (3.60%), and “hyper-masculine, hyperreal body” (0.70%) were selected by minimum of participants. Manipulation with body shape is not an important part of playing for 3.00% of the participants.

Table 7: Respondents’ experience with negative reactions of players to the appearance of game characters (A7)

category	occurrence	%
yes	26	19.00 %
no	101	73.70 %
I can't give a definite response	10	7.30 %
total	137	100.00 %

Source: own processing

The goal of the next question was to point out the presence of prejudice and stereotypical re(actions) in digital games. Based on the questionnaire evaluation, we have found out that 73.70% of the survey participants have never encountered such negative reactions to the appearance of their game characters. On the other hand, 19.00% of the respondents mentioned occurrence of such reactions in digital games; 7.30% of the participants did not know for certain.

Table 8: Respondents’ experience with undesirable stereotypes and prejudice connected to the appearance of game characters (A8)

category	occurrence	%
yes, definitely	35	25.50 %
it depends on the type of digital game, sometimes yes, sometimes no	30	21.90 %
it depends on current preferences of a particular player, sometimes yes, sometimes no	24	17.50 %
no, definitely not	35	25.50 %
I can't give a definite response	13	9.60 %
total	137	100.00 %

Source: own processing

Question A8 asked whether players of digital games take prejudice and undesirable stereotypes (such as a woman is weaker, Afro-Americans are more aggressive, etc.) into account when choosing gender and race of a game character. Opposing responses “yes, definitely” and “no, definitely not” have gained identical 25.50%. The aforementioned state proves the fact that the way players approach digital games is purely individual. Further 21.90% of the respondents refer to the type of the game and 17.50% to the current game preferences. 9.60% of the participants do not provide their opinion on the topic.

Table 9: Appearance of game characters as a precondition of socialization with other players (A9)

category	occurrence	%
yes, definitely	32	23.40 %
it depends on the type of digital game, sometimes yes, sometimes no	45	32.80 %
it depends on current preferences of a particular player, sometimes yes, sometimes no	16	11.70 %
no, definitely not	39	28.50 %
I can't give a definite response	5	3.60 %
total	137	100.00 %

Source: own processing

According to the majority of the participants (32.80%), the question of whether the appearance of game characters can be seen as a precondition of socialization and interaction of a player with other game characters is a matter of the particular game or genre. Other 28.50% of the respondents state that the level of socialization and interaction is in no way determined by the avatar's appearance. On the other hand, 23.40% of the participants view this process as a significant part of playing, while only 11.70% of the respondents incline towards the option “it depends on current preferences of a particular player, sometimes yes, sometimes no”. 3.60% of the participating students do not give their opinion on the issue in question.

Table 10: Appearance of game characters as a way to impress other players (A10)

category	occurrence	%
yes, definitely	56	40.90 %
it depends on the type of digital game, sometimes yes, sometimes no	54	39.40 %
it depends on current preferences of a particular player, sometimes yes, sometimes no	13	9.50 %
no, definitely not	10	7.30 %
I can't give a definite response	4	2.90 %
total	137	100.00 %

Source: own processing

As regards the question of how other players view the game characters, we can reasonably state that almost half of the respondents (40.90%) find an interesting physical appearance of an avatar to be a certain element of competitiveness and a way to impress others in the game. Type of digital game (39.40%) and current preferences of a player (9.50%) represent further aspects that are involved in the stated type of interaction between the player, their character, and the gaming world. Negative response, where an attractive physical appearance of an avatar does not symbolize an element of competitiveness and a way to impress other users or their virtual representatives, is given only by 7.30% of the participants. The percentage of 2.90% represents respondents who cannot answer this question.

Digital game and real identity of a player (B)

Table 11: Appearance of game characters as a reflection of player's desire for a better life (B1)

category	occurrence	%
yes, definitely	40	29.20 %
it depends on the type of digital game, sometimes yes, sometimes no	30	21.90 %
it depends on current preferences of a particular player, sometimes yes, sometimes no	37	27.00 %
no, definitely not	17	12.40 %
I can't give a definite response	13	9.50 %
total	137	100.00 %

Source: own processing

Through the second series of questions, we are trying to clarify the impact of virtual world on everyday reality. The goal of the question B1 is to ascertain whether the respondents consider the choice of a game character’s physical appearance a reflection of player’s desire for a better, more enjoyable life. Almost one third of the respondents (29.30%) believe this statement to be true, however, according to 27.00% of the participants, this process of player’s immersion into the virtual world of a game is strongly interfered by current game preferences. 21.90% of the respondents refer to the game typology and genre and 12.40% express a sceptical approach towards the analysed phenomenon. A relatively high number of the respondents (9.50%) cannot give a definite response to this question.

Table 12: Validity of the relationship “attractiveness of game characters – perception of the player” (B2)

category	occurrence	%
yes, definitely	48	35.00 %
it depends on the type of digital game, sometimes yes, sometimes no	40	29.20 %
it depends on current preferences of a particular player, sometimes yes, sometimes no	20	14.60 %
no, definitely not	20	14.60 %
I can't give a definite response	9	6.60 %
total	137	100.00 %

Source: own processing

In the part “digital game and real identity of a player”, we are interested in the validity of a statement – the more likeable, attractive the game character, the more positive perception of its “owner” – the player by other users. More than one third of the respondents (35.00%) agree with this statement. According to them, the attractiveness of an avatar improves the way its real representative – player is viewed by other users of the game. We are talking about both the positive and negative attitude of a player towards judging other players, which is happening on the basis of the attractiveness of their game character. The second most selected response with 29.20% is the “it depends on the type of digital game, sometimes yes, sometimes no”. Current preferences, through which the player approaches judging the attractiveness of their and others’ avatar, are referred to by 14.60%. The same percentage (14.60%) is gained by the response “no, definitely not”. In conclusion of this part we state that as many as 6.60% of the respondents do not provide a relevant response to this question.

Table 13: Validity of the relationship “attractiveness of the game character – self-confidence of the player” (B3)

category	occurrence	%
yes, definitely	77	56.20 %
it depends on the type of digital game, sometimes yes, sometimes no	22	16.10 %
it depends on current preferences of a particular player, sometimes yes, sometimes no	25	18.20 %
no, definitely not	8	5.80 %
I can't give a definite response	5	3.70 %
total	137	100.00 %

Source: own processing

The objective of question B3 is to find out whether the attractiveness of a game character has an impact on strengthening self-confidence of its “owner” – the player. The majority of the participants (56.20%) are of an opinion that this statement is valid. Much lower percentage is obtained by the options “it depends on current preferences of a particular player, sometimes yes, sometimes no” (18.20%) and “it depends on the type of digital game, sometimes yes, sometimes no” (16.10%) – however, in both cases, the respondents are inclined to choose the alternative that in certain circumstances the boost in player’s self-esteem as a result of an attractive look of their avatar could really happen. Sceptical attitude is presented only by 5.80% of the participant and 3.70% of the respondents do not provide their opinion to this question.

Table 14: Respondents’ attitude towards creating idealized versions of their game characters (B4)

category	occurrence	%
yes	91	66.40 %
no	35	25.50 %
I can't give a definite response	11	8.10 %
total	127	100.00 %

Source: own processing

With regard to the question of creating game characters that represent an idealized version of themselves, a considerable number of respondents (66.40%) state that they have some experience with designing an avatar

in a way that represents their “idealized self”. An opposing opinion is held by 25.50% of the respondents; these have never tried such an activity in the process of constructing their game character’s appearance. A definite response is not presented by 11 participants of the survey (8.10%).

Table 15: Harmless experimentation of the respondent based on the appearance of game characters (B5)

category	occurrence	%
yes	28	20.40 %
no	96	70.10 %
I can't give a definite response	13	9.50 %
total	137	100.00 %

Source: own processing

The penultimate objective of the survey was to obtain information about whether the respondents have ever grown so close to their game character that its appearance would inspire a harmless experimentation with their own looks (e.g. cosplay, LARP, buying accessories, adjusting hair colour or haircut with an aim to look like a certain avatar). The responses show that more than two thirds of the participants (70.10%) have never subjected their body to such a harmless experimentation based on avatar’s appearance. The alternative “yes”, selected by 20.40% of the respondents, speaking about a fact that the participants are rather open to this phenomenon, is also of an interest of our research. The discussion about this topic is concluded by the option “I can’t give a definite response” chosen by 9.50% of the participants.

Table 16: Radical experimentation of the respondent based on the appearance of game characters (B6)

category	occurrence	%
yes	12	8.80 %
no	121	88.30 %
I can't give a definite response	4	2.90 %
total	137	100.00 %

Source: own processing

The quantitative research conducted on the basis of a written questionnaire is concluded by the question B6. It is also aimed at clarifying the impact of avatar's appearance on possible experimentation with player's body. At this point, however, we mainly pay our attention to more radical ways of manipulation with their looks (e.g. considering or using plastic surgery, tattoos, weight loss, body-building, and other more radical changes to the body with an aim to look like a certain game character). The vast majority of the participants (88.30%) have never been so influenced by a game character to modify their real appearance accordingly. On the other hand, there are 8.80% of the respondents, who have succumbed to such an activity in some way. 2.90% of the survey participants cannot express their view of this question.

4 Summary of the Conducted Research – Answers to Research Hypotheses

Detailed evaluation of the written questionnaire allows us to test – confirm or refute – the hypotheses we have defined in the methodological part of the study. The collected quantitative data could also be used as a basis for other similar researches.

- **Hypothesis 1:** The majority of respondents apply standardized beauty patterns in building their game character.

Views of hedonistic elements – physical appearance and beauty – are, to a great extent, conditioned by cultural and social patterns (Proteus effect). It means that, according to various researches, a large proportion of the digital game users tend to create their game characters as attractive, strong, young, with an athletic body. Based on the stated facts, we assumed that more than 50% of the respondents would construct their game character as reflecting traits expected by social and cultural conventions. From 137 survey participants, as many as 102 have in some way approached creating their avatar in accordance with mainstream beauty standards (e.g. a well-built man, attractive woman with a symmetrical curves, etc.). It means that as many as 74.50% of the respondents were motivated to do this activity by either their current preferences (43 respondents, 31.40%), particular game genre (39 respondents, 28.50%), or they considered creating an avatar a key part of playing (20 respondents, 14.60%). This option was unimportant for 34 participants (24.80%) and only 1 person was not able to respond to the question, which in total constitutes a significant minority in comparison

to the positive responses to the analysed problem. The stated results have also been confirmed by individual preferences connected to the process of building a game character according to the standardized standards of beauty – despite the fact that 44 respondents (32.10%) could not give a certain answer, as they thought that it is explicitly dependent on the type of digital game, 40 respondents (29.20%) prefer an average body shape of their game character, and as many as 37 participants (27.00%) enjoy constructing an athletic shape of their virtual body. The aforementioned Proteus effect has, thus, proved to be applied also in our research. Hypothesis 1 has been confirmed.

- **Hypothesis 2:** The majority of respondents consider the physical appearance of their game character a certain aspect of parasocial interaction with other virtual characters or opponents.

Digital games have been examined from the position of the impact the representing images of game characters have on the quality of (un)real life of a player. The game mode conditions the way in which a user is parasocially perceived and addressed by other players. Assuming virtual physical identity is connected not only to the game mode, but also to game genre, mainly role-playing or simulation games that allow the player to really live the life of their “representatives”. Therefore, we expected the respondents to regard physical appearance of their game character as an influential aspect of parasocial interaction with other virtual characters or opposing players. From 137 respondents, the majority (45 respondents, 32.80%) have indeed stated that the appearance of avatars can be seen as a certain prerequisite for interaction of a player with the gaming world, taking into account the particular game or genre. To this number, we have added further 23.40% of the participants (32 respondents), who consider this process a significant part of digital gaming and also 11.70% of the survey participants (16 respondents) referring to this aspect of digital games from the player’s current preferences point of view. Generally, we can state that, in all three cases, the respondents consider physical appearance of game characters a certain aspect of parasocial interaction with the gaming world – coming from either current preferences of the player, game genre, or individual playing tendencies. In total, we are talking about 67.90%, i.e. 93 respondents, who, compared to the remaining 28.50% (39 respondents; “no, definitely not”) and 3.60% (5 respondents; “I cannot give a definite response”) constitute a marked majority. It means that the hypothesis 2 has been confirmed.

- **Hypothesis 3:** Projection of virtual and real images of an individual is, in case of the majority of the interviewed respondents, primarily motivated by a desire for a better, more beautiful, and higher quality (virtual) life.

In cyberspace, body is represented by a certain textual description. The fact that self-presentation through virtual image of a person is grounded in the text represents a great means to achieve a more perfect (virtual) life. Even the environment of digital games makes player's life easier and more special by allowing them to assume identity of their choice, choose a fictitious name or gender of their avatar. Based on the aforementioned we assumed that selecting physical appearance of the game character could, for the majority of the respondents, be considered a reflection of their desire to have a better, more enjoyable life. Almost one third of the participating students (40 respondents, 29.30%) strongly agreed with the described statement. According to 37 respondents (27.00%), this process of user's immersion into the virtual world is considerably dependent on player's preferences and other 30 participants (21.90%) referred to game typology. As many as 107 participants (78.20%) have shown a positive attitude towards the analysed phenomenon. In contrast, only 17 respondents (12.40%) have not found physical appearance of their game characters a tool to achieve a more enjoyable, better quality (virtual) life and 13 participants (9.50%) could not give a concrete response to this answer. Thus, the hypothesis 3 has been confirmed.

- **Hypothesis 4:** The majority of respondents have already created an avatar that represented an idealised version of their real appearance.

Although there is an apparent trend in constructing avatars different from real appearance of the player, we assumed that working with the so-called "idealized self" still dominates in constructing virtual characters. The majority of the respondents have at some point created a game character that represented their idealized version, within the meaning of the statement "this is what I would like to look like". As many as 91 respondents (66.40%) confirmed having a certain experience with creating avatars representing their "idealized selves". The opposing opinion was selected by only 35 respondents (25.50%); these have never tried a similar activity in the process of constructing the appearance of their game characters. 11 survey participants (8.10%) did not provide a definite response. Our hypothesis 4 has been confirmed.

- **Hypothesis 5:** Respondents perceive the looks of avatars as a part of experimentation with their body.

Pervasion of artificial reality into the everyday reality means that the modelled reality can project itself also in real life. Therefore, we assumed that identification of a player with their game representative cannot exist without the constructed virtual reality affecting real identity of a player in return. This means that the respondents perceive the appearance of their avatars as a part of harmless experimentation (e.g. cosplay, LARP, buying accessories) or radical experimentation (considering or undergoing plastic surgery, tattoos, losing weight) with their bodies. More than two thirds of the survey participants (96 respondents, 70.10%) have never subjected their body to harmless experimentation based on an avatar’s image. Especially interesting for our research is the alternative “yes” that has been selected by 28 respondents (20.40%). 13 participants (9.50%) did not give a definite response. In regard to the question of a more radical manipulation with the appearance of a player with an aim to look like a certain game character, the majority of the participants (121 respondents, 88.30%) have never been influenced by a game character to such an extent that they would adjust their real appearance to match its. On the other hand, there are 12 respondents (8.80%) who have “succumbed” to such an activity at some point of their life. 4 survey participants (2.90%) did not provide their opinion on this question. Despite the fact that statistical data evaluation cannot be done (variables cannot be stratified in relation to already existing statistical data, because a similar research reflecting the impact of avatar’s appearance on experimentation with player’s real body has not been conducted yet), we claim that the minority of respondents (28 participants, 20.40% - harmless experimentation; 12 respondents, 8.80% - radical experimentation) really perceive the appearance of avatars as a part of experimentation with their own bodies. However, we cannot definitely verify – confirm or refute - the hypothesis 5.

Conclusion

The data reflecting the issue of a player’s self-presentation on the basis of their avatar’s appearance cannot be ignored, as the choice of who we are and how we present ourselves in virtual world constitutes a basic aspect of our identity. Although representing images are often perceived as results of a one-way process, they certainly change the way

we behave, act, and look like. The aforementioned fact is also directly related to digital games. Through game mechanics, user handles their virtual identity. They use the mechanics to project their own “self” in the form of constructed avatars. The Proteus effect aims to give an answer to the question whether an image created in such way influences mental and physical life of a player. We have also applied its concept in an attempt to examine the impact of ideal images of game representatives on sociocultural reality. We have included quantitative analysis, through which we have complemented existing data (research into the Proteus effect) with a number of statistical data, in our research process. The results of the conducted research have shown that creating avatars has an impact on a certain percentage of players, at least in the area of various materialized effects. In some cases, this experimentation manifests itself also to a more extreme extent. However, it is appropriate to add that players still approach this activity in a very reserved manner. In conclusion, we would like to add that the extent to which the impact of game characters on manipulation with real appearance of a player is dependent on several factors (e.g. a concrete type of digital game, game genre, marketing intentions of game designers, membership in sub-cultures and fan groups, or motivation and goals of a player). However, due to the existence of various aspects involved in the formation of a relationship game character – player, we cannot define a direct relation between the analysed variables. Despite this limitation, we want to accentuate that the main objective of the submitted study has not been its external validity, but rather a reflection of internal side of this problem. By choosing this approach, we have been able to fulfil the main objective of the study, which was to clarify the issue of the relationship between technically conditioned environment of a digital game and the sociocultural reality.

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CONSUMER INNOVATIVENESS OF THE ELDERLY. DO GENDER AND NATIONAL CULTURE MATTER? EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON THE CONSUMERS AT THE AGE OF 60 AND OVER IN CENTRAL EUROPE

Sylvia Badowska

ABSTRACT:

The study goal is to identify and compare the level of consumer innovativeness among the elderly and verify whether gender and national culture affect the elderly's consumer innovativeness. To verify the research objective the surveys were carried out among the representatives of the elderly people participating in lectures at the selected Third Age Universities in Slovenia, the Czech Republic and Poland in the period of 2017–2018. To collect data the PAPI technique was employed and the smartphone as the object of the study was chosen. To obtain results, the domain specific innovativeness approach was applied and the modified domain specific innovativeness (DSI) scale was employed. The construct was measured on a five-point Likert scale. The outcomes suggest that the level of consumer innovativeness for the tested national samples is varied definitely. It is differentiated by gender, as well as by nationality understood also as national culture. It seems that among the surveyed populations in terms of the smartphone, the Polish consumers at the age of 60 and over seem to be the most innovative, then the Slovenians, and the Czechs. The findings will endow academics and practitioners with insight by illustrating the effects of national culture and innovativeness in consumer behaviour in terms of applying suitable activities for international marketing. They will also contribute to social and technological inclusion of the Central European elderly people into the digital world.

KEY WORDS:

Central Europe, consumer 60 and over, consumer innovativeness, domain specific innovativeness, domain specific innovativeness (DSI) scale, elderly, gender, national culture, smartphone, the elderly people

Introduction

The processes of market integrations, globalization and uniformization of consumer behaviour have become both a challenge and an opportunity for business to implement their development strategies based on international expansion. Globalization has led to the increasing belief among marketing managers that consumer behaviour in different nations is converging into general common patterns that may serve as

a common ground for predicting the adoption of an innovation.¹ This is particularly observed on the market of high tech goods and services, where there is a perception that due to internet mass communication, unified consumers' attitudes towards innovation evolved on different latitudes. As practice shows, young consumers are the first target market chosen by business for high-tech products due to the fact of demonstrating a greater interest in product innovations. What's more some theoretical studies point out that the elderly are defined as digital immigrants in relation to new technologies² and those consumers are still not ready enough to obtain high-tech innovations. Nevertheless, the current world is facing a major challenge of changes in the structure of human population in the world due to age. With the increase of life expectancy and low mortality resulting from the development of civilization (especially in medicine), and a change of lifestyle and low fertility in societies there were a substantial transformation. For the first time in human history, in around 2020, the number of people aged 65 or over will outnumber children under the age of 5. The number of people aged 65 and over is projected to grow to nearly 1.5 billion in 2050, with the biggest increase in the developing countries.³ Significant changes in the population structure are also observed in Central and Eastern Europe. In 2015 the average age for the selected countries in the region, such as: Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Lithuania were 39.7; 41.4; 43.0 and 42.7, respectively. However, in 2050 these countries will have some of the oldest demographic profiles worldwide, and will constitute for Poland -52.2, the Czech Republic - 47.9; - Slovenia - 49.7; Lithuania -46.2, respectively. Such a new demographic structure has an impact on appearing of consumption patterns also for high tech markets. More and more future consumers will have gray hair, but will be users of technologically advanced goods and services constituting a crucial target market for business soon. Despite of those facts, a deep lacuna of cross cultural comparative studies on the behaviour of elderly

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- 1 YALCINKAYA, G.: A Culture-based Approach to Understanding the Adoption and Diffusion of New Products Across Countries. In *International Marketing Review*, 2008, Vol. 25, No. 2, p. 202-221.
 - 2 ŠVECOVÁ, M., KABÁT, M.: Digital Competences: Teaching Seniors. How to Better Control Their Smartphones. In KUSÁ, A., ZAUŠKOVÁ, A., RUSŇÁKOVÁ, L. (eds.): *Marketing Identity. Digital Mirrors – part II. Conference Proceedings*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2018, p. 289-297.
 - 3 See: *World Population Prospects: The Revision 2017*. New York : United Nations, 2017.

consumers in this part of Europe is observed. Especially it is noted in the field of innovation that according to previous study outcomes, consumer innovativeness determines tendencies to adopt innovative goods and services.

Therefore, the research sheds light on the issues of the elderly consumers and innovativeness in Central Europe. The research aims to identify and compare the level of consumer innovativeness among the elderly of the selected Central European countries and verify whether gender and national culture affect the elderly's consumer innovativeness. To verify the research objective the surveys were carried out among the representatives of the elderly consumers in Slovenia, the Czech Republic and Poland in the period of 2017–2018. The sampling was conducted among the participants of the selected Third Age Universities in those countries. The reason to single out those nations derived from the fact that all the countries share common characteristics: becoming ones of the oldest societies of the world in 2050; belong to Slavonic cultural group; and have post-communist and transformation experiences. Thus, they share some common ground, that will constitute a pretty clear background for defining research differences. To collect data the PAPI technique was employed and the smartphone as the object of the study was chosen by the author. To obtain results, the domain specific innovativeness approach was applied and the modified domain specific innovativeness (DSI) scale was employed. The construct was measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1–‘strongly disagree’, to 5–‘strongly agree’. These study findings will endow academics and practitioners with insight by illustrating the effects of national culture and innovativeness in consumer behaviour in terms of applying suitable activities for international marketing. This will also contribute to better understanding the elderly consumer behaviour generally. As well the study outcomes will fostersocial and technological inclusion of the elderly in Central Europe as a market segment mostly left behind by marketers as still not ready enough to absorb high tech innovations. This paper is organized as follows: the literature review is provided in brief in section 1. Next, the research methodology is presented in chapter 2, and subsequently the results are described in section 3. Finally, discussion and conclusion with practical and social implications are illustrated in the closing chapter.

1 Consumer Innovativeness in Literature in Brief

Making innovative decisions and/or using innovative products depends on the individuals' preferences and predispositions which vary among consumers⁴ and is connected with consumer innovativeness.⁵ Firstly, consumer innovativeness was perceived by academics as a degree to which a person or individuals adopt new ideas than the average members of their social circles.⁶ Then innovativeness was associated with psychological and/or social attributes.⁷ Individuals' innovativeness might be impacted by a tendency to go with the crowd and the status quo, avoiding changing traditions and preferring not to stand out from the circle.⁸ The consumer innovativeness is defined by the multiple level of abstraction of this notion, eg. innate innovativeness, domain-specific innovativeness and actualized innovativeness.^{9, 10, 11, 12} The first one as innate innovativeness concerns a range of personality traits possessed by every human being and observed as the degree to which an individual makes innovation decisions independently from the communicated experience of others.¹³

4 HAUSER, J. R., TOUBIA, O.: The Impact of Utility Balance and Endogeneity in Conjoint Analysis. In *Marketing Science*, 2005, Vol. 24, No. 3, p. 498-507.

5 MIDGLEY, D. F., DOWLING, G. R.: Innovativeness: The Concept and Its Measurement. In *Journal of Consumer Research*, 1978, Vol. 4, No. 4, p. 229-242.

6 For more information, see: ROGERS, E. M., SHOEMAKER, F. F.: *Communication of Innovations*. New York : The Free Press, 1971.

7 See: MIDGLEY, D. F.: *Innovation and New Product Marketing*. Londra : Croom Helm, 1977.

8 ALKAILANI, A., KUMAR, R.: Impacting Innovativeness: The Role of Interpersonal Influences and Cultural Dimensions on Consumer Innovativeness. In *Journal of Strategic Innovation and Sustainability*, 2016, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 62-79.

9 See also: MOWEN, J.: *The 3M Model of Motivation and Personality: Theory and Empirical Applications to Consumer Behavior*. Norwell, MA : Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2000.

10 HIRUNYAWIPADA, T., PASWAN, A. K.: Consumer Innovativeness and Perceived Risk: Implications for High Technology Product Adoption. In *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 2006, Vol. 23, No. 4, p. 333-358.

11 VANDECASTEELE, B., GEUENS, M.: Motivated Consumer Innovativeness: Concept, Measurement, and Validation. In *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 2010, No. 27, p. 308-318.

12 HIRUNYAWIPADA, T., PASWAN, A. K.: Consumer Innovativeness and Perceived Risk: Implications for High Technology Product Adoption. In *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 2006, Vol. 23, No. 4, p. 333-358.

13 MIDGLEY, D. F., DOWLING, G. R.: Innovativeness: The Concept and Its Measurement. In *Journal of Consumer Research*, 1978, Vol. 4, No. 4, p. 229-242.

Also it is understood as an inclination to acquire new and various products and brands rather than remain with the previous choices and consumer patterns¹⁴ or noticed as a personal tendency to accept new products.¹⁵ The second approach is defined as the domain-specific innovativeness and perceived as an inclination to accept innovative goods and services in a specific domain¹⁶ and seems to be a substantial predictor of innovation adoption.¹⁷ The actualized innovativeness is understood as individuals' actual innovative behaviour.¹⁸

Thus, nowadays in the consumer behaviour field, consumer innovativeness is defined as a tendency to look for and test new products¹⁹ and the inclination to purchase new goods and/or services, before other consumers do or products that others have not heard of.²⁰ The phenomenon lead consumers from routinized repeatable purchasing acts towards more modified and various buying processes.²¹ The factors moderating the consumer innovativeness inquire e.g. novelty seeking, needs of stimulation and uniqueness or decision making autonomy.²² Consumer innovativeness is a widely used construct to predict new

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- 14 TEENKAMP, J. et al.: A Crossnational Investigation into the Individual and National Cultural Antecedents of Consumer Innovativeness. In *Journal of Marketing*, 1999, No. 63, p. 55-69.
 - 15 TELLI, S. G. et al.: Global Consumer Innovativeness: Cross-country Differences and Demographic Commonalities. In *Journal of International Marketing*, 2009, Vol. 17, No. 2, p. 1-22.
 - 16 See: FOXALL, G. R. et al.: *Consumer Psychology for Marketing*. London : International Thomson Business Press, 1998.
 - 17 HIRUNYAWIPADA, T., PASWAN, A. K.: Consumer Innovativeness and Perceived Risk: Implications for High Technology Product Adoption. In *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 2006, Vol. 23, No. 4, p. 333-358.
 - 18 For more information, see: MIDGLEY, D. F.: *Innovation and New Product Marketing*. Londra : Croom Helm, 1977.
 - 19 AILAWADI, K. L. et al.: Pursuing the Value Conscious Consumer: Store Brands Versus National Brand Promotions. In *Journal of Marketing*, 2001, Vol. 65, No. 1, p. 71-89.
 - 20 KOSCHATE-FISCHER, N. et al.: Do Life Events Always Lead to Change in Purchase? The Mediating Role of Change in Consumer Innovativeness, the Variety Seeking Tendency, and Price Consciousness. In *Journal of the Academic Marketing Science*, 2018, No. 46, p. 516-536.
 - 21 HIRSCHMANN, E. C.: Innovativeness, Novelty Seeking, and Consumer Creativity. In *Journal of Consumer Research*, 1980, Vol. 7, No. 3, p. 283-295.
 - 22 ROEHRICH, G.: Consumer Innovativeness-concepts and Measurements. In *Journal of Business Research*, 2004, Vol. 57, No. 6, p. 671-677.

product adoption²³ and plays a substantial role in the processes of diffusion and acceptance of new offers and brands.²⁴ The previous studies show that individuals with high innovativeness have a tendency to show positive attitude towards a particular innovation than the ones with a low level of innovativeness.²⁵ High-innovative consumers also share well-accepted opinions and thoughts concerning new products influencing other in their circles.²⁶ It is likely that consumers with high level of innovativeness tend to choose radical innovations and those with lower level prefer incremental solutions.²⁷ The distinction between different levels of consumer innovativeness (high versus low) provides an understanding of innovation acceptance and allows marketers to develop more targeted strategies for the launch of new products.²⁸ Consumer innovativeness seems to be affected by demographic variables, e.g. age influences it negatively^{29, 30} however it was argued by others suggesting that no significant effects of age exists.³¹ Moreover, consumers' eagerness

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- 23 GOLDSMITH, R. E., HOFACKER, C.: Measuring Consumer Innovativeness. In *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 1991, Vol. 19, No. 3, p. 209-221.
 - 24 IM, S. et al.: An Empirical Study of Innate Consumer Innovativeness, Personal Characteristics, and New-product Adoption Behaviour. In *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 2003, Vol. 31, No. 1, p. 61-73.
 - 25 GUMEL, A. M.: Does Consumer Innovativeness Matter? Predicting Customer Behaviour of a New Financial Architecture. In *Turkish Journal of Islamic Economics, TUJISE*, 2018, Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 145-172.
 - 26 HO, H., WU, W.: Role of Innovativeness of Consumer in Relationship between Perceived Attributes of New Products and Intention to Adopt. In *International Journal of Electronic Business Management*, 2011, Vol. 9, No. 3, p. 258-266.
 - 27 TELLI, S. G. et al.: Global Consumer Innovativeness: Cross-Country Differences and Demographic Commonalities. In *Journal of International Marketing*, 2009, Vol. 17, No. 2, p. 1-22.
 - 28 LEICHTA, T. et al.: Consumer Innovativeness and Intentioned Autonomous Car Adoption. In *Journal of High Technology Management Research*, 2018, Vol. 29, No. 1, p. 1-11.
 - 29 STEENKAMP, J. et al.: A Crossnational Investigation into the Individual and National Cultural Antecedents of Consumer Innovativeness. In *Journal of Marketing*, 1999, No. 63, p. 55-69.
 - 30 TELLI, S. G. et al.: Global Consumer Innovativeness: Cross-Country Differences and Demographic Commonalities. In *Journal of International Marketing*, 2009, Vol. 17, No. 2, p. 1-22.
 - 31 IM, S. et al.: An Empirical Study of Innate Consumer Innovativeness, Personal Characteristics, and New-product Adoption Behaviour. In *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 2003, Vol. 31, No. 1, p. 61-73.

for purchasing new products differs by product category and country in fact.³² Consumers’ innovativeness, as psychological and behavioural result, is affected by national culture.³³ Culture is understood as the collective mental programming of the people in an environment and varies among countries.³⁴ It affects purchasing of specific products, consumption structure, individual decision-making and communication processes.³⁵ Consumers’ innovativeness is significantly positively influenced by such culture dimensions as individualism, and masculinity³⁶ and negatively by uncertainty avoidance.^{37, 38} Despite of growing globalization, cultural values have an impact on local consumers as it was before and on account of national culture impact, cross cultural consumer behaviour appears to be more heterogeneous.^{39, 40, 41} Additional evidence shows that national values, norms and culture differences determine consumer motivation

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- 32 TELLI, S. G. et al.: Global Consumer Innovativeness: Cross-Country Differences and Demographic Commonalities. In *Journal of International Marketing*, 2009, Vol. 17, No. 2, p. 1-22.
- 33 STEENKAMP, J. B. E. M., BAUMGARTNER, H.: Assessing Measurement Invariance in Cross-national Consumer Research. In *Journal of Consumer Research*, 1998, Vol. 25, No. 1, p. 78-90.
- 34 See: HOFSTEDE, G.: *Culture’s Consequences: International Differences in Work-related Values*. Beverly Hills, CA : Sage, 1980.
- 35 See also: ENGEL, J. F. et al.: *Consumer Behaviour*. Fort Worth : The Dryden Press, 1993.
- 36 STEENKAMP, J. et al.: A Crossnational Investigation into the Individual and National Cultural Antecedents of Consumer Innovativeness. In *Journal of Marketing*, 1999, No. 63, p. 55-69.
- 37 STEENKAMP, J. et al.: A Crossnational Investigation into the Individual and National Cultural Antecedents of Consumer Innovativeness. In *Journal of Marketing*, 1999, No. 63, p. 55-69.
- 38 SUNDQVIST, S. et al.: The Effects of Country Characteristics, Cultural Similarity and Adoption Timing on the Diffusion of Wireless Communications. In *Journal of Business Research*, 2005, Vol. 58, No. 1, p. 107-110.
- 39 DE MOOIJ, M., HOFSTEDE, G.: The Hofstede Model: Applications to Global Branding and Advertising Strategy and Research. In *International Journal of Advertising*, 2010, Vol. 29, No. 1, p. 85-110.
- 40 DE MOOIJ, M., HOFSTEDE, G.: Cross-cultural Consumer Behavior: A Review of Research Findings. In *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 2011, Vol. 23, No. 3-4, p. 181-192.
- 41 DE MOOIJ, M., HOFSTEDE, G.: Convergence and Divergence in Consumer Behavior: Implications for International Retailing. In *Journal of Retailing*, 2002, No. 78, p. 61-69.

and behaviour.^{42, 43, 44} Cultural values at the national level influences individual's personality traits.⁴⁵ However, certain common interests are shared by diverse cultures.⁴⁶ It is essential to business to understand the process of new product adoption among consumers of diverse cultures (especially in the case of radical one) to secure their market success.⁴⁷ Together with the in-depth studies on innovation, consumer innovation measurement was launched and can be carried out at three levels:⁴⁸

- general level - measurement of any news (regarding the product, behaviour, etc.);
- product level - measurement of innovation or novelty of the product;
- domain-specific level - a product in a specific product category.

One of the well-adjusted scales to measure the level of consumer innovativeness is the domain specific innovativeness scale (DSI).⁴⁹ It estimates the consumer's innovativeness towards a specific product within a given product category. This scale is one-dimensional with high internal consistency.⁵⁰ The DSI scale suggests the likelihood of individuals' behaviour based on responses from descriptions of specific

42 MARKUS, H. R., KITAYAMA, S.: Culture and the Self-implications for Cognition, Emotion and Motivation. In *Psychological Review*, 1991, Vol. 98, No. 2, p. 224-253.

43 PARK, J. K. et al.: Multidimensional Trust Building in Eretailing: Cross-cultural Differences in Trust Formation and Implications for Perceived Risk. In *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 2012, Vol. 19, No. 3, p. 304-312.

44 TRUONG, Y.: A Cross-country Study of Consumer Innovativeness and Technological Service Innovation. In *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 2013, No. 20, p. 1-22.

45 LIM, H., PARK, J. S.: The Effects of National Culture and Cosmopolitanism on Consumers' Adoption of Innovation: A Cross-cultural Comparison. In *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 2013, Vol. 25, No. 1, p. 16-28.

46 See: MOWEN, J. C., MINOR, M. S.: *Consumer Behavior: A Framework*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey : Prentice Hall, 2001.

47 PATWARDHAN, A. M.: Consumers' Intention to Adopt Radically New Products: A Conceptual Model of Causal Cultural Explanation. In *Journal of Customer Behaviour*, 2013, Vol. 12, No. 2-3, p. 247-259.

48 ROEHRICH, G.: Consumer Innovativeness – Concepts and Measurements. In *Journal of Business Research*, 2004, Vol. 57, No. 6, p. 671-677.

49 GOLDSMITH, R. E., HOFACKER, C.: Measuring Consumer Innovativeness. In *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 1991, Vol. 19, No. 3, p. 209-221.

50 SZMIGIN, I., CARRIGAN, M.: The Older Consumer as Innovator: Does Cognitive Age Hold the Key? In *Journal of Marketing Management*, 2000, Vol. 16, No. 5, p. 505-527.

situations depending on the context.^{51,52} It is more suitable for attempts to identify likely types of specific purchasing behaviour and focuses primarily on the consumer and not on the product.

2 Research Methodology

This empirical study sheds light on the issues of the elderly consumers and innovativeness in the selected Central European countries. The research aims to identify and compare the level of consumer innovativeness among the elderly of the selected Central European countries and verify whether gender and national culture affect the elderly's consumer innovativeness on the example of a mobile technological product as the smartphone in Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovenia. The scientific problem concerns finding the answer to the following questions:

- what is the level of consumer innovativeness among the elderly in the selected Central Europe countries?
- how strongly those studied populations differ from each other in this aspect?

The main hypothesis suggests that: H. in the case of a mobile technological product such as the smartphone, among the elderly users, the level of consumer innovativeness is related to their gender and national culture. For this study, the term 'elderly consumer' refers to individuals at the ages of 60 and above. The research was based and developed on the previous studies of Szmigin and Carrigan,⁵³ and Truong.⁵⁴ The construct 'consumer innovativeness' covers the following ten items adapted from the above mentioned research:

- relative time to start using the smartphone with regard to the behaviour of the social circle;
- interest in buying the latest version of the smartphone if it is available on the market;

51 GOLDSMITH, R. E. et al.: The Generality/Specificity Issue in Consumer Innovativeness Research. In *Technovation*, 1995, Vol. 15, No. 10, p. 601-613.

52 SZMIGIN, I., CARRIGAN, M.: The Older Consumer as Innovator: Does Cognitive Age Hold the Key? In *Journal of Marketing Management*, 2000, Vol. 16, No. 5, p. 505-527.

53 SZMIGIN, I., CARRIGAN, M.: The Older Consumer as Innovator: Does Cognitive Age Hold the Key? In *Journal of Marketing Management*, 2000, Vol. 16, No. 5, p. 505-527.

54 TRUONG, Y.: A Cross-country Study of Consumer Innovativeness and Technological Service Innovation. In *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 2013, No. 20, p. 1-22.

- relative frequency of the purchase of the smartphone in relation to the experience of the social circle;
- interest in buying the latest version of the smartphone without knowledge of its features;
- a subjective assessment of being the last who uses the latest version of the product in relation to people of the respondent's circle;
- a subjective assessment of the time to get to know about the latest version of the product in relation to people of the respondent's circle;
- a general interest in technological novelties;
- a frequency of visits to departments in stores/supermarkets which sell with the product;
- a subjective assessment of the level of knowledge concerning the product in relation to people of the respondent's circle;
- a propensity to purchase the latest version of the product in the future if the necessity appears.

The statements of the questionnaire were adjusted to the studied object and local requirements (a product, a language, the size of fonts). In the survey the adapted statements had 7 positive and 3 negative overtones for the respondents. The construct items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1-‘strongly disagree’, to 5-‘strongly agree’. For targeting the smartphone users, the PAPI technique was used and pre-tested in pilots. The proper surveys were conducted among the elderly in the Republic of Slovenia in 2017, and in the Czech Republic and Poland in 2018. In this study the selective quota sampling procedure was employed (age and gender). To obtain the sufficient number of the respondents in all there search samples, the survey for the elderly people was carried out among the participants of the Third Age Universities. The questionnaires were distributed among all the Third Age Universities students, who attended lectures on the survey days. Finally, the level of return was 80%. The specificities of the samples’ characteristics are presented in Table1.

Table 1: The specificities of the samples’ characteristics by country

Items	Nationalsamples		
	Slovenia	Czechia	Poland
Year of data collection	2017	2018	2018
No. of respondents	322	522	981
No. of smartphone users	142	270	664
Gender			
Female	88%	88%	83%
Male	11%	12%	14%
no data	1%	0%	3%
Age			
60-69 yearsold	75%	64%	43%
70-79 yearsold	23%	32%	39%
80 and aboveyearsold	2%	4%	11%

Source: author’s own study based on the original research (2017-2018)

The process of a comparative analysis of the studied respondent groups consisted of two stages: firstly, statistic descriptive analysis was conducted to get to know the characteristics of those groups and finally, the level of consumer innovativeness was estimated. To measure the consumer innovativeness level, the modified domain specific innovativeness (DSI) scale was applied. Within the modified scale, respondents can obtain a minimum score of 10, and a maximum of 50. For the negative overtone statements, the respondents’ results were revised to positive statements. Within the scale, five result sections of a consumer innovativeness were determined correspondingly and they were as follows: the A section (10.00-17.99) for definitely non-innovative ones; B (18.00-25.99) for non-innovative ones; C (26.00-33.99) for neither non-innovative nor innovative ones; D (34.00-41.99) for innovative ones and E (42.00-50.00) for definitely innovative ones. Then, the results obtained by each person in all the ten statements were summed up. At this stage, all the respondents whose answers for any of the ten statements contained deficiencies or no gender was indicated were rejected. Finally, 778 respondents’ declarations were selected for the further analysis. The specificities of the samples’ characteristics taken for further analysis are presented in Table 2. Then, the average results and standard deviations for those national (Slovenian, Czech and Polish) and gender (men and women) groups were estimated.

Table 2: The specificities of the samples' characteristics taken for the further analysis by gender and country

Items	Nationalsamples			
	Slovenia	Czech Republic	Poland	Total
Gender (n)				
Female	121	171	381	673
Male	14	24	67	105
Total	135	195	448	778

Source: author's own study based on the original research (2017-2018)

3 Research Results

According to the obtained results, the average level of consumer innovativeness for all the three national samples is 26.21. This indicator is higher for men and amounts to 27.09 than women to whom this ratio amounts to 26.07. Among all the female respondents, their standard deviation indicator is lower than for male ones and reaches the level of 6.38 and for men 7.19. Confronting the national data, the highest level of consumer innovativeness is noted among the Polish respondents and totals 27.55. The Slovenian respondents are subsequent and their indicator amounts to 26.30. The Czech respondents obtained a weighted average with 24.37. Comparing female respondents, the higher level of consumer innovativeness is shown by the Polish women and it amounts to 26.82. A lower level of this indicator is observed among the Czech ones (25.56) and the lowest among the Slovenians totalling only 24.45. A different ranking seems to be for male respondents. The highest level of the studied indicator is reserved also for the Polish men and amounts to 28.27, but the sequent place is taken by the Slovenian men with the ratio at 28.14. Finally, the lowest indicator is observed among the studied Czech male respondents which amounts to 23.17.

Table 3: The estimated level of consumer innovativeness for the studied groups by gender and country

Items	Nationalsamples								
	Slovenia		Poland		Czech Republic		Total		
Gender	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Total
Average of results	24.45	28.14	26.82	28.27	25.56	23.17	26.07	27.09	26.21
Weighted average of national results	26.30		27.55		24.37		x	x	x
SD	5.96	7.22	6.84	7.29	5.29	5.60	6.38	7.19	6.50
Minimal (reference min =10)	10	18	11	13	12	16	10	13	10
Maximal (reference max=50)	40	41	48	44	44	40	48	44	48
Section	B	C	C	C	B	B	C	C	C
Type of consumer innovativeness	non-innovative	neither non-innovative nor innovative			non-innovative		neither non-innovative nor innovative		

Source: author’s own study based on the original research (2017-2018)

Legend: The sections: A (10.00 -17.99) for definitely non-innovative ones; B (18.00-25.99) for non-innovative ones; C (26.00-33.99) for neither non-innovative nor innovative ones; D (34.00-41.99) for innovative ones and E (42.00-50.00) for definitely innovative ones.

Table 4: The consumer innovativeness ranking by gender and country

Place	Respondents’ group	Amount of consumer innovativeness
1	Polish male	28.27
2	Slovenian male	28.14
3	Polish female	26.82
4	Czech female	25.56
5	Slovenian female	24.45
6	Czech male	23.17

Source: author’s own study based on the original research (2017-2018)

Referring to the collected data and the proposed modified scale and its section and to estimate the types of consumer innovativeness, the Czech men and woman and the Slovenian women can be classified in section B as the non-innovative consumers. The Polish women and men and the Slovenian men appear to be systemized in section C as the neither non-innovative nor innovative consumers.

Discussion and Conclusion

In the literature of the field, consumer innovativeness is defined multilevelly, eg. as a personality trait that moderates the process of acceptance and diffusion of innovation, and an inclination to accept innovative products or as actual innovative behaviour. Despite of different theoretical approaches, overall it is argued as one of the effective predictors of foretelling future consumer purchasing behaviour. Many researchers state that consumer innovativeness is moderated by demographic factors, such as age and gender, or social as eg. national culture. In the case of the processes of acceptance and diffusion of innovative technological products, a strong belief among marketers exists that global markets are already unified.⁵⁵ This is particularly evident in the case of the young generations (eg. Y and Z), where such uniformity is far more advanced. However, among the consumers at the age of 60 and over, such a simplification seems to be definitely a false assumption and may be the cause to indicate improper marketing activities. Regarding to the obtained research results, it should be noted that the level of consumer innovativeness for the tested national samples is various definitely. It is differentiated by the respondents' gender, as well as by their nationality understood also as a national culture. Thus, the posed hypothesis 'in the case of a mobile technological products such as the smartphone, among the elderly users, the level of consumer innovativeness is related to their gender and national culture', has been verified positively. It seems that among the surveyed populations in terms of the smartphone, the Polish consumers at the age of 60 and over seem to be the most innovative, then next the Slovenians, and finally the Czechs. In addition, in the case of the Poles and the Slovenians, men are more innovative, while most innovative women are among the Czechs.

55 YALCINKAYA, G.: A Culture-based Approach to Understanding the Adoption and Diffusion of New Products Across Countries. In *International Marketing Review*, 2008, Vol. 25, No. 2, p. 202-221.

Although the differences obtained in the particular subgroups (gender, nationality) seem to be small, however, using the modified DSI scale, two specific consumer segments were identified: non-innovative and neither non-innovative nor innovative ones.

Such results have specific implications for the marketing activities, especially in terms of international marketing. Firstly, when planning the implementation of new technological products on markets, it is necessary to adapt the strategy to the selected geographic markets and their specificities. In practice, if the products are also dedicated to consumers aged 60 and over, it seems that in the case of the tested Central European countries, the Polish market should be one of the first to launch such goods and services. Not only because of its nominal size, but also the highest level of the consumer innovativeness among the other verified populations. It is also important to initially dedicate this type of products to men who show a higher innovation rate parallel. So far, international business has a tendency to treat Central European consumers as one single market and defines the unified marketing strategy for all those markets together. Referring to these research findings, such approach appears to be at least too concise or even inappropriate. Definitely such a business practice needs be revised to avoid improper allocation of resources and desired stimulation of the diffusion of innovations on these geographical markets. From the methodological perspective, it is worth noting that the modified DSI scale presents an applicable value in defining differences and similarities in consumer attitudes developing consumer segmentation and creating micro segments. Thus, it appears to be a quite useful tool for the developing of the marketing of innovations as well. The results will also contribute to the social and technological inclusion of the elderly in Central Europe as a population mostly left behind by marketers as still not ready enough to absorb high tech innovations. Finally, concluding the deliberations, it should be emphasized that with regard to the sampling method employed for the study and the size of the examined groups, the received applications should not be referred to the entire elderly segments in Poland, Slovenia and the Czech Republic. The results suggest the verified characteristics of the groups emphasize the observed direction of their types of behaviour. However, the generalization of the obtained data requires conducting wider and in-depth studies using representative methods, which will constitute the author's future work.

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SPECIFIC NATURE OF VALUES IN CONTEMPORARY ADVERTISING BASED ON THE NARRATION ABOUT HOME-COMMUNITY

Kludia Cymanow-Sosin

ABSTRACT:

This article focuses on the reflection on advertising and the related message in the post-consumption era, where there is a gradual shift towards social values. As follows from numerous studies, references to values in advertising strictly correlate with the perception and reception of the advertising spots. When combined with socially significant values, products, services or ideas advertised in this manner affect a specific choice of lifestyle and including these values when creating advertising messages enhances the strength and quality of the advertising message itself. The conducted analyses are an attempt at answering the question: do the creators of contemporary advertisements published on the Internet and promoting global corporations use specific motifs in order to reflect the condition of an individual society in their creative ideas and do they pay attention to the local market and the hierarchy of values promoted in a certain culture, or do they play with conventions and schemes or even intentionally contest and challenge these values?

KEY WORDS:

advertising, content, narration, persuasion, system of values

1 Present State of Research

According to the concept by M. J. Rokeach, values are “enduring beliefs that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence.”¹ When analysing the issues related to values with regard to how they are used in persuasive messages, the standpoints of most researchers bend towards the recognition of a strong impact of product, service or idea imaging through the use of evaluating notions.²

1 For more information, see: ROKEACH, M. J.: *The Nature of Human Values*. New York : The Free Press, 1973; DOMURAT, A.: *Identyfikacja wartości osobistych w badaniach psychologicznych. Wartości jako cele działań i wyborów*. Warszawa : Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2009.

2 MATUSZEWSKA, A.: Oddziaływanie reklam społecznych a system wartości jej odbiorców. In *Zeszyty Naukowe Polityki Europejskiej, Finanse i Marketing*, 2013, Vol. 9, No. 58, p. 320.

The study of the role of the values in advertising includes both the area of marketing and market analysis, cultural thought and the area of the social communication and media sciences. In the former case, the considerations related to consumption behaviour focus on the analysis of the issues and interrelations between values and consumption.³ In the analyses focused on the relationships between values and consumption behaviour, it is important to note the broad understanding of the system of social values. This thesis gains new significance in the post-consumption era, when we can observe a gradual turn towards social values. “The system of social values is complex, because it is composed of general values, which stem from the overall social system of a particular society as the supersystem for consumption, and specific values related to the nature and purposes of consumption.”⁴ Apart from general values (also known as target values - ultimate, autotelic), the author also mentions specific (instrumental) values such as e.g. courage, autonomy, self-control, expertise, reliability, diligence, forbearance – which are a means to the end, and as such enable the ultimate values. In this research, the priority goal is to analyse how the system of values impacts consumer behaviour and decisions.

Many researchers have studied the issue of using values in advertising. The analyses related to the role of axiology in advertising were particularly intense in the 1990s, at the time of market saturation and the presence of signals that heralded the pending retreat from consumerism. Among the authors who wrote about it, we can mention Z. Caillat and B. Mueller,⁵ H. Cheng and J. Schweitzer,⁶ C. Wiles,⁷ I. Wright and R. Faber⁸ in “Journal of Advertising Research”. They noted that

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- 3 BYLOK, F.: Problemy metodologiczne badania wartości jako czynnika determinującego zachowania konsumpcyjne. In *Ekonomiczne Problemy Usług. Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego*, 2011, No. 72, p. 11.
 - 4 BYLOK, F.: Problemy metodologiczne badania wartości jako czynnika determinującego zachowania konsumpcyjne. In *Ekonomiczne Problemy Usług. Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego*, 2011, No. 72, p. 11.
 - 5 CAILLAT, Z., MUELLER, B.: The Influence of Culture on American and British Advertising. In *Journal of Advertising Research*, 1996, Vol. 36, No. 3, p. 79-88.
 - 6 CHENG, H., SCHWEITZER, J.: Cultural Values Reflected in Chinese and U.S. Television Comerciáis. In *Journal of Advertising Research*, 1996, Vol. 36, No. 3, p. 40-56.
 - 7 WILES, C.: The Ideology of Advertising: The US and Sweden. In *Journal of Advertising Research*, 1996, Vol. 36, No. 3, p. 57-78.
 - 8 WRIGHT ISAAK, C., FABER, R. J.: Hidden: Value in Advertising Effectiveness Awards. In *Journal of Advertising Research*, 1996, Vol. 36, No. 3, p. 21-39.

advertisements that are successful in a specific cultural environment fail to produce the desired results on other markets, and the reason for this is the different hierarchy of values. It was expressly proven that values impact the effectiveness of advertising, just like T. Parsons claimed back in the 1960s, in his book *The Social System*. He proved that values are part of human internal orientation.⁹ On the other hand, in the analysis of social communication and the media as part of the culture, the study of values in persuasive communication focuses primarily on referring the hierarchy of values functioning within a specific community to the media image, which – along with social advancement – tends to show various models and types of presenting values that are considered important by the media users and recipients.¹⁰ In this article, it is not so much the impact itself, but the mechanism of creating advertising messages that is of key significance.

The analyses of the media as part of the culture, as pointed out in numerous studies conducted i.a. by M. Lisowska-Magdziarz, A. Duda or E. Szczęsny, with reference to Polish advertising show that we are faced with a dynamic process. “The studies of the Poles’ attitudes to advertising over the first decade of its functioning in Poland [i.e. from 1989 – K.C.S.] showed a slow evolution from fascination, through resentment and rejection, to the condition similar to the one in most European countries: moderate resentment combined with the awareness that advertising is an important and essential element of market economy and a prerequisite for the functioning of the media.”¹¹ Detailed studies – both quantitative and qualitative – are regularly conducted in Poland and they refer to the individual segments of the advertising market, just to mention a few examples of the academic reflection on the TV (*Świat wartości polskiej reklamy telewizyjnej w latach 90*¹² [The world of values

9 PARSONS, T.: *The Social System*. Glencoe : The Free Press, 1964, p. 68-112.

10 See: BACZYŃSKI, A., DROŻDŻ, M.: *Wartości w mediach – z dolin na szczyty*. Tarnów : Biblos, 2012; DROŻDŻ, M., CYMANOW SOSIN, K.: *Etyczność w mediach. Między pogardą a szacunkiem*. Tarnów : Biblos, 2017; DROŻDŻ, M., CYMANOW SOSIN, K.: *Etyczność w mediach. Utopia czy powinność*. Tarnów : Biblos, 2018.

11 LISOWSKA MAGDZIARZ, M.: Świat wartości polskiej reklamy telewizyjnej w latach 90. In OSTROWSKI, M. (ed.): *Estetyka reklamyreklama w rzeczywistości – rzeczywistość w reklamie*. Kraków : Art-Tekst, 2002, p. 230.

12 LISOWSKA MAGDZIARZ, M.: Świat wartości polskiej reklamy telewizyjnej w latach 90. In OSTROWSKI, M. (ed.): *Estetyka reklamyreklama w rzeczywistości – rzeczywistość w reklamie*. Kraków : Art-Tekst, 2002, p. 230.

in Polish TV advertising in the 1990s] – by M. Lisowska-Magdziarz), or the press (*Zmiany wartości w polskiej reklamie prasowej na podstawie analizy tygodników „Polityka” i „Newsweek”*¹³ [Shifts in values observed in the Polish press advertising, on the basis of the analysis of weekly magazines] “Polityka” and “Newsweek”) – by Aneta Duda). Regardless of the selected study material, the main focus of the analyses was the concept of advertising as a distorted mirror, as defined by R. W. Pollay and K. Gallagher.¹⁴ The abovementioned authors tried to find the answer to the question as to whether advertising is a mirror of cultural values valid for a specific community and as such reacts to the evolving social awareness, or whether it distorts the image of social values in persuasive messages e.g. by exaggerating such processes as consumerism. On the basis of the collected study material it was possible to formulate certain theses: that in the area related to hedonism (which is directly related to consumerism) the concept of the distorted mirror is applicable, whereas with regard to the social-oriented and individualistic values, the advertising is statistically adjusted to the observed level of social awareness. On the one hand, advertisements shape (and even reinforce) social beliefs related to consumerism, as discussed by R. W. Pollay, while on the other hand – as regards social-oriented values such as home community and family – they usually reflect the image functioning in the society (according to the concept by M. B. Holbrook and R. Batra).¹⁵

2 Research Problem

In the academic discourse related to the primacy of the global perspective (future of the advertising medium as a message addressed to the global recipient, assuming the increasing homogenization despite the borders, according to the theses formulated by T. Levitt),¹⁶ or the local viewpoint

13 DUDA, A.: *Zmiany wartości w polskiej reklamie prasowej na podstawie analiz tygodników „Polityka” i „Newsweek”*. Konsumpcja jako forma komunikacji społecznej. Nowe paradygmaty i konteksty badawcze. In *Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu*, 2016, No. 414, p. 136-154.

14 POLLAY, R. W., GALLAGHER, K.: Advertising and Cultural Values: Reflections in the Distorted Mirror. In *International Journal of Advertising*, 1990, No. 9, p. 21-32.

15 HOLBROOK, M. B., BATRA, R.: Assessing the Role of Emotions as Mediators of Consumer Responses to Advertising. In *Journal of Consumer Research*, 1987, No. 14, p. 404-420.

16 LEVITT, T.: The Globalization of Markets, Abstract. In *Harvard Business Review*, 1983, Vol. 25, Issue 3, p. 92.

(system of values rooted in smaller social groups, as discussed by S. P. Douglas and Y. Wind)¹⁷ as well as the moderate standpoint (proposing the so called mixed approach by P. Kotler,¹⁸ considering the globalization of attitudes), M. Lisowska-Magdziarz underlines that within the theoretical reflection related to advertising, the standpoint promoting the local approach was quantitatively dominant back at the beginning of the new millennium. What was emphasized was the inability to standardize the recipients of the advertisements due to the similarities in the group of communities with a smaller range. Homogenization of communities, considerable migration and the flourishing of virtual culture does impact the process of selecting appropriate means when creating advertising messages. This is why studies started to focus on issues related to the absorption of the international corporate culture model as regards adjusting the means of promotion to the group of local recipients. The purpose of this article is to define the extent to which the creators of advertising campaigns refer to the system of values that is characteristic for a specific community, thus creating communication based on the most popular motifs such as home and family. The reason for this being so was already explained by T. Parsons,¹⁹ who claimed that a family is by no means an isolated community, nor is it a miniature of the society, but rather a subsystem of the global society. It follows that the factors that consolidated the social system also organise and govern a smaller community - a family, therefore the principle of getting to know what is unfamiliar (the content of advertisement) with the help of what is already familiar (model of the home community) may be functional with reference to the analysed messages.

Home community is the leading motif of numerous IKEA campaigns selected for this analysis. The example of this company is particularly worth describing as regards the reference to the global and local system of values in the context of the crisis situation faced by the corporation a few years ago (controversies related to the fact that the images of women were removed from Saudi markets, as it was feared the reception would

17 DOUGLAS, S. P., WIND, Y.: The Myth of Globalization. In *Journal of Consumer Research*, 1987, No. 22, p. 19-29.

18 KOTLER, P.: Broadening the Concept of Marketing. In *Journal of Marketing*, 1969, Vol. 33, No. 1, p. 10.

19 PARSONS, T., BALES, R.: *Family, Socialization and Interaction Process*. Glencoe: International Library of Sociology, 1955, p. 19.

be contrary to the advertiser’s expectations.)²⁰ The abovementioned example poses the following research questions:

- Do the creators of contemporary advertisements in Polish which appear online and promote global corporations use specific motifs to reflect the condition of a specific society in their creative ideas?
- Do copywriters pay attention to the local market and the hierarchy of values valid for the specific culture, or do they play with conventions and schemes? Or maybe they go as far as to challenge these values?

These questions refer to the classification proposed by M. Lisowska-Magdziarz, namely a division of advertising messages into four basic categories, characterised by: promoting, reinforcing, neglecting and challenging (e.g. by playing down, ridiculing or applying humour) values that are important for a specific community.²¹ The studied issue also refers to the claim made by M. Wegner-Jezińska, who wrote in her text titled *Rola wartości w kulturowej adaptacji reklamy* [The role of values in the cultural adaptation of advertisements] that this message introduces and consolidates, or modifies or changes the sphere of values in the communication of individual societies.²²

3 Research Methodology and Research Material

In order to diagnose and analyse the phenomenon, a set of methods organised within a mosaic block was used, which made it possible to look at the phenomenon of values in advertising from a few different perspectives. First of all, the methods include elements of content analysis as a study and analysis of the content of a specific brand (intentional choice of campaigns prepared for the Polish market with the organising principle related to the primary values used in the advertising message); secondly, elements of semiotic analysis (study of denotation and connotation), and the analytical part, focused on the study of the correlation between the hierarchy of values valid for the Polish society and the campaigns proposed by IKEA, includes analyses prepared

20 *Kobiety zniknęły z saudyjskiej wersji katalogu IKEI*. [online]. [2019-04-10]. Available at: <<https://euroislam.pl/33071/>>.

21 LISOWSKA MAGDZIARZ, M.: Świat wartości polskiej reklamy telewizyjnej w latach 90. In OSTROWSKI, M. (ed.): *Estetyka reklamy reklama w rzeczywistości – rzeczywistość w reklamie*. Kraków : Art-Tekst, 2002, p. 230.

22 WEGNER JEZIŃSKA, M.: Rola wartości w kulturowej adaptacji reklamy. In *Ruch prawniczy, ekonomiczny i socjologiczny*, 1999, Vol. 61, No. 2, p. 286.

with the use of the conceptual blending theory by ²³ G. Fauconnier and M. Turner, which makes it possible to separate the key values used in a specific advertising message. As regards the choice of the research material, the subject matter of the analysis include advertisements prepared by professional copywriters hired by the Swedish and Dutch company IKEA, which – as regards image and product campaigns – is famous for challenging the existing trends and for its unconventional approach to promotion, advertising and creating image in various cultural environments. With its interesting campaigns focused on home and family, IKEA fits into the area of creative marketing. It is one of the more interesting themes to be considered in the analysis of the contemporary media messages functioning on the Internet. This article includes the analysis limited only to those advertisements that were commissioned by IKEA for the Polish market, and which feature the motif of home and family, rather than their remakes.

4 The Theme of Home and Family in IKEA Advertisements Vs the Hierarchy of Social Values

The reflection on the functionality of an advertisement as a message about products, services and ideas entails another question in the area of social communication, namely one about the sphere of values used by this highly expansive message. It is possible to separate four basic mechanisms used by the creators of advertisements, who:

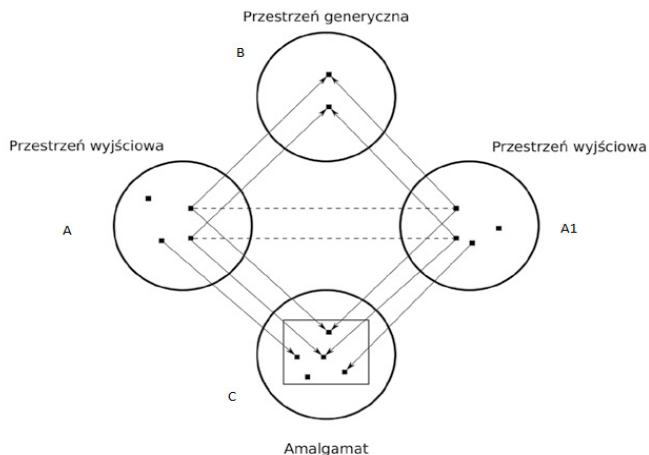
- introduce new motifs and themes in advertising – thus promoting certain values,
- modify the familiar and already known themes and motifs – thus creating certain values and neglecting (ousting) others,
- consolidate the existing themes and motifs – thus reinforcing the consolidated, existing values,
- amend the consolidated themes and motifs – thus challenging the status quo in the hierarchy of values.

23 FAUCCONNIER, G., TURNER, M.: Blending as a Central Process of Grammar. In GOLDBERG, A. (ed.): *Conceptual Structure, Discourse, and Language*. Stanford : Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 113-131.

It follows from the analyses of the branding advertising on the Polish market that the first two categories are the most popular. They distinguish the advertisements of this company and have become a sort of IKEA trademark. An example of the first category – campaigns that introduce new motifs and promoting certain values – is one of the spots from the series *IKEA. Niech żyje dom* [IKEA, long live the home], titled: *When he moves in with her*.²⁴ The very first sentence of the spot is: „Is it appropriate to talk about sex in advertisements?”. This phrase is an attempt at breaking taboos in public communication, especially in advertisements in which this motif has been functioning for years in the visual sphere. It is a seductive element and so far it has been treated mainly as a category of aesthetic activities. In this case, though, it marks a step towards the new, widely-launched trend related to breaking taboos²⁵ as regards the debate about a certain lifestyle. The reply we can hear from behind the camera, from the director, is: “It is, in this advertisement.” This brief exchange is supposed to produce a connotation that the material is not “smoothed” at the post-production stage and at the same time it is meant to consolidate the reliability of the spot, which – as a rule – is an artificial and staged creation. When analysing the spot with the tools described by G. Fauconnier, M. Turner, the originators of the blending theory, we have two initial spaces: (A) – the backstage of the spot (conversation between the operator and the actor who is having powder applied to his face before the scene is shot – see fig. 2) and another one (A1) – the sphere of IKEA furniture, which can be assembled independently. Then the spot proceeds to list the “problems that are always the same” whenever “he moves in with her.” As regards the form, the story is constructed around zeugma – used in the visual rhetoric this time – and based on shifting contradictory points of view and opposite opinions of the man and the woman. Although the denotation refers to the adjustment of the home space, the conversation in fact boils down to intimate relations (connotations refer to personal affairs), which is corroborated by the last sentence: “Be cunning in the bedroom.”

24 *Kiedy on wprowadza się do niej*. [online]. [2019-04-10]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SoZ3sJFel3w>>.

25 SOCZYŃSKI, S.: Tabu politycznej poprawności – tarcza czy kaganiec? In *Studia Socialia Cracoviensia*, 2016, No. 115, p. 80-91.



Rys. 2. Schemat przestrzeni mentalnych w amalgamacie pojęciowym

Picture 1: Scheme of mental spaces in conceptual blending

Source: KOWALEWSKI, H.: Tłumacz zaplątany w sieć, czyli kognitywna analiza wybranych problemów przekładu komiksu. In *Przekładaniec*, 2017, No. 34, p. 111.

In the process of developing the blend, blending is automatic within the conceptual integration network, even though there is no logical link to the original space. In the generic space (B), parts of the initial spaces are combined to produce such notions as: independence, liberty or creativity, which are directly linked to the value known as freedom. The resulting blend (C) created after the mental spaces melt together fits into the entire image campaign, aimed at introducing changes that bring about freedom and independence. The blend can be aptly summarised by the following sentence: IKEA enables unrestrained life, which is also corroborated by other slogans in the next spots within the same campaign, e.g. *Po swojemu. Dobry początek każdego dnia* [Do it your way. A good way to start each day].²⁶

The second highlighted type includes modifying familiar themes by toying with conventions and the stereotypical roles in the family, portrayed with humour in order to create certain values and neglect others. This

26 *Sypialnia, w której zawsze wstajesz prawą nogą*. [online]. [2019-04-10]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C119QqXOsII>>.

is exemplified in the spot titled: *Kleopatra. Ty tu urzqdzisz*.²⁷ [Cleopatra. You rule] This is part of the image campaign which was originally prepared for the Polish market under the slogan: *Ty tu urzqdzisz* [You rule - in Polish there is an interesting game on the words related to ruling and arranging space]. The proposal of the PZL agency (photos: Paweł Edelman, stage design: Allan Starski, director: I. Zaniewski), one of the key creators of advertisements on the Polish market and audiovisual advertising trendsetters, is supposed to encourage people to break the barriers and discard any fear of being judged by others, even those close to you, and to “rule” your life as you like it. When engaging in semiotic analysis, we can state that on the one hand, we have the reference to one’s own home (a very strong motif in the Polish culture), which consolidates the belief that home is the most important place in the world, associated with something permanent, familiar, orderly, with tradition and stability, but on the other hand, we can see the authors of the advertisement encourage you to modify this fixed order. Along with the disruption of the traditional myth, you can see innovative proposals as regards changes, new textiles or furniture that is associated with courage, desire for change, initiative and creative freedom etc.

When analysing this spot using the blending theory, we can say we have two initial spaces here. The first one is the motif of Cleopatra and Mark Anthony, known from history and ever-present in the culture (literature, film, paintings etc.) and presented in a stereotypical manner, as a jealous mother-in-law meddling with the relationship of her son and the beautiful queen (A). The narration is conducted in a hybrid manner. The plot of the film takes us back to the times of the Roman Empire and the Ancient Egypt. Cleopatra is visited by her “mother-in-law” - the mother of Mark Anthony. The nosy woman has her own opinion on the arrangement of the chambers and does not approve of the design provided by Cleopatra, who is bent on “doing it her own way.” The second space (A1) is the sphere of IKEA products, which are functional and they help you stay calm in the face of any intrigue and stick to your own style. According to the benchmarks for blending, in the generic space (B) a certain set of values is produced, such as: confidence in your own beliefs or self-determination, which are elements of the broadly understood freedom. The resulting blend combines the selected elements of both spaces (home is taken from the first space, and elements that can be placed in any

27 *IKEA: Kleopatra. Ty tu urzqdzisz*. [online]. [2019-04-10]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2V08hNPz2r4>>.

home, regardless of style, come from the second space.) Values created in the generic space (freedom, ability to make independent decisions) are transferred to the blend (C) and complete the slogan “You rule.” It is worth emphasizing that the advertisement is mainly addressed to women aged 20-49, so it is a group that usually makes decisions concerning interior design and home arrangement. The campaign was prepared on the basis of a few years of consumer research and sociological analysis. Tying with conventions and stereotypes produces an incredibly intriguing message, which modifies the existing model of values by introducing an element of fun.

Conclusion

The presented analyses irrefutably prove that what IKEA campaigns have in common is the consistent narration with a leading motif: supporting the broadly understood freedom, while other values are only a set of tools used to promote this idea. In the advertisements of global companies promoting their products or services in Poland themes such as patriotism, honour and religion are virtually absent (although these values are traditionally declared by Poles as associated with home), while themes such as freedom, tolerance, universalism and unrestrained freedom are reinforced. The target group of IKEA advertisements are young people. The company consciously promotes itself through one of the most appreciated values, i.e. freedom. While doing it for commercial reasons (to optimise earnings), they also affect social changes, which corroborates the thesis that advertisements not only reflect the condition of a specific society and its hierarchy of values, but what is more important, they also reinforce certain values (freedom and liberty, openness and tolerance), at the same time completely neglecting others (religiousness, patriotism, family ties). This is corroborated by semiotic analysis and the application of the blending theory, where we observe the same set of concepts and values every time in the generic space. Building brand awareness on a consistent vision is justified and effective, which is corroborated e.g. by the manner of positioning the idea of victory in Nike campaigns or the idea of innovativeness in Apple advertisements. From the perspective of media and communication sciences, a more important element is that obvious ideas placed in advertisements emerge only in the process of analysis and interpretation, while their practical impact on the recipient is unintentional, somehow automatic and takes place in mental spaces. This justifies and corroborates the affirmative answer

to the question posed in this article, as to whether the creators of such advertisements use specific motifs in order to reflect the condition of a specific society in their creative ideas, or take into account the hierarchy of values valid for the specific culture, together with any pertinent changes therein. At the same time, the analyses have shown that as regards the chosen forms of expression, the creators intentionally toy with the conventions and schemes, challenging the abovementioned values, expressing a preference for liberty and unrestrained freedom and prioritising these values in the company's campaigns.

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PERSONAL SALES AND ITS PLACE IN COMMUNICATION OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Slávka Gracová – Ľubica Bôtošová

ABSTRACT:

In today's world of social media, personal selling as a tool for communicating with customers has become overshadowed. It is also the same with educational institutions. The authors of the paper are dedicated to the project of the Faculty of Mass Media Communication at the University of ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava called RoadTrip FMK as a form of personal sales and characterize its place and importance at the faculty communications towards potential students. The aim is to describe this activity, its link with social networks and the background of its origin and transformation in recent years.

KEY WORDS:

personal sale, promotion, RoadTrip, social networks, students

1 Personal Sales in the Context of Educational Institutions

Like other businesses, education institutions need to communicate with their potential customers. „*The basic function of communication is to exchange information between the school and the target group.*“¹ Target groups of educational institutions can be different. In this article, we focus primarily on the target group of potential students, secondary school students. The overall communication program is also called a communication mix. It consists of a specific combination of ad elements, sales promotion, personal sales, and direct marketing that the company uses to promote its advertising and marketing goals over the period.² The communication mix combines the appropriate tools and forms of communication that can be used to reach potential customers. Thanks to the communication mix, the institution is able to meet the set goals. The goals of the communication mix are for example:³

- Providing information – the educational institution must inform the market about availability of its services and products.

1 ČERNÁ, J. et al.: *Marketing vzdelávacích inštitúcií*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2015, p. 90.

2 KITA, J. et al.: *Marketing*. Bratislava : Iura Edition, 2005, p. 431.

3 ZYMAN, S., BROTT, A.: *Konec reklamy, jak jsme ji dosud znali*. Praha : Management Press, 2004, p. 74.

- Creating and stimulating demand – some products need to stimulate demand for the seasonality. For example, educational institutions offer complementary courses during the holidays.
- Clearly communicate the benefits and value of your product – The communication mix allows you to communicate the benefits and features of our products to the potential customers.
- Distinguishing yourself from your competition – One of the important tasks is to differentiate yourself from your competitors. By proper setting up of a communication mix, we build a brand of an educational institution and distinguish ourselves from other competitors in the market.
- Gaining and maintaining loyalty – Thanks to a well-established and built-in brand with consistent communication can create the educational institution its permanent and loyal customers. In many cases, parents and their children attend the same school and eventually former graduates actively help with fundraising. Many come to their original schools to teach or manage management again.

Educational institutions require a specific approach to creating a communication mix. It is also the same at universities and their faculties. We pay great attention to communication with target groups at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication, and the whole team is working on it. We carry out surveys to operatively eliminate deficiencies and improve and innovate the communication tools used. Personal sales as a communication tool is a process of customer support and persuasion. Educational institutions may be personally sold during exhibitions or inch promotions (for example, an open day) where potential students can speak directly to school representatives. However, both sales promotion and personal sales are minimal in the communication mix of educational institutions and their use is only appropriate in specific cases.⁴ The form of direct (personal) communication raises specific demands on workers who act on behalf of the school. Contact between the source and the recipient is personalized, which can lead to easier identification of the recipient's needs and wishes. However, this requires some specific personal qualities on the part of the school worker. The effectiveness of personal communication depends to a great extent on the verbal and non-verbal abilities of these workers.⁵

4 ČERNÁ, J. et al.: *Marketing vzdělávacích institucí*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2015, p. 104.

5 SVĚTLÍK, J.: *Marketingové řízení školy*. Praha : Wolters Kluwer ČR, s. r. o., 2009, p. 218.

Communication as such has many kinds: deliberate, unintentional, conscious, unconscious, cognitive, affective, positive, negative, identical, disagreeing, assertive, aggressive, manipulative, passive, one-way, two-way, face-to-face, verbal, nonverbal etc.⁶ Each communication process can have features of several of them. In the case of the Roadtrip FMK project under examination, the communication was deliberate and thus the presenter had the content ready to submit all the necessary information about the study to the high school students and to attract them enough to come to the open door day or to apply. Communication was also positive, face to face. The Faculty of Mass Media Communication at the University of ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, participates in several exhibitions and organizes an open day each year. It is usually attended by approximately 600 visitors. In this article, we pay attention to the mentioned Roadtrip FMK project, which the faculty has been doing for several years, few universities using it and belonging to the area of personal sales.

2 RoadTrip FMK

In the 2012/2013 academic year, the Road Trip FMK promotional activity was implemented for the first time. Its aim is to acquaint secondary school students with the FMK UCM study offer, all its school or extracurricular activities, in person through visits to selected secondary schools. Within the first two years, a group of PhD students visited one of the selected schools within one week. FMK presented daily on about two secondary schools. Grammar schools played the biggest role in the selection of secondary schools. Road Trip itself preceded:

- selection of secondary school;
- creating a timetable by phone contact with school heads or eastern advisers;
- preparation of presentation;
- campaign creation.⁷

The biggest problem with the organization was communication with secondary schools. Educational consultants were often reluctant, communication with them was complicated. It was very challenging to create a schedule of 5 days, while the cities visited were selected in

6 MIKULÁŠTÍK, M.: *Komunikační dovednosti v praxi*. Praha : Grada Publishing, a. s., 2003, p. 32.

7 ČERNÁ, J. et al.: *Marketing vzdělávacích institucí*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2015, p. 129-130.

a logical sequence of the route. In addition to creating a timetable, the promotional group was responsible for preparing presentations that included information about all study programs, faculty implementation, school and extracurricular activities. The presentation lasted one lesson, that means 45 minutes. The RoadTrip also had its own subpage on the faculty website. There were blogs, photos, project information, competitions for secondary school students etc. Everything was prepared by promotional group.

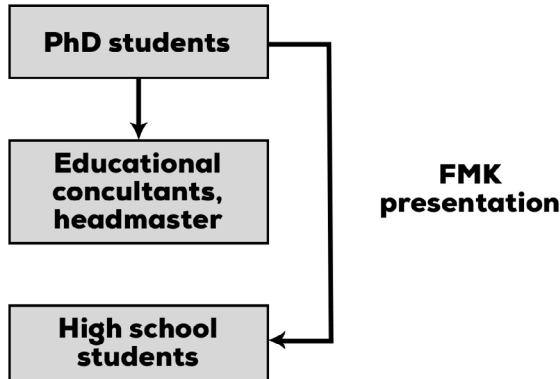


Chart 1: The original Road Trip promotional model

Source: own processing, 2014

In the 2014/2015 academic year, the original model, that included a group of PhD students, who were presenting the faculty at selected secondary schools during one week. This model was replaced by a new one. It is an optimized model, in which students present their faculty at the secondary schools they attended. This model brought several advantages:

- implementation costs have decreased as students have visited their former secondary schools during the exam period, when they usually spend more time at home or close to their secondary schools,
- the number of secondary schools visited increased,
- the involvement of students has contributed to building better relationships with a sense of belonging to their faculty.

FMK Roadtrip preparation remains at FMK promotion group. Its members prepare the presentation, design and production of promotional materials and the training of registered students.

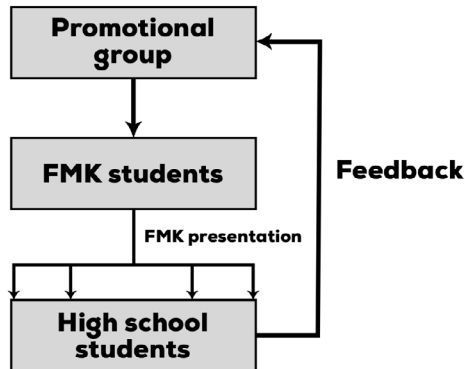


Chart 2: The optimized Road Trip promotional model

Source: own processing, 2015

As mentioned above, during a personal meeting with potential customers, in this case secondary school students are very important verbal and non-verbal skills of a worker, which means a faculty student. By preparing and training the enrolled students and also elaborating a presentation with materials accurately, the promotional group tries to avoid inconvenience. The group selects students with whom the members have experienced something or have received positive reviews from teachers.

3 Involving Promotion Through Social Networking to FMK RoadTrip 2018/2019

After optimizing the model, the promotional group tried to reach out to the faculty students and encourage them to sign up via email and an article on the faculty website. Students applied repeatedly, because of having a positive experience from the previous year. In the academic year 2018/2019, advertising was included in the promotion through social network Instagram in the form of „stories.“ It consisted of three short videos prepared by our students. They were announcing in a funny way that the students showed on the video, are going to RoadTrip FMK 2019. There was a published article on the faculty website with information about the possibility of joining the RoadTrip team. Repeatedly, the call was also published on Facebook FMC UCM in Trnava. Stories consisted of three short funny videos in which FMK students has participated and referred to the fact that they were already going to FMK Roadtrip. In comparison with the previous years, this was the highest number of students enrolled in the academic year 2018/2019. In 2016/2017 it was

37 participants, who visited 22 secondary schools. In 2017/2018, there were 34 participants and 27 schools visited. In the last academic year of 2018/2019, the number of applicants increased to 62 and 46 secondary schools were visited. As part of the evaluation of the last year, it was found out that the majority of participants in RoadTrip FMK were 44 students from the bachelor degree. This phenomenon is particularly interesting because of the fact, that freshmen are not involved in this activity. That may be the reason why the bachelor students were so attracted to be the part of RoadTrip FMK. Even though, many of them had not known about this activity before. Talking about the types of secondary schools visited in the academic year 2018/2019, we have following results:

Table 1: Selection of visited schools

Type of school	Number of schools
Grammar school	16
Secondary Vocational School	12
Business Academy	5
Bilingual High School	3
United Secondary School	2
Secondary Art School	2
Secondary Technical School	5
Hotel Academy	1
TOGETHER	46

Source: own processing, 2019

22 visited schools are located in the western part of Slovakia, 16 are in the central Slovakia and 8 in the eastern Slovakia. Even these findings are very useful, because in the previous Roadtrip model, the promotional group focused more on the eastern part of the country and only in the last two years are schools visited also in Trnava, Bratislava and surroundings. From the results of the last realized FMK Roadtrip, we can conclude that the involved advertising through the social network Instagram was important and influenced the positive growth of enrolled faculty students to RoadTrip FMK 2019. On average, 1355 followers viewed each of the video from series on Instagram's social network in profile @fmk_ucm. Such promotion has been classically complemented by an article on the faculty website and by email communication. Personal selling in educational institutions is not used as often as advertising. It is mainly done through open doors and exhibitions. It requires a specific approach and preparedness of

the workers (students) who implement it. At the Faculty of Mass Media Communication UCM in Trnava, the promotional group cares about personal contact with potential students, but also with current students, so it annually issues energy and efforts to implement the Roadtrip FMK project. The involvement of social networks in promoting this event has proven to be very beneficial. The promotional group sees the importance of providing this event not only in a connection with addressing potential students. Many of them are coming DOD FMK. But RoadTrip FMK builds positive relationships with current students, who like to participate in the organization of other events at the faculty. This is an important element in building a positive image for the faculty.

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TOWARDS FULLY-FLEDGED CONCEPTUALIZATION OF CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

David Havíř

ABSTRACT:

Both academic and managerial communities agree that phenomenon of customer experience is offering the new area of differentiation and competition for all sorts of companies. However, as this marketing topic is basically new, there is still a considerable theoretical and terminological fragmentation and scholars call for an accurate definition of customer experience, its general conceptualization and development of the customer experience framework. The aim of this paper is to provide a general conceptual model of customer experience as the stable foundation for further scientific analysis in this area of modern marketing – the model encompassing both antecedents and consequences of customer experience. This paper is based on the analysis and synthesis of 139 customer experience related research papers. These papers were analyzed and synthesized in terms of authors, year of publication, industry, and presented antecedents, components and consequences of customer experience. Antecedents, components and consequences were further content analyzed to reveal major themes and visualized by the conceptual model.

KEY WORDS:

affective, cognitive, conceptual model, customer experience, experiential marketing, review

1 Introduction

Today's global market places companies into the difficult position where it is very challenging to differentiate itself from the competition and thus to gain competitive advantage.¹ Several former marketing phenomena, such as customer satisfaction and customer relationship management, have been declared as competitively ineffective because of its wide spread and insufficient focus on customer² Customer experience, encompassing all customer's interactions with a company, is considered to be next marketing approach that will allow companies

1 For more information, see: BADGETT, M., BOYCE, S. M., KLEINBERGER, H.: *Turning Shoppers into Advocates: The Customer Focused Retail Enterprise*. New York : IBM Institute for Business Value, 2007.

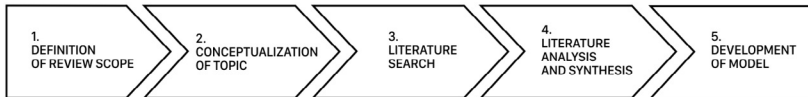
2 See: SCHMITT, B.: *Customer Experience Management: A Revolutionary Approach to Connecting with Your Customers*. New York : Wiley, 2003.

to differentiate themselves through management of its touchpoints with customer, and is also considered to be the effective tool for improving marketing KPIs.³ Even though many companies have started to improve customer experience as a response to the increasing public awareness and popularity of this approach, nature of customer experience seems to be not fully understood and conceptualized yet and thus level of real effectivity of these efforts is still a question.⁴ At the same time, in the academic space, the customer experience research is terminologically and conceptually very inconsistent.⁵

2 Methodology

Research process related to this paper is composed of two main building blocks – systematic literature review framework and qualitative content analysis.^{6,7} Systematic literature review framework developed by vomBrocke et al. offers the set of five stages that will systematically lead the researcher to the state of identifying potential areas for further research in a given research area.⁸ As this is not the aim of this research, the framework was modified and adapted to suit the actual needs. The first three stages of scope definition, topic conceptualization and literature search match the original framework, the fourth stage of literature analysis and synthesis was extended by qualitative content analysis process, and the fifth stage of research agenda development was exchanged for the stage of conceptual model development based on theoretical modeling.⁹

- 3 KLAUS, P.: Quo Vadis, Customer Experience? In RUSCONI, C. (ed.): *Beyond CRM: Customer Experience in the Digital Era. Strategies, Best Practices and Future Scenarios in Luxury and Fashion*. Milano : Franco Angeli, 2011, p. 165-175.
- 4 JAIN, R., AAGJA, J., BAGDARE, S.: Customer Experience – A Review and Research Agenda. In *Journal of Service Theory and Practice*, 2017, Vol. 27, No. 3, p. 642-662.
- 5 HAVIR, D., MACHALA, J.: How to Prepare an Impressive Journey: Dimensional Decomposition of Customer Experience. In *Merkúr 2018: The Proceedings of the International Scientific Conference for PhD. Students and Young Scientists*. Bratislava : Ekonóm, 2018, p. 91-100.
- 6 See: MASON, J.: *Qualitative Researching*. London : Sage, 1996.
- 7 ERLINGSSON, C., BRYSEWICZ, P.: A Hands-on Guide to Doing Content Analysis. In *African Journal of Emergency Medicine*, 2017, Vol. 7, No. 3, p. 93-99.
- 8 VOM BROCKE, J. et al.: Reconstructing the Giant: On the Importance of Rigour in Documenting the Literature Search Process. In *European Conference on Information Systems ECIS*. Verona : Università di Verona, 2009, p. 2206-2217.
- 9 MOORTHY, K. S.: Theoretical Modeling in Marketing. In *Journal of Marketing*, 1993, Vol. 57, No. 2, p. 92-106.



Picture 1: Research process visualization

Source: own processing; adaptation from: VOM BROCKE, J. et al.: Reconstructing the Giant: On the Importance of Rigour in Documenting the Literature Search Process. In *European Conference on Information Systems ECIS*. Verona : Università di Verona, 2009, p. 2206-2217.

2.1 Definition of Review Scope

Cooper's taxonomy, comprising of six characteristics (focus, goal, organization, perspective, audience, coverage), was used for the definition of scope.¹⁰ The focus of the research was chosen on primary theories and secondary on research outcomes, the goal was the integration of the results, the way of organization conceptual, the perspective neutral, the audience general scholars, and coverage was exhaustive.

2.2 Conceptualization of Topic

For the initial identification of key concepts, backward and forward search (citation chaining) was conducted, starting with articles from twenty most active authors on the customer experience in last ten years indexed in databases Web of Science and Scopus. Besides identifying frequently used keywords related to the topic of customer experience (e.g. holistic, touchpoint, omni-channel, NPS, loyalty, satisfaction, hedonic, value), basic contextual categorizing of these terms revealed possible three-stage nature of customer experience – factors influencing the customer experience, experience itself with its dimensions and perception by customer, and outcomes of this experience. Moreover, the need for possible knowledge input from the area of psychology was identified.

2.3 Literature Search

With the aim of create the conceptual model of customer experience, recently acquired concept of three-stage nature, and frequently used keywords in mind, the literature search in the Web of Science database was conducted. Despite characteristic of exhaustive coverage, limitations

¹⁰ COOPER, H. M.: Organizing Knowledge Syntheses: A Taxonomy of Literature Reviews. In *Knowledge in Society*, 1988, Vol. 1, p. 104-126.

on the search results were placed in the form of keyword “customer experience”, year of publication “2017–2019”, and document type “article, proceedings paper”, for securing feasibility of the research based on manual content analysis. This search brought 442 results (36 for 2019, 203 for 2018, and 203 for 2017). All these papers were further subjected to the scanning and skimming for the selection of the research papers relevant to the aim of this research – containing information about customer experience and its antecedents and consequences. The resulting set counted 121 research papers (11 for 2019, 76 for 2018, and 34 for 2017). This set was then expanded by 18 corresponding papers from earlier years acquired during previous research.

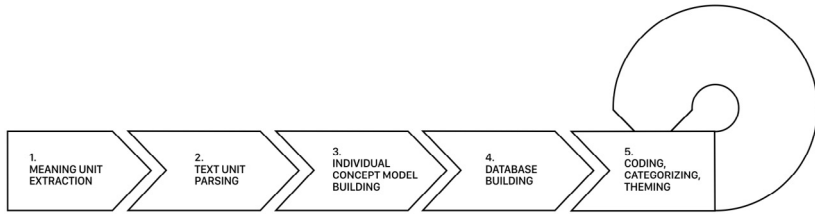
Table 1: Industries covered by collected research papers

Industry/Year	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2010	SUM
Transportation and Warehousing	2	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	5
Accommodation and Food Services	4	10	7	1	-	-	-	-	-	22
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2	12	5	2	-	-	-	-	-	21
Information	1	7	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	10
Retail Trade	-	23	16	2	1	-	2	2	-	46
Health Care and Social Assistance	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Finance and Insurance	-	9	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	13
Wholesale Trade	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
technology	-	5	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
multiple/universal	2	5	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	10
SUM	11	76	34	6	3	2	3	3	1	139

Source: own processing

2.4 Literature Analysis and Synthesis

The subsequent stage of analysis and synthesis of collected research papers can be divided into the five main sub-stages – meaning unit extraction, text unit parsing, individual concept model building, database building, and iterative coding, categorizing, theming.



Picture 2: Literature analysis and synthesis process visualization

Source: own processing

Meaning unit extraction

During this stage, all the collected papers were read and meaning units relevant to the aim of conceptualization (containing information about customer experience antecedents, customer's experience, and consequences of customer experience) extracted.

Table 2: Meaning unit examples

Author	Meaning unit
Lyu et al. (2019)	seven dimensions underpin the customer experience with P2P accommodations: physical utility, sensorial experience, core service, guest-host relationship, sense of security, social interaction, and local touch
Terblanche (2018)	merchandise assortment, interaction with staff and the internal shop environment and customers' in-shop emotions have a strong positive and significant relationship with cumulative customer satisfaction
Kawaf & Tagg (2017)	experience and its construction (emotional, perceptual, situational and behavioural)

Source: LYU, J., LI, M., LAW, R.: Experiencing P2P Accommodations: Anecdotes from Chinese Customers. In *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 2019, Vol. 77, No. 2, p. 323-332; TERBLANCHE, N. S.: Revisiting the Supermarket In-store Customer Shopping Experience. In *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 2018, Vol. 40, p. 48-59; KAWAF, F., TAGG, S.: The Construction of Online Shopping Experience: A Repertory Grid Approach. In *Computers in Human Behavior*, 2017, Vol. 72, p. 222-232.

Text unit parsing

After the extraction of all meaning units from all collected research papers, units were further parsed into the multiple individual text units to ensure the clearest possible meaning for each such working unit and for most appropriate preparation of data for the coding process. The final set counted 1707 items.

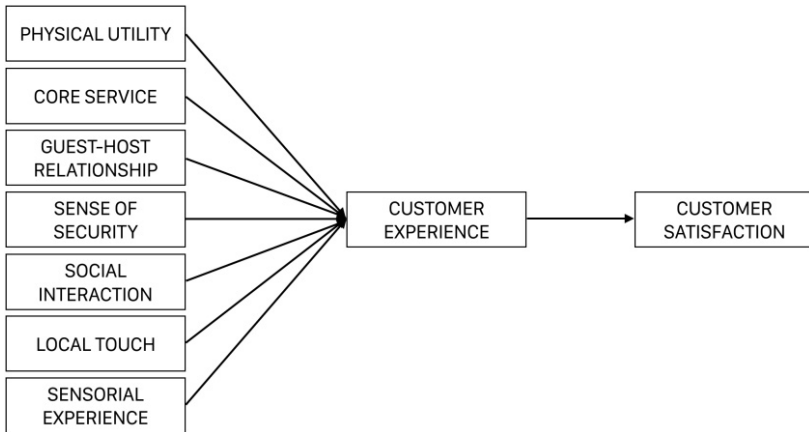
Table 3: Text unit examples

Author	Meaning unit	Text units
Lyu et al. (2019)	seven dimensions underpin the customer experience with P2P accommodations: physical utility, sensorial experience, core service, guest-host relationship, sense of security, social interaction, and local touch	physical utility, sensorial experience, core service, guest-host relationship, sense of security, social interaction, local touch

Source: LYU, J., LI, M., LAW, R.: Experiencing P2P Accommodations: Anecdotes from Chinese Customers. In *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 2019, Vol. 77, No. 2, p. 323-332.

Individual concept model building

Beyond extraction of meaning units and their parsing into the small text units, the concept model for each paper was built for two main purposes – to visualize the information in the three-stage nature and to capture relations between the individual text units for later reference.



Picture 3: Individual concept model for research paper from Lyu et al. (2019)

Source: own processing; data: LYU, J., LI, M., LAW, R.: Experiencing P2P Accommodations: Anecdotes from Chinese Customers. In *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 2019, Vol. 77, No. 2, p. 323-332.

Database building

In the fourth step, the database was built, and all 1707 items loaded. Each such item was assigned unique ID number, in-text citation, examined industry, and several attributes for capturing several steps of coding, and category and theme assignment.

Table 4: Database example

ID	YEAR	CITATION	INDUSTRY	ITEM	CODE_1	...	CATEGORY	THEME
1700	2019	Lyu et al. (2019)	Accommodation and Food Services	Core service				
1705	2019	Lyu et al. (2019)	Accommodation and Food Services	Sensorial experience				
1707	2019	Lyu et al. (2019)	Accommodation and Food Services	Satisfaction				

Source: LYU, J., LI, M., LAW, R.: Experiencing P2P Accommodations: Anecdotes from Chinese Customers. In *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 2019, Vol. 77, No. 2, p. 323-332.

Coding, categorizing, theming

Final step of the literature analysis and synthesis stage was to iteratively manually code and recode all the items, and further group them into the categories and small enough number of themes for subsequent modeling.¹¹ All these steps of coding and recoding, categorizing and theming were recorded into the database. For the best possible accuracy, explicit description of each item and presented data examples from the examined research paper were taken into account, as well as descriptions acquired through the process of citation chaining.

Table 5: Example of description and data example used for the content analysis

Item	Description and data example
Social interaction	Aside from virtual communication, the personal face-to-face interaction among Airbnb guests was considered valuable in enriching tourists' travel experiences.
	In the evening, we all hung out in the living room. The host prepared drinks for us, and we introduced ourselves, shared our travelling experiences and plans...

Source: LYU, J., LI, M., LAW, R.: Experiencing P2P Accommodations: Anecdotes from Chinese Customers. In *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 2019, Vol. 77, p. 323-332.

11 ERLINGSSON, C., BRYSEWICZ, P. A.: Hands-on Guide to Doing Content Analysis. In *African Journal of Emergency Medicine*, 2017, Vol. 7, No. 3, p. 93-99.

In the first round of coding, each item was assigned the code representing belonging to the particular part of the three-stage nature (I – input, E – experience, O – outcome) and the code describing its contextual meaning.

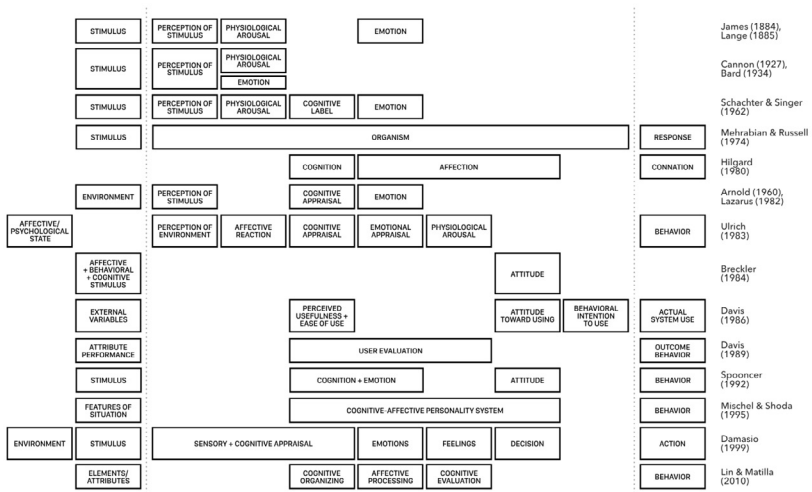
Table 6: Results of the first round of coding

Stage	Codes
I 1st stage	assortment, augmented environment, brand, cognition, communication, competitor, customer, customers sense, employee, environment, experience, innovation, marketing, mobile environment, offering, omni-channel, online environment, partners, past experience, payment, physical environment, price, product, product value, promotion, purchase, risk, service, social, social media, support service, technology
E 2nd stage	affective, arousal, behavioral, brand, cognition, economy, emotions, engagement, experience, experience quality, feeling, fun, hedonism, intellectual, memory, mood, outcome, product, product/service, provider, psychological, relation, sensory, social, stage, value
O 3rd stage	affective, arousal, attitude, awareness, behavioral, brand, cognition, competitiveness, emotions, engagement, equity, experience, feedback, feeling, growth, image, life, loyalty, memory, performance, price, purchase, quality, relation, return, risk, satisfaction, social, stakeholder, trust, value, word of mouth

Source: own processing (partial results from the content analysis)

Several iterations of coding and recoding followed, during which the codes were optimized based on their similarity and contextual ties, and number of codes was reduced. At the same time, based on the meaning hierarchy, drafts of the categories and themes started to emerge. In this methodological sub-stage, terminological fragmentation and theoretical inconsistency materialized and the previously identified possible need for input from the area of psychology arose. Necessary, in the area of customer centric marketing, research regarding customer’s perception, evaluation and behavior was conducted and revealed analogical correspondence with the three-stage nature (Picture 4 – illustrated by dotted lines) identified during the initial conceptualization of customer experience and had moreover brought important knowledge to clarify the complex nature of customer experience. For the collection of psychology related research papers, citation chaining was used, starting with the collected customer experience research papers. Collection was terminated after the fifteenth model, when it was concluded there is no more knowledge available to the extent we need to gain. Over the years, many researchers tried to explain human perception, evaluation and behavior flow (Picture 4). It is stated that more memorable experiences

are those based on emotional experience, so the main focus was placed on the theories of emotion.¹² It should be noted, that the aim of this psychological research within our customer experience research is not to compare the individual results, critically evaluate them, nor propose the new models, but to synthesize them to get the general knowledge and terminological vocabulary from the field of psychology. Obtained information were visualized for easier comparison with the results from the conceptualization of the individual research papers. The emphasis was placed on the most accurate possible representation of theories in the predominantly linear form, with the effort to correctly vertically align similar elements.



Picture 4: Visualization of different psychological models

Source: JAMES, W.: What Is an Emotion? In *Mind*, 1884, Vol. 9, p. 188-205; LANGE, C. G.: *The Emotions*. Baltimore : William & Wilkins, 1885; CANNON, W. B.: The James-Lange Theory of Emotions: A Critical Examination and an Alternative Theory. In *The American Journal of Psychology*, 1927, Vol. 39, p. 106-124; BARD, P.: On Emotional Expression after Decortication with Some Remarks on Certain Theoretical Views: Part 1. In *Psychological Review*, 1934, Vol. 41, No. 4, p. 309-329; SCHACHTER, S., SINGER, J.: Cognitive, Social, and Physiological Determinants of Emotional State. In *Psychological Review*, 1962, Vol. 69, No. 5, p. 379-399; MEHRABIAN, A., RUSSEL, J. A.: *An Approach to Environmental Psychology*.

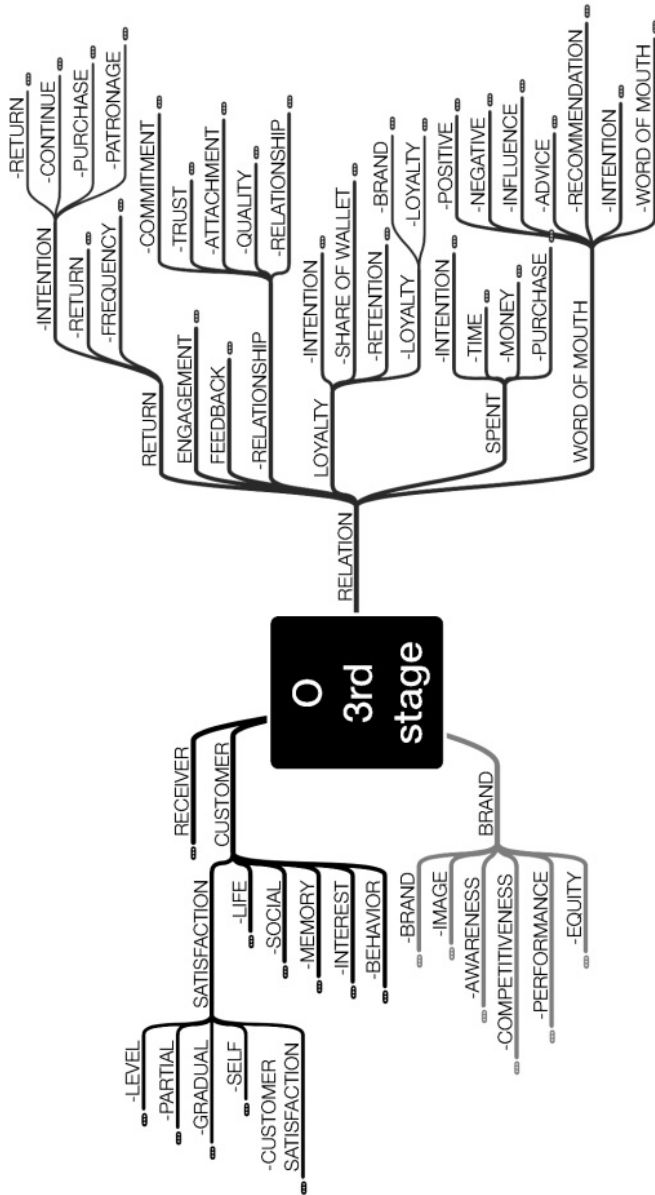
12 DOLCOS, F., CABEZA, R.: Event-related Potentials of Emotional Memory: Encoding Pleasant, Unpleasant, and Neutral Pictures. In *Cognitive, Affective, & Behavioral Neuroscience*, 2002, Vol. 2, No. 3, p. 252-263.

Cambridge : The MIT Press, 1974; HILGARD, E. R.: The Trilogy of Mind Cognition, Affection and Conation. In *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 1980, Vol. 16, p. 107-117; ARNOLD, M. B.: *Emotion and Personality*. New York : Columbia University Press, 1960; LAZARUS, R. S.: Thoughts on the Relations between Emotion and Cognition. In *American Psychologist*, 1982, Vol. 37, No. 9, p. 1019-1024; ULRICH, R. S.: Aesthetic and Affective Response to Natural Environment. In *Human Behavior & Environment: Advances in Theory & Research*, 1983, Vol. 6, p. 85-125; BRECKLER, S. J.: Empirical Validation of Affect, Behavior, and Cognition as Distinct Components of Attitude. In *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1984, Vol. 47, No. 6, p. 1191-1205; DAVIS, F. D.: *A Technology Acceptance Model for Empirically Testing New End-User Information Systems: Theory and Results*. Massachusetts : Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1986; DAVIS, F. D.: Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, and User Acceptance of Information Technology. In *MIS Quarterly*, 1989, Vol. 13, No. 3, p. 319-340; SPOONCER, F.: *Behavioural Studies for Marketing and Business*. Leckhampton : Stanley Thornes, 1992; MISCHEL, W., SHODA, Y.: A Cognitive-affective System Theory of Personality: Reconceptualizing Situations, Dispositions, Dynamics, and Invariance in Personality Structure. In *Psychological Review*, 1995, Vol. 102, No. 2, p. 246-268; DAMASIO, A.: *The Feeling of What Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness*. Fort Worth : Harcourt College Publishers, 1999; LIN, I. Y., MATTILA, A. S.: Restaurant Servicescape, Service Encounter, and Perceived Congruency on Customers' Emotions and Satisfaction. In *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 2010, Vol. 19, No. 8, p. 819-841.

If we would like to narratively summarize the results in the broad way, we could state that in the beginning there is a human/customer with his affective/psychological state, that occurs in a certain environment, where he encounters the affective, cognitive or/and behavioral stimulus, which he perceives, first with his senses, and then processes with his cognitive and affective (emotions, feelings, attitude) systems. During this stage of processing, physiological arousal may occur. Human/customer then comes to the state of intent to behave in some way and then behaves in a certain way. If we would like to go further, we can state that this is the way, how customer generally interacts with particular touchpoint during the customer journey and that this is the process how the experience is created. Although, the whole process between stimulus encounter and the behavior is far more complex in reality, and not yet fully explored, (and very difficult to determine linearly), this simplified explanation is still very valuable input for our research. Research from J. J. Gross served as an additional psychological input and insight into the affective science.¹³

13 GROSS, J. J.: The Future's So Bright, I Gotta Wear Shades. In *Emotion Review*, 2010, Vol. 2, No. 3, p. 212-216.

He discusses the inconsistent approach of using the term affect and proposes model where affect is divided into attitudes, moods and emotions and emotions further into feelings, behavior and physiology. Pictures bellow (Picture 5-7) illustrate the tree of working terms for each stage assembled during the content analysis process as the auxiliary tool for more effective and clear terminological synthesis. It should be noted that the hierarchical sequences do not strictly respect literal semantic structure and thus terms at the same distance on different branches should not be viewed as equally important or semantically on the same level. The main purpose of the inclusion of this visualization is to share more detailed working structure of each theme and category.



Picture 7: Visualization of the hierarchical structure of proposed themes, categories, sub-categories and codes for the third stage
 Source: own processing

3 Results

The stage of literature analysis and synthesis with the last iterative step of coding, categorizing and theming resulted in the set of small enough number of themes to be manageable during the last stage of model development. At the same time, for the purpose of generality and most descriptive potential, all the codes, categories, and themes were taken into account regardless the number of items they were assigned to. Some of the themes were named after one of the categories that grouped the more syntactically and contextually general items, some were assigned the unique name, best describing its overall content. The first stage consists of the following themes: customer, peripheral service, core product/service, brand, marketing, people, and real/virtual environment, the second stage consists of experience, value, perception, cognitive, affective, mental state and behavioral themes, and the third stage of customer, brand, and customer-brand themes. Each theme can be further decomposed into several categories revealing attributes and characteristics of each input (stimulus), dimensions of customer experience and value for the second stage, and types of outcome for the third stage (Tables 5–7).

Table 7: Themes and categories for the first stage

Theme	Categories
Customer (38)	Characteristics (16); Skill, knowledge and education (12); Needs, requirements, expectations, desire (8); Involvement (11); Attitude (8); Past experience (8); Motivation (4); Device (1)
Peripheral service (28)	Technology (12); Administrative and purchase process (6); Customer support (5); Delivery (4); Peripheral service (3); Usability and accessibility (3); Post-purchase (3)
Core product/service (71)	Features, attributes and functions (27); Usability and accessibility (24); Offering (24); Quality, excellence and expertise (19); Service (17); Customization, personalization and flexibility (15); Product (5)
Brand (24)	Image (9); Brand (6); Trust (5); Communication (5); Responsibility and ethics (4); Reputation (4); Activity (3)
Marketing (21)	Price (13); Promotion (9); Marketing (3); Social media presentation (3)
People (52)	Employees (40); Other customer (13); Social elements (12); Companions (3); Experts (3)
Physical/virtual environment (73)	Environment type (32); Design and architecture (27); Attributes, elements and features (23); Atmosphere and ambience (18); Navigation, accessibility and usability (14); Customization and personalization (4); Utility and function (10); Location (2)

Source: own processing (results from the content analysis)

The most examined factors influencing customer experience are environment in which experience happens, followed by the core product/service of the company with its features, attributes and functions. The third most covered factor is people with predominant focus on the employees.

Table 8: Themes and categories for the second stage (number of source articles)

Theme	Categories
Experience (84)	Social (37); Cognitive (26); Affective (24); Sensory (22); Behavioral (22); Elements, factors and attributes (15); Journey, stage and touchpoint (13); Experience (8); Experience quality (8); Source (6); Evaluation (3); Brand (3)
Value (32)	Cognitive (25); Affective (12); Experiential (7); Social (5); Value type (5); Customer (3); Added (2); Brand (1); Value (1)
Sensory (7)	Perception (6); Sensory (1); Social (1)
Cognitive (46)	Perception (32); Cognition (6); Certainty, reliability and safety (4); Information (3); Challenge (3); Sense (3); Thinking and decision (2); Risk (2)
Affective (55)	Feelings (39); Emotions (27); Affect (6); Affective (4); Attitude (4); Mood (1)
Mental state (14)	Attention (14)
Behavioral (18)	Behavioral (7); Intention (6); Response (5)

Source: own processing (results from the content analysis)

The most covered theme of the second stage is the experience with its social aspect. The second and third most researched themes are affective and cognitive aspects of customer. Customer’s cognitive based perception category predominates in the cognitive theme and customer’s feelings in the affective theme.

Table 9: Themes and categories for the third stage (number of source articles)

Theme	Categories
Customer (72)	Satisfaction (66); Life (4); Social (2); Behavior (2); Memory (1); Interest (1)
Brand (22)	Image (9); Equity (7); Brand (6); Performance (5); Awareness (3); Competitiveness (2);
Customer-brand (89)	Word of mouth (40); Loyalty (38); Return (34); Relationship (18); Spent (15); Engagement (10); Feedback (4)

Source: own processing (results from the content analysis)

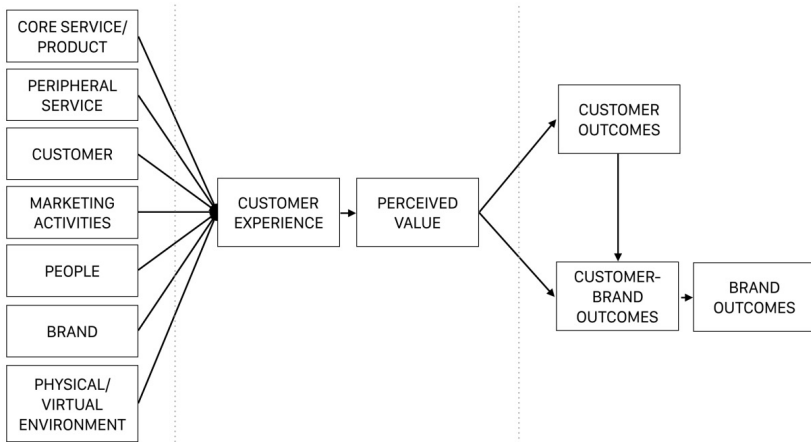
The third stage encompassing outcomes of the customer experience is dominated by customer-brand relational outcomes with three most numerous categories – word of mouth, loyalty and customer’s return. The most numerous customer related outcome and also the most numerous among all other categories is satisfaction category. For the development of the conceptual model of customer experience, all the themes were taken into account, as well as individual conceptual models developed during the third sub-stage of literature analysis and synthesis. Themes from the first stage (inputs) and third stage (outcomes) could be used as they are, but the second stage needed to be subjected to the further evaluation because of its diverse nature. Theme called experience is one major concept representing the whole second stage. It is tightly connected with the value theme, as customer’s evaluation of the experience and the elements encountered during this experience leads to the value perception. During this experience, customer’s perceptive, cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects play their roles and customer might get into the particular mental state. For the purpose of customer experience conceptualization, customer’s aspects were attached to the categories under the experience theme as they match by meaning and they are the same characteristics just examined from the two points of view (sensory-perception, cognitive-cognitive, affective-affective, behavioral-behavioral). The mental state theme created for the purpose of the correctness from the psychology point of view, further encompassing attention category with the sub-categories immersion, flow and escapism was later included in the affective theme as the coded items are mostly connected to the customer’s feelings even though they are not psychologically connected just to the affective aspect. At the same time, these states represent the states to which customer gets into during the experience as the result of various experiential aspects and so its place in the experiential domain is more or less justified just as in case of the other customer’s aspects.

Table 10: Revised themes and categories for the second stage (number of source articles)

Theme	Categories
Experience (84)	Affective (74); Cognitive (64); Social (37); Behavioral (36); Sensory (27); Elements, factors and attributes (15); Journey, stage and touchpoint (13); Experience (8); Experience quality (8); Source (6); Evaluation (3); Brand (3)
Value (32)	Cognitive (25); Affective (12); Experiential (7); Social (5); Value type (5); Customer (3); Added (2); Brand (1); Value (1)

Source: own processing

After the simplification of the middle stage thematic structure, conceptual model of the customer experience with hypothesized relationships can be proposed.



Picture 8: Conceptual model of customer experience

Source: own processing (visualization of the results from the content analysis)

The left part of the model (covering the first stage mention earlier, separated by dotted lines) contains factors that influence customer experience. This part also corresponds with the first stage from the psychological visualization. It includes psychological state of the customer (customer), environment (physical/virtual environment), and stimulus (core/product service, peripheral service, marketing activities, people, brand), although in broader sense. The middle part (second stage) contains the experience itself with its evaluation by customer. Whereas the left part might be considered basically static, this part should be, on the other hand, perceived in more dynamic way. As the customer, in his initial psychological setting, starts to interact (intentionally and also unintentionally) with the factors from the left part of the model, experience starts to shape, the cycles of customer’s psychological processes begin to run (sensory, cognitive, affective, behavioral) and the experience continues to form. As the experience forms, customer continuously evaluates it from the perspective of the value obtained (again, intentionally and also unintentionally) and the intentions and outcomes start to arise. The outcomes, situated in the right part of the model, are threefold – customer oriented only (e.g. satisfaction, interest), with no particular business results for the company (but with possible

connection to them), customer-brand relation outcomes representing results of the connection between customer and the company with an impact on marketing metrics (e.g. patronage, loyalty, word-of-mouth), and brand outcomes (image, performance, equity) encompassing brand related characteristics influenced by the customer-brand outcomes. As customer experience is time-dynamic process, the end of this one imaginary cycle blends into the second through the connection of outcomes and inputs (e.g. customer outcomes – customer, brand outcomes – brand).

Conclusion and Discussions

The aim of this paper – to provide a theoretical-conceptual model of customer experience – was accomplished through the systematic analysis of the current state of knowledge on customer experience. The generality was supported by the inclusion of 139 research papers covering customer experience through eight different industries (accommodation and food services; arts, entertainment, and recreation; health care and social assistance; information; retail trade; transportation and warehousing; finance and insurance; wholesale trade). The main challenge was to bring terminological consistency to the customer experience field, which was achieved through the input from the field of psychology. The next considerable obstacle was caused by the dual view present in the middle part of the model, where one view was focused on the experience itself, and the second on the customer. There were two possible approaches. The first, to adopt solely the customer as the psychological subject and accepting the complexity of psychological processes resulting in the abstract concept of the experience. And the second, to approach the experience as something more tangible with dimensions reflecting customer's psychological nature. The second approach was chosen because of the expected benefit of higher clarity going hand in hand with the aim of this paper. Literature review based marginal research in the field of psychology was conducted to better understand the process of customer's processing of the external stimulus and, in the end, to determine basic set of customer experience dimensions. Both, customer experience dimensions obtained from the papers, and assigned customer's psychological aspects resulted in the set of five major dimensions (sensorial, cognitive, affective, behavioral, social).

Surprisingly, despite through the years amplified terminological fragmentation, the very initial Schmitt's suggestion to approach the customer experience from the perspective of sense, feel, think, act, relate component, seems to be the still fully valid but often overlooked gold standard in the customer experience field.¹⁴ Therefore I strongly suggest to embrace it but with slightly modified naming – sensorial (sense), cognitive (think), affective (feel), behavioral (act), and social (relate) for easier understanding and easier connection to the field of psychology. At the same time, Schmitt's denomination of ExPros (experience providers) can be used for the items in the left part of the model, as they represent the high-level groups of factors influencing and, except the customer theme, providing customer's experience through the interaction. From the managerial perspective, the conceptual model might be used as the indispensable starting point for customer experience management activities – the important clarification tool for more effective efforts in the marketing field.¹⁵

As many research papers focus on the identification of the important factors influencing customer experience in the selected areas, the theory, that to use the actual advantage of customer experience to gain differentiation and competitive advantage, means to not only improve experience with most influencing factors identified in a given industry, but also to extend the customer experience management efforts into the new dimensions, should be taken into account and subjected to further research. As experience may take on many different forms due to its abstract nature, the basic nature of human perception and behavior is fundamentally given, extensively explored, and thus can be used as an auxiliary tool for directing experiential management activities. I encourage researchers and companies to embrace truly customer-centric approach and to start with the understanding of the „full-fledged“ customer, put him in the center of their marketing efforts and to build the company branded world of thoughtfully designed stimulus around him to get the best possible outcomes that can be actually achieved by adopting thorough customer experience management. Limiting factors of this research are possible subjectivity during the content analysis, and limited number of papers for some industries. The next step following this conceptualization is to empirically test the model in variety of industries to test its generality and to test hypothesized relationships.

14 SCHMITT, B.: *Experiential Marketing*. In *Journal of Marketing Management*, 1999, Vol. 15, p. 53-67.

15 PENNINGTON, A.: *The Customer Experience Book*. London : Pearson, 2016.

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(DIS)ADVANTAGES OF TOURISM IN THE CONDITIONS OF SELF-GOVERNMENT AND WAYS OF ITS EFFECTIVE PROMOTION

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ABSTRACT:

The creation of Slovak Republic as an independent state, globalization, and internationalization of society has brought an increase in competition between cities, not only at the national level, but beyond national borders also. This is also related to the city image and its communication after the year 1989, when the self-governments acquired a significant position thanks to the implementation of the law on municipal establishment. If cities want to keep their position in the urban market and be successful at the same time, it is necessary to remember the importance of marketing activities, as well as maintain a positive city image. Thus, paper focuses on the characteristics of internal marketing communication of the selected city. Based on the results of the survey conducted, we will proceed to our own proposals and recommendations for the city's marketing communication in order to maintain its image and competitiveness.

KEY WORDS:

city image, city of Bojnice, local self-government, promotion of city, tourism

Introduction

We live in a time when organizations of both the private and public sector spend huge amounts of money for commercial purposes. Companies spend millions on having their name placed in stadiums, developing new packaging for their products or on television and radio prime time advertising. We could state that each step an organization makes is a certain way of communication towards current, but also prospective, customers, building its image. All the abovementioned activities could be summarized by one word – marketing. We understand it as a continuous process, where the marketing staff set strategies, which would allow a city to achieve its long-term goals. To achieve these aims, marketing experts implement instruments that are the most suitable for a particular situation. The origins of marketing go back to the distant past and have been developing as a consequence of goods surplus and competitiveness. The importance of a customer has grown proportionally, placing them at the forefront.

There are many definitions of marketing, however, this term can be summarised as an activity aimed at making profit. Within the aforementioned activity, services and products are promoted and supplied to customers, subsequently meeting at the goods and services market in order to satisfy their needs. Marketing is also connected to many aspects of activities on a communal or regional level. To sell as many products and services as possible, a certain differentiation from competition is necessary for the subject to be able to stand out on the market. This difference comprises many attributes, which a product or a service contains. In the sense of the whole complex of perceptions, direct or shared experience, the organization builds its image. We could assert that just like every individual builds their personality, every organization, city, region or nation similarly create their own character, which could be called an image. It is their image that supports improving competitiveness in the area of urban tourism and increases potential customers' awareness of a touristically attractive city. In the paper, we will primarily focus on a theoretical definition of the terms tourism, image, and relationship between the image and local self-government. Subsequently, we will analyse tourism and image of the city of Bojnice. In the practical part we will, therefore, concentrate on the advantages and disadvantages that tourism brings to the city and how it influences its overall image. Stemming from the conducted survey, we will proceed to our own proposals and recommendations for building a positive image of a city within the context of tourism.

1 Main Objective and Methodology of Research

We are of the opinion that the given subject is highly topical due to the importance of competitiveness of the Slovak cities. Cities are usually the main place for life and work activities. It is currently a matter of course that municipalities compete for new residents, investors, visitors, etc. Each city tries to be unique and make the most of their potential, therefore it is not exceptional that cities are building their own positive image, through which they present themselves both internally and externally. The main objective of the paper is to suggest our own recommendations for an efficient marketing communication, which could improve the positive image of the city and tourism on the examined territory on the basis of theoretical definition and conducted survey. The method of the realized study lies mainly in analyzing individual components, elements, and features of the available literature, allowing the reader to better understand the issue concerned. In this part, we can also encounter

induction, which means that the acquired scientific data served as a basis for developing general theoretical conclusions in the paper. The method of deduction, vice versa, helped us to make a general interpretation from general assumptions.

The object of research in our study is the city of Bojnice, known for its spa resort or the presence of tourist attractions like the castle or the Zoo. The strategy of our research in the practical part is a general methodological approach to solving the target question, with the existence of two main categories of research strategies – qualitative and quantitative. In our case, we have decided to use the qualitative approach to developing the submitted paper. Despite the fact that qualitative methods work with relatively lower number of cases, they address them in more depth. The qualitative approach thus lies mostly in more intensive examination of the facts at hand. To analyse internal and external communication, we have used online questioning of the self-government representatives as a technique of data collection. The representatives questioned were the members of the Bojnice City Council, who were sent a questionnaire through e-mail. The selection of the aforementioned respondents was intentional. We have chosen this research sample, because these individuals represent the city both internally and externally and are the elected representatives of residents of the city. To describe further elements of internal and external communication of the city, we have used an analysis of internet sources. Stemming from the theoretical framework of the examined issue, the analysis of external and internal communication of the city, and the questionnaire survey, we will conclude by proceeding to proposals and recommendations for an efficient building of communication between the city and the public which could increase the level of tourism in the city.

2 Theoretical Background of Image and Tourism

Many entrepreneurs, members of community, and state officials, who take part in creating marketing of a city, believe that marketing consists only of advertising and sales. Consequently, they often might not understand the importance of analysing the external environment of the city. For this reason, in the following part of the paper we will focus our attention on explaining the significance of tourism in the urban environment. As the word image can be understood from various points of view, we analyse this term and individual meanings in detail in the theoretical chapter. We also concentrate on image in the conditions of self-government.

2.1 Definition of Urban Tourism and Its Value for Cities

Similarly, to other terminological definitions, there are several views and opinions of the term tourism. Chorvát¹ states that among Slovak experts, namely economists and managers, a term “travel industry” has been long-established, because many do not consider “tourism” a correct expression. Thus, the travel industry means a set of activities aimed at meeting the needs connected to travelling and persons’ stay away from their place of residence, usually in their leisure time. Tourism has changed significantly in the recent years, it has grown and developed. As a consequence, activities outside leisure time like work and business trips are now being included as a part of it. Tourism has thus become an important sector of both national and regional economy.² As Lukáč³ state, tourism helps to reach potential customers or associates of local subjects, who carry out and enforce their development activities and projects. As a product of tourism representing the image of a given place in the eyes of customers, a well-prepared promotion of the place, knowing its strengths and increasing awareness of the less-known but interesting facts, enhances not only tourism.

Image of a territory should stem from the historical and natural specifics, knowledge, innovation, and thought potential of the territory. The industry of tourism comprises specific sectors of products, like e.g. accommodation services, catering services and selling beverages, services of personal transport, assistance services in personal transport, letting means of personal transport, travel agencies and guidance services, information offices, cultural services, recreational and entertainment services, and various other services for tourists and visitors.⁴ From the World Tourism Organization’s point of view, the potential of a country, its supply, on which the client’s or visitor’s interest depends, is a precondition of any form of tourism happening. Subsequently, various forms of tourism have been

- 1 CHORVÁT, I.: Turista a turizmus jako metafory pohybu a pobyt člověka v modernej spoločnosti. K niektorým vybraným koncepciám sociológie turizmu. In *Sociální studia*, 2006, Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 113. [online]. [2019-04-11]. Available at: <https://is.muni.cz/el/1423/podzim2012/SOC189/um/Chorvat/chorvat_sost_1_2006_070116-7.pdf>.
- 2 MATLOVIČOVÁ, K., KLAMÁR, R., MIKA, R.: *Turistika a jej formy*. Prešov : Prešovská univerzita v Prešove, 2015, p. 10.
- 3 LUKÁČ, M.: Vplyv návštevnosti turistických atrakcií na rozvoj regiónu. In IMROVIČ, M. (ed.): *Regionálne voľby a regionálna politika*. Trnava : UCM, 2014, p. 94.
- 4 PALATKOVÁ, M.: *Mezinárodní turizmus*. 2nd Edition. Praha : Grada Publishing, a. s., 2014, p. 14.

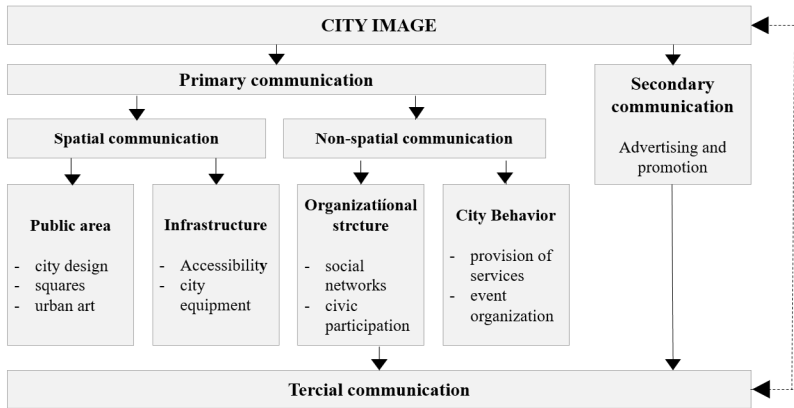
defined: winter tourism and winter sports, summer tourism, urban and cultural tourism, wellness, medical or agrotourism. In the paper, we will concentrate on tourism in the conditions of a city. According to Palatková – Zichová⁵ tourism is further broken down into urban, rural, and resort tourism. Urban tourism is characterized mainly by shorter stays, the main motive of visiting being a historical, cultural or social experience. In recent years, city-break has been paid greater attention in the connection to the trend of dividing a yearly holiday fund into several parts; it is oriented at experience-based urban tourism, congress and business tourism, fairs, exhibitions, or wellness tourism. Urban tourism represents a specific type accompanied by tourists' stay in the cities, mainly in city centres. Fundamental motives of visiting cities are learning about cultural and historical monuments, shopping and other commercial activities, education, work and business trips, social prestige, etc. The basic attractions that the cities offer to the tourists are historical monuments and modern architecture. Tourism is, thus, one of the ways to build an economic and overall standard of not just the city itself, but also the whole region.⁶ In the conditions of local government, tourism falls within the competences of municipal board of representatives or commissions established. It stems from the Act No. 369/1990 Coll. on Municipal Establishment,⁷ based on which the provision of development of urban tourism is one of the tasks of local self-administration subjects. This is connected to creating the framework conditions in legislation, building institutions of tourism, providing various form of support, land-use planning, etc. The quality of urban tourism is undoubtedly influenced by the communication of a city towards its citizens and visitors. Prilenska,⁸ in her study, defines image as consisting of three components, which are the primary, secondary, and tertiary communication.

5 PALATKOVÁ, M., ZICHOVÁ, J.: *Ekonomika turizmu*. 2nd Edition. Praha : Grada Publishing, a. s., 2014, p. 23.

6 MICHNIAK, D.: Vplyv dostupnosti na rozvoj cestovného ruchu vo vybraných regiónoch na Slovensku. In *Geographia Cassoviensis*, 2010, Vol. 4, No. 1, p. 114. [online]. [2019-04-11]. Available at: <https://uge.science.upjs.sk/images/geographia_cassoviensis/articles/GC-2010-4-1/24Michniak_4.pdf>.

7 *Zákon o obecnom zriadení č. 369/1990 Zb. zo dňa 9. septembra 1990*. [online]. [2019-04-11]. Available at: <<https://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/1990/369/>>.

8 PRILENSKA, V.: City Branding as a Tool for Urban Regeneration: Towards a Theoretical Framework. Architecture and Urban Planning. In *Architecture and Urban Planning*, 2012, Vol. 6, p. 13 [online]. [2019-04-11]. Available at: <https://www.academia.edu/30418242/City_Branding_as_a_Tool_for_Urban_Regeneration_towards_a_theoretical_framework>.

Table 1: Communication within city tourism

Source: PRÍLENSKA, V.: City Branding as a Tool for Urban Regeneration: Towards a Theoretical Framework. Architecture and Urban Planning. In *Architecture and Urban Planning*, 2012, Vol. 6, p. 13.

As we can see on the illustration on the Table 1, the primary communication is divided into two parts: spatial and nonspatial. Spatial communication includes a set of activities aimed at improving the physical part of the city, like for example constructions, reconstructions, or building infrastructure of the city. On the other hand, the nonspatial communication means a consolidation of social environment, provision of services by the city, and organization of various events. The secondary communication can be understood as focusing on advertising and promotion of the image of a city. The last, tertiary communication contains within it a word of mouth, involves passing of experience among visitors and potential visitors or by the media; this communication is usually difficult to keep in check. Within the tertiary communication, information about the possible difference between the city image and reality is also disseminated. Therefore, it is desirable to focus on both the spatial and nonspatial components. It is, thus, obvious that there is a whole range of stimuli, which the city can use to attract potential visitors and consequently increase the standard of tourism. On one hand, this can be achieved through the aforementioned communication, either within the municipal office (internal communication), or related to the public, visitors, government, or investors. The other important part is building a positive image and public awareness of the city, and increasing the desire to visit it.

2.2 Image of a Territory as a Prerequisite for City Tourism Building

It is equally important to define the image, the key term of our study, within its meaning to the general public. We encounter the word image not only on the national or regional level; there also is a city image, where we will focus on its structure, specific features, and its division. In this chapter we will also clarify the relationship between image and public administration, thus describing the image of the city in more detail. Within the context of knowledge obtained from the authors addressing the term image, Vysekalová and Mikeš⁹ have defined the principles, which allow us to understand the image more deeply. According to this, image can be described as a product created with respect of certain situations, in which an individual has been subjected to either negative or positive emotions. Image is dependent on emotions to a great extent. An individual or a group can be affected by various different emotional influences. Therefore, we can describe it as a result of the encountered reality and experience connected to the object which is trying to build a certain image. Within this position, there comes a moment of customer's decision, which they then associate with the concrete image of the product.

The American Marketing Association, which brings together businessmen from around the world, defines the word image in its dictionary. It means the customers' perception of goods, services, organizations, brands, etc., which may or may not reflect reality.¹⁰ We are of the opinion that, in marketing, image is many times more important than a product itself. As we could have noted, the term image is not only a one specific characteristic. It contains a great number of nuances of meaning, which allow us to understand this term; it can be found not only in marketing, but also in psychology. Vitálišová¹¹ states that it is the public relations, one of the basic marketing instruments, that is aimed at building the image of an organization. The author Karlíček¹² defines public relations as a particular way of creating relationships with media, with a main

9 VYSEKALOVÁ, J., MIKEŠ, J.: *Image a firemní identita*. Praha : Grada Publishing, a.s., 2009, p. 14.

10 AMERICAN MARKETING ASSOCIATION: *Dictionary*. [online]. [2019-04-13]. Available at: <<https://www.ama.org/resources/Pages/Dictionary.aspx?dLetter=I>>.

11 VITÁLIŠOVÁ, K.: *Marketing vzťahov v miestnej samospráve*. Banská Bystrica : Belianum, 2015, p. 13.

12 KARLÍČEK, M. et al.: *Základy marketingu*. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2013, p. 203.

objective to attract positive attention and suppress possible negative attention. The essence of image-building, therefore, depends mainly on a successful relationship with the public, building optimal relations with both public and private organizations, making a positive impression - the image of an organization, and eliminating negative publicity. The author Svoboda¹³ follows up on this idea and defines image as one of the three main points that constitute the core of public relations. These points are the public opinion, identity of the society, and the repeatedly mentioned image. If we look closer at the term public opinion, the author describes the word as having its origins in early antiquity and its basic characteristics standing on the following three pillars: it is reflected in biased attitudes; it is influenced by concrete impulses; it can be perceived as subjective, as it is affected by emotions.

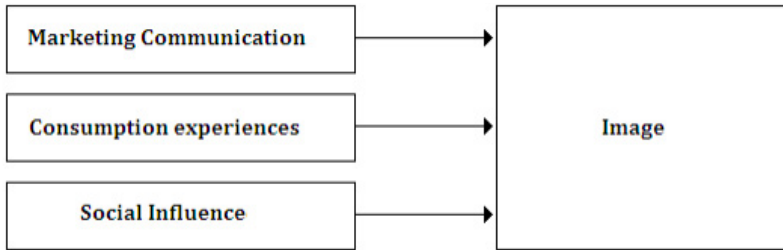
Generally, image has several classifications. The authors Vysekalová and Mikeš,¹⁴ in regards to the market forces, defines three types of image, which are the type image, product or brand image, and, last but not least, the company image, regarded also as corporate image. The authors Křížek and Crha¹⁵ distinguish between two types of image - based on a truth or a lie, i.e. the real image and the fake image. However, they also see image from another point of view as either a positive or a negative image. The authors have joined these criteria together and have established four types of image: positive and real image, negative and real image, negative and fake image, and positive and fake image. If we want to comprehend the term image in more depth, it is necessary to also analyse the process of its creation. The authors Rosengren, Standoft and Sundbrandt¹⁶ describe how an image is being formed within three processes, which are the marketing communication, consumption experience, and social influence. Hereby, we present the model of the aforementioned three types of processes.

13 SVOBODA, V.: *Public relations – moderně a účinně*. Praha : Grada publishing, a.s., 2009, p. 15.

14 VYSEKALOVÁ, J., MIKEŠ, J.: *Image a firemní identita*. Praha : Grada Publishing, a.s., 2009, p. 17.

15 KŘÍŽEK, Z., CRHA, I.: *Jak psát reklamní text*. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2012, p. 28.

16 ROSENGREN, A., STANDOFT, A., SUNDBRANDT, A.: *Brand Identity & Brand Image*. [online]. [2019-04-13]. Available at: <<http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:326094/fulltext01.pdf>>.



Picture 1: The Process of Forming the Concept of Image

Source: RIEZEBOS, H., KOTLER, P., PFOERTSCH, W.: *Marketing*. Berlin : Springer, 2006, p. 94.

The opinions of the authors Kotler and Levy¹⁷ show the thought transition from the classic view of marketing, related strictly to the business sector, to the area of public relations. In the article, they state that the implementation of marketing instruments was not widely used by the cities at the time, but due to the expansion of progressive concept of marketing, it has become possible. The authors have hereby asserted that marketing can be beneficial not only for purely economic operators, but also for subjects like universities, churches, political parties, etc. It is possible also because these subjects have some elements of business institutions, which means that they also try to maximize profit while considering expenses; they also use advertising and communication aimed at a certain target group.

2.3 Definition of City Image and Its Value for Cities

To ensure success in the area of the city image, support from the public administration is a necessity. However, it often happens that mayors and members of the board of representatives reserve some funds to support the image of the city, but their opinion could change in the view of some other activity in need of financing. As an example we could mention an election, when mayors and representatives change their opinions in accordance to the support of the citizens. That means that if the citizens ask for roads being repaired, the mayor takes the funds reserved for city image support and allocates them to road repairs. That is why it is important to accord a greater weight to the city image. In case of an insufficient support, departments responsible for city

17 KOTLER, P., LEVY, S. J.: Broadening the Concept of Marketing. In *Journal of Marketig*, 1969, Vol. 33, No. 1, p. 10-15. [online]. [2019-04-13]. Available at: <C:/Users/krist/Downloads/Broadening_the_Concept_of_Marketing.pdf>.

image should take an action and explain the opportunities that the city image might bring to the city. This strategy should be based on rational factors, real economic benefits and examples of other cities where image plays an important role. These activities should be presented to the mayors and municipality representatives, who can further use them to inform the voters of the benefits brought by building a positive image of a city. Based on the study of the author Vitálišová,¹⁸ image in public administration could be understood as a set of perceptions of self-governments on either the municipal or regional level that are dominant in the public. The author further states that the most frequently used instruments of building a favourable employee and employer image in public sector are circulars, directives, memorandums, articles in local press, events at the self-government level, press releases, or local news service, which all form the image at the national, regional, or municipal level. The government plays a central role in image-building, as it is often its tourism agencies deciding on the marketing strategy. Therefore, they determine the budget and a following promotion tactics of the city or region. Allen¹⁹ asserts that for the image building in public sector, attention must be paid to the following points: understanding the role and dynamics of the government; defining key points of promoting the image; targeting marketing campaigns both internally and externally; an appropriate selection of physical and virtual tools for evoking emotions associated with the brand; developing new methods promoting the desired customer's experience with the product.

We agree with Rainistom²⁰ who states that the main target groups for city marketing and local brands are the visitors, residents, people working in the city, as well as the entrepreneurs and businesses. These target groups are much more specific and complex, i.e. they differ by perception of the city and local needs and demands. To clarify, we can state an example: visitors usually look for leisure activities like shopping centres,

18 VITÁLIŠOVÁ, K.: *Marketing vzťahov v miestnej samospráve*. Banská Bystrica : Belianum, 2015, p. 23.

19 ALLEN, G.: Place Branding: New Tools for Economic Development. In *Design Management Review*, 2007, Vol. 18, No. 2, p. 62. [online]. [2019-04-13]. Available at: <<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1948-7169.2007.tb00084.x/epdf>>.

20 RAINISTO, S. K.: *Success Factors of Place Marketing*. Helsinki : Helsinki University of Technology, 2003. [online]. [2019-04-13]. Available at: <<http://bestplaceinstytut.org/www/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/dissertationRainisto.pdf>>.

culture, spas, etc., while investors and entrepreneurs are interested in diametrically opposed topics, like e.g. business. We could assert that the customers of a city are not interested in just one particular point of the city, but rather in a generally favourable environment. We would like to support the suggestions that an individual marketing approach is required for cities. A city cannot be seen as a usual product, as it itself is a set of products. It is necessary to see a city as a complex of localities, i.e. not as separate, independent services that the city provides for individual target groups. Building an attractive city image is rarely simple due to a complicated nature of cities. Each city is unique by its geographical location, natural resources, culture, transport interconnection, etc. Correct understanding of the city's nature and consequent proper measures are vital for achieving a positive image of a city.²¹

If a city is capable of creating a positive image usually, concentrated on specific areas, it becomes an interesting place for future visitors and residents. It is a result of an effort that aims to help spreading the positive image of a city with an objective of drawing investment into the city and becoming a preferred place.²² For cities to keep a positive image, it is important to maintain the brand image and positive experience of visitors and residents. If the city can fulfil and bring together these expectations, it is likely that the city image will be disseminated as positive. We could say that the image of a city is perceived subjectively to a great extent and is formed through the way the visitors or residents interpret it, either rationally or emotionally.²³ The ability of a city to build an image is also possible to apply on strengthening emotional ties of the people to the particular city. This means that the image is formed not only through recognizing certain points within the city, but it is possible to combine this knowledge with an emotional side. If positive information about a city is broadcast, people can further expand their approaches and attitudes, which will be based more on a hedonistic model. He proposes the ABC model, which states that the customer's attitude towards a city is derived from the following components: affect, which represents customer's feelings; the second one is behaviour; the

21 KÓŇA, A.: *Brand destinácie: Tvorba značky miesta*. Bratislava : Brand Institute, 2017, p. 26.

22 MAITLAND, R., RITCHIE, B. W.: *City Tourism. National Capital Perspectives*. Cambridge : CABI, 2010, p. 27.

23 JANSSON, J., POWER, D.: *The Image of The City - Urban Branding as Constructed Capabilities in Nordic City Regions*. Oslo : Uppsala University, 2006, p. 11.

third one is the intention of the customer towards the object; and the last one is the cognition, i.e. the customer's knowledge about the object.²⁴ Currently, city image is an important topic in almost every document published by the city. Image in regard of a city is linked to the concept of urban development, i.e. an improvement of the city environment aimed at housing, recreation, or production. Prilenska²⁵ builds on this idea in her study, where she discusses image as an instrument of city revitalization. The author defines urban image as a certain package of steps directed at increasing competitiveness and strengthening the way inhabitants identify with a city. She also asserts that the overall image must be derived from reality, as the urban image comprises tangible objects like buildings, constructions, city infrastructure, or communities, events and services. Therefore, we can state that city tourism success depends on the brand and image of the city, which are supposed to draw visitors because of tourism or job opportunities, as well as investors and new citizens. Various types of rankings are used to evaluate image and brand of a city in the view of competition.

3 Characteristics of the City of Bojnice from the Image and Marketing Communication Point of View

Image of the city Bojnice, as a result of public relations, comes mainly from its relationship with the public, building mostly on positive relationship of the city with its inhabitants. According to the information obtained from the theoretical part, public relations is one of the key means of marketing communication, which applies also for Bojnice. Communication is an instrument of administering and joining the inhabitants of Bojnice together for the purpose of certain publicly beneficial objectives. Depending on where the communication in the city occurs, we can speak of two types of communication. Internal communication in Bojnice takes place within the Municipal Office and organizations established by the city and the city council. We could say that we regard all communication concerning the citizens and the city as internal. The city of Bojnice uses also the external – outwards targeted,

24 For more information, see: SOLOMON, M. et al.: *Consumer Behaviour, A European Perspective*. 3rd Edition. London : Pearson Education Limited, 2006.

25 PRILENSKA, V.: City Branding as a Tool for Urban Regeneration: Towards a Theoretical Framework. Architecture and Urban Planning. In *Architecture and Urban Planning*, 2012, Vol. 6, p. 13. [online]. [2019-04-13]. Available at: <https://www.academia.edu/30418242/City_Branding_as_a_Tool_for_Urban_Regeneration_towards_a_theoretical_framework>.

communication, which, in practice, means the communication of the municipality with the public comprising tourists, investors, and visitors of the city.

3.1 Internal and External Communication of the City of Bojnice

Representatives of local self-government can support tourism by asking for funds that would be reserved for targeting a new segment of customers or designing a new²⁶ brochure about a city. No matter how well these types of marketing activities might be targeted to reach new customers, all this effort could be useless if an analysis of the environment is not conducted before they are applied. It is the impression of the external audience, members of which are not citizens of the city, that is important for the external image. External image is formed as a result of information and data available to the visitors or potential visitors from various sources. These could be, for example, a direct visit or personal experience with the city or sources, information, images, emotions, which a potential customer can obtain from books, magazines, city website, or conversations with people who already have an experience with the city. We also cannot forget to mention external media like television and radio. The external image of a city is also represented by the tourists' and potential investors' view of the city. This kind of image does not depend solely on the activities of external media outside of the city; each city builds its external image individually.

Websites are a necessity for the majority of cities and municipalities in the Slovak Republic. The official website of Bojnice, www.bojnice.sk, provides its citizens, as well as entrepreneurs and non-residents, with information regarding the city that can be obtained very quickly and efficiently. Information is available 24 hours a day, which means that the municipality is more open and accessible to the public. After analysing the website of the city we can state that it is available also for visually impaired, blind, deaf, or otherwise disabled individuals. Through the functions of voice service or enlarged font size, the site can be used smoothly by the general public. The webpage contains four horizontally arranged subpages allowing fast navigation; concretely these are the following blocks of subpages: self-administration, citizen/

26 GIRIWATI, N., HOMMA, R., IKI, K.: Urban Tourism: Designing a Tourism Space in a City Context for Social Sustainability. In *The Sustainable City*, 2013, Vol. 1, No. 8, p. 166. [online]. [2019-04-14]. Available at: <file:///C:/Users/krist/Downloads/Urban_tourism_Designing_a_tourism_space_in_a_city_.pdf>.

business, official board, and where to in the city. If a visitor does not find the information they are looking for on the website, they need only one click on the contacts, where they can find relevant e-mail addresses and telephone numbers to request the information. The site is created in the native language, as well as for the English- and German-speaking visitors of the website.

A social network Facebook is a relatively recent type of marketing instrument used to spread information about the city and its events. It allows the municipality of Bojnica to gain user support and feedback from the residents, visitors, or potential visitors of the city. Because Facebook enjoys great popularity in Slovakia, information sharing increases the range of information available to the public, concerning the events held in the city, planned activities, or various interesting moments in the life of Bojnica. Bojnica administer an official Facebook page entitled "The City of Bojnica", which a visitor can find through a search tool directly on Facebook or by clicking on an icon found on the website of Bojnica. Through analysing the Facebook page of the city of Bojnica we have found out that Bojnica uses Facebook to regularly update and add information about events coming up or shares Facebook pages of cooperating subjects. However, it is questionable whether the page fulfils its purpose, as the visitors rarely actively react to the posts. Majority of the posts have no comments and, on average, about five "likes" to one post.

A modern communication channel between the municipalities and their citizens is the application. „Virtualne“, which has been bought by the city of Bojnica. We can state that it is a tool that is on the borderline between the internal and external communication. It is a contemporary, flexible, and convenient way of communicating with the residents of Bojnica. It enables the citizens to get immediate information of various kinds on their mobile phones or tablets. The advantage of it is also the ability to set notifications of actual announcements, events, or warnings in the city; furthermore, the application is free of charge. Concerning the tourism in Bojnica, the Regional Organization of Tourism – Upper Nitra Region in cooperation with the Bojnica Municipal Office have devised a mobile application Travel Guide serving as a certain type of a tourist guide around the city. It provides the visitors with a large amount of information from various areas, such as history, maps, traditional events in the city, cash machines, important phone numbers and a link to the website of the city. The application can be used on both the Android and iOS operating system. It is vital to note that a city image is not only an internal view

of the city. The image of a city also has an impact internally, i.e. on the residents of the city. Contrary to the external image, it is the internal image, where the resident is a customer but also a services supplier.²⁷ In this case it is a supply of services aimed at image building. Each resident should, in the context of the internal image, have a perfect knowledge of the character of the city and the products it offers. Internal city image can be influenced by countless factors. One of the most significant is the age of the residents. It is natural that opinions and perceptions of environmental circumstances change with age. The view of an internal image can also differ in dependence on the level of education.²⁸

In relation to the internal communication of the Bojnice municipality, we distinguish between two main groups, which are the employees of the Municipal Office and organizations established by the city, and the members of the City Council. These are the eleven members of the Bojnice City Council, employees of the Municipal office, municipal police and other organizations such as the cultural center, technical services, senior citizen facilities, or the leisure center. Among them, information is shared through internal communication channels. We find the meetings at different levels of city management especially important. In Bojnice, there is a regular meeting of the Mayor with the employees of management of the city every Monday. Every first Monday of the month a large meeting of the Mayor with managers and directors of municipal subsidised organizations takes place. Furthermore, every first Tuesday of the month, the Mayor administers a regular session with the directors of school facilities operating in Bojnice. Within the self-government, communication that occurs between the superiors and employees, which includes meetings, instructions, directives, and orders of the Mayor – also described as vertical communication, is not the only type of communication. In Bojnice, we are also able to note a horizontal communication, which is characteristic by information being shared at the parallel level like, for example, meetings among department managers. To administer the internal documentation, the city of Bojnice has drawn up the Organization Manual, which lays down the internal organization of the Bojnice Municipal Office. Preparation of documents for city administration authorities is regulated by the Rules of Procedure, which is also publicly available at the official website of the city. As regards

27 VYSEKALOVÁ, J., MIKEŠ, J.: *Image a firemní identita*. Praha : Grada Publishing, a.s., 2009, p. 16.

28 MATLOVIČOVÁ, K.: *Značka územia*. Prešov : Prešovská univerzita v Prešove, 2015, p. 127.

the dressing of the employees, which also is a certain type of internal communication, they do not have a compulsory dress code. A business formal code is a rule during the meetings of the Municipal Council, municipal boards, and receiving official visits mostly by the Mayor of the city, the Head of the Municipal Office, and the management employees. The municipality has a fiber-optic internet connection with the speed of 30Mbit/s, where the employees have their email addresses in the form of name.surname@bojnice.sk. There also are common email addresses corresponding to a department or an office, e.g. the e-mail address for the Municipal Office is urad@bojnice.sk. Each employee has a signature with their name, job title, office address, and contact information at the end of the email message.

Another internal communication tool of the municipality is the email information service, through which the city informs its residents about cultural or sport events, public affairs, municipal legislation, investment offers, property offers, meteorological information, emergency situations, water or electricity shutdowns, etc. Citizens can decide for themselves what kind of information they are interested in during the registration at the Bojnice website. To register, they have to fill in login information, including their email, where they will receive messages through the information service. The next communication tool is the News from Bojnice, which are being sent similarly to the email information service. The residents or visitors can subscribe to receive news updates about the events in the city by sending an email request to join the service News from Bojnice to the address novinky@bojnice.sk. The public address system of the city as a form of communication is used not only by the Bojnice municipality, but is available also to the natural and legal persons. For the announcements made through the public address system, a pricelist available at the Bojnice city website applies. The price depends on the character of the announcement, i.e. whether it is of a commercial or non-commercial nature. The concrete time – days and hours of the announcements being made, can be also found at the city website. An unquestionable advantage of the public address system is its availability to the people without the internet connection. Another popular means of communication is the monthly newspaper Bojnice News (Bojnické zvesti) published by the Cultural Center of Bojnice, which is a subsidised organization of the city with a legal personality, established by the Municipal Council. It provides the Bojnice city with information about cultural events and various activities, announcements about upcoming events or important dates.

3.2 Results of the Survey Among the Representatives of Bojnice Municipality

We gave the representatives of the Bojnice municipality eight questions related to image and tourism. The respondents of our survey were the members of the Municipal Council. The questionnaire was sent to them electronically. The intention of the first question was to find out how the council members perceive the city of Bojnice and what they primarily associate the word with.

Which of the following characteristics is the most distinctive for the city?

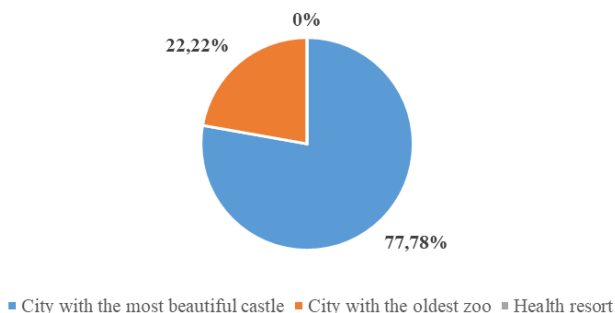


Chart 1: Which of the following characteristics is the most distinctive for the city?

Source: own processing

On the Chart 1 we can see that the opinions of individual respondents are almost identical, i.e. they primarily perceive the city through the Bojnice Castle, which is the central element of the city. The aim of the question number 2 was to determine whether the city cooperates with the subjects from the Chart 2.

Does the city cooperate with any of the stated subjects?

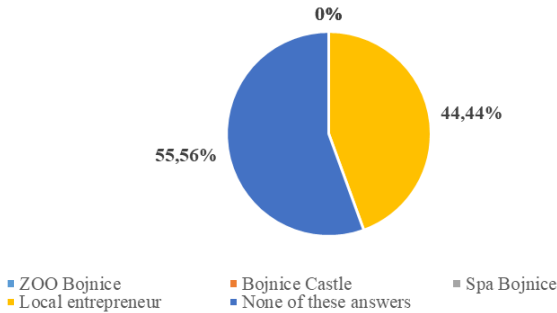


Chart 2: Does the city cooperate with any of the stated subjects?

Source: own processing

The second question deals with the cooperation of the city with organizations located in the city, which constitute the core of tourism in Bojnice. We regard the cooperation as official when it is established by a memorandum, declaration, etc. From the replies of the council members we can see that the city is currently not in a partnership with any of the stated institutions. The question number three was aimed at getting an answer to whether the private sector actively engages with activities of the city.

To what extent do private businesses participate on the activities of the city?

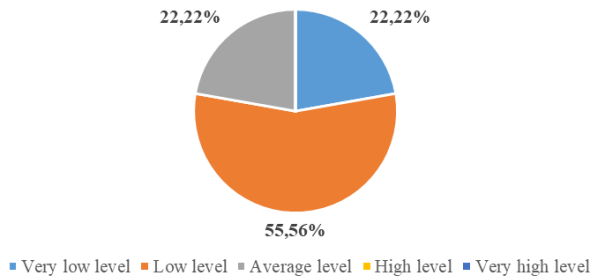


Chart 3: To what extent do private businesses participate on the activities of the city?

Source: own processing

As we can notice, the council members perceive the participation of entrepreneurs as minimal, nonexistent, or average. The results are, therefore, oriented around the low and average level. They expressed an opinion that the entrepreneurs expect concessions and support of their activities from the city, but they are not interested in cooperating on the activities of the city. The objective of the fourth question was to ascertain whether the respondents perceive tourism in Bojnice as being of an all-year round or just seasonal nature. The fourth question brought an overall agreement, where we can see the answers aligned vertically in sequence. All council members agreed that tourism in the city is focused mainly on the season between the beginning of April and the end of September. In all the other months they see only minimal tourism, which they consider a problem that should be addressed. The fifth question was aimed at determining the impact of tourism in Bojnice on lives of its residents.

Does tourism in the city influence an every-day life of a resident?

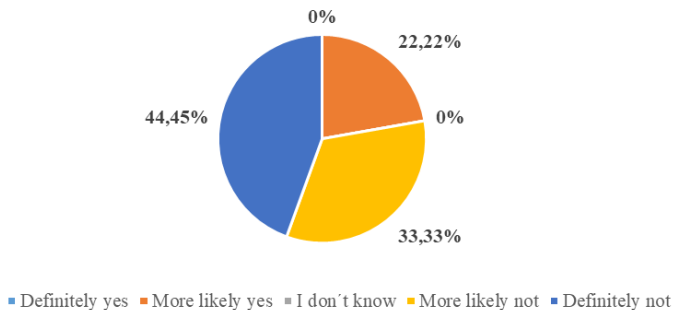


Chart 4: Does tourism in the city influence an every-day life of a resident?

Source: own processing

All respondents concurred in the opinion that there is no or just a small impact on the residents. Furthermore, they add that this phenomenon is caused mainly by the fact that tourists usually visit only the outer areas of the city close to the Zoo and Bojnice Castle. An average resident thus has only a minimal contact with tourists. The goal of the sixth question was to acquire information about whether the individual promotion elements fit with the overall appearance of the city and how the city representatives assess them.

How would you assess the level of the looks and content of advertising and information materials of the city?

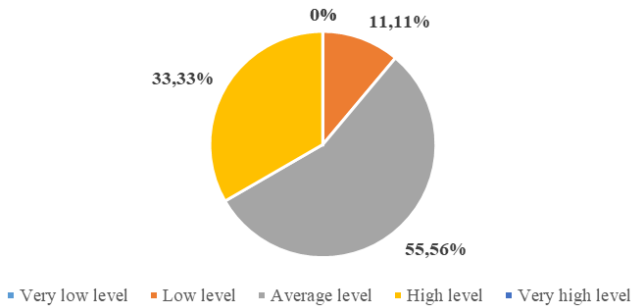


Chart 5: How would you assess the looks and content of advertising and information materials of the city?

Source: own processing

It goes without saying that design and content of billboards and information boards is important especially for cities profiting from tourism. Looking at the Chart 6 we can assert that the promotion and information boards do not meet the standards required by the council members. Half of them state a low level, while the other half tend towards the average level. The respondents were assessing the material form which these objects are made and the overall looks in the environment where they are placed. The seventh question was aimed at finding out the level of cleanliness in Bojnice and the state of parking in the city. One of the negative influences of tourism in cities generally is often a low cleanliness and lack of parking space. As we can see, the answer of the council members to this question statistically stands at around an average level. Neither member has expressed a principally negative opinion, but from the answers we could assume that there is space for improvement in this area. The objective of question number eight was to determine whether the looks of the city corresponds to the status of a tourism city.

Are the technical and public amenities sufficient for a "tourist city"?

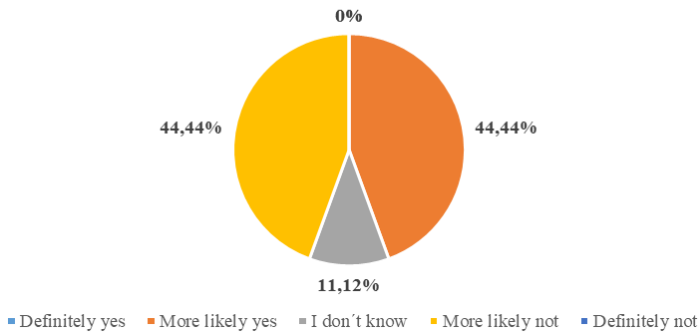


Chart 6: Are the technical and public amenities sufficient for a “spa town”?

Source: own processing

Tourism image of a city is not shaped only by the spa, but also by the overall looks of the city. That is the reason for aiming the last question at the amenities of Bojnice as a tourism city. The council members replied no/rather no and rather yes. They agreed that a visitor does not have an opportunity to encounter spa elements during a walk in the city, which they think needs to be changed.

3.3 Proposals and Recommendations

Based on the results of the survey analysis, in this chapter we are offering proposals for possible solutions and recommendations that could contribute to the development of a multi-day tourism and building an image of a spa town in Bojnice. As we have found out, the city currently does not have a separate department of tourism or a person who would be entirely devoted to activities connected to image-building, marketing, promotion, etc. Therefore, we find it necessary to establish the Tourism Department within the Municipal Office. The department should be headed by an employee, who is an expert in the field and has adequate managerial skills. These traits are important, as the city is struggling with one-day tourism. The department should bring plans and concepts that would solve the problem of one-day tourism oriented to the outer areas of the city. Another important mission within the scope of the tourism department should be building a spa image of the city, which could attract a lot of multi-day tourists. It would also be a priority role of the

department to attract tourists to the city centre. The tourism department would preferentially cooperate with subjects like e.g. local businesses, Bojnice Zoo, Bojnice Castle, Bojnice Spa, Regional Organization of Tourism – Upper Nitra Region, neighbouring municipalities, and many other tourism-carriers in and around the city.

Another proposal directed at supporting the multi-day tourism would be a creation of a city tourist card. The card could be purchased at all members of the memorandum of cooperation, which we have proposed above or online through the website of the city of Bojnice. The price of the card should be accessible to the general public. Using the purchased Bojnice Tourist Card would help the visitors save money on entrance fees to the spa, zoo, and the castle. The card would also provide discounts at local businesses, mainly souvenir shops, restaurant services, cafés, or tourist guides. This would mean that a visitor would be motivated to stay in Bojnice for more than one day. By using the discounts on city attractions, a tourist could perceive the city as more attractive and be more inclined to return to Bojnice for a longer recreation. The objective would be to ensure a multi-day tourism and extend the stay of tourists in the city or improve low-season tourism. The card should also help increase the number of tourists, improve quality of services in the city, and enhance low-season tourism. Creating a mobile application would be aimed at reducing the number of one-day tourists, strengthening tourism in the city, and increasing the knowledge of other attractions besides the Castle and the Zoo.

The application would be based on the principle of a geolocation competition, which means that the visitors of Bojnice would be able to join different contests announced by the city of Bojnice in the application. The tourists would be tasked with visiting the defined GPS coordinates in the city and its surroundings and confirm the visit in the application. Through the application, the visitor would get to know the cultural and historical monuments in the city, its squares, spa, nature, cycle routes, sports locations, and other interesting corners of the city that would otherwise be overlooked. Players would get points for every visited GPS point. After the announced competition would be completed, the city would provide a ranking list in the application and the winners would receive interesting prizes like, for example, phones, laptops, or vouchers for stays in hotels in the city or wellness services in the Bojnice Spa. We also propose building a low podium that would serve for smaller cultural performances in the city. It could also be used by artists like street

theatres, dancers, painters, or performers. Another way of getting the atmosphere of a spa into the heart of the city would be building a small pond. Near the pond, contemporary artists could place their statues and works of art that would complement the overall romantic concept of the city. Offering thematic walks or cycle routes is also one of the possibilities to inspire a visitor to stay in Bojnice for longer. Such an attraction would undoubtedly be found interesting not only by the visitors, but also by the city residents. We would like to recommend the city to create several types of thematic routes. First type would be a route informing the tourist about the nature around, natural phenomena, minerals, etc. The other types would be pathways alongside the cultural monuments and historically interesting places that could be found in and around Bojnice.

Conclusion

Although Bojnice is visited by more than four hundred thousand people a year, the benefits for the city are minimal. The main reason is the one-day tourism, which the council members consider the priority problem. This phenomenon manifests itself in Bojnice by the tourists parking at the edge of the city near the Bojnice Zoo and Castle, where they spend the whole day mainly on one street sometimes called also a “golden mile”. This area offers the zoo, castle, and various other services like cafés and restaurants, diners, attractions, and souvenir and toy shops. The council members all agree that there are some sellers, who do not belong there, because they disturb the overall impression of the historical city. These are mainly shops selling tawdry souvenirs and toys or people dressed in costumes of animals asking a considerable amount of money from tourists after taking a photograph with their children. The majority of the visitors of the city of Bojnice thus experiences an atmosphere of only one street and does not go further towards the city centre, although there is the reconstructed Hurban Square only two hundred meters away. We can say that a one-day tourist does not see the rest of the city, which contains green parks, cafés and restaurants.

This fact is a cause of concern for the municipality, as it generates minimal or zero profit for the city. On the contrary, the city must take care of cleanliness in the streets, reconstruct the roads, mow the grass, provide public street lighting, plant greenery, etc. All this is funded from the residents’ taxes. However, the costs of one-day tourism are not adequately compensated by the money spent by the visitors of the

city. The reason being the fact that the Bojnice Castle comes under the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic and the Zoo under the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic, meaning that the profit flows into the treasury of the state, not the municipality. We think that the city of Bojnice has a potential that it should use for its own benefit. Not only does tourism bring profit to the municipality in the form of taxes, it is also one of the main employers in the city. It is vital to make the city more attractive to both its residents and visitors. This could be achieved by the aforementioned suggested recommendations. Therefore, our paper could be used as a background material for Bojnice, but also other cities encountering similar problems in their self-administration.

Acknowledgement:

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ANALYTICAL VIEW OF THE CHOICE OF GOODS AND SERVICES PURCHASED ON THE INTERNET

Jakub Horváth – Mária Oleárová

ABSTRACT:

The gradual expansion of the Internet to businesses and households has also significantly increased the amount of e-commerce. Nowadays, a huge amount of trading is being done in this way. The essence of e-commerce is based mainly on the use of information and communication technologies, online presentations and etc. Currently, online stores are making it easier and faster for businesses to do business. At the same time, by being a form of direct sales to customers, it is easier to buy goods comfortably from their homes. The aim of this article is to evaluate the process of selecting goods and services purchased online.

KEY WORDS:

customer choice, e-commerce, mobile marketing, smartphone

1 Introduction

Mobile Marketing is a new form of marketing communication that uses mobile communication methods to promote ideas, products and services.¹ Marketing tools deliver anywhere, anytime targeted customer engagement, interaction, placement, and self-measurement of campaign effectiveness.² Truban³ states that responsive design is closely related to mobile marketing. It is defined as a website that can automatically adapt to the device on which it is displayed. This solution brings many advantages.⁴ However, creating such website is more time consuming than creating a traditional version.⁵

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- 1 BAČÍK, R., MIHAL, J., FEDORKO, R.: The Analysis of the Impact of Selected Communication Channels on the Selected City Population' Opinion. In *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, 2015, Vol. 12, No. 2, p. 7-14.
 - 2 WIEDEMANN, D. G.: *Handbook of Research on Mobile Marketing*. Germany : Hershey, 2010, p. 67.
 - 3 TRUBAN, M.: *Môj verný zázpisník*. [online]. [2019-03-12]. Available at: <<http://www.truban.sk/>>.
 - 4 FEDORKO, R., KAKALEJČÍK, L.: Search Engine Optimization and Its Importance in the Purchase Process. In *Central European Conference on Finance and Economics*. Herľany : CEFÉ, 2015, p. 155-163.
 - 5 ŠTEFKO, R., FEDORKO, I., BAČÍK, R.: Facebook Content Analysys of Banks Operating on Slovak Market. In *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, 2014, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 145-152.

The main advantage of this solution is that there is no need to resolve separately the HTML for the mobile version of the website and it is possible to highlight elements that are important to users on a particular device.⁶ Otherwise, it is necessary to delete those that are not important. Mobile marketing is a tactical marketing communication tool that uses mobile technologies to present ideas, products or services.⁷ Its advantage is that it allows immediate interaction with the target audience, i.e. depending on its location or the situation in which it is located at the time of receiving marketing information.⁸ Mobile marketing is an effective tool for measuring the effectiveness of mobile campaigns, making it an ideal means of building a true relationship with the client, with regard to the customer's individual requirements.⁹ It was established gradually with the development of mobile operator networks.¹⁰ It was the marketers' desire to create the fastest and most interactive communication with customers.¹¹ According to Holtzblatt and Hugh¹² mobile marketing is a set of procedures that allow companies to communicate and interact with their customers in a relevant way.¹³ This communication runs through

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- 6 HAGYARI, P., BAČÍK, R., FEDORKO, R.: Analysis of the Key Factors of Reputation Management in Conditions of City Marketing. In *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, 2016, Vol. 13, No. 1, p. 69-80.
 - 7 MUDRÍK, M., FEDORKO, R.: Business Via Google – New Possibilities and the Future. In *3rd International Scientific Conference on Management – Knowledge and Management in Times of Crisis and Ensuing Development*. Prešov : ISCM, 2010, p. 448-455.
 - 8 FRANKOVSKÝ, M., BIRKNEROVÁ, Z.: Measuring Social Intelligence – The MESI Methodology. In *Asian Social Science*, 2014, Vol. 10, No. 6, p. 90-97.
 - 9 LIZBETINOVÁ, L. et al.: Application of Cluster Analysis in Marketing Communications in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises: An Empirical Study in the Slovak Republic. In *Sustainability*, 2019, Vol. 11, No. 8, p. 1-18.
 - 10 MURA, L., KLJUCNIKOV, A.: Small Businesses in Rural Tourism and Agrotourism: Study from Slovakia. In *Economics & Sociology*, 2018, Vol. 11, No. 3, p. 286-300.
 - 11 QUIRK: *Pros and Cons of Mobile Marketing*. [online]. [2019-03-12]. Available at: <<http://www.quirk.biz/resources/mobile101/282/1/Pros-and-Cons-of-Mobile-Marketing>>.
 - 12 HOLTZBLATT, K., HUGH, R. B.: *Contextual Design. The Encyclopedia of Human Computer Interaction. 2nd Edition. Interaction Design Foundation*. [online]. [2019-03-10]. Available at: <http://www.interaction-design.org/encyclopedia/contextual_design.html>.
 - 13 ŠTARCHOŇ, P. et al.: Introduction of a New Mobile Player App Store in Selected Countries of Southeast Asia. In *Social Sciences*, 2018, Vol. 7, No. 9, p. 1-15.

any mobile device or the Internet.¹⁴ Mobile marketing is required to be interactive, unobtrusive and original, to offer an added value to customers so that the customer does not just consider it an interference with their privacy.¹⁵ Mobile marketing companies have created a variety of acronyms to name the characteristics of mobile marketing.¹⁶ Msolutions¹⁷ as the most frequently used lists:

- PAIR:
 - Personal,
 - Available,
 - Immediate,
 - Real time.

- MAGIC:
 - Mobile,
 - Anytime,
 - Globally,
 - Integrated,
 - Customized.

- 5M's
 - Movement,
 - Moment,
 - Me,
 - Money,
 - Machines.

14 MURA, L., MARCHEVSKA, M., DÚBRAVSKÁ, M.: Slovak Retail Business across Panel Regression Model. In *Marketing and Management of Innovations*, 2018, No. 4, p. 203-211.

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16 ŠTEFKO, R., BAČÍK, R., FEDORKO, R.: The Significance of Internet Marketing Tools in Terms of Building a Positive Image of an Higher Education Institution. In *24th International Business Information Management Association Conference: Crafting Global Competitive Economies: 2020 Vision Strategic Planning & Smart Implementation*. Milan : IBIMAC, 2014, p. 1764-1772.

17 MSOLUTION: *Mobilný marketing*. [online]. [2019-03-12]. Available at: <<http://www.msolutions.sk/mmarketing.htm>>.

2 The Current State of the Issue

Verto analytics,¹⁸ has also shown an exploratory initiative on this issue, which in July 2017 mapped consumer habits of UK consumers who were older than 18 years old. According to the company, the use of equipment varies considerably for different age groups as well as for the gender. Users older than 55 years old prefer larger screens when purchasing online. The survey shows that 42% of the time spent on e-commerce websites is on PC for this population group and 25% uses them via the tablet. Only 8% of the time is spent on smartphones by users older than 55 years old. Consumers from the age 35 to 44 use their devices on desktops as well as on tablets (23 to 26%), but they prefer mobile phones to purchase products up to 32%.

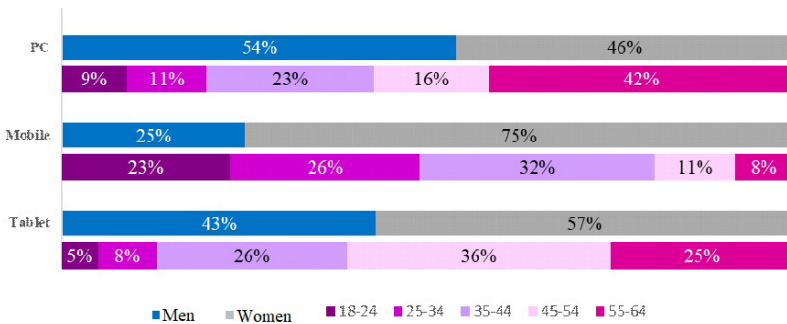


Chart 1: Time spent in online shops by devices depending on age and gender

Source: VERTO ANALYTICS: *E-commerce in the UK: Online Shopping Habits of UK Consumers*. [online]. [2019-03-04]. Available at: <<http://research.vertoanalytics.com/hubfs/Files/VertoAnalytics-Report-UKecommerce.pdf>>.

3 Methodology

The main objective of this article is to evaluate the process of selecting goods and services purchased online. For the purpose of this article, the selected research sample was defined as a new generation of customers represented by the millennium. Regarding the definition of the age

18 VERTO ANALYTICS: *E-commerce in the UK: Online Shopping Habits of UK Consumers*. [online]. [2019-03-04]. Available at: <<http://research.vertoanalytics.com/hubfs/Files/VertoAnalytics-Report-UKecommerce.pdf>>.

group of millenarries, the article follows the methodology of Young.¹⁹ Millenarries are referred to as ‘Y generation’, which means that they are in the age category 18-34 years. The primary sources of the article were obtained by carrying out quantitative research, which was done by the Computer Assisted Web Interview (CAWI) method. Data collection through an electronic questionnaire was held in January, 2019. The link to the electronic questionnaire was placed on the relevant Facebook pages and was also distributed by e-mail. In both cases, this selection can be characterized as voluntary. For the purposes of quantitative research, we were observing students from the Faculty of Management of the University of Prešov in Prešov. The survey sample consisted of 396 respondents. For the purpose of this article, we used descriptive statistics.

	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Never	66	16.7	16.7
Almost never	60	15.2	31.8
Occasionally	156	39.4	71.2
Often	66	16.7	87.9
Very often	48	12.1	100.0
Total	396	100.0	

Chart 2: Purchasing clothing/jewellery via the Internet

Source: own processing

48 respondents (12.1%) purchase clothing/jewellery very often. 66 respondents (16.7%) purchase often, 156 respondents (39.4%) sometimes, 60 respondents (15.2%) almost never and 66 respondents (16.7%) never.

Mean	Median	Modus	St. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Percentile	
						25	75
2.9242424	3	3	1.2114718	1	5	2	4

Chart 3: Descriptive statistics purchasing clothing/jewellery via the Internet

Source: own processing

19 YOUNG, M.: *Ogilvy o reklamě v digitálním věku*. Bratislava : Svojtka & Co, 2017, p. 68.

From the values of the central tendency, it can be concluded that the purchase of jewellery can be seen at level 3. The deviation is slightly increased. The variable encompasses a scale of responses, i.e. a minimum is 1 and a maximum is 5. Looking at the 25th percentile, 25% of responses is at level 2 and 75% of responses is at a scale of 1 to 4.

	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Never	288	72.7	72.7
Almost never	57	14.4	87.1
Occasionally	39	9.8	97.0
Often	9	2.2	99.2
Very often	3	0.8	100.0
Total	396	100.0	

Chart 4: Purchasing PC (hardware/software) via the Internet

Source: own processing

3 respondents (0.8%) purchase PC (hardware/software) very often via the Internet. 9 respondents (2.3%) purchase often, 39 respondents (9.8%) sometimes, 57 respondents (14.4%) almost never, and 288 respondents (72.7%) never.

Mean	Median	Modus	St. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Percentile	
						25	75
1.4393939	1	1	0.8199189	1	5	1	2

Chart 5: Descriptive statistics purchasing PC (hardware/software) via the Internet

Source: own processing

From the values of the central tendency it is possible to conclude that the purchase of PC (hardware/software) can be seen at level 1. The deviation is at the level of 0.82, which can be understood as a relatively low value of variability. The variable encompasses a full scale of responses, the minimum is 1 and the maximum is 5. Looking at the 25th percentile, 25% of responses are at level 1 and 75% of responses include a scale of 1 to 2.

	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Never	279	70.5	70.5
Almost never	42	10.6	81.1
Occasionally	42	10.6	91.7
Often	18	4.5	96.2
Very often	15	3.8	100.0
Total	396	100.0	

Chart 6: Purchasing insurance via the Internet

Source: own processing

15 respondents (3.8%) purchase insurance very often via the Internet. 18 respondents (4.5%) purchase often, 42 respondents (10.6%) sometimes, 42 respondents (10.6%) almost never and 279 respondents (70.5%) never.

Mean	Median	Modus	St. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Percentile	
						25	75
1.6060606	1	1	1.086797	1	5	1	2

Chart 7: Descriptive statistics purchasing insurance online

Source: own processing

From the values of the central tendency, it can be assumed that the purchase of insurance can be seen at level 1. The deviation is approximately 1.09. The variable encompasses a whole scale of responses, i.e. the minimum is 1 and the maximum is 5. Looking at the 25th percentile, it can be said that up to 25% of responses are up to level 1 and 75% of responses include a scale of 1 to 2.

	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Never	282	71.2	71.2
Almost never	33	8.3	79.5
Occasionally	66	16.7	96.2
Often	12	3.0	99.2
Veryoften	3	0.8	100.0
Total	396	100.0	

Chart 8: Purchasing food and groceries via the Internet

Source: own processing

3 respondents (0.8%) purchase food and groceries very often via the Internet. 12 respondents (3%) purchase often, 66 respondents (16.7%) sometimes, 33 respondents (8.3%) almost never and 282 respondents (71.2%) never.

Mean	Median	Modus	St. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Percentile	
						25	75
1.5378788	1	1	0.9256292	1	5	1	2

Chart 9: Descriptive statistics purchasing food and groceries via the Internet

Source: own processing

From the values of the central tendency, it can be concluded that purchasing food and groceries can be seen at level 1. The deviation is approximately 0.93. The variable encompasses a full scale of responses, i.e. the minimum is 1 and the maximum is 5. Looking at the 25th percentile, it can be said that up to 25% of responses are at level 1 and 75% of responses include a scale of 1 to 2.

	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Never	84	21.2	21.2
Almost never	54	13.6	34.8
Occasionally	135	34.1	68.9
Often	75	18.9	87.9
Veryoften	48	12.1	100.0
Total	396	100.0	

Chart 10: Purchasing services (cinema, holiday and cultural event tickets) via the Internet

Source: own processing

48 respondents (12.1%) purchase services (cinema, vacation and tickets for cultural events) very often via the Internet. 75 respondents (18.9%) purchase often, 135 respondents (34.1%) sometimes, 54 respondents (13.6%) almost never and 84 respondents (21.2%) never.

Mean	Median	Modus	St. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Percentile	
						25	75
1.5378788	1	1	0.9256292	1	5	1	2

Chart 11: Descriptive statistics purchasing services (cinema, vacation, cultural event tickets)

Source: own processing

From the values of the central tendency it is possible to conclude that the purchase of services (cinema, holidays and tickets for cultural events) can be perceived at the level 3. The deviation is 1.28. The variable encompasses a full scale of responses, i.e. the minimum is 1 and the maximum is 5. Looking at the 25th percentile, 25% of responses are at level 2 and 75% of responses include a scale of 1 to 4.

Conclusion

Life before the Internet is unimaginable for many Millennials. Y generation representatives use the internet in almost every aspect of their lives. Whether it is about searching sources for seminar works, ordering food delivery, watching streaming TV shows or getting know new people through cyberspace, the Internet has become an integral part of our lives. While the widespread use of the Internet is not necessarily negative, it has lasting effects on the lives of Millennials. In Europe, especially in the United Kingdom, in terms of spending time on individual devices, the results are as follows: 42% of the time spent on e-commerce websites for this group is on PC and 25% on tablet. Only 8% of the time is spent on smartphones by users older than 55 years old. Consumers from the age 35 to 44 use their devices on desktops as well as on tablets (23 to 26%), but they prefer mobile phones to purchase products up to 32%. Based on the above analysis, we can note that representatives of the new generation of customers, i.e. the Millennials often buy clothing and jewellery. As far as services are concerned, the Millennials most often buy cinema tickets, holiday tours and tickets for cultural events via the Internet. The new generation of customers is using the Internet to a lesser extent for buying food and groceries. The least used goods and services bought online are PC insurance and PC (hardware/software).

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- ŠTEFKO, R., FEDORKO, I., BAČÍK, R.: Facebook Content Analysys of Banks Operating on Slovak Market. In *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, 2014, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 145-152. ISSN 2081-7452.

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ANALYSIS OF GLOBAL CONSUMER PREFERENCES IN THE E-COMMERCE PROCESS

Jakub Horváth – Mária Oleárová

ABSTRACT:

The era of mobile devices also reflects the changing purchasing habits of an increasingly demanding consumer. Mobile devices and integrated technologies serve not only as a means to purchase products, but they also play an irreplaceable role at all stages of the purchasing process. Many researches also highlight the strength of their potential, reflecting the changing dynamics of e-commerce. The aim of this article is to evaluate the current state of consumer preferences when purchasing online through mobile devices.

KEY WORDS:

consumer preferences, e-commerce, mobile marketing, smartphone

1 Introduction

According to Vysekalova¹ a mobile platform (mobile phone or other mobile electronic device) provides one crucial advantage to marketing research, i.e. real-time data collection. Mobile research gives the opportunity to engage customers in research in different situations and get real feedback just when customers experience the situation.² It is a unique opportunity to engage respondents in research in a funny way.³ The advantage of mobile marketing according to Adamko⁴ is mainly its efficiency and readiness. We can also use mobile marketing as a more effective alternative to other marketing communication techniques, as it aims to stimulate the purchase or make the customers visit the

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- 1 VYSEKALOVÁ, J. et al.: *Emoce v marketingu: Jak oslovit srdce zákazníka*. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2014, p. 112.
 - 2 BAČÍK, R., MIHAL, J., FEDORKO, R.: The Analysis of the Impact of Selected Communication Channels on the Selected City Population' Opinion. In *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, 2015, Vol. 12, No. 2, p. 7-14.
 - 3 FEDORKO, R., NASTIŠIN, L., POLLÁK, F.: On-line Reputation of the Selected Slovak Start-ups. In *Conference: Central European Conference on Finance and Economics*. Herľany : CEFÉ, 2015, p. 164-170.
 - 4 ADAMKO, J.: *Marketing v poisťovníctve E-marketing*. Prešov : Michal Vaško – vydavateľstvo, 2013, p. 65.

physical store.⁵ Jakubíková⁶ states two benefits of mobile marketing for communication campaigns. Just as Kadlec⁷ states it is mainly about its efficiency and readiness. Another advantage is the ability to respond more flexibly to the needs of the market.⁸ In addition, mobile marketing complements and strengthens traditional forms of communication, creating synergies and bringing effective marketing elements to traditional media. Fluent⁹ considers flexibility and personality as the advantage of mobile marketing, as a mobile phone is a versatile and adaptable medium that allows a wide range of activities. As another benefits of mobile marketing, he lists the following:¹⁰

- targeting accuracy,
- speed of preparation,
- interactivity and communication speed,
- immediate measurability of campaigns,
- lower input and operating costs,
- building a database.

Mobile devices have everything that companies want from their customers and products to come in contact strategically.¹¹ Mobile marketing has high real-time operability, has high user comfort, is cheaper, more portable,

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- 5 HAGYARI, P., BAČÍK, R., FEDORKO, R.: Analysis of the Key Factors of Reputation Management in Conditions of City Marketing. In *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, 2016, Vol. 13, No. 1, p. 69-80.
 - 6 JAKUBÍKOVÁ, D.: *Marketing v cestovním ruchu: Jak uspět v domácí světové konkurenci*, Praha : Grada Publishing, 2012, p. 136.
 - 7 KADLEC, T.: *Responzivní design – profesionálně*. Brno : Zoner Press, 2014, p. 28.
 - 8 MURA, L., MARCHEVSKA, M., DÚBRAVSKÁ, M.: Slovak Retail Business Across Panel Regresion Model. In *Marketing and Managment of Innovations*, 2018, No. 4, p. 203-211.
 - 9 FLUENT: *Marketing to Millennials*. [online]. [2019-02-06]. Available at: <<https://www.fluentco.com/resources/marketing-to-millennials/>>.
 - 10 ŠTEFKO, R., BAČÍK, R., FEDORKO, R.: The Significance of Internet Marketing Tools in Terms of Building a Positive Image of an Higher Education Institution. In *24th International Business Information Management Association Conference: Crafting Global Competitive Economies: 2020 Vision Strategic Planning & Smart Implementation*. Milan : IBIMAC, 2014, p. 1764-1772.
 - 11 LIZBETINOVÁ, L. et al.: Application of Cluster Analysis in Marketing Communications in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises: An Empirical Study in the Slovak Republic. In *Sustainability*, 2019, Vol. 11, No. 8, p. 1-18.

faster, has a personal ad target, and even has a networking position.¹² Other benefits of mobile marketing according to Quirk¹³ are the following:

- Instantaneousness– it is likely that users carry their mobile devices everywhere. For this reason, they are more than likely to receive and absorb messages immediately.¹⁴
- Effectiveness – creating pictures and video content for mobile devices is relatively cheap compared to desktop or laptops that handle higher quality content. Mobile device restrictions such as data transfer speed, screen size means that the content that is created for the mobile must be easier.¹⁵
- Suitability - A good idea makes mobile campaigns more appropriate and can do much more than traditional media, provided that content is kept to a minimum and platforms are adaptable on a mass scale.¹⁶
- Sharing - Mobile devices can easily share information. Mobile marketing has a massive viral potential due to the possibility of planning a campaign that goes into offline mode, and then returns to the “online” mode using multimedia devices such as Global Positioning System (GPS), 2D barcodes, or capabilities of the camera, so it can attract others to get involved.¹⁷
- Extensiveness - the huge potential of new customers who may not have a lot of experience with the “online environment”, but specific target groups can be set aside.¹⁸

12 MURA, L., KLJUCNIKOV, A.: Smal Businesses in Rural Tourism and Agrotourism: Study from Slovakia. In *Economics & Sociology*, 2018, Vol. 11, No. 3, p. 286-300.

13 QUIRK: *Pros and Cons of Mobile Marketing*. [online]. [2019-02-06]. Available at: <<http://www.quirk.biz/resources/mobile101/282/1/Pros-and-Cons-of-Mobile-Marketing>>.

14 GAVUROVÁ, B., BAČÍK, R., FEDORKO, R.: The Customers’s Brand Experience in the Light of Selected Performance Indicators in the Social Media Environment. In *Journal of Competitiveness*, 2018, Vol. 10, No. 2, p. 72-84.

15 ŠTARCHOŇ, P. et al.: Introduction of a New Mobile Player App Store in Selected Countries of Southeast Asia. In *Social Sciences*, 2018, Vol. 7, No. 9, p. 1-15.

16 FRANKOVSKÝ, M., BIRKNEROVÁ, Z.: Measuring Social Intelligence – The MESI Methodology. In *Asian Social Science*, 2014, Vol. 10, No. 6, p. 90-97.

17 ŠTEFKO, R., FEDORKO, I. BAČÍK, R.: Facebook Content Analysys of Banks Operating on Slovak Market. In *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, 2014, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 145-152.

18 KOVALOVÁ, J. et al.: Identification of Links between Source and Consequences of Work-related Stress. In *Ad Alta: Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*, 2019, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 65-69.

2 The Current State of the Issue

Several exploration companies have demonstrated the initiative on this issue. Globally, it can be confirmed that people buy nondurable goods via the Internet rather than durable goods. The Nielsen¹⁹ company has mapped the goods that are most often purchased via the Internet and subsequently created a ranking with an appropriate proportion of respondents. The Nielsen Global Connected Commerce survey took place between August and October 2016. More than 13,000 consumers from 26 countries, including Asia, Europe, Latin America, North America, the Middle East and Africa. The sample was made up of Internet users, with the exception of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, where a personal interview was conducted. The survey shows that only one out of ten respondents bought fresh food (11%) or wine and alcoholic beverages (11%) via the internet. On the contrary, consumers are most often buying clothing and other products (55%). Every second online buyer has bought books, music, or office supplies via the Internet. Other frequently purchased products are travel tickets or travel services (49%), cultural event tickets (43%) or IT and smartphones (40%). Although it is a trend to purchase durable products from the Internet, but there are some exceptions. Beauty & personal care products, which belong to the durable goods category has been purchased by more than a third of online respondents (35%), which is 5% more than in the case of video game products (30%) or furniture and decorations (23%). The Nielsen²⁰ company has also explored through what digital devices consumers purchase online. From the results of this survey, it is clear that while smartphones are increasingly popular among consumers, still the desktop or notebook is preferred over the world to purchase products via the Internet and the least dominant device is a tablet. The preferences of these facilities vary according to countries. An interesting difference, however, is in the case of North America and Africa. While a desktop computer is the most preferred device for online purchasing in North America (84%), which is more than the global average (80%) a desktop is least used in Africa (60%), where consumers use mobile

19 NIELSEN: *Global Connected Commerce. Is E-tail Therapy the New Retail Therapy?* [online]. [2019-03-03]. Available at: <<https://www.nielsen.com/content/dam/niensenglobal/jp/docs/report/2016/Nielsen-Global-Connected-Commerce-Report-January-2016>>.

20 NIELSEN: *E-commerce.* [online]. [2019-03-04]. Available at: <http://s1.q4cdn.com/199638165/files/doc_financials/Nielsen-Global-E-commerce-Report-August-2014.pdf>.

devices for purchasing products online, representing 55% and vice versa, mobile devices are the least used in North America (27%), which is 17% less than the global average.

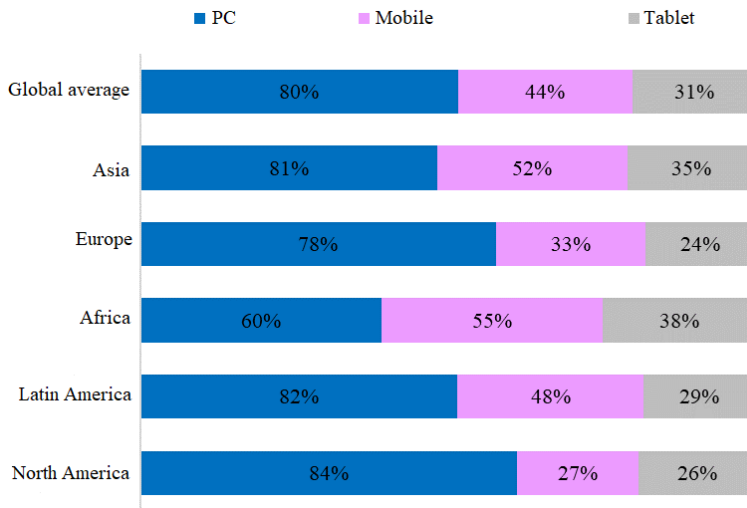


Chart 1: Online purchasing according to the devices

Source: NIELSEN: *Global Connected Commerce. Is E-tail Therapy the New Retail Therapy?* [online]. [2019-03-03]. Available at: <<https://www.nielsen.com/content/dam/niensenglobal/jp/docs/report/2016/Nielsen-Global-Connected-Commerce-Report-January-2016>>.

Verto analytics²¹ made a survey at what time online buyers are the most active. According to the survey, regardless of the digital equipment used, the largest purchasing activity is between 5:00 pm and 8:00 pm during the day. It is clear from the chart that for desktop computers the peak of online purchasing is around 7:00 pm, for mobile phones it is from 3:00 pm to 9:00 pm. At 5:00 pm, a sharp decrease in case of mobile purchasing is observed, while at this time, purchasing on tablets is growing sharply, and the peak of online purchasing is at 18:00, which shows a decline. The survey therefore shows that desktop computers represent the highest share of purchasing time among respondents.

21 VERTO ANALYTICS: *E-Commerce in the UK: Online Shopping Habits of UK Consumers.* [online]. [2019-03-04]. Available at: <<http://research.vertoanalytics.com/hubfs/Files/VertoAnalytics-Report-UKecommerce.pdf>>.

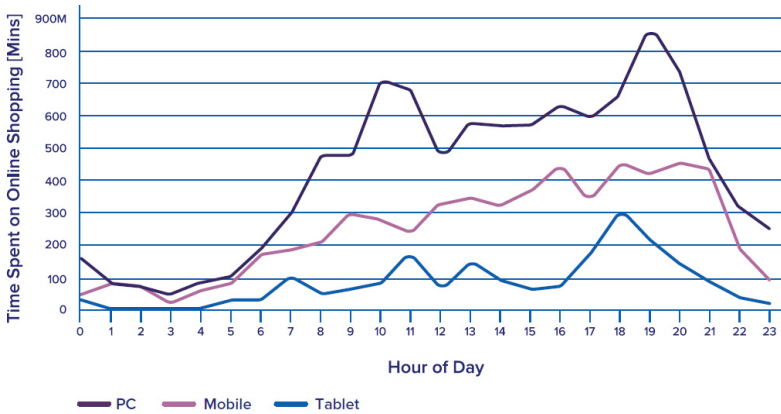


Chart 2: Online purchasing during the day in terms of equipment

Source: VERTO ANALYTICS: *E-Commerce in the UK: Online Shopping Habits of UK Consumers*. [online]. [2019-03-04]. Available at: <<http://research.vertoanalytics.com/hubfs/Files/VerToAnalytics-Report-UKecommerce.pdf>>.

The constant development of mobile technologies reflects the changing purchasing habits of consumers. With the change in available technologies, there is also a change in purchasing channels that consumers increasingly prefer. M-commerce has therefore been the subject of many studies and many surveys revealing the fact that in the near future ubiquitous smartphones will not only be a device for communication and entertainment, but also a means of purchasing goods and services. This is also evidenced by eMarketer²² statistics, according to which sales of e-commerce amounted to 2.3 billion dollars in 2017, which is an increase of 23.2% over the previous year. The share of mobile market accounted for 58.9% of total e-commerce sales this year, representing 1.4 billion dollars. In 2018, the share of m-commerce in total e-commerce was 4.6 percentage points more, reaching 1.804 billion dollars, a total of 63.5% e-commerce. The portal predicts that in 2021 mobile e-commerce could reach about 3.5 billion dollars, making up almost three quarters (72.9%) of total e-commerce sales.

22 EMARKETER: *Mobile Is Driving Retail Ecommerce Sales Worldwide*. [online]. [2019-02-23]. Available at: <https://retail.emarketer.com/article/global-ecommerce-topped-23-trillion-2017-emarketer-estimates/5a6f89f5e5bd40008bc791221?ECID=SOC1001&utm_content=bufferdfa97&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer>.

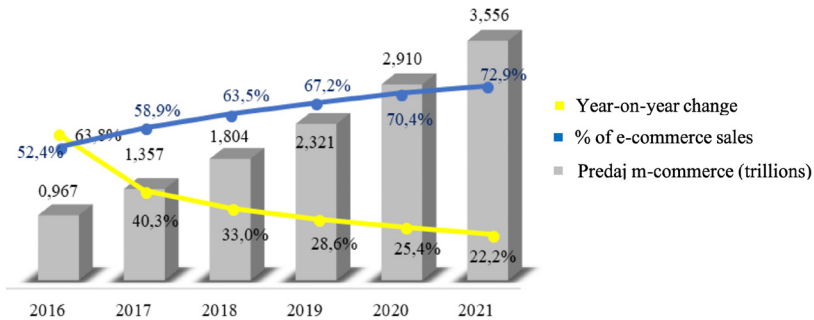


Chart 3: Online purchasing during the day in terms of equipment

Source: VERTO ANALYTICS: *E-commerce in the UK: Online Shopping Habits of UK Consumers*. [online]. [2019-03-04]. Available at: <<http://research.vertoanalytics.com/hubfs/Files/VerToAnalytics-Report-UKecommerce.pdf>>.

Conclusion

Life before the Internet is unimaginable for many Millennials. Y generation representatives use the internet in almost every aspect of their lives. Whether it is about searching sources for seminar works, ordering food delivery, watching streaming TV shows or getting know new people through cyberspace, the Internet has become an integral part of our lives. While the widespread use of the Internet is not necessarily negative, it has lasting effects on the lives of Millennials. In Europe, especially in the United Kingdom, in terms of spending time on individual devices, the results are as follows: 42% of the time spent on e-commerce websites for this group is on PC and 25% on tablet. Only 8% of the time is spent on smartphones by users older than 55 years old. Consumers from the age 35 to 44 use their devices on desktops as well as on tablets (23 to 26%), but they prefer mobile phones to purchase products up to 32%. Based on the above analysis, we can conclude that there is a trend for online purchasing via mobile devices that is growing every year, but online purchasing via the Internet on desktop/notebook still dominates.

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CHANGE THE WORLD THROUGH THE ARTS (REVIVING THE ARTS EXPERIENCE FROM LATVIA)

Jana Skubeňová Hubinová

ABSTRACT:

Art is something that somehow pleases our mind. Except of being a means of self-expression, art is very often the main reason certain social and socio-political changes were induced. History of human kind has proven that arts have been with us ever since the Lascaux and Altamira paintings and will be with us even nowadays in the digital and digitalized era where arts has shifted from man-made (hand made products) to man-initiated (where the man designed and the industrial equipment or artificial intelligence produced the work of art). Certain areas on Earth, specific nations and national federations can be thankful to art as the moving force for change, for the cultural evolution. Now, more than ever before, art is what we need for its human-kind savior potential. Marketing the arts, to make art businesses a sustainable business at any level, is what our article deals with.

KEY WORDS:

arts, audience, audience development, culture management, marketing, work of art

1 Marketing The Arts¹

Marketing the arts has little to do with **marketing** in general. First of all, artists are usually not *usual* people. Marketers should be aware of certain stereotypes linked to artists that may apply in fact. Artists are very creative, open-minded, eager, sometimes competitive. On the other hand, they are not very flexible, they do not think a few steps ahead and they rarely stick to deadlines. Organizations re-grouping successful artists try to fight this *‘outdated portrayal of artists, which stereotypes them as eccentric, disorganized and free-spirited nomads²* and look for the ways how to support their opinion. They stress out that famous directors, successful web designers and architects are artists, too, and that these people earn real money and run their business cautiously. Though, our

1 MOKWA, M. P., DAWSON, W. M., PRIEVE, E. A.: *Marketing the Arts*. New York : Praeger, 1980, p. 11.

2 ZHANG, B.: *Breaking Down the Stereotype of a “Starving Artist”*. [online]. [2019-04-24]. Available at: <<https://thecampanile.org/2018/03/02/breaking-down-the-stereotype-of-a-starving-artist/>>.

article deals with certain type of artists only; those who create fine art and for those, it is hard to fight this stereotype as it mostly fully applies to them. We speak about painters, sculptors, glass makers, photographers... **Fine art** (sometimes incorrectly referred to as *visual art*) is *'the traditional term used to embrace painting, sculpture and printmaking, produced for its own sake and not concerned with whether it is functional or practical.'*³ With the development of possibilities how people may create visual imagery reflecting more or less reality, photography and video making is nowadays comprised in fine arts, too. The notion **visual art** is, on the other hand, an umbrella term for *'art forms that create works that are primarily visual in nature, such as ceramics, drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, design, crafts, photography, video, film making and architecture.'*⁴ To understand it better, visual art creates a product pleasant for the eye that, at the same time, may also be functional. A great example of visual art craftsmanship is pottery. Pots are not only beautiful artistic products but at the same time functional items in our household. Applied arts are also covered under this umbrella term. As such, industrial, fashion or graphic design are visual arts, too.

From experience, I can claim that working with fine artists (later in the article referred to as *artists* only) may be really challenging. Especially for the marketers who are usually the ones to blame for unsuccess of newly launched product lines and innovative services. In case of marketing the arts being persuasive in convincing the client of marketer's rightness about the marketing process may be really difficult. Marketers are the thinkers; artists are the feelers. Marketers sell the product; artists see the same process as selling a part of themselves. One may easily understand how difficult it may be for an artist to sell their ideas, feelings, stories... Basically they offer an introspective into their lives via their creations. Everybody remembers how it felt being examined in front of the blackboard of a certain study topic and speaking to the audience of one's schoolmates. Performing arts is a very similar situation to that. An artist feels like being examined by the unknown audience. The exam consists of comprehending, sometimes even translating the message they send via their piece of art to its audience.

3 *Fine Artist*. [online]. [2019-04-24]. Available at: <<https://gradireland.com/careers-advice/job-descriptions/fine-artist>>.

4 *What is Visual Art?* [online]. [2019-04-05]. Available at: <<https://www.unboundvisualarts.org/what-is-visual-art/>>.

Marketing the arts as a very specific branch of marketing management that is at the same time very different from general traditional marketing. Moreover, digital marketing has been analyzed for the first time back in the 80s of the 20th century. In the world of arts where everything needs to settle down for certain period of time to be acknowledged and fully absorbed, digital marketing with its techniques has not yet been here long enough. In the book that carried the same name *Marketing the arts*, three scholars, Mokwa, Dawson and Prieve reference one of the fathers of marketing management, P. Kotler, whom they agree with on four interrelated marketing challenges that play a fundamental role especially in marketing the arts. Those are **attendance stimulation, audience development, membership development** and **fundraising**.⁵ If the art is meant to save the world from unreasonable level of digitalization of our everyday activities, of total social contact decline, of deepening individual's feeling of hollowness... Then it has to be helped by certain very specific marketing tools in order to re-gain its status of morals and true human values carrier, beauty appraisal tool and the artists should be perceived as saviors. **Perseverance** is the notion that links the artists, the marketers and the audience. As a matter of fact, preserving traditions through the arts objects that may be at the same time functional objects, for example, is a great way how to start with marketing the arts in our, public's, everyday lives.

At first, starting with the most important performance measuring indicators, we have to have a closer look at **attendance** (previously referred to as **attendance stimulation**). Speaking of attendance in connection with arts, we consider the number or arts exhibitions goes. Here, we have a fundamental claim. According to Keith Haring's⁶ popularized quote '*Art is for everybody*,⁷ we believe that art has been meant to please people. Ideally, if it can please them on daily basis and as such, we believe its transformation into functional, serving objects is the ideal way how to attract people's attention to art in general. Let me draw

5 MOKWA, M. P., DAWSON, W. M., PRIEVE, E. A.: *Marketing the Arts*. [online]. [2019-04-01]. Available at: <https://books.google.sk/books/about/Marketing_the_arts.html?id=9ZPuAAAAMAAJ&redir_esc=y>.

6 Keith Haring (1959-1990) was a popular pop art creator, a New Yorker whose chalk drawings in the NY subway made him recognized by the whole generation of Americans (remark by the author).

7 '*Art is for Everybody*': *The Life and Work of Keith Haring*. [online]. [2019-04-05]. Available at: <<http://museumnetwork.com/art-is-for-everybody-the-life-and-work-of-keith-haring/>>.

an example. In 2019, I was in Livani, Latvia. Livani is quite a small town (with the area of 4,7km² and no more than 7,5 thousand inhabitants) located in central Latvia, approximately 170 km far from the capital, Riga. It is very popular for its glass works as there is a glass factory with more than 130 years tradition. Though, the town does not limit their culture related activities to glass craftsmanship only. Back in 2007, the town made a big decision to take part in *Project ELRI-177 'Tartu, Rezekne, Pskov: Green Management for Urban Development and Planning'*.⁸ The project has been ongoing since then and many great outcomes for the municipality and the whole community have come out of it, so far. One of them was that there was built a bench directly in front of the municipality hall. The bench is not just a usual bench, it is a real piece of art. The bench was designed by a regional artist and made by regional craftsmen. The idea of the bench aims to point out the supposedly luxurious position of a town's mayor and municipality clerks that is in fact hard and might be even uncomfortable. It is a place that one wishes to sit on and at the same time once there, a person cannot sit there comfortably.



Picture 1: Bench in front of the municipality hall in Livani, Latvia

Source: own processing

8 BALULE, A.: *Livani District Council. Experience of Livani Municipality in Improving Urban Environment*. [online]. [2019-04-30]. Available at: <<https://slideplayer.com/slide/6242285/>>.

Given this example, the audience can easily be stimulated in this way. Making art a natural part of public environment by including it in daily perception objects stimulates the need to think about the creator's intention and also creates the habit to have some kind of art always around. Two birds killed with one stone; artists have a possibility to create and be hired to produce objects of daily use and the public is challenged to think about these objects and start to coexist with art. The ladder should be climbed up to the next important step that is **audience development**. Occasional art viewers, users and buyers are not exactly what arts market is looking for. The fidelity of the client that may result in loyalty is the real marketing target here. Development of a *'faithful loyal client'* is hard but it is worth trying. Back in 2010, Barrow and Shibli⁹ re-classified a 19th century study effected on chamber music attenders. They found out that likewise centuries ago, there is no single way to grant success in developing the audience. Stimulating participation on cultural events by identifying local strengths and building up relationships with potential audiences were perceived as the fundamental factors in identifying the right approach to audience treatment. Surprisingly, the basic principle of local availability of the arts has still remained one of the most influential factors for attenders of any exhibitions, performances or other cultural events.

At this point, a very important notion has to be mentioned. It is **cultural management** that we speak about and it is far more about mastering the psychological links in between the artists and art buyers, but it also comprises creating a true and dependent relationship in between the artists and general public. Cultural management cannot be defined as a marketing notion only as it comprises of various nuances and crosses several socio-cultural layers. **Culture management** within arts is about recognizing the challenges and their assessment. Looking at cultural managers as a profession closely related to arts marketers, cultural managers have to be skilled in various marketing techniques and keep the pace with global but preferably local trends. Globalization and digitalization are addressed by cultural managers on daily basis. Its part can be described as creating the feeling in public that they want, that they actually need something artistic and this subsequently creates

9 BARLOW, M., SHIBLI, S.: *Audience Development in the Arts: A Case Study of Chamber Music*. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13606710701339272?scroll=top&needAccess=true>>.

opportunities for the artists to create and perform art. Practically, it could mean that the cultural manager comes to the municipality, for example, with a proposal of a site reconstruction. Their role is to set well all criteria, handle the municipality bureaucracy and in the end, to suggest an artist to create the design. This approach stimulates workload for local craftsmen and creates an important local value for the community. In this sense, the role of a cultural management in audience development is irreplaceable.

Membership development is then the next level that needs to be developed. For the ones who get in touch with the term for the first time in connection with marketing, it may be quite tricky. Membership development is both-sided; membership can be developed in regards to audience and then in regards to authors, too. The prior deals with building up a stable basis of 'art goers' who are able to either support the artists and the association or buy their piece of arts. Some of loyal members can do both. From the marketing point of view, such a database is from vital for the business. The latter understanding of the term deals with building up a member base on the side of the association. Artists, marketers, stakeholders, wide public... Whoever can take any part in the association from the organizational point of view can be of great importance and may contribute to the association blooming. Both connotations of the term are significantly important and matter a lot for business leagues, professional societies and trade associations, especially the ones that are non-profit. All of them are membership-based. The point of our interest in connection with audience development is to be able to build up a firm database of clients and possible clients that should be ideally growing after each arts exhibition or workshop. Nowadays, membership development goes that far as to neural networks and their recognition and utilization as foundations for mixed membership. This has much to do with digital marketing and unfortunately cannot be used to full extent in arts marketing. Visualization, for example, is a model case of neural networks utilization in architectonic arts. Available online and very stimulating for the audience.

A great example is Louvre 3D models that are sold online by certain businesses (e.g. SketchFab.com).¹⁰ The worldwide famous and well recognized museum of Louvre does not make it easily possible to copy the

10 *Louvre 3D Model*. [online]. [2019-04-21]. Available at: < <https://sketchfab.com/tags/louvre>>.

works of arts exhibited in its premisses. One have to pay high prices to be able to create sketches of popular paintings. This way, the management of Louvre and members of various connected arts associations try to avoid copying and falsification of master pieces pf famous painters. In fact, replicas are allowed under strict conditions and paintings can be visited for sketches making only in certain hours. For this reasons, various companies started to sell 3D visuals of Louvre’s exhibited pieces of art for the purpose of sketch making. Thanks to digital technologies, various lightening and shading is available, though, the reflections are still not perfectly copiable.

Fundraising is the last but not least important challenge that needs to be faced. In fact, fundraising shall probably be the ground zero point and challenge number one. Some people misinterpret the terms *fundraising* and *donations*. Donations are a part of fundraising pledges but are not the only means how to execute fundraising. Fundraising pledges are beforehand planned pledge campaigns with clearly set conditions in a specific timeframe. They count on promised support of pledged funding in cash but usually via online payments. Donations, on the other hand, as a part of fundraising pledges, are ready to be cashed money, cash or in-kind goods received in at any time. These are immediate and ready to be used at the moment the donation is provided.¹¹ Charity fundraising, as we know it for centuries, has changed much with the involvement of donators in the virtual space. Start up businesses started to flourish thanks to **crowdfunding**, then **peer-to-peer** campaigns where the cause can easily get viral. They are highly popular and given the circumstances, may be tremendously successful. **Grassroot fundraising** is extremely popular with politics, for example. In the world of arts, reaching out to existing donors, so-called patrons, is the usual practice that should be overstepped. Patronage is an important stimulus for artists’ production, though, this tends to lead to B2C level of marketing. A better approach would be through B2B segment by means of different fundraising methods, such as already mentioned online pledges for a specific cause. Pre-selling future art pieces or exhibitions, events of any kind such as *soirées*. Another approach is getting the pledges viral and creating challenges. There always is an interesting way how to attract new donors.

11 KILLORAN, J.: *Fundraising Pledges vs. Donations/ What’s the Difference*. [online]. [2019-04-21]. Available at: <<https://snowballfundraising.com/fundraising-pledges-vs-donations/>>.

1.1 European Vs. Western Arts Management

The artist rarely considers audience tastes ahead. Especially European cultural tradition is based on interpretation and hidden sense, in literature, as well as in visual arts. The fact is an inevitable result of oppression many European nations experienced throughout their existence on the old continent. Historically, there always was a need for artists to speak in allegories. Under the suppression, artists tend to invoke the hide-and-peek game. The Artist hides certain politically, socially or otherwise unacceptable piece of information in their art work and people seek its mobilization effect. Literature has ever since been one of the most predicative arts in regards to evolution. Great society moving books were written throughout the centuries, such as *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* by Homer, *Common Sense* by Thomas Paine, 1984 by George Orwell, Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy*, etc. The western cultures are slightly different. In particular in the US, audience development starts usually long before artistic manifestation. The artists create their crafts works based on what audience wants them to create and expects to receive. This tendency is believed to develop based on *'increasing (political) pressure regarding the social effectiveness of art and culture and its measurability.'*¹² In fact, merchandising modern art, for example, has become a strong tendency in art making for money. Visual art merchandising *'is the process of reproducing the art on another surface and marketing the new product.'*¹³ In case of visual arts we speak of creating one unique pattern, e.g. a painting and selling its reproductions on various materials for different The recipients are the real drivers for the creators. The art is monetized.

Monetization of art is a great part of arts management. Nowadays, most craftsmanship is monetized by means of money or certain companies recognize craftsmen and venture their brand with them to create special product lines or services. A great example is fashion industry where sport or retail brands cooperate with *haut couture* designers and create unique things. Back in 2016, clothing retail company H&M launched a very successful campaign Kenzo x H&M linking their name with famous French luxury fashion house. The campaign was a huge success. Similarly

12 GARECHT, J.: *5 Best Quick Fundraising Methods*. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <<https://www.artsmanagement.net/Articles/New-understanding-of-the-roles-of-arts-managers-It-s-time-to-say-goodbye,3953>>.

13 TINGUM, J.: *What is Visual Arts Merchandising*. [online]. [2019-04-21]. Available at: <<https://smallbusiness.chron.com/visual-arts-merchandising-12542.html>>.

to this model, influencers such as celebrities, youtubers or instagram influencers do often link their name with popular clothing brands. This is called **celebrity endorsement** and is one of very popular, though costly advertising tools. Celebrity endorsement is grounded in celebrity credibility. It is a great way of brand building and then it increases brand awareness. What matters the most is celebrity's image in public. Among other important criteria, such as choice of the right person linked to the right industry with a credible story, there is a principal rule that *'...advertisers using celebrity endorsement should feature an attractive celebrity who is perceived to be trustworthy to best influence both their low- and their high-involvement consumer base.'*¹⁴ Very recently, in 2016, Rihanna endorsed the collection Fenty by Puma. Rihanna, who designed the look of various trainers in the collection, created the pull effect on the market when certain types of Fenty shoes (especially the fur covered slides) were sold out within hours after they started to be sold online. The fact that European and the western model of art management varies from the other in tremendous dimensions points out the fact that culture is one criterion that influences monetizations a lot. Creative people are often framed within social expectations. Either there are real artists who live on the edge of financial survival as artists striving for appreciation or bohemians who fit certain, usually unknown and quite time limited norms successful artists should meet. Practicing arts, though, is a wide notion understood differently in the western and in the eastern hemisphere. Cultural managers and exhibition curators very sometimes assume what their clients visiting cultural institutions need and what do they want... Their knowledge is indeed very limited, sometimes archaic, following the Eurocentric approach. I came across a very useful claim summarizing rightness or wrongness of choice in cultural management approach that simply stated: *'Rather than simply impose outside solutions, which assume that different cultural viewpoints of arts and culture, and specifically arts and cultural management practice and institutional structures, are simply transferrable between cultures, we need to develop greater balance of knowledge exchange.'*¹⁵ So to say, arts management has to deal with both, artist's talent and cultural specifications meeting client's expectations.

14 FORD, J. B.: *What Do We Know About Celebrity Endorsement in Advertising?* [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <<http://www.journalofadvertisingresearch.com/content/58/1/1>>.

15 *Arts Managers as Intercultural Brokers.* [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <<https://www.artsmanagement.net/Articles/A-new-understanding-of-Arts-Management-Arts-Managers-as-Intercultural-Brokers,3773>>.

1.2 Boosting European Cultural Management

Speaking about cultural background importance in connection with audience development, one has to clarify that audience development techniques vary according to different geography just like audiences of different countries vary, too. Certain English speaking countries (such as the US or the UK) deal with audience development as an important activity for setting the right target group. On the other hand, there are many more, for example European countries (such as Spain or Baltic countries) that face difficulties involving audience development activities in their marketing efforts. The need to enhance audience development activities into European artists and cultural managers actions in the field are that strong that the European Commission created a Culture sub-program within the Creative Europe program to support initiatives for cooperation in arts and culture in European Union countries across the borders. It has four main aims:

- cooperation between cultural and creative organizations from different countries,
- initiatives to translate and promote literary works across the European Union,
- networks helping the cultural and creative sector to operate competitively and transnationally,
- establishing platforms to promote emerging artists and stimulating European programming for cultural and artistic works.¹⁶

The European Commission has included the interest of European Union countries in audience development trainings in response to low involvement of cultural managers in issues related to entrepreneurship. In fact, the ADESTE project (as part of the Leonardo Da Vinci Programme) was launched in November 2013 and lasted until April 2016. It was aimed at defining the occupational profile of the audience developer and creating a pilot training in audience development in a few EU countries. Among them, there were Spain and Italy who have currently been facing one of the greatest unemployment rates in their history. The project has drafted a path to follow by trying to understand and then implement audience development as a useful marketing tool reflecting different cultural contexts in various geographical locations in Europe. The greatest contribution of the project lays in the fact that there has been clearly articulated the need

16 *Culture Sub-programme*. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/node/139_en>.

to compete for the attention of potential fund providers and not only for the cultural consumers.¹⁷

The quest for resolution of the issue if it is better to apply audience-centric or the market approach and the product approach remains unresolved, though a certain proportion, ratio has been settled. Before, the approach trying to please the audience tend to adapt those elements of the marketing mix that could have influenced the demand for the product such as place, promotion or price. The artistic concept usually remained the same, the product has been rarely altered. The oppositional approach oriented rather towards the product alternation on the market digs deep into artist's creation process, this so-called nemesis. This issue resolution emphasizes that art creation on the market of goods and services is a business like any other and for this reason artists should consider the taste of their possible clients prior to creation of the final product or at least alter their artistic nemesis accordingly. One of very few European theoreticians dealing with the segment of audience and its development within culture is Diggle who stated that *'the whole art of programming for an arts organization is based on a sensitive appreciation of who the market is, what it wants now and what it may be persuaded to want in the future and the relating of those perceptions to what the organization is capable of delivering'*.¹⁸ Cultural managers have accepted Diggle's challenge already decades ago and have often created happening and cultural events. Nowadays, the phenomenon of workshops is on its rise. A few years ago, here in Slovakia, there has been a trend to attend pottery classes. Slovakia, along with other European countries, has a long lasting pottery tradition. People's interest in pottery products and local craftsmanship has significantly risen especially thanks to pottery courses that the associations have organized.

2 The Code Inside and Outside the Bubble

Ever since Stuart Hall, the father of Encoding-Decoding model of communication, introduced the basic principles of mass-media communication, theoreticians take it for granted that the message from a sender may be interpreted in various ways by different receivers.

17 BIURRUN, A. M., CUENCA, M.: *Arts Managers As Intercultural Brokers*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315985947_Audience_Development_a_cross-national_comparison>.

18 DIGGLE, K.: *Arts Marketing*. London : Rhinegold, 1994, p. 23.

Historically proven, these apply for media in general and I am not cautious to say that for man kind communication in general. *'The codes of encoding and decoding may not be perfectly symmetrical. The degrees of symmetry - that is, the degrees of 'understanding' and 'misunderstanding' in the communicative exchange - depend on the degrees of symmetry/ asymmetry (relations of equivalence) established between the positions of the 'personifications', encoder-producer and decoder-receiver.'*¹⁹ So to say, artists have a very though role in making their art comprehensible. Some of them succeed in the task, the others do not. The most difficult role sticks to those artists who express themselves by any other means than words. Generally speaking, words (along with non-verbal communication, called also body language) are the real carriers of meaning what one intends to communicate. Let us, for a short moment, explain why.

Semiotics, as commonly quoted, is *'a science that studies the life of signs within society'*²⁰ Ferdinand Saussure, the author of Semantic triangle²¹ whom had understood the nature of language with its signs as a primarily means of communication was way ahead of mass media époque. Nowadays, when we live the époque and we have even overstepped it into 'post-modern era, artists such as painters, sculptors, glass-makers, who do not usually use words as their medium, have even harder role delivering their message than poets, speakers, actors We would like to address our attention especially to those artists who are probably not that good with words, as their profession does not require them to speak out. They often say that artists live in their nutshell. Trying to make it sound more positive, marketers usually refer to this nutshell as to a bubble. But how to break artist's personal bubble to be able to communicate with them? How should a marketer deliver their data, analysis, statistics, basically any numbers related to target audience and subsequently to sales to their client who is an artist and the stereotypical

19 DURING, S.: *The Cultural Studies Reader*. [online]. [2019-04-21]. Available at: <<https://faculty.georgetown.edu/irvinem/theory/SH-Encoding-Decoding.pdf>>.

20 CHAPTER 3: *Semiotics, Linguistics, and Visual Communication* [online]. [2019-04-05]. Available at: [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<http://www.isfla.org/Systemics/Print/Theses/RoyceThesis/Chapter%203%20-%20Semiotics%20and%20Linguistics.pdf>>.

21 GLAZ, A.: *The Linguistic Sign: Metonymy and Virtuality*. [online]. [2019-04-18]. Available at: <<https://bop.unibe.ch/linguistik-online/article/view/3565/5417>>.

bubble phenomenon applies to them? It is a quest, a real challenge. Though, the bubble is not unbreakable. Marketing the arts starts with setting a mind set similar to Your client's one. A marketing specialist needs to understand what is comprised in artistic *genesis*. ‘... *performing arts marketing is unique because of the process of genesis of the artistic products, despite the fact that the elements that compose it are the same as in traditional marketing models...*’²²

Diggie also stated that, ‘*The aim of arts marketing is to bring an appropriate number of people, drawn from the widest possible range of social background, economic condition and age, into an appropriate form of contact with the artist and, in so doing, to arrive at the best financial outcome that is compatible with the achievement of the aim.*’²³ Just like with the artists not being usual producers, cultural marketers are obviously not the usual marketers. There arises a huge bias in the notions ‘*cultural marketer*’ and ‘*marketer of cultural events*’. Cultural marketing is a wide umbrella notion that incorporates multicultural and cross-cultural marketing and many other terms within content marketing aimed at specific audience based on their culture. **Multicultural marketing**, for instance, tends to seek very specific audience based on their culture. In this case, marketers focus on a very specific audience with strong culture-driven values and provide them valuable and possibly scarce content they strive for finding elsewhere. The old-school marketing academics tend to speak about losing chances by engaging multicultural approach, though, the opposite is the case. Multicultural audience may be growing fast. Many multicultural campaigns have grown viral really rapidly. A great example is *Dove's Real beauty campaign*. Their marketing campaign raised social debate in regards to feminine beauty and became a cultural movement. They addressed women's insecurities, visual related doubts and confronted media body image with real women body shapes, size of individual body parts and in general body lassitude. Their message was clear. Comprehensible for both men and women. They somehow managed to unite women carrying for their bodies all around the world. Dove, as a brand, reconstituted their position on the beauty products market. They kept their position in the battle with *Nivea* whom succeeded just a few years ago with their *Mum's touch campaign*. To be able to execute a master multicultural campaign, a company should engage in the cultural, social issue ahead. Being multicultural very often means to bring up

22 DIGGLE, K.: *Arts Marketing*. London : Rhinegold, 1994, p. 25.

23 DIGGLE, K.: *Arts Marketing*. London : Rhinegold, 1994, p. 31.

and then fight a bias, certain stereotype or social prejudice. No matter what is the exact message sent, being multicultural means to be able to appreciate the value of diversity and not being afraid to stand by one's conviction against many others. Cross-cultural marketing is the second of the two notions commonly linked to marketing the arts as it crosses all political borders, though may bounce the social and intellectual ones, especially taking into consideration message decoding.

After having explained the radius of term 'cultural marketing' and how uneasy it is to do the marketing of fine arts where the words do not speak for the work of art but the work of art must speak for itself, the role of cultural managers specifically educated for the arts marketing starts to make sense. Getting back to the idea of being on the same wavelength, the very first steps of a cultural marketer should be to get educated in the field and to find one's own creativity on various levels. Copywriters, social skills related, even artistic in the scope of fine arts. Arts have great potential to start the change and try to alter the consumeristic viewpoint. Art has ever since strived for big changes in the world. All we have to do as marketers is not to take marketing knowledge for granted in the artistic world, within their bubble. We do not have to break the bubble through, though. Linking it with the rest of the world via a fleeting rainbow just like once the bubble makers bubbles start to break. The vanishing effect could be accomplished by building up a bridge in between 'Art for art's sake' principles and making the arts a real part of everyday experience with daily use objects. Making art accessible and still, keeping it a prerogative not everybody can fully understand and comprise is, according to our belief, the right way of enabling the power of arts as possible man-kind savior.

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MARKETING COMMUNICATION STRATEGY TO DEVELOP AN AUDIENCE ON INSTAGRAM SOCIAL NETWORK

Martin Kuchta – Monika Stanková

ABSTRACT:

Increasing importance of Instagram as a critical distribution channel of created content exerts pressure on audience development for commercial entities. The main aim of the article is to identify, analyse and practically test the possibilities of building an audience on the commercial profile of Instagram social network. The expected result is a proposal of a content communication strategy which main focus is the continuous growth of a quality audience created from target group defined by the owner of a commercial profile.

KEY WORDS:

communication strategy, digital marketing, Instagram, marketing audience, social media

1 The Big Bang of Social Media

The internet and its wide possibilities created social media platforms which during relatively short amount of time caught attention of millions of internet users. According to Boyd and Ellison¹ “we define social network sites as web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site.” According to declared definition, website Sixdegrees.com, which was created in 1996 can also be considered a social network. Thus, the year can be considered as milestone for social media platforms. The Sixdegrees offered creation of “profiles, friends lists and school affiliations in one service”.² However, lack of internet connection caused that the social network didn’t have enough regular users and was not able to be viable. The Sixdegrees.com was in 2000 sold to another company

1 BOYD, D. M., ELLISON, N. B.: *Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship*. [online]. [2019-03-27]. Available at: <<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00393.x>>.

2 READ, A.: *A Brief History of Social Media (The Stuff You Probably Didn't Already Know) and 4 Predictions on Its Future, 2015*. [online]. [2019-03-29]. Available at: <<https://buffer.com/resources/history-of-social-media>>.

and was not managed enough to create a phenomenon. A lot of similar social network projects were created over time, however the most significant was created in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg and his team. They named the site Facebook. Facebook came just in the right time because of internet connection expansion and expansion of smart technologies, which could be used as vehicles for the internet consumption. Since then “more and more people use social media for different aims such as make communication, find friends and family members, share the information and idea, and speak about product experience and even search for advice about special brands and goods”.³

Digitalization and social networks influence almost every aspect of our lives. Especially in cases of younger age groups, who utilize social networks in almost every area of their lives. Some studies even argue, that young generations are so digitalized they might be resistant to traditional methods of teaching and learning. Thus, it is necessary to include social networks and other digital platforms into education processes to reach at least similar educational results as before the digitalization and social networks.⁴ Social media have nowadays become widespread and the networks are utilized by almost half of the world population. Users have accounts on various social media sites and on every site they share some personal information and create their new digital identities. However, sharing personal data is closely associated with threats related to privacy issues.⁵ Every activity of users leaves digital footprint and a lot of data which social media providers utilize for marketing purposes, which often serves as the only monetisation strategy of a social media platform. For instance due to recent study of Giglio et al.⁶ it is possible to create a predictive model for tourism scenarios and trends in country visitors movements based on geo-tagged photos of users published

3 ZOMORODIAN, S., LU, Y.: *How Social Media Increase Selling Trend in Clothes Industry? (Case Study: Selling Brand Clothes Named Cotton in Iran via Instagram)*. [online]. [2019-03-29]. Available at: <<https://doi.org/10.20397/2177-6652/2019.v19i1.1537>>.

4 BOSCH, T. E.: *Using Online Social Networking for Teaching and Learning: Facebook Use at the University of Cape Town*. [online]. [2019-03-29]. Available at: <<https://doi.org/10.1080/02500160903250648>>.

5 ACQUISTI, A., TAYLOR, C., WAGMAN, L.: *The Economics of Privacy*. [online]. [2019-04-01]. Available at: <<https://doi.org/10.1257/jel.54.2.442>>.

6 GIGLIO, S. et al.: *Using Social Media to Identify Tourism Attractiveness in Six Italian Cities*. [online]. [2019-04-01]. Available at: <<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2018.12.007>>.

on various social media platforms. Users have tendency to prioritize their own preferences and desires over consequences associated with privacy-related behaviours. That means, they rather offer more personal data to achieve what they want on a social network.⁷ Users offer their personal information and social media providers mine, process and utilize them for marketing purposes. The process offers competitive advantage for companies, which are able to communicate to their target groups more precisely. A lot of users concentrated in one place who offer their data made companies think about social networks as about new communication channels where they can very precisely target their digital marketing strategies. Social networks have such significant potential that companies put them in the top of marketing strategies.

1.1 Wide Universe of Social Networks

Since boom of social media networks a lot of new websites with the purpose were created and a lot of acquisitions happened on the market. According to Chaffey⁸ in the year 2018 internet had 4,021 billion of users which represents penetration 53% of the world population. Social media had 3,196 billion of users which represents penetration 42% of the world population and penetration 79% of the internet users. There are currently thousands of global and local social media networks. To create a list of the most relevant of them we can use categorization of study of Alam et al.⁹ The authors categorize social media platforms into two categories:

1. Social Network Sites (SNS),
2. Social Apps (SAP).

SNS represents platforms with social networks characteristics available in a web browser environment. SAP represents social media platforms available in application on a smartphone. However most of current social

7 ACQUISTI, A., BRANDIMARTE, L., LOEWENSTEIN, G.: *Privacy and Human Behavior in the Age of Information*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aaa1465>>.

8 CHAFFEY, D.: *Global Social Media Research Summary 2019, 2019*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.smartinsights.com/social-media-marketing/social-media-strategy/new-global-social-media-research/>>.

9 ALAM, M. S. A., WANG, D., RAFIQUE, K.: *Analyzing the Impact of Social Network Sites and Social Applications on Buying Attitude in Developing Nations Consumers' Engagement Using Flourishing Digital Platforms*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<https://doi.org/10.4018/IJEIS.2018100108>>.

networks are available in both platforms, thus categorization is more relevant from where the social networks were initially made for point of view. According to the study most spread platforms in both categories are (Table 1):

Table 1: The most spread social media platforms

SNS	SAP
Facebook	WhatsApp
LinkedIn	Facebook Messenger
YouTube	WeChat
Pinterest	Instagram
	Snapchat

Source: processed based on categorization of: ALAM, M. S. A., WANG, D., RAFIQUE, K.: *Analyzing the Impact of Social Network Sites and Social Applications on Buying Attitude in Developing Nations Consumers' Engagement Using Flourishing Digital Platforms*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<https://doi.org/10.4018/IJEIS.2018100108>>.

It is possible to consider some of the named SNSs also as SAPs and vice versa. The best example is Instagram, which should be, due to opinion of the authors, included in both categories. Based on advertisement possibilities and amount of users SNSs Facebook and YouTube and SAPs Instagram are most relevant for European markets. In terms of monthly active users (MAUs) according to Lua¹⁰ in the year 2018 the most relevant social networks reached:

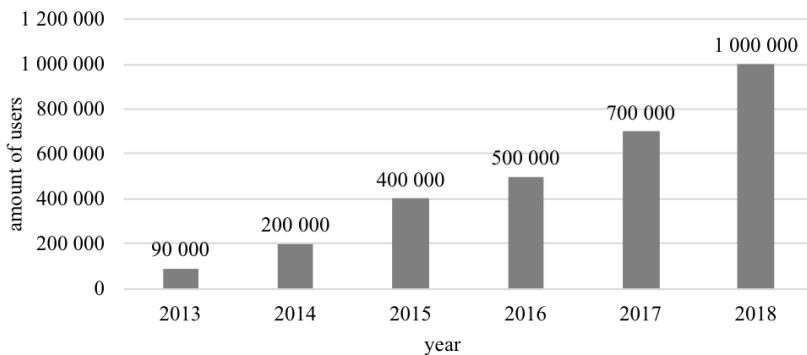
- Facebook 2,2 billion MAUs,
- YouTube 1,9 billion MAUs,
- Instagram 1 billion MAUs.

A lot of people concentrated in one place means interesting marketing opportunities for companies. The three social media platforms are the most used platforms in terms of marketing on the European markets.

10 LUA, A.: *21 Top Social Media Sites to Consider for Your Brand, 2019*. [online]. [2019-04-03]. Available at: <<https://buffer.com/library/social-media-sites>>.

1.2 Domination of Immersive Visual Experience

Current trends in media and content consumption indicate, that users are lazy to read or often find some obstacles in reading a text-content.¹¹ This is the reason why the social media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram and TikTok expand by thousands of new MAUs daily. Brands should rather use content that is easier to consume such as videos, audio podcasts and pictures in their marketing strategy. Visually based social media has become a significant trend nowadays. Some users even switch from more traditional social media platforms such as Facebook to visually based platforms such as Instagram. The trend causes decrease in amount of MAUs of more traditional social media. For instance the trend together with some changes in newsfeed algorithm caused, that people spend less time on Facebook. In the USA and Canada there was even a decrease in a number of active users of the network and new accounts registrations by the end of 2018. The situation had a negative impact also on the value of Facebook stocks on financial markets.¹² Instagram is nowadays considered a big trend and it is reflected on increase of MAUs.



Graph 1: Instagram MAUs over time

Source: Statista: *Number of Monthly Active Instagram Users from January 2013 to June 2018, 2019*. [online]. [2019-04-07]. Available at: <<https://www.statista.com/statistics/253577/number-of-monthly-active-instagram-users>>.

11 LOMBARDI, E.: *Why We Don't Read, 2019*. [online]. [2019-04-07]. Available at: <<https://www.thoughtco.com/why-people-dont-read-738494>>.

12 CONSTINE, J.: *Facebook Feed Change Sacrifices Time Spent and News Outlets for "Well-Being", 2018*. [online]. [2019-04-05]. Available at: <<https://techcrunch.com/2018/01/11/facebook-time-well-spent/>>.

Instagram had 1 billion of MAUs in 2018. Increasing trend of new users is significant and due to declared numbers there is a great possibility the trend will continue also in upcoming years. Preference for visual content is reflected in migration of social media users from more traditional social networks to visual ones.

1.3 Instagram as Newborn Star of Digital Marketing

According to Vassallo et al.¹³ brands use 6 to 11 different marketing strategies in their Instagram accounts and strategies utilize high level of branding, although not necessarily product information. A lot of companies realized social media and especially Instagram can have significant influence on users from brand building and also performance point of view. Once the brand has followers it can build brand and sell products through a visual content. There are many guides, recommendations and strategies how to build follower audience on the Instagram profile. However, many of them do not work, or some of them work better than the others. Authors of the article selected most discussed strategies found in the literature:

1. *Use related hashtags* – hashtags are widely used symbols, which group various Instagram content from various profiles under the one word. “Hashtag functionality is now used for a very wide variety of purposes, from covering crises and other breaking news events through gathering an instant community around shared media texts (such as sporting events and TV broadcasts) to signalling emotive states from amusement to despair”.¹⁴ Using hashtags can secure appearance of Instagram profile posts near posts of other Instagram profiles what creates a possibility to lure followers.
2. *Share the profile via Instagram post on a profile of an influencer* – according to De Veirman¹⁵ using share of Instagram posts on a

13 VASSALLO, A. J. et al.: *Junk Food Marketing on Instagram: Content Analysis*. [online]. [2019-04-07]. Available at: <<https://doi.org/10.2196/publichealth.9594>>.

14 BRUNS, A. et al.: *Towards a Typology of Hashtag Publics: A Large-scale Comparative Study of User Engagement across Trending Topics*. [online]. [2019-04-07]. Available at: <<https://doi.org/10.1080/22041451.2016.1155328>>.

15 DE VEIRMAN, M., CAUBERGHE, V., HUDDERS, L.: *Marketing through Instagram Influencers: The Impact of Number of Followers and Product Divergence on Brand Attitude*. [online]. [2019-04-07]. Available at: <<https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2017.1348035>>.

profile of an influencer with a great amount of followers is widely spread strategy, which might bring new followers for brand profile, however it is important to find a connection between an influencer and a brand to secure visual and context consistency.

3. *Share the profile via Instagram story on a profile of an influencer* – Instagram stories represent content, which disappear after 24 hours. The biggest advantage is that users can be redirected to some landing page or other Instagram profile via stories. Collaboration with an influencer who promotes business Instagram profile in Instagram story with redirection to business profile might bring new followers.
4. *Mark bigger profile in Instagram post* – on Instagram it is possible to mark other Instagram profiles in description of a published post. If a marked profile has a great follower database it is possible the followers will follow also profile which marked the bigger profile.
5. *Follow as much content related Instagram profiles as possible* – when business profile follows other business or personal Instagram profiles the subject gets a notification. In the case there is a possibility the subject reciprocally follows back. The strategy can significantly increase follower base of an Instagram profile.
6. *Paid promotion of Instagram post* – spread of a content published on Instagram can be achieved by paid promotion via advertising system Facebook Ads Manager. Paid promotion secures higher reach of content, thus possibility of gaining new followers increases.
7. *Contest with organic reach only* – condition of contest on Instagram can be to mark Instagram friends in comments of the contest and encourage them to follow the profile. Only if the condition is accomplished user can win a price. Instagram contests have tendency to spread organically without need of paid promotion. Reach of the contest post is dependent on attractiveness of the price.
8. *Contest with paid promotion* – if the contest doesn't achieve satisfying results it is possible to use paid promotion to extend a reach of the post and to reach more people.

There are many more strategies, however the identified ones are the most spread and more discussed across the internet and scientific literature.

2 Aim and Methodology

Methodology of the paper consists of a *literature overview*, which uncovered perception and importance of the Instagram social network from academic and also business point of view. The comprehensive literature overview identified a research gap and defined a direction of an empirical research of the paper. During the literature study the authors did not find a paper, which would have tested identified approaches and recommended audience development strategies to entities potentially interested in Instagram audience development. The main aim of the article is to identify, analyse and practically test the possibilities of building an audience on the commercial profile of Instagram social network. The authors used *case study* as a primary research method of an empirical part of the paper. There was a new Instagram profile created as initial step of the research. The authors focused on Instagram profiles for business purposes. As fashion is one of the most demanded and spread business areas, the founded profile had fashion character and it was focused on outfit inspirations for the younger target groups. Content for founded Instagram profile was mostly overtaken from other social networks such as Pinterest and Facebook. Later, some of followers also sent their own inspirational photos with request to publish it on our business profile. During the test period the authors published almost thirty Instagram posts. Eight of them were devoted to testing identified audience development strategies. Rest of them had complementary character to secure naturalism and continuity of the profile.

On the basis of literature overview eight different strategies to develop an Instagram audience were tested. The test was conducted during a period of one month. The test took place in March 2019. Two strategies per week were tested. The eight deployed strategies were: 1) utilization of related hashtags in Instagram post description area; 2) share the profile via Instagram story on profile of an influencer; 3) mark bigger profile in Instagram post or story; 4) follow as much content related Instagram profiles as possible 5) like as much content related Instagram profiles as possible; 6) paid promotion of Instagram post; 7) contest with organic reach; 8) utilization of paid promotion for contest. Results of each strategy were analysed and the number of new followers were considered as key performance indicator in the empirical part of the article. Individual strategies were subsequently compared between each other and the best one was recommended as most functional. However, Instagram acts like living organism and it is important to keep an

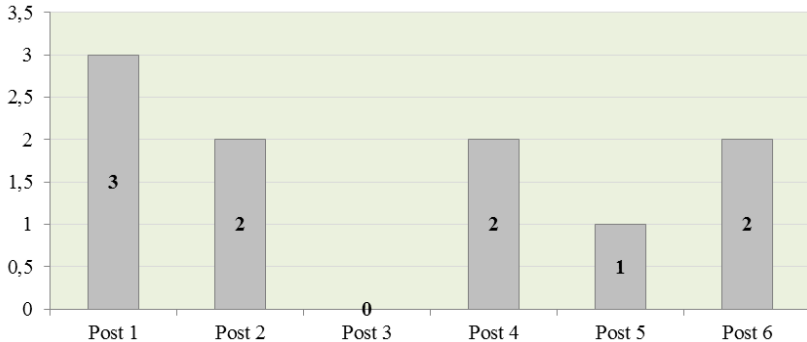
attention of the target audience. Utilization of diverse content types and approaches is necessary. As the result of the paper the authors identified the most performing Instagram audience developing strategy and suggested a mix of strategies, which might be utilised for development of the following audience on Instagram social network.

3 Content Based Instagram Approaches

The research conducted in the article is aimed to test eight different strategies focused on developing an audience on the Instagram social network. Individual strategies were identified by the authors on the basis of a literature overview. In order for the research to be carried out and for the strategies to be tested, it was necessary to create a new Instagram profile. The newly created Instagram profile had fashion character and its main focus were outfit inspirations for the younger target groups.

Strategy 1: Utilization of related hashtags in Instagram post description area

The first strategy tested in the research was the “*utilization of related hashtags in Instagram post description area*” strategy. In order to test this strategy, 6 posts were published to newly created Instagram profile, each with an average of 30 hashtags relevant to the content of the profile. Instagram posts mainly included hashtags such as *fashion, outfit, inspiration*, as the main focus of the Instagram profile content was fashion, but also tags like *slovak blogger, slovak girl*, etc., as we primarily wanted to reach Slovak audience. Since the goal was to acquire new followers, strategy couldn't miss the hashtags like *follow me, follow for follow*, or *follow me back*. Based on the above strategy, 10 new followers were gained within all six posts (Graph 2), which represents almost 2 new followers on average per post.

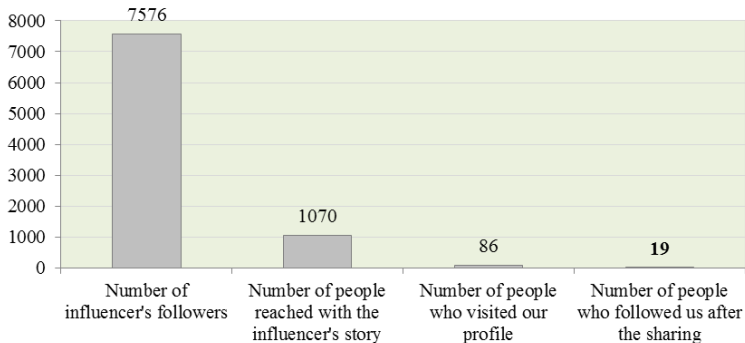


Graph 2: Number of followers acquired by the strategy „utilization of related hashtags in Instagram post description area”

Source: own processing

Strategy 2: Share the profile via Instagram story on profile of an influencer

The second strategy tested was the “*share the profile via Instagram story on profile of an influencer*” strategy. To enable the strategy to be tested, it was necessary to reach out to an influencer with a view to sharing created profile on their story, namely the one whose content would be similar to the developed profile, thus luring and obtaining new followers with similar interests. The influencer addressed was a person who at the time of the research had a total of 7576 followers. The main focus of the influencer’s content was primarily fashion, beauty and lifestyle. Based on the statistics collected from the influencer after the sharing, it can be assessed that the post published on the influencer’s story was seen together by 1070 people, of whom 86 visited our profile and 19 people clicked to follow the account (Graph 3).



Graph 3: Number of followers acquired by the strategy „share the profile via Instagram story on profile of an influencer”

Source: own processing

Strategy 3: Mark bigger profile in Instagram post or story

The third strategy was the “*mark bigger profile in Instagram post or story*” strategy. The strategy consisted of marking Instagram profiles with a greater number of followers on developed Instagram account, which in turn would be followed by a mutual sharing from the above profiles, thus potentially acquiring new followers. Profiles marking was done both in the form of a post in the feed and in the form of a story, while focusing on profiles with similar content. In order to completeness of the strategy, it is necessary to mention that developed Instagram profile was, among other things, designed to share outfit photos of other profiles as the main focus of the profile was the inspiration for outfits. The essence of this sharing was that if another profile sent a photo with their outfit, we would publish the photo on developed profile. With that being said, one photo which was sent from another profile was published on developed Instagram account within the post in the feed. Subsequently, the above profile, with a total of 1551 followers, shared us in their story, resulting in the acquisition of 10 new followers. In addition to the above, marking was also done via a story, where we marked and shared 9 other profiles with a fashion related content. Four of the profiles we shared followed us back, of which three of them consequently shared our profile in their story. As a result, 4 new followers were acquired. However, it is necessary to mention that the gained followers represented just the profiles we did a mutual sharing with, thus concluding that basically no new followers were obtained from the mutually shared profiles. For a better view, we present the results of the strategy in Table 2.

Table 2: Number of followers acquired by the strategy „mark bigger profile in Instagram post or story”

Type of marking	Follow back	Number of profiles' followers	Mutual sharing	Followers gained
1 in post	was already following our profile	1551	yes	10
9 in story	4	1098	yes	4 (just the profiles that followed us back)
		576	yes	
		320	yes	
		909	no	

Source: own processing

Strategy 4: Follow as much content related Instagram profiles as possible

The fourth strategy was to *follow as much content related Instagram profiles as possible*. The purpose of the strategy was to start following multiple profiles, the content of which was again similar to the content of developed profile, in order to get a backward follow from these profiles, as one of the Instagram's functions is to provide notifications of the new "likes" or the new "follows". Thus the newly followed profiles would get a notification about developed profile following them, which in turn would result in a backward follow from these profiles. The candidates chosen to be followed for the purpose of this strategy were searched for through related hashtags such as *slovak girl, slovak blogger, fashion, slovak fashion* etc. In order for this strategy to take place, 50 accounts were followed in total, of which 3 of them gave the created profile a follow back. The result of the strategy is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Number of followers acquired by the strategy „follow as much content related Instagram profiles as possible”

Number of profiles followed	Followers gained
50	3

Source: own processing

Strategy 5: Like as much content related Instagram profiles as possible

The fifth strategy was very similar to the previous fourth one and it was to *like as much content related Instagram profiles as possible*. The aim of this strategy, again, based on the notifications, was to acquire a follow back from the followed profiles. Out of 200 posts of different profiles that were liked, only one account followed the developed profile back. The result of this strategy is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Number of followers acquired by the strategy “like as much content related Instagram profiles as possible”

Number of profiles liked	Followers gained
200	1

Source: own processing

Strategy 6: Paid promotion of Instagram post

The sixth strategy was a *paid promotion of Instagram post*. In order for this strategy to work, it was necessary to switch the profile format from personal to business. Working with it is not much different from working with a personal account, but the user gets the opportunity to promote their posts, or monitor their statistics. All of the above would be available by activating a business account. What’s positive is that anyone can set up a business account, regardless the number of followers, and so did we have the opportunity to use this option for our relatively newly created profile. In order to set up a promotion of the post, four basic steps need to be accomplished. The first step is a so-called *destination* in which users can select where to send people they try to reach by the promotion. There are three options to be chosen from, thus concretely the user’s profile, the user’s website, or the user’s direct message. We chose “to visit our profile” as an option. The second step is to select a *target audience*. In this step, Instagram offers two options, the first of which is automatic targeting, which means that Instagram targets people similar to the user’s followers. The second option is to create our own audience, that is, manually enter the targeting options. In this step, we chose the option number one. The third step is to choose *budget and duration* of the promotion. For this step, users can choose the amount they want to invest, ranging from 1€ per day to 1000€ per day. Concerning the duration of the promotion, a minimum time to be chosen is 1 day and a maximum is 30 days. Depending on the choice of budget and duration, the estimated reach of the promotion changes as well. As a result of

this step, we have invested 3€ per day with a total duration of 1 day. An estimated reach of people who could've seen the promotion ranged from 200 to 540. The final step is to *review* the previous steps and eventually create the promotion. The strategy resulted in 6 new followers, but what is worth mentioning is that the promoted post has received the largest number of likes from all of the posts published so far. The result was 261 likes, while the average number of likes per post at time of the research was 22. An overview of the results of the strategy is presented in Table 5.

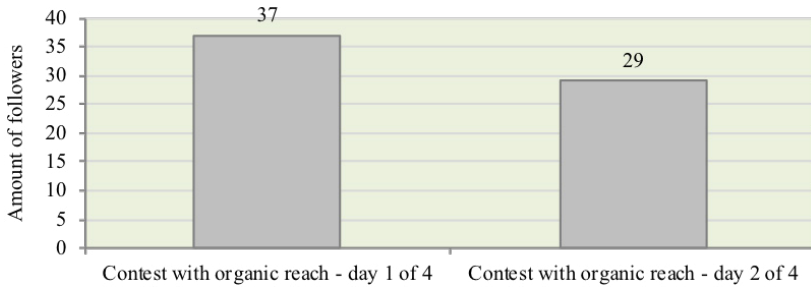
Table 5: Number of followers acquired by the strategy „paid promotion of Instagram post“

Destination	Audience	Budget and duration		Number of likes	Followers gained
Our Profile	Automatic	3€ daily	1 day	261	6

Source: own processing

Strategy 7: Contest with organic reach

The seventh strategy that was tested in the research was the “*contest with organic reach*” strategy. The terms and conditions of the contest had a fairly classic structure and consisted of three basic steps, the first of which was to follow the developed profile, the second one was to “like” the contest post, and the third one was to tag two more (real) accounts / friends, who would've also liked to join the contest, in the comment section below the post. It is precisely on the basis of the aforementioned tagging that the contest was spread in an organic way among a wide range of people and potential new followers. The contest with organic reach only took place during the first two days of the contest and was subsequently supported by the promotion of the post (Strategy 8), which, again, lasted for the next 48 hours. The total duration of the contest consisted of 4 days. In order to completeness of the strategy, the financial budget of the contest should be mentioned, in which approximately 30€ was spent on the things that the followers were competing for, including various small items attractive to the target audience. The contest with organic reach only resulted in 66 new followers, of which 37 were acquired on the first day of the contest and 29 of them were gained during the next day (Graph 4).

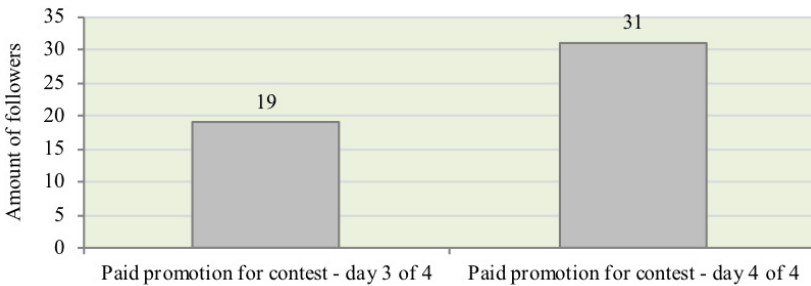


Graph 4: Number of followers acquired by the strategy “contest with organic reach”

Source: own processing

Strategy 8: Utilization of paid promotion for contest

The last strategy was a *utilization of paid promotion for contest*. This strategy is related to the previous seventh one and its aim was to support the contest by the promotion of the post. The budget for the promotion consisted of spending 3€ per day, which in total represented 6€, as the contest was supported by the promotion for a period of 2 days. Utilization of paid promotion for the contest brought together 50 new followers, of which 19 of them were acquired on the first day of the promotion and thus the third day of the overall contest, and 31 new followers were obtained the next day (Graph 5).

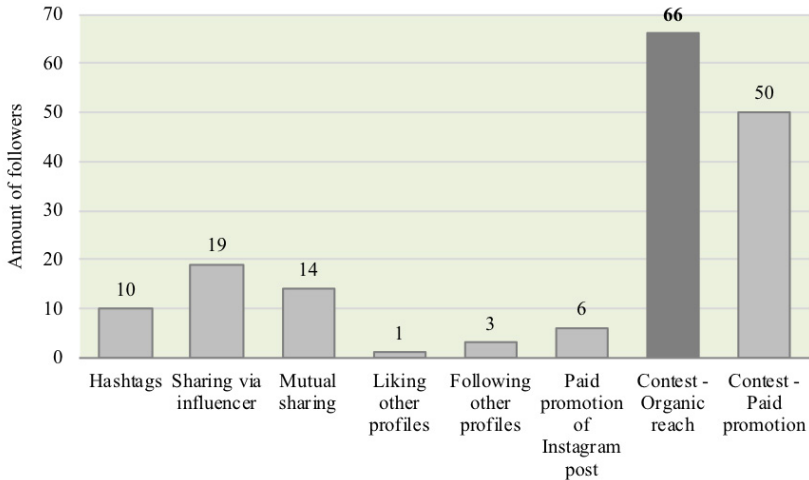


Graph 5: Number of followers acquired by the strategy “utilization of paid promotion for contest”

Source: own processing

The summary of the strategies

The summary of all eight tested strategies aimed to develop an audience on Instagram social network is shown in Graph 6, in which the results of the aforementioned strategies are visually presented in the form of the number of followers obtained under each one of them.



Graph 6: Summary of the number of followers acquired by the tested strategies

Source: own processing

As can be seen from the graph, the largest number of followers, 116 in total, were acquired through the last two strategies, namely “*contest with organic reach*” and “*utilization of paid promotion for contest*”. The second highest numbers of followers were obtained by the “*share the profile via Instagram story on the profile of an influencer*” strategy and the “*mark bigger profile in Instagram post or story*” strategy, in which the first one resulted in 19 new followers and 14 new people in the profile’s followers base were acquired by the second one of them. The “*paid promotion of Instagram post*” strategy brought out 6 new followers, the “*follow as much content related Instagram profiles as possible*” strategy resulted in 3 new followers, and 1 new follower was obtained by the “*like as much content related Instagram profiles as possible*” strategy. The “*utilization of related hashtags in Instagram post description area*” strategy reached 10 new followers but they were obtained within six published posts, what in the end represents only 2 new followers on average per post.

All eight strategies aimed to develop an audience on Instagram social network were tested during the period of one month and the total result represented 169 new followers.

Discussion and Conclusions

Instagram is a worldwide social network that is nowadays, besides the regular users looking for some type of entertainment and relaxation, used by many business companies which utilize the network to mainly communicate with both their existing and potential customers, and in addition to that, to build their brand. On Instagram, brands are able to interact with their customers by sharing photos and videos and leaving comments as a way of sharing information; receiving comments and likes as a way of gaining feedback from customers. Thus, building and maintaining audience on the network is key for companies to increasing brand awareness and expand their business. The aim of the article was to identify, analyze and test the possibilities of developing an audience on Instagram social network. In order to achieve the goal defined, a commercial profile was created on Instagram, where the research was conducted during the period of one month. The focus of the research was to test eight different strategies, identified by authors on the basis of a literature overview, aimed to develop an audience and acquire new followers. As fashion is one of the most demanded and spread business areas, the founded profile had fashion character and it was focused on outfit inspirations for the younger target groups. Content for the newly created Instagram profile was mostly overtaken from other social networks such as Pinterest and Facebook. The eight strategies tested were: 1) utilization of related hashtags in Instagram post description area; 2) share the profile via Instagram story on profile of an influencer; 3) mark bigger profile in Instagram post or story; 4) follow as much content related Instagram profiles as possible; 5) like as much content related Instagram profiles as possible; 6) paid promotion of Instagram post; 7) contest with organic reach; 8) utilization of paid promotion for contest. In summary, 169 new followers were acquired during the testing period. As the results of the research show, the “*contest with organic reach*” strategy and the “*utilization of paid promotion for contest*” strategy proved to be the most functional ones since the aforementioned strategies resulted in 116 new followers, representing up to 69% of the total number of followers gained.

Although these two strategies showed to be the most effective ones, they were also the most costly, as it was necessary to purchase several products, which the existing and potential new followers would've competed for. Since the contest was later supported by paid promotion, the authors invested around 30€ to 40€ in these strategies. On the other hand, the "like as much content related Instagram profiles as possible" strategy proved to be the least effective, resulting in only one new follower out of 200 profiles liked. The strategies involving sharing such as "share the profile via Instagram story on profile of an influencer" and "mark bigger profile in Instagram post or story" also proved to be quite effective ones, as the result of the two were 33 new followers. Based on the results of the research, contest and sharing can be recommended as the most functional strategies to develop an audience on the Instagram social network, but it is also necessary to point out the cost of the first one. What is also worth mentioning is that the recommended strategies can become uninteresting or even repulsive for the audience over the time. Therefore, the best strategy aimed to acquire new followers might be the mix of all eight strategies, alternate them, and, at the same time, create interesting content that would lure potential new followers itself. Based on the results obtained authors recommend to direct the research to a different field than a fashion, as the results may vary depending on the area surveyed. They also recommend to apply the testing of individual strategies to a profile other than the newly created one, thus a profile that already has a certain number of people in its follower base. Last but not least, the authors of the article recommend to extend the strategies testing research by the statistics including indicators such as interactions, engagement, reach, or impressions, as one of the Instagram functions is the possibility to create a business profile, which such statistics offers, thus carrying even more interesting results.

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THE USAGE OF ONLINE TOOLS AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL

Lenka Labudová – Denisa Jánošová

ABSTRACT:

Cities and regions are in these day more aware of the power of marketing in their environment. Effective usage of marketing tools helps to successfully formulate their development and lead them to gain desired goals. The ability to promote and build positive image of the city, with intention to sustainable development of the territory is primarily in the hands of a well-established philosophy, based on marketing approaches. By effectively arranged and properly targeted communication, the regions have the opportunity to impress the target group and change its attitude towards to territory in desired direction.

KEY WORDS:

citizen, city, communication, marketing, online tools, region, self-government, social media, social networks

Introduction

Over the last century, marketing has gradually changed and evolved, as has its definition. Originally, marketing was simply perceived as a method through which to sell products to the right customer, at the right time, for the right price and in the right place by the use of effective communication tools, whilst in its current understanding marketing is perceived and defined as total social and management process of satisfying the needs and wishes of individuals or groups in the process of production and exchanging products and values. It is not considered an isolated science anymore, but a multi-spectral methodological approach to handle personal and professional situations. The importance of marketing in the business area is unquestionable. But over time many prominent experts recognized the importance of advanced marketing concepts in other fields. Philip Kotler, one of the leading theoreticians and experts in marketing, believes that the scope of marketing must be extended not only to areas that are associated with the direct sale of goods, but also to non-profit organizations, to the promotion of individuals, events, areas of historical, economic or natural interest and, finally, to the management of cities, municipalities and territorial units in general.

There can be no doubt that the time in which territorial units may start to benefit from highly-sophisticated marketing activities, used mainly in the private sector, has come. Authors Clark and Rainisto pointed out that in the past simplified notion of cities as commodities often prevailed, although, in reality, they are complex “mega products”, used in countless ways. As a reflection of this, existing marketing tools are being adapted to reflect the complex “mega product” nature of such territories, so as not to handle them anymore as a mere commodity. They are, in fact, now perceived as demanding heterogeneous marketing objects. In terms of the ongoing socio-economic transformation of Slovak towns and regions, this issue is still relatively new, which led us to the decision to examine the use of online marketing communication between companies and private individuals in district towns of the Trnava region. We focussed specifically on the following social networks: Facebook, Instagram and the web portal Odkazprestarostu.sk. The goal was to determine the degree of usage of such new „mega product“ tools, and the presence of any disparities in the use of online communication tools in relation to their citizens between the district towns of Trnava Region.

1 Marketing and Marketing Communication

The concept of marketing can be defined as a social and managerial process that aims to satisfy the wishes and needs of groups or individuals in the market environment. Its primary task is to reach the target group and engage its attention¹ One of the four basic components of the marketing mix is marketing communication. There are countless definitions of communication, but in short, it is the transferring of information from one source to the recipient. The principle of communication is composed by, namely: source encoding, notification transmission process, decoding, the recipient of the report, and feedback noise.² Marketing Communication, one of the elements of the marketing mix, is considered an interdisciplinary scientific discipline that is based on the fundamentals of marketing, economics and trade and that uses knowledge of psychology, sociology and customer behavior. Marketing communication includes techniques and tools through which companies carry out the process of communication with their target group in order

1 KOTLER, P., ARMSTRON, G.: *Marketing*. Praha : Grada Publishing a.s., 2004, p. 543.

2 JAHODOVÁ, H., PRIKRYLOVÁ, J.: *Moderní marketingová komunikace*. Praha : Grada Publishing a.s., 2010, p. 71.

to promote their products or themselves.³ The primary objective of marketing communication, according to Kita, is to inform the public, and, in the specific, the target group, about offered products, emphasising their benefits, usefulness, quality and value. It is equally important to receive, understand and process the target group's requirements and to react accordingly. So marketing communication is a two-way flow of information.⁴

In relation to the issue at the core of this paper, we will define the essence of regional marketing communication as the ability to provide information about the activities of the city and its products and to impress target groups through its tools, so that the aforementioned activities, products and information will be considered from a positive point of view. The way in which cities communicate significantly affects the behavior of the target markets. For example, a poor communication level is reflected in consumer disinterest. On the contrary, effective communication can positively influence the target market/groups and make them more interested in active participation. The manner of communication is affected by its objective, the nature of the products and which market segment is targeted.⁵ According to Bernátová, a city should communicate mainly because of the following reasons:⁶

- obtaining public support in dealing with public affairs,
- arousing public interest in the development of the city,
- means of mutual agreement,
- public awareness,
- obtaining views and feedback.

1.1 Online Marketing Communications

Since the arrival of the Internet, marketing communication has been experiencing an unprecedented „boom.“ *„The internet is a medium which has had a global impact on sales, marketing and communication, and it has surpassed in impact traditional forms of media. With the development,*

3 DE PELSMACKER, P. et al.: *Marketing Communication*. Praha : Grada Publishing Inc., 2003, p. 195.

4 KITA, J. et al.: *Marketing*. Bratislava : Jura Etion, 2005, p. 193.

5 PAULÍČKOVÁ, R.: *Regionálny a mestský marketing*. Bratislava : Eurounion s.r.o., 2005, p. 87.

6 BERNÁTOVÁ, M., VAŇOVÁ, A.: *Marketing pre samosprávy*. Banská Bystrica : IROMAR, 2000, p. 46.

availability and dissemination of its popularity, the Internet has become a highly important part of the activities of companies, communities, organizations and individuals,"⁷ Dorčák explains. The Internet has become a communication platform and a powerful marketing tool, it has a wide range of content and features, global influence, relatively low cost, precision targeting and the possibility of multimedia capability. It is able to combine the aforementioned global reach with a high density of local recipients of this communication. „*The Internet contributes to the breakdown of traditional barriers of time and space in the transmission of information and reports,*“⁸ Ftorek says. At the same time, it's offering space for individualism, and by using the latest technology, it allows marketers to send highly personalized messages based on the available information about the consumers' preferences, such as browsing history, personal interests and so on. Another advantage of the Internet is its measurability, thanks to which we are able to gather useful data. For instance, this data may relate to tracking the number of unique visitors (i.e. visitors whose subsequent browsing of other websites is not going to be counted), who click on a particular webpage or ad, and the collected data disclose how much time they spent on it or where they moved afterwards.⁹ According to the website eMarketer, it can be expected that in 2019 companies will be spending about 328 billion dollars on digital advertising. The Alibaba website, Facebook and Google, which currently represent 61.2% of the total global market in digital advertising, are going to be the main vendors.¹⁰

2 Social Media and Social Networks

Social media is a tool allowing individuals to exchange ideas and opinions, to discuss content and establish contacts. Social media has precedence over other social networks because it arches over the other social tools such as blogs, wikis, etc. Compared to mainstream media, social media is differentiated by the fact that everyone can create, contribute to and

7 DORČÁK, P.: *eMarketing – Ako oslovit' zákazníka na internete*. Prešov : EZO, 2012, p. 48.

8 FTOREK, J.: *Public relations jako ovlivňování mínění*. Praha : Grada Publishing a.s., 2009, p. 154.

9 WEBSTER, F. E., WIND, Y.: *Organizational Buying Behavior*. 4th Edition. Prentice : Hall, 2010, p. 286.

10 *Global Ad Spending Update*. [online]. [2019-04-12]. Available at: <<https://www.emarketer.com/content/global-ad-spending-update>>.

comment on content.¹¹ In fact, the very definition of social media hinges on this characteristic. Threadway and Smith write: „*This term refers to a set of technologies that capture communications, content and so on, between individuals, their friends and their virtual relationships.*”¹² Based on targeting, social media could be divided as follows:¹³

- Social Networking - Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and MySpace, which are focused on building a community between users, called „friends“ and sharing information and news.
- Blogs – websites created by people who are interested in a specific topic. The core of these pages is represented by the discussants who comments on the author’s attitudes or opinions.
- Sites for viewing videos and photos – Vimeo, Youtube, Flickr, Instagram, which are sites that greatly simplify the process of publishing videos and photos.
- Public chat rooms and bulletin boards – they represent an online place where you can meet people with common interests and converse about disparate topics. Discussants can be anyone who is registered.
- Listservs – which is a tool operating on a similar principle as a public chat room. It is possible to send a message to all group members, who are registered users, via e-mail.
- Wikis – which is a site where it is possible to create, edit or update content on a specific topic.
- Social bookmarking – for instance, Digg or Delicious. Users of these sites have the ability to share content with others through public bookmarks.

The categorisation of social media differs slightly, according to individual authors. For example, Janouch divides social media into 5 categories - social networks, business networks, social bookmarking, pages with polls and messages.¹⁴ In summary, social media is used for connection and social interaction. Its advantage is that its content can be created, shared or commented by every registered user. Social networks, a type of

11 SCOTT, D. M.: *Nové pravidlá marketingu & PR*. Bratislava : Easton Books, 2010, p. 38.

12 TREADWAY, Ch., SMITH, M.: *Marketing na Facebooku*. Brno : Computer Press, 2011, p. 42.

13 SCOTT, D. M.: *Nové pravidlá marketingu & PR*. Bratislava : Easton Books, 2010, p. 149.

14 JANOUC, V.: *Internetový marketing*. Brno : Computer Press, 2010, p. 203.

online media, are dramatically growing and they are constantly adapting to current challenges and needs. „*Social networks are a relatively new type of web applications. They were developed in the first decade of the twenty-first century from precursor websites, which catered to the needs of previous users.*”¹⁵ These precursors were various discussion sites, weblogs, storage for files and more. However, their users no longer wanted to be just the creators and publishers of content but they also desired to interact with other Internet users. Social networks allow them to. The basic and most important services offered are:

- creating an almost completely public profile within a limited system,
- contacting, interacting and connecting with other users,
- publishing their content while watching content created by other users in the same system,
- limited interaction between server operators.¹⁶

2.1 Facebook

Facebook („FB”) is the most popular social networking site in the world, and in Slovakia as well. It was founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg. Registered user can create a personal profile, a group or plan an event. Through these profiles, users send messages, whether public or private, share articles, images, photos, collect news, search for „friends”and much more. Despite the negative press and scandals that FB faced in the past, the total number of users increased to 2.2 billion in 2018. FB in Slovakia has 2.5 million registered users. Facebook is not an unknown domain for Slovak autonomies. Each county town has an established public page on FB, through which it offers information about current affairs in the government, about upcoming events, and about project activities and through which it also acquires support and feedback from citizens. FB’s importance in the sphere of public occasions is not only about mobilization, awareness and citizen involvement, but in its perception „*as a weapon in election,*”¹⁷ too. The importance of using social networking was understood as early as 2013, when the mayor of the capital city – Bratislava - Milan Ftáčnik, spoke as follows: „*there is very*

15 BEDNÁŘ, V.: *Marketing na sociálních sítích*. Brno : Computer press, 2011, p. 96.

16 BEDNÁŘ, V.: *Marketing na sociálních sítích*. Brno : Computer press, 2011, p. 95.

17 BEDNÁŘ, V.: *Marketing na sociálních sítích*. Brno : Computer press, 2011, p. 81.

limited space to physically engage people in a discussion. 50, 100, 1000, 10,000 people come to public meetings, and that's it. Cities, however, have more than 100,000 inhabitants, therefore we must look for ways to get to them. Social media is the way.”¹⁸ The Conservative Institute points out that „actively notifying citizens via the Internet creates the best conditions for citizens' awareness and for the public control of regional governments. At the same time, it represents the easiest and most convenient way for citizens to obtain information without the need to visit municipal offices and/or communicate with their staff.”¹⁹

2.2 Instagram

Instagram is a popular social network, which guarantees an easy and amusing option for sharing pictures and videos. The only prerequisites are ownership of a mobile device – such as a smartphone or tablet – and internet access. It was created in 2010 for users of mobile devices by Apple, and, very soon after that, a second version for Android-operated smartphones was developed. Today the domain is owned by Facebook and has nearly a billion users. Because of that, it was only a matter of time before Instagram began being used as a business and promotion platform.²⁰

2.3 Project - Reference for the Mayor

The Odkazprestarostu.sk project is another tool for citizens to participate in public affairs. It is a project initiated by the Institute for Good Governance NGOs. Its aim is to intensify and streamline the mutual communication between citizens and government, make them more effective and better their perception by citizens. Citizens, through the website or mobile app, point and draw attention on issues and deficiencies of the territory, so that they may be cleaned, repaired, replaced, removed or otherwise resolved. It is also necessary to submit a photo or video recording to each individual notification, as proof. These notifications are then forwarded to the relevant governments, which will

18 *Tlačová agentúra slovenskej republiky*. [online]. [2018-09-26]. Available at: <<http://www.tasr.sk/>>.

19 *Konzervatívny inštitút M. R. Štefánika*. [online]. [2018-04-15]. Available at: <<http://www.konzervativizmus.sk/article.php?6211>>.

20 *Môj Android*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.mojandroid.sk/instagram-miliarda-pouzivatelov/>>.

try to deal with them effectively and in the shortest possible timeframe. If there is a problem or defect which does not fall under its competence, the government can also declare that they are not responsible for finding a solution and that they will forward it to the appropriate entity. When a notification isn't addressed within 14 days or the responsible body doesn't comment on it, it will be automatically marked as „unresolved.” Probably the biggest advantage of the portal lies in gaining information about issues in a specific location and in a specific time. The notifications fall under the following categories:

- roads and sidewalks,
- traffic signs,
- Abandoned vehicles,
- greenery and environment,
- street furniture,
- public policy,
- public services,
- sewage and construction works,
- others.²¹

3 Trnava Region

Trnava Region („TTSK”) is situated in the southwestern part of Slovakia. It borders three countries - Austria, Hungary and the Czech Republic. As for internal territorial-administrative arrangements, the TTSK is adjacent to the Bratislava, Trenčín and Nitra regions. The surface area of the TTSK is 4174 square kilometers, and its population on 31. 12. 2017 numbered 561,666 inhabitants. TTSK is the smallest region in the Slovak Republic, from the perspective of its population. The region has 251 municipalities and 17 towns, of which 7 are county towns. The headquarter of TTSK is the city of Trnava, which is the 7th largest city in Slovakia. Trnava, because of the presence of a high number of churches, received the nickname „Little Rome”. In Trnava, there are 2 universities: the University of Trnava and the University of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, plus the Faculty of Materials Science and Technology, which falls under the Slovak Technical University.

21 *Portál odkaz pre starostu*. [online]. [2019-03-22]. Available at: < <https://www.odkazprestarostu.sk/>>.



Picture 1: Map of regions in Slovakia

Source: *Trnavský kraj*. [online]. [2019-04-04]. Available at: <<http://www.slovakregion.sk/trnavsky-kraj>>.

3.1 Use of Facebook and Instagram Website odkazprestarostu.sk by District Towns Trnava Region

The following table shows the district towns in the Trnava region - Trnava, Piešťany, Dunajská Streda, Hlohovec, Senica, Galanta Skalica – in relation to the usage of social network Facebook, Instagram and website Odkazprestarostu.sk, for the month of April 2019.

Table 1: Usage of FB, portal Odkazprestarostu.sk and Instagram by district cities of TTSK

<i>City</i>	<i>Population (Thous.)</i>	<i>Official Facebook profile</i>	<i>Number of fans on FB (thous.) In April 2019</i>	<i>Usage of portal Odkazprestarostu.sk</i>	<i>Official profile on Instagram</i>
Trnava	65382	YES	21748	YES	YES
Piešťany	27777	YES	4791	YES	NO
Dunajská Streda	22639	NO	-	NO	NO
Hlohovec	22000	YES	2942	YES	NO
Senica	20398	YES	5644	YES	YES
Galanta	15109	YES	507	NO	NO
Skalica	14911	YES	4886	NO	NO

Source: own processing

Three district towns, Trnava, Hlohovec and Senica, are using the social networking site Facebook, as well as the portal Odkazprestarostu.sk. District town, Dunajská Streda have not created an official Facebook page and do not use the portal Odkazprestarostu either. Skalica has only set up an official Facebook page and Piešťany uses the portal Odkazprestarostu.sk and Facebook, as well. Trnava has the greatest number of fans on Facebook – 21,748, which represents 32% of the total population of the city. Galanta has, compared to other cities, the fewest number of fans – 507; in comparison, Senica has 5644 and the smallest town of TTSK, Skalica, has 4,886 fans. The possibility to establish an official profile on the social network Instagram was used only by 2 towns: Trnava and Senica.

Conclusion

Even if a city does not use Facebook („FB“), the portal Odkazprestarostu.sk or Instagram, it can not be declared that is unsuccessful in relation to its communication with its citizens, but it may be stated that it is impoverishing itself by ignoring the main communication channels that have experienced an unprecedented „boom“ in the last few years. In the case of social networking - FB and Instagram („IG“) – the possibility of communication and virtual promotion are free. That is the main reason why every town should establish its own page on FB and IG. Furthermore, FB and IG, because of their undemanding nature, do not require any advanced technical skills or information and are thus an ideal marketing tool. By proper optimization of posts, each city has the possibility of increasing and streamlining communication with its citizens, visitors and tourists. Social networks play an increasingly important role in each city. Most cities are aware of this fact, nevertheless, 3 cities out of 7 district towns of the Trnava Region have not set up a profile on FB yet, and IG is used by only 2 cities. Cities which are choosing not to take advantage of social media networks are losing significant opportunities for promotion and visibility of their region to visitors and for a strong informative and communicative channel with their citizens. TTSK is adjacent to the Bratislava region, which is in first place for tourism in Slovakia. In this context, FB and IG could help TTSK challenge Bratislava's tourism numbers, but that means TTSK should appeal to all district towns of the region to set up a profile on these social networks. There also arises the possibility of cooperation between the district towns within one region, through mutual sharing of information and events, which ultimately

can help the whole TTSK in self-promotion. As for the negative side of FB and IG, it ought to be noted that every visitor must create their own profile to interact with the content, i.e. their use is conditional upon registering for their services. However, since the number of registered users is constantly increasing, FB and IG have become an effective means of communication, which often also provides immediate feedback.

8 regional cities, 45 towns and 40 other municipalities were registered on the portal Odkazprestarostu.sk as of April 2019. This website has become an essential platform for communication between citizens and government. Each initiative is labeled as – solved, in the process of resolution or unresolved – in a specific timeframe. It is therefore in the interests of each registered territorial unit to strive for its remedy. The fact that the project involves not only cities but also municipalities should act as an incentive for unregistered towns to do so as soon as possible. The portal is not just an instrument for gaining information on the deficiencies in the local territory but also a tool for involving citizens in improving the places in which they live. The information that we found is sufficient to answer the original research questions, namely whether the district towns of TTSK use tools of online communication and if there is a tendency of unification and progress or if the disparities between cities are deepening.

Based on the results of the analysis we must state that some district towns of TTSK do not use the full potential brought on by the Internet, in the form of social networks and web portals. For comparison, let us look at 2 cities with about the same population, Senica and Dunajská Streda, which have equal opportunities available in this area. Senica has decided to utilize these options and vice versa Dunajská Streda has not established a profile on either FB or IG and did not take part in the project Odkazprestarostu.sk, as well. A solution that would lead to the unification and progress in the usage of online communication tools could be some regulation or agreement among all the district towns of TTSK. In conclusion, we would like to point out, that among the important prerequisites for successful communication and marketing of a city it is necessary to include the ability of some realistic thinking, readiness for change and the presence of exploitable resources. Nowadays cities are trying to apply marketing strategies, which hopefully will help them to adapt their offers to changing market conditions and to gain a competitive advantage. The use of effective marketing communication tools undoubtedly belongs to this set of marketing strategies.

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THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN NEWS CONTENT AND NATIVE ADVERTISING – IS IT CLEAR?

Gordana Lesinger – Iva Buljubašić

ABSTRACT:

The very concept of native advertising is not unknown and is, as such, present in the marketing field. With the emergence and growing domination of social networks, especially Instagram, native advertising is experiencing its culmination, but it also gets the continuation of coexisting in hybrid media genres. While marketing is clear in defining and using native advertising, the problem arises in journalism. The emergence of a genre of clicks where the sensationalist titles differ from the content of the article itself has led to the trivialization of journalistic genres and the emergence of hybridity in journalism itself. In such an ambiguous defining situation, where online communication requires constant content generation and updating of information, journalism has become the subject of social media content. Never so many media genres have been overwhelmed, and information from one medium spilled into others, as today. The appearance of the influencers, Youtubers, and opinion makers made a turning point at the core of journalism. Though columnists and analysts have always been present as the voice of experts who engage in social events, their thoughts have not spilled beyond the media in which thoughts are published. However, their online versions have experienced an unimaginable situation. Influential companies, through native advertising, want to advertise their products on social networks. The actors themselves, because of the large number of followers accompanying them in the same media, knowingly talk about the story of the advertised brands, and then the same tale is told on some of the informative portals. This confusing situation, where there is no clear boundary between advertisements and journalistic articles, numerous theorists are attempting to scatter. The authors made a research about native advertising in Croatian media and how to be clear about the boundaries of it. The research concluded in-depth interviews with practitioner and academics who gave review on practice in Croatian media outlets, regarding native content.

KEY WORDS:

information, journalism forms, media, native advertising, portals

1 Introduction

Due to the buzz about native advertising (in literature, similar names for native advertising can be found, like: content marketing, branded content, sponsored content, paid content, product placement etc.), it is clear that nowadays there are still lots of opinions about it. Opinion makers, marketers, business people, university professors, who are researching

native advertising are still divided in opinions (regardless of whether they are critics or supporters of native advertising) and are also divided about answers to the next questions: is native advertising ethical or not, is it effective or not, is it part of media or advertising (or both), or does it have bright future in or not, and the question on which authors of this paper wanted to get the answers is that, is the boundary clear between native advertising and news content. Exploring the past researches, according to the author Murray¹ ‘the border between advertising and editorial content has been fuzzy and contested from the very beginnings of mass media.’ To get the answer for the question, is the boundary clear between native advertising and news content, the authors of this paper made in-depth interviews with practitioner and academics who gave review on practice in Croatian media outlets, regarding native content. The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 provides a literature review of native advertising, in the narrow sense, definitions of native advertising, how different authors defined it and which types of native advertising can be found in the literature. Section 3 presents the materials and methods of the paper. Further on, the section 4 gives analysis and research with in-depth interviews and a discussion. General conclusions based on research results is presented in section 5.

2 Definition of Native Advertising

This section will explain native advertising and authors’ comments on the following. According to Sandler and Secunda,² native advertising is not a new concept. The Sandler study states that evidence of integrative advertising and editorial content can be seen as far back as the 1940’ as commercially sponsored programs became more popular on the radio in the United States. Today, native advertising has made even larger advances due to consumers’ increased use of digital and mobile media. Based on this case study, it became clear that ‘native advertising’ is also called other names such as ‘content marketing’, ‘sponsored content’, and ‘branded journalism’.³

- 1 MURRAY, S.: *Hitch Your Antenna to the Stars: Early Television and Broadcast Stardom*. London, New York : Routledge, 2013, p. 15.
- 2 SANDLER, D., SECUNDA, E.: Point of View: Blurred Boundaries – Where Does Editorial End and Advertising Begin? In *Journal of Advertising Research*, 1993, Vol. 33, No. 3, p. 73-80.
- 3 GILLER, E.: *Native Advertising: An International Perspective (2016)*. *Professional Projects from the College of Journalism and Mass Communications*. [online]. [2019-02-20]. Available at: <<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/journalismprojects/7>>.

As mentioned, native advertising is also called other names like content marketing or sponsored content (and also it can be confused with terms like PR or journalism), but some author would disagree with this, because there is a difference between the previously mentioned terms. According to the Interactive Advertising Bureau ('IAB'), native ads are 'paid ads that are so cohesive with the page content, assimilated into the design, and consistent with the platform that the viewer simply feels that they belong',⁴ Native advertising is produced by the brands themselves or their advertising agencies, by the publishers' own writers at the request of the brands, and by the publishers in arranging for sponsorship. From the point of view of placement—how the advertisements are integrated into the media offerings—a review of native ads reveals a variety of formats as well. Some publishers even fully integrate the sponsored content, placing it within the body of a news story. Native advertising formats also differ, with some native ads being part of broader campaigns and others standing alone.⁵

According to the author Wasserman,⁶ native advertising, in short, is all about deception. You, as a reader, are encouraged to perceive the messages as something other than what they are. And even if, at some level, you understand they weren't put together by the magazine's staff, you're still expected to see them as partaking of the magazine's trustworthiness, and as deserving something of the same regard. Also, according to the authors Wojdynski and Golan,⁷ native advertising is

4 *Interactive Advert. Bureau, Native Advertising Playbook 3 (2013). Stating the Self-regulatory Guidelines by the IAB and Describing the Landscape and Recommending Disclosure Principles for Native Ads.* [online]. [2019-01-20]. Available at: <<http://www.iab.net/nativeadvertising>>.

5 EDMONDS, R.: *As the New York Times Debuts Its Template for Native Ads, Will Other Newspapers Follow?* [online]. [2019-02-19]. Available at: <<http://www.poynter.org/news/mediawire/237061/as-the-new-york-times-debuts-its-template-for-native-ads-will-other-newspapers-follow>>. Describing New York Times' foray into native ads with a campaign by Dell consisting of "a whole series of loosely related articles that touch on how the company defines itself and the services it offers" (remark by the author).

6 WASSERMAN, E.: *Advertising Goes Native, and Deception Runs Free.* *Huffington Post.* [online]. [2019-02-15]. Available at: <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/edward-wasserman/nativeadvertising-atlantic-scientology_b_2575945.html?>.

7 WOJDYNSKI, B. W., GOLAN, G. J.: Native Advertising and the Future of Mass Communication. In *Journal American Behavioral Scientist*, 2016, Vol. 60, No. 12, p. 1403-1407.

‘practice by which a marketer borrows from the credibility of a content publisher by presenting paid content with a format and location that matches the publisher’s original content.’ Author Levi⁸ called native advertising ‘a new marketing technique for unobtrusively integrating paid advertising into editorial content’. Steve Rubel, CEO of public relations giant Edelman, has said that native advertising is ‘taking that which is organic and flipping it around into advertising’.⁹ On the other hand, Steve Gray, an executive at newspaper publisher Morris Communications, opted for a news-specific definition: ‘Commercial message that appears within normal news content, sponsored by an advertiser’.¹⁰ Central to each of these definitions is the notion of relatively seamless integration of paid content with other non-paid content.¹¹ However, what makes contemporary native advertising unique is that, although some forms of online native advertising may take a very similar format to an advertorial, the current generation of ‘native advertising’ is used to comprise a broad variety of content delivery approaches that have in common two main characteristics: integration with the publisher’s platform, and providing original content that may be of interest to the publication’s audience. Thus, the ‘native’ in native advertising refers to both fitting in with the publisher’s own publishing platform design, template and systems, and providing content that caters to a publisher’s existing market and audience. The seamlessness of fit with a publisher’s design and content that defines successful native advertising is also the root of controversy

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- 8 LEVI, L.: *A Faustian Pact? Native Advertising and the Future of the Press*. [online]. [2019-02-21]. Available at: <http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2579341>.
- 9 CISION OFFICIAL WEB SITE: *The Comprehensive Guide to Native Advertising*. [online]. [2019-02-01]. Available at: <<http://www.cision.com/us/resources/white-papers/the-comprehensive-guide-to-nativeadvertising>>.
- 10 For more information, see: MARTINEZ, J.: *What Publishers Should Know about Native Advertising*. *Newspaper Association of America*. (2015). [online]. [2019-02-21]. Available at: <<http://www.naa.org/Topics-and-Tools/Advertising/Ad-Strategies/2015/Native-Ad-Insight.aspx>>; WOJDYNSKI, W. B.: Native Advertising: Engagement, Deception, and Implications for Theory. In BROWN, E. R., JONES, V. K., WANG, M.: *The New Advertising: Branding, Content and Consumer Relationships in the Data-driven Social Media Era, Chapter: 9*. Santa Barbara : CA: Praeger/ABC Clío, 2016, p. 203-236.
- 11 WOJDYNSKI, W. B.: Native Advertising: Engagement, Deception, and Implications for Theory. In BROWN, E. R., JONES, V. K., WANG, M.: *The New Advertising: Branding, Content and Consumer Relationships in the Data-driven Social Media Era, Chapter: 9*. Santa Barbara : CA: Praeger/ABC Clío, 2016, p. 201.

surrounding the practice, and it can be seen in a variety of types of online content. From all mentioned definitions, it can be resumed that from marketers' point of view native advertising is made to have more respect to the end consumer, because the creators of native advertising are trying not to waste end consumers' time (because the ad is assimilated into the design of the media platforms). Also, native advertising is the solution to the ad blockers (also agreed by author Steiernstedt¹²), so the marketers could find a way to promote their brand, product or service in creative, interesting, non - intrusive and subliminal way. Although the marketers find the way to promote their brand, product or service, it is still hard for the end consumer to understand if he is reading an independent journal article or a paid advertisement.

2.1 Types of Native Advertising

When it comes to basics of native advertising, it can be divided into two basic types: *open* and *closed*. In the first case, the advertised content is defined by the appearance, style and capabilities of the platform on which it is published and is exclusive to it, and the simplest examples are sponsored Facebook posts or promotional tweets on Twitter. The second, closed type means distributing the same branded content to different digital destinations through third-party services, such as *Outbrain* or *Sharethrough*. However, through all and when native advertising is mentioned, it is primarily thought of sponsored or paid content that is published on web pages and portals.¹³ Further on, native advertising can be divided into next types. Taking into consideration the objectives and specific form used for the ad, native advertising is divided into six major types (I.A.B. 2013¹⁴):

- *In-Feed Units*: promoted articles in the normal feed section of the publication, with or without a guaranteed placement or surrounding context, written in standard editorial style; used disclosure language: 'Advertisement/ AD', 'Promoted (by)', 'Sponsored (Content)',

12 STIERNSTEDT, F.: Blurring the Boundaries in Practice: Economic, Organisational and Regulatory Barriers against Native Advertising. In EDSTRÖM, M., KENYON, T. A., SVENSSON, M. E. (eds.): *Blurring the Lines: Market Driven and Democracy-driven Freedom of Expression*. Göteborg : Nordicom, 2016, p. 123-131.

13 *Jasno i Glasno – Official Web Site*. [online]. [2019-02-01]. Available at: <<https://www.jasnoiglasno.com/sto-trebate-znati-o-native-advertisingu-5557>>.

14 *Interactive Advertising Bureau, 2013*. [online]. [2019-02-01]. Available at: <www.iab.net>.

- ‘Presented by’, ‘Suggested Post’; current users: Facebook, Twitter, Yahoo, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram, Sharethrough, BuzzFeed, Gawker, Forbes Brand Voice, Mashable;
- *Paid Search Units*: special search results on the right column or in a different writing style (at the beginning of the result or inserted in the list), designed to attract a little more attention and with a guaranteed placement; The Rise of native advertising commonly used disclosure language: ‘Ads related to...’; current users: search engines;
 - *Recommendation Widgets*: sponsored ads in the column or cassette with the recommended articles; commonly used disclosure language: ‘You might like...’, ‘Recommended by...’, ‘Sponsored Content by...’;
 - *Promoted Listings*: special products in the list of results designed by the client specifications; commonly used disclosure language: ‘Ads’, ‘Sponsored Products’, ‘What’s this?’; current users: Amazon, Google, Foursquare, Auto Trader;
 - *In-Ad with Native Element Units*: ads placed outside the editorial articles, containing relevant material and measured on brand metrics; used disclosure language: a clearly distinguishable style from the rest of the page (different borders, other elements that set the article apart);
 - *Custom elements*, which are not contained in the previous types or are too platform-specific to form a separate category.¹⁵

3 Materials and Methods

The main goal of the paper is to determine the boundary between journalistic material and the ads called ‘native’. Should the ads, whatever the epithets, be an integral part of the information placed within the journalistic text or should they be clearly delineated from the journalistic content and labeled as such. In this regard, a number of articles published on informative portals dealing with the topic of native content will be presented in the research part of the paper. The research was conducted in the form of in-depth interviews during January and February 2019. Four respondents, two male and two female students were questioned. Respondents were asked four targeted questions which tried to identify newer occurrences of online communication such as influencers which often are a tool for native advertising. Furthermore, the next issue is

15 MANIC, M.: The Rise of Native Advertising, Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Braşov Series V. In *Economic Sciences*, 2015, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 57.

connected to journalists transferring such content from social networks to informative portals. We were interested in whether this practice threatens traditional journalism and is this ethically dubious practice. Respondents are of different professions, and the authors of the paper intended to cover different perspectives. Respondent 1 is a professor of public relations, Respondent 2 is a professor of ethics in journalism, Respondent 3 is a marketing practitioner and Respondent 4 is a journalist. In this way, we have presented different angles of professions connected with the issue this paper discusses. Following academic correctness, the identities of the respondents are known to the authors of the paper.

4 Analysis and Research

The article titled 'It is worrying (and perhaps illegal) that domestic 'influencers' promote questionable loans,' published on February 20, 2019, on 'Netokracija.hr' portal offers a detailed analysis of what an advertisement is, how it should be highlighted and which legal regulations point to it. The title makes the correlation between the influencers and the promotion of credit evident, but 'Netokracija.hr' states those are just advertisements that are nowhere labeled as such. Although Instagram has recently imposed the obligation to label 'advertisements', judging by the answers of 'Netokracija.hr' this is not the case with Croatian influencers because 'Some claim that the 'sponsored' tag decreases their reach, others are afraid that their reputation will be disrupted with the target group, the rest are simply not thinking about it...'. Due to the fact that through social networks a message is transmitted to the general public, the question is why Croatian legislation, although legally regulated by the obligation, does not respond to such occurrences. Article 2 of the Electronic Media Act states that advertising is 'any form of advertisement issued in exchange for payment or for similar remuneration or broadcasting for the purpose of self-promotion by a public or private company or a natural person in connection with a trade, business, craft or profession in order to promote the procurement of goods or services, including immovable property, rights and obligations, in exchange for payment'.

Furthermore, the informative portal 'Večernji.hr' brings an article in which influencer Paula Sikirić reveals how she earns through Instagram and it says: 'She quickly became the ambassador of many fashion brands which signed a contract with her, cosmetic and hairdresser salons and so on. Her job includes making a nice picture of some product - glasses,

watch, a nice piece of cloth she is wearing, taking a picture after having a new hairstyle or cosmetic treatment, writing a message, sign the advertiser, and the advertisement is there'. Although the interview is a legitimate form of journalism, the article abounds with photos from instagram profile of the influencer, which contain the # mark of the brand that the person is 'ambassador'. In conclusion, web portal 'Lider.hr' brings an analysis of the phenomenon of native advertising and its affiliation with the online community, and says: 'The saturation of the amount of ads that come from television, social networks, newspapers, or radio has led advertisers to find consumers and future buyers in new, wisest ways. In doing so, the goal is certainly best achieved by advertising that is invisible, unobtrusive and long-lasting to consumers. Concealed advertising today has gone a step further by finding the way to users through social networks with the help of well-known bloggers, mostly ordinary people who give good or bad ratings to the products. Many of them are paid by advertisers to spread their enthusiasm about their products, but it seems that everything has gone too far. Therefore, 'Netokracija.hr' considers all that to be low and worrisome, but it also seems to be in line with the needs and opportunities in the local market. Further in the paper we bring respondents' responses to the topic of native content published by influencers, and further distributed by web portals.

The first question is: 'What is your perception of the appearance of influencers, Youtubers and online opinion makers whose opinions, in the form of a status, are transformed into a journalistic content on informational portals?' The answers are as follows:

- Respondent 1. feels that this is a logical sequence because online opinion makers' role in creating public opinion is constant, and by using the new, modern technology, they have been dubbed as a special profession. He thinks it is a too over-commercialized phenomenon because a lot of products and services use influencers to reach their customers on the market. Taking everything into consideration, he notes, there are the right opinion makers - we would say real influencers, and those who would like to be like them, but are trying to sell their status and their capabilities. The latter he is sceptical about. Anyhow, this is an occurrence we can not pass and we can not ignore it.
- Respondent 2. mentions that attitudes are fairly consistent with the respondent's age and the understanding of classical journalism and says that the influencer's story is not something she would not support, as a person who is open-minded about everything new and

related to young people and new media consumers, and accepts it as a fact and a phenomenon that truly engrosses a new generation of media audiences. At all times, the media have promoted some content, fashion, and habit in one way or another, and today young people find inspiration in following the influencers. They say the big money i.e. good earnings is involved. If so, then she supports young people building their ways of following or creating lifestyles, earning their money at the same time. It is assumed that journalists in the newsrooms regularly review social networks and find stimulus and information for their reports and stories. There is nothing wrong with it, unless those things are taken for granted and there is no longer a reason to physically leave the newsroom. This downsides journalism to a large extent. She understands that the media are struggling in all possible ways to survive, but often there is no news value behind such information, and still they are frequently published.

- Respondent 3. welcomes the freedom of communication the Internet provides and the possibility for anyone willing to publicly express their opinions online. Among these opinions, there are certainly interesting and original ones, and if someone wants to read it, it's certainly commendable to the one who writes them. But whether an opinion is worth repeating and publishing on the informative pages or not, is a completely different matter. He personally feels that not every opinion is important, and the journalists working on informative portals are to assess which thoughts and authors are valuable to publish, and which are not. The job of a journalist is not and must not be indiscriminatory transmission of the trivial reflections of dubious sources, who, besides instant glory, have no other reference for which their opinion should be seen or heard by anyone other than their 'followers'. Journalism is not a PR and journalists should not be someone's free PR service, whether it is PR services for celebrities or corporations. Both practices are equally detrimental to journalism.
- Respondent 4 states that this form is opposed to standards and professional practice, if we are talking about an article that was created solely on the basis of social networking. If such content comes to the informative portal pages, this is considered to be the wrong professional selection of news. If such content comes to light theme portals, then that's understandable. Still, it should be taken into account how some people, by their very nature, are a certain type of influencers (Pope, US President ...) and their publication can well be a part of the content of the news web.

The next question is ‘How do you perceive the emerging of native advertising on social networks and transferring of such content in the form of journalistic genres on informative portals, without labeling it as advertising?’

- Respondent 1. believes that native advertising is a blend of classic ad and PR publishing, a product of a crisis when advertising budget has declined. Advertisers have tried to find new space to ensure advertising budgets. It is thought that they have created a product that satisfies the form, so it fits into the newspaper content because it is still paid. They have made it easier for the PR to carry out its work, but in the long-term the appearance of native advertising is very damaging to the credibility of the media and the PR profession. This means we can pack any content whatsoever into native advertising to make it look like classic journalist content, pay it and be sure it will, as such, find its way to the audience. He warns that this is a pragmatic move in order to earn more, but in the long run, it is very damaging to the credibility of the media. Because if we do not know what it is, and the vast majority of average consumers of media content can not discern what is the right content and what is paid for, it is as damaging to one profession as it is to the other one, in the long run.
- Respondent 2. warns that so-called ‘native advertising’ is advertising. Ads have always existed because the media - both classic and on the internet platform - can not survive without advertisements. It is a strange name because it can not be translated. All in all, the most important thing regarding so-called native ad is that it should be labeled as either sponsored story or an ad, in order not to mislead people. Unfortunately, when it is not done then it is a pure fraud. All editors in the media should keep in mind that such stories should be clearly marked and separated. At one point a few years ago even some media called it native journalism, so it is a bit better now. This is an advertisement and has nothing to do with journalism. It is sad that these pages are often made by good journalists who do not currently have jobs in the profession and, for survival, they are writing native ads.
- Respondent 3. finds such practice unacceptable because every promotional text must be clearly labeled as a paid advertisement because that is what it is. Everything else is unacceptable and he believes that informative portals, which publish promotional articles without being labeled as paid ads, should be subject to financial penalties for such practice, because in that case they are no

longer informative portals but an ad space. He warns that they will suffer long-term penalties because they will lose the readers - such underestimation of audience is likely to be punished at some point by the loss of readers whose trust they will lose.

- Respondent 4. considers this to be misleading and thus being a form of manipulation as the reader is not professionally trained to recognize and distinguish the journalistic genre from the ad. He warns that non-labeling such content is a fraud.

The next question is as follows 'Do you think that such hybrid genres threaten journalism due to the increasing presence of infotainment in articles, especially the appearance of clickbaits that make the journalist work even more trivial?'

- Respondent 1 definitely agrees with this statement. He thinks that journalism will be degraded in the long run, because media should have certain standards about what can be published and what cannot, even if paid for. On the other hand, he thinks that every form of advertising must be clearly labeled and clearly separated from classical journalistic content, and what we are witnessing today is just the opposite. He warns that at the beginning there were those discreet 'promo' tags, then 'native', and today there are more and more cases where it is obvious that something is paid for, that is, classic advertising, which has not been labeled in any way. He considers such practice to be a violation of ethical and professional standards, and concludes that perhaps in this way, the media can make short-term gains, but will lose reputation in the long run.
- Respondent 2 is sure these contributions will certainly affect the perception of journalism today. Infotainment is not a new thing, it exists since the time of media tabloidization around the world. The problem is that we are losing more serious media and that some think people cannot manage to read 60 lines of pure, professional and serious text. She disagrees and thinks there is still interest in clean information and an appropriate approach to dealing with a certain topic. Such journalism will become expensive and elitistic, but will continue to exist. She does not know if small countries like Croatia will be able to afford it, but big and strong surely will. And that will preserve journalism. She considers clickbaits to be terrible - it's a fraudulent form of bait that tells the reader to click on some attachments and to experience disappointment because the title has nothing to do with what he thought he would read and see. She concludes it cannot be named journalism.

- Respondent 3. is of the opinion that journalism is more threatened by journalists than by such hybrid genres. A good journalist and a quality and profiled news portal will always have their audience. This audience may not be as numerous as on Instagram celebrity profiles, but will be selected and probably loyal, as long as the content quality is at an expected level. He thinks that such access to journalism requires serious work, dedication, education, literacy, skills that are not necessary for copy-pasting celebrity statuses and making them the news while trying to make a brand of yourself. He mentions how journalists, unfortunately, often trivialize their work when they choose trivial topics or approach serious topics in a trivial way. As long as this is not a mainstream orientation, he is not worried about the future of the profession, but lately, especially on domestic portals, it is indeed becoming mainstream orientation. He supposes the reasons for such practice are of financial nature because the editors of the portal may feel like they should pander the public to keep their portals financially stable, but such editorial policy will hurt them in the long run. With such access to journalism, they will make themselves irrelevant and at some point perhaps unnecessary. Because, in the end, the Instagram status of a well-known singer can be equally well copy-pasted by a robot.
- Respondent 4. believes that such content violates professional standards and further breaches the journalistic profession which is already somewhat derogated by the fact that people are working in the media without adequate education. He thinks that clickbaits are difficult to avoid. However, by working on the media literacy of the society and all its layers, one can develop the ability to recognise and avoid such manipulations. Of course, he concludes, it is a process in which we have been late for at least two decades.

The last, fourth question is 'Are these approaches in journalism ethically dubious and what is your vision of regulating the publication of native content in informative media?'

- Respondent 1 says that they damage the credibility of the media for sure, and ethically speaking, they are certainly dubious. He thinks that journalist associations should be the first ones to react and demand for native content to be labeled, or, if not, excluded. On the other hand, it is thought that this is detrimental to the PR profession because the media in this way create certain forms of cooperation directly with advertisers and offer something on the market that PR professionals or any consultants can not. He considers this to be a

threat to both professions, and repeats once more - in the short term, it can be paid to reach the public, but in the long run it is certainly not good for either of the professions.

- Respondent 2. thinks that native ad is not ethically dubious because it is an ad. This is not journalism, she warns. The problem is when it is not labeled as the ad must be labeled. In this case, media owners should be financially penalized. Only then would things get in their place. But, she concludes, we live in Croatia.
- Respondent 3. decisively says 'Yes, I think it is unethical to publish the paid advertisement and try to present it as a news item.' He also thinks it is unethical to publish an unprofessional interview with the head of a corporation, from which it is apparent that the reporter did not do his job and did not talk to the interlocutor, but only gave him the opportunity to make his views on pre-arranged questions. The first situation is clearer, he says, easier to notice, and the other is harder to notice, but both are bad for journalism and for those who try to attract the public in such journalism. In the long run, he believes that the media will suffer the consequences the most, they will lose the trust of their audience, become irrelevant and, finally, lose their audience completely.
- Respondent 4. concludes the interview by saying he is not against native advertising. However, he thinks that marketing, just as other branches, need to develop, and that such development should not be limited but regulated. According to him, it is a classic ad in the journalistic form and it should be treated like that. The fact is that the Republic of Croatia does not regulate the internet in the way it should, just like any other media activity, but when it comes to native advertising, it should be clearly and unambiguously labeled as such. Everything else would a try to wittingly manipulate, he concludes.

Conclusion

Through this paper we have presented the theoretical and research aspect of the problem of native advertising. The title itself asked the question whether there is a clear boundary between native content and information and we can conclude that today this boundary is blurred. Although market communications, as well as journalist profession and the public relations profession have been struggling for a long time to make advertising as such clearly labeled, the practice shows the opposite.

Likewise, the social networking rules themselves insist on clear labeling of ads, but there seems to be no compliance with the regulations here either. Concealed advertising was a ‘justification’ during a crisis and a recession when marketing budgets dropped significantly and investing in promotional business stopped completely. Today, we knowingly enter the so-called ‘grey zone’ that is not grey at all; in fact, it is the dark side of these trades, what we have proven through the research part. The professions themselves prescribe how the ad should be treated, just as the legislators are clear in this regard, with penalties for violations, social networking rules as well as the media deontology itself that questions the ethics of advertisement wrapped up into journalistic content are foreseen. However, practice, especially on online portals, shows something quite different, our respondents clearly say that it is manipulation of content and information - so we can say that the border of the so-called gray zone is crossed. The rise of social networks and their growing use has opened up space for new phenomena such as influencers. Well, those who were once called opinion makers in the ‘offline world’ today are influencers in the ‘online world’. Manufacturers monitor the development of this market and enter into contracts with influencers where they become the ‘ambassadors’ of certain brands. The oldest marketing tool, pathos appeal, is now widely available - because ‘if this product is carried by my favorite influencer, then I need it too’. This information just becomes a part of the news portal, which is then further disseminated and widespread through online community.

Never in the history of the media transfer of information in this way has been reported. It was necessary for information to be adapted to media formats for which they were intended, otherwise they would not be transmitted. Today media are adapted to the online formats and demands of the online community and thus degrade their own media space and journalistic profession. Content from social networks, so-called statuses, often become information on traditional media even though such content is not adapted to the demands of these media. Radio has never transmitted information taken over from television or vice versa, but today, in a networked society, traditional media relentlessly convey information from social network media. Although different hybrid media genres are not new in the media space, they are new when the two professions mix with the motive of market manipulation. Since no one can foresee further development of social networks, nor even of regulatory mechanisms, we will keep track of how native advertising will evolve and whether there

will be a new form of concealed advertising that will find its place in the media due to the fast information spin. In conclusion, we can repeat the sentence from the text - low and worrisome, but seems to be in line with the needs and opportunities in the local market.

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POLITICAL TALK SHOWS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF BALANCE OF REPRESENTATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN 2018

Matej Martovič

ABSTRACT:

Political battle takes place not only in the National Council of the Slovak Republic, but also on television screens. Each political party wants to gain the highest possible share of broadcasting time. In the article, we will address the balance of political debaters in television programmes aimed at political discussions. Specifically, these are the TA3 talk show *V politike* (In the politics) and RTVS show *O 5 minút 12* (5 minutes to 12). The paper will analyze the number of political debaters in the programmes and compare the results with the results of the parliamentary election in 2016.

KEY WORDS:

balance, election, political marketing, politics, talk shows, television

1 Development of Political Marketing

Political marketing is based on the principles of the classic, i.e. economic marketing. The last president of the USA elected without the instruments of modern communication was Harry Truman.¹ He led his campaign in the field and after being elected, he stated: *“I have shaken five thousand hands and talked to 15 million people.”*² The emergence and development of political marketing has been influenced by three factors: expansion of television, public opinion polls, and implementation of advertisement in the streets and in the media.³ Political marketing has been developing simultaneously with the development of technology and media. At first, posters, leaflets, and advertisement in press were used. Gradually, radio and later television have been added and, nowadays, internet plays a significant role. Radio became one of the communication instruments that were used also in political marketing. Initially, radio was a luxury because it was expensive, but later it became affordable and had a wider reach than the press. In the 30s of the 20th century, American president Franklin Delano Roosevelt introduced himself to his voters through

1 BOUČKOVÁ, J. et al.: *Marketing*. Praha : C. H. Beck, 2003, p. 350.

2 BOUČKOVÁ, J. et al.: *Marketing*. Praha : C. H. Beck, 2003, p. 350.

3 ZIELIŃSKI, J.: *Marketing polityczny a Internet*. Warszawa : MPI, 1998, p. 27.

radio. In Europe, the first politician to appeal to his voters through radio was the French president Gaston Doumergue. Although radio is a place where politicians lead electoral debates during their campaign, the television has become the main political tool.⁴

Dwight Eisenhower was the first president to use advertising agency to handle his election campaign in 1952. He was the first politician, who let his co-workers persuade him that television campaign could play a decisive role in the election. Eisenhower used short television spots that were thirty seconds long. John F. Kennedy was an American politician who was able to use the power of television in his election campaign. His staff saw a chance to make a less known politician into a popular candidate for president by using television debates.⁵ With the growing power of television in the politics, a so-called television personality, i.e. a visually convincing person, has been created. The emphasis is placed on facial expression, behaviour, tone of voice and speech, and the overall appearance.⁶ Nowadays, a significant role in political marketing is played also by the internet and social networks. Political parties and candidates use this space to win votes by using various articles and videos that they place on different internet servers. Political marketing has thus gone through a development that has changed how the politics is viewed. With the help of marketing instruments, a less known politician could become a favourite for president and vice versa. Political marketing was used for the first time in 1952 in the USA, after a few years it was used in Great Britain, precisely in 1959 during the parliamentary election, and in 1965 during the presidential election in France.

2 Political Talk Shows in Slovakia

In the dual system of television broadcasting, as is the case of Slovakia, where both the private and public media operate on the media market, we often encounter a question of objectivity and independency of the media. If we look at the television market in the Slovak Republic, it defines public-service media and private media. The RTVS programme *O 5 minút 12* is on air from 11:55 (i.e. according the name of the programme) every Sunday. It does not air during summer and Christmas holidays. In the first half of 2018, the programme was hosted by Martin Stišinec, who was replaced

4 ZIELIŃSKI, J.: *Marketing polityczny a Internet*. Warszawa : MPI, 1998, p. 27.

5 BOUČKOVÁ, J. et al.: *Marketing*. Praha : C. H. Beck, 2003, p. 350.

6 ZIELIŃSKI, J.: *Marketing polityczny a Internet*. Warszawa: MPI, 1998, p. 27.

by Jozef Hajko in September. In 2018, the programme was broadcast 37 times. The hosts invited politicians, but also various analysts and experts to the programme. The TA3 programme *TA3 V politike* airs every Sunday at 11:00 and similarly to the RTVS it has a break during summer and Christmas period. This programme is hosted by Norbert Dolinský. In 2018, the programme was on air 39 times, while the presenter invited politicians, analysts, and various experts to participate on the talk show.

3 Methodology

For this paper, we have chosen two political talk shows, i.e. *V politike*, which is broadcast by a private television TA3 and a programme *O 5 minút 12* broadcast by a public television RTVS. We have analysed the programmes from the point of view of the representation of political parties in the talk shows, while taking into account members of political parties that appeared in one or both programmes, as well as the nominees appointed to an executive post by a political party. The results will show how individual political parties are represented in talk shows. I have also analysed the proportion of coalition, opposition, and extra-parliamentary parties represented in these programmes. Currently, after the election in 2016, there are seven political parties in the National Council of the Slovak Republic – Smer – SD, Sloboda a Solidarita, Slovenská národná strana, Kotleba - Ľudová strana Naše Slovensko, Sme Rodina – Boris Kollár, Obyčajní ľudia a nezávislé odobnosti, and Most – Híd.

4 The Programme O 5 minút 12

The programme *O 5 minút 12* is a political talk show that belongs to the oldest political talk shows in Slovakia. The programme invites politicians to discuss various topics, while both parliamentary and extra-parliamentary political parties participate on the debates.

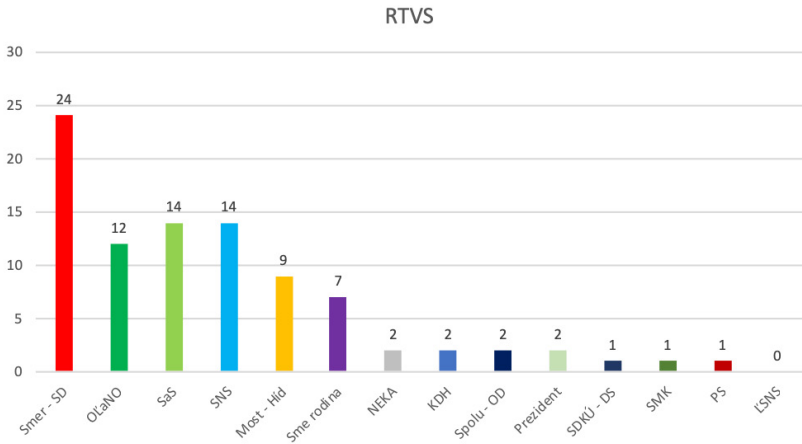


Chart 1: Percentage of political parties' representatives in the programme *O 5 minút 12*

Source: own processing

The chart above presents the number of political debaters from individual political parties in the programme *O 5 minút 12*. Political party Smer – SD, which is a coalition party and has the most ministers and the post of a prime minister, had the most participants. The second place is shared by Slovenská národná strana (coalition party) and Sloboda a Solidarita (the strongest opposition party). The third place was taken by the party Obyčajní ľudia a nezávislé osobnosti, which is an opposition party. Another coalition party is Most – Híd, which had 9 debaters in the whole year of 2018, the lowest percentage of all coalition parties. The party Sme rodina – Boris Kollár is also an opposition party that had seven appearances in the political debate in 2018. The party Kotleba – Ľudová strana Naše Slovensko did not have any political debater in the programme *O 5 minút 12* in 2018. As regards the extra-parliamentary parties, Kresťanko-demokratické hnutie and Spolu – Občianska demokracia had two political debaters. Other extra-parliamentary parties, such as SDKÚ – DS, SMK and PS had one debater in the programme in 2018.

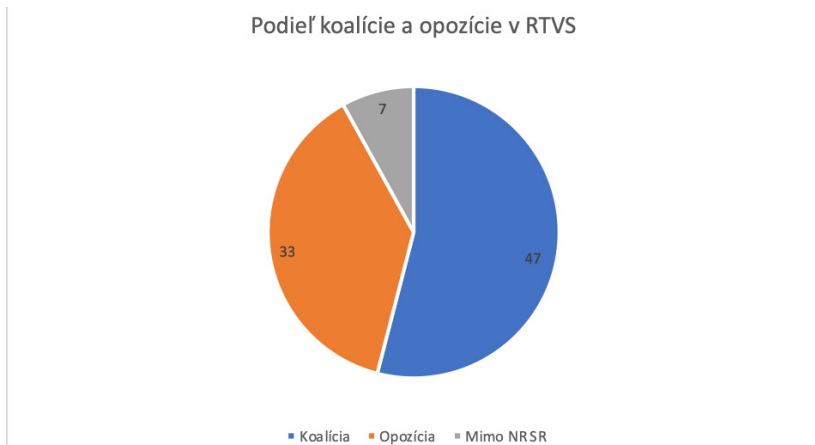


Chart 2: Proportion of coalition and opposition in the programme *O 5 minút 12*

Source: own processing

The coalition had the greatest proportion of representatives in the political talk show *O 5 minút 12* with 47 politicians joining the discussion in the programme. Opposition parties elected to the National Council in 2016 had 33 political debaters in total. Members of parties outside the National Council appeared in the programme 7 times.

5 The Programme *V politike*

The programme *V politike* is broadcast by a private news television TA3. This programme also invites politicians and various experts or analysts. We can see politicians from both the parliamentary and extra-parliamentary environment in the programme.

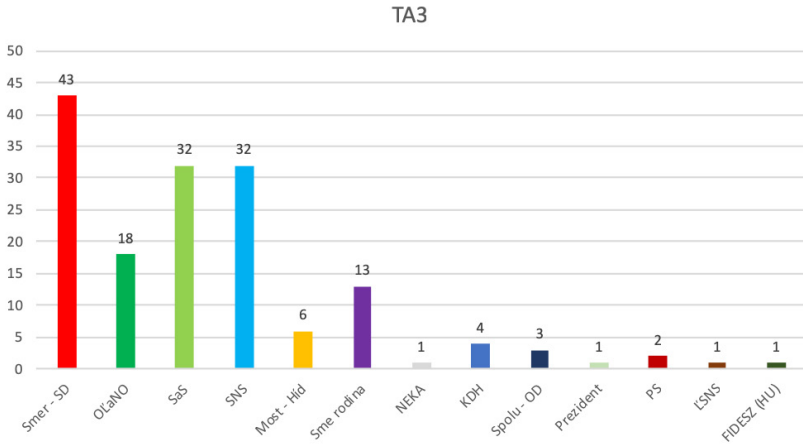


Chart 3: Percentage of political parties' representatives in the programme V politike

Source: own processing

Also in this political talk show, the political party Smer – SD had the largest proportion of debaters. It constituted an overall number of 43 politicians or party nominees. The second place was taken by Slovenská národná strana (coalition) and Sloboda a Solidarita (opposition), both having 32 political debaters in total. The third most invited members were from the parliamentary party Obyčajní ľudia a nezávislé osobnosti, followed by Smer rodina – Boris Kollár and Most Híd. Space was also given to extra-parliamentary parties KDH (4), Spolu – občianská demokracia, which is an extra-parliamentary party but its founding members are also members of the National Council, and Progresívne Slovensko (2) that also has one member of the National Council (who has left the party SaS). Parliamentary party Kotleba – Ľudová strana Naše Slovensko had only one debater throughout 2018. Space in this programme was also given to a foreign political party FIDESZ from Hungary, concretely to the prime minister of Hungary. The president of the Slovak Republic Andrej Kiska only appeared once in the programme in 2018.

Podiel koalície a opozície v TA3

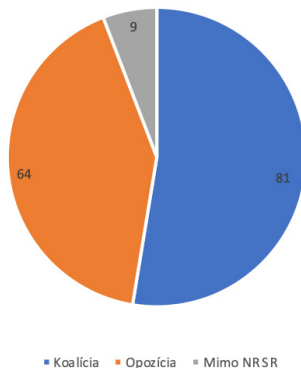


Chart 4: Proportion of coalition and opposition in the programme V politike

Source: own processing

Coalition had a higher representation of its members in the programme *V politike*. Specifically, in 2018, the coalition politicians appeared in the programme 81 times in total. Opposition parliamentary parties overall had 64 debating politicians. Extra-parliamentary parties received the proportion of 9 debaters.

6 Percentage of Political Parties' Representation Compared to the Results of the Election to the National Council of the Slovak Republic in 2016

In this part of the paper, we will compare the percentage of the politicians representing political parties in talk shows to the percentage of votes gained in the election to the National Council in 2016.

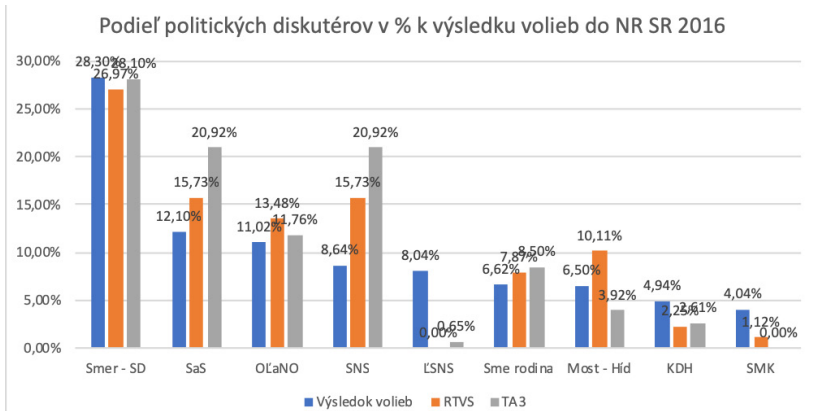


Chart 5: Percentage of debaters from individual political parties to the percentage results of the election to the NC SR in 2016

Source: own processing

From the chart above we can see that the results of the election to the National Council, in case of Smer – SD, match the percentage of debaters in the talk shows in question. The party Sloboda a Solidarita in both cases shows a higher percentage of debaters compared to its election results. OĽaNO roughly matches the result of parliamentary election. As regards Slovenská národná strana, in case of TA3, it receives a 12% more television space compared to the election results and, in case of RTVS, it is 7% more. ĽSNS is given almost no time on air. The party Sme rodina roughly matches the results of the election in comparison to the percentage of broadcasting time. Most – Híd is given the greatest amount of space in RTVS, but the lowest in TA3. KDH, as well as SMK, are extra-parliamentary parties that receive an occasional air time in the programmes.

Conclusion

The paper addressed the balance in political discussions in the programmes *V politike* broadcast by TA3 and in the talk show *O 5 minút 12* broadcast by RTVS. From the results we can see that both the opposition and the coalition get appropriate amount of space in the programmes. Space is also given to political parties that did not get to the National Council in 2016 and to parties that have been established after 2016. Televisions thus try to offer a balance of opinions in the political debates.

We can see that from the coalition parties, the lowest proportion of time was given to Most – Híd, while the highest to Smer – SD and SNS. In opposition, the first place is taken by SaS as the leader of the opposition. The lowest amount of space from the parliamentary parties is given to K-LSNS, as it is considered to be an anti-systemic and extremist party. In 2018, it had no representation in RTVS.

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SPECIFIC CONSUMER CONDITIONS IN THE VYSEGRAD FOUR COUNTRIES ON THE USE OF MOBILE PHONES IN A PURCHASING PROCESS

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ABSTRACT:

The fast penetration of smartphones reflects the fact that the time people spend online dominates on mobile devices. This transition reflects the changing attitude towards m-commerce and signals a new era of growth for other purchasing channels that are dependent on mobile phones. It is noteworthy that online retail is constantly expanding to capitalize on the potential of a growing mobile population. Therefore, the presented paper deals with the issue of mobile trade, while emphasizing the specifics of consumer behaviour of the Visegrad Four countries. The paper describes the current situation of m-commerce in the global aspect, to underline the growing importance of this industry and then maps the current situation related to the countries surveyed based on the available data of the Consumer Barometer. In this case, it should be pointed out that the situation of m-commerce is different in the V4 countries compared to the global average.

KEY WORDS:

country V4, m-commerce, mobile devices, mobile purchasing, smartphone

1 Introduction

The Internet-enabled mobile phone has achieved worldwide penetration and the expansion of sophisticated communications technologies.¹ Although mobile phones have been commercially available for three decades, mobile devices have evolved over the past decade to the level of so-called smartphones that not only revolutionize how we use mobile devices, but also enable businesses to communicate directly with customers regardless of location or time constraints.²

1 ŠTEFKO, R., FEDORKO, I., BAČÍK, R.: Facebook Content Analysys of Banks Operating on Slovak Market. In *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, 2014, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 145-152.

2 HAGHIRIAN, P., MADLBERGER, M., TANUSKOVA, A.: Increasing Advertising Value of Mobile Marketing: An Empirical Study of Antecedents. In *Proceedings of the 38th Annual Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*. Hawaii: ICSS, 2005, p. 32.

Chong³ states that the retail sector has seen the huge potential of mobile technology, which has gone all the way to mobile purchasing and close collaboration with customers. The era of mobile devices also reflects the changing purchasing habits of the increasingly demanding consumer.⁴ Mobile devices and integrated technologies serve not only as a means to purchase products, but they also play an irreplaceable role at all stages of the purchasing process. Many researches also highlight the strength of their potential, reflecting the changing dynamics of e-commerce.⁵ Mobile business is a new element of e-commerce where all transactions are connected via mobile devices and using the network in wireless mode. Therefore, mobile business is part of the e-commerce that is specified by the mobile phone.⁶

The term mobile commerce is considered a complex development that is capable of supporting a variety of activities, such as social interactions, work or games, through the use of various services, software and hardware. Such activities and their corresponding support technologies are not fixed, but the experience varies depending on the mobile service concerned, on the context of use and the criteria of this type.⁷ In the case of terminology, mobile business is referred to as any transaction, whether direct or indirect, with the implementation of monetary value through a wireless telecommunications network.⁸

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- 3 CHONG, A. Y.: Mobile Commerce Usage Activities: The Roles of Demographic and Motivation Variables. In *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 2013, Vol. 80, No. 7, p. 1350-1359.
 - 4 BAČÍK, R., MIHAL, J., FEDORKO, R.: The Analysis of the Impact of Selected Communication Channels on the Selected City Population' Opinion. In *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, 2015, Vol. 12, No. 2, p. 7-14.
 - 5 HAGYARI, P., BAČÍK, R., FEDORKO, R.: Analysis of the Key Factors of Reputation Management in Conditions of City Marketing. In *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, 2016, Vol. 13, No. 1, p. 69-80.
 - 6 LI, M., DONG, Z. Y.: Factors Influencing Consumption Experience of Mobile Commerce: A Study from Experiential View. In *Internet Research*, 2011, Vol. 22, No. 2, p. 120-141.
 - 7 ALKHUNAIZAN, A., LOVE, S.: What Drives Mobile Commerce? An Empirical Evaluation of the Revised UTAUT Model. In *International Journal of Management and Marketing Academy*, 2012, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 82-99.
 - 8 BEACONSTAC: *The State of Indian Mobile Commerce*. [online]. [2019-04-11]. Available at: <https://resources.beaconstac.com/ebook/the-state-of-indian-mobile-commerce.pdf?_s=vffvhtprpm9w2gruckzhd>.

The author⁹ states that mobile commerce also includes the use of mobile devices to search, view, compare, and purchase products and services in the online environment. M-commerce has been described as a distance shopping through the use of mobile phone and network connectivity,¹⁰ or as a transaction via a variety of mobile communications in a wireless environment and through a wireless telecommunications network.¹¹ The authors¹² define m-commerce as trade-related communication between members of the public and organizations, but it does not necessarily involve transactions of a financial nature. Some authors draw attention to the number of mobile commerce sub-tools available, but emphasize in particular the three main sub-sections, which are mobile banking (m-banking), mobile payments (m-payments) and mobile shopping (m-shopping). It should be emphasized that the implementation of mobile commerce activities in business strategies provides consumers with another purchasing platform.¹³ From the seller's point of view, it increases the likelihood of initial interest and consequently revenue.¹⁴

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- 9 GROSS, M.: Exploring the Acceptance of Technology for Mobile Shopping: An Empirical Investigation among Smartphone Users. In *The International Review of Retail Distribution and Consumer Research*, 2015, Vol. 25, No. 3, p. 215-235.
 - 10 WOLFE, S., GENIN, D.: Alcatel's Solution for M-commerce. In *Alcatel Telecommunications Review*, 2003, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 12-16.
 - 11 YANG, C., KENNETH, C. C.: Exploring Factors Affecting the Adoption of Mobile Commerce in Singapore. In *Telematics and Informatics*, 2005, Vol. 22, No.1, p. 257-277.
 - 12 MOHSIN, M., MUQTADIR, R., ISHAQ, A.: Mobile Commerce – The Emerging Frontier: Exploring the Prospects, Applications and Barriers to Adoption in Pakistan. In *International Workshop on Frontiers of Information Technology*. Islambad, Pakistan : IWFIT, 2003, p. 387-400.
 - 13 MURA, L., KLJUCNIKOV, A.: Smal Businesses in Rural Tourism and Agrotourism: Study from Slovakia. In *Economics & Sociology*, 2018, Vol. 11, No. 3, p. 286-300.
 - 14 HUNG, M. C., YANG, S. T., HSIEH, T. C.: An Examination of the Determinants of Mobile Shopping Continuance. In *International Journal of Electronic Business Management*, 2012, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 29-31.

2 Methodology

The analysis presented in this article is based on Google's available Consumer barometer data, which summarizes the results of The Connected Consumer Survey and the Consumer Barometer Survey. Consumer Barometer is a tool to help us understand how to use the Internet across the world. The analyses map the use of the Internet, consumer behaviour and the preferences of Internet users worldwide. 56 countries of the world were included in this analysis. The respondents were older than 16 years old. Within the Connected Consumer Survey, the sample size was 1 000 respondents in each country surveyed. Surveys were administered by TNS Infratest on behalf of Google. Survey data was collected in all countries via telephone (CATI) or face-to-face interviewing (CAPI/PAPI). Questionnaires were administered in local language(s) for all countries surveyed. The interview length was 25 min. on average for telephone interviews and 30+ minutes for face-to-face interviews. Data was weighted according to local Census data. Enumeration surveys were administered January - March 2014.

3 Current State of the Issue

A number of research studies confirm the steady increase in mobile business. One of them is Business Insider,¹⁵ which expects that by 2020, m-commerce will account for 45% of the US total e-commerce market and reach 284 billion dollars. Even Accenture¹⁶ has shown in its studies how m-commerce is at the height of the growing trend for buyers. This is evidenced by the Millennials in the United States, which, according to Accenture, will account for 30% of the total retail sales by 2020.

15 BUSINESS INSIDER: *Mobile Commerce Tops \$24 Billion for Holidays*. [online]. [2019-04-11]. Available at: <<http://www.businessinsider.com/mobile-commerce-tops-24-billion-for-holidays-2016-12>>.

16 DONNELLY, Ch., SCAFF, R.: *Who are the Millennial Shoppers? And What do They Really Want?* [online]. [2019-04-11]. Available at: <<http://fliphtml5.com/scht/lrmf/basic>>.

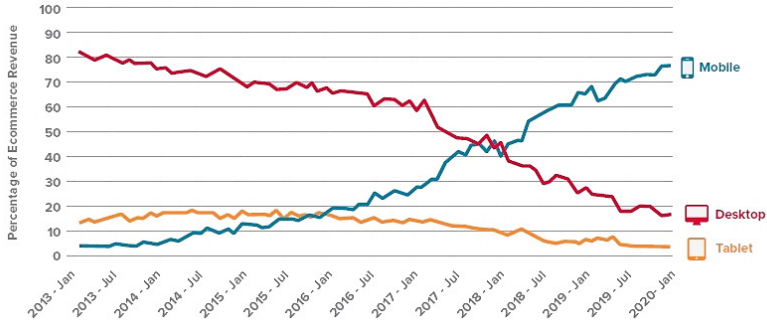


Chart 1: Percentage of Ecommerce Revenue by Device

Source: MOBIFY: *2017 Q1 Mobile Commerce Insights Report*. [online]. [2019-04-11]. Available at: <<http://resources.mobify.com/2017-insights-q1.html>>.

According to the release of Mobify's ¹⁷ quarterly report on trade statistics, this year is extremely important for e-commerce. The fact that the purchases from mobile devices are overtaken by desktop purchases is interpreted in Chart 1. From the results of the observation, while in 2013, the share of desktops was 80%, in the same period, the share of mobile devices was only about 5% of the total e-commerce revenue. Between 2013 and 2017, the share of desktops and mobile phones indirectly changed. While desktop shares decreased, the share of mobile phones increased. January 2018 can be seen as a point where the situation changed and according to Mobify's prediction in 2020, the percentage of mobile e-commerce revenue will reach almost 80% and desktop revenue will fall below 20%. In the case of tablets, it is noteworthy that they reached the highest rate in 2014 - 2016 at a level of less than 20%. However, it is predicted that in 2020 the share of purchases made through tablets will drop rapidly below 5%.

17 MOBIFY: *2017 Q1 Mobile Commerce Insights Report*. [online]. [2019-04-11]. Available at: <<http://resources.mobify.com/2017-insights-q1.html>>.

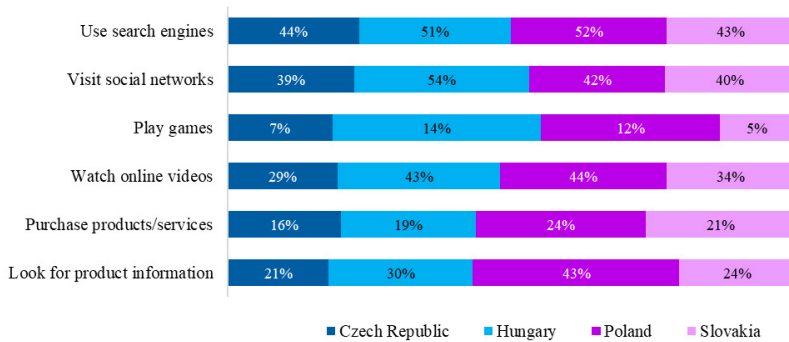


Chart 2: Activities performed more often on smartphones than on computers

Source: CONSUMER BAROMETER: *Which Online Activities Are Done by People at Least as Often via a Smartphone as Computer*. [online]. [2019-04-11]. Available at: <https://www.consumerbarometer.com/en/graph-builder/?question=N7&filter=country:slovakia,czech_republic,hungary,poland>.

Changes in consumer behaviour are clear from a global perspective. Using mobile devices is ahead of using larger screens. However, the situation in Europe is slightly different. Through the available data from the Consumer barometer portal¹⁸ we have identified which activities are performed more often by people through a smartphone than through a computer. The survey was conducted in 2017 and a total of 3,069 respondents participated. From the chart below, we can see that among the V4 countries most people who prefer a smartphone over a computer to buy products/services are in Poland with a 24% share, while the least (16%) in the Czech Republic. However, the most frequently performed activity that users perform more on smartphones than computers is the use of search engines across all countries surveyed. Small screens, which are an enormous advantage of smartphones, are likely to reflect higher preferences in terms of performing the activity on the device. Smartphone users have search engines available whenever and wherever needed. A remarkable difference was seen in social networking. While respondents from the Czech Republic (44%), Poland (52%) and Slovakia (43%) most often prefer smartphones instead of computers to use search engines, in case of Hungarian respondents social networking is the most

18 CONSUMER BAROMETER: *Which Online Activities Are Done by People at Least as Often via a Smartphone as Computer*. [online]. [2019-04-11]. Available at: <https://www.consumerbarometer.com/en/graph-builder/?question=N7&filter=country:slovakia,czech_republic,hungary,poland>.

frequently used activity (54%). On the other hand, respondents from all V4 countries are more likely to prefer computers instead of smartphones for playing games. Among all the activities monitored, playing games is the least performed activity. While in Hungary 14% of the respondents prefer playing games on mobile devices, the share is only 5% in Slovakia.

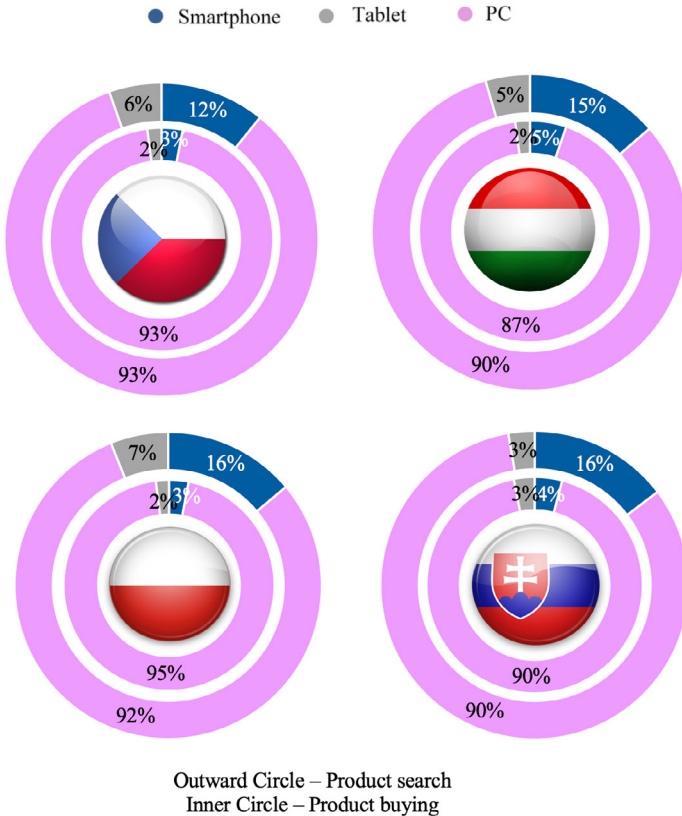


Chart 3: The share of respondents searching for information about products/services and the share of respondents buying products/services in the online environment according to the devices

Source: CONSUMER BAROMETER: *Which Devices Did People Use for Product Research?* [online]. [2019-04-11]. Available at: <https://www.consumerbarometer.com/en/graph-builder/?question=S33&filter=country:slovakia,czech_republic,hungary,poland>; CONSUMER BAROMETER: *Which Devices Did People Use to Make Their Purchase?* [online]. [2019-04-11]. Available at: <https://www.consumerbarometer.com/en/graph-builder/?question=S34&filter=country:slovakia,czech_republic,hungary,poland>.

The subject of our analysis of the current state of the selected issue is also the identification of devices through which respondents search for information about products and the identification of devices through which respondents buy in the online environment. We used the available data from the available Consumer Barometer.^{19,20} 18 277 respondents answered to the question “*Through what equipment do you search for product/service information?*” and a total of 10 096 consumers answered the question “*Through what equipment do you buy products/services in the online environment?*” The survey was conducted in 2014/2015. The results of these analyses were interpreted in Chart 3, which shows that in both cases, that is, when searching for product information and buying products, across all countries the most preferred device is the computer among all three monitored devices (smartphone, computer and tablet). The percentage of respondents searching for information is between 90% and 93%, and the percentage of buyers using computers ranges from 87% to 95%, suggesting that computers are still the most dominant devices for V4 consumers. While in Hungary, the proportion of searching for information (90%) via computers is higher than share of buying (87%), the share of searchers and buyers is the same in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Specifically, in the Czech Republic 93% and in Slovakia 90% of the consumers. However, in the case of Poland, the situation is the opposite. The share of computer buyers are higher (95%) than the share of respondents seeking product information (93%). The results of the analysis also show that devices with smaller screens such as smartphones and tablets are significantly less preferred devices for the selected activities in the V4 countries.

19 CONSUMER BAROMETER: *Which Devices Did People Use for Product Research?* [online]. [2019-04-11]. Available at: <https://www.consumerbarometer.com/en/graph-builder/?question=S33&filter=country:slovakia,czech_republic,hungary,poland>.

20 CONSUMER BAROMETER: *Which Devices Did People Use to Make Their Purchase?* [online]. [2019-04-11]. Available at: <https://www.consumerbarometer.com/en/graph-builder/?question=S34&filter=country:slovakia,czech_republic,hungary,poland>.

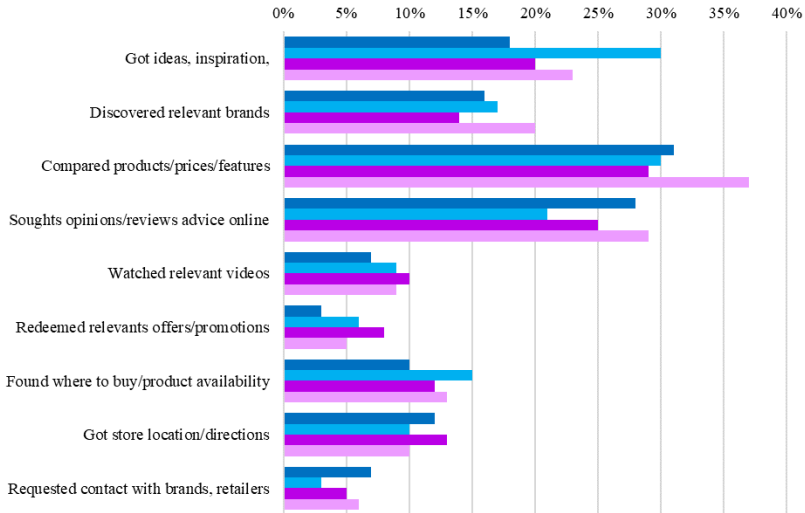


Chart 4: Most searched areas via smartphone

Source: CONSUMER BAROMETER: *What Kind of Product Research Did People Do on Their Smartphones?* [online]. [2019-04-11]. Available at: <https://www.consumerbarometer.com/en/graph-builder/?question=S38&filter=country:czech_republic,hungary,poland,slovakia>.

In addition to consumer preferences for selected V4 search and purchase devices, we were interested in the most frequent searches of the countries surveyed through their smartphones.²¹ Looking at Chart 4, it is clear that consumer preferences are different but across all countries it can be stated that consumers most often look for products, they compare the prices, or search for products they want. Slovaks (37%) dominate in this area and Poles (29%) are the least active. Czechs also use their smartphones primarily for price comparison and product search (31%). In Hungary, people compare product prices, search for ideas and inspiration (30%). Slovaks and Czechs search for product reviews through their smartphones. On the other hand, only 21% of Hungarian consumers read reviews. According to the survey, consumers are least looking for information about the brand or promotional offers.

21 CONSUMER BAROMETER: *What Kind of Product Research Did People Do on Their Smartphones?* [online]. [2019-04-11]. Available at: <https://www.consumerbarometer.com/en/graph-builder/?question=S38&filter=country:czech_republic,hungary,poland,slovakia>.

Conclusion

Although mobile devices have become one of the important aspects of everyday life, their use is increasingly intense in retail environments. Indeed, mobile technologies create a number of opportunities and new revenue streams for businesses. With the change in available technologies, there is also a change in purchasing channels that consumers increasingly prefer. Although mobile trading is rapidly growing in global terms, and positive forecasts suggest that mobile phones will be the most widely used purchasing device, it is still questionable to what extent the V4 countries will prefer mobile devices when purchasing online. According to the Consumer Barometer, the percentage of consumers in these countries using their mobile phones is still too low to consider the prevalence of mobile purchasing. On the other hand, mobile devices and their integrated technologies serve not only as a means of purchasing products, but they are irreplaceable at all stages of the purchasing process. From the results of the present analysis, it is evident that V4 consumers use the devices most widely to compare products, as well as to find product ratings or to gain new inspiration. Relying on the above results of the analysis, we can conclude that the present article understanding the behaviour of a mobile consumer is crucial for businesses wishing to keep up with the pace of change and innovation.

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- BUSINESS INSIDER: *Mobile Commerce Tops \$24 Billion for Holidays*. [online]. [2019-04-11]. Available at: <<http://www.businessinsider.com/mobile-commerce-tops-24-billion-for-holidays-2016-12>>.
- CONSUMER BAROMETER: *What Kind of Product Research Did People Do on Their Smartphones?* [online]. [2019-04-11]. Available at: <https://www.consumerbarometer.com/en/graph-builder/?question=S38&filter=country:czech_republic,hungary,poland,slovakia>.
- CONSUMER BAROMETER: *Which Devices Did People Use for Product Research?* [online]. [2019-04-11]. Available at: <https://www.consumerbarometer.com/en/graph-builder/?question=S33&filter=country:slovakia,czech_republic,hungary,poland>.
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VIDEO CONTENT AS A DOMINANT ONLINE MARKETING COMMUNICATION TOOL

Mária Oleárová – Jakub Horváth

ABSTRACT:

The combination of vision, sound and movement are the basics of video content that has unique advantages in creating and maintaining business-to-consumer relationships. Nowadays, video is the most popular form of content marketing among consumers. Relying on available statistical portal data and research studies from many companies, the aim of this paper is to explore consumer preferences related to watching and engaging in video content, which is now a strong and integral part of online marketing communication. It is necessary to understand the developing potential of this tool, since it is crucial for businesses that want to keep up with the pace of change to know current consumer behaviour. Therefore, this paper deals with consumer preferences related to content marketing in terms of different dimensions, maps the spending on advertising digital videos, and last but not least, focuses on video content tracking from the perspective of preferred devices and the most popular online platforms.

KEY WORDS:

marketing communication, video content, video marketing

1 Introduction

Storytelling was used by brands as a form of marketing content because it is the most natural and oldest form of communication. That is why it is an effective way to attract customers.¹ Delgado and Escalas² share a similar view, as the story makes it possible to create an emotional friendship.³ There is no doubt that communication has become an essential part of a successful brand.⁴ Content marketing can therefore be understood as

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- 1 PULIZZI, J.: The Rise of Storytelling as the New Marketing. In *Publishing Research Quarterly*, 2012, Vol. 28, No. 2, p. 116-123.
 - 2 DELGADILLO, Y., ESCALAS, J. E.: Narrative Word-of-Mouth Communication: Exploring Memory and Attitude Effects of Advances. In *Consumer Research*, 2004, Vol. 31, p. 186-192.
 - 3 FRANKOVSKÝ, M., BIRKNEROVÁ, Z.: Measuring Social Intelligence – The MESI Methodology. In *Asian Social Science*, 2014, Vol. 10, No. 6, p. 90-97.
 - 4 LIŽBETINOVÁ, L. et al.: Application of Cluster Analysis in Marketing Communications in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises: An Empirical Study in the Slovak Republic. In *Sustainability*, 2019, Vol. 11, No. 8, p. 1-18.

words, knowledge and information chosen to share with customers. In other words, it is a content that educates, helps or inspires customers.⁵ Conviction is a major business activity with which storytelling can be performed effectively. Since stories are designed as a combination of communication and inspiration, they enable companies to persuade their customers to buy products and accept the changes or collaborate with their partners.⁶ Content marketing is important given the growing power of consumers. The potential to create interesting content around the brands that consumers choose to watch can have great potential. The benefits of successful content can create a positive chain reaction. Thus, consumers may be more willing to communicate, which leads to positive reactions and actions.⁷ One of the forms of content marketing is also video marketing. According to Stringfellow⁸ video marketing can be used for everything. It can be used for customer relationship building and for service or product promotion. In addition, video marketing can serve as a medium for presenting practices, promoting customer certificates, live broadcast events, and providing viral content. Video content is becoming the predominant part of the user's everyday life on the web. Allowing users to generate and distribute their own content to a large audience has been transformed by the website into a major multimedia channel. Video penetrates the Internet and supports new types of user interactions, including video, video conferencing and video blogging.⁹

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- 5 JEFFERSON, S., TANTON, S.: *Valuable Content Marketing. How to Make Quality Content Your Key to Success*. 2nd Edition. London : Kogan Page, 2015, p. 18
 - 6 HERSKOVITZ, S., CRYSTAL, M.: The Essential Brand Persona: Storytelling and Branding. In *Journal of Business Strategy*, 2010, Vol. 31, No. 3, p. 21-28.
 - 7 KELLER, K.L.: Building Strong Brands in a Modern Marketing Communications Environment. In *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 2009, Vol. 15, No. 2-3, p. 139-155.
 - 8 STRINGFELLOW, A.: *What is Video Marketing? Benefits, Challenges and Best Practices for a Successful Video Marketing Campaign*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.ngdata.com/what-is-video-marketing/>>.
 - 9 SHANNON, M.: Shaking Hands, Kissing Babies, and... Blogging? In *Communications of the ACM*, 2007, Vol. 50, No. 9, p. 21-24.

Trimble¹⁰ claims that online video is quickly becoming a key means for people to meet their information and entertainment needs. Small businesses that do not include it in their internet marketing strategies are at great risk.¹¹ Through increased engagement and trust, video content can be a great way to increase conversions, especially on commercial websites. This is the main reason why videos in products have become popular in the world of e-commerce.¹² Video marketing works based on creating and distributing valuable and consistent video content to the target audience in order to attract, engage and convert qualified potential customers. The video allows companies to show their relaxed and human side.¹³ Video advertising is not just direct advertising of products or services, it is relevant information or content that is shared with potential customers. Therefore, the aim of video marketing is to provide valuable information that educates potential customers and, of course, inspires them to purchase or recommend the product.¹⁴ Video marketing is closely related to viral marketing. We can define it as a marketing technique in which information about a company's goods or services is transmitted electronically or through social networks. Users share such content based on relevance, interest, credibility, and especially entertainment.¹⁵ People are more likely to share videos associated with the brands they like.¹⁶

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- 10 TRIMBLE, Ch.: *Why Online Video is the Future of Content Marketing*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/small-business-network/2014/jan/14/video-content-marketing-media-online>>.
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 - 16 ŠTEFKO, R., BAČÍK, R., FEDORKO, R.: The Significance of Internet Marketing Tools in Terms of Building a Positive Image of an Higher Education Institution. In *24th International Business Information Management Association Conference: Crafting Global Competitive Economies: 2020 Vision Strategic Planning & Smart Implementation*. Milan : IBIMAC, 2014, p. 1764-1772.

Consumer who feel connected to a particular brand will recommend the product to friends. People undoubtedly share videos they have received from their friends and family because it is easier and safer to bring something socially approved.¹⁷

2 Current State of the Issue

Digital advertising is becoming increasingly important, thanks to the rapid growth of video advertising. In fact, a study conducted by Microsoft in 2000 showed that the average range of people’s attention dropped from 12 to 8 seconds. People generally lose concentration after 8 seconds, which is a consequence of the impact of increasing digitization on the human brain.¹⁸ In addition, verbal intelligence scores are dropping while the visual and nonverbal intelligence scores are rising. Also, only 20% of people remember content from reading text without visuals.¹⁹

17 HAYES, J. L., KING, K. W.: The Social Exchange of Viral Ads: Referral and Coreferral of Ads Among College Students. In *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 2014, Vol. 14, No. 2, p. 98-109.

18 MCSPADDEN, K.: *You Now Have a Shorter Attention Span Than a Goldfish*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<http://time.com/3858309/attention-spans-goldfish/>>.

19 CONTENTLY: *State of Content Marketing 2015 When Content Ate Marketing*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <https://contently.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/150218_State-of-Content-Marketing-2015.pdf>.

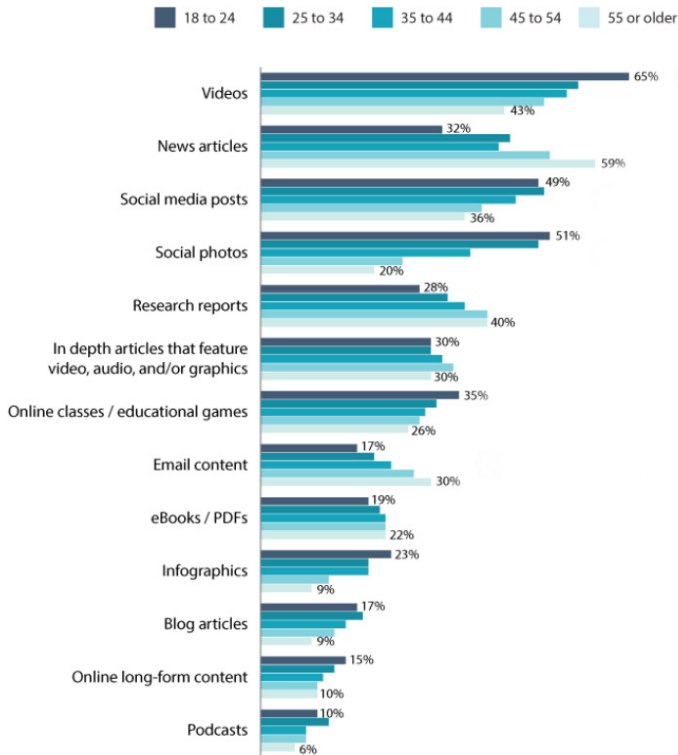


Chart 1: Most preferred content according to age

Source: HUBSPOT: *Content Trends: Preferences Emerge along Generational Fault Lines*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <https://blog.hubspot.com/news-trends/content-trends-preferences?_ga=2.151251065.1967598691.1555971717-783375563.1553810784>.

In fact, there is too little time for people to read content when they are exposed to a huge amount of information every minute. Moreover, social media dominates the Internet when almost 8,000 tweets and more than 800 Instagram photos are posted per second.²⁰ As a result, content marketing has become an important part of social media. Thus, consumers can be more selective when deciding on what to spend time. This phenomenon leads to the fact that content marketing is becoming the key to social success. In 2018, content marketing proved to be the

²⁰ INTERNET LIVESTATS: *Actual Data*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<http://www.internetlivestats.com/one-second/>>.

most preferred video content. According to Blurbpoint²¹ up to 87% of the respondents have confirmed that video is the most popular content. With a huge margin, it is more dominant than blog posts, which represent 20%. Less than half of the respondents prefer presentations or articles. HubSpot²² through a survey conducted in Q3 2011, identified which type of content consumers (in terms of age groups) would most welcome in the future. The survey included 3,010 respondents from the US, Germany, Colombia and Mexico. From the results of this survey, it is clear that although age group preferences in different types of content are different, video is the most dominant content in almost all age groups (except in case of respondents older than 55). Based on Chart 1, while younger consumers (18-24 years) prefer video (65% of the respondents) and only 32% of consumers of this age group prefer the text in the form of contributions, the opposite is true for older people. 43% of the respondents older than 55 prefer video content and up to 59% of consumers in this age category would prefer text content.

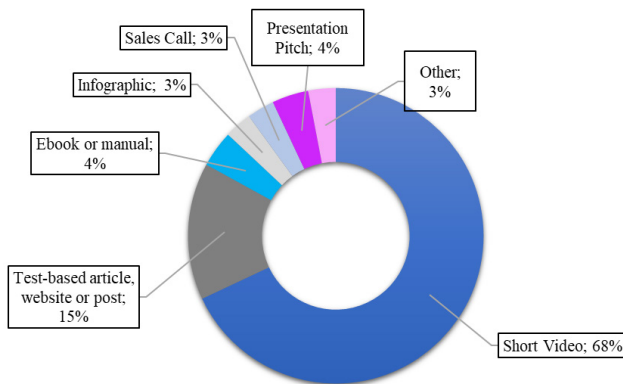


Chart 2: Content type

Source: MANGROLIA, A.: *5 Dental Practice Marketing Trends for 2018*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.practicebuilders.com/blog/5-dental-practice-marketing-trends-for-2018/>>.

21 MANGROLIA, A.: *5 Dental Practice Marketing Trends for 2018*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.practicebuilders.com/blog/5-dental-practice-marketing-trends-for-2018/>>.

22 HUBSPOT: *Content Trends: Preferences Emerge along Generational Fault Lines*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <https://blog.hubspot.com/news-trends/content-trends-preferences?_ga=2.151251065.1967598691.1555971717-783375563.1553810784>.

Another company that has mapped video content issues is Wyzowl.²³ The company conducted a survey in December 2018, involving 613 respondents, i.e. marketers and online consumers. Individual questions were asked from them. The respondents had to identify which product information the respondents preferred. According to the results of this survey, up to 7 out of 10 respondents prefer short videos (68%). The short video is clearly the most dominant. It is followed by text articles (15%), e-books and presentations (4%) and infographics with a 3% share. The potential of short videos can also be used in connection with the so-called “Stories”. Promo²⁴ in its survey revealed that 68% of the respondents “always” or “sometimes” follow stories on Facebook or Instagram. Remarkably, only 52% of the respondents said they share stories. According to the survey results, there are more people viewing this content than those who create and share it. Stories could be a great opportunity for brands. It is also interesting to note that the popularity of “Stories” is particularly high for consumers under the age of 34. Up to 81% of these respondents “always” or “sometimes” follow stories.

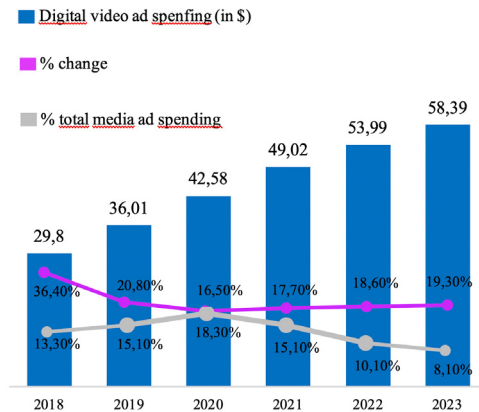


Chart 3: Video Advertising Expenses

Source: EMARKETER: *US Digital Video Ad Spending, 2018-2023 (Billions, % Change and % of Total Media Ad Spending)*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.emarketer.com/Chart/US-Digital-Video-Ad-Spending-2018-2023-billions-change-of-total-media-ad-spending/226834>>.

23 WYZOWL: *Video Marketing Statistics 2019. The State of Video Marketing 2019*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.wyzowl.com/video-marketing-statistics-2019/>>.

24 PROMO: *New Study: 2018 PROMO Online Video Statistics and Trends*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<https://promo.com/blog/online-video-habits-2018>>.

EMarketer's²⁵ statistics and forecasts show that video marketing is on the rise and becoming the most dominant marketing platform. While nearly 30 billion dollars was spent on digital video advertising in 2018, it is more than 6 billion dollars in the current year, representing an increase of 20.8%. Although it is predicted by the company, spending on digital video advertising will grow slowly, the amount of money spent compared to total media advertising spending will continue to grow. In 2020, spending on digital video advertising is expected to exceed 42 billion dollars, an 18% share of total advertising costs. EMarketer estimates that in 2023 this spending should be increased to as much as 20% of total spending, accounting for more than 58 billion dollars in financial terms. The State of Online Video 2018²⁶ surveys the video surveillance situation across different devices. Consumers from France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, the United Kingdom and the United States attended the survey. 500 responses were collected from each country, with a total research sample of 5,000 global consumers older than 18 years who watch at least one hour of video content per week. The respondents had to answer one question: *How much of your online video viewing is on the following devices?* From the survey results it can be stated that the most widely used video surveillance device is a computer or notebook with an average value of 2, 1. The second most used device is a smartphone (1.91) and the third most frequently used device is a smart TV (1.44). It is noteworthy that among all the countries surveyed, videos are most often viewed on computers in France (2.38), but smartphones are preferred to watch videos in India, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea and the US.

25 EMARKETER: *US Digital Video Ad Spending, 2018-2023 (Billions, % Change and % of Total Media Ad Spending)*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.emarketer.com/Chart/US-Digital-Video-Ad-Spending-2018-2023-billions-change-of-total-media-ad-spending/226834>>.

26 MILLIGAN: *The State of Online Video 2018*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.limelight.com/blog/state-of-online-video-2018/>>.

Table 1: Watching videos according to the device

Country	Computer	Smartphone	Tablet
France	2,38	1,29	0,72
Germany	2,23	1,54	1,05
India	2,11	2,68	1,08
Italy	2,13	1,95	1,05
Japan	1,83	1,51	0,73
Philippines	2,34	2,55	1,38
Singapore	2,15	2,2	1,07
South Korea	2,11	2,2	1,03
U.K.	1,84	1,25	1,01
U.S.	1,91	1,92	1,2
Global	2,1	1,91	1,03

Source: MILLIGAN: *The State of Online Video 2018*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.limelight.com/blog/state-of-online-video-2018/>>.

The eMarketer portal also paid attention to the issue of video content.²⁷ According to this portal, consumers spend the most time browsing videos through mobile devices where the average time is 37.75 minutes per day. Almost 14 minutes less are videos that are viewed daily on desktops and notebooks. The total average time spent watching videos is 86.11 minutes per day. Video content is currently followed by consumers more than ever before. Up to 85% of all Internet users in the United States have watched online video content in January 2018 on their devices. It is interesting that Saudi Arabia and Turkey were at the first place where 95% of the internet users watching online video content on any device during the month.²⁸ The same source also states that US users of smartphones from the age 18 to 24 spent more time watching video content than any other age category. On average, they spent up to 83 minutes watching videos. On the other hand, users of smartphones between 50-64 years spent an average of 36 minutes watching mobile video during one week.

27 IAB: *Video Landscape Report IAB Digital Video Center of Excellence*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <https://www.iab.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/IAB_Video_Landscape_Report_2018-12.pdf>.

28 STATISTA: *Percentage of Internet Users Who Watch Online Video Content on Any Device as of January 2018, by Country*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.statista.com/statistics/272835/share-of-internet-users-who-watch-online-videos/>>.

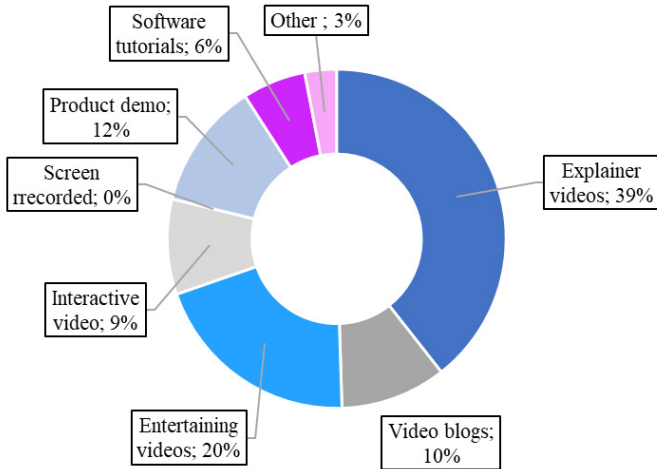


Chart 4: Most preferred video types

Source: MANGROLIA, A.: *5 Dental Practice Marketing Trends for 2018*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.practicebuilders.com/blog/5-dental-practice-marketing-trends-for-2018/>>.

Wyzowl²⁹ among other things, invited respondents to identify only one type of video content that they like. According to the results of the analyses, the most preferred are videos with explanations identified by up to 39% of the respondents. Consumers also expect brands to share funny videos that spread virally among the people (20%). Product demo videos would be welcomed by 12% of the respondents, and 10% preferred video blogs. People are least interested in interactive videos (9%) or program tutorials (6%). According to Promo³⁰ the future of online marketing is video content. For this reason, it has also devoted consumer preferences to this instrument. The survey was conducted in June and July 2018, with 500 respondents from all over the world. One of the most remarkable findings is that Facebook outperformed YouTube as the most popular video surveillance platform. Of the total research sample, up to 47% of the respondents said they were watching videos most often on Facebook, compared to 41% of those who claim to be

29 WYZOWL: *Video Marketing Statistics 2019. The State of Video Marketing 2019*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.wyzowl.com/video-marketing-statistics-2019/>>.

30 PROMO: *New Study: 2018 PROMO Online Video Statistics and Trends*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <<https://promo.com/blog/online-video-habits-2018>>.

watching most of the videos on YouTube. This is an interesting change that is a sign of Facebook's success in transforming their platform to take advantage of the growth of online videos. For example, Facebook has increased the reach of native video content over videos shared from other platforms (e.g. YouTube). Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn are not in the limelight, which is probably due to lower popularity.

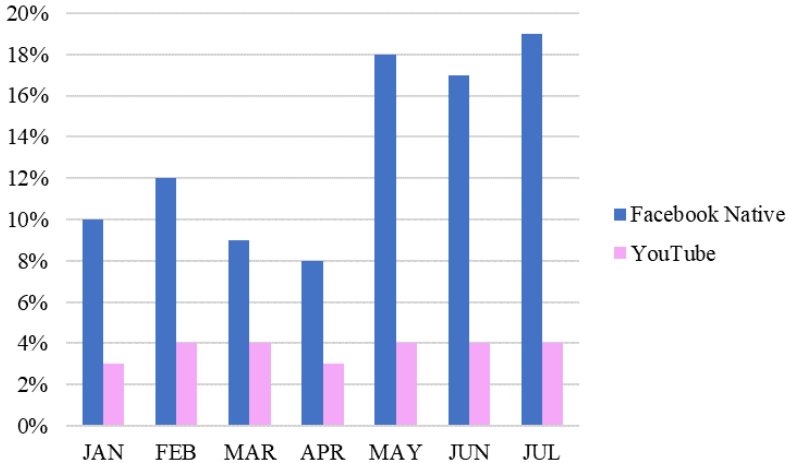


Chart 5: Average share rate

Source: QUINTLY: *Facebook Video Study*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <https://info.quintly.com/facebook-video-study-h1-2017?utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.quintly.com%2Fblog%2F2017%2F03%2Ffacebook-video-study>.

In addition, native video content receives more interaction and more comments than videos posted on Facebook from external platforms. The Quintly³¹ study is focusing on a number of actions that native Facebook videos and YouTube videos have reached. According to the study, native videos on Facebook had a share of 477% more than YouTube videos. The number of shares was the highest in July 2017, a share of 611%. Another interesting finding about Facebook video interactions relates to user comments. The most interesting value is the average number

31 QUINTLY: *Facebook Video Study*. [online]. [2019-04-02]. Available at: <https://info.quintly.com/facebook-video-study-h1-2017?utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.quintly.com%2Fblog%2F2017%2F03%2Ffacebook-video-study>.

of comments per video type. We can see that native Facebook videos encourage more users to interact with content. Compared to YouTube videos, the native Facebook video received an average of 530% more comments. This means that Facebook video type is supported five times more people who comment on videos. It is interesting that this figure rose to 806% in May 2017.

Conclusion

This article deals with consumer preferences related to video content. Building on the above-mentioned statistical facts and the results of many analyses dealing with this issue, it can be concluded that video content preferences are prevalent in all age groups, with the exception of people older than 55 years old. Currently, videos are most often viewed on computers, but there are countries such as the USA, the Philippines, and India, where consumers watch videos on smartphones. It is also interesting to note that instead of sharing YouTube video links on Facebook's social network, it is better to publish videos directly on this network so that brands can deliver greater reach and user engagement. It is important to realise that video dominates as the most popular form of content and becomes a key tool for online marketing communication.

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COMMERCIAL MEDIA LANDSCAPE CHANGES WITH THE ARRIVAL OF THE INTERNET IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Dušan Pavlů

ABSTRACT:

The arrival of the internet communication has, particularly in the past 20 years, significantly changed the structure, influence, impact and effectiveness of information sources in the commercial and social environment in the Czech Republic. The paper wants to document this development on the basis of the data from public opinion polls and costs of marketing communication, from statistics and expert reports. It will analyze the quantitative share of electronic commercial communication in the total volume of funds invested in marketing communication and assess changes in the behaviour of recipients of this information in the aspect of preferences to sources, trust in these sources, etc.

KEY WORDS:

internet, internet commercial communication, shares of individual media-types, structure of the media market

1 Current Reality of the Structure of Marketing Communication Sources in the Czech Republic

The popular opinion in the Czech marketing environment is that the internet commercial communication will, in the near future, become a completely dominant, maybe the only marketing mass communication channel. I believe that if we looked at this phenomenon in the view that works with historic parallels from other, similar critical communication turning points, our enthusiasm for the straightforward and triumphal march of the internet would be less pronounced. History of mass communication shows two basic phenomena with the arrival of a new mass medium. On the one hand, enthusiasm for this new communication means demolishing everything existing, established and time-tested and marching triumphantly ahead and, on the other hand, concerns of the contemporary media that their historic mission is over. These concerns arise from the fact that attention of investors and advertisers in the means of mass communication has been gradually moving towards the new medium, which but not only because it is a novelty, attracts a growing number of target groups. New communication technologies, mass spread of the internet and new devices enabling 24-hour contact with the virtual world are, especially, for our younger target groups, such an attractive

communication means that they naturally lead to their mass scale use. Actually, the statistics confirms the new media have become stronger and stronger and their share has strengthened. The restructuring of the overwhelming majority of commercial budgets results, slowly or more quickly, but surely in the economic „starvation“ of the current communication sources and to the weakening of their position in the spectrum of diversified commercial communication sources.

But this internet scenario is forgetting the other side of the coin. The traditional mass media acting not only on self-preservation instinct but also striving to succeed in competition are looking for a new definition of their existence, new justification for their functionality in the changing structure of information sources. Therefore, they examine new information needs and habits and study possible ways of a new information offer to suit not only the customs of their stable – existing target group but also the requirements of advertisers. The general overstatements of the new apostles of the internet era in the sense „internet and the on-line world is everything, the others are junk of the past“, seem pointless unless supported by analyses and hard data of the social reality, which give a slightly different picture.

1.1 Analysis of Expenditures on Internet Advertising in 2008-2018

The Czech Association for Internet Development – SPIR – is an organization systematically analysing the internet and mobile world and all forms of commercial marketing communication that appear in their space. The recent overview of the achieved advertising performances indicates that this form of communication is growing, year-on-year, in the order of units of CZK billions in the interval of the years 2008 – 2015 (CZK 1.2 – 2.3 billion) and this growth has been more dynamic and stronger in the recent 3 years: CZK 4.7 / 3.6 / 5.3 billion.

Table 1: Global performance of internet and mobile advertising in 2008 / 2018

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
In CZK billion	5.0	6.4	7.7	8.9	11.2	13.3	14.6	15.0	19.7	23.3	28.6

Source: *Advertisers Invested CZK 28.6 Billion in Internet Advertising in 2018. More Than Half the Deals Were Traded Programmatically.* [online]. [2019-03-12]. Available at: <http://www.inzertnivykony.cz/download/TZ_inzertni_vykony_SPIR_2018.pdf>.

In my opinion, the dynamic of growth reflects, above all, the improving technologies of the electronic world and good commercial experience of users backed by frequent public opinion polls, market research and media surveys. The detailed analysis of the tested period works with the individual types of commercial communicates.¹

Table 2: Detailed analyses of performances of the types of internet and mobile advertising in 2008 / 2018

v tis. Kč	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019* (odhad)
Display **	5 137 305	6 148 289	7 378 185	9 204 844	9 967 379	10 481 447	14 164 675	16 400 893	20 139 248	22 829 717
Search ***	1 593 704	1 871 320	2 871 428	2 901 804	3 360 886	3 656 319	4 663 124	5 857 274	7 321 593	8 563 335
Katalogy a řádková inzerce	985 445	919 806	901 784	1 200 788	1 256 196	906 356	899 652	1 052 715	1 124 984	1 150 698
SMS/MMS		114 027	99 537	93 264	107 070	135 947	113 935	104 150	98 000	100 940
CELKEM (bez SMS/MMS)	7 716 454	8 900 469	11 151 399	13 307 435	14 584 460	15 044 122	19 727 451	23 310 883	28 585 825	32 543 750

Source: *Advertisers Invested CZK 28.6 Billion in Internet Advertising in 2018. More Than Half the Deals Were Traded Programmatically.* [online]. [2019-03-12]. Available at: <http://www.inzertnivykony.cz/download/TZ_inzertni_vykony_SPIR_2018.pdf>.

Some shares of the individual types of communication are very interesting. The biggest proportion of advertising spends goes to display advertising – CZK 20.1 billion in gross prices were invested in display advertising in 2018. This type of advertising includes that in content networks (especially, the networks Seznam, Sklik, Google AdWords and Facebook), advertising traded in the form RTB and native advertising. The second biggest proportion represents advertising in search engines – advertisers invested CZK 7.3 billion in real prices in this type of advertising. The media declare revenue of CZK 1.1 billion in gross prices from catalogues and classified ads. And advertisers paid CZK 98 million in gross prices for SMS and MMS campaigns that don't fall into internet advertising.²

1 Typology of communication means – internet and mobile advertising is working with these definitions: **Display** – display advertising, banner, standard and non-standard, video banner, content advertising network and RTB advertising. **Search** – advertising in search engines, **Catalogues and classified ads**, **SMS/MMS** – text and visual information. **Mobile advertising** – advertising delivered to smart phones and tablets. For detailed information about the development of the Czech internet advertising market see the web: *Sdružení pro internetový rozvoj.* [online]. [2019-04-04]. Available at: <<http://www.inzertnivykony.cz>>.

2 *Advertisers Invested CZK 28.6 Billion in Internet advertising in 2018. More Than Half the Deals Were Traded Programmatically.* [online]. [2019-03-12]. Available at: <http://inzertnivykony.cz/download/TZ_inzertni_vykony_SPIR_2018.pdf>.

The year-on-year difference 2017/2018 shows a 23% increase in investments in the internet and mobile advertising. This is undoubtedly an impressive leap, which is also conditioned by generally more accessible means of this type of communication – more and more reliable internet network, new types of multifunctional mobile phones, etc. That is why we can speak about a continual growth of advertising spend on internet advertising. Now we will look at the position of electronic commercial communication in the total structure of marketing communication means and media in the Czech Republic. The latest research published by AKA ČR – the Czech Association of Communication Agencies - shows the total value of the sold advertising space and time in 2018 at the amount of CZK113.5 billion. The survey's author, Nielsen Admosphere, is working with the breakdown of marketing communication costs into media- and non-media channels.

Table 3: Total investment in advertising in ČR 2016 / 2018

In CZK billions	2016	2017	2018
Media investment	49	54.8	57.7
Non-media investment	51	52.7	55.8
Total	100	107.5	113.5

Source: *Marketing Communication Spends Survey AKA 2018*. [online]. [2019-02-15]. Available at: <https://aka.cz/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/aktivacni-vyzkum-prezentace_2018_short-1.pdf>.

Table 4: Share of individual media-types in 2018

MEDIATYPE	SHARE IN TOTAL INVESTMENTS 2018	ABSOLUTELY IN CZK BILLIONS
TELEVISION	46.3%	53.1
INTERNET	25.0%	28.6
PRESS	17.1%	19.6
RADIO	8.0%	8.0
OOH	4.6%	5.2

Source: *Advertisers Invested CZK 28.6 Billion in Internet Advertising in 2018. More Than Half the Deals Were Traded Programmatically*. [online]. [2019-03-12]. Available at: <http://www.inzertnivykony.cz/download/TZ_inzertni_vykony_SPIR_2018.pdf>.

In terms of the profiling of our UNIVERSITY OF CREATIVE COMMUNICATION, it is definitely interesting to establish to what extent the target group of managers responsible for marketing communication in their companies and decisions on the structure of communication investments in the on-line space, finds their own communication creative, innovative or conservative. The question asking whether they would describe the marketing communication of their company as innovative or more conservative resulted in this structure of answers:³

- Very innovative 6%;
- Rather innovative 33%;
- Neither innovative, nor conservative 29%;
- Rather conservative 24%;
- Very conservative 7%.

Just a little more than a third - 36% of responsible managers are inclined to innovative forms of marketing communication, almost a third sticks to the routine, habitual forms of communication and almost a third is rather or very conservative. It is apparent that in the intensive movement of the mass-media and non-mass media market many of them will have to reconsider their attitudes in the near future, once they analysed the hard data documenting the movements in the mass-media and non-mass media landscape of the Czech Republic.

Table 5: Shares of individual media-types in the total advertising market in ČR 2008/2018

In % - year	PRESS	Radio	CINEMA		TV	OOH	OTHER	INTERNET
2008	33.9	3.6	0.2		45.6	6.3	0	8.6
2009	35.9	6.0	0.2		43.0	4.6	0.6	9.7
2010	30.5	7.1	0.3		43.5	5.3	0.5	12.8
2011	31.3	1.8	NESL		46.8	5.9	NESL	14.3
2012	27.5	1.5	NESL		47.1	6.3	NESL	17.4
2013	25.4	8.5	NESL		40.5	6.2	NESL	19.4
2014	24.0	8.0	NESL		42.0	6.0	NESL	20.0
2015	22.5	8.0	NESL		44.6	6.0	NESL	18.9
2016	20.4	7.5	NESL		45.4	5.6	NESL	21.1

3 *Marketing Communication Spend Survey AKA 2018*. [online]. [2019-02-15]. Available at: <https://aka.cz/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/aktivacni-vyzkum_prezentace_2018_short-1.pdf>.

2017	18.6	7.3	NESL		46.4	5.1	NESL	22.5
2018	17.1	7.0	NESL		46.3	4.6	NESL	25.0
AVERAGE SHARE 08-18	26.1	6.02	NESL		44.6	5.6	NESL	17.2

Source: Press releases on advertising performances SPIR 2008/2018; own analysis based on: *Sdružení pro internetový rozvoj*. [online]. [2019-04-04]. Available at: <<http://www.inzertnivykony.cz>>.

The table documents the movements in the national mass-media world. It is clear that television advertising still keeps its dominant position with almost half of the share followed by internet advertising with a quarter of the share in the total, and periodical press is third with one-sixth of the share. The radio's share is 7% and that of OOH is 4.6%. The trends are self-evident, as we can see in the data analysis below:

- Television advertising's share in the past five years has been around 45%.
- Internet advertising continues growing and there is a tendency to keep growing.
- Periodicals are gradually losing their positions and have a declining tendency.
- The radio has been declining in the past three years, but its recovery after the year of 2012 gives hope for its stronger anchoring in the mass-media structure.
- Cinema advertising plays only a marginal role today.
- OOH is the segment affected by new legislation and it seem the time when it played a more significant role, has been over.

Now, we will compare some national data on internet advertising with the international prognostics thoughts. According to Zenith Optimedia's global advertising expenditure forecast, in 2012:⁴

- Advertising on the internet will continue to grow fastest.
- Internet's share of expenditure was 16% in 2011 in the world; it was 14.3% in the Czech Republic.

4 *Global Expenditures on Advertising in 2013 Will Grow Thank to the Developing Markets and Digital Media*. [online]. [2019-01-15]. Available at: <http://www.marketingovenoviny.cz/marketing_11753/>.

And in 2015, ZenithOptimedia predicts:⁵

- **Internet advertising will represent 29.5% of total advertising expenditures.** It was 18.9% in the Czech Republic in 2015.
- **In 2018, the internet will represent 37.6% of all global advertising:** in 2018, the internet in our country reached only a quarter of the share – 25% of the total.
- **In 2017, the internet will overtake television in the world.** In 2017, internet advertising reached only a 22.5% share in the total media market in the Czech Republic and was just under a half of the volume of television advertising.
- **Globally, the forecast year-on-year increase in internet advertising in 2015 – 2018 was 13% on average.** In the Czech Republic it was 2015-2016 / 11.5%, 2016-2017 / 6.6% and 2017-2018 / 11.1%.

In 2017, the European digital advertising market was worth €48 billion and CZK 22.5 billion in our country, which is 872 million euros in the exchange rate CZK 25.80/€. ⁶ The table TOP 10 below indicates the strength of internet advertising in 10 European countries with highest investments in this segment of marketing communication.

Table 6: TOP 10 countries with highest investments in digital advertising in 2017

Country	In billions €
United Kingdom	15.6
Germany	6.6
France	5.1
Russia	3.3
Italy	2.6
Sweden	1.8

5 *Global Advertising Investments in the Internet Will Overtake Television Soon.* [online]. [2019-03-05]. Available at: <<http://www.marketingovenoviny.cz/globalni-advertisingni-investice-do-internetu-brzy-předezenou-televizní/#more-39699>>.

6 *European Market with Digital Advertising Has Doubled in the Past 5 Years – From EUR 28.8 Billion in 2012 to EUR 48 Billion in 2017.* [online]. [2019-01-15]. Available at: <<http://www.admonitoring.cz/evropsky-trh-s-digitalni-reklamou-se-za-posledních-5-let-zdvojnásobil-z-28-8-miliard-v-roce-2012-na>>.

Netherlands	1.8
Switzerland	1.8
Spain	1.8
Belgium	1.0

Source: *Europe an Market with Digital Advertising Has Doubled in the Past 5 Years – From EUR 28.8 Billion in 2012 to EUR 48 Billion in 2017*. [online]. [2019-01-15]. Available at: <<http://www.admonitoring.cz/evropsky-trh-s-digitalni-reklamou-se-za-poslednich-5-let-zdvojnasil-z-28-8-miliard-v-roce-2012-na>>.

To get a better idea about our position in the European comparison, we should come out of the conversion of Czech investments to internet advertising at the amount of CZK 28.6 billion in 2018, which is €1.11 billion, i.e., comparable to Belgium (about 11.1 million inhabitants, slightly more than the population of the Czech Republic).

1.2 E-Commerce as a Result of Effective Working of Internet Advertising

There is no doubt that massive advertising investments in all forms of advertising, including that on the internet, are met with a positive response in the buying behaviour of the public. As the above statistics show it is absolutely vital to continuously work with integrated marketing communication because the target groups only rarely prefer one single communication channel, even though the role of on-line communication is becoming more and more significant, especially in the younger generation. However, we still get information through multiple channels – i.e., from more information sources. E-commerce also changes the structure of selling channels and shopping habits of the public. Shopping on-line is very popular in the Czech Republic, as you can see in the table below showing the growth of turnover in e-shops in the recent 5 years:

Table 7: Developments in e-commerce turnover 2014/2018

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Turnover in CZK billions	67	81	98	115	135

Source: *Development of the Turnover of E-commerce from the Year of 2014*. [online]. [2019-01-15]. Available at: <<http://www.apek.cz/>>.

The dynamic of this selling channel is unprecedented. There was one e-shop per every 246 residents of the Czech Republic in 2018; in total, 43,500 e-shops are active in our country. According to the price comparison platform Heureka.cz, there are 3,400 new e-shops per year. The Czechs are also at the top of online shopping in Europe.⁷The turnover increased 17% year-on-year, which means that sales online account for 11.4% of all Czech retail today.⁸ Only a few years ago it was a normal consumer practice to visit the brick-and-mortar shop before any purchase at an e-shop and physically compare the offered goods, while today, the comparison of offers and decision-making is made through comparison platforms in mobile phones. Nevertheless, there is an interesting two-way process going on in the market environment, as mentioned by Jan Vetyška from APEK: „*E-shops more and more often open brick-and-mortar pick up points and stores, while the main players from the area of traditional retail launch online sale of their products. This trend is set to continue in the near future.*”⁹ In the Czech Republic, it is electronics, mobile phones, computers and laptops that are most interesting items in the online trading. Customers are also interested in fashion, sports gear, toys, and drugstore and cosmetics products. Online sale of food products has been growing, too. In 2019, we can expect primarily the segments of daily consumption goods, essentials, the Czechs gradually learn to buy in e-shops.

Thinking globally about the entry of the on-line sphere into the social world, we should also consider some other aspects. There is no doubt that the new electronic world, on the one hand, makes many decisions on consumption, on spending free time or on planning various forms of travel, choice of appropriate educational institutions, etc., much easier. But, on the other hand, more and more time spent on the on-line

7 *The Czech Republic is the Paradise of E-shops. It Beats the Rest of Europe in the Purchases of Electric.* [online]. [2019-01-15]. Available at: <https://www.idnes.cz/ekonomika/domaci/eshopy-nakupy-online-elektro-cesko.A190111_162629_ekonomika_fih>.

8 *Czech E-commerce Exceeded Expectations, Turnovers for the Sales of Goods On-line Reached CZK 135 Billion in 2018.* [online]. [2019-01-06]. Available at: <<https://www.apek.cz/clanky/ceska-e-commerce-prekonala-ocekavani-obraty-za-pr>>.

9 *M-commerce in the Czech Republic is Growing, Those Buying Most Often Through the Mobile, are Young People. Outside Europe. Mobile Sales Dominate.* [online]. [2018-11-12]. Available at: <<https://www.apek.cz/clanky/m-commerce-v-cesku-roste-pres-mobil-nakupuji-nejc>>.

world, which applies especially to the younger generation and brings many negative phenomena related to the declining level of social skills, abilities to express oneself, knowledge of mother language and leads, among others, to social isolation or relying on someone else to solve the problems.

Conclusion

In my opinion, the above aggregated data and information are a convincing argument for the dynamic changes in the sphere of preferences to the individual advertising media in the past ten years in our country. They show that the growth of investments in on-line advertising formats is very robust, however, we should understand the movements in the advertising market in relation to connections and support of other tools of marketing communication.

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Czech E-commerce Exceeded Expectations, Turnovers for the Sales of Goods On-line Reached CZK 135 Billion in 2018. [online]. [2019-01-06]. Available at: <<https://www.apek.cz/clanky/ceska-e-commerce-prekonala-ocekavani-obraty-za-pr>>.

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Global Expenditures on Advertising in 2013 Will Grow Thank to the Developing Markets and Digital Media. [online]. [2019-01-15]. Available at: <http://www.marketingovenoviny.cz/marketing_11753/>.

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Marketing Communication Spend Survey AKA 2018. [online]. [2019-02-15]. Available at: <https://aka.cz/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/aktivacni-vyzkum_prezentace_2018_short-1.pdf>.

M-commerce in the Czech Republic is Growing, Those Buying Most Often Through the Mobile, are Young People. Outside Europe. Mobile Sales Dominate. [online]. [2018-11-12]. Available at: <<https://www.apek.cz/clanky/m-commerce-v-cesku-roste-pres-mobil-nakupuji-nejc>>.

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BIG BANG AND GLORY OF ECO-INNOVATIONS IN THE DIGITAL ERA

Monika Rezníčková – Anna Zaušková

ABSTRACT:

Many relevant publications and research indicate a continuing threat to the environment and the environment in which we live. Implementation of eco-innovations within individual business processes and activities seems to be the one of the possible ways to help change this state in the long term. The role of any business entity should be to contribute to sustainability and environmental protection, as well as to encourage their customers to do so. In the scientific contribution, the authors further analyse selected innovative tools of digital marketing communication applied in introducing ecological innovations in business environment. The authors also present partial results of the research conducted, in which companies operating in the Slovak business environment were questioned with the aim to determine the utilization rate of SoLoMo marketing tools within presentation of eco-innovations. These results are complemented and compared with the results of current foreign surveys in the study field.

KEY WORDS:

digital marketing, eco-innovations, geolocation services, green marketing, mobile devices, mobile marketing, Slovak business entities, social media, SoLoMo marketing

1 Introduction

Ecological trends in 2019 point to various fascinating innovations the main goal of which is their implementation into different business activities, i.e. manufacturing, food industry, architecture, design or fashion. For instance, a 3D printer may be used to make a vegan steak from various plant proteins (rice, peas, seaweed) and thus promote a healthy lifestyle.¹ Other eco-innovations may include development of brand new materials promoting more ecological production processes. Tjeers Veenhoven, a Dutch product design studio, uses rather untraditional production materials, for instance. Palm tree leaves are used to create „eco-leather“ design carpets, shoes or furniture.² Nowadays, there are a

1 NEDELICHEVA, K.: *Top 85 Eco Trends in 2019*. [online]. [2019-02-18]. Available at: <<https://www.trendhunter.com/slideshow/2019-eco-trends>>.

2 *Studio Tjeerd Veenhoven*. [online]. [2019-04-14]. Available at: <<http://www.tjeerdveenhoven.com/>>.

lot of enthusiasts who try to „ecologize“ various spheres of our everyday life – start-ups, new entrepreneurs as well as global producers. Eco-innovations trigger big bang on a global scale and their popularity is constantly growing. Businesses have to do their best to use their own creativity, fill the gap in the market and „show off“.

2 Eco-Innovations and Green Marketing

The current state of environmental degradation prompts an urgent need for change of behaviour of people, businesses as well as state authorities the main role of which is to spread awareness and enhance ecological responsibility. On the other hand, customers are able to influence corporate responsibility to a certain extent providing their voice and demand is strong enough. We speak about a so-called mutual interactive dialogue which may be initiated through digital environment and by means of fast developing technological gadgets. In general eco-innovations represent a certain technological change which is set to increase environmental performance. Eco-innovations may also generate other technological, social, organisational and economic changes to corporate social responsibility of businesses and their components (economic, social and environmental ones). Eco-innovations may even represent a competitive advantage.³ Eco-innovations are defined by various authors. Even though the issue seems to be rather complex, its core remains the same. The European Commission defines an eco-innovation as „*an innovation focusing on remarkable and visible progress towards sustainable development, either by means of reduction of environmental impact or more effective and more responsible exploitation of natural resources including energies.*“⁴ According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) an eco-innovation can be regarded as „*implementation of new or considerably improved products (goods or services), production processes, marketing or organisational methods which are set to improve the environment.*“⁵ Eco-Innovation Observatory determines an eco-innovation as „*implementation of a new*

3 CARRILLO-HERMOSILLA, J., DEL GONZÁLEZ, P. R., KÖNNÖLÄ, T.: *Eco-Innovation – When Sustainability and Competitiveness Shake Hands*. London : Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, p. 6.

4 *European Commission*. [online]. [2018-01-08]. Available at: <<https://ec.europa.eu/commission/index>>.

5 OECD: *The Future of Eco-innovation: The Role of Business Models in Green Transformation*. [online]. [2018-01-20]. Available at: <<http://www.oecd.org/innovation/inno/49537036.pdf>>.

or considerably improved product (goods or services), a process, an organisational change or a marketing solution which is likely to reduce exploitation of natural resources (including materials, energies, water or soil) and at the same time, eliminates release of noxious substances in course of the whole life cycle.⁶ We may even say that the common thread of all the definitions of eco-innovations is a positive change for the environment, either technological changes (product or process innovations) or non-technological changes (marketing innovations or those in the company structure).⁷ Such innovations are preconditions for solving current or future ecological problems while enhancing sustainable economic activities and reducing consumption of non-renewable natural resources by humans.

According to the monograph by Zaušková et al.⁸ we may assume that eco-innovations are a certain subcategory of innovations. A business implementing eco-innovations is said to perceive and react sensitively to impacts of the external environment as it does not necessarily focus only on generation of profits. The authors point to certain loopholes of the Slovak legislation which does not enact any specific definition of an ecological innovation. Eco-innovations are only amended in *the Act Nr. 172/2005 Coll. on organisation of state support for research and development as amended, supplemented or otherwise modified by the Act Nr. 575/2001 Coll. on organisation of competencies of the government or central state authorities*. The legislative framework of eco-innovations should be properly defined in order to create ecological awareness, provide funding from various resources available, ensure cooperation with experts and foreign partners or establish interbusiness cooperation through clusters or information distribution. Significance and need for implementation of eco-innovations across all the EU member states is permanently growing. The European Commission regularly issues the eco-innovation index for all the EU member states. This indicator evaluates 16 sub-indicators from five areas: eco-innovation inputs, eco-innovation activities, eco-innovation outputs, resource efficiency

6 *Eco-innovation Observatory*. [online]. [2018-01-08]. Available at: <<http://www.eco-innovation.eu/>>.

7 OECD: *Sustainable Manufacturing and Eco-innovation Synthesis Report*. [online]. [2018-10-15]. Available at: <<http://www.oecd.org/sti/ino/43423689.pdf>>.

8 ZAUŠKOVÁ, A., GRIB, L., KYSELICA, P.: *Phygitalové komunikačné nástroje na podporu environmentálnych inovačných procesov v slovenskom podnikateľskom prostredí*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2016, p. 24.

outcomes and socio-economic outcomes. It also indicates eco-innovation performance within a particular EU member state in comparison to the EU average. The results from 2017 show that the value of eco-innovation index for the whole EU is determined at 100. When being compared, Slovakia comes below the average as its eco-innovation index is 75. Sweden (145) becomes a leader, followed by Finland (141) and Luxembourg and Germany (139). Poland (60), Cyprus (45) and Bulgaria (38) lag behind.⁹ The eco-innovation index also takes into consideration a holistic approach to economy and environmental and social performance of particular countries. Please find all the statistic data in the Graph 1.

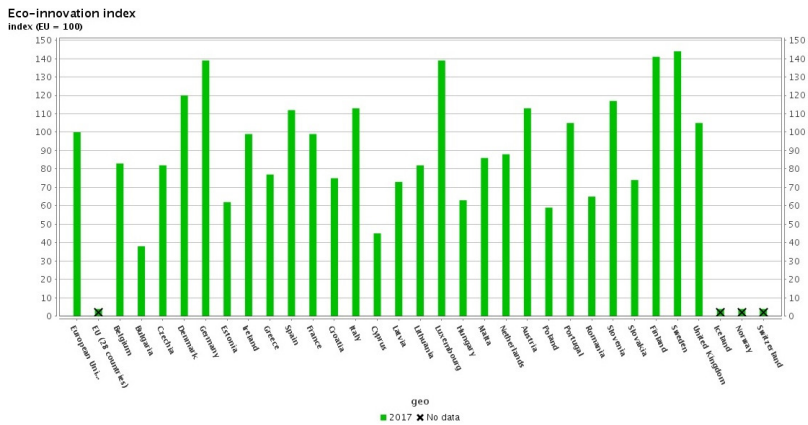


Chart 1: Eco-innovation Index

Source: ECO-INNOVATION OBSERVATORY: *Eco-innovation Index*. [online]. [2018-01-08]. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/graph.do?tab=graph&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=t2020_rt200&toolbox=type>.

In her paper, J. Ottman states that eco-innovations bring a lot of advantages for businesses or even transfer traditional business models in order to improve competitiveness and promote sustainable future. Eco-innovations are defined as innovations in the process of production or production of a completely new product or service (including materials and technologies) which are able to satisfy similar needs as existing

9 ECO-INNOVATION OBSERVATORY: *Eco-innovation Index*. [online]. [2018-01-08]. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/graph.do?tab=graph&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=t2020_rt200&toolbox=type>.

products and services, yet with a much lower environmental impact.¹⁰ Eco-innovations also bring more benefits for customers. J. Ottman defines five categories for eco-innovations:

1. *systematic innovations* – the change has to occur on a system level where the product is made or offered (e.g a new system of water use in households; fewer material inputs for production);
2. *development of new materials* (e.g. eco-leather made from apple waste);
3. *development of new technologies* (e.g. use of alternative sources of energy);
4. *development of new business models*;
5. *restoration of the environment*.

Z. Bezáková and A. Zaušková determine different areas for implementation of eco-innovations: application of various alternatives for energy production (renewable natural sources) while reducing consumption of natural sources in the production process, using ecological materials, reducing production waste or its secondary processing and controlling environmental pollution by production processes.¹¹ Eco-innovations are becoming an opportunity for business development. Ecological behaviour of businesses also includes protection of natural habitat and threatened animal species, protection of consumer's health, recycling or use of biodegradable packaging. When creating an eco-innovative product, it is advisable to follow so-called life-cycle assessment respecting the way raw materials are extracted, processed, made into a product, distributed, used and packed in order to reuse or eliminate them. It is able to identify certain areas where energy or water consumption should be minimized and to assess cost effectiveness.¹² J. Ottman mentions two basic strategic approaches in implementation of eco-innovations:

- production of goods which combine customers' requirements for quality, performance, availability and utility with the least possible environmental impact and with regard to social values;

10 OTTMAN, J. A.: *The New Rules of Green Marketing: Strategies, Tools, and Inspiration for Sustainable Branding*. Sheffield : Greenleaf Publishing, 2011, p. 91.

11 BEZÁKOVÁ, Z., ZAUŠKOVÁ, A.: Zelené inovácie – výzva pre trvalo udržateľný rozvoj Slovenska. In RAJČÁK, M., KOLLÁROVÁ, D. (eds.): *Trvalo udržateľný rozvoj regiónov a podnikov pomocou inovatívnych a zelených technológií*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2012, p. 48.

12 OTTMAN, J. A.: *The New Rules of Green Marketing: Strategies, Tools, and Inspiration for Sustainable Branding*. Sheffield : Greenleaf Publishing, 2011, p. 49.

- requirements towards businesses by way of relevant communication which is generated by customers and can help to implement principles of production sustainability.¹³

Consequently, the author also determines a new paradigm of green marketing. She states that green marketing is gradually replacing conventional marketing as it provides more complex opportunities for targeting customers and meeting their high requirements. Green marketing highlights environmental and social values, requires a holistic approach and offers eco-innovative products or services.¹⁴ However, spreading deceiving or incomplete information – green washing – seems to be rather dangerous.¹⁵ Sustainable principles need to be followed across all aspects of activities. Green activities and marketing strategies of a business need to be harmonized and thus prepare the market for penetration of a new eco-innovative product or service.¹⁶ According to J. Ottman seven basic strategies should be applied for successful green marketing:

1. thorough understanding of environmental and social opinions and values customers and company stakeholders declare, preparation of a long-term strategic plan and its implementation;
2. development of new products and services combining customers’ requirements for quality, availability and usability with a minimum environmental impact in course of their whole life cycle;
3. development of such a brand that can offer practical benefits and at the same time educates a customer and spreads awareness;
4. building credibility by means of transparent communication and fulfillment of obligations;
5. a proactive approach to global environmental and social problems which can help gain a competitive advantage;

13 OTTMAN, J. A.: *The New Rules of Green Marketing: Strategies, Tools, and Inspiration for Sustainable Branding*. Sheffield : Greenleaf Publishing, 2011, p. 43.

14 OTTMAN, J. A.: *The New Rules of Green Marketing: Strategies, Tools, and Inspiration for Sustainable Branding*. Sheffield : Greenleaf Publishing, 2011, p. 44.

15 KORAUŠ, A. et al.: Security Aspects: Protection of People in Connection with the Use of Personal Identification Numbers. In *Journal of Security and Sustainability Issues*, 2019, Vol. 8, No. 3, p. 319-330.

16 ZAUŠKOVÁ, A., GRIB, L., KYSELICA, P.: *Phygitalové komunikačné nástroje na podporu environmentálnych inovačných procesov v slovenskom podnikateľskom prostredí*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2016, p. 24.

6. to think hollistic;
7. to try to have a zero environmental impact and promote sustainable consumption and product recycling.

Perception of environmental marketing strategies and green products play a crucial role in the highly competitive environment.¹⁷ We may say that the primary goal of green marketing is development and promotion of products which try to minimize negative environmental impact and increase the quality of health and life of people, animals and the whole planet. Its main goal is to influence the existing marketing practice and thinking.¹⁸ In today's modern and highly-developed era marked by fast technological progress, an environmental message needs to be spread by the Internet which is set to enrich traditional marketing approaches. The world of digital media determines the change of user's attitude to information, the way this information is used as well as mutual communication (among users, among users and businesses or state authorities).¹⁹ The contribution also focuses on a brief characteristics of the SoLoMo marketing concept which seems to be the most effective tool for increasing people's awareness. Public insensibility towards environmental issues needs to be neutralized by personalized communication.

3 SoLoMo Marketing

The SoLoMo marketing concept refers to convergence of technologies based upon geolocation and cooperation while interconnecting online marketing with offline environment and providing a user with a personalized message in the right time and on the right place. We

17 MIKLENČIČOVÁ, R.: Global Perception of Eco-products and Ecological Marketing Activities by Consumers. In KLIŠTIK, T. (ed.): *Globalization and Its Socio-Economic Consequences: 16th International Scientific Conference*. Žilina : ŽU – University of Žilina, 2016, p. 1385.

18 ČÁBYOVÁ, L.: Environmentálny marketing a jeho význam pre spoločnosť. In ZAUŠKOVÁ, A., MADLEŇÁK, A. (eds.): *Manažment environmentálnych inovácií prostredníctvom phygitalových nástrojov*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2017, p. 10.

19 GRIB, L.: Nové prístupy v marketingovej komunikácii pri propagácii ekoinovácií v oblasti stavebníctva. In MADLEŇÁK, A., MIKLENČIČOVÁ, R. (eds.): *Eko-inovácie ako nástroj konkurencieschopnosti – Aktuálne trendy a nové výzvy na ceste k digitálnemu marketingu*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2017, p. 168.

can speak about connection of three current trends – social media, geolocation services and mobile devices.²⁰ A mobile application as a product of this concept uses geolocation services in order to target a customer situated in its geographic proximity. A personalized message is also adapted to specific social media and therefore satisfies users’s requirements through various mobile devices.²¹ The key advantage of the online SoLoMo concept is the ability to target a niche group of customers – so-called microsegments sharing the same interest or hobby. Microsegmentation is a marketing strategy using the data collection process for identification of specific customer requirements who are split into smaller groups according to specific psychographic and behavioural traits.²² The key function of the SoLoMo marketing is its ability to connect a company to its customers, either current or prospective ones, and thus create better customer experience.²³

The social media environment can be promoted by various activities, e.g. software applications, computer programmes enabling their users to interact, create and share data online. Such tools are particularly useful for individuals as well as communities, businessmen or entities. Nowadays there are over 1.2 billion of multi-purpose applications available in stores. Social networking sites applications are used to share, create communities, fun or trade. Chatbots have become a must – this is a software programme using artificial intelligence which simulates intelligent communication by a written or spoken text in the chatting interface (e.g. Facebook, Messenger, WeChat). Chatbots are able to take over functions of communication service, either for fun or offering advice. In addition hereto, social networking sites use complex mathematic algorithms to deliver a personalized message.²⁴ When we

20 CONNECTHEDOT: *SoLoMo or Social, Local, Mobile – The New Experiential Mindset*. [online]. [2018-11-08]. Available at: <<https://connecthedot.com/%20internet-of-things/solomo/>>.

21 YANG, H., LIN, R.: Determinants of the Intention to Continue Use of SoLoMo Services: Consumption Values and the Moderating Effects of Overloads. In *Computers in Human Behavior*, 2017, Vol. 73, p. 583-595.

22 WOSKOFF, K.: *How to Get Started with Micro-segmentation*. [online]. [2018-07-31]. Available at: <<https://www.merkleinc.com/blog/how-get-started-micro-segmentation>>.

23 SANTOS, A.: *SoLoMo: The Rise of Digital Marketing*. [online]. [2018-11-10]. Available at: <<https://www.slideshare.net/kimmy961/solomo-the-rise-of-digital-marketing>>.

24 TUTEN, T. L.: *Social Media Marketing*. 3rd Edition. Los Angeles : SAGE, 2018, p. 207.

look at the type of content to be consumed by the Internet, online videos come first. 92% of Internet users follow online videos each month. These are followed by online TV stream (58%), online and live PC games (30%), watching the others playing these games (23%) and watching Internet sports tournaments (16%). Voice search or online searching have also reported growing tendencies. Four out of ten Internet users use a voice command or voice search once a month at least. It is a complex revolutionary change of user's attitude to online content as well as to a particular mobile device.²⁵ According to the estimations, there are over 5.6 billion users of mobile devices worldwide. When it comes to a type of a mobile device, a smartphone is used by 5.4 billion users. Downloading and installation of mobile apps has increased by 9% on a yearly basis. In 2018 up to 101 billion dollars are spent on mobile apps worldwide.²⁶ It is crucial to understand a user's route, i.e. to implement changes which occurred after transfer from desktop to mobile devices.²⁷

Local online marketing is becoming a priority. As for Slovakia, up to 46% of searching is done through mobile devices – a responsive website is a must. Local searching do not necessarily need to lead to further click onto another website. If a business is registered by „Google My Business“ service (e.g. a café or a restaurant), Google is able to offer its user basic information in local searching (rating, distance, address, localisation on the map, office hours or any other description). It is interesting to note that local searching often include voice search – up to 40% of voice search is of a local character. Lots of businesses have understood importance of geolocation services – the number of searches with „near me“ keywords has dropped recently as the majority is based upon user's localisation. A user searching for a business or service in his/her proximity, turns up in person in one day. 28% of such searches result in purchase. Geolocation services offer not only easy and useful mobile searching or purchase by a mobile device, but they are able to get a customer come in person to a brick and mortar shop.²⁸ Marketing is becoming a service. Businesses

25 KEMP, S.: *Digital 2019: Global Internet Use Accelerates*. [online]. [2019-01-30]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/blog/2019/01/digital-2019-global-internet-use-accelerates>>.

26 WE ARE SOCIAL: *Digital in 2019*. [online]. [2019-01-30]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/global-digital-report-2019>>.

27 ŠVEC, M., MADLEŇÁK, A.: Legal Frameworks for the Phygital Concept. In *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2017, Vol. 13, No. 6, p. 209-217.

28 *Basta Digital: Ako na lokálny online marketing?* Paper presented at the media event. Nádvorie Coworking, Trnava, presented on 6th March 2019.

have understood that success results from valuable content for the audience who is no longer interested in indefinite business propaganda and simple advertising. In practice we may offer a valuable „how-to-do“ YouTube video or an activity which can move the audience into the „centre of attention“ – however, it is important to understand the transfer from „newsfeed“ to „stories“.²⁹ Users require relevant information to be summarized, categorized and personalized.³⁰

4 Use of Solomo Marketing Tools in Presentation of Eco-Innovations of Slovak Businesses

From May to June 2018 the authors conducted their own quantitative research in order to define the rate of use of SoLoMo marketing tools in presentation of eco-innovations of Slovak businesses. The businesses questioned usually promote implementation of eco-innovations into practice. As for their size, there were mostly small (47.8%) and medium-size (39.2%) businesses. As for the geography, there were mostly businesses operating in Bratislava region (41.1%), followed by Trnavsky region (32.5%), Trenčiansky region (7.7%) and Žilinsky region (5.7%) whereas the smallest proportion of businesses were located in the Central and Eastern Slovakia regions (13%). As for their field of business, there were mostly businesses operating in the food industry (14.4%), construction (7.2%) and wood processing industry (6.7%). Other fields of business included: tourism, electrotechnology, energy industry, pharmaceutical industry, metallurgy, chemical industry, textile and clothing industry, IT, agriculture, machinery industry, health care. The majority of businesses ticked „other“ (over 40.7%), e.g. various types of services, warehouse and logistics, transportation, wholesale and retailing, cosmetics, finance, sales, gastronomy, advertising agencies, glass industry, etc.

At the beginning, the authors studied the basic viewpoint of the businesses in relation to environmental protection itself. When answering the question, the respondents had various options to choose from:

- *active* (demonstrating activity, developing activity) – 64.6%;

29 KEMP, S.: *Digital 2019: Global Internet Use Accelerates*. [online]. [2019-01-30]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/blog/2019/01/digital-2019-global-internet-use-accelerates>>.

30 MURA, L. et al.: Economic Freedom – Classification of Its Level and Impact on the Economic Security. In *AD ALTA – Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*, 2017, Vol. 7, No. 2, p. 154-157.

- *passive* (not demonstrating activity, defined by inactivity, disinterest) – 2.9%;
- *reactive* (reaction to a change after it occurred; insufficient planning) – 4.8%;
- *preventive* (searching for risky areas in order to avoid a problem) – 14.8%;
- *proactive* (forward thinking, anticipating events and planning changes) – 12.9%.

In the majority of cases, the businesses ticked „active“ (64.6%), which demonstrates the overall change of social climate and behaviour of both individuals and businesses towards nature, social and corporate awareness and eventually, consumer’s demand for ecological and local products. Please find the results in the Graph 2 below.

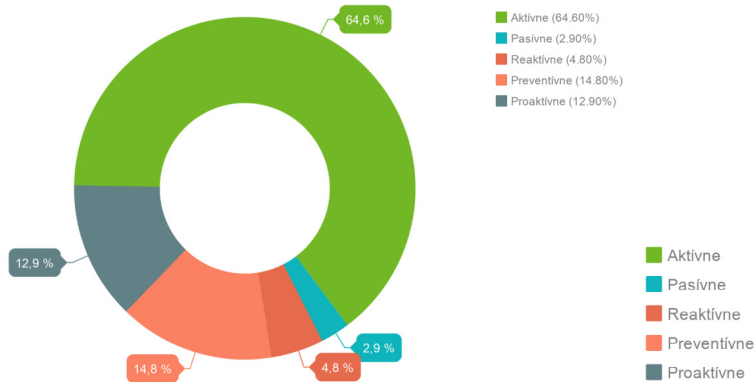


Chart 2: Relations of businesses towards environmental protection

Source: own processing, 2019

In the research, the authors also found out that 82.8% of respondents had already implemented an eco-innovation into their business processes for the last five years. 17.2% of businesses did not implement any special innovation for the last five years while 6.7% of them are still considering this option. These results are summarized in the Graph 2. Environmental activities and green products are promoted several times a year, but not on a regular basis. Communication mainly focuses on introduction of a new product onto the market.

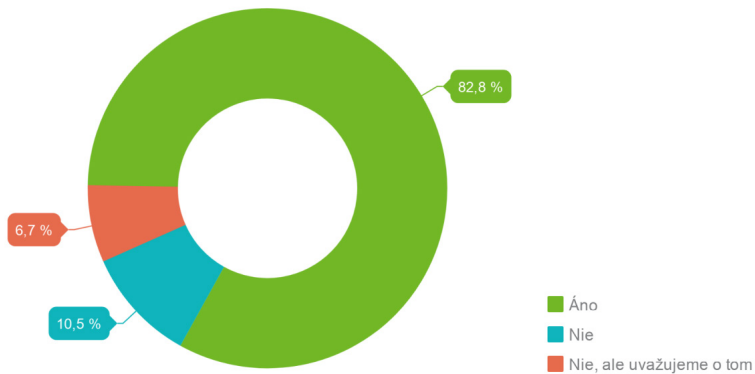


Chart 3: Implementation of an innovation into a business process for the last five years

Source: own processing, 2019

The following part of the research demonstrated in what manner businesses ensure implementation of a communication strategy within and outside the company (i.e. communication with their staff, the public, product promotion) while focusing on specific online communication tools in eco-innovation processes. It especially focuses on application of particular tools in the framework of the SoLoMo marketing concept. From the total number of businesses questioned, up to 72.2% use social media for their innovation process in the company. As for social media, businesses favour mainly social networking sites and their platforms, e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Snapchat or Skype (from a total of up to 94 %). Their content of social networking sites is updated only occasionally, though. Businesses also use websites for sharing video and audio content, such as YouTube, Vimeo, Flickr (41.7%) or photo sharing websites, e.g. Pinterest or Instagram (39.1%). They also use various chatrooms and discussion forums (26.5% from the total) and blogs and vlogs (24.5%). The least popular communication forms are podcast, videocast (7.9%) and wiki systems such as Wikipedia (7.9%). The research also showed that social media are mainly used by food industry companies. The results are summarized in the Table 1 below.

Table 1: Use of social media within the business innovation process

	Yes (%)	No (%)
Social networking sites	94.0	6.0
Video and audio content sharing websites	41.7	58.3
Photo sharing websites	39.1	60.9
Chatrooms and discussion forums	26.5	73.5
Blogs, vlogs	24.5	75.5
Podcast, videocast	7.9	92.1
Wiki systems	7.9	92.1
<i>Total</i>	72.2	

Source: own processing, 2019

The research from 2019³¹ shows that active users of social media account for over 45% of the overall worldwide population with the annual increase of 9%. 67% of the worldwide population are unique users of mobile devices, which is an annual increase of 2%. 42% of the worldwide population are users of social media via a mobile device, which is an annual increase of 10%. Facebook and Instagram are the fastest growing social networking sites.³² Facebook reports the highest proportion of active users followed by YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, WeChat, Instagram, QQ, QZone, Tik Tok, Twitter, etc.³³ Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Snapchat are the most popular social networking sites based on the minutes spent on a worldwide scale.³⁴ According to the research, an average user of social media spends two hours and 16 minutes a day on social platforms, which accounts for one

31 KEMP, S.: *Digital 2019: Global Internet Use Accelerates*. [online]. [2019-01-30]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/blog/2019/01/digital-2019-global-internet-use-accelerates>>.

32 CHAFFEY, D.: *Global Social Media Research Summary 2019*. [online]. [2019-02-12]. Available at: <<https://www.smartinsights.com/social-media-marketing/social-media-strategy/new-global-social-media-research/>>.

33 STATISTA: *Most Famous Social Network Sites Worldwide as of January 2019, Ranked by Number of Active Users (in Millions)*. [online]. [2019-04-01]. Available at: <<https://www.statista.com/statistics/272014/global-social-networks-ranked-by-number-of-users/>>.

34 KEMP, S.: *Digital in 2018: World's Internet Users Pass the 4 Billion Mark*. [online]. [2018-01-30]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/uk/blog/2018/01/global-digital-report-2018>>.

third from all online activities.³⁵ Social networking sites represent an ideal place for sharing paid as well as organic content with potentially high reach. Their effectivity is gradually dropping these days due to more expensive paid advertising and slighter decline of their reach. This is a continuous worldwide trend marketers and businesses should take into consideration in their marketing strategies and communicate to current as well as potential customers.

When looking at Europe, especially EU members states and according to the Eurostat database, 47% of businesses operating within EU used at least one type of social networking site in 2017 whereas more than 8 out of 10 companies (84%) use social media to build their image and promote products. From 2013 to 2017 the rate of use of social media for marketing purpose by business entities operating within EU increased from 22% to 40%. As for using social media for communication with customers, the rate increased from 15% to 27% and in the context of staff recruitment the rate increased from 9% to 23%.³⁶ The Eurostat research from 2016³⁷ demonstrates that 34% from the total number of business entities use social media for their activities. The leader in this area is Norway (68%), the Netherlands (65%) and Finland (60%). Businesses are gradually using social media as a marketing communication tool in order to get feedback from customers or communicate from outside or inside. Even though this trend seems to be obvious throughout the whole Slovak business environment, it still lack complete application. The authors also discovered that only 19.6% from the total number of businesses they questioned had used some kind of a geolocation tool to identify a precise location of the material for production, the goods for sale, the position of employees for work or better targeting of the message despite the fact that especially these services have started playing a key role in the whole business environment. Some of the businesses also stated specific

35 KEMP, S.: *Digital 2019: Global Internet Use Accelerates*. [online]. [2019-01-30]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/blog/2019/01/digital-2019-global-internet-use-accelerates>>.

36 EUROSTAT: *Social Media – Statistics on the Use by Enterprises*. [online]. [2017-12-01]. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Social_media_-_statistics_on_the_use_by_enterprises>.

37 EUROSTAT: *Internet Advertising of Businesses – Statistics on Usage of Ads*. [online]. [2017-12-01]. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Internet_advertising_of_businesses_-_statistics_on_usage_of_ads>.

geolocation tools they prefer to use: GPS systems (in a car or a van) for monitoring vehicles, monitoring movement of goods and materials or identifying lots and constructions in the terrain as well as for delivering a parcel, localizing stores, positioning employees during their business trips, sales representatives, targeting advertising by geographic location when promoting services or using social networking sites and SMS competitions, verifying food producers, intranet, etc.

As stated by Eurostat research from 2016³⁸ only 16% of Slovak businesses use online advertising which targets users by their geographic location. Norway (42%) is a leader in this area. As for the size of the company, advertising using geolocation is mainly implemented by large businesses (41%) in contrast to small and medium-sized enterprises (30%). As for the scope of business, geo-targeting in advertising is mainly used in IT, retailing as well as wholesale, energetics or large production companies. Geolocation tools and their application in the framework of business marketing strategy can ensure a highly personalized message. According to the recent research³⁹ 90% of marketers see their business future in personalization. In relation to the aforementioned, the authors also studied whether particular businesses collect data and information about their customers and analyze them by a specific computer software. 46.4% of businesses confirmed proper data collection and analysis. Such databases are regarded as an important competitive advantage as they enable implementation of various digital marketing tools, precise targeting and personalized messaging. Last but not least, 24/7 customer service and customer feedback have become a must. Yet personal data protection and data security need to be considered to avoid possible identity theft or breach of confidentiality rules.

Thanks to the research, the authors found out that 40.2% of respondents had used some of the mobile marketing tools when promoting outputs of their own research and development activities or advertising a specific product. In general, these businesses mostly use mobile applications as a specific tool of mobile marketing (54.8% from the total). Furthermore,

38 EUROSTAT: *Internet Advertising of Businesses – Statistics on Usage of Ads*. [online]. [2017-12-01]. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Internet_advertising_of_businesses_-_statistics_on_usage_of_ads>.

39 HALL, S. H.: *15 Smart Ecommerce Personalization Examples That Boost Sales*. [online]. [2019-04-15]. Available at: <<https://optinmonster.com/ecommerce-personalization-examples/#>>.

they also use PPC advertising in mobile search engines (41.7%), SMS marketing including flash messages, push messages, interactive messages and MMS marketing (32.1%), QR codes, NFC, RFID, EAN codes (28.6%) and mobile banners (23.8%). They occasionally use geolocation services (15.5%). The results are summarized in the Table 2 below.

Table 2: Use of mobile marketing for product promotion

	Yes (%)	No (%)
Mobile applications	54.8	45.2
Mobile search engine advertising	41.7	58.3
SMS marketing	32.1	67.9
QR codes, NFC, RFID, EAN codes	28.6	71.4
Mobile banners	23.8	76.2
Geolocation services	15.5	84.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>40.2</i>	

Source: own processing, 2019

As shown in the research from 2018⁴⁰ 48% of customers use a mobile device to search for information about a product they are going to purchase. We may speak about a considerable change of consumer’s attitude to digital information and services which are accessed from various types of mobile devices at the expense of desktop devices. Mobile experience needs to be optimized – either in a mobile application or on a mobile website. Up to 90% of mobile activities are done through applications.⁴¹ Strong positive experience enhances user’s engagement and loyalty as well as the proportion of time consumers spend online. Content marketing represents an unseparable part of the online environment. According to the research by Eurostat from 2016⁴² context advertising is one of the most popular form of online advertising as it is currently used by 62% of Slovak businesses. The research conducted by the authors shows that the businesses they questioned also use Pay

40 HUBSPOT: *The Ultimate List of Marketing Statistics for 2018*. [online]. [2018-12-01]. Available at: <<https://www.hubspot.com/marketing-statistics>>.

41 HUBSPOT: *The Ultimate List of Marketing Statistics for 2018*. [online]. [2018-12-01]. Available at: <<https://www.hubspot.com/marketing-statistics>>.

42 EUROSTAT: *Internet Advertising of Businesses – Statistics on Usage of Ads*. [online]. [2018-12-01]. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Internet_advertising_of_businesses_-_statistics_on_usage_of_ads>.

Per Click advertising (37.3%) and content marketing (27.3%) apart from other digital marketing communication tools. At the end of the questionnaire, the authors studied the awareness of the term „SoLoMo marketing“ in the Slovak business environment. Only 7.2% of businesses stated they had already encountered this terms on the Internet, in books, in advertising (mainly Facebook) as well as in marketing seminars, conferences and workshops or through personal development. Up to 92.9% of businesses have never heard this term whereas 9.6% of them stated they would be interested in any further information hereon. Based upon the results obtained, the authors of the research have understood that „SoLoMo marketing“ would need to be properly defined in the Slovak expert literature.

Conclusion

The recent research including 31 participants from countries all over the world shows that 96% use their smartphone within one hour from the time they wake up, some of them while being in bed. They check their e-mails, follow up news on social networking sites or post a new story.⁴³ Accordig to H. Hubináková the Internet has become the heart of our society and there is no doubt we all live in the digital world.⁴⁴ The number of people using the Internet has increased dramatically over the last year. January 2018 saw over one million of people online a dayfor the first time, which means 11 new users per second. The way users connect to the Internet changes very fast – people tend to perform online activities through mobile devices.⁴⁵ The question is: How can we manage to attract attention of such large public and educate them environmentally? In their contribution, the authors describe connection of three basic elements of the SoLoMo marketing concept – social networking sites, geolocation services and mobile devices by means of which we are able to target specific audience in a personalised and creative way.

43 TUTEN, T. L.: *Social Media Marketing*. 3rd Edition. Los Angeles : SAGE, 2018, p. 208.

44 HUBINÁKOVÁ, H.: Importance of Games in the Educational Process. In PIVEC, M., GRÜNDLER, J. (eds.): *Proceedings of the 11th European Conference on Game-based Learning ECGBL 2017*. Reading : Academic Conferences and Publishing International Limited, 2017, p. 814.

45 KEMP, S.: *Digital 2019: Global Internet Use Accelerates*. [online]. [2019-01-30]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/blog/2019/01/digital-2019-global-internet-use-accelerates>>.

Eco-innovations live a big boom – literally said, they caused a big bang on a global scale. Therefore their communication through digital marketing tools is essential.

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MARKETING OF EDUCATION AND ITS SPECIFICS IN MODERN SOCIETY

Romana Schunová

ABSTRAKT:

Modern society is a knowledge-based society. Education has become a valuable investment in recent years. Knowledge is regarded as an increasingly important means of achieving extensive economic growth and development. Intellectual property is used to gain a competitive advantage in the marketplace. Differentiation is a viable strategy for those education establishments, which desire to offer educational programmes appealing to their clients. To build their strategy, it is inevitable to adopt approach focused on using effective marketing communication tools. The main objective of the theoretical part is to demonstrate specifics of marketing communication and focus on event marketing as a popular and effective marketing tool used by education establishments.

KEY WORDS:

education, event marketing, marketing communication in the education sector, marketing mix in the education sector, PR, specifics of marketing education

Introduction

Modern society is a knowledge-based society. It enables access to information and education as well as it creates possibilities to use knowledge in diverse constructive decision making processes and improving one's quality of life. Investment in education is regarded as one of the most valuable assets in today's modern society. Knowledge has been used as a tool to achieve a country's economic growth and boost its economic performance. Intellectual property is not only an important part of people's lives, but it also significantly contributes to achieving company's competitiveness. Educated people are valuable for each society they live in.¹ Having a good quality education and gaining a great deal of knowledge have become part of people's lifestyle. People are driven and motivated to pursue and obtain their degree since good education and qualification may provide them with better job

1 FRK, V., PIROHOVÁ, I.: Znalostná spoločnosť a človek ako jej prvoradá hodnota. In PIROHOVÁ, I., LUKÁČ, E. (eds.): *Vzdelávanie dospelých v poznatkovo orientovanej spoločnosti*. Prešov : Filozofická fakulta Prešovskej univerzity, 2010, p. 135.

opportunities in the labour market. Lifelong learning contributes to the further development of knowledge-based society. Educated people are flexible and more capable of adopting to existing social changes. They are more flexible, productive and are more likely to use their potential and modern technology. Now, governments put emphasis on increasing quality of education and qualification as well as supporting labour market with better-qualified labour force. Transformation to a knowledge-based economy helps to achieve a country's competitive advantage.²

Education is a process provided by educational establishments, number of which continually rises. To improve their image, educational establishments offer new educational courses and programmes. They introduce modern marketing principles in order to better their communication and achieve higher performance. The concept of marketing communication in educational establishments in Slovakia is relatively new. It is only 15 years ago, that it started to be used. The development of marketing communication strategy is closely related to different variables, such as demographic changes, interest in students' needs, financial support of educational establishments, development of private educational sector or changes in the labour market – professional mobility of educators and their qualification and mobility of students. The recent tendency to turn Slovak educational establishments into those ones working in accordance with European standards plays an important role in contributing to the development of marketing communication. Changes in marketing communication strategies are very common. Nevertheless, those changes ought to bring and guarantee the quality of education.³ Educational establishments may definitely use public relations tools and techniques to communicate effectively. Public relations techniques help foster their business relationships. The importance of event marketing has gained in strength recently, whether used in its classic form, or online.⁴

2 ORESKÝ, M. et al.: *Aplikovaný marketing*. Bratislava : Wolters Kluwer, 2016, p. 241.

3 See: ČERNÁ, J. et al.: *Marketing vzdelávacích inštitúcií*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2015.

4 See also: HALADA, J. et al.: *Marketingová komunikácia a Public Relations*. Praha : Nakladatelství Karolinum, 2016.

1 Education and Marketing

Education has become another significant economic variable, which helps to make effective educational investment decisions taking into account its quality, effectiveness and financial viability. The society we live in considers knowledge to be a determining factor in productivity. Knowledge-based economy focuses on enhancing education.⁵ Education as a lifelong process is a significant contributor towards improving people’s overall quality of life. In modern societies, maintaining one’s good mental health is crucial to achieving respect.⁶ Education is a key factor, which shapes one’s personality. It is not only a prerequisite for being able to fully participate in social and economic life, but it is also a universal human value, the goals of which stem from individual as well as social needs.⁷ In every developed country, education plays a key role in undergoing its economic revival, improving its competitiveness, boosting its economic growth and improving people’s quality of life.⁸ An educated society is a main indicator of a well-developed country defining its competitiveness and ability to innovate. Labour is now identified with knowledge.⁹

Development of education politics has its own history closely linked to a few important documents. The Maastricht Treaty (1992) is a real milestone since it emphasizes the importance and quality of education. The other important documents in the field of education are White Papers (1993) and White Papers (1995), which highlight the importance of investment in education, Green Papers (1993). UNESCO International Conferences on Adult education CONFINTEA belong to those events having a visible impact on education. The other milestones to be mentioned are: The Lisbon Treaty (2000), Memorandum on Lifelong Learning issued by the European Commission, Europe 2020, Education

5 FRK, V.: Rozvoj vedomostného kapitálu organizácie. In PIROHOVÁ, I. (ed.): *Úloha andragogiky v spoločnosti založenej na vedomostiach*: Prešov : Filozofická fakulta Prešovskej univerzity, 2007, p. 120.

6 For more information, see: BARTÁK, J.: *Vzdělávání ve firmě*. Praha : Alfa Publishing, 2007.

7 ORESKÝ, M. et al.: *Aplikovaný marketing*. Bratislava : Wolters Kluwer, 2016, p. 243.

8 GREŇČÍKOVÁ, A.: Význam vzdelávania v regionálnom rozvoji. In *Manažment školy v praxi*, 2010, Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 7.

9 ORESKÝ, M. et al.: *Aplikovaný marketing*. Bratislava : Wolters Kluwer, 2016, p. 241-242.

and Training 2020.¹⁰ Education and Training 2020 is a framework providing a set of principles based on knowledge and innovation, which positively contribute to a country's economic growth. The main objective is to increase the share of individuals with tertiary educational attainment aged 30 – 34 to 40% until 2020.¹¹ Education and Training 2020 (ET 2020) is a strategic framework which proposes strategies to support education systems of the EU member states enabling EU citizens to reach their full potential and to stimulate economic employment and prosperity. Another significant document 'Millennium 2001' defines scopes and principles needed for implementing changes in education. It has contributed to decentralization of education system. Act No 245/2008 Col. of Laws of the Slovak Republic is another step further. The Slovak Republic is a signatory of the so-called Bologna Declaration convened in 1999 and belongs to the group of European countries the main goal of which is to propose a European higher education area.¹² The main objectives of education policies of the EU member states are the following:

- To support lifelong learning and mobility.
- To improve quality of education.
- To find and implement educational innovations.
- To learn and obtain new skills.¹³

The main objectives in the field of education policies are the following:

- To improve quality of tertiary education.
- To raise profile of university programmes and academic degrees.
- To internationalize tertiary education.
- To enhance the attractiveness of university study programmes.
- To grant the access to education to every one.
- To support lifelong learning.
- To design student-focused curriculum.
- To improve co-operation between higher education institutions.
- To support mobility and studying abroad.

10 ORESKÝ, M. et al.: *Aplikovaný marketing*. Bratislava : Wolters Kluwer, 2016, p. 241-242.

11 KOŠTA, J.: Súvislosti formovania slovenského trhu práce v európskom priestore. In PAUHOFVÁ, I. (ed.) et al.: *Paradigmy zmien v 21. storočí*. Bratislava : Ekonomický ústav SAV, 2012, p. 163.

12 See: ČERNÁ, J. et al.: *Marketing vzdelávacích inštitúcií*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2015.

13 ORESKÝ, M. et al.: *Aplikovaný marketing*. Bratislava : Wolters Kluwer, 2016, p. 243.

Higher education institutions, undoubtedly, maintain their unique role, and their mission is straightforward. They offer the most advanced type of degree programmes, conduct research and development, and contribute to the regional development. In addition, they offer lifelong learning, have an impact on increasing human capital and its quality. Competitiveness in education is strongly influenced by the emergence of a true global economy, student and professional mobility, low birth rate and technology advances. Higher education institutions are to carry out marketing research in order to design study programmes with clearly stated requirements. It is essential that those marketing activities that positively affect the management of education establishments be put into practice. Furthermore, it is also essential to use either information or operational marketing tools effectively.¹⁴

2 Specifics of Marketing in the Education System

Marketing for educational establishments is a management process, the result of which is gaining in-depth knowledge, influencing and satisfying needs of the participants of the learning process and clients through meeting the needs of an educational establishment effectively. Marketing for educational establishments builds on marketing for non-profit organisations and marketing for services.¹⁵ In education, marketing is a management process, the result of which is gaining in-depth knowledge, influencing and satisfying needs of customers and clients through meeting the needs of an educational establishment effectively.¹⁶ Education must be student-centred. In recent years, there is a more diverse offer of different educational establishments. To attract new students, implementation of a suitable marketing strategy is highly needed. Marketing of education is widely understood as an exchange of values between students and institutions.¹⁷ One of the main objectives of marketing of education is to define the needs, requirements and desires of a target market - students. Educational establishments ought to provide a high-quality education, to work with accurate, timely and reliable information, to achieve high level of student satisfaction and loyalty to a chosen institution, as well as to help finance their students'

14 See, for example: ČERNÁ, J. et al.: *Marketing vzdelávacích inštitúcií*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2015.

15 SVĚTLÍK, J.: *Marketing školy*. Zlín : EKKA, 1996, p. 18

16 MATÚŠ, J.: Interakcia marketingového mixu a prostredia. In MATÚŠ, J. (ed.) et al.: *Marketing vzdelávacích inštitúcií*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2007, p. 133-134.

17 See: SVĚTLÍK, J.: *Marketingové řízení školy*. Praha : Wolters Kluwer, 2009.

education accordingly. We may assume that students' intentions to continue their studies with the same institution are strongly influenced by the above-mentioned facts. Moreover, these facts play a major role in students' willingness to recommend the school they study at, or to attract and engage prospective students. The main role of educational establishments is to define the needs and requirements of a target market through a portfolio of study options, communication policy, pricing, distribution of programmes and services offered by school. Effective marketing management as one of the main tools is used to fulfil major objectives of an educational establishment. Diversity and a good quality of educational policies, financing, awareness and loyalty are the key factors contributing to the marketing management of every educational establishment.¹⁸

In the education sector, marketing professionals carefully select qualified educators, create positive working environment, design an optimum portfolio of educational programmes, pay attention to pricing, distribution policy, communication and analysis of student-client satisfaction in order to achieve a competitive advantage build on originality and uniqueness. Well-designed educational programmes build loyalty, brand and positive image. Enhancement and innovation may bring better performance. However, it is the human factor that still plays a key role in the field of education. Not only marketing professionals, but also students may work as a relevant source of innovation. Within the marketing used in the education sector, relationship marketing needs to be mentioned as well. To offer quality education, the key questions we need to ask are: What to teach; How to teach; Who to teach; Why to teach; When to teach.¹⁹ Regarding the marketing strategy used in higher education, there are a few factors, which need to be taken into account:

- scope within which universities may perform is rather limited;
- purpose of public funding is strictly defined;
- number of target markets is quite high;
- heterogeneity of faculties;
- limited independence;
- provision of higher education is part of complex services;

18 For more information, see: ŠTEFKO, R.: *Akademické marketingové inštrumentárium v marketingu vysokej školy*. Bratislava : R. S. Royal Service, 2003.

19 See: VODÁK, J., KUCHARČÍKOVÁ, A.: *Efektívni vzdelávaní zamestnanců*. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2011.

- university performance is mostly financed indirectly, via linear rate subsidies;
- no or little know-how when implementing marketing strategy.²⁰

While defining what type of marketing strategy to use, it is highly recommended that educational establishments carry out marketing research in order to gather information about market targets, as well as to forecast market future development. Strategic planning builds on in-depth analysis of the marketing environment of each educational establishment, whether it is its macro-economic environment, internal environment or external environment.²¹ The external environment is defined by the macro environment, which cannot be influenced by any business and the ‘mezzo environment’ represented by students, parents, the public and their attitudes or stronger competitors, too. The internal environment includes teachers, school equipment, image, corporate culture, history of school, etc. Unlike educational establishments, in which we do not observe frequent changes, today’s environment is much faster changing. Therefore, each successful educational establishment is expected to accept the inevitability of any change, show its flexibility and adapt to a new environment.²²

Within the macro environment, the factors with an impact on educational establishments are:

- a) Demographic environment: a crucial prerequisite for success of economy is population structure, its education level and qualification. Only educated and qualified individuals are capable of applying knowledge. The main goal of Strategy Europe 2020 is to increase the share of individuals with tertiary educational attainment.
- b) Economic environment: Slovakia is an EU country with one of the lowest investments in education in relation to the gross domestic product. What characterizes Slovakia’s economic environment is its high long-term youth unemployment rate, which places Slovakia in the group of the countries with the highest unemployment rates in the EU. One of the reasons why it is so is that the education system in Slovakia is not flexible enough. It does not reflect the current demand in the labour market either. The access to lifelong learning for the

20 ORESKÝ, M. et al.: *Aplikovaný marketing*. Bratislava : Wolters Kluwer, 2016, p. 243.

21 See: ČERNÁ, J. et al.: *Marketing vzdelávacích inštitúcií*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2015.

22 SVĚTLÍK, J.: *Marketingové řízení školy*. Praha : Wolters Kluwer, 2009, p. 32.

group of people aged 55 to 64 is rather limited, which consequently negatively affects their employment opportunities. The economic environment is characterized by a low level of education, and continuous and consistent quality improvement is inevitable. The offer of lifelong learning programmes is totally inadequate.²³ On the other hand, the share of individuals with tertiary educational attainment has risen by 100% in the past 10 years.²⁴

- c) IT environment: Research and development funding of the EU does not help its economy. The economic growth of the EU is on the decline. Slovakia belongs to the group of the countries investing in higher education less than 1% of its gross domestic product. Education capacities in The Slovak Republic are one of the lowest in the EU. Financing innovation in Slovakia is heavily influenced by its insufficient support. In Slovakia, Information and Communications technology (ICT) is on the rise, whereas the use of these technologies does not correspond with the European standards as its support towards ICT is inadequate.²⁵
- d) Political environment: it includes laws and legislative measures with their impact on education.
- e) Cultural environment: it comprises of people's views and beliefs, their cultural values and views. The economic environment influencing consumer purchasing power as well as the political environment implementing various education-related regulations and laws are the most impactful in the macro environment.

Strategic planning of educational establishments is based on the analysis of their strengths and weaknesses. When opting for a marketing strategy, they are to evaluate a current market offering, identification of opportunities in the education market, competitive analysis, and market share.²⁶ If an individual decides to obtain higher education, it is important to know what purpose it serves. In order to make an individual motivated, marketing is the key factor that may shape one's views on education and help to choose such an establishment, which meets one's needs.

23 ČERVENKA, L.: *Vývoj nezamestnanosti mladých ľudí na Slovensku*. [online]. [2018-03-14]. Available at: <<http://www.iness.sk/stranka/8126-vyvoj-nezamestnanosti-mladych-ludi-na-slovensku.html>>.

24 See: ORESKÝ, M. et al.: *Aplikovaný marketing*. Bratislava : Wolters Kluwer, 2016.

25 *World Economic Forum. The Global Competitiveness Report 2015-2016*. [online]. [2019-04-04]. Available at <http://alianciapas.sk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Global_Competitiveness_Report_2015-2016.pdf>.

26 See: ČERNÁ, J. et al.: *Marketing vzdelávacích inštitúcií*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2015.

3 Marketing Mix in the Education Sector

While marketing used by educational establishments is built on marketing for non-profit organisations, it uses its specific tools.²⁷ Except for traditional 4P – Product, Price, Place and Promotion, marketing for the purpose of education uses such tools as personalities (public figures, educators), process pedagogical approaches and participation activating.²⁸ Relating to marketing mix from the customer’s point of view, the 4C are: customer value (value, quality and attractiveness of the product, employment opportunities of graduates), customer costs (tuition fees, travel costs, food and accommodation, etc.), convenience (comfortable and attractive environment, availability of study material, etc.), communication (co-operation and communication among teachers, the student administration department and students).²⁹ Educational outputs are the direct effects on students in relation to meeting their needs, such as study programmes, graduates, outputs of school (coursebooks, conferences), commercial activities and the contribution of universities to regional development.³⁰

On one hand, there are highly market-oriented educational programmes designed for placing graduates in the private sector, and the so-called on-the-job-learning programmes, which include courses, trainings, vocational trainings, work-based learning, apprenticeships, employee training programmes and inductions. On the other hand, there are programmes, such as classroom-based teaching strategies offering no or few possibilities to gain necessary work experience. These programmes have not adopted a market-oriented approach whatsoever. It is impossible to evaluate the effectiveness of educational programmes without determining their market orientation and considering one’s employment possibilities. Since a large number of participants demand high-quality products at low, affordable prices, the intersection of the

27 ORESKÝ, M. et al.: *Aplikovaný marketing*. Bratislava : Wolters Kluwer, 2016, p. 247.

28 ŠVANDOVÁ, Z.: Marketing vo vzdelávaní. In MATÚŠ, J., ČÁBYOVÁ, L., ĎURKOVÁ, K., KOLLÁROVÁ, D. (eds.): *Marketing vzdelávacích inštitúcií*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2007, p. 51.

29 MATÚŠ, J.: Podstata a význam imidžu vzdelávacej inštitúcie. In MATÚŠ, J. (ed.) et al.: *Budovanie pozitívneho imidžu vzdelávacích inštitúcií*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2006, p. 48.

30 ČERNÁ, J. et al.: *Marketing vzdelávacích inštitúcií*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2015, p. 67.

needs and perspectives of an educational establishment must correspond with the actual needs and perspectives of the participants in the learning process.³¹ In education, the term school curriculum is used. An educational programme is defined within the complex school curriculum of an educational establishment. The formal curriculum promotes teaching programmes, school's informal curriculum (promoting school activities such as excursions, school competitions, socializing, sports and cultural events, etc.) and the hidden curriculum (school environment, relationships between teachers and students, hierarchy and relationships in education, relationships with partners of school, teaching staff, etc.).³²

Price has a specific role in the marketing mix used in the education sector. Services provided by educational establishments are charged. The price includes a tuition fee, educational costs (travel costs, study material, etc.) as well as payments of taxpayers. Budget of a state school includes funding through grants and subsidies and a school's own funds. The amount of the subsidy depends on the number of students, research and development programmes, publication, employability of graduates, etc.³³ Subsidies are granted to finance approved educational courses and programmes, research and development, artistic activities, university development and advancement, and social support of students.³⁴ Distribution policy deals with these key issues: When, Who to, Where and How is the study programme going to be communicated and delivered to a market segment. One of the objectives is to design and provide students with excellent material, personal and IT conditions. Within the distribution, the following factors merit attention: location of school and its convenience, equipment, schedule and distribution methods. In terms of distribution, internal and external forms of study are considered to be common forms of study, and in terms of basic distribution methods, there are two types of learning: regular and distance learning.³⁵ Currently, it is e-learning that is being preferred a lot. One of the advantages of e-learning is its flexible access to all information needed, however, it has

31 ORESKÝ, M. et al.: *Aplikovaný marketing*. Bratislava : Wolters Kluwer, 2016, p. 246.

32 See: SVĚTLÍK, J.: *Marketingové řízení školy*. Praha : Wolters Kluwer, 2009.

33 ČERNÁ, J. et al.: *Marketing vzdělávacích institucí*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2015, p. 84.

34 See: ORESKÝ, M. et al.: *Aplikovaný marketing*. Bratislava : Wolters Kluwer, 2016.

35 ČERNÁ, J. et al.: *Marketing vzdělávacích institucí*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2015, p. 89.

not appealed to as many students as expected so far. The major obstacles to making e-learning more appealing are: strong tradition of traditional classroom-based teaching, lack of ICT skills, not enough e-learning courses, people’s low motivation, lack of government funding.³⁶

Marketing communication has become a prominent player in the education marketing mix. Marketing communication includes a set of communication marketing tools: advertising, personal selling, public relations and direct marketing. Its main purpose is to communicate the message to the target market – current and prospective students, parents, sponsors, institutions in the external environment, and to refine people’s desired behaviour: to increase student enrollment, hosting university open day, etc.³⁷ Public relations (PR) plays a key role in the marketing communication in education. It refers to the process of building, fostering and improving relationships with the public. In recent years, even marketing has been playing a vital role within PR. The key factors are personalities - teachers and educators, their personality traits, charisma, their motivation skills, qualification and knowledge, their pedagogical approaches, communication skills, building favourable relationships with students, communication with their partners as well as their student-friendly approach in teaching.³⁸ Staff members in a school are: personnel administrators, educators and teachers, technical support, service and maintenance staff.³⁹ The human resources department is responsible for recruiting, developing and looking after qualified employees, maintaining positive relationships with them and fostering a sense of belonging in the workplace.

The processes are mutually interconnected steps, methods and activities resulting in providing customers with services in order to satisfy their needs and requirements.⁴⁰ Tuition is an educational process. Requirements of customers as well as new technological advances are most likely to modify these processes. Educational establishments differ in using different educational approaches as well as in modeling different

36 ORESKÝ, M. et al.: *Aplikovaný marketing*. Bratislava : Wolters Kluwer, 2016, p. 259.

37 ČERNÁ, J. et al.: *Marketing vzdelávacích inštitúcií*. Trnava: FMKUCM, 2015, p. 67.

38 See: ĎAĎO, J. et al.: *Marketing služieb*. Bratislava : Mračko, 2006.

39 MATULČÍKOVÁ, M.: Od vedenia vzdelávacej inštitúcie k vodcovstvu. In *Manažment školy v praxi*, 2011, Vol. 5, No. 9, p. 5.

40 See: ĎAĎO, J. et al.: *Marketing služieb*. Bratislava : Mračko, 2006.

pedagogical processes. To gain a competitive advantage, educational programmes ought to be unique and different. Active participation relates to a student participation in offering educational services, which may bring an impact on the output and quality of learning and educational processes as well as word-of-mouth referrals.⁴¹

4 Marketing Communication in Marketing in the Education Sector and Its Current Trends

Marketing communication is a key player in the marketing mix. Its main function is a mutual exchange of information between an educational establishment and its target market. The main marketing communication tools are advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations and direct marketing. Educational establishments in Slovakia do not have enough sources to finance their advertising activities. Advertising in journals, dailies, on-air advertising (aired on radio), online and viral advertising are the most commonly used means of communication.⁴² Sending e-mail newsletters is a popular form of direct marketing. Sales promotion is rare, nevertheless used mostly to promote language courses, business consultancy or counselling. Personal selling as a form of marketing communication is used in exhibitions or other events, such as open day; however, personal selling is only rarely used nowadays.

The most common and effective marketing communication tools used in the education sector are public relations, direct marketing and advertising.⁴³ The most significant tool used in the education sector is public relations, however the importance of event marketing is indisputable, such as event marketing of social and cultural character.⁴⁴ One cannot argue that it is necessary to take into account the impact of every single communication tool on the target market.⁴⁵ Marketing communication is one of the most

41 See also: ORESKÝ, M. et al.: *Aplikovaný marketing*. Bratislava : Wolters Kluwer, 2016.

42 ČÁBYOVÁ, L., PTAČIN, J.: Benchmarking Comparison of Marketing Communication of Universities in Slovakia. In *Communication Today*, 2014, Vol. 5, No. 1, p. 54-69.

43 ČERNÁ, J. et al.: *Marketing vzdelávacích inštitúcií*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2015, p. 100.

44 See: HALADA, J.: *Marketingová komunikácia a Public Relations*. Praha : Nakladatelství Karolinum, 2016.

45 REPČÍKOVÁ, S.: Marketingové riadenie školy ako faktor jej úspechu. In *Manažment školy v praxi*, 2011, Vol. 6, No. 5, p. 10.

discussed marketing tools used by the provider of a particular service in order to communicate the message to a specific target market. The main aim of such a communication strategy is to attract customers and build positive relationships with them. Marketing communication is dynamic and it evolves with the development of social and technological changes. In the education sector, marketing communication is based on an effective and positive communication between a provider of a service and student. The main objectives of marketing communication of an educational establishment are: to form and better image, build loyalty of students and graduates, start co-operation with sponsors, provide accurate, reliable and timely information about the activities and plans of an educational establishment, attract prospective students, increase the number of students with an excellent performance, create its attractiveness in order to achieve a competitive advantage over the other educational establishments.⁴⁶ The main aim of the communication mix is to provide information, stimulate demand, communicate the benefits and value of the product, differ from competitors, achieve and maintain customer loyalty.⁴⁷

To choose specific marketing communication tools, there are a few factors to consider, e.g. the environment. In the internal school environment (staff, students), it is public relations that is used as a communication tool for the purpose of communication between the staff and students. Web pages, social media, events, school media and others are commonplace platforms for the communication with students. Intranet, teambuilding activities or staff meetings communicate the message to school employees. In the external environment (parents, prospective students, sponsors, media, regional and state institutions, business people, professionals, scientific institutions, educational establishments), public relations is a very effective communication tool. The most common techniques are considered to be press release, web pages, social media as well as event marketing, the popularity of which is on the rise. There are other factors that may have an impact on the communication mix choice: rising competition, a great variety of educational establishments, demographic trends, budgeting, different stages of the product life cycle, diversity of

46 For more information, see: ŠTEFKO, R.: *Akademické marketingové inštrumentárium v marketingu vysokej školy*. Bratislava : R. S. Royal Service, 2003.

47 See: ZYMAN, S., BROTT, A.: *Konec reklamy jak jsme ji dosud znali*. Praha : Management Press, 2004.

target markets, changes in education funding system.⁴⁸ To offer quality and build its own identity play a key role in marketing communication. The factors that hinder effective marketing communication in the education sector are: insufficient budgets, no marketing plan, vague targeting, no financial reporting and no checking of the effectiveness of marketing expenditures, understaffing, no marketing know-how, underestimating return on investment.⁴⁹

In recent years, digital transformation has been on the rise. The online environment offers a few advantages, such as global impact, measurability and monitoring the investment effectiveness, lower costs, multimedia formats, direct interaction, monitoring customer behaviour and their attitudes.⁵⁰ Today, business focuses on the use of modern technology and marketing tools. 2015 Social Media Marketing Industry Report⁵¹ shows that 96 per cent marketers use social media. The Internet has become a communication and trade centre used to exchange information, negotiate business deals and build business relationships.⁵² In regard to social media, social media marketing has been defined as a main communication channel. Marketing makes use of such social media as Facebook or Twitter. These platforms make it easy to create one's own public account including a list of other desirable users one would like to be in contact with. Within these platforms, it is also possible to see and monitor other users' connections. Marketers are offered an opportunity to reach out to a specific target market or audience, become opinion leaders, be authentic and transparent, craft messages to persuade the others to contact the organization. It is important that marketers develop or participate in discussions, and use social media for different marketing experiments. Social media have popularized the 4C model: connect, create, consume and control.

48 ČERNÁ, J. et al.: *Marketing vzdelávacích inštitúcií*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2015, p. 99.

49 ČÁBYOVÁ, L., PTAČIN, J.: Benchmarking Comparison of Marketing Communication of Universities in Slovakia. In *Communication Today*, 2014, Vol. 5, No. 1, p. 60.

50 See: ČERNÁ, J. et al.: *Marketing vzdelávacích inštitúcií*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2015.

51 ORESKÝ, M. et al.: *Aplikovaný marketing*. Bratislava : Wolters Kluwer, 2016, p. 220.

52 See also: KOTLER, P.: *Marketing*. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2004.

Within the term ‘internet marketing’, other terms have been defined: e-business, e-commerce, mobile marketing is going to be used a lot. These are the terms with an immediate response.⁵³ Mobile marketing has significantly strengthened its position within the traditional forms of marketing communication.⁵⁴ In the education sector, the following marketing communication elements are the most popular: brand and brand story, homepage settings, content marketing, digital PR – social media communication, communication with bloggers, online magazines, Instagram, Snapchat, student networks, newsletters, SEO, mobile web pages, YouTube channel and buzz marketing. With an upward trend in virtual conferences, online testing, complete online courses, and new possibilities in the education sector have already arisen over time. Modern technologies positively influence marketing communication and personalization, they adapt to customer needs, improve course registration process and online gradebook via mobile phones. Neuromarketing may be found very beneficial in the learning process. Advanced technology improves co-operation as well as it helps find new ways of a better understanding the linkage between education and a company’s requirements.⁵⁵ The primary purpose of marketing in the online environment is to foster positive attitudes of customers, influence their behavior, raise brand awareness and create positive Word of Mouth.

5 Public Relations in Marketing in the Education Sector

From the point of view of an educational establishment, the most important marketing communication tool is public relations. It is understood as a socio-communication activity through which the educational establishment influences the attitudes of the internal and external public, forms and maintains positive relationships in order to strengthen mutual understanding and trust.⁵⁶ Public relations represents the whole system of different activities the main purpose of which is to foster all extraordinary relationships including all the contacts of a particular educational establishment. Public relations is a planned and systematic

53 See: HALADA, J.: *Marketingová komunikácia a Public Relations*. Praha : Nakladatelství Karolinum, 2016.

54 See: FREY, P.: *Marketingová komunikace. Nové trendy 3.0*. Praha : Management Press, 2011.

55 See: ČERNÁ, J. et al.: *Marketing vzdelávacích inštitúcií*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2015.

56 See: SVOBODA, V.: *Public relations moderně a účinně*. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2009.

process aimed at building and fostering understanding, trust and positive relationships between an educational establishment and target audience. Establishing strong core values provides a clear communication between an educational establishment and its employees.⁵⁷ Students, employees and their family members, the school environment such as trade unions, owners, etc. are associated with the public within the internal PR. The construction of identity of a particular educational establishment as well as its internal communication including motivation of its employees are the key communication tools. The external PR is defined as the practice of managing communication between an educational establishment and the public, government and the others in order to introduce and shape views and opinions, maintain reputation and improve image of the educational establishment. The public relations tools within the educational sector are: direct communication with the press, press release production and distribution, advertising, distribution of the best press release, social media communication, academic journals, annual reports, events, open days.⁵⁸

Within PR, we distinguish the following tools: media relations (press release, press conferences – rarely used by educational establishments), events (exhibitions, trade fairs, roadshows), digital communication (news on social media), sponsoring (school facilities or premises available for rental), crisis communication, endorsement (support of celebrities, experts, leaders), sponsoring and fundraising, etc.⁵⁹ Advanced technology is used in PR, and there are signals which predict PR future trends in the digital world: information overload (people waste their time searching the Internet, posting comments, photos and videos), privacy policy violation (privacy policy, loss of credibility), elimination of fraudulent practices, false presentations, attacks on one's reputation and credibility, censorship, building micro networking system to eliminate network congestion.⁶⁰

57 See: ORESKÝ, M. et al.: *Aplikovaný marketing*. Bratislava : Wolters Kluwer, 2016.

58 See: ČERNÁ, J. et al.: *Marketing vzdelávacích inštitúcií*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2015.

59 See: HEJLOVÁ, D.: *Public relations*. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2015.

60 See: KOPECKÝ, L.: *Public relations. Dějiny-teorie-praxe*. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2013.

6 Event Marketing in Marketing in the Education Sector

Educational establishments build positive and favourable relationships with the public in different public, social, cultural and sports events. The popularity of event marketing has risen considerably in recent years. Attending different events has become part of an individual's socializing. To reach the intended audience and to attract new customers, the organization employs this progressive marketing communication tool as it can successfully attract all five individual's senses. Implementing such a marketing strategy contributes to creating synergies, where, the theory implies that each piece of information repeated a hundred times becomes the truth.⁶¹

The term 'event' indicates any themed activity, social occasion or experience. 'Event' can be defined as an interactive form of communication of a brand designing and planning successful marketing events. It is understood as a 3D hyperreality linked to the brand and to the customers who are expected to actively participate at the behavioral level. The customers are thus more likely to create their emotional bond with the brand.⁶² Event marketing, which is called participation marketing engages customers to create their own experience. Participation marketing has been experiencing dynamic changes and development. Event marketing as an effective public relations tool shapes public opinion. Event marketing is characterized by: evolving one's experiences (when evolving experiences with a brand, it may have a bigger impact on a customer), interactivity (a dialogue between participants of an event and representatives of an educational establishment), its own realization (gaining greater control over creating sensory experiences of customers) and a particular script, which is creative and unique enough to attract. The more the event differs from reality, the more it affects consumer-buying behaviour. Regarding the content of event, there are three types of events: workshops (e.g. trainings), informative (e.g. conferences) and entertaining (e.g. sports events). Regarding the target market, there are public events (exhibitions, trade fairs) and corporate events (e.g. Christmas parties). Taking into account the concept, there

61 See: ŠINDLER, P.: *Event marketing. Jak využít emoce v marketingové komunikaci*. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2003.

62 WOHLFEIL, M., WHELAN, S.: Event Marketing as Innovative Marketing Communications: Reviewing the German Experience. In *Journal of Customer Behavior*, 2005, Vol. 4, No. 2, p. 194.

are opportunity-centred events (e.g. open days at school), brand events (building brand loyalty), image-oriented events (impact of the venue and content of events), know-how events (launching new products) and combinations of the above mentioned.

Events may be of a social, cultural or sports character, the aim of which is to identify and attract different target markets while developing a positive atmosphere, which contributes to building more favourable relationships, providing information about the educational establishment, its services and improving its image. Events themselves may have different forms: marketing, corporate, informative, presentation, charity, launch, motivation, anniversary, rebrand events, etc.⁶³ Event marketing may be defined by its two main specifics: as a well-managed activity, which can be planned thoroughly, and its targeting – focusing on a specific target market. What surrounds and determines each event is its context and props. Each event is planned to reach the interest of a designated target market. Marketers ought to realize that the audience attend events to learn something about what they are clueless about, something what may be called attractions. It is not necessarily the brand the audience comes to look for. To promote services, marketers use different props. However, these are only side products, not the tmain activities. The target market associates an attractive prop with a brand promoted. Frey speaks of the latest trends in event marketing, especially of a remarkable increase in the use of digital mobile technology. Its main purpose is to build strong relationships with the target market at the venue as well as to foster these relationships after the event. ‘Road shows’ are very popular to communicate key messages.⁶⁴

Multimedia capable of exploring and understanding emotions and desires of a target market have emerged. Events are complex PR activities, which are designed to evolve emotional experiences by using different multimedia tools. Recent studies have shown that 90 per cent of those presented information through audio and audiovisual technology are able to remember the message conveyed, however, it is only 20 per cent of those who are provided with the information through audio, and 40 per cent of those who are delivered the message through visual aids. Specific

63 See: HALADA, J.: *Marketingová komunikácia a Public Relations*. Praha : Nakladatelství Karolinum, 2016.

64 See: FREY, P.: *Marketingová komunikace. Nové trendy 3.0*. Praha : Management Press, 2011.

experiences are very likely to evoke social events. One cannot argue that the most effective events are those ones that attract a great turnout with thousands of attendees, and where people can meet in person since one of the most effective communication tools is meeting face-to-face, and where nonverbal and visual cues may help convey the verbal message. Organizing events is a highly efficient PR tool, however it requires a thorough and careful scheduling and planning.⁶⁵ Event marketing may be used by educational establishments of all types, regardless of their size.⁶⁶ The primary purpose of educational establishments is to provide a good quality education. Nevertheless, every educational establishment may achieve and maintain its competitive advantage over its competitors by offering well-organized events, eventually contributing to building a positive image of the institution. Event marketing is a very popular PR tool, it may be applied either in the internal or external environment. School events are organized to attract current students (freshers's weeks, student orientations, Halloween parties, etc.), prospective students (open days at schools), parents (open days at schools, balls) as well as to invite a scientific community and other scientific professionals to attend events (conferences, workshops), school staff (parties, balls, sports days, teambuilding events, etc.).⁶⁷

Conclusion

Education is a major contributor to the development of one's personality. It also teaches people to live their lives to the fullest. Education is a universal human right and its goals stem from either individual or social needs. The offer of education has shaped. There is a large variety of different educational establishments available. Educational establishments may find it quite difficult to raise their profile and attract enough students. Educational establishments ought to be flexible and they need to adapt to current social, economic, technological or political changes. Marketing has also been undergoing different changes due to technological advances. The Internet is a medium with a huge impact on trade, marketing and communication worldwide. No other medium has

65 See: SVOBODA, V.: *Public relations moderně a účinně*. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2009.

66 See: HEJLOVÁ, D.: *Public relations*. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2015.

67 ČÁBYOVÁ, L., PTAČIN, J.: *Marketing, komunikácia a identita vzdelávacích inštitúcií*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2016, p. 96.

revolutionized these areas more dramatically than the Internet so far. With everything turning to digital, marketing communication specialists also keep up with the latest trends and reach their target groups online, on social media. Public relations, building, fostering and maintaining favourable relationships between educational establishments and their clients as well as effective communication have gained a very positive acceptance as powerful marketing tools. Educational establishments are expected to be flexible and adaptable as well as to be aware of current trends. To be successful in identifying and satisfying their target market, it is essential that they use such marketing communication tools that are found highly effective in the education sector. The importance of event marketing has risen over the past few years. It is universal and global. Designing a set of effective communication tools, event marketing is very likely to attract all five customer's senses. Thus, customers want to evolve and stay with the brand and service they identify with.

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WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO PROMOTE CONSUMERS' „ECO-FRIENDLY“ BUYING BEHAVIOUR

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ABSTRACT:

The article deals with consumer buying behaviour in accordance with the “eco-friendly” attribute. It explains the theoretical basis of consumer behaviour in economic and marketing theory and clarifies the characteristics of the ecological relationship to the environment. It answers the question of why consumers' eco-friendly buying behaviour should be promoted. It offers solutions for shaping, building and strengthening a positive relationship with consumer social responsibility. It emphasizes the importance of applying the optimal mix of marketing communication, which is applied in the concept of the circular model of economy at the corporate level.

KEY WORDS:

circular economy, consumer behaviour, environmental friendliness, environmental quality, marketing communication

1 Introduction

Consumer behaviour is one of the most interesting topics of marketing research in the consumer goods market, because the customer is at the heart of the business process. The success of a business activity depends heavily on aligning the company's strategy with customer needs and ideas. Consumer activity - as well as any other economic activity, is subject to objective, but also subjective factors. Its in-depth research is a large part of market research that deals with the observation, detection and analysis of a substantial part of the market factors, seeking out the main contexts for predicting future developments. Trying to explore and understand consumer buying behaviour in the target market is a prerequisite for setting marketing strategy and planned goals of organizations and identifying appropriate tools to achieve and meet them. Unlike an organization that decides to maximize its profits, the consumer (individual or household) decides to satisfy their needs. By exploring the factors that influence the decision-making process of organizations and consumer units, we can assume and identify multidimensional relationships between marketing incentives and customer buyer and consumer responses.

2 Consumer Buying Behaviour

The current marketing theory of the basic consumer unit's buying behaviour usually interprets the purchasing activities and behaviour of individuals, that is consumers and households who buy products and services for personal consumption, and is an important criterion for evaluating the organization's marketing environment. Many renowned marketing experts have been paying constant attention to buying behaviour for decades. Thus, they create the opportunity to follow the dynamics of this phenomenon and lay the foundations for scientific forecasting of development trends.

2.1 What Influences Consumer Buying Behaviour?

The ability to identify and better meet the expectations of customers compared to competitors is directly related to the quality of marketing communication of the company.¹ Thus, it can be clearly stated that the quality of external marketing communication with customers is a prerequisite for building relationship marketing and secondarily affects consumer buying behaviour. In the communication strategy and subsequent tactics of using tools of communication mix, there are currently significant shortcomings and errors in the conditions of the market environment of Slovak companies. This also implies unclear behaviour towards the external environment. Communication with the customer lacks a systematic, conceptual, procedural approach that is geared towards building a prospective market position. As a result, there is inadequate evaluation of the effect of communication with customers and this is usually related to unqualified or lack of theoretical knowledge of evaluation methods. Communication tools are characterized by dispersion and short-termism. Customers often perceive the level of communication as not impressive. The artistic level is often rated as not very impressive or unattractive. In general, marketing studies attribute up to 60 percent of all business problems to miscommunication, suggesting that increased attention needs to be paid to this area.² Communication

1 See: ŠALGOVIČOVÁ, J. et al.: *Integrovaná komunikácia organizácie orientovanej na kvalitu: Záverečná správa o riešení inštitucionálneho projektu FAGA 7/2010*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2010.

2 See: ŠALGOVIČOVÁ, J. et al.: *Kvalita komunikačného systému ako činiteľ ovplyvňujúci konkurencioschopnosť malých a stredných firiem: Záverečná správa o riešení projektu VEGA č. 1/7162/20 771. (2000 – 2002)*. Trnava : MtF STU, 2002.

processes are currently a priority of the highest importance. The quality of the marketing communication process can be improved by:

- characterizing and understanding target customers;
- defining the expected reactions;
- on the basis of this knowledge, choosing the optimal mix of marketing communication tools;
- after the message is sent, monitoring its effect;
- evaluating behavioural changes affected by the message.

The entire communication activity of an organization focused on influencing eco-friendly behaviour should be supported by a long-term strategic plan with an emphasis on information about the quality of products and services, information on environmental protection and social responsibility, or on the implementation of a circular economy model in the organization, within the framework of building the overall image and goodwill of the company.

2.2 Marketing Analysis of Customer Buying Behaviour

General consumer behaviour theorems are well researched in scientific literature for decades. The research sphere has long been working in the theoretical field with Gossen's laws. They point out that, in order to satisfy a particular need, the degree of enjoyment falls to zero, and when it is not possible to fully satisfy all needs, they need to be satisfied so that the intensity of their satisfaction is the same.³ Engel's Law says that, as household income grows, relative food spending declines, i.e. the income elasticity of demand for food products is weak.⁴ We accepted the Thorstein-Veblen's paradox, which characterizes the symbolism of goods, Giffen's paradox, focusing on the aspect of increasing the proportion of basic food purchases directly in proportion to price increases. We have been working with Keynes's basic psychological law that consumers are generally willing to increase their consumption on average if their income increases (but not to the extent that income increases for a number of reasons). We have known Katon's social-psychological aspects of human

3 ŠALGOVIČOVÁ, J.: *Vývoj osobnej spotreby a spotrebiteľského správania obyvateľstva v procese transformácie slovenskej ekonomiky na trhové hospodárstvo ako informačná základňa pre marketing*. Bratislava : FOŠ STU, HP Bratislava, 1994, p. 38.

4 *Engel's Law. Štandardizovaný medzinárodný slovník ekonomických pojmov a organizácií*. [online]. [2018-04-30]. Available at: <<http://ekonomika.oldweb-sulik.sk/ekonomicky-slovník/engelov-zakon-engels-law/>>.

behavior - in booms and crises, the Tornquist demand curve, and also the basic patterns of consumer behaviour. Research work of research teams of research institutes contains recommendations for business practice. Unfortunately, they often remain only at the level of scientific and professional discussions, or on the pages of professional journals, without the benefit of their practical implementation.

What influences the current consumer's buying behaviour? Consumer behaviour in the market in some aspects is not so different in the long run, as it is a manifestation of consumers' physical and mental lives, their thinking, opinions and habits, the manifestation of free will unless it they aware of the influence of their attitudes and decisions involving many factors. Their way is determined by the personality of the person, the quality of living conditions, the achieved standard of living conditions, the achieved standard of living, environment, education, and the amount of income and so on. As stated by Philip Kotler, purchasing behavior factors can be examined and analysed in terms of cultural factors, social, personal and psychological factors.⁵ The well-known and frequently mentioned patterns of consumer behaviour, based on the psychology of needs, also generally express an individual, special approach to the issue of the development of needs, specifying in detail further sub-criteria of evaluation. They can be used as inputs to the process of knowing consumer behavior. The aim of the consumer behaviour review process is therefore to recognize how incentives are transformed into certain responses. Consumers' desires, wishes and preferences should be the primary and main concern of both businesses and society. It is a philosophy that focuses primarily on value and customer satisfaction, a fundamental criterion of marketing.⁶ The decisive factor is the quality of the communication message, the chosen communication channels and the media and the company's own approach to assessing the importance of marketing communication with customers. Responding to consumer feedback will be the choice of product, or brand, quantity, seller, time of purchase, as far as possible in accordance with the company's interests.⁷

5 KOTLER, P.: *Marketing management. Analýza, plánování, využití, kontrola*. Praha : Victoria Publishing, 1991, p. 178.

6 SCHIFFMAN, L. G., KANUK, L. L.: *Nákupní chování*. Praha : Computer Press, 2004, p. 23.

7 ŠALGOVIČOVÁ, J.: Značka ako znak kvality. In *Zborník CO – MAT – TECH*. Bratislava, Trnava : STU v Bratislave, MtF STU v Trnave, 1997, p. 259-262.

3 Modelling Eco-Friendly Buying Behaviour in Terms of the Circular Economy Model

Globalization has brought new urgent communication topics to the spirit of “eco-friendly” shopping behaviour that need to be incorporated into marketing communication. They will allow not only the shaping and influencing of the awareness of customers and consumers, but also their actual real-life buying behaviour. Replacing primary materials with secondary, that is, recycling offers only part of the solution to the global problem of environmental pollution, because it may not be definitive. The circular economy model is based on a renewable industrial system that leads to waste. This goes beyond recycling. “Recycling can be seen as the outer shell of the entire circular economy, requiring greater energy consumption than the inner shell of a circular economy, which means above all repair / modification, reuse or processing,” as stated by the Circular Economy Institute on its website.⁸ The aim of the circular economy is to make the production of quality products more efficient with low resource consumption, energy and low emissions, and to extend the product life cycle. It should be borne in mind that neither recycling nor the circular economy model currently presents solutions that are attractive to organizations and businesses to which they voluntarily report. Major manufacturing processes that meet the corresponding requirements can be initially extremely energy intensive and thus costly. It is legislation, consumer requirements, or competition that organizations bring to the model. The circular economy is based on three “3Rs” principles, which are the economic code of conduct: reduce, reuse, and recycle.⁹ The reduce principle is an innovation-oriented approach to streamline resource use while minimizing the use of raw material and energy consumption and the greatest possible use of high-tech technology. It prefers the production of smaller and lighter products, simple and practical packaging for luxury reusable packaging, which is the principle of reuse. The recycle principle means returning it to the end of their life cycle as available resources. It expects to build and support the development of the recycling industry, which will return waste and scrap (generated intermediates, raw materials and other materials) to the production process or to other uses.

8 BONDOROVÁ, B.: *Pohľady na cirkulárnu ekonomiku*. [online]. [2019-01-30]. Available at: <<https://www.inicien.sk/cirkularna-ekonomika/> <http://www.inicien.sk/cirkularna-ekonomika/>>.

9 *Circular Economy*. [online]. [2019-01-30]. Available at: <<https://www.odpady-portal.sk/Dokument/102210/kruhova-ekonomika-circular-economy.aspx/>>.

3.1 Environmental Marketing Communication Principles

The emphasis on the need for environmentally friendly behaviour, the protection of non-renewable resources, and the emphasis on people's responsible behaviour is typical for marketing environmental communication. It assumes that customers want a product that satisfies their needs materially, a product that is consistent with their belief that by purchasing the product they help nature and do not destroy it. At the same time, they demand that the company from which they buy the product declares their social responsibility and fulfills the general principles of the circular economy. Corporate social responsibility information must provide customer marketing in environmental marketing communications. Its role is to inform customers in a non-aggressive manner and motivate their consumer behaviour. It also helps to sell the story associated with it, in addition to the product itself. The principles of transparency, adequacy, credibility, comprehensibility and rapid response capability must be applied in marketing environmental communications.¹⁰ The role of environmental marketing communication is to proactively transform customers and their behaviour into "eco-friendly", that is, to inform them about eco-friendly products and to change their purchasing behaviour and preferences for behaviour that corresponds to eco-friendly ecological life.

3.2 What Does It Mean to Be Eco-Friendly and How Should One Live an Ecological Life?

The easiest way to define what is environmentally friendly is to say that it is an act of living in accordance with an environmental philosophy, with a specific purpose, to avoid harm to the environment and to prevent our lives and consumer environmental behaviour unnecessarily suffering great damage.¹¹ Being environmentally friendly goes far beyond just turning off the lights when we leave the room or separating garbage for recycling - it is a change in the purpose of our lives. This means above all preferring environmentally friendly products in shopping behaviour. Also to promote an environment of helping to save energy while preventing air, water and noise pollution, as well as preventing

10 *STN ISO 14063 Environmentálne manažérstvo Environmentálna komunikácia - Návod a príklady.*

11 ŠALGOVIČOVÁ, J.: Kvalita života a jej hodnotenie v globalizovanej spoločnosti. In *Globalizácia a jej sociálno-ekonomické dôsledky '06, 2. časť*. Žilina : Žilinská univerzita, 2006, p. 325-328.

harm to human health.¹² How are organic products defined? According to the definition given on the all-recycling-facts.com website, organic products are “products that do not harm the environment, whether in their production, use or disposal”. Environmentally friendly products can be produced environmentally by their very design, or from recycled materials. These kind of products are easily recognizable because they are so marked in most cases.¹³ Living an environmentally friendly life, making ecological life more and more important, brings with it both advantages and disadvantages. One of the drawbacks is that we may have to give up some more modern conveniences. There is not much, but conveniences such as fast food and some kinds of luxury activities that we have become accustomed to are a little more of a burden on the environment. Ecological life becomes easier in an environmentally friendly community. Increasingly more community gardens and farm markets are making it easier for the entire community to actively participate in eco-friendly activities. If our close community does not have any of these options, it is time to consider how they can be implemented. An ecological business is also an ecological life, characterized by the fact that we are aware of the waste products that businesses create and the way they use resources to do business.¹⁴ As a business entity, we can more effectively influence how our suppliers approach our environmental protection and bring them into the family of an eco-friendly community as well.

The process of starting an “eco-friendly” life needs to be started by realizing the implications of how our choices affect the environment. Here’s the sequence of steps:

1. The first step is to act immediately to change the way we consume objects. Learn to consume items that cause minimal environmental damage. This means changing habits, such as driving, using certain types of packaging, waste disposal, using natural resources, and so on.
2. The second step is to try to identify the extent of one’s own carbon footprint as part of the overall environmental impact of human activities such as the use of motor vehicles or electricity

12 *What is Being Eco-friendly?* [online]. [2019-01-15]. Available at: <<https://www.conserve-energy-future.com/10-steps-to-become-eco-friendly.php>>.

13 *All Recycling Facts.* [online]. [2019-04-20]. Available at: <<http://www.all-recycling-facts.com/>>.

14 ŠALGOVIČOVÁ, J. et al.: Značka ako znak kvality. In *Zborník CO – MAT – TECH.* Bratislava : STU v Bratislave, 2000, p. 259-262.

consumption.¹⁵ However, from a broader perspective, we can also take into account the emissions that have been generated throughout the life cycle of products and services, from sourcing raw materials to producing them to processing waste from them. The problem may be that the carbon footprint may not be easy to change - for example the way of living in a house or influencing the performance of our employment. Overall, however, there is a need to counteract this negative environmental impact.

3. The third step is to strive to support others who are working to produce environmentally friendly and sustainable communities. It involves actively searching for links with other people, communities and businesses that are environmentally friendly and promote a more sustainable life friendly.

Some examples are:

- Create a hierarchy of waste components in order to reduce waste on one hand and improve waste management on the other;
- Save energy in production and daily consumption;
- Buy energy efficient and economical products;
- Prefer recyclable products;
- Follow recycling symbols when buying food;
- Buy locally grown products;
- Avoid buying in plastic packaging;
- Planting more plants and trees;
- Protect local water resources;
- Less driving, more walking;
- Joining environmental groups to combat pollution.¹⁶

4 Impact of Environmental Appeals on Changes in Consumer Behavioural Preferences

Changes in consumer behaviour due to environmental appeals are geographically different. While three quarters of Americans are worried about the environment, far fewer are those who are trying to do something about it. Only 1 out of 5 says they are constantly trying.

15 *Uhlíková stopa*. [online]. [2019-04-25]. Available at: <<http://www.ekologika.sk/uhlikova-stopa.html/>>.

16 *What is Being Eco-friendly?* [online]. [2019-01-15]. Available at: <<https://www.conserve-energy-future.com/10-steps-to-become-eco-friendly.php>>.

This may be because we usually talk about climate change in the Arctic or other remote locations, or because there is a lack of willingness to give up comfort, we don't know how to change or we have never dealt with this issue.¹⁷ A picture of complex entrepreneurial success is given by the ranking of the most valuable brands in the world. Google remains the most valuable brand in the world this year, and Apple again ranks second, although the gap between the two has been significantly reduced over the past year. Third place went to Amazon, which outperformed Microsoft. It stems from the BrandZTop 100 ranking, compiled by WPP and MilwardBrown. Technological companies and retail companies have the largest representation in the top ten. The retail sector was the fastest growing industry last year with a 35 percentage increase. Automotive companies are also particularly successful in this respect, and with the advent of electric propulsion and autonomous mobility, they benefit from close co-operation with technology companies. The world's most valuable automotive brand remains the world's leading \$ 30 billion hybrid promoter for Toyota.¹⁸

The growing use of data-driven technologies, artificial intelligence, or augmented reality, along with creative marketing approaches, enables many brands to understand consumers more and provide them with personalized content. Eight new brands have emerged in the rankings, including Uber's transportation applications and Adidas, the-sports equipment manufacturer. The total value of hundreds of the world's most valuable brands has increased by a record 21 percent this year to \$ 4.4 trillion. All of these brands are known for their positive attitude towards environmental protection. The model for "eco-friendly" products in the long-term is Philips. The new Philips 241B7QGJ 24 inch"Full HD monitor has been launched recently. This model is a new benchmark for" green "monitors that offer environmental consciousness to professionals in addition to high energy efficiency, recyclable packaging and compliance with international environmental standards, as well as a full range of ergonomic solutions for comfort and convenience for the user, making it the world's greenest monitor, Philips has a long-term commitment to

17 LEIGHTON, M.: *Insider Picks: 30 Eco-friendly Alternatives for Things You Use Every Day*. [online]. [2019-02-01]. Available at: <<https://www.businessinsider.com/eco-friendly-alternatives-everyday-products-2018-1>>.

18 ČTK: *Najhodnotnejšou značkou je opäť Google, Apple sa dotahuje*. [online]. [2019-03-04]. Available at: <<https://medialne.etrend.sk/marketing/najhodnotnejsou-znackou-je-opat-google-apple-sa-dotahuje.html29>>.

environmental protection and sustainable development in its business philosophy. It helps to reduce material consumption and the associated costs, resulting in the Green Electric Council's EPEAT ecolabel certificate, which confirms green design and powerful performance.¹⁹

5 Is the Consumer Behaviour of Slovak Consumers “Eco-Friendly”?

Alarming data on climate change and depleted resources are forcing individuals and groups to think about these issues and consider their readiness to change their behaviour. Nowadays, many people in Slovakia are worried about how we treat our planet. However, so far, in the popular brand rankings that document consumer preferences, the “eco-friendly” criterion is not clear at all. KPMG conducted a second year of consumer preference assessment survey of more than 120 brands across ten sectors. The number of respondents was over 2800. Data was collected in the third quarter of 2018. Accounts were taken of people who are clients of particular brands or at least interacted with them in the last half year. The brand could be included in the final evaluation if it received at least one hundred customer answers. Entertainment and leisure, logistics and fast food are three sectors in which consumers in Slovakia have the best brand experience. Among the sectors, the entertainment and leisure industry ranked first. The top brand of Slovak consumers is the Martinus bookshop. People particularly appreciate the helpful attitude of staff and communication. Martinus achieved the best score in all areas. More than half of the respondents who visited it are its promoters. It means that they really love the company, praise it and recommend it to friends. The top 50 included Netflix, Cinemax, Cinema City and Ticketportal.sk.

Customers appreciate their ability to bring them a quality experience. They praise the smoothness, willingness, friendly staff and above-standard services and reliability. Total customer experience in Slovakia has improved slightly compared to the previous year. The brand ranking reflects the ratings in six core customer experience areas: personalization, integrity, expectations, time and effort, empathy and problem solving. Perhaps only Lidl, who were placed fourth and

19 *MMD predstavuje Philips 241B7QG. NEXTECH PC Revue*. [online]. [2019-01-14]. Available at: <<https://www.pcrevue.sk/a/CZ--MMD-predstavuje-Philips-241B7QGJ--Svetove-najzelenejsi-monitor-maximalizuje-produktivitu-prace-a-chrani-zivotne-prostredie>>.

IKEA in ninth place, can meet the environmental value criterion in the top ten.²⁰ However, the truth is that the “eco-friendly” aspect of the assessment among the core pillars of customer experience has not been explicitly included. Consequently, the emphasis on buying behaviour and consumption preferences remains in the hands of marketing and environmental marketing workers in conjunction with the creation of a circular economy strategy. We believe that the content of communication campaigns can effectively and efficiently teach and guide consumers that living and buying eco-friendly is good and beneficial. Environmental consumption education and the related circular economy model and the consequent marketing environmental communication with consumers are delivering results. Consumers realize that through their purchasing behaviour they can help the environment, economy, domestic producers and job creation. On this basis, they change their purchasing behaviour in favor of buying eco-friendly products. If we add to this the purchase of Slovak products, it will be good news for all stakeholders.

Conclusion

It is possible to agree with the slogan “Even if you make only one change, before you change your whole home to being environmentally friendly, you are doing something good.” Therefore, it is necessary to clarify and explain to consumers that the circular economy is a scientific concept of a sustainable economic development model. It is essentially a kind of green economy, taking into account natural and human resources, science and technology. It should be stressed to consumers that the priority of the circular economy is the saving and efficient use of scarce natural resources, streamlining the production of products with high efficiency and low resource consumption, and low (or even zero) waste generation and consequently polluting resources to recycling when resources are returned to the economic cycle, which is of increasingly practical importance. Those businesses and organizations that operate in accordance with the circular economy model offer consumers eco-friendly products. On the other hand, backward eco-friendly buying behaviour as a demand of customers and consumers must be a motivating

20 LEGÉŇ, M.: *Toto je 50 značiek, ktoré milujeme*. [online]. [2019-03-26]. Available at: <<https://www.etrend.sk/firmy/toto-je-50-znaciek-ktore-milujeme-v-prvej-desiatke-lidl-aj-netflix.html>>.

factor that will bring the business world towards the circular economy. Marketing environmental communications by organizations must play an indispensable role.

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LEIGHTON, M.: *Insider Picks: 30 Eco-friendly Alternatives for Things You Use Every Day.* [online]. [2019-02-01]. Available at: <<https://www.businessinsider.com/eco-friendly-alternatives-everyday-products-2018-1>>.

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ŠALGOVIČOVÁ, J. et al.: *Environmentálna etika. Environmental ethics.* In *Zborník CO – MAT – TECH.* Bratislava : STU v Bratislave, 2000, p. 259-262.

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ŠALGOVIČOVÁ, J. et al.: *Kvalita komunikačného systému ako činiteľ ovplyvňujúci konkurencieschopnosť malých a stredných firiem: Záverečná správa o riešení projektu VEGA č. 1/7162/20 771. (2000 – 2002).* Trnava : MtF STU v Trnave, 2002.

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A STELLAR HASHTAG AS A SOLUTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

Martin Vanko – Anna Zaušková

ABSTRACT:

The power of social networking sites and mainly their negative impact linked to their active use have recently been widely discussed. Still all social media are full of various challenges people tend to undergo not only to fulfil their main goal, but rather due to their attractivity and trendiness. The latest successful challenge #trashtagchallenge has generated positive frenziness across all social networking sites and thanks to a simple “celebrity” hashtag, it has helped to fight a serious environmental problem, which is waste and any corresponding environmental pollution.

KEY WORDS:

environment, environmental problems, hashtag, Instagram, social sites

1 Introduction

Upon arrival and evolution of social sites, marketing has brought various effective tools to complement traditional marketing communication. Some businesses use primarily social sites for any communication with their customers. This is mainly because businesses tend to use the “*fear of missing out*” trend for their own benefit. *“In fact, fear of missing out is a sort of fear that social events or any other pleasant activities may occur without your presence or enjoyment. Fear of missing out is defined by a need to be constantly connected with what other people do to avoid ending up omitted or excluded. Fear of missing out may result in worse moods and lower life satisfaction.”*¹ Businesses, companies or organisations focus on social sites communication because they know well that individual users have a chronic need to be constantly online, available and at the same time be always ready to receive any content being created online. We must agree with businesses in this regard, but we have to point out that profits or earnings should not be the only goals of companies as the year 2019 will mainly focus on education and solutions of environmental problems.

1 *Sociálne siete a psychické zdravie*. [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://medialne.etrend.sk/internet/socialne-siete-a-psychicke-zdravie-najhorsiji-je-instagram-positivny-vplyv-ma-len-youtube.html>>.

The main goal of the paper is to define the presence of a hashtag, a key word which, from a linguistic point of view, does not only refer to #, but mainly to a text which in combination with a hash mark describes a key word.² „Nowadays hashtag occurs on all social sites including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram or Pinterest. It is mainly used as a tool for content categorising. It helps a user search relevant content and what is more, enables the content to be more accessible for the others.“³ The paper deals with the recent challenge named „#trashtagchallenge” by means of which users on social networking sites published photos of polluted areas wherever on the world which reflected the current environmental condition and later posted a photo after the area had been thoroughly cleaned. „Unlike some of the other more recent challenges, this one makes people feel good about themselves and the environment around them and helps to clean up spaces for others. As thousands of people go outdoors to help clear trash and litter, they help people focus on taking care of their community for future generations and others.”⁴

2 Trends on Social Networking Sites in 2019

The second chapter of our paper defines the fundamental theoretical background of social networking sites. Scott describes them as platforms where users communicate with one another while sharing their personal profiles as well as opinions or attitudes.⁵ We agree with Scott while adding that for the last three or four years, social sites have not longer been only platforms for mutual communication among users, but also a perfect marketing tool for promoting communication of brands, businesses or associations. Brown perceives social sites as one of the most commonly used and the most dynamic media which are equal to traditional media, mainly thanks to technological integration, social interactions or creation of texts and pictures.⁶ „A social network can be

2 *Prevzalo sa do slovenčiny anglické slovo hashtag?* [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://jazykovaporadna.sme.sk/q/8953/>>.

3 *Ako používať hashtag?* [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://contentagency.sk/ako-pouzivat-hashtag/>>.

4 *Trashtag Challenge Goes Viral.* [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://www.forbes.com/sites/trevornace/2019/03/12/trashtag-challenge-goes-viral-as-people-share-beforeafter-photos-of-their-cleanup/>>.

5 SCOTT, D. M.: *Nové pravidlá marketingu a PR.* Brno : Zoner press, 2008, p. 44.

6 BROWN, G.: *Social Media 100 Success Secrets: Social Media, Web 2.0 User – Generated Content and Virtual Communities – 100 Most Asked Mass Collaboration Questions.* New York : Emereo Pty Ltd., 2008, p. 67.

seen as a set of subjects (joints) which are interlinked by mutual relations (network borders), e.g. values, ideas, financial exchanges, friends, relatives, trade, web links, illnesses or airways.⁷ Janouch agrees with relations among users who are mutually connected with one another while adding that the power of social media lies in their ability to create content by users themselves.⁸ In his paper *New rules of marketing*, Scott speaks about the content published on social networking sites. Users are no longer only mere recipients of what is distributed, but thanks to their own entity or creativity they are able to create this content on their own. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn are all good examples of social networking sites.⁹ We mostly agree with Karlíček and his statement that the most precious feature of social networking sites and their content is their timeliness. In its blog, the ADMA – the Association of digital marketing agencies in Slovakia – describes social networking sites as a tool which helps to meet business or marketing goals. „*In this digital era, they are a necessary tool for building relations with customers. In order to be effectively used for our goals, these objectives have to be precisely defined.*”¹⁰ Whereas the authenticity and the need to receive reliable and authentic content were the social networking trends back in 2018, the year 2019 favours real-time content which is directly linked to *backstage* demonstrations from the real environment. Despite the fact that trends keep developing, they are all linked one to another. The agency Visibility agrees with us while recommending that the year 2019 should emphasize the added value of the content being shared on social networking sites. Even though marketers have enough time when planning content, preparing a message or communicating creativity, it is now crucial to communicate real-time content in order to attract target audience.¹¹

7 DUBOVEC, J.: Využitie teórie hier pri rozhodovaní v sociálnej sieti. In *Ekonomía a podnikanie*, 2011, No. 1, p. 100.

8 JANOUC, V.: *Internetový marketing: Prosad'te se na webu a sociálnych sítích*. Brno : Computer Press, 2010, p. 41.

9 SCOTT, D. M.: *Nové pravidlá marketingu a PR*. Brno : Zoner press, 2008, p. 44.

10 DITRICHOVÁ, M.: *Social media v roku 2019*. [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://adma.sk/social-media-v-roku-2019/>>.

11 *Social media v roku 2019 – na čo by ste sa mali pripraviť?* [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://visibility.sk/blog/social-media-v-roku-2019-na-co-by-ste-sa-mali-pripravit/>>.

ADMA defines exactly what specific online activities in the social networking environment are about:

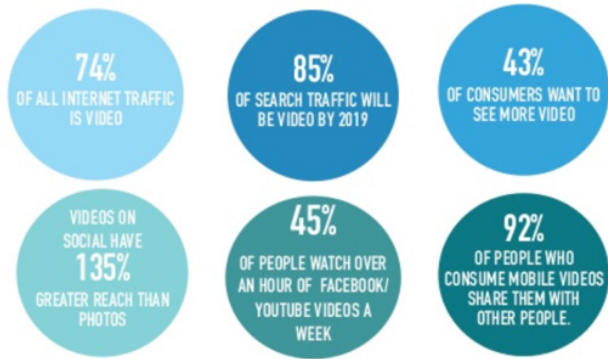
- **brand awareness** – in order to enhance awareness, it is necessary to focus on an interaction rate, impact, video views or the methods of increasing the number of fans and followers,
- **performance** – it focuses mainly on sale or the place from where fans come to a specific brand and a product or website traffic,
- **public relations** – sharing a specific profile on social networking sites by third parties, ratings and reviews,
- **creating a community** – Facebook communities,
- **customer service** – queries and messages.

Zadáková from the marketing agency *eVision* confirms the expectations from the year 2018 which have also been set for the year 2019. In was last year when marketers forecast that video content would account for over 80% of the consumed content on social networking sites. Such content should mainly focus on live broadcast.¹² We agree with Zadáková because even the practice shows that Facebook and Instagram keep promoting creation of life broadcast with organic and free-of-charge notifications of users. As soon as a subject on social networking sites launches live broadcast, users are shown a corresponding notification. Such a notification does not show in any other content. Zadáková also emphasises vlogs which should not only be created for entertainment merely showing specific parts of the day, but could also be used for promoting business objectives – *„from eduction of wide public, through product promotion up to training pools for newcomers.“*¹³

12 ZADÁKOVÁ, M.: *Trendy na sociálnych sietach v roku 2019*. [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://www.evisions.sk/blog-2018-11-14-trendy-na-socialnych-sietach-v-roku-2019-co-by-vam-nemalo-uniknut/>>.

13 ZADÁKOVÁ, M.: *Trendy na sociálnych sietach v roku 2019*. [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://www.evisions.sk/blog-2018-11-14-trendy-na-socialnych-sietach-v-roku-2019-co-by-vam-nemalo-uniknut/>>.

VIDEO ON SOCIAL

**Picture 1: Videos on social networking sites**

Source: ZADÁKOVÁ, M.: *Trendy na sociálnych sieťach v roku 2019*. [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://www.evisions.sk/blog-2018-11-14-trendy-na-socialnych-sietach-v-roku-2019-co-by-vam-nemalo-uniknut/>>.

The Picture 1 just confirms the video content trend on social networking sites in 2019. It states that videos published on social networking sites have a 135% higher impact than photos and what is more, videos are expected to represent 85% of video content in the year 2019.

2.1 Facebook

„Real-time communication is a must these days.“¹⁴ The marketing agency *Digital partner* real-time content as the main Facebook trend. All customers are said to be reliant upon help and assistance from social sites administrators whenever and wherever they are. Social sites users keep shopping or searching for goods and services 24/7. In that case, their questions need to be answered immediately.¹⁵ Chatbots are one of the most effective ways how to be permanently in touch with customers. „Facebook Messenger has become a sort of an improved version of e-mail

14 *Hlavné trendy v sociálnych sieťach v roku 2019*. [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://digitalpartner.sk/hlavne-trendy-v-socialnych-sietach-v-roku-2019/>>.

15 *Hlavné trendy v sociálnych sieťach v roku 2019*. [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://digitalpartner.sk/hlavne-trendy-v-socialnych-sietach-v-roku-2019/>>.

marketing.¹⁶ This is to be confirmed by the statistics by *socialmediatoday.com* describes Messenger as the second most downloaded application for iOS. Messenger itself has over 1.3 billion of monthly users who send more than 20 billion instant messages a month.¹⁷



Picture 2: Statistics on Messenger

Source: *Facebook Messenger by the Numbers 2019*. [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://www.socialmediatoday.com/news/facebook-messenger-by-the-numbers-2019-infographic/553809/>>.

The statistics on Messenger on *socialmediatoday.com* speaks about the number of bots which are active in the application itself – there are more than 300,000.¹⁸ Despite the fact that Hausman states that social media are a cheap tool for promotion,¹⁹ we can not agree herewith. In our opinion,

16 *Hlavné trendy v sociálnych sieťach v roku 2019*. [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://digitalpartner.sk/hlavne-trendy-v-socialnych-sietach-v-roku-2019/>>.

17 *Facebook Messenger by the Numbers 2019*. [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://www.socialmediatoday.com/news/facebook-messenger-by-the-numbers-2019-infographic/553809/>>.

18 *Facebook Messenger by the Numbers 2019*. [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://www.socialmediatoday.com/news/facebook-messenger-by-the-numbers-2019-infographic/553809/>>.

19 HAUSMAN, A.: *16 Differences Between Social Media and Traditional Media*. [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://www.business2community.com/social-media/16-differences-between-social-media-and-traditional-media-0211995>>.

any administration of social networking sites requires certain financial costs. ADMA describes Facebook as the most favourite social site while adding that it is necessary to realize that due to the fact that Facebook is a media space, targeting a selected target group is not possible without considerable financial investments.

2.2 Instagram

According to the *Visibility* agency, real-time content on social networking sites will be mainly dominated by Instagram stories. „*These will be much more interactive in 2019 than now. Now you can even include a click on another website or mark a product (a so-called Shopping Tag), enable followers to ask questions (via a Q&A sticker) or set an event countdown.*“²⁰ Rezníčková and Zaušková both agree with Visibility – they refer to Instagram innovations of Instagram stories in their journal *Management of environmental innovation by phygital tools*.²¹ Vanko adds that these are accurate, emotionally strong and short-term effective tools which make content much more attractive.²² „*Their main advantage is to maintain customer’s everyday attention thanks to interesting content and publishing of instant photos and videos which are more likely to contain reality than adjusted photos.*“²³ These assumptions are supported by ADMA which says that the main success of Instagram stories is their 15-min long duration, a click into IGTV, real-time, product tagging or target group engagement. When creating Instagram content, ADMA recommends focusing on the added value of a communicated message and brand identification due to the fact that social networking sites mainly focus on the Millennials, which

20 *Social media v roku 2019 – na čo by ste sa mali pripraviť?* [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://visibility.sk/blog/social-media-v-roku-2019-na-co-by-ste-sa-mali-pripravit/>>.

21 REZNÍČKOVÁ, M., ZAUŠKOVÁ, A.: Online komunikačné nástroje využívané pri podpore ekoinovácií. In MADLEŇÁK, A., ZAUŠKOVÁ, A. (eds.): *Manažment environmentálnych inovácií prostredníctvom phygitalových nástrojov*. Trnava: FMK UCM, 2017, p. 51-61.

22 VANKO, M.: Sila sociálnej siete Instagram v kontexte environmentálnych problémov. In MADLEŇÁK, A. (ed.): *Integrácia sociálnych médií, geolokačných služieb a mobilných zariadení v záujme podpory environmentálnych inovácií*. Trnava: FMK UCM, 2018, p. 45-57.

23 REZNÍČKOVÁ, M., ZAUŠKOVÁ, A.: Online komunikačné nástroje využívané pri podpore ekoinovácií. In MADLEŇÁK, A., ZAUŠKOVÁ, A. (eds.): *Manažment environmentálnych inovácií prostredníctvom phygitalových nástrojov*. Trnava: FMK UCM, 2017, p. 51-61.

are defined as the most loyal generation according to ADMA. Moreover, when creating Instagram content, marketers should think about „*relevancy for target audience, authenticity, regularity of contributions, production quality and originality.*“²⁴

On the other hand, Lajoš from the *Elite Solutions* agency in his e-book *Instaheroes* admits that not all the businesses have to necessarily be on Instagram just because it is generally seen as a modern and appropriate tool for marketing communication. Businesses should first ask these questions:

- Why do we want to be on Instagram?
- What do we expect?
- Are we able to offer interesting content?

Only answering the above mentioned questions can help businesses to justify their Instagram promotion. Companies should not go online just because it is appropriate or fashionable. „*If a company thinks this way, it is not a good way.*“²⁵

3 #trashtagchallenge

The third chapter is named after a „celebrity“ hashtag which accurately and precisely pointed to environmental issues linked to excessive waste production. Despite the fact that there are many hashtags or viral challenges referring to funny or incomprehensible moments, the challenge named *#trashtagchallenge* attempted to save our planet. It is derived from the English word „trash“.²⁶ The webportal *boredpanda.com* states that households generate 1.3 billion of tons of waste a year whereas only 258 – 368 million end up in landfills and one million tons are thrown away into the ocean with only 80% having its origin on the continent. „*The hashtag blew up on social media after a reddit user posted a screenshot of someone who had completed the challenge, with the caption: 'Here is a new #challenge for you all bored teens. Take a photo after you*

24 DITRICHOVÁ, M.: *Social media v roku 2019*. [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://adma.sk/social-media-v-roku-2019/>>.

25 LAJOŠ, J.: Majú firemné profily na Instagrame zmysel? In *Instaheroes: Top slovenskí influenciari na Instagrame*. Bratislava : Elite Solutions, 2018, p. 121-122.

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have done something about it, and post it here.”²⁷ The main goal of this challenge is making a photo before and after cleaning and collecting all waste. „The trashtag challenge is an effort to clean up litter and trash on beaches, roadsides, parks, etc.”²⁸



Picture 3: The first post to #trashtagchallenge

Source: #trashtagchallenge – Instagram Post. [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://lnk.sk/cep/>>.

The Picture 3 shows that the post launching the whole challenge #trashtagchallenge obtained 102 000 reactions, 37 comments and was shared by 333 000 users. Content agency thinks there are various key factors which influenced success of this hashtag, such as:

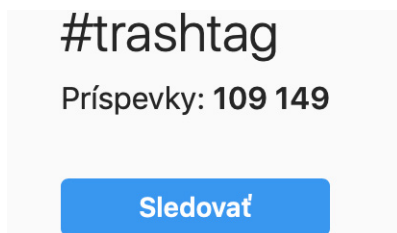
- „do not link too many words into one single hashtag,

²⁷ *Trashtag Challenge People Clean Surroundings*. [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://www.boredpanda.com/trashtag-challenge-people-clean-surroundings/>>.

²⁸ *Trashtag Challenge Goes Viral*. [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://www.forbes.com/sites/trevornace/2019/03/12/trashtag-challenge-goes-viral-as-people-share-beforeafter-photos-of-their-cleanup/>>.

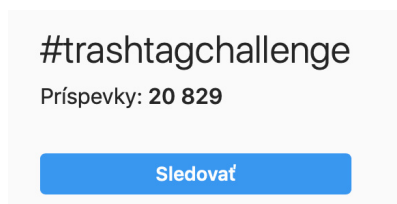
- *do not use too many hashtags – do not spam,*
- *use only those hashtags which are relevant to the topic.*²⁹

They also confirm that users on social networking sites create their own hashtags and thus increase the chance for the hashtag to become trendy and popular among users. „*The first thing anyone who sees your hashtag thinks of is your product, your blog, store or brand.*“³⁰ They also add that the key to success of *#trashtagchallenge* is its proper specification which aims at targeting the right audience. The post on the Facebook profile of Byron Román mainly targeted the group of Millennials who have been recently engaged into various social network challenges.



Picture 4: The number of posts published under the hashtag #trashtag

Source: *Posts Published under the Hashtag #trashtag.* [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/trashtag/>>.



Picture 5: The number of posts published under the hashtag #trashtagchallenge

Source: *Posts Published under the Hashtag #trashtagchallenge.* [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/trashtagchallenge/>>.

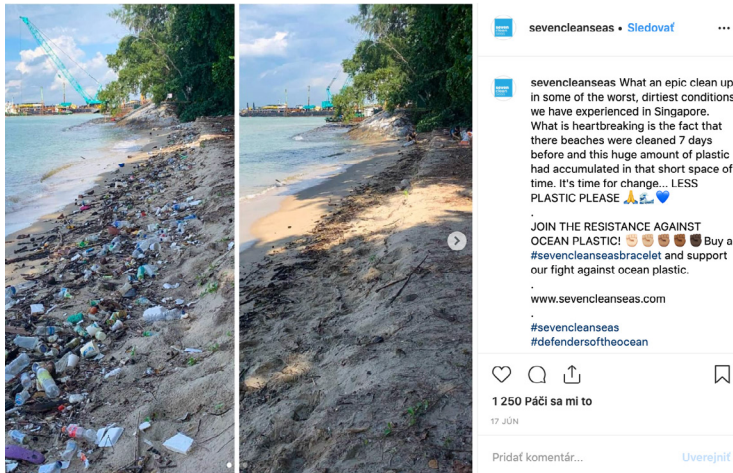
29 *Ako používať hashtag?* [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://contentagency.sk/ako-pouzivat-hashtag/>>.

30 *Ako používať hashtag?* [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://contentagency.sk/ako-pouzivat-hashtag/>>.

The Picture 4 shows that on June 6, 2019 the hashtag *#trashtag* had 109 149 comments whereas the hashtag *#trashtagchallenge* as shown in the Picture 5 had only 20 829 comments. Instagram users had added photos closely connected with environmental issues or waste before the *#trashtagchallenge* was launched. After clicking on the Pictures 4 and 5, one can see that each post having been published under the hashtag *#trashtagchallenge* was also linked to another hashtag *#trashtag*, which means that the hashtag *#trashtag* (referring to all trash-related posts) have had over 80 000 posts so far. We may assume that social networking sites users have been interested in environmental issues since their very beginning – 80 000 posts marked with *#trashtag* have been created since Instagram was launched in 2010,³¹ which is more than 9 years, while the *#trashtagchallenge* has generated over 20 000 posts since March 2019. Therefore the hashtag *#trashtagchallenge* can be described as utterly viral. The Texto Agency thinks the key to success of the above mentioned campaign was its social networking feature and adds that Instagram reports a 5% growth every three months (much more than Facebook or Snapchat), which explains the viral success of *#trashtagchallenge*, i.e. over 100 000 posts for the last 9 years and over 20 000 posts under *#trashtagchallenge* for the last 4 months in 2019. According to their marketers, over 60 % of Instagram users are actively online every day and therefore launching various challenges on this social platform seems to be highly relevant.³² Based upon our own experience, we can confirm that sharing posts „before“ and „after“ has become a rather successful platform on social networking sites. Even though all these posts published before 2019 had mainly concerned a new haircut, fashion or a diet, it is important to promote environmental issues the same way back in 2019. Social networking sites may help solve such problems more effectively.

31 *Ako robit' marketing na Instagrame?* [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://www.texto.sk/blog/ako-robit-marketing-na-instagrame/>>.

32 *Ako robit' marketing na Instagrame?* [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://www.texto.sk/blog/ako-robit-marketing-na-instagrame/>>.



Picture 6: Before and after in the context of #trashtagchallenge

Source: *Before and After in the Context of #trashtagchallenge*. [online]. [2019-06-06]. Available at: <<https://www.instagram.com/p/Byye9wYHYj4/>>.

Conclusion

The authors of the paper named “A famous hashtag as a solution to environmental issues” pointed to a viral and mass impact of a specific key word marked with a hash mark and called *#trashtagchallenge*. The paper also defined new trends on social networking sites such as Facebook and Instagram which, according to the statistics by Status Brew,³³ are the most popular social networking sites worldwide. Facebook has over 2 billion active monthly users while Instagram over one billion. The paper also specified some effective tools for innovations in marketing communication, which in long term have tendency to make environmental solutions much more available. Through the analysis of hashtags *#trashtag* and *#trashtagchallenge* our main goal was to define viral features of the Instagram content. In the third chapter named *#trashtagchallenge* the authors summarized all possible aspects of popularity of this Internet challenge based upon recommendations and ratings of various marketing agencies. In their opinion, the main

33 *100 Social Media Statistics That Matter for Your Business in 2019 + Infographic*. [online]. [2019-05-17]. Available at: <<https://blog.statusbrew.com/social-media-statistics-2019/Statusbrew>>.

key to success is creating and launching a quickly established hashtag in the context „before“ and „after“, which users like to show on social networking sites. Even though the challenge was expected to be launched in 2015 by the Company *UCO Gear*,³⁴ it did not meet the expectations that time. It was only in 2019 when the whole challenge gained a viral character thanks to the post by Byron Román described above. The challenge has also been successful in Slovakia as it has already been joined by a number of Slovak businesses within a newly established form of teambuilding. *Poštová banka* or the advertising agencies *Wiktor Leo Burnett*, *Socialists* or the media agency *Media and Digital Services*³⁵ have joined the campaign. The authors of the paper highly appreciate the connection of offline and online space, which is so important in 2019. Even though focusing on environmentally-related activities in our free time still plays a role, it is also crucial to spread awareness of these activities on social networking sites. Social networking sites have to take over the same role as traditional media did. Consequently, users need to be able not only receive such content, but also create it or share it.

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NEW “FEMALE” MARKETING AND PR STRATEGIES

Yvonne Vavrová

ABSTRACT:

Women are considered the ideal target group for each marketing and ad campaign. On the other hand, these ads are mostly made by male directors. Men manage for 90% of advertising and marketing agencies all over the world. The view of the world through the prism of female optics is different if a female director implements the advertising campaign, if the stories are written by female screenwriters. Nowadays sexist ads are no exception in the media world. Often, these ads indirectly promote domestic violence and express themselves about women as men’s assets and about women as beautiful but stupid creatures. All of this could be abolished if men, owners, CEO of advertising, PR and media companies would admit women directors, screenwriters to make such ads. In any case, it would be a win-win effect on both sides. Statistics only confirm this.

KEY WORDS:

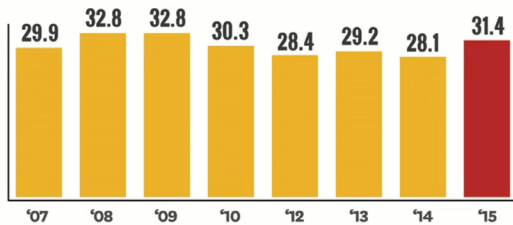
advertising, campaign, discrimination, film, gender, marketing, PR, storytelling, strategy, women

Why are the movies so important? Why do people tell their stories? Why, despite the advancement of digital technology. Well, simply because storytelling is old as humanity itself. Although cave paintings were still “dead” pictures, they were telling their fears, worries, joys and achievements. And they stayed engraved on the rocks for millions of years. Why are we talking about the story and the film when it comes to marketing and advertising? Well, simply because storytelling has become the absolute duty and must of any good creative, screenwriter, and director of a good marketing campaign. Long ago there were times when it was enough for a good marketing campaign to “sell” well and present the product itself. To show the product from all sides, to point out its pluses (less to its minuses) and to present the product in the most sober way. Finally, add a packshot with a catchy tagline and it was. Of course, we are talking about the time when television programs did not bend under the tons of advertising slots and the streets were not filled with such a huge amount of advertising and marketing smog as it is today. And the future will be even worse and let us return to the very beginning of the paper itself: New „Female“ Marketing and PR Strategies. So where are the women? In front of camera or behind camera? The numbers will no longer be pink, as are the products mentioned. They

won't even be pale pink, but they'll be black. To begin with, I would like to point out that this post is not feminist-tuned, even if it seems so to many readers. Or would they rather call it this, to discourage a large part of the predominantly male population from reading it at the very beginning. These are facts that are not only true but also alarming. The good news is that, on the other hand, it can bring tremendous potential to marketing and advertising business.

FEMALES ARE NOTICEABLY ABSENT IN FILM

Prevalence of female speaking characters across 800 films, in percentages



Total number of speaking characters

35,205

Ratio of males to females

2.3:1



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USCAnnenberg | Media, Diversity, & Social Change Initiative

Chart 1: Ratio of Males and Females Speaking Characters across 800 Films in Percentage

Source: PILCHER, L. D., SILVERSTEIN, M.: *The MS Factor: The Power of Female Driven Content*. Hollywood : The MS Factor, 2015, p. 32.

Why should women tell their stories? Whether in the film by edge, documentary or even in the ad itself? Well, simply because they account for up to 51% of the world's population. Because they are the majority of cinema visitors and they are the ones who decide what to buy into the home, where to go on holiday, what household equipment will be bought and so on. Maybe with the exception of cars, it's all the commodities that women choose. Women of all ages, from the youngest to the oldest.

Moviegoers by Gender:

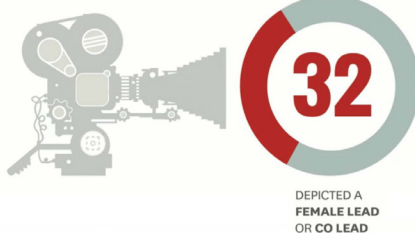
- **2014: Male - 110 million; Female - 119 million;**
- **2013: Male - 110 million; Female - 119 million;**
- **2012: Male - 108 million; Female - 117 million;**
- **2011: Male - 108 million; Female - 112 million;**
- **2010: Male - 109 million; Female - 113 million;**

Where did it all begin? The history is much older than it might seem to us. On behalf of all mankind, priests, teachers, rabbi and so on told their human stories. They have always interpreted them from the perspective of a male perspective, which is understandable because they were and are men. If a woman built a department for a department or pulpit, it would be considered a purely feminine approach which, in turn, is taken for granted from a male perspective. So what, on the one hand, is taken for granted, on the other hand, is considered totally incomprehensible. The creative genius has always been attributed to men. Women find it hard to fight it from centuries to centuries and it's not an easy fight. Fighting the electoral right alone took a lot of effort across all continents. But we won't deal with history. The present is just as if not even more alarming. The proportion of women behind the camera who is "allowed" to shoot the stories of women from their so-called, purely female perspective is only 5%! In Hollywood alone, only 5% of women are allowed to shoot feature-length films. Statistics are getting a little bit better when we talk about a documentary film that is less profitable and more so-called, dangerous. One World's Film Festival founder Igor Blažević said: "Feature fiction film is a queen of art and men like to sit on the throne. That is why there are so few women in the fiction film business and women are moving in the documentary film, as the documentary film is not so flashy and it does not have the imaginary royal crown. Just to express these stories not through a fiction story, but through a documentary".

Table 1: Depicted a Female Lead or Co Lead of the 100 Top films in 2015

FEMALES ARE SELDOM AT THE CENTER OF THE STORY IN FILM

Of the 100 top films in 2015...



And of those Leads and Co Leads*...

- 3** FEMALE ACTORS WERE FROM UNDERREPRESENTED RACIAL / ETHNIC GROUPS
- 1** UNDERREPRESENTED FEMALE ACTOR WAS 45 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER

*Excludes films w/ensemble casts

But the situation could be better when we imagine to “replace” the majority of men behind the camera with creative a gifted women. Interesting is that women behind the camera could make profitable and earn a lot of money for the producers in Hollywood.

Top Grossing Women Directors - Director Film Gross:

- Jennifer Lee *Frozen* \$1.274 Billion;
- Jennifer Yuh Nelson *Kung Fu Panda 2* \$665 million;
- Phyllida Lloyd *Mamma Mia!* \$609.8 million;
- Brenda Chapman *Brave* \$539 million;
- Vicky Jenson *Shrek* \$484.4 million;
- Catherine Hardwicke *Twilight* \$392.6 million;
- Mimi Leder *Deep Impact* \$349.5 million;
- Ann Fletcher *The Proposal* \$317.4 million;
- Amy Heckerling *Look Who's Talking* \$297.0 million;
- Betty Thomas *Doctor Dolittle* \$294.5 million.²



Picture 2: Fashion RELISH 2009 Advertisement

Source: *Fashion RELISH 2009 Advertisement*. [online]. [2019-04-04]. Available at: <<https://www.businessinsider.com/sex-violence-against-women-ads-2013-5>>.

2 *Women Control the Purse Strings*. [online]. [2019-04-04]. Available at: <<http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/news/2013/u-s-women-control-the-purse-strings.html>>.

One out of every six women in the U.S. has been the victim of a sexual assault. Women have been and still are depicted as an objects of violence, humiliation. They are always in submissive position and presented as silly creatures that depend on men. Although things have changed in this field, it cannot be totally excluded that women in some countries are not displayed in humiliating ways in advertising. Women find it difficult to find their place behind the camera and behind the desk. Very often, they can decide, respectively hit as the women appear in the ads because they haven't occupied extra decision posts. But one thing is certain. The young emerging female generation feels a strong problem of discrimination not only from the point of view of women's representation in the professional sphere, but also sees the problem of displaying women in advertising. They are no longer willing to accept the sexist touch of some ads that portray a woman as the object of violence and the property of a man.

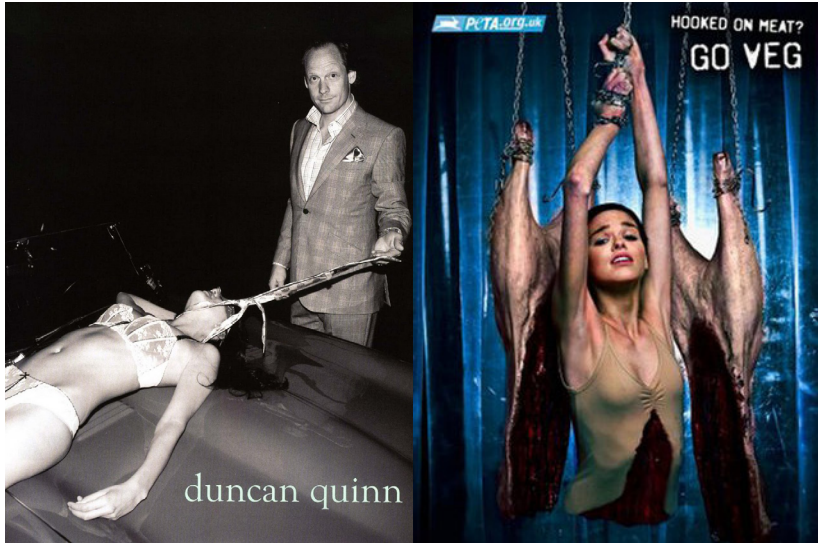


Picture 3: Dolce and Gabbana violent Advertising

Source: *Dolce and Gabbana*. [online]. [2019-04-04]. Available at: <<https://www.businessinsider.com/sex-violence-against-women-ads-2013-5>>.

This condition is definitely not recorded by anyone. Not even the men themselves. Women depicted in such a humiliating manner are, after all, daughters or sisters, mothers of some men. And that could really hinder men. We do not want to believe that men are so heartless that they are not willing to perceive their own blood daughters, or sisters, as material possessions that are often treated worse than conquests. These claims

are not exaggerated, and a few pictures show that sexist and humiliating advertisements create even the most reputable clothing fashion brands. 15 Recent Ads That Glorify Sexual Violence Against Women.



Picture 4: Women treated poorly in fashion and food ads

Source: *Sex Violence against Women*. [online]. [2019-04-04]. Available at: <<https://www.businessinsider.com/sex-violence-against-women-ads-2013-5>>.

So why should women tell their stories? Why should anybody shoot commercials from a purely “female perspective”? Because movies and stories are a huge means of changing society, changing consumer behavior, learning ethics, habits, setting values to pay attention to in society. Films preserve the image of the past, give lessons that have given us the past, give examples of follow-up. They teach us empathy, understanding, make our being easier and valuable better. If our multiplexes overwhelm stories in which the notion of team and the hero is distorted, then there is a man’s identity crisis. It is still a very hidden process, but it bears its fruit.

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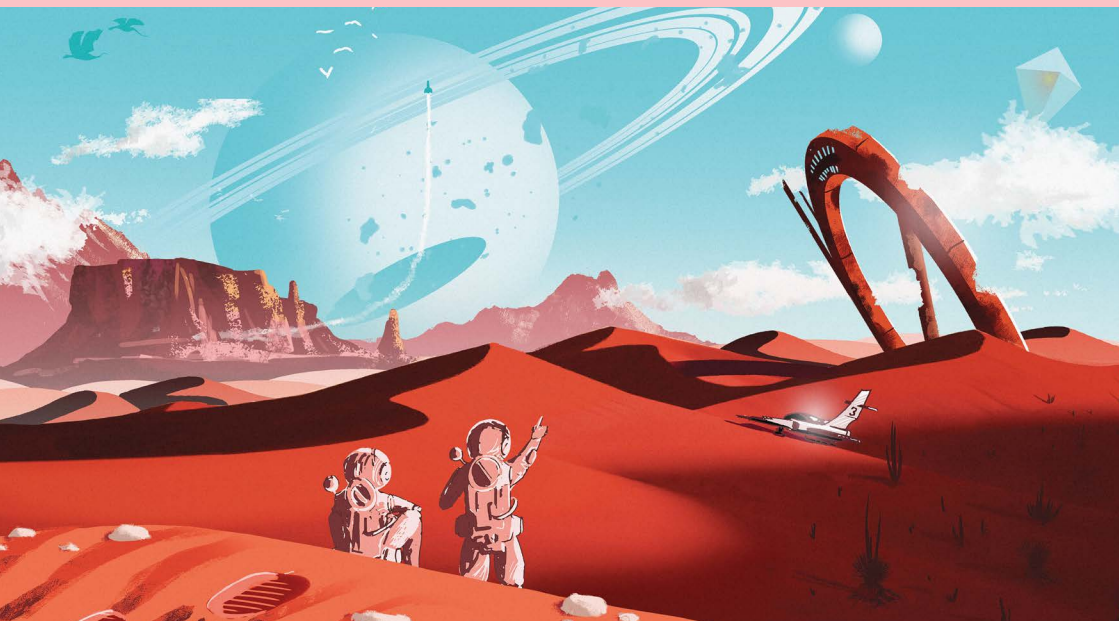
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