

FACULTY OF MASS MEDIA COMMUNICATION
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava,

MEGATRENDS AND MEDIA

ON THE EDGE

**Zuzana Kvetanová
Martin Solík**
(eds.)

FMK
Fakulta masmediálnej komunikácie
Faculty of Mass Media Communication

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

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Conference Proceedings
from the International Scientific Conference
held online on 22nd April 2020,
available via @FMK.UCM on *Facebook*
and <https://fmk.sk/mm20/>



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2020

MEGATRENDS AND MEDIA: On the Edge

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MEGATRENDS AND MEDIA

On the Edge

International Scientific Conference, 22nd April 2020

Available via @FMK.UCM on Facebook and <https://fmk.sk/mm20/>

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 15th 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 22nd April 2020 and was held online due to coronavirus concerns. The main discussion session is available via <https://fmk.sk/mm20/> and also at FMK UCM's *Facebook* page: <https://sk-sk.facebook.com/FMK.UCM/>

The discussion sessions were divided into four sections as follows:

- Section 1: *Merging Reality and Fiction*
- Section 2: *Media Education, Policy and Ethics*
- Section 3: *Digital Platforms and Marketing*
- Section 4: *Media Culture, Art and Creativity*

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

Conference website:

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PREFACE

Dear Colleagues, Dear Scientific Community,

Let us present conference proceedings associated with the 15th 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). While writing the last year's Preface, being full of expectations regarding what would the future bring to our faculty and our conferences, we did not even imagine how difficult and strange it would be to organise *Megatrends and Media 2020*. Nevertheless, the global COVID-19 pandemic may have complicated our work, endangered our lives and threatened many of the principles we stand for, but none of us actually thought about postponing the conference or cancelling it entirely. Instead, we felt that it is even more important to provide the scholarly community with a sense of 'normal' academic life with everything it involves, including an internationally attended debate on media and the ways they are changing literally in front of our eyes and in our hands. After all, we possess all the means and technologies necessary to do so.

In December 2019, while thinking about this year's conference title, which is 'On the Edge', it was hardly possible to expect that in 2020, everything would be so different. During the last few months, our homes have also become our offices, lecture halls, playgrounds for our children, the only places where we feel safe, all at once. We have truly found ourselves 'on the edge' – that is, on the edge of what can possibly be a new era of human communication. Some of the cultural, social and economic trends related to this unprecedented situation are quite logical consequences of the pandemic itself, other have been emerging for a much longer time period.

The world of the new Millennium, as imagined in late modern fiction back in the 1970s and 1980s, is now our everyday reality; nothing about it truly surprises us anymore. While many people, even some scholars used to claim that the media would control us entirely, we can observe quite the opposite – in the last decade or so, media audiences and their volatile preferences have 'colonised' the once unreachable world of media production thanks to their own creative activities, social networking sites and other digital media platforms. The spheres of media production and reception have never been this close to one another, the boundaries separating them so blurred. That is why media professionals, media scholars and even media audiences see so clearly that the media are, in fact, on the edge of an emerging communication era marked by digital entertainment, multiplatform publishing, participation culture and deeper interactions between those who create and those who enjoy or criticise the creations. On the other hand, reality and fiction often merge without us even noticing, usually on purpose, as those who produce such reality/fiction hybrids always pursue their own agendas. We may feel that we hold the world of media firmly in our hands, but many pathological communication aspects are, in fact, getting out of anyone's control, living their own 'life'. It is almost unnecessary to explain that these communication phenomena have been named by a wide variety of terms – hoaxes, disinformation, half-truths, 'alternative' facts and so on. Some of our attempts to expand the existing body of knowledge on these communication phenomena are available in these proceedings.

Even though we were not able to offer our participants the 'traditional' discussion space known from the previous years of the conference, while moving online, we did our best to fill the gap by inviting interesting keynote speakers from Slovakia and abroad. Their positive reactions and willingness to give the keynote speeches via *Facebook* live streaming and our website felt

very encouraging. Even though we were a little bit worried that the following discussions, Q&A sessions and feedback elements would be somehow strange or even utterly forgotten, quite the opposite turned out to be true. On *Facebook*, each of the given speeches was lively discussed via comments and other available feedback tools.

The main programme was introduced by Ľudmila Čábyová, Dean of the Faculty of Mass Media Communication UCM in Trnava. Her opening speech was followed by Martin Solík's presentation of the latest issue of the renowned scholarly journal *Communication Today*. The next session included several media professionals, starting with Vahram Chuguryan, the director of the Centre of News and Opinions at the Slovak Radio and Television, who outlined the public broadcaster's measures applied during the COVID-19 pandemic. A creative specialist's view on the current media environment was shared by Peter Michalka, the creative director and co-owner of the Respect APP agency. He was followed by Martina Töröková, a television journalist working for TV Markíza, who offered the conference participants a set of valuable information on changes in processing TV news during the pandemic. The academic sphere was represented by renowned scholars. The first scientific speech was given by Katarína Fichnová, media and marketing Professor affiliated with Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, who talked about transforming reception practices associated with the 'traditional' (print) media texts and their digital counterparts. Slavka Pitoňáková, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Žilina, offered a set of knowledge on the ever-changing media world, basing her thinking on the 'black swan' metaphor. Associate Professor Juraj Rusnák from Prešov University followed his last year's speech by analysing various indications and outlines of a new media production paradigm and its functioning. The conference was also proud to feature Mark Deuze, the renowned Dutch media scholar currently affiliated with University of Amsterdam, and his speech on how to adapt Denis McQuail's mass communication theory for the future of the field of media and communication studies.

Merging lectures given by academics and media professionals, the afternoon session included Jord Nikov, the creative director of Work&Hugs, and his contribution on positive and negative consequences of the pandemic in relation to advertising. The sphere of public communication was represented by Miroslav Kolárik, the social media and content manager working for the City of Bratislava, who outlined the ways the Slovak capital communicates in the time of coronavirus. A set of interesting notes on 'how not to go crazy' during the worldwide health crisis was shared by Boris Pršo, a TV journalist from TV Markíza. Representing the Faculty of Mass Media Communication, Peter Krajčovič offered his explanation on what it truly means for us when the media are teetering 'on the edge'. We were also happy to reunite with our former colleague and regular conference speaker Alexander Plencner from Comenius University in Bratislava, who defined the role human emotions play in online argumentations. Milena Popović, the editor-in-chief of *istinomer.rs*, Serbia, stressed the immense importance of fact-checking in journalism. The main programme also included Andrej Brník, Vice-Dean of FMK UCM, and his view on how radio broadcasters in Slovakia are coping with the current pandemic situation.

The main topic of this year's conference was formally divided into four sections, i.e. in accordance with partial problems the conference papers aimed to address. Even though our participants were unable to present them personally, i.e. in a more traditional way, the conference proceedings you are reading are still divided into four sections in order to systematically sort out the individual contributions:

1. Merging Reality and Fiction
2. Media Education, Policy and Ethics
3. Digital Platforms and Marketing
4. Media Culture, Art and Creativity

The proceedings include 61 best contributions written in English that have been reviewed and carefully selected to represent the conference's complexity and scholarly objectives. The papers are written by media scholars and professionals from eight different countries, including Croatia, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine.

We cannot forget to mention the tradition we were unable to foster despite all the effort, 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 to 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. If the pandemic situation will not prevent us from doing so, this year's *Pomegranates* will be awarded during the international scientific conference *Marketing Identity 2020*, which will take place in November 2020.

Dear members of scholarly communities, dear friends; as usual, we would like to express our 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. Given the current health crisis and all related problems, we especially appreciate all the efforts and kind words of our colleagues, speakers and participants that encouraged us not only to keep the conference 'alive' despite the situation but also to work even harder to reflect on the ways media cover the crisis and its possible consequences. Let us hope next year we will be able to see each other in person and if not, *Megatrends and Media* will still be here, although just virtually.

*Mgr. Zuzana Kvetanová, PhD.
JUDr. PhDr. Martin Solík, PhD.*

*Heads of the Organising Committee of Megatrends and Media
Faculty of Mass Media Communication
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MERGING REALITY AND FICTION

CRITICAL THINKING



**MEGATRENDS
AND MEDIA**

ON THE EDGE

GENRE DIVERSITY IN JOURNALISM IN PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING

Lubica Bôtošová

ABSTRACT:

The present study focuses on the diversity of genre production of one of the public service broadcasters. Radio production of *Radio Regina Západ* consists of news, journalistic and non-genre journalistic genres. This issue is actual from the point of view of the real occurrence of radio journalistic genres in radio broadcasting and its theoretical definition. The main aim is to provide an insight into the work of the public service broadcaster and its regional work in the region of Western Slovakia through the analysis of weekly broadcasting. In this way we would like to point out the genre focus of this radio circuit of Radio and Television of Slovakia (RTVS).

KEY WORDS:

genres, public service media, radio, Radio Regina, regional broadcasting

1 Introduction

This study focuses on genre diversity in journalism in public service broadcasting in Slovakia. Radio is a means of systematically disseminating verbal and music programs of all kinds using electromagnetic waves wirelessly or by wires, for an unlimited number of dispersed listeners who are equipped with appropriate reception equipment. Recipients can receive the program simultaneously, either individually or in groups.¹ Radio communication is a part of mass media communication and consists of sound-modulated information reproduced to a wide audience. E. Chudinová and V. Lehoczka state that we characterize radio communication as an organized sound system of transmission of information, mass media – journalistic, artistic and musical content from communicator to recipient, by means of radio technology.² Compared to the press, the radio has a more frequent news period, which may extend into continuous information about the event from an authentic author's recitation and the presentation of audio material.³ One of the topics covered in media communication is the long-term outdated categorization of journalistic genres. The systematisation of radio genres respects the formal and content segmentation, functionality and balance of the creative subject and object. The genre can be understood as an abstract and generalized model of expression with fixed formal and content signs, in which the journalist applies the traditional way of its presentation.⁴ An innovative and much more explanatory characteristic of today's media conditions is that the genre is shaped by new structures of relationships: technological but also social. We see the overlapping of genres, their decomposition, and enrichment with new approaches. The genre is not fixed. In some areas, the innovative, rapidly changing genre can attract the recipient, preserve steady forms and link the available expression systems. But there is also a pressure to stabilize genres to keep communication with the recipient in this way. The genre itself is a specific way of acting and interacting within social communication and can be understood as a specific discursive aspect of acting and interaction.⁵

¹ REIFOVÁ, I. et al.: *Slovník mediální komunikace*. 1st Edition. Prague : Portál, 2004, p. 217.

² CHUDINOVÁ, E., LEHOCZKÁ, V.: *Fenomén rozhlasu v systéme masmédií. Základy teórie rozhlasovej žurnalistiky v systéme masmediálnej komunikácie*. 1st Edition. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2005, p. 23.

³ SLOVÁK, L.: *Teória rozhlasovej žurnalistiky*. 1st Edition. Prague : Novinár, 1981, p. 23.

⁴ VELAS, Š.: *Novinárska publicistika I. Publicistika racionálneho typu*. 1st Edition. Bratislava : Slovenské pedagogické nakladateľstvo, 1983, p. 159.

⁵ SCHNEIDEROVÁ, S.: *Analýza diskurzu a mediálny text*. 1st Edition. Prague : Karolinum, 2015, p. 101-102.

The issue of characteristics of the term genre or genre dominance is not uniform even today, each theoretician defines the term in a different way. And the question of genre purity is a topical issue in media practice. Often, journalism students and the younger generation of media workers are not familiar with the genres. Genreology is a major problem or rather a challenge for both parties. Theorists should clearly disclose a common view or characteristic of genres, and the media professionals will work on the topic so that the listener can identify the genre with which they have just come in contact.⁶ However, practice shows that this issue is not of interest to the public, and therefore, in radio practice, we usually come across the idea that the topic determines the genre. The basic typology of genres can be called trichotomic division to: news, analytical and artistic-documentary genres. In practice there is also so-called dichotomic division into news (rational and emotional type) and journalism (rational and emotional type). In this study we will focus on the broadcasting of *Rádio Regina Západ* and its genre diversity as part of a one week broadcast analysis.

2 Results

Rádio Regina is the second radio program with three regional studios in Bratislava, Banská Bystrica and Košice. Program structure of the second RTVS⁷ program has a full-format character. It is a radio with nationwide coverage in the Slovak Republic. Rádio Regina was established in the Czech Republic with the ambition to be a regional radio at the turn of 1990 and 1991. Its mission was defined by Bohumil Kolář, Deputy Editor-in-Chief for Children and Youth, who became the dramaturg of Rádio Regina. It was created by the demise of the EM program - originally the Slovak program *Elán* and the Czech program *Mikrofórum*. The beginning of the broadcast was accompanied by two types of complaints: the first was linked to the disappearance of the original EM for young people, instead of Rádio Regina; the second group complained about interfering with the signal and disabling listening to other favorite shows.⁸ It started broadcasting in Slovakia on March 4, 1991. With its three studios, Rádio Regina is characterized as a regional radio focusing on individual regions with the ambition to map the life in them. Local or regional broadcasting means an active shift towards listeners. Knowing their problems, actively changing regional development in terms of culture and economy. It follows the phenomenon of mass audience transition to a more segmented, interest-based audience. Most often it is the geographical segmentation that determines how regional and local media are defined.⁹ In 2004, Regina began broadcasting as a modern family type radio with 24-hour broadcasts, music-oriented to older genres or middle stream of popular music. It ensures contact with listeners in the regions and fulfills public functions.¹⁰ In 2014, after the *Rádio Slovensko* and *Rádio Devín*, the sound graphics of *Rádio Regina* changed as a result of the main function of this program: being close to the listener. That is why the voice of Miloslav Král' speaks in the main claim: Radio Regina - your nearest

⁶ Compare to: BRNÍK, A.: Reklama v rádiu a hlavné dôvody jej využitia. In ČÁBYOVÁ, E., BEZÁKOVÁ, Z., MENDELOVÁ, D.: *Marketing Identity 2019: Offline Is the New Online – aktuálne výzvy onlinovej a offlinovej komunikácie*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2019, p. 20-28; KRAJČOVIČ, P.: Strategies in media planning. In *Communication Today*, 2015, Vol. 6, No. 2. p. 20-30.

⁷ Remark by the author: Radio and Television of Slovakia.

⁸ MORAVEC, V.: Svobodný rozhlas 1990-2003. In JEŠUTOVÁ, E. (ed.): *Od mikrofónu k posluchačum: Z osmi desiatich českého rozhlasu*. Prague : Český rozhlas, 2003, p. 420.

⁹ BREČKA, S., BENKOVIČOVÁ, D., TUŠER, A.: *Regionálne a lokálne médiá na Slovensku*. 1st Edition. Bratislava : Print-Servis, 1998, p. 6.

¹⁰ LEHOCZKÁ, V.: *Transkultúrne kontexty v rozhlasovej komunikácii verejnoprávneho Slovenského rozhlasu*. 1st Edition. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2010, p. 204.

world.¹¹ In addition to sound graphics, *Rádio Regina's* editorial staff really wants to speak individually through the many autonomous formats of the three studios, but also through individual shows, such as *Hudobné pozdravy* (Musical Greetings). The regional intention is also included in the broadcasting of Regina in the news service, which consists of regional editors separately five times. The main news program *Žurnál Rádia Regina* is broadcasted daily from another of the three studios.

The RTVS program structure consists of news, current affairs, documentaries, drama, music, sports, entertainment, educational programs for children and youth. Speaking of the activities of RTVS, the law states that there should be radio broadcasting on at least four radio program services, one of which is intended for content and regional balanced programs in the languages of national minorities and ethnic groups living in Slovakia. The three regional studios are broadcasting in such a way that the contributions are balanced from the whole territory of Slovakia. In addition, public service broadcasting provides space for the activities of registered churches and religious societies, and broadcasts and recordings from selected political, religious, cultural, artistic or sporting events. RTVS also provides radio broadcasting of cultural and information programs abroad.¹² *Rádio Regina* is a full-format radio and that is why it has art in various forms. Reporters can fill the themes of the content in their contributions or the art can be transmitted to the radio ether in various journalistic genres such as radio plays or features. Since *Rádio Regina* is legally obliged to broadcast in the language of national minorities, there are also minority music genres, as well as classical music. Closer to the audience is trying to be the second program of RTVS also on social networks, where *Rádio Regina* is represented three times: *Rádio Regina Západ* (West), *Rádio Regina Stred* (Central) and *Rádio Regina Východ* (East). On weekdays, *Rádio Regina* broadcasts forty-six hours a day. On weekdays, three studios broadcast autonomously up to eleven hours for the Central, Eastern and Western Slovak regions. *Rádio Regina* has another thirteen hours of broadcasting in studios in Banská Bystrica, Bratislava and Košice. News of the *Rádio Regina* is divided into two parts: *Žurnál Rádia Regina* (Radio Regina Journal), which is broadcasted three times a day at the same time for all regional studios and news enriched with information from *Rádio Slovensko*.¹³ Some reports from *Správy RTVS* (News of RTVS) are focused on local and regional issues or topics, so we can say that they are also *Správy Rádia Regina* (Radio Regina News). Of course, there is also a national-ethnic broadcasting, which listeners hear on the frequencies after 6 pm. The program of all three studios of *Rádio Regina* is connected throughout the Slovak Republic mainly in the evening from Monday to Friday and in most of the weekend broadcasts. In this broadcast, it focuses on a wide range of topics - communal, social and cultural. *Rádio Regina* is presented as a family radio environment that allows its listeners to stop quickly and listen to traditional radio production formats. The program consists of news, reports, discussion programs, magazines, but also music programs, features, fairy tales and plays.¹⁴

Radio Regina is dedicated to several of her own projects, including such as *Košický zlatý poklad* (Košice's Golden Treasure) or *Folklorne leto s Rádiom Regina* (Folkloric Summer with Radio Regina). It is also interesting to note that when it ther eis a nameday of Regina in

¹¹ *Rádio Regina s novou zvukovou grafikou*. [online]. [2020-02-25]. Available at: <https://www.radia.sk/spravy/3136_radio-regina-s-novou-zvukovou-grafikou>.

¹² *Zákon č. 532/2010 Z. z. o Rozhlase a televízií Slovenska a o zmene a doplnení niektorých predpisov*. [online]. [2020-02-25]. Available at: <<https://www.zakonypreludi.sk/zz/2010-532>>.

¹³ LEHOCZKÁ, V.: *Transkultúrne kontexty v rozhlasovej komunikácii verejnoprávneho Slovenského rozhlasu*. 1st Edition. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2010, p. 207.

¹⁴ *Rádio Regina*. [online]. [2020-02-25]. Available at: <<https://www.radia.sk/radia/regina>>.

Slovak calendar, *Rádio Regina* organizes an open day called *Rádio Regina dokorán* (Radio Regina wide open) in all three regional studios. This is how the program creates a relationship with listeners who can personally meet their favorite moderators or reporters. Music is an essential element in radio broadcasting that often underlines the context or radio genre before or after a song. There is a wide selection of songs on the radio ether of Regina. Hits of the past decades, melodic songs, Czech and Slovak music production, but also foreign music. There are also country, folk, folklore, brass music and evergreens, especially from the 60s, 70s and 80s. A unique component of Radio Regina are live broadcasts from folk festivals and special music-word shows.¹⁵

2.1 Analytical Journalism in Radio Regina Západ

Based on the traditional trichotomic division, journalism is divided into rational type journalism and emotional type journalism. For our needs we have divided them into monologic, dialogical and synthetic genres. In monologic types of radio journalistic genres, we were the first to characterize a note, even a sound note. It is especially the introduction of a show, a magazine or an introduction to half an hour, hours of broadcasting. The presenter can thus attract listeners to stay tuned to *Rádio Regina's* frequency. Furthermore, it is an intercession that regularly appears in the show *Z duše* (From the Soul). It is expressed by priests, for example during Easter and Christmas, and offers to the audience spiritual reflections corresponding to the theme that dominates in society. From the monologic types of analytical radio genres, there is no comment or review in the broadcast. Although it was possible to argue whether even speaker input could actually be a commentary expressing its experience or observations.

Dialogue genres of analytical journalism are very diverse in broadcasting. Among the journalistic interviews we include a report interview, commentary, analysis and portrait interview. The journalistic interview in the form of a commentary interview can be found in *Rádio Regina's* broadcast in the journalistic contributions that are in the *Ludia* (People) section. For example, on March 9, 2020, it was a post about Ivan Pavle.¹⁶ A commentary interview can also be called *Kulinárium Rádia Regina* (Radio Regina Culinary), where you will learn how to prepare a particular food and the reporter comments on the preparation process, such as food quantization. Among the portrait interviews at *Rádio Regina* we included the radio document *Knih na týždeň* (Book for a Week), because the reporters talk to the authors of the books we are talking about. They focus on a broad audience base. It includes works by young Slovak successful authors as well as Slovak classics, as well as current works from world literature. Mostly for adults, but to a lesser extent for children. These are mainly authors who live in Western Slovakia or write about it. This format has 4 minutes. An art-journalistic show about the transgressions of spiritual life into today's life, but also an interview with various interesting people who provide testimony, values they profess. The portrait interviews of these people are in the *Večerné reflexie* (Evening Reflections) program. In the *Portréty* (Portraits) show, *Rádio Regina* presents again interesting people who have crossed the threshold of their region but also of Slovakia. Among the portrait interviews we also included the journalistic two-part position called *Životný štýl* (Lifestyle). The listener can hear some of the interviewee's life, his hobbies, what he likes and so on. An analysis interview can be found in the *Uličákmi starého mesta* (Old Town Streets) section. In this section, the reporter speaks with experts in different parts of the city and explains the history

¹⁵ *Rádio Regina*. [online]. [2020-02-25]. Available at: <<https://www.radia.sk/radia/regina>>.

¹⁶ *Výtvarník Ivan Pavle má 65 rokov*. [online]. [2020-03-11]. Available at: <<https://reginazapad.rtv.s.sk/clanky/ludia/219430/vytvarnik-ivan-pavle-ma-65-rokov>>.

of the place. It has in the broadcasting plan called two-part position. We did not find any reportage interview in dialogical journalistic genres.

Synthetic journalistic types include a radio discussion, which is represented in public broadcasting by several programs: *Klub komunálnej politiky* (Municipal Policy Club), *Dejiny.sk* (History.sk), *Pohotovosť* (Emergency), *Klub spotrebiteľov* (Consumer Club) and *Klub farmárov* (Farmers' Club). It is also a *Vademecum* program or a radio health counseling program, which is broadcast as part of the *Mozaika regiónu* (Mosaic of the Region) program as a composition of reporters' interviews as well as listeners' personal experiences, but sometimes as a radio discussion. The *Občiansky klub* (Civic Club) is also a radio discussion, focuses on current issues about citizens, covers a wide range of topics. Also the program *Záhradkári* (Gardeners) is a professional radio discussion, with the opportunity for listeners to ask questions. In general, it is extremely popular part of the broadcast of *Regina*. *Poradíme, vysvetlíme* (We will advise, explain) is also a radio discussion, or better said discussion with the participation of listeners in terms of telephone contact, focused on various topics, with the possibility of audience feedback. When incorporating into genre categories, we have in some cases considered several categories. For the *Host' Rádia Regina* (Radio Regina Guest), *Host' Panorámy Rádia Regina* (The Guest of Panorama of Radio Regina), and *Duchovné horizonty* (the Spiritual Horizons) program, which is purely religious and could therefore be included in a group of religious programs, we have finally classified this genre as a radio interview. In *Panoráma Rádia Regina* (the Radio Regina Panorama) as well as in *Host' Rádia Regina* (Radio Regina Guest), the theoretically the conversation can be carried out in a professional debate. The same problem is in *Duchovné horizonty* (the Spiritual Horizons) it is a religious issue. A professional debate within the popular-educational style is also part of the *Meteoklub* (Meteoclub) program. The journalistic mosaic is represented by *Mozaika Rádia Regina* (the Radio Regina Mosaic) format in broadcasting, the journalistic band is present in public institutions in the form of festive bands (Christmas, etc.) and then in the form of music-verbal bands such as *Túto hudbu mám rád* (I like this music). Talkshow is also popular today. Again, it is difficult to determine exactly what a talkshow is, as in many characteristic features it coincides with the genre of a journalistic interview, a news interview, and even a radio interview.

The radio analysis should analyze the problem and the part in the broadcast devoted to the *Fórum* (Forum) section. It focuses on various topical topics, which are from the field of agriculture, finance, but especially topics that concern people. Radio dispatching is a particular genre, but in broadcasting it can only be characterized as a partial genre of streaming the show *Rádiobudík* (Radioalarm), for example a phone call with a meteorologist, or a telephone connection of a speaker with another speaker through a tele-bridge during a radio talk. The radio series is still present in public service broadcasting. On the waves of *Rádio Regina* you can hear, for example, the series *Život s vôňou vanilky* (Life with the scent of vanilla) or *Rozhlasoví bakalári* (Radio bachelors) in a reprise. Another form of radio series is a radio documentary. In *Regina* it is again only a part of the show called *Dobrá rada nad zlato* (Good advice over gold). Separately these documents consist mainly of montage interviews, in exceptional cases they are report interviews. In some cases, one could also consider the magazine *Zvony nad krajinou* (Bells over the landscape) as a radio documentary. It is a radio documentary about life in the villages of Slovakia, their past, present and future plans. It consists of reports, interviews and authentic sounds and the atmosphere of the place. Publicistic montage has been one of the most popular genres in recent years, together with news montage. On the journalistic level it is characterized by *Výročia v Rádiu Regina* (Radio Regina Anniversaries) or *Historický kalendár* (Historical Calendar), *Slovička* (Words) or

Ranná rozcvička (Morning Warming Up). Speaking of the genre of a publicist survey, *Rádio Regina* has included in its broadcast part *Otázka na dnes* (Question for Today), which deals with current topics such as: Who would you like to thank from your heart? How do you get rid of unnecessary things? Do you believe in a friendship between a man and a woman?

2.2 Artistic and Documentary Journalism

Among the journalistic art-documentary type we include a radio report, which we found in the broadcast of *Rádio Regina Západ. Dominanty* (The Dominants) session brings authentic reports from the place discussed in the article, along with an accompanying person. Such an element can be found in the section *Prekvapilo nás* (Surprised us). Journalistic elements are broadcasting in multiple predominance in fixed time areas, so it is difficult to analyze all genres in this space. It is open to diverse topics and genres. There is also a glosse genre in the broadcast, which is a stable element of the morning broadcast and is prepared every day by a different editor on various topics. Feature is one of the most demanding radio genres, it also appears in *Rádio Regina*. During the festive days the features in the radio broadcasts are even thematically adapted and are also available in the Slovak Radio archive. On Sunday, Slovak Radio presented a ficer by Gabriela Horečná: I am not angry with anyone - The story of a family who survived the Chernobyl disaster. Although the genre of radio reading is in public service broadcasting, it is not on the *Rádio Regina* program, this genre is mainly devoted to *Rádio Devín*, which is also available in the radio archive. However, this genre is covered by a speaker input called *Reading*, that contains tips for book titles. The radio play is represented in *Rádio Regina's* broadcasts over a year, for example by Ivor Gogál: The Magic Mallet (aired March 1, 2020). But it is more often represented during the festive days, Christmas mini-dramas by a cycle of radio mini-dramas or a themed radio play. A radio fairy tale has an irreplaceable role in public service broadcasting, older artists, writers, teachers and scientists recall that in addition to family and school, radio fairy tales or youth games have formed them. This genre also has a stable place in the public service broadcast called *Dobrá noc, deti!* (Good Night Kids!). *Rádio Regina* also offers space for a child listener on its frequencies: every evening at 6 pm it is a short story: Good night, children!, on Friday at 5:30 pm *Panpulóni* (the Panpulóns), *Knižky mačky Abecedy* (Cat Books Alphabet), *Bola raz jedna povest' na Regine* (there was once a legend on Regina). On Sunday at 8 am it is a big radio fairy tale.

2.3 Non-genre Forms in the Broadcast of Radio Regina West

This group also includes news and current affairs blocks: *Správy RTVS* (RTVS News), *Žurnál Rádia Regina* (Radio Regina Journal), *Zelená Vlna* (Green Wave), *Správy v jazyku národnostno-etnických skupín* (News in the Language of National Ethnic Groups), *Správy Rádia Regina* (Radio Regina News), as well as streaming of morning show called *Rádiobudík* (Radioalarm). The autonomous broadcasts of the Bratislava studio of *Rádio Regina* are dominant on weekdays by sessions of a contact character with listeners. It's *Rádiobudík* (Radioalarm) from 5:05 till 9:00 am, *Predpoludnie s Rádiom Regina* (Afternoon with Radio Regina) from 9:05 till 12:00 am and *Popoludnie s Rádiom Regina* (Afternoon with Radio Regina) from 13:05 till 17.00 pm. The program is filled by information about events in the municipalities and towns of the Bratislava, Trnava, Nitra and Trenčín regions, as well as topics from education, health, tourism, cross-border cooperation, public order, security, consumerism, volunteering, traditions, social events, culture, sports, lifestyle, etc. Broadcasting does not lack good advice, enlightenment and inspiration. On Saturday, *Rádio Regina Západ* broadcasts from 6:15 till 12:00 am, while from 9:05 am *Panoráma Rádia*

Regina (Radio Regina Panorama) is characterized mainly by tourist-historical-homeland themes.¹⁷ Magazines belong to another category. The traditional format includes *Zvony nad krajinou* (Bells over the Landscape), a monothematic magazine, especially from a regional context. *Rádio Regina* also has specialized magazines. *Plná poľná* (the Full field) is an army magazine.

Every week, there is information from the world of the professional army, interviews with professional soldiers, memories of important personalities and events in military history and much more – they announce a week in the army. We also analyzed other genres in the magazine: montages, surveys, interviews. Specialized or better said the religious magazine is *Viera v živote* (Faith in Life). Broadcasting is over the weekend with traditional headlines: *Aktuálne zamyslenie* (Current Thinking), *Na návšteve* (Visiting), *Galéria osobností* (Gallery of Celebrities), *Hudobná kapitolka* (Music Chapter) or *Slovo na víkend* (Word for the Weekend). In the category of specialized magazine we also included the program *Pozor, zákruta!* (Attention, Twist!), which is characterized as a motoring magazine, composed of monothematic type contributions, events of road transport, news in legislation, attractions in the world of road transport. Listeners can also join this session. Again, there is a categorization issue with this session. The characteristic of this format is a motoring magazine, but since it is a specialized monothematic magazine, we believe that by genre classification it belongs to the genre of a revue. *Na vlastné nohy* (On his own feet) is a program dedicated to youth. The joys and pitfalls of young people while they are building on their own feet. Without moralization, it discusses problems. Topics include music, street activities, adrenaline, fun or stories of inspiring and talented people. RTVS also offers podcasts. The show is broadcasted every other Sunday at 5:05 pm and alternates with *Čo by bolo keby* (What if). The program is intended for children as well as adult listeners who are not curious about curiosity. The program addresses topics in history, biology, culture, society, or other phenomena that are worth mentioning. Interviews with experts in the field are complemented by interviews with children, children's questions, surveys, literature extracts or radio archives.

2.4 Music Programs

Rádio Regina is focused on a wide range of music genres. From the radio ether you can hear hits, Slovak, Czech, but also foreign songs, brass music, folklore and much more. Sessions *Brieždenie* (Braking), *Nočné tónovanie* (Night Tinting), *Pekné hlasy* (Nice Voices) are purely musical programs, which are broadcast mainly in unattractive listening times. For example at night or early in the morning or at the time of the television news when it is prime-time on television. *Túto hudbu mám rád* (This music I like) is a show conducted by speaker Vlado Franc with a simple dramaturgy, where he asks guests what songs they like. This format could also be included in a journalistic interview, but as the title itself suggests, it is a program mainly about music, for which reason it is classified in this journalistic group of genres. *Zahrajte mi túto* (Play me this) is a show with a moderated stream of folk and brass music, supplemented with information about folklore events from various areas of western Slovakia. In this case too, one could say that according to genre, this radio program can be classified as a magazine, but it is primarily devoted to music. Information is just a session plug-in. *Kapela hraje!* (Band, play!) is a monothematic oriented music show focused on brass music. Musical memories, as the title itself suggests, refer to an event, anniversary or jubilee, whether the singer or the song itself, which is to be played on the radio ether. *Lubovník* program focuses

¹⁷ *Rádio Regina Západ – štúdio Bratislava*. [online]. [2020-02-25]. Available at: <<https://reginazapad.rtvsk/o-radiu>>.

on folk music. *Klenotnica ľudovej hudby* (Folk Music Treasury) is a show broadcasted by all three studios, enriched with invitations to folklore events. *Husličky z javora* (Maple violins) is a program dedicated to recordings of music performers from various regions of Slovakia. *Šlágre* (The Hits) program is devoted to purely musical demonstrations, songs of this music style. *Na koncert s Reginou* (For the concert with Regina) is a format of commented listening to songs. *Bez slov – Orchesterálne skladby* (No Words - Orchestral compositions) are records of orchestral compositions without additional commentary. *Hudobné pozdravy* (Music greetings) are broadcasted on Saturdays and Sundays from 13:00 till 15:00 pm. The moderator reads the jubilant congratulations that the listener sends, but the greatest overlap of the listener's contact with the radio world is seen during phone calls to the studio. The listeners have a deep relationship not only with *Rádio Regina*, but also with the moderator and the show itself. In addition to congratulating your family members, it is a contact session with the moderator and old friends. Some journalistic programs are repeated, the journalistic double-positions in the structure are purposefully earmarked for current problems, but also interesting facts in regions of individual studies of *Rádio Regina*. Sometimes, when information is interesting, it is also broadcasted by a studio in Bratislava and Košice. *Rádio Regina* even adjusts the program to leave space for other sports genres. This becomes a radio station with a genre - news commentary broadcast. Despite the fact that *Rádio Regina* is characterized by a higher age category, on a wide variety of radio journalistic genres it addresses issues and topics that are also addressed to other age categories. Genres are varied, from the perspective of journalism, the most popular genre is an interview. They broadcast several interview sessions in *Rádio Regina* along with an opportunity for listeners to contact guests in the studio.

Conclusion

The analysis of radio genres has also raised some questions about the need to define new genres that have only recently emerged. The need to walk with the times has also brought changes in public service broadcasting. Within the scope of the approach to the listener, there are parts of the broadcast that are not defined in detail, such as the stable part of the program *Rádiobudík* (Radioalarm) – *Meniny* (Nameday), *Výročia* (Anniversaries), *Z archívu* (From the archive). In addition, there is an increased amount of competitions in broadcasting, it is a stable part of everyday radio broadcasting and listeners like and participate in the competition. This genre is not defined. There are also inputs within the streaming, which include advice or a song, program or guest quiz. The speaking part of speaker has solely a function of attracting a listener to a specific product, along with an invitation or a section of a song. Even this genre is not defined even though it occurs in both commercial and public service broadcasting. Within the so-called clocks¹⁸ it is named either opener or short input. It is also used as a summary of the best that has been heard on the radio during the week, or the day before. The moderator has the function of being a pleasant companion to the listener and provides tips for trips, tips for what to do, tips for listening. Although, it is part of streaming, it has a regular character and a certain structure that should be defined as a genre. The same problem occurs when informing about the current phenomenon, in *Rádio Regina* this position is called: *Aktualita* (Update). However, it can also change its form within the genre, the moderator can process it as an interview with a reporter somewhere outside of the radio or a short message or enrich his comment with an audio message. It is up to the creativity of the moderator. In addition, we can encounter a genre in which the listener expresses his or her opinion on the

¹⁸ Remark by the author: Schedule of 60 minutes distribution within radio broadcast, streaming template.

radio ether - in *Rádio Regina*, it is part of a streaming program entitled: *Čomu dáte prednosť?* (What do you prefer?). Listener chooses which of the three song samples he or she prefers.

During the weekend broadcast, we noticed the problematic parts of the broadcast and included them in journalistic genres, such as the already mentioned stable parts of the broadcast: teasing program, guests or mentioning in advance parts of broadcasting etc. In addition, the best of last week's broadcasts, but also competitions, archive-edited materials or historical calendar, moderator tips and advice. A new challenge for defining the genre is Radio Vatican. It is a session, based on the RTVS and Radius Vaticana Cooperation Agreement and informs citizens of the Slovak Republic about the lives of Christians around the world. At the same time, the audience has the opportunity to listen to the daily program on these two pages prepared and broadcast by Vatican Radio for their listeners in Slovak and Hungarian. Because it is broadcasted in slovak and hungarian language.¹⁹ In Table 1 you can see a detailed analysis of individual journalistic genres over the weekend and working week.

Table 1: Radio genres in Radio Regina Západ from 9th March till 15th March 2020

Genre	Working days	Weekend
Survey	10	0
Gloss	10	0
Music show	28	24
Comment	10	7
Commenting interview	5	1
Montage	60	3
Expert debate	5	0
Portrait interview	4	2
Journalistic double positions	4	3
Publicistic interview	14	5
Reportage	14	6
Radio discussion	6	2
Radio play	1	1
Radio fairy tale	5	3
Radio reading	1	3
Radio dispatching	10	3
Radio document	10	0
Radio analysis	15	0
Radio series	5	3
Specialized magazine	5	2
Zábavník (Entertainer)	1	0
Address	0	1
Transmission of the Holy Mass	0	1
Religious session	0	2
Magazine	0	1
Feature	0	1
Children's session	0	2
Analyzing interview	0	1

Source: own processing, 2020.

¹⁹ *Rádio Vatikán*. [online]. [2020-03-10]. Available at: <<https://www.rtv.slovakia.sk/radio/program/1218>>.

We can say that *Rádio Regina* has in its program structure space for music shows, journalistic interviews, montages, which are prepared mainly by regional reporters as a certain information service to listeners. They also devote themselves to genres such as survey, gloss, radio dispatching, radio analysis. However, they use many programs from the archive or use them for further processing. During the weekend, genres have been added that are not available during the week. It is a feature, an address, a holy mass, a magazine, a religious and children's program, or an analyzing interview. Radio documentary, analysis, professional debate, survey, gloss or entertainer are lacking in broadcasting during the weekend.

Broadcasting genres are diverse in *Rádio Regina Západ*. Of the genres we have mentioned, *Rádio Regina Západ* broadcasts a lack of journalistic genres as: cross-section, a column, a talkshow and reflection. This is mainly because of the complexity of these genres. They require longer preparation time and peace of mind to create them. Another factor is the rapid volatility of information on the radio, which means that longer and better preparation of more complex journalistic genres, which in addition require processing from a skilled reporters, because they can affect the listener only once or in a reprise. At *Rádio Regina Západ*, however, they only provide reprisals at unattractive times of the audience, such as at night or when the television news is broadcast. This also applies to other genres. The reason is the need for the already mentioned information saturation in the contributions, a short period of audience attention focused on radio, the need to produce more contributions from the reporters, which is at the expense of genre purity. Here is the opportunity to mention a new form of radio journalism, the so-called podcast in which we see some possibility of continuing and overlapping radio contributions. It is a form of keeping audio material online. It can be useful for young listeners who find it easier to find certain media content or to return to the material repeatedly. Also, journalism students have difficulty in identifying a particular radio journalism genre. Opinions differ on the practical as well as the theoretical level. We can say that the commentary according to the theoretical classification in *Rádio Regina's* broadcast is not, but on the other hand the speaker's speech at the beginning of the hour during the broadcasting in which he or she mentions and comments on a story or experience of his or her own life can be considered a genre – commentary. The classification of genres is very extensive and theoreticians' opinions differ. We can also say that the possibilities of scientific literature available to us do not fully meet the current state of radio journalism. Genres dynamically change and adapt to current market conditions, listeners or topics. The audience does not even register the issue of broadcasting genres, and media workers lose their genre classification as a result of hybridization. It is important to redefine the basic characteristics of radio genres, which is adapted to modern times. In its broadcast, *Rádio Regina* provides the audience with a wide range of traditional genres from which different ages can choose. The diversity of radio journalistic genres today is rather a disadvantage. Theorists have defined and still define many of them in scholarly publications, but in real-life broadcasting, the genre rarely appears as it has been described. Hybridization and changes in radio listeners' habits have made radio broadcasting less pure in genres, making it difficult to determine the genre of a contribution. Often it is the genre dominance that will also help media professionals to identify the genre. The importance of radio genres is crucial for public service broadcasting. The probability of their occurrence in broadcasting is conditioned by the ability of reporters to produce high-quality media outputs subject to criteria for individual genres. Furthermore, it is a fact that the media environment is changing, a dynamically developing area where once valid definitions may already be inapplicable in practice. Their number is characterized, but new and clear characteristics and selection of radio genres are needed. Especially those that are not currently heard on the radio. The situation can also be solved by purifying

broadcasting contributions that are hybridized and thus do not meet the characteristics, features and definition of the genre.

Based on the analysis of the selected week and the generalization of the genre focus of radio shows and radio program contributions that we heard from the RTVS online archive, we conclude that *Rádio Regina*, as a radio station focused on regional broadcasting and close contact with the listener, wide media space in the offer of radio genres. In addition, it broadcasts a program for different ages, with a diverse musical focus, but also takes into account the demanding nature of the listener. In broadcasting in addition to common genres such as short news, interviews, reportages or montages, we analyzed more demanding genres or genre groups such as radio play, feature, speech, radio analysis. Those that we did not analyze in the broadcast, such as the press review, are similar in genre focus to the structure of *Rádio Slovensko*, where this genre occurs. However, most of the genres defined in the theoretical part of this work occur in *Rádio Regina Západ*. Radio Regina broadcasts as a single radio station several specific formats that we have included under the genre of news commentary broadcast. This includes live broadcasts of worship, folklore festival programs and football matches. Other unique projects include recordings of Orchestral compositions.

Montage is one of the dominant elements in broadcasting. *Rádio Regina Západ* provides an extensive space for various, usually regional and locally focused, journalistic themes, especially in journalistic double-positions. These are current contributions that address the same issue, but can be worked out by the reporters for two times four minutes or two times three minutes, which is really an exception in today's radio broadcasting. Another important genre is journalistic interview, which has even sixty minutes space in radio program. In the programs of *Host' Rádia Regina* (Radio Regina Guest), *Host' Panorámy Rádia Regina* (Radio Regina Panorama Guest) or *Večerné reflexie* (Evening Reflections), listeners can listen to a traditional journalistic interview, which is appreciated especially by older listeners. Contact with radio is extremely important for this group of listeners. It is the uniqueness of radio, which no other mass media offers, is close, direct to personal contact during the programs *Hudobné pozdravy* (Music greetings), *Klub Farmárov* (Farmers Club) and other radio discussions, which are different thematically oriented and offer the opportunity to call the studio and have contact with the studio guest or moderator. In addition to contact sessions, listeners can come to the *Rádio Regina* event every year and meet their favourite personalities from radio ether. In this way, Radio Regina shows interest in the audience.

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TRUTH IN THE CONTEXT OF THE INTERNET

Diana Bulganová

ABSTRACT:

The Internet community is full of information of different quality. The absence of any rules, the lack of awareness and the unwillingness to analyse information give support to alternative facts, while Social Networks increase their influence and give the impression that they are actually real. However, serious journalists who are becoming more and more active on Social Networks are also coming on the scene. They explain the facts, put them into context, or argue against false news. The aim of the paper *Truth in the context of the Internet* is to map this current issue by analysing theoretical knowledge of several authors.

KEY WORDS:

disinformation, influencers, information, internet, social networks, truth

1 Introduction

The Internet influences our knowledge more than any other medium, precisely thanks to its availability and popularity with recipients of almost all ages. We can therefore say that it is an important source of relevant and less relevant information, while recipients have the opportunity to comment on or share posts on the Internet and by doing so increase the content readability and reach on the Internet. Such a massive access to information and direct feedback that is available to the Internet users is not possible with any other medium. The main feature of the Internet environment is also the possibility for the recipients to obtain a large amount of information in a relatively short time. Recently we could see that disinformation has been spreading on the Internet much faster than ever before. They take various forms such as web articles, videos, podcasts or media coverage. The disinformation media where these posts concentrate has also been flourishing direct proportionately. More and more people trust them, which supports the impact of disinformation on society. It often happens that the truth in their contents is distorted, sometimes even rejected, and the activity of disinformation media is proving to have become a new trend. Disinformation media pretend to be "the credible defenders" of the public interest. No topic is taboo for them, nothing is sacred or untouchable for them, while they still redefine and interpret facts according to their own opinions and beliefs. Disinformation that claim to be real and objective messages in the Internet environment is under no control in any way. The authors of disinformation do not follow any commonly used rules and standards applicable to real journalism when creating articles. They have set their own principles and criteria. The volume and impact of disinformation is also huge thanks to the users of Social Networks. The disinformation media and the recipients who spread those lies are responsible for the crisis of distrust in real journalism and investigative media. Verifying information which is the most important journalistic activity thus becomes an important ability of every recipient (not only) in the Internet environment.

2 Information and Disinformation on the Internet and Social Networks

Information has long been referred to as the driving force of the information society, while the availability of the Internet (and especially Social Networks) ensures its daily direct transmission between recipients. It enriches us, strengthens, expands or disproves our assumptions, ideas and images of reality and redefine our knowledge. Gálíková also claims

that “new media and especially the Internet, are becoming the most important media of our era and contemporary society. Their technologies are the predominant carriers of the news and inseparable sources of our knowledge.”¹ Based on the above, we can unambiguously say that the rapid pace of information transfer on the Internet and at the same time the ability of the recipients to receive this information have a direct impact on their understanding of reality and the world. And disinformation has the same or even greater impact on society. With the development of online journalism, the responsibility of the authors of the articles and the recipients themselves, who further disseminate these contents has also intensified. The reason for this intensified responsibility is the fact that in an online environment, posts spread much faster and reach a wider range of recipients. The Internet communication environment raises many questions that affect the content quality or even the credibility of the journalism itself. The truth is that the Internet content and especially the content on Social Networks is not subject to any standards or principles and we may therefore come across misleading, false and fake information or news. Hermida also states and gives an example that the Twitter Social Network provides a combination of messages, information and comments that try to reflect social events, but without any order or prescribed rules.² Nowadays, we can even say that the Internet environment is "infected" with websites and profiles on Social Networks that focus on spreading lies, half-truths, fake or embellished stories.³ In such a spectrum of credible and less credible information, or even disinformation, it is important to distinguish their relevance. In the case of disinformation, we can even speak of rejecting facts or "paralyzing" the truth. We can therefore say that "the role of information fails" in online space.⁴ As Frost-Arnold says, anonymity clearly contributes to the birth of such fabricated facts and news.⁵ There are still many websites where authors do not sign their posts and they are mainly disinformation websites. Many recipients still ignore one of these basic aspects of assessing the credibility of a resource. Cherylin Ireton notes that the volume and reach of disinformation that is sent through social media as real news can damage the reputation of real journalists.⁶ This increases the distrust in professional journalists, but also in journalism as such. Janna Anderson and Lee Rainie also say that the digital age has influenced the nature of news. Online information platforms "encourage" recipients to search information which corresponds to their views and perspectives. Ultimately, this means that the recipients do not have sufficient sensitivity to assess the relevance and meaning of the news and the subsequent handling with such information.⁷

¹ GÁLIKOVÁ TOLNAIOVÁ, S.: Nové médiá, pravda a realita. In BUČKOVÁ, Z., RUSŇÁKOVÁ, L., RYBANSKÝ, R., SOLÍK, M. (eds.): *Megatrendy a médiá 2018: Realita & mediálne bubliny*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2018, p. 6.

² HERMIDA, A.: Tweets and Truth: Journalism as a discipline of collaborative verification. In *Journalism Practice*, 2012, Vol. 6, No. 5, p. 3. [online]. [2020-05-03]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/263119113_Tweets_and_Truth_Journalism_as_a_discipline_of_collaborative_verification>.

³ IRETON, Ch.: Trust, truth and journalism: why it matters. In IRETON, Ch., POSETTI, J. (eds.): *Journalism, 'fake news' & disinformation*. Paris : United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2018, p. 33.

⁴ IRETON, CH., POSETTI, J.: Introduction. In IRETON, Ch., POSETTI, J. (eds.): *Journalism, 'fake news' & disinformation*. Paris : United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2018, p. 14.

⁵ FROST-ARNOLD, K.: *Trustworthiness and Truth: The Epistemic Pitfalls of Internet Accountability*. [online]. [2020-05-03]. Available at: <<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/e2cb/be9b74d262e1aaef846f58f55c0ca4b4a183.pdf>>.

⁶ IRETON, Ch.: Trust, truth and journalism: why it matters. In IRETON, Ch., POSETTI, J. (eds.): *Journalism, 'fake news' & disinformation*. Paris : United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2018, p. 33.

⁷ ANDERSON, J., RAINIE, L.: *The Future of Truth and Misinformation Online*. [online]. [2020-05-03]. Available at: <<https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2017/10/19/the-future-of-truth-and-misinformation-online/>>.

We can therefore say that they assess the relevance of the news only on the basis of their own beliefs, opinions, emotions, reassuring themselves in what they are familiar with and with which they identify. They do not confront their theories and ideas with facts, but they adhere firmly to what they themselves consider to be true. In 2006, a team of authors published a study that examined the impact of social media on the information awareness of their users and the change of their opinions. According to the authors, social media undoubtedly influence the way we receive information, while they simultaneously influence our opinions, too. They have also found that users only follow a limited number of websites from which they draw information. On the other hand, the authors also argue that such a limitation of one's interests is common, because we tend to focus our attention on a limited set of anything.⁸ This can have negative consequences if the recipient focuses only on the type of "news media" that spreads false and misleading information. In connection with the above, we can quote the idea of Christian Huitem, who says that *"The quality of information will not improve in the coming years, because technology can't improve human nature all that much."*⁹ News on the Internet and Social Networks is highly popular, and we can simply say that the Internet and Social Networks speed up the flow of information that gets to the recipients. It is therefore important to be able to correctly distinguish the relevance of content and to fight against disinformation through critical thinking, media and information literacy, because disinformation is not limited to any topic and is a major feature of post-factual age.

3 Post-Factual Age of the Internet and Alternative Facts

Post-factual age is nothing new for the contemporary society, because we already live in it. It exists mainly because of the Internet and Social Networks and one of its negatives is that it divides society into two groups. To those who trust the serious media and those who trust the alternative media. This new era in the evolution of humanity creates a misguided and defective picture of reality and truth. Some recipients take alternative facts as an absolute truth, they accept it without reservation and do not think in deeper contexts. This type of recipient wants "quick trials," simple solutions to difficult problems and often trusts bizarre, extreme news. Such actions arouse in this part of the public distrust in science, history, modern medicine and scientific authorities, which have long and thoroughly pointed to various social problems, such as e.g. climate crisis. Alfred Hermida also claims, relying on authors such as Lih and Buolos, that the influence of social media changes the role of both established authorities and academic knowledge.¹⁰ Wim Westera notes that Social Networks are the primary sources of information that we receive. However, at the same time, he points to the fact that a large part of the information on the Internet is untrue and that is why,

⁸ See also: SCHMIDT, A. L. et al: Anatomy of news consumption on Facebook. In *PNAS*, 2017, Vol. 114, No. 12, p. 3035-3039. [online]. [2020-05-03]. Available at: <<https://www.pnas.org/content/pnas/114/12/3035.full.pdf>>.

⁹ ANDERSON, J., RAINIE, L.: *The Future of Truth and Misinformation Online*. [online]. [2020-05-03]. Available at: <<https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2017/10/19/the-future-of-truth-and-misinformation-online/>>.

¹⁰ HERMIDA, A.: Tweets and Truth: Journalism as a discipline of collaborative verification. In *Journalism Practice*. 2012, Vol. 6, No. 5, p. 2. [online]. [2020-05-03]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/263119113_Tweets_and_Truth_Journalism_as_a_discipline_of_collaborative_verification>; See also: BOULOS, M. N. K., MARAMBA, I., WHEELER, S.: Wikis, Blogs, and Podcasts: A New Generation of Web-Based Tools For Virtual Collaborative Clinical Practice and Evaluation. In *BMC Medical Education*, 2006, Vol. 6, No. 41, p. 41-47.; LIH, A.: Wikipedia as Participatory Journalism: Reliable Sources? Metrics for Evaluating Collaborative Media as a News Resource. In *Nature*, 2004, Vol. 428, No. 6984, p. 1-31. [online]. [2020-05-03]. Available at: <<https://online.journalism.utexas.edu/2004/papers/wikipedia.pdf>>.

according to him, Social Networks are also considered a suitable channel for spreading lies.¹¹ We could say that the clearer real truth, reality and clearer facts are the more constructiveness there is. The main features of real, serious journalism are transparency, ethics, independence. The serious journalism serves society, freedom of speech and protects democracy.¹² In general, we could say that real journalism contributes to knowing real reality, to some extent facilitates the life of its recipients and protects the interests and independence of society in a positive sense.

The term post-factual age is also defined by the online Cambridge Dictionary, which offers a definition that the recipients will more quickly believe testimonies based on emotions and their own opinions, beliefs as arguments that are based on objective and verifiable facts.¹³ According to Gáliková, we could add to the definition above that the truth on the Internet “embodies the modern phenomenon of the masses in the liquid present. It is neither possible to grasp, regulate, correct nor silence it at all with traditional tools, procedures and techniques ...”¹⁴ On the contrary, it follows its own “rules,” and is as unstable and rapidly changing as the Internet. Alternative facts have contributed to the rise of conspiracy theories, hoaxes and false news that are closely related to them. Absolute distrust in everything that has long been accepted as facts blocks the objective knowledge of recipients who turn to alternative sources. Many politicians also use alternative facts as a great marketing tool in election campaigns. Knowing true reality and searching for the truth in the context of the Internet are hampered by the information overpressure of imaginary information bubbles and distorted facts. Dominika Čmehýlová-Rašová has also addressed the question of how the “language of the media” sometimes lies. According to her, sophisticated lies modify the truth/lie so that they become facts or reality. At the same time, she says that creating disinformation is demanding and requires the involvement of cognitive activity. According to her, its author must predict a possible rejection or denial. At the same time, she thinks that disinformation abuses human trust.¹⁵ In addition to cognitive activity, we think that the creative component is also important in order to make the false information appealing. Wim Westera notes that recipients of disinformation channels use different criteria when assessing the truth. These criteria do not have intellectual but emotional nature. The image of the world created by alternative media is so stable that it is difficult to disprove it. They do not even consider empirical facts relevant.¹⁶

¹¹ WESTERA, W.: *The Digital Turn: How the Internet Transform Our Existence*. [online]. [2020-05-04]. Available at: <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/d741/fbde39c6f59c374dd30dd39d0e175f83110c.pdf?_ga=2.96901151.1034805101.1578247016-1464772486.1575658110>.

¹² IRETON, Ch.: Trust, truth and journalism: why it matters. In IRETON, Ch., POSETTI, J. (eds.): *Journalism, 'fake news' & disinformation*. Paris : United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2018, p. 33.

¹³ *Post-factual*. [online]. [2020-05-05]. Available at: <<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/post-factual>>.

¹⁴ GÁLIKOVÁ TOLNAIOVÁ, S.: Nové médiá, pravda a realita. In BUČKOVÁ, Z., RUSŇÁKOVÁ, L., RYBANSKÝ, R., SOLÍK, M. (eds.): *Megatrendy a médiá 2018: Realita & mediálne bubliny*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2018, p. 12.

¹⁵ ČMEHÝLOVÁ RAŠOVÁ, D.: Can media language lie? In *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2019, Vol. 15, No. 1, p. 40. [online]. [2020-05-05]. Available at: <http://www.ejst.tuiasi.ro/Files/74/5_Cmehylova-Rasova.pdf>.

¹⁶ WESTERA, W.: *The Digital Turn: How the Internet Transform Our Existence*. [online]. [2020-05-05]. Available at: <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/d741/fbde39c6f59c374dd30dd39d0e175f83110c.pdf?_ga=2.96901151.1034805101.1578247016-1464772486.1575658110>.

4 Journalists on Social Networks

Recently, a completely new phenomenon has been forming in the environment of Social Networks. Journalists have started to be active on Facebook, Instagram, or on other platforms. They have become influencers who do not promote cosmetic products, fashion brands or holiday destinations but spread news and shape the public opinion. Clark likens social media posts to mini-series.¹⁷ Journalists who are active on Social Networking platforms such as Facebook or Instagram create the idea of so-called "open journalism."¹⁸ They share both private and professional life with their followers and make journalism more popular. But we can also say that they make journalism more interesting, for example, for young people. To their followers they often reveal the behind-the-scenes of court hearings, the parliament and show us what the work of a journalist looks like. They stream "live" news on their profiles, directly from the scene. In their posts, they explain topics that are currently discussed in society, but also topics that they deal with professionally in their work as a journalist. They explain the facts, put them into context, or argue against false news.

Journalists who are active on Social Networks increase interaction between their recipients, open discussions on various topics and use their name to build "their own brand." At the same time, they also promote the medium they work for. The activity of journalists as influencers is not subject to any strict rules that are obeyed in the editorial office, they work on Social Networks only from their own initiative. That is why journalism is becoming much more accessible and personal in the environment of Social Networks. Julie Posetti says in connection with the above that, despite the absence of any rules, both journalists and influencers should present themselves on Social Networks so as not to damage their professional reputation or the reputation of their employer.¹⁹ However, at the same time, she states that the connection between private and professional life and the presentation of one's own identity on Social Networks is a debatable and problematic issue for journalists. Sharing news may affect the objectivity or neutrality.²⁰ We would like to add that the trend of journalists as influencers on Social Networks concerns all journalists. In the environment of Social Networks, there are journalists from serious but also from alternative media. Through their influence and posts on Social Networks they can strengthen the truth, but also support someone in believing lies. We could say that the combination of a written word and a photo/image/video increases the credibility of the news. Such news is stronger and more credible, and we can say that the recipient creates a certain relationship with the journalist. The relationship between a journalist and a reader/follower on Social Networks is more personal, more credible and more subjective precisely for sharing private and work posts. The

¹⁷ CLARK, R. P.: *How journalists are using Facebook, Twitter to write mini serial narratives*. [online]. [2020-05-07]. Available at: <<https://www.poynter.org/reporting-editing/2011/how-journalists-are-using-facebook-twitter-to-write-mini-serial-narratives/>>.

¹⁸ For more information, see: POSETTI, J.: The „twitterisation“ of investigative journalism. In TANNER, S. J., RICHARDSON, N. (eds.): *Journalism Research and Investigation in a Digital World*. South Melbourne : Oxford University Press, p. 88-100. [online]. [2020-05-07]. Available at: <<https://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.sk/&httpsredir=1&article=2765&context=lhapapers>>.

¹⁹ POSETTI, J.: *Media140 Brings Old and New Media Together, With Explosive Results*. [online]. [2020-05-07]. Available at: <<http://mediashift.org/2009/11/media140-brings-old-and-new-media-together-with-explosive-results317/>>.

²⁰ See also: POSETTI, J.: The „twitterisation“ of investigative journalism. In TANNER, S. J., RICHARDSON, N. (eds.): *Journalism Research and Investigation in a Digital World*. South Melbourne : Oxford University Press, p. 88-100. [online]. [2020-05-07]. Available at: <<https://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.sk/&httpsredir=1&article=2765&context=lhapapers>>.

follower knows that they will always find the latest information they trust on the journalists' profiles, as well as "news of the day" that includes links to articles containing relevant information. According to Eric Scherer, Julie Posetti states that trust is the most valuable and important aspect in developing relationships between recipients, the media and news creators. Recipients believe that what they read is credible and verified information.²¹ This applies not only to the current trend of journalists who are active on Social Networks, but also to the media in general. We can therefore say that journalists as influencers increase the credibility not only of themselves but also of the media they work for. Philip McKenzie states, according to a study of the Global Comms Report overseas study called "*The Path to Progress*," that nowadays journalists are the most influential and respected people.²² At the same time, this study confirms the growing influence of Social Networks, especially Instagram, but also the fact that an increasing part of the population trusts the serious media.²³ However, a significant part of the population follows the accounts of alternative or conspiratorial media or their workers. These accounts just like their media serve to spread false news, conspiracies or strengthen political propaganda. Posetti says that it is important to verify the content we receive. However, recipients need to have "healthy journalistic scepticism" to be able to evaluate the content. The importance of verifying information is growing as the amount information and disinformation on the Internet and Social Networks has been increasing rapidly.²⁴

5 Critical Thinking in the Era of Internet Information

Verifying and evaluating the posts' truthfulness and relevance have, with the expansion of Internet news portals and massively used Social Networks, become one of the most important user skills of every recipient. At the same time, it is true, as Gálíková states and as we have mentioned above, that in the Internet environment everyone can be "*the author, editor and disseminator of different not only their own texts, sounds and images, either static or moving.*"²⁵ At the same time, she adds that "*these texts, sounds and images have become a regular source of information on the Internet.*"²⁶ This means that recipients can also create their own content or posts and their activity on the Internet is not limited to commenting and sharing articles and posts. However, this content is not subject to any checking, it does not follow any rules and basically any content is published. Frost-Arnold says that on the Internet we can also see sharing information and disinformation for fun, self-presentation or political

²¹ POSETTI, J.: *When Good People Share Bad Things: The basics of Social Media Verification*. [online]. [2020-05-07]. Available at: <<http://mediashift.org/2014/07/goodwhen-good-people-share-bad-things-the-basics-of-social-media-verification/>>.

²² MCKENZIE, P.: *Journalists are the New Influencers*. [online]. [2020-05-07]. Available at: <<https://www.mediavillage.com/article/journalists-are-the-new-influencers/>>.

²³ *Cision And PRWeek Release 2019 Global Comms Report: The Path To Progress, Demonstrating The Rise Of Earned Media*. [online]. [2020-05-010]. Available at: <<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/cision-and-prweek-release-2019-global-comms-report-the-path-to-progress-demonstrating-the-rise-of-earned-media-300960346.html>>.

²⁴ POSETTI, J.: *When Good People Share Bad Things: The basics of Social Media Verification*. [online]. [2020-05-07]. Available at: <<http://mediashift.org/2014/07/goodwhen-good-people-share-bad-things-the-basics-of-social-media-verification/>>.

²⁵ GÁLÍKOVÁ TOLNAIOVÁ, S.: Nové médiá, pravda a realita. In BUČKOVÁ, Z., RUSŇÁKOVÁ, L., RYBANSKÝ, R., SOLÍK, M. (eds.): *Megatrendy a médiá 2018: Realita & mediálne bubliny*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2018, p. 7.

²⁶ Ibidem.

advertising or to harm others.²⁷ We can therefore talk about the combination of blogs, journalism and entertainment in one. Since content of this type also has its recipients, we can say that truth (or reality) in the Internet environment is usually created, explained and adjusted according to the personal views of each author. We can therefore say that online truth is often "constructed." In connection with this García-Avilés also notes that in the "Internet ecosystem" professional journalists share space and recipients with bloggers and influencers who present their work on Facebook Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and other channels. Westera perceives Social Networks in the same way and claims that they have become the main sources of our knowledge. She also speaks about them as the main way for strengthening the reach of lies.²⁸ In connection with bloggers, Frost-Arnold says that blogging has less epistemological value than traditional (print), resp. online journalism.²⁹ On the other hand, García-Avilés states that such personal blogs, own YouTube channels or social media accounts often have a greater reach, readability and views than traditional and online media.³⁰ At the same time, he adds that the ethics of traditional journalism, which is based on values such as information accuracy/truthfulness, verification of sources, authenticity and balance of information, also applies to online journalism.³¹ However, we can say that these ethical standards are mostly applied by professional journalists, while other bloggers follow only what they themselves consider to be popular with the audience and adapt their content to, among other things, business interests. However, the requirement or however, the claim of truth still remains in the Internet environment.

In connection with the online space, Gálíková states that the Internet does not only serve the creators of lies, but above all it is a place for sharing objective and truthful information.³² At the same time, García-Avilés states that in cases of bloggers, the ethics and intention, with which they enrich the Internet environment with their own posts, are very important.³³ We can say that ethics is a treasured and significant value in journalism. We believe, that it is very important to be able to distinguish information and news from paid advertising or propaganda. As for the sponsorship and advertising García-Avilés speaks of it as some kind of "ethical

²⁷ FROST-ARNOLD, K.: *Trustworthiness and Truth: The Epistemic Pitfalls of Internet Accountability*. [online]. [2020-05-10]. Available at:

<<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/e2cb/be9b74d262e1aaef846f58f55c0ca4b4a183.pdf>>.

²⁸ WESTERA, W.: *The Digital Turn: How the Internet Transform Our Existence*. [online]. [2020-05-10]. Available at:

<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/d741/fbde39c6f59c374dd30dd39d0e175f83110c.pdf?_ga=2.96901151.1034805101.1578247016-1464772486.1575658110>.

²⁹ FROST-ARNOLD, K.: *Trustworthiness and Truth: The Epistemic Pitfalls of Internet Accountability*. [online]. [2020-05-10]. Available at:

<<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/e2cb/be9b74d262e1aaef846f58f55c0ca4b4a183.pdf>>.

³⁰ GARCÍA-AVILÉS, J. A.: Online Newsrooms as Communities of Practice: Exploring Digital Journalists' Applied Ethics. In *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 2014, Vol. 29, No. 4, p. 258-259. [online]. [2020-05-10]. Available at:

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/285571568_Online_Newsrooms_as_Communities_of_Practice_Exploring_Digital_Journalists'_Applied_Ethics>.

³¹ Ibidem, p. 259.

³² GÁLIKOVÁ TOLNAIOVÁ, S.: Nové médiá, pravda a realita. In BUČKOVÁ, Z., RUSŇÁKOVÁ, L., RYBANSKÝ, R., SOLÍK, M. (eds.): *Megatrendy a médiá 2018: Realita & mediálne bubliny*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2018, p. 9.

³³ GARCÍA-AVILÉS, J. A.: Online Newsrooms as Communities of Practice: Exploring Digital Journalists' Applied Ethics. In *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 2014, Vol. 29, No. 4, p. 260. [online]. [2020-05-10]. Available at:

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/285571568_Online_Newsrooms_as_Communities_of_Practice_Exploring_Digital_Journalists'_Applied_Ethics>.

challenge."³⁴ Westera perceives the issue of advertising very similarly and says that it is the best example of how Social Networks can be used for manipulation.³⁵ In traditional and online media, this requirement is also defined by legislation. Advertising must always be clearly separated, because the recipient should know whether it is a paid content or not. That is why, even in the case of advertising and propaganda, the media literacy of the recipients is crucial for the ability to objectively analyse online content, verify the truthfulness, accuracy and validity of the statements. Frost-Arnold has a similar view. She argues that blogging doesn't have to be just a tool for a blind sharing and dissemination of information. She sees its potential in critical analysis, where the recipients can also ask questions or reveal mistakes and shortcomings.³⁶ We believe that the most important thing is to understand how, why and with what purpose bloggers publish their content. It is equally important to remember that no blogger will ever replace a quality journalist and that their work is different in many ways.

6 Individual Responsibility for Internet Content

Frost-Arnold describes certain mechanisms of responsibility that she considers adequate solution to the explosion of disinformation and the spread of fake news. These mechanisms apply equally to media content creators and their recipients. According to her, we can take the following steps to improve our online expression:³⁷

- *abolition of anonymity* – although almost all news websites identify the author of the news, there are still some that publish content anonymously or under pseudonym. She says that abolition of anonymity can increase the relevance, reliability, and truthfulness of the shared content. She notes that anonymity undermines credibility, can disrupt sharing of truthful information and encourage false beliefs, prejudices, stereotypes, hate speech, or can help create a hostile environment for oppressed groups. Westera also says that knowing the identity of the sender is crucial for the interpretation and assessment of the truthfulness of the news.³⁸ Revealing a true identity clearly ensures greater credibility of the information. On the other hand, it must be said that Frost-Arnold also perceives anonymity as some kind of defensive shield for the creators, for whom anonymity ensures security and protection against criticism on the Internet.
- *verification* – we currently have several ways of checking the truthfulness of information. However, such a search requires considerable effort and expertise. The basic step is to consider the credibility of the content, webpage and of course, the author. She also says that if the article contains completely new ground-breaking information, the recipients

³⁴ GARCÍA-AVILÉS, J. A.: Online Newsrooms as Communities of Practice: Exploring Digital Journalists' Applied Ethics. In *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 2014, Vol. 29, No. 4, p. 265. [online]. [2020-05-10]. Available at:

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/285571568_Online_Newsrooms_as_Communities_of_Practice_Exploring_Digital_Journalists'_Applied_Ethics>.

³⁵ WESTERA, W.: *The Digital Turn: How the Internet Transform Our Existence*. [online]. [2020-05-11]. Available at:

<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/d741/fbde39c6f59c374dd30dd39d0e175f83110c.pdf?_ga=2.96901151.1034805101.1578247016-1464772486.1575658110>.

³⁶ FROST-ARNOLD, K.: *Trustworthiness and Truth: The Epistemic Pitfalls of Internet Accountability*. [online]. [2020-05-12]. Available at:

<<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/e2cb/be9b74d262e1aaef846f58f55c0ca4b4a183.pdf>>.

³⁷ Ibidem.

³⁸ WESTERA, W.: *The Digital Turn: How the Internet Transform Our Existence*. [online]. [2020-05-12]. Available at:

<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/d741/fbde39c6f59c374dd30dd39d0e175f83110c.pdf?_ga=2.96901151.1034805101.1578247016-1464772486.1575658110>.

should pay attention. She recommends to verify the authenticity of the information by comparing it on several independent domains. In contrast, *Gáliková* says that “we seldom have time for serious critical verification of information. And even if we had it, we will simply not get certain information (its real unavailability, secrecy, but also taboo ...).”³⁹ We would like to add that both assumptions are correct. In their own interest, everyone can verify the information to the extent that is permissible and not be immersed in emotions or simplified facts. It is also true that for laymen it may be difficult to find some information. According to Hermid, the development of Social Networks as “news” media creates a space for the verification of information and news, which is the skill of not only journalists but also users in the Internet environment.⁴⁰

Conclusion

The Internet and Social Networks have influenced the nature of receiving information to certain extent. We may encounter various obstacles when searching for the truth on the Internet. Searching for the truth is handicapped in the context of the Internet, because users often succumb to the first impression, being absorbed by the apparent urgency of information with emotional undertone. We can consider the content on the Internet to be a reflection of society. We create our own reality; we choose what we will believe and what will affect us. Posts in the online community have the widest reach. By disseminating alternative theories, they express their agreement with the presented opinions and adopt them. It is the responsibility of each user what content they distribute, because in the context of the Internet there are no checking mechanisms or sanctions for sharing and promoting disinformation. The thing is that news and information are published, disseminated, confirmed and disproved precisely through a media-supported sharing process. In the Internet environment it has become a necessity to have the ability to distinguish between those authors we can consider trustworthy. Preventing the harmful effects of disinformation is a challenge for anyone who enters the online environment, because their actions affect not only themselves, but to some extent also others around them. The legitimacy of disinformation is also increased by sharing it with individuals or various social groups. Intentionally misleading content that is disseminated on internet platforms influences the citizens' perceptions of reality and undermines their trust, awareness and perception of real reality.

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³⁹ GÁLIKOVÁ TOLNAIOVÁ, S.: Nové médiá, pravda a realita. In BUČKOVÁ, Z., RUSŇÁKOVÁ, L., RYBANSKÝ, R., SOLÍK, M. (eds.): *Megatrendy a médiá 2018: Realita & mediálne bubliny*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2018, p. 10-11.

⁴⁰ HERMIDA, A.: Tweets and Truth: Journalism as a discipline of collaborative verification. In *Journalism Practice*, 2012, Vol. 6, No. 5, p. 2. [online]. [2020-05-12]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/263119113_Tweets_and_Truth_Journalism_as_a_discipline_of_collaborative_verification>.

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EFFECT OF THE QUARANTINE ON TELEVISION VIEWERSHIP

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ABSTRACT:

Television viewership is measured on a regular basis. The results vary within the broadcast times and programs deployed. The ranking of television viewers in Slovakia does not change significantly at least in the top three of the largest televisions. In the current situation, at a time when we are hit by a pandemic, residents are forced to spend most of their time at home without much social activity and outside the public space. This situation therefore leads people to higher media ratings. They are interested in current information about the pandemic, but also in the media content that will fill their free time. After the closure of various facilities, schools and public spaces, people have more of it than before the government's restrictive measures to suppress the consequences of the COVID 19 pandemic. They also pay attention to watching media services providers such as Netflix.

KEY WORDS:

electronic media, quarantine, television, viewership

1 Introduction

After the outbreak of a virus called COVID19 in China on November 17, 2019,¹ the coronavirus also appeared in the Slovak Republic on March 6, 2020.² Subsequently, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID19 a pandemic.³ The first restrictions in public life in Slovakia were on March 6, immediately after the confirmation of the first case of infection with a new coronavirus. The crisis staff has adopted several bans and recommendations for the public.⁴ On March 10, the Central Crisis Staff banned sporting, cultural and public events and ordered a mandatory 14-day quarantine for citizens returning from abroad.⁵ Finally, on 16 March, schools, airports, bars in Slovakia were closed, border controls were introduced and train and bus traffic was restricted.⁶ By closing the individual facilities, closing schools and restricting movement, citizens in Slovakia began to stay in their

¹ *Čína stanovila prvý prípad nákazy koronavírusom na 17. november.* [online]. [2020-03-13]. Available at: <<https://svet.sme.sk/c/22357855/cina-stanovila-prvy-pripad-nakazy-koronavirusom-na-17-november.html>>.

² *Slovensko zaznamenalo prvý potvrdený prípad ochorenia COVID-19.* [online]. [2020-03-06]. Available at: <http://www.uvzsr.sk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4061:slovensko-zaznamenalo-prvy-potvrdeny-pripad-ochorenia-covid-19&catid=250:koronavirus-2019-ncov&Itemid=153>.

³ *World Health Organization (WHO).* [online]. [2020-03-11]. Available at: <https://twitter.com/WHO/status/1237777021742338049?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwtterm%5E1237777021742338049&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.who.int%2Femergencies%2Fdiseases%2Fnovel-coronavirus-2019%2Fevents-as-they-happen>.

⁴ *Informácia zo zasadnutia Ústredného krízového štábu v súvislosti s COVID-19.* [online]. [2020-03-06]. Available at:

<http://www.uvzsr.sk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4062:informacia-zo-zasadnutia-ustredneho-krizoveho-tabu-vnsuvvislosti-sncovid-19&catid=250:koronavirus-2019-ncov&Itemid=153>.

⁵ *COVID-19: Slovensko zakazuje športové, kultúrne a verejné podujatia, hlási 7 potvrdených prípadov.* [online]. [2020-03-09]. Available at:

<http://www.uvzsr.sk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4071:covid-19-slovensko-zakazuje-portove-kulturne-a-verejne-podujatia-hlasi-7-potvrdenych-pripadov&catid=250:koronavirus-2019-ncov&Itemid=153>.

⁶ *COVID-19: Ústredný krízový štáb zavádza ďalšie opatrenia, zatvoria sa školy i letiská, karanténa platí pre všetkých, ktorí sa vrátia zo zahraničia.* [online]. [2020-03-12]. Available at: <http://www.uvzsr.sk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4087:covid-19-ustredny-krizovy-tab-zavazda-alie-opatrenia-zatvoria-sa-koly-inletiska-karantena-plati-pre-vetkych-ktori-sa-vratia-zo-zahranii&catid=250:koronavirus-2019-ncov&Itemid=153>.

homes for most of the day. This also resulted in an increased interest in watching individual televisions as a substitute for the absence of time spent at work, school or in public space.

2 Media

Different authors divide media into several groups according to different parameters, but according to the basic division we know print and electronic media. We will focus on electronic. These media include radio, television and the Internet. Their common feature is signal transmission. The recipient of radio, television or Internet content must have the technological equipment to access electronic media.⁷ For print media, the technological component is absent when receiving content. Television is a medium that allows sending and receiving information based on the sound and at the same time video principle. Television, thanks to its ability to act on the primary receptors of man (sight and hearing) and at the same time its ability to reach a large target audience, is one of the most effective media ever.⁸ In radio, the so-called listenership, a substantial part of radio broadcasting is listened to when performing another activity - especially in the morning broadcasting, when the program of radio stations is listened to by the most listeners. „ *Radio offers us freedom, but the number of disturbing elements that make such listening difficult (other activity, different sounds), multiplies the possibility of misunderstanding or even not capturing information.*“⁹ Online media is a separate category of media. They are mainly characterized by the possibility of interactive communication via the Internet. These include classic websites, social networks and various mobile apps.¹⁰ Nowadays, video service providers via the internet are very popular. It is a service on demand - video on demand (VOD). For example, Netflix works on this principle. The applicant pays the operator money to make the video content available to him. VOD services are divided into two basic categories:

- online rental,
- flat services.¹¹

In the first case, the applicant will pay a one-time fee for playing the selected film (as was the case with old video rentals). In the second case, he pays a monthly fee and has access to the complete offer. Other providers of this service are, for example, HBO GO, Apple TV, Voyo.sk in Slovakia.

3 Viewership

In our analysis, we monitored the average viewership of viewers older than 4 years, during 4 weeks in March 2019 and March 2020. Viewership is average and was measured throughout the day of television broadcasting. In the introduction, we summarized the schedule of

⁷ KRAJČOVIČ, P., ČÁBYOVÁ, E.: *Mediálny trh a možnosti jeho inovácií*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2016, p. 38.

⁸ Ibidem, p. 40.

⁹ JENČA, I., SEKEREŠOVÁ, Z., BRNÍK, A.: *Rozhlasová tvorba*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2013, p. 14.

¹⁰ Compare to: KRAJČOVIČ, P., ČÁBYOVÁ, E.: *Mediálny trh a možnosti jeho inovácií*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2016, p. 19; KRAJČOVIČ, P.: Strategies in media planning. In *Communication Today*, 2015, Vol. 6, No. 2. p. 20-30; BRNÍK, A.: Reklama v rádiu a hlavné dôvody jej využitia. In ČÁBYOVÁ, E., BEZÁKOVÁ, Z., MENDELOVÁ, D.: *Marketing Identity 2019: Offline Is the New Online – aktuálne výzvy onlinovej a offlinovej komunikácie*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2019, p. 20-28.

¹¹ KADLEC, R.: *Netflix a ostatné videosluzby na Slovensku*. [online]. [2020-04-03]. Available at: <<https://touchit.sk/netflix-a-ostatne-videosluzby-na-slovensku/45481>>.

measures ordered by the Crisis Staff in the Slovak Republic. The first recommendations began on March 6. Graph 1 shows that during the first restrictions there was a slight increase in television viewership compared to the same period in 2019. The increase in the period from 2 to 8 March 2020 is 6.8%. Of course, the restrictions were only slight and did not last throughout the week, so the increase is minimal. A larger increase of 14.6% was recorded in the audience in the second week in the period from 9 to 15 March, where restrictions began to manifest themselves in public life. The turning point came in the third week under review in the period from March 16 to 22, when the average television viewing throughout the day reached a value of more than 5 hours, which represented a year-on-year increase of 39.9% over the same period. This significant increase in viewership was due to other restrictions that came into force on March 16 and included, for example, a regulation on the closure of schools, restaurants etc. Due to domestic quarantine and partial restrictions on movement, which made it possible to reach the public only in necessary cases such as shopping, moving to work or walking outside large groups of people, the share of television viewers increased by more than a third. The trend continued in the last observed week in the period from March 23 to 29, when the time spent in front of the screens again remained above 5 hours, and compared to the same period in 2019 it increased by 36.4%. Compared to the previous week, the viewership decreased by an average of 8 minutes. Nevertheless, it maintained an above-standard high value.

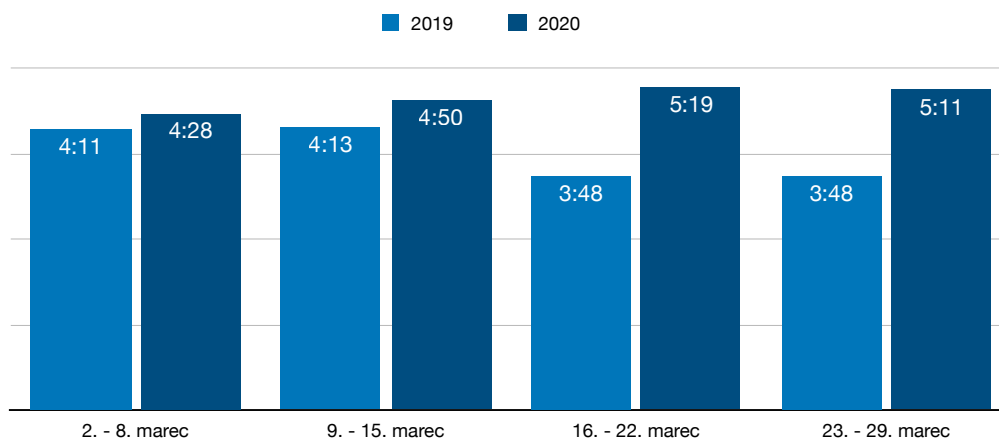


Chart 1: Average daily viewership for the whole day in March in 2019 and 2020 (viewers 4+)

Source: own processing, 2020.; *Koronavírus mení sledovanosť televízie: Marec bol historicky najsledovanejším mesiacom.* [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <<https://pmt.sk/tlacove-spravy>>.

In Graph 2 we see the same observed period of viewers older than 4 years, during the broadcast of television in the interval 7:00 - 17:59. Throughout March, television viewing increased even outside primetime and thus during the day. In the first week, viewership increased by 9.3%, in the second week the value rose to 19.6% and television viewing was on average more than 2 hours. In the most restrictive third week, the viewership increased by 63.7% and in the last week under review, the average viewership increased by 56% compared to the same period a year ago. Compared to the all-day average that we can see in Graph 1, the growth curve is similar. Audience outside primetime saw a more significant percentage increase in audience.

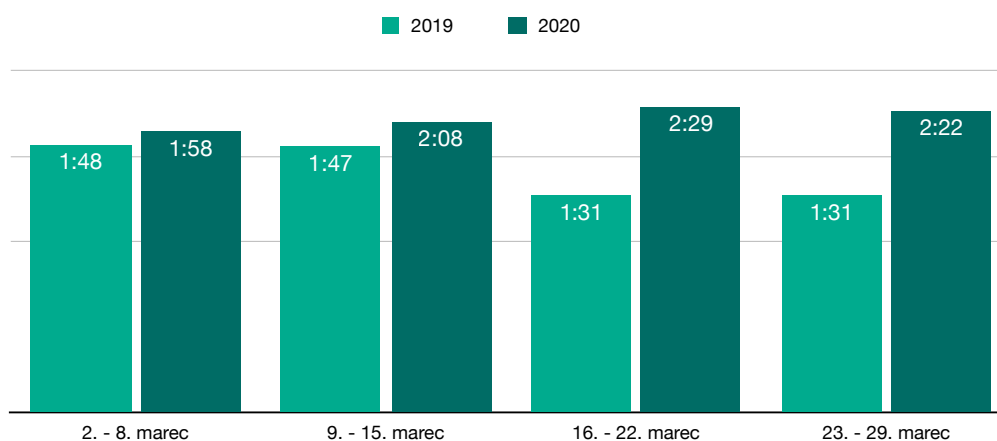


Chart 2: Average daily viewing time 7:00 - 17:59 in March 2019 and 2020 (viewers 4+)

Source: own processing, 2020.; *Koronavírus mení sledovanosť televízie: Marec bol historicky najsledovanejším mesiacom.* [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <<https://pmt.sk/tlacove-spravy>>.

Graph 3 compares the average daily audience in the age category from 4 to 15 years, for the whole day in the period from 2 to 29 March. The rising trend of increasing viewership is obvious. Compared to age category 4, the difference in viewership is much stronger. In the first week, the viewership increased slightly by 4.3%, which is less than in category 4. The second week saw a larger increase of 32%, and in the third week, when schools were closed due to restrictions, the audience for viewers under 15 increased by 67.7%. In the last monitored week, the viewership increased by 64.1% compared to the same period a year ago. The increase in viewership after the closure of schools had a significant share in the increase in viewership. Compared to age group 4, the increase was almost double.

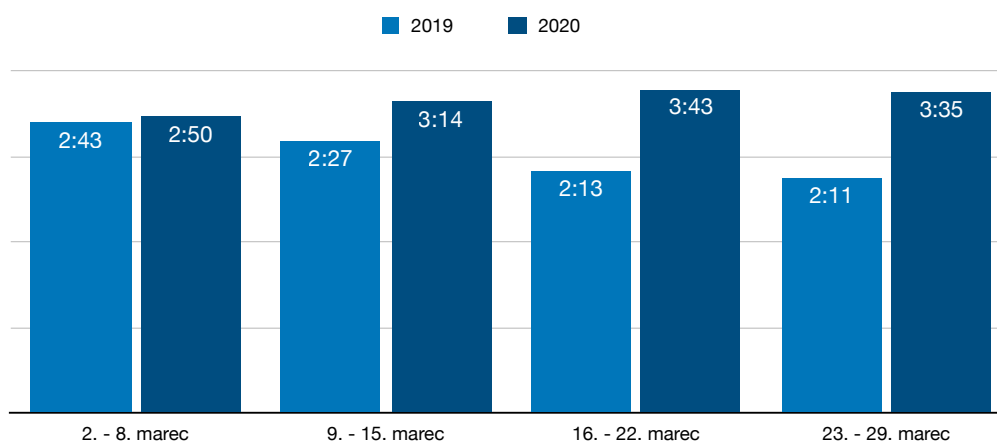


Chart 3: Average daily viewing for the whole day in March 2019 and 2020 (viewers 4 - 15 years)

Source: own processing, 2020.; *Koronavírus mení sledovanosť televízie: Marec bol historicky najsledovanejším mesiacom.* [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <<https://pmt.sk/tlacove-spravy>>.

Graph 4 shows the average daily viewership of children from 4 to 15 years of age between 7:00 and 17:59 in the period March 2019 and March 2020. The first week recorded an increase in viewership compared to March 2019 by 5.8%. With the onset of the first restrictions, the viewership of children under 15 years of age outside primetime increased by 49.3%. In the third week, the viewership increased by 109.9%. This significant increase in viewership during the day, when the time spent in front of the screen climbed to more than 2 hours, led to the closure of schools ordered on 16 March. In the last week under review, the viewership increased by 93.4% and averaged almost 2 hours.

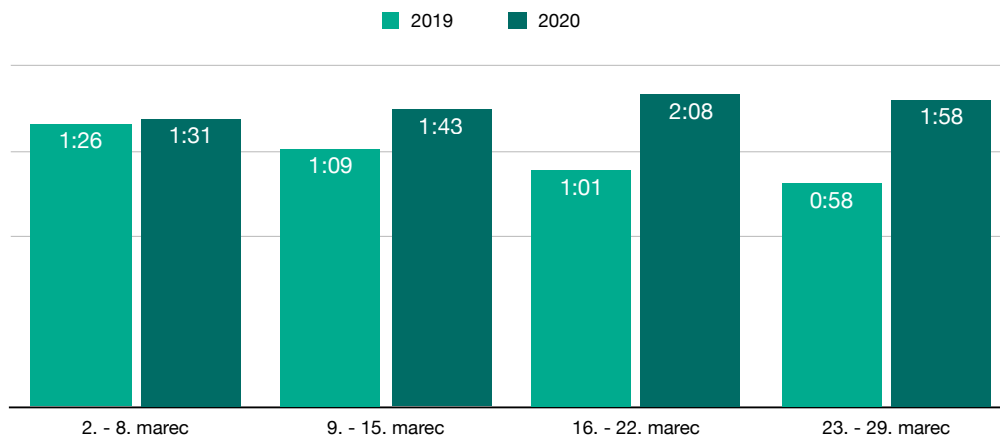


Chart 4: Average daily viewing time 7:00 - 17:59 in March 2019 and 2020 (viewers 4 - 15 years)

Source: own processing, 2020.; *Koronavirus mení sledovanosť televízie: Marec bol historicky najsledovanejším mesiacom.* [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <<https://pmt.sk/tlacove-spravy>>.

The increase in viewership occurred in several countries where coronavirus was reported. Graph 5 shows the individual countries and their average viewership in minutes. The viewership until the adoption of restrictions to stop the spread of the pandemic, followed the development of 2019. After the introduction of restrictions, viewership increased significantly in all countries. The exception was Norway, which, after taking measures to combat the coronavirus, saw only a slight increase in viewership. While in the case of Slovakia, Turkey and Spain the viewership increased by about 100 minutes per day, in Norway the viewership increased minimally. In general, viewership has increased since the restrictions were adopted.

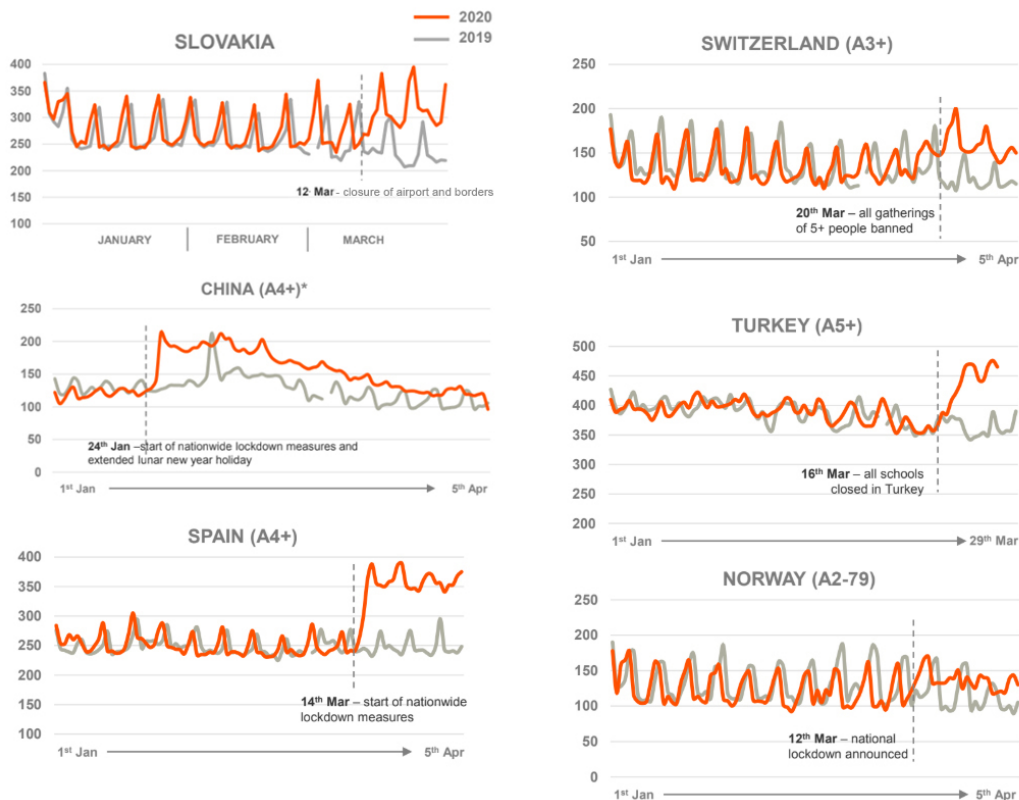


Chart 5: Development of average viewership in minutes

Source: *Koronavirus mení sledovanosť televízie: Marec bol historicky najsledovanejším mesiacom.* [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <<https://pmt.sk/tlacove-spravy>>.

In addition to standard electronic media, online media viewership has also increased. One example of the increase in the number of subscribers and thus the viewership during the pandemic is the video service provider via the Internet Netflix. Graph 6 shows the increase in new Netflix subscribers since 2012. The graph shows the increase in subscribers in each quarter. By 2015, the number of new subscribers did not exceed 5 million. From 2016 to 2019, new subscribers remained at less than 10 million. In the first quarter of 2020, when countries began to take action against the aftermath of the pandemic, the number of Netflix subscribers rose to a maximum of 15.8 million subscribers. The increase in new subscribers is almost half of the last quarter of 2019. Netflix currently has 182.9 million global subscribers.

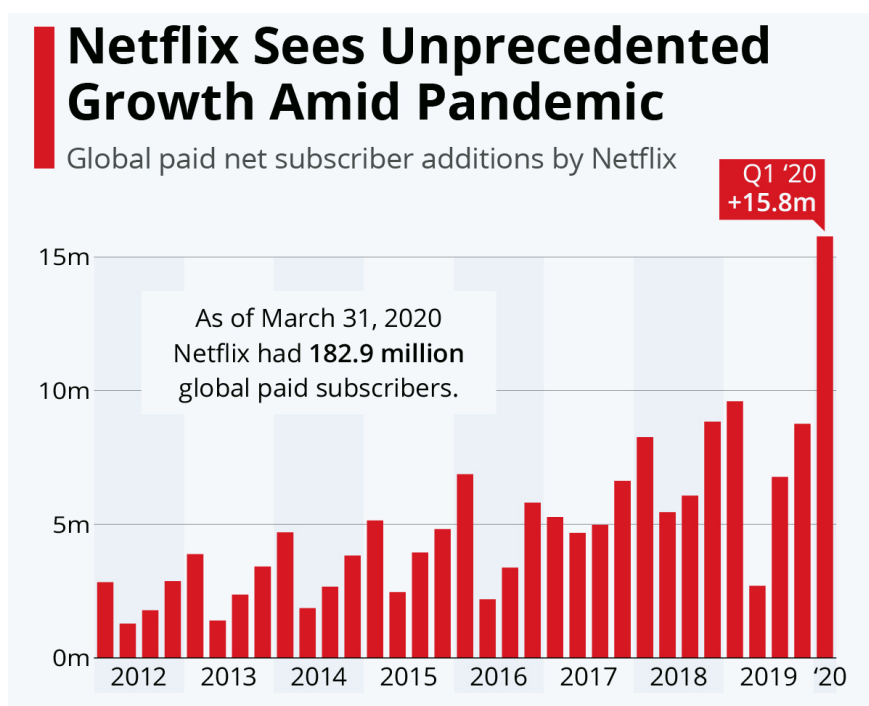


Chart 6: Global paid net subscriber additions by Netflix

Source: RICHTER, F.: *Netflix Sees Unprecedented Growth Amid Pandemic*. [online]. [2020-04-22]. Available at: <<https://www.statista.com/chart/21465/global-paid-net-subscriber-additions-by-netflix/>>.

4 Result

A pandemic that we were not prepared for forced us to change our behavior in some ways and to adapt to new conditions. The economy has slowed, some sectors have come to a complete halt for some time. Despite the increase in viewership of television and online video service providers, advertising revenue for these media is also declining. If the economy fails, so does the amount of advertising that companies are willing to pay because they can't afford it. People are compensating for the closure of schools, various establishments, services and the reduction of public space, with increased demand for entertainment from the home environment. Electronic media provide this type of entertainment and fill their reflection of increased leisure time. In Slovakia, but also in the world, the viewership increased mainly due to the consequences of the pandemic. Viewership is likely to decline after the release of restrictions and is likely to return to baseline only after the vaccine invention and the population will be vaccinated. Until then, we can continue to monitor the development of electronic media viewership in Slovakia and in the world as a whole.

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ONLINE REPORTING DURING THE EXTRAORDINARY SITUATION IN SLOVAKIA

Sláva Gracová – Martin Graca

ABSTRACT:

Virus Covid-19 has affected almost every part of human life all over the world. In Slovakia were first people infected at the beginning of the March 2020 and equally in that time they were introduced measures to limit spreading the illness. All media were oversaturated with news about this topic. The authors of this contribution was realizing quantitative research during the whole month March 2020. They were studying home reporting on selected reporting portals. Within this research she was interested in proportion of news about coronavirus and their frequency during the whole month. The results of research are completed with data of media monitoring for researching period. During the research the author has determined several assumptions on the base of observation in the actual happenings in the beginning of March in Slovakia.

KEY WORDS:

coronavirus, covid-19, extraordinary situation, home news, reporting

1 Reporting During the Extraordinary Situation

Reporting always has a task to reflection on an actual happening in the world. If it is for example a special occasion (e.g. election) in Slovakia in reporting has this topic first place and whole reporting with the highest number of news is dedicated to it. If it's the topic worldwide important, this effect is showing all over the world. The same situation is also in 2020 when the main topic is virus Covid-19. From the reason of this new situation we wanted to watch how big will be the share of news about this disease in chosen web portals within home reporting. According to monitoring in researching portals in March appears the topic Covid-19 in following particular categories together:

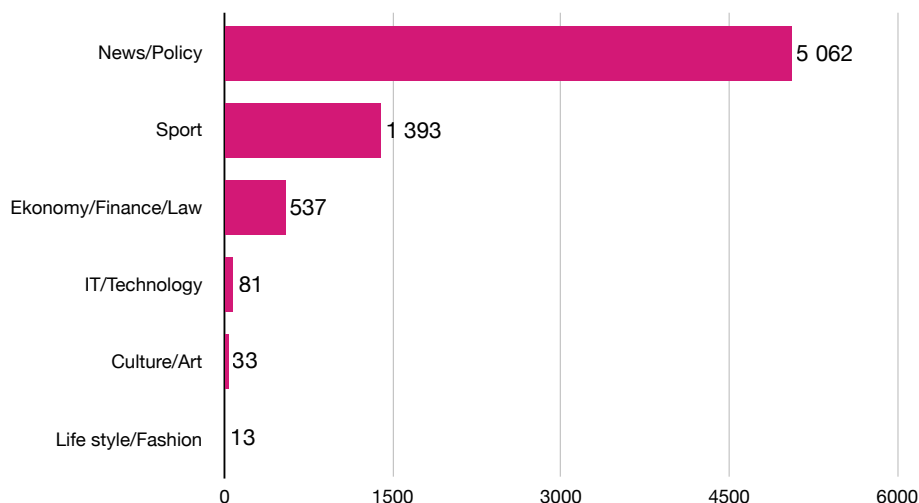


Chart 1: The amount of articles in three researching portals together in March

Source: MONITORA, 2020.

The topic Covid-19 was mentioned on web portal SME.sk in category News and politics 1963 times, on web portal Akuality.sk 1465 times and on web portal Denník N 1634 times. According to monitoring and searching the key words was Covid-19 and coronavirus on researching portals together for period from the 1st of March to 31st of March 2020 found 7199 times.

On particular portals:

- SME.sk – 2966 times,
- Aktuality.sk – 2519 times and
- Denník N – 1634 times.

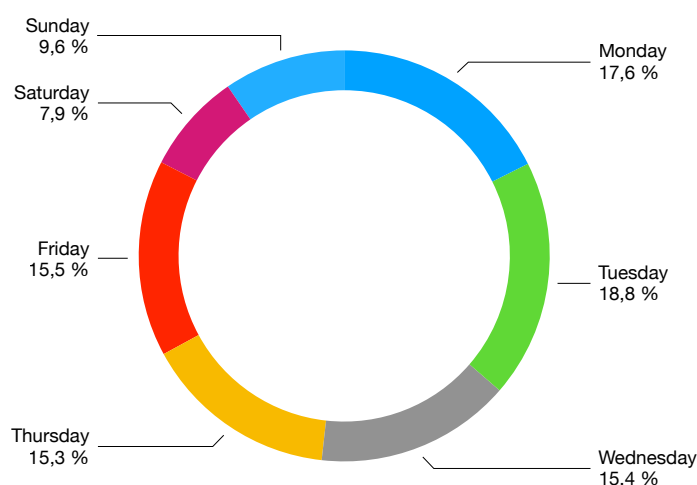


Chart 2: The amount of articles on three researching portals according to the days in a week

Source: MONITORA, 2020.

Chart 2 shows us how was the articles with the topic Covid-19 divided according to the days in a week. From the graph it is clear that in the beginning of the week (Monday and Tuesday) there were the most articles with this problematics. The other days of the working week were balanced and during the weekend their amount fell. How we are stating in the article later, the occurrence of news about actual situation caused by the coronavirus was affected by the first cases discovered in Slovakia, by the other happenings in our country in March which was in the beginning of March focused mainly at results of parliament elections and building the new government.

2 The Assumptions of Implemented Research

While realizing this research we determine some assumptions:

- news about coronavirus will start to increase after the 6th of March 2020, if it is discovered the first case of the infection by virus Covid-19 in Slovakia;
- news about coronavirus will represent more than 50% of all news in home reporting;
- news from state e.g. announcements, instructions, regulations, changes in law etc. will be the part of home reporting at least three times a week;
- advices and tips focused on hygiene, protection and spending time at home during the extraordinary situation will be regular part of home reporting at least three times a week;
- data journalism will be regular part of home reporting and infographics, graphics, tables and maps will appear on every researching portal at least once a week.

These assumptions we determined on the basis of medias observing and the change of content in more web sites. Their content has from the beginning of the March been directing on especially the extraordinary situation in Slovakia and in the whole world. Before interpretation of discovered results in the research it is necessary to add important data, which has influenced the results. It is mainly the happenings in Slovakia except spreading coronavirus. On the 29th of February 2020 they were held the elections to the National council of Slovak republic in Slovakia. This event was the number one topic and that's why it is understandable that the first

days in March media were bringing news mainly about results of elections, building the new government etc. For example, the portal SME.sk, which was in our research, added on the 1st of March 2020 several tens of news which we didn't count in our research because they were about election results in particular election district.

3 The Research of Selected Portals

For the needs of this contribution we decided to watch incidence of news about actual topic - Covid-19, called coronavirus in Slovakia. For the time interval we have chosen the period between the 1st of March 2020 and the 31st of March 2020 because from the beginning of this month the first confirmed cases of infection were discovered in Slovakia and the first measures to limit spreading the illness. Our goal was to monitor their share in comparison with other news about happenings and life in Slovakia. For the qualitative research we have chosen two reporting portals with the biggest amount of subscribers of their content. It is Denník N which during the realized research reached 50 000 subscribers and SME.sk which according to available information had in November 2019 40 000 subscribers. We weren't able to find out the exact amount of subscribers of portal Aktuality.sk but according to statistics it's the most visited site in Slovakia and that's why we put it to the research, too. According to stated graph the portal SME.sk is on the second place and Denník N is on the thirteenth place in February 2020.

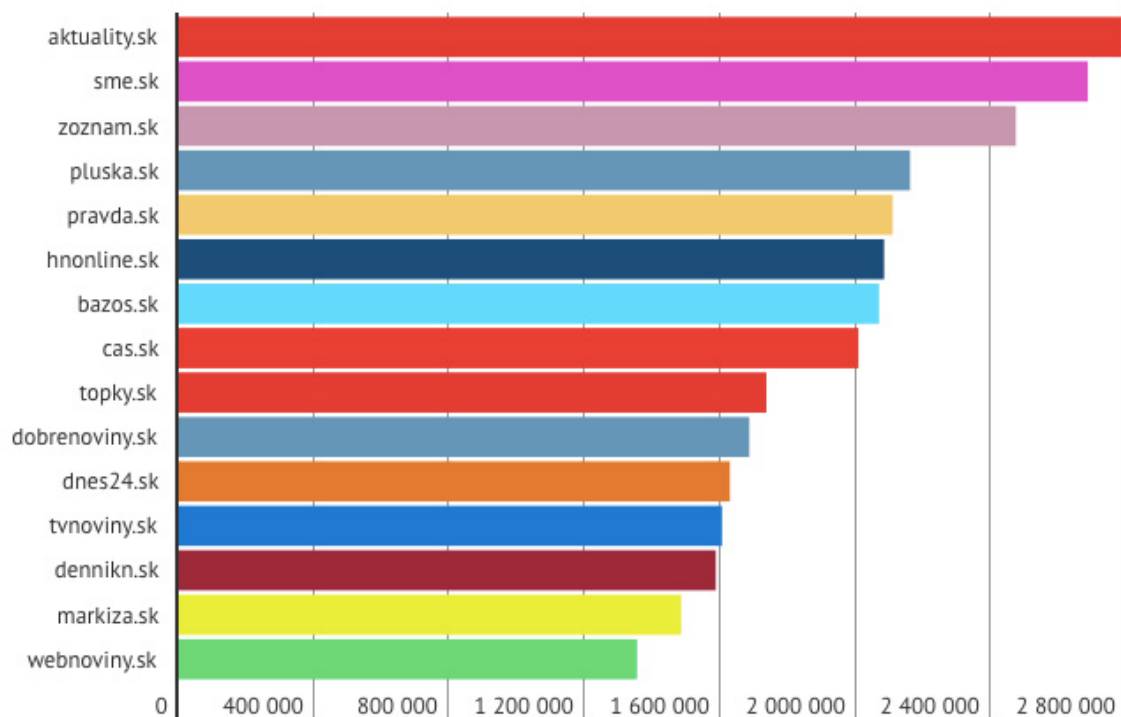


Chart 3: Web attendance in February 2020

Source: KOSNO, L.: *Ako zamiešali parlamentné voľby 2020 poradím webov (návštevnosť)*. [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <<https://zive.aktuality.sk/clanok/145630/ako-zamiesali-parlamentne-volby-2020-poradim-webov-navstevnost/>>.

In implemented research we monitored the number of news from home reporting for every day of the month. Then we selected from them the news about coronavirus. There were news concerning information about disease, number of tested and infected, news from the government regulations, declarations of ministries, and also all information about different parts

of life in Slovakia which were affected by virus. In this group of news, we took down the news from the government regulations, news including advices and instructions (focused on increasing hygiene, producing protection aids, spending time at home etc.) and news coming under data journalism. It means graphs, maps and infographics. On researching portals, we didn't count to the research news referring to their podcasts, sections like e.g. Minute after minute because they have their own space or own advertising on portals. The number of news in particular categories is shown in table 1.

Table 1: Home reporting in March 2020 in chosen web portals

	The number of home reports	Coronavirus reports	Reports from a government regulation	Advice	Infographics
DenníkN	482	255	18	6	10
Aktuality.sk	773	464	38	1	1
SME.sk	858	331	51	0	5

Source: own processing, 2020.

The number of home reporting fluctuate in all researching portals. We can confirm the data from media monitoring because all three portals publish during the weekend less news than during the week. For example, Denník N added on the 1st of March the highest amount of home news - 27 and the following Saturday the 7th of March just two news. The high number in the first day of the month was influenced by the parliament elections which were held the day before. The portal Aktuality.sk reached the highest number of news for a day on 16th of March - 57 news. The lowest number was on 28th of March, just 9 news. SME.sk published on 20th of March 45 news and the lowest number was on Saturday 7th of March - 6 news.

Table 2: Average number of home news for a one day in March 2020

	The number of home reports	Coronavirus reports	Reports from a government regulation	Advice	Infographics
DenníkN	15,54	8,22	0,58	0,19	0,32
Aktuality.sk	24,93	14,96	1,22	0,03	0,03
SME.sk	27,67	10,67	1,64	0	0,16

Source: own processing, 2020.

Portal Aktuality.sk added on the average the most home news, almost 25 news and also from them was the most about topic coronavirus - 15 news a day. From the research follow that news from government regulations were added about every second day on portals Denník N and SME.sk. Within portal Aktuality.sk there is usually one this kind of message every day. In the research we monitored also news oriented on tips and advices which were focused on dealing with the situation that has arisen. In portal Denník N was news like this added on the average once in 5 days and in portal Aktuality.sk just one in the whole researching month. We didn't find this kind of news on the page SME.sk. News which contained data journalism like graphs, maps and other graphic additions turned out the same. In home reporting of Denník N we found this kind news 10 times, in Aktuality.sk just one and SME.sk published 5 news which contained infographics. From the implemented research follows that together were added 2113 news of home reporting and 1050 from them were linked with coronavirus. That presents 49,69 % of all news. In particular portals were results following:

- Denník N: 52,9 % news of home reporting were with the topic coronavirus,
- Aktuality.sk: 60 % news of home reporting were with the topic coronavirus,
- SME.sk: 38,57 % news of home reporting were with the topic coronavirus.

In the research we can see also how and when started the news about coronavirus and situation that has arisen increasing. There were very few of this news in the first week of March. Portal Aktuality.sk added first news with this topic on the 7th of March (together 7 news). On this day was discovered first infected citizen in Slovakia. The most news about coronavirus were on this

portal published on the 16th of March – 43 news. Denník N added first news about coronavirus on the 3rd of March. Their amount was between 0 – 4 news a day in the first week. The most news with this topic were published on the 13th of March - 18 news. Portal SME.sk published first news about coronavirus on the 2nd of March and like in the other portals in the first week was their amount low (0 – 6 news a day). The most news about coronavirus were published on the 30th of March – 25 news.

Conclusion

The news about coronavirus will be part of our and also global news for a long time. According to current situation the number of it will change in every country. For this research we picked up the first month in which the disease got in Slovakia and radically changed people's lives and the life of whole republic. On the basis of research result we can verify given assumptions:

- Assumption that the news about Covid-19 will be increasing after the 6th of March 2020 was confirmed by research. Portal Aktuality.sk has added first news about coronavirus exactly on the 6th of March. Other portals had coronavirus news earlier but the amount of news has increased after this date. Before that the amount had been going between 0 – 6 news a day.
- We expected that the news about coronavirus will be more than 50% of all home news. This expectation has confirmed just in one part. Denník N has in average 52,9% news about coronavirus and Aktuality.sk 60% news for whole month. Portal SME.sk has just 38,57% news about coronavirus in home news.
- With the third assumption is good to mention that in this period has changed the governments in Slovakia and the differences were in communication of the old prime minister and the new prime minister. Also, these facts had big impact in the number of news from government decree. Into that we put there prime minister statement, new rules, restrictions, orders from the extraordinary situation, news from ministry and so on. We assumed that this kind of news will be added at least three times a week. This assumption has confirmed on all researched portal. In the average Denník N had put up this message every second day. Aktuality.sk every day and SME.sk had put up in average one and half message per day.
- Because of the fact that we had this research done at the beginning of this extraordinary situation in Slovakia we expected that advises and instructions (e.g. how to sew your own mask, how to spend time at home or how to increase your hygiene and so on.) will be part of our home news. This expectation has not confirmed. During whole month Sme.sk has not published any kind of this article, Aktuality.sk just one, Denník N has put up six articles about it. We can say that this content is not suitable to go in to the main news and on news portal it has its own section or it appears in lifestyle portals.
- We also assume that the news about coronavirus will at least once a week include elements of data journalism. We thought they will be adding maps, charts and maps of Slovakia with the exact number of infected by coronavirus. This assumption has not confirmed because Denník N has added ten messages about it, SME.sk five and Aktuality none.

From this research it's obvious that the topic about coronavirus is the number one topic in Slovakia. In the two explored portals represents more than half of the home news. The beginning of this topic was connected with the first case of infection on our area. Daily we can see approximately eight to almost fifteen news about this virus on the explored portals. Regular part of daily news are orders from government. We don't know how the situation in Slovakia and all over the world will be developing. We can say that during year 2020 will always be this topic outstanding even if it don't be the main topic of home news in every month.

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IMAGES OF SEXUALITY IN TELEVISION DRAMA PRODUCTION

Zuzana Kvetanová – Mária Sviteková

ABSTRACT:

Scenes of sexuality in media production are today one of the proven ways, in which you can get your audience's attention. These images are mainly used in television drama, especially in the genre of "situational comedy", while paradoxically, the sitcom should have primarily elements of humor. However, at the expense of witty situations, sexist or similar depictions are often inserted into the genre-type mentioned above, which more often saturate the recipient's amusing need. In the present study, we examine the question relating to images of sexuality and clarify their presence in the media reality, specifically in television production. The explication of the pertracted phenomenon is based on the opinions of J. Orlebar, V. Slunčík, S. Tarrant, B. Calvert, P. Hartl and H. Hartlová, P. Horňák, M. Durham and the publications of many other relevant theorists. The subject of the paper is not only to present the occurrence of sexual images in contemporary situational comedies. Our intention is also to reflect the theoretical knowledge of the problem. The primary aim of the paper is to clarify the issue of images of sexuality in media production, respectively to prove their existence in Slovak and foreign sitcoms. For the purposes, we use mainly logical-conceptual methods of text analysis in conjunction with qualitative content analysis. The ambition of the paper is to map the current state of television production in the context of a research phenomenon.

KEY WORDS:

erotic scenes, images of sexuality, media reality, sexism, sitcom, television production, TV drama

1 Introduction into the Issue

Existence of different media has made society's access to information of various kinds much easier and has also provided the percipients with possibilities of entertainment and relaxation in their leisure time. Despite broad spectrum of media market, the medium of television is considered one of the most preferred sources of data. Diverse possibilities of using the provided content and easy manipulation with the device are the main factors that cause television to be viewed by heterogeneous media audience. This informational function is a significant factor of the attractiveness of the medium of television, mainly for the percipients of post-productive age. The most frequent intention of the recipients to seek this medium is, however, to fulfil their need for entertainment. The function of entertainment in the broadcast programming is attained mainly by the products of television drama production, such as soap operas, series or sitcoms. Implementation of foreign programmes of the aforementioned types into Slovak television broadcasting has prompted their production also by the local creators of media contents. High number of similar programmes in the broadcast scheduling of televisions thus mobilizes producers to create original contents which the audience usually prefers over others. With an intention of a notable rise in viewership, the creators of media contents incorporate elements of violence, narcissism, and also sexual scenes into their programmes with an aim to attract the attention of the viewers. However, images of sexuality could also be seen in the so-called "pre-media" period of time – presence of such phenomena can be noted in the recent and distant past within daily socio-cultural reality. Clarification of their existence within the media reality has become the subject of our study, as the centre of our interest is to define different forms of sexual scenes in narrative structures of the selected media contents – the situational comedies.

Our foremost ambition, however, is to reflect the ascertained theoretical knowledge related to the analysed problem and, thus, to closely specify the television genre-type of "sitcom" and the occurrence of these images within the type of media content in question. The secondary,

but not less important, goal of the paper is to identify certain heterogeneous scenes of sexuality in concrete products of domestic and foreign television production using relevant research procedures – methods of logical analysis and qualitative content analysis. The purpose of the study is to “reflect” the theoretical premises in television practice, or the interpretation of timely research data (within the analysed topic) that, however, need to be continually reassessed and approached critically.

2 Images of Sexuality and Their Media Presentation in Television Genre of Drama Production – Situational Comedy

Television genres of dramatic production are among the most-watched media contents. These genre types have been a part of television broadcast since its beginnings, although in a significantly different form. The broadcast scheduling is being modified with the development of television broadcast. Television genres that have become the most viewed and have started to attract the attention of a high number of percipients have been gradually profiled. Situational comedy – sitcom – can be complexly defined as a genre that represents a combination of a story based on a screenplay, an expressive acting behaviour, jokes, and studio laughter. Sitcom, or situational comedy, is presently considered one of the most popular TV genres.¹ It is a specific type of television programme characterized by certain typical attributes. One of its most characteristic features is the setting, where almost the entire story takes place. Another specific feature of this genre is also the aforementioned, artificially inserted, studio laughter. This element indicates funny or humorous situations often present in the narrative of this genre.² First television products of the discussed genre initially did not have a defined uniform structure, but, eventually, four kinds of this type of comedy have been settled – suburban, rural, urban, and the youngest model of situational comedy based on topics of social-criticism.³ Authors B. Calvert and others, who address the topic of sitcoms, have also defined a certain typology that is derived from the location or environment in which most of the story takes place. One of the locations is the home, where humour is based on funny situations and relationships between family members; another location is the workplace, where the humorous scenes appear as a result of interactions between colleagues.⁴ Despite the aforementioned, V. Slunčík refutes the simplicity of this model and states that contemporary situational comedies present mostly nonlinear ways of story depiction, e.g. the title *Sex and the City* or *How I Met Your Mother*, which explain several story-lines at the same time.⁵ J. Korda categorizes the analysed genre according to the type of conflicts that occur in them as follows:

- family sitcoms – their story consists of plots containing family members, e.g. *The Cosby Show*, *Step by Step*, *Susedia*, *Kutil s.r.o.*, and others;
- workplace sitcoms – the story-line of these sitcoms takes place at the workplace, e.g. *House M.D.*, *2 Broke Girls*, *Profesionáli*, etc.⁶, which clearly agrees with B. Calvert et al.

¹ ORLEBAR, J.: *Knihy o televizi*. Prague : Nakladatelství Akademie muzických umění, 2012, p. 70.

² SLUNČÍK, V.: *Sitcom: Vývoj a realizace*. Prague : Akademie muzických umění, 2010, p. 11.

³ IŁOWIECKI, M., ZASĘPA, T.: *Moc a nemoc médií*. Bratislava : Typi Universitatis Tyrnaviensis, Veda, 2003, p. 161.

⁴ CALVERT, B. et al.: *Television studies: The key concepts*. London : Routledge, 2008, p. 42.

⁵ SLUNČÍK, V.: *Sitcom: Vývoj a realizace*. Prague : Akademie muzických umění, 2010, p. 10.

⁶ KORDA, J.: *Televizní žánry*. In *Cinepur*, 2005, Vol. 39, No. 4, p. 22. [online]. [2020-03-03]. Available at: <<http://cinepur.cz/list.php?issue=37>>.

However, the current saturation of television broadcasting with situational comedies of both the domestic, but mainly, the foreign production causes a departure from originally defined models of sitcoms. Producers of these comedies are naturally trying to attract the recipients and achieve the highest possible ratings of their shows and they often do this by incorporating sexual scenes into the story of the aforementioned genre-type. Initially, programmes containing images of sexuality offended the recipients; however, through a long-term process of instilling these elements into their subconscious, the audience has become immune to sexually laden media programmes. From the psychological point of view, sexuality can be described as the fundamental and individual motive in human life. Sexuality accompanies an individual throughout their whole life and influences their personality and relationships. It is also a source of specific emotions and a form of interpersonal communication.⁷ Sexuality is a set of features and expressions of human behaviour stemming from the physical and mental differences between the sexes. It is a physiological act accompanied by sexual activities with an aim of psychological satisfaction.⁸ An essential part of an individual's sexuality is also their behaviour during the sexual act.⁹ "*Sexuality is understood not only as the actual biological sexual act of reproduction, but also as the whole system of behaviour that aims to achieve sexual intercourse, including psychologization of this behaviour and sublimation of this sexuality into intellectual artistic creative activity.*"¹⁰ From the point of view of implementing the elements of sexuality into media contents, it is a fact that sexual talk is acceptable for the recipients. Depiction of these elements in the television broadcast, however, tends to offend them.¹¹ The term "sexuality" is thus linked to both the negative and positive connotations. The positive aspect of the discussed term, within the context of depicting these elements, is the phenomenon of "erotica". Erotica in its various shapes and forms of presentation has always been a good instrument for media to attract attention and increase the viewership of their media contents.¹² The term "erotica" is determined mainly as a set of scenes of sexual intercourse, depiction of which, however, does not humiliate the individuals involved.¹³ Erotic elements in media contents are expressed in a sensual and tender way, presented by partially concealed bodies. Erotic images have mainly an aesthetic function and the recipient interprets the scenes on the basis of their past experience.¹⁴ It is the aesthetical function that constitutes the basic difference between the terms "sexism", "erotica", and "pornography". The polar opposite phenomenon, i.e. the negative connotation connected to the issue of images of sexuality, is represented by the term "sexism".

"Sexism" can be understood as a certain kind of discrimination on the basis of gender. In most cases, women are the discriminated group. In media production, this happens mostly in commercials or situations in programmes, where women are degraded and depicted as

⁷ WEISS, P.: *Sexuální deviace*. Prague : Potrál, 2002, p. 5.

⁸ HARTL, P., HARTLOVÁ, H.: *Psychologický slovník*. Prague : Portál, 2000, p. 532.

⁹ PREVEDÁROVÁ, J., KUBÍČKOVÁ, G.: *Základy rodinnej a sexuálnej výchovy*. Bratislava : Slovenské pedagogické nakladateľstvo, 1996, p. 33.

¹⁰ KASARDA, M.: Pop-pornografizácia výpredaj zlacnenej erotiky v populárnej literatúre. In PETRANOVÁ, D., PRAVDOVÁ, H., SOLÍK, M. (eds.): *Megatrendy a média 2013. Sex, lži a video*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2013, p. 175.

¹¹ WARD, L. M. et al.: *Sexual Media Content and Effects*. New York : Oxford University Press, 2016, p. 3. [online]. [2020-03-03]. Available at: <<http://oxfordre.com/communication/view>>.

¹² KOBIELA, R.: *Reklama – 200 typů, které musíte znát*. Brno : Computer Press, 2009, p. 98.

¹³ HORŇÁK, P.: Erotika a sex ako efektívne emocionálne apely v reklame. In HORŇÁK, P., VOPÁLENSKÁ, E. (eds.): *Marketingová komunikácia a médiá*. Bratislava : FF UK in Bratislava, 2011, p. 9.

¹⁴ REICHERT, T., LAMBIASE, J.: *Sex in Consumer Culture: The Erotic Content of Media and Marketing*. New Jersey : Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006, p. 113.

commodities.¹⁵ The discussed term represents different forms of treating women unfavourably, as well as ways that men use to express their power and superiority over female gender.¹⁶ Authors J. Cviková and J. Juránová distinguish two types of sexism. They define benevolent sexism as a positively intentioned discrimination of a person with an aim to protect an inferior individual. On the other hand, hostile sexism directly refers to inferiority of female gender.¹⁷ Despite the fact that sexism is specified as humiliation of both genders, it is mostly the degradation of female gender that is being depicted in media. Discrimination of men in heterogeneous media contents is appears rarely and is significantly disproportionate to defamatory connotations against women. Besides erotica and sexism, media also often resort to presentation of pornographic elements. Images of pornography are regarded as indecent depictions of sexual intercourse. Pornography leaves the recipients with an impression of derogation and humiliation of the depicted individuals.¹⁸ It is also connected to an emergence of psychological and social processes, which consequently also influence real relationships in the recipient's life.¹⁹ Porn industry can be considered an expression of hyperreality. Porn culture provides a recipient with possibilities that are unrealistic in real life. It represents a simulation of reality or materialization of real emotions and relationships.²⁰ Although current broadcast programming is oversaturated with pornographic elements, erotic images or sexism, a recipient watches these contents without question. By incorporating these phenomena into media products, televisions are trying to gain the highest possible number of viewers and increase viewership of these shows. However, the aforementioned phenomena had been present in socio-cultural reality even before they became a part of media contents. As the objective of media is to reflect reality as faithfully as possible, they look for inspiration in an every-day reality of life.

In the real world, the element of sexuality is closely linked to phenomena such as beauty or the aforementioned erotica. In social reality, beauty is presented mostly in connection to female gender. A woman's appearance is constantly watched and judged. The society thus assumes that a woman is the embodiment of beauty, but beauty is an irrelevant term. The so-called beauty myth still influences uncountable number of women. Pressured by society, women are trying to transform themselves into an ideal of beauty which does not really exist.²¹ For many of them, opinions of others are the decisive factor and they are willing to undergo even radical changes to come close to their ideal.²² The society perceives beauty as a necessary aspect of a happy and successful life. Beauty of a woman is judged more strictly than her profession or knowledge. That is one of the reasons why women, concerned for their status, prioritize their looks, which, in the long term, slows down their personal development.²³ Similarly, even today, there are still opinions about inferiority of a woman's role. It is assumed that the purpose of a woman is to be a mother, wife, and to care for household and children. This assumption about the image of a woman stems from the culture

¹⁵ *Sexizmus*. [online]. [2020-03-03]. Available at: <<https://www.gender.gov.sk/aktivity/temy/zakladne-pojmy/sexizmus/>>.

¹⁶ CVIKOVÁ, J. et al.: *Žena nie je tovar*. Bratislava : Aspekt, 2005, p. 399.

¹⁷ CVIKOVÁ, J., JURÁNOVÁ, J.: *Ružový a modrý svet. Rodové stereotypy a ich dôsledky*. Bratislava : Aspekt, 2003, p. 265.

¹⁸ HORŇÁK, P.: *Erotika a sex ako efektívne emocionálne apely v reklame*. In HORŇÁK, P., VOPÁLENSKÁ, E. (eds.): *Marketingová komunikácia a médiá*. Bratislava : FF UK in Bratislava, 2011, p. 10.

¹⁹ DIVÍNOVÁ, R.: *Cybersex: Forma internetové komunikace*. Prague : Triton, 2005, p. 57.

²⁰ BAUDRILLARD, J.: *O svádení*. Olomouc : Votobia, 1996, p. 38.

²¹ BOSÁ, M.: *Prečo je tá láska taká ťažká*. In CVIKOVÁ, J., JURÁNOVÁ, J. (eds.): *Ružový a modrý svet*. Bratislava : Aspekt, 2003, p. 115-117.

²² WOLF, N.: *Mýtus krásy*. Bratislava : Aspekt, 2000, p. 46.

²³ BOSÁ, M.: *Prečo je tá láska taká ťažká*. In CVIKOVÁ, J., JURÁNOVÁ, J. (eds.): *Ružový a modrý svet*. Bratislava : Aspekt, 2003, p. 120.

that the society identifies with. Sexism, i.e. discrimination based on gender, itself comes from cultural identity. Origins of sexism go back to distant past, where women were considered lowly. Gender stereotypes, which define the idealized notions about women and men, are the basis of sexist behaviour or expressions.²⁴ Gender stereotypes had been indicated long before the existence of media. For example, the actual structure of family presents a man/father as the most important member of family, while men are also favoured for important positions in political or educational system.²⁵ Relationships between men and women are being defined through gender stereotypes. Within this context, men are considered the superior, powerful members of society situated in the highest positions.²⁶ J. Cviková and J. Juránová agree with the aforementioned statement and similarly describe the phenomenon of gender stereotype as relations between men and women. They focus their attention mainly on ideologies that present superiority of men and inferiority of women.²⁷ Stereotypes, however, are not connected exclusively to gender. According to Z. Svobodová, they can be divided into the following three groups:

- stereotype defined by time axis – it is a stereotype that has existed for several generations or its modern type, which has been formed on the basis of new technologies;
- stereotype from the view of its generality – some stereotypes are related to the whole society in general; others, the specific ones, only to a certain subculture;
- cultural stereotype – represents division based on gender.²⁸

In relation to the elements of sexuality, erotica, and sexism, we thus speak mainly of cultural, or gender, stereotypes. However, we should not forget that elements of pornography are also a part of similar expressions in socio-cultural reality. First records of pornographic images come from Ancient Greece. Even the term “pornography” is of Greek origin and is derived from the words “porné” (bride) and “graphien” (to write). Pornography is, in a way, similar to erotica. Erotica, however, constitutes a form of artistic representation of pornography.²⁹ Consumption of pornography is considered a trend in contemporary society. Criticism of this phenomenon is rare and the negative consequences it can cause are also left unsaid.³⁰ With the arrival of technologies and the mass media, the spreading of pornography has become much easier and available to general public, including the adolescents.³¹ Pornographic images are therefore often (un)knowingly a part of media contents and, together with other elements of sexuality, participate in production of TV programmes, situational comedies not excluded.

The origins of sexual motives presented in the society naturally date back to distant past. First symbols of sexuality depicted and presented to general public can be observed in the

²⁴ BALUCHOVÁ, B.: *Rodová (ne)citlivosť na Slovensku (a úloha médií v tomto probléme)*. [online]. [2020-03-03]. Available at:

<https://www.academia.edu/8052656/Rodov%C3%A1_ne_citlivost%C5%A5_na_Slovensku_a_%C3%BAloha_m%C3%A9di%C3%AD_v_tomto_prob%C3%A9me>.

²⁵ *Rodové stereotypy*. [online]. [2020-03-03]. Available at: <<https://www.gender.gov.sk/>>.

²⁶ KICZKOVÁ, Z.: Moc rodových stereotypov. In KICZKOVÁ, Z., SZAPUOVÁ, M. (eds.): *Rodové štúdiá, súčasné diskusie, problémy a perspektívy*. Bratislava : Vydavateľstvo Univerzity Komenského, 2011, p. 123.

²⁷ BOSÁ, M.: Prečo ženy zažívajú násilie. Mýty a fakty o násilí na ženách. In CVIKOVÁ, J., JURÁNOVÁ, J. (eds.): *Ružový a modrý svet*. Bratislava : Aspekt, 2003, p. 146.

²⁸ SVOBODOVÁ, Z.: *Média a stereotypy*. [online]. [2020-03-03]. Available at: <<https://medialnivychova.fsv.cuni.cz/>>.

²⁹ *Analýza fenoménu pornografia*. [online]. [2020-03-03]. Available at: <<https://www.prohuman.sk/psychologia/analiza-fenomenu-pornografia>>.

³⁰ CHMELÍK, J. et al.: *Mravnosť, pornografie a mravnostní kriminalita*. Prague : Portál, 2003, p. 121.

³¹ *Analýza fenoménu pornografia*. [online]. [2020-03-03]. Available at: <<https://www.prohuman.sk/psychologia/analiza-fenomenu-pornografia>>.

antiquity. Back then, sexual motives were used for “advertising” purposes (e.g. ancient houses of pleasure were marked by erotic symbols to attract the attention of the passersby).³² Also later, in the media environment, first images of sexuality appeared in advertising. Author J. Vysekalová claims that the recipient’s interest is caught more by images of other people than inanimate objects. In the 1940s, research proved that women are also interested in images of other women, while men take no notice of depictions presenting other men. These were also the reasons, why, in the 1950s, a woman became a symbol of sexuality not only in the advertising³³, but also in the whole media industry. The development of the media and the contents transmitted by mass-media has thus brought a constant need to attract an ever-growing number of recipients. As a consequence, women, or a female body, started to be exposed more and more.³⁴ In the context of sexuality depiction, J. Vysekalová states that sex and erotica are one of the instruments that influence the emotions of percipients the most.³⁵ Constant competition between televisions for audience then leads to applying a growing number of elements of sexuality to their programmes. According to P. Horňák, the level of images of sexuality in the programming is permanently growing. The producers of media contents, with an aim to increase their viewership, move from depicting elements of sexuality to bold sex, which, however, leads to rejection of the discussed contents, mainly by the female part of audience.³⁶ The result of an abundance of these elements in media production is then often the opposite of the expected intention. Monotony of media contents is unappealing for a recipient and uniformity of programmes encourages the audience to opt for other leisure activities.

M. Durham, on the other hand, states that media only reflect a given society. Depiction of sexual elements in media contents is dependent on the actual culture. Media are a reflection of ethics, values, and preferences of a society.³⁷ In Slovakia, percipients are adjusted to a certain rate of sexuality in television broadcast and majority of the aforementioned elements do not cause any offence or stir in the society. However, a thing considered ordinary in one culture can be unthinkable in another, mainly in countries where perceiving women as sexual objects is strictly forbidden (these are mostly countries practicing Islam). Sexist expressions in media productions are regarded in an especially negative way.³⁸ Although some groups of recipients perceive elements of sexism as negative, a certain part of audience considers sexual images (even those with a negative undertone) in media as a form of excitement or entertainment. Often, the discussed contents are even more attractive to the audience than production without these motives.³⁹ The problem with depiction of elements of sexuality lies mainly in the form of its presentation by the media. Many times, sex is connected to alcohol or drug usage; it is frequently conducted outside of marriage, and is usually reflected as a superficial activity without a deeper meaning.⁴⁰ Producers of media contents, however, use this phenomenon in situations when they are forced to impress. Incorporating images of sexuality into a product

³² HORŇÁK, P.: Erotika a sex ako efektívne emocionálne apely v reklame. In HORŇÁK, P., VOPÁLENSKÁ, E. (eds.): *Marketingová komunikácia a médiá*. Bratislava : FF UK in Bratislava, 2011, p. 10.

³³ VYSEKALOVÁ, J. et al.: *Psychologie reklamy*. Prague : Grada Publishing, 2007, p. 59.

³⁴ HORŇÁK, P.: Erotika a sex ako efektívne emocionálne apely v reklame. In HORŇÁK, P., VOPÁLENSKÁ, E. (eds.): *Marketingová komunikácia a médiá*. Bratislava : FF UK in Bratislava, 2011, p. 12.

³⁵ VYSEKALOVÁ, J. et al.: *Psychologie reklamy*. Prague : Grada Publishing, 2007, p. 60.

³⁶ HORŇÁK, P.: Erotika a sex ako efektívne emocionálne apely v reklame. In HORŇÁK, P., VOPÁLENSKÁ, E. (eds.): *Marketingová komunikácia a médiá*. Bratislava : FF UK in Bratislava, 2011, p. 14.

³⁷ DURHAM, M. G.: *The Lolita Effect: The Media Sexualization of Young Girls and What We Can Do About it*. New York : Overlook Press, 2005, p. 158.

³⁸ TARRANT, S.: *Men Speak Out: Views on Gender, Sex and Power*. New York : Routledge, 2013, p. 47.

³⁹ McQUAIL, D.: *Úvod do teorie masové komunikace*. Prague : Portál, 1999, p. 352.

⁴⁰ ZASEPA, T., IZRAEL, P.: *Televízia u nás doma*. Ružomberok : VERBUM, 2011, p. 72.

can increase the user's interest in the television programme. Whether the content influences the audience in an offending and negative way, or it is considered entertaining and exciting, the percipient pays their attention to it out of curiosity.⁴¹ It is the stated aspect of television production (reflexion of sexual depictions) that the theoreticians of media studies consider a risk, while criticising mostly the way these elements are depicted, i.e. frequently presented with humour. It is our objective to map the presence of various forms of images of sexuality in popular products of domestic and foreign television drama production – in situational comedies.

3 Selected Methodological Approach

Sexual scenes are a part of many media contents. The producers of the discussed products often implement these elements into the narrative structure, and not only within the television production. With an aim to attract the audience's attention and improve ratings of a certain product, individual programmes are overfilled with erotica, sexism, and their equivalents. The submitted study addresses the presence of images of sexuality in television drama production, specifically in situational comedies. To achieve the stated intention, it is necessary to set out and characterize the research methods, specify survey questions, define analytical categories, and describe the intentionally selected research material.

In the light of the need to clarify the existence of various forms of sexual depictions, we have decided on using the method of qualitative content analysis as the most suitable. Qualitative content analysis represents an inductive approach. It prefers theoretical formulation of results; it does not, however, "avoid" numeric data.⁴² A. Strauss and J. Corbinová also define qualitative research as an analysis that does not obtain its results by the methods of quantification.⁴³ According to M. Miovský, it is fairly difficult to define qualitative content analysis. The author states that it is almost impossible to determine the method of how the research was conducted by examining the results of the analysis, especially in regards to qualitative content analysis.⁴⁴ For an analysis to be comprehensible and successful, it is essential to adhere to the research procedure. Before conducting qualitative research, it is desirable to define the research topic and specify the research questions. These may, however, change during the actual research, in dependence on the collected data. The researcher consequently clarifies the pre-set research questions.⁴⁵ The first phase of each qualitative analysis is represented by the actual problem that is presented as research material after the commencement of the research. Consequently, the problem is defined more closely and its content and features are identified. Coding units, or analytical categories, code the selected media content.⁴⁶ After the process of coding, it is necessary to process the collected data. The obtained data then allow the research questions to be answered.⁴⁷ Following the correct methodological approach presumes the success of this type of research.

⁴¹ TARRANT, S.: *Men Speak Out: Views on Gender, Sex and Power*. New York : Routledge, 2013, p. 49.

⁴² GAVORA, P.: *Sprievodca metodológie kvalitatívneho výskumu*. Bratislava : Univerzita Komenského, 2007, p. 20.

⁴³ STRAUSS, A., CORBINOVÁ, J.: *Základy kvalitatívneho výskumu*. Brno : Sdružení podané ruce, 1999, p. 10.

⁴⁴ MIOVSKÝ, M.: *Kvalitatívni přístup a metody v psychologickém výskumu*. Prague : Grada Publishing, a.s., 2006, p. 15.

⁴⁵ HENDL, J.: *Kvalitatívni výskum*. Prauge : Portál, 2012, p. 48.

⁴⁶ POLÁKOVÁ, E., SPÁLOVÁ, L.: *Vybrané problémy metodológie masmediálnych štúdií*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2009, p. 77.

⁴⁷ TRAMPOTA, T., VOJTĚCHOVSKÁ, M.: *Metody výskumu médií*. Prague : Portál, 2010, p. 109.

As each method of conducting a research, qualitative content analysis also has some advantages and disadvantages. J. Hendl considers the possibility of modification and adjustment of research questions a positive of this analysis. Researcher carries out the data collection and the analysis simultaneously. At the end, the researcher is able to decide whether the results of the analysis are usable or not. According to the author, quality of the collected data that the researcher obtains by a precise analysis of the examined phenomenon is also an advantage. A disadvantage of the research is the fact that if the obtained data do not fulfil the purpose, the researcher starts the same process over. Extensiveness of qualitative research can also be considered its minus. The actual collection of data and their evaluation takes place over a long period of time. Due to this extensiveness, the researcher works with a small research sample, which, in the end, leads to generalization of the obtained data.⁴⁸ Despite the aforementioned, thanks to the collected data, we are consequently able to answer the pre-set research questions. Research question can be defined as an expression of assumption in an interrogative form. Research question is asked, if the topic it examines is unresearched or we do not know the results of the previous research. It expresses an independent expectation of the researcher.⁴⁹ Research question also provides information about the submitted topic related to the theoretical part of the analysed phenomenon.⁵⁰ The researcher chooses the questions before the actual analysis. During the research, the defined questions can be modified.⁵¹ In connection to the analysed topic, we have formulated the following research questions:

- RQ 1: What kinds of erotic scenes appear in the selected research material?
- RQ 2: Is verbal sexism present in the selected research material – situational comedies? If it is, in what form?
- RQ 3: Which expressions of physical (situational) sexism appear in the selected domestic and foreign sitcoms?
- RQ 4: Do the selected episodes of the analysed situational comedies contain pornographic elements?

To achieve the set objective, it is important to define analytical categories, or coding units. A coding unit represents words or symbols (e.g. a topic, person, or a phenomenon).⁵² The described analytical categories will help us to conduct the analysis on a preselected research material in a precise way. Each analytical category, constituting a separate analysed item, should represent only one category. Appropriate analytical categories should be independent, but related to the researched problem.⁵³ In connection to the analysed topic, we have selected the following analytical categories:

- 1. erotic scenes** – the first analytical category we are addressing is the area of erotic scenes. Erotica, as an aesthetic expression of sexuality in media, is being depicted in several television contents. Within the first analytical category, we observe elements such as “depiction of naked female body” or “intense displays of affection”, which represent mostly passionate touches and kissing.
- 2. verbal sexism** – nowadays, sexism occurs in almost every broadcast product. Verbal sexism is a verbal expression of discrimination of an individual on the basis of their

⁴⁸ HENDL, J.: *Kvalitativní výskum*. Prague : Portál, 2012, p. 48.

⁴⁹ TRAMPOTA, T., VOJTĚCHOVSKÁ, M.: *Metody výzkumu médií*. Prague : Portál, 2010, p. 23.

⁵⁰ RITOMSKÝ, A.: *Metodológia sociálnopsychologického výskumu*. In KOLLÁRIK, T. et al.: *Sociálna psychológia*. Bratislava : Univerzita Komenského, 2004, p. 56.

⁵¹ HENDL, J.: *Kvalitativní výskum*. Prague : Portál, 2012, p. 50.

⁵² FERJENČÍK, J.: *Úvod do metodologie psychologického výskumu*. Prague : Portál, 2010, p. 108.

⁵³ POLÁKOVÁ, E., SPÁLOVÁ, L.: *Vybrané problémy metodologie masmediálních štúdií*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2009, p. 78.

gender. This kind of sexism is often perceived by recipients as more acceptable, as it is not explicitly depicted in the content. In the selected sitcoms, we pay our attention mostly to “verbal sexist expression of a man against a woman”, “verbal sexist expression of a woman against a man”, and general “usage of sexist vocabulary by individual protagonists”.

3. **physical (situational) sexism** – for a recipient, physical sexism is as interesting as the verbal sexism. Occurrence of this type of sexism is, however, more dangerous for the percipient due to its direct depiction of a person performing sexist actions. Perception of physical sexism is therefore much more risky, in the light of it being watched by, for example, a minor viewer. Physical (situational) sexism within our research is coded into expressions like “sexist behaviour initiated by a male character”, “sexist behaviour initiated by a female character” or “sexist facial expressions or gestures” used by the leading or supporting characters.
4. **pornographic elements** – an abundance of elements of sexuality in media contents can sometimes resemble pornographic production. The aim of situational comedies is to entertain their recipients and the producers constantly strive for growing viewership. That is why they incorporate increasingly more sexual scenes of pornographic character into the examined contents. In analysing the defined research material, we have included “explicit depiction of sexual intercourse”, “close-ups showing the actors of sexual intercourse”, and “background sounds clearly representing sexual intercourse” in the category of pornographic elements.

Significant part of the methodological procedure is also a concrete definition of the research material. For our article, we have intentionally selected two situational comedies of domestic production and two sitcoms of foreign production. Within the Slovak drama production, we have opted for a popular sitcom *Susedia (The Neighbours)* and a relatively new media content falling within the discussed television genre *Som mama (I am a Mother)*. Foreign production offers a wide selection of television shows of drama character; however, for the needs of our study, we have chosen a long-running sitcom *Two and a Half Men* and the sitcom *The Big Bang Theory*, which we also consider an appropriate material for the purposes of our research. The reason for choosing the sitcom *Susedia* as a research material was its popularity among the viewers. As the cast comprises adult individuals, we are expecting an obvious presence of sexual scenes. The main determinant for selecting the situational comedy *Som mama* as our second research material was the novelty of the media product. Through analysis, we intend to find out, whether the creators of the contemporary Slovak production incorporate the examined elements into the narrative structure. Another reason for our selection was, similarly to the aforementioned research materials, the cast represented by adult people. An absence of child protagonists presumes higher probability of the presence of sexual elements. As regards the TV show *Two and a Half Men*, we have chosen this sitcom mainly because of its popularity with the audience, which has persisted for the whole time of its broadcasting. In this situational comedy, we are also expecting significant presence of the analysed phenomenon of sexuality in the light of its main theme presenting men’s “obsession” with women. The last selected research material of foreign production is the American sitcom *The Big Bang Theory*. We have opted for this sitcom due to its scientific theme that directly excludes the presence of the analysed elements. However, sexual intercourse and elements connected to it are often mentioned in the individual episodes of this situational comedy, despite the strange relationships between the protagonists. On the basis of the aforementioned, we state that the analysis of the discussed sitcoms will be beneficial in regards to the obtained results.

4 Interpretation of the Collected Data Obtained on the Basis of Conducting Qualitative Content Analysis

In the presented article, we have paid our attention to determining the presence of sexual scenes in the television drama production. Our objective was to record these images of sexuality in the media production, i.e. in the contemporary domestic and foreign situational comedies. Thanks to a suitable methodological procedure, we have succeeded in conducting qualitative content analysis and have consequently partially interpreted the results in a form of answers to the pre-set research questions:

1. What kinds of erotic scenes appear in the selected research materials?

In the selected research materials, we have noted all the defined subcategories within the analytical category *erotic scenes*. However, as the most frequent, we have observed the subcategory of *intense displays of affection*, in which we have included scenes like kissing, cuddling, stroking a naked leg or seductive looks of the protagonists. We have encountered this subcategory in all the analysed situational comedies in twenty-two forms. The subcategory of *depiction of naked male body* appeared in eleven different forms in the research material and it was presented mostly in situations, when the protagonists were depicted in towels or underwear. In the selected research material, *depiction of naked female body* was displayed in five ways (e.g. the female protagonists wearing swimsuits, underwear or lying in bed covered by a sheet).

2. Is verbal sexism present in the selected research material – situational comedies? If it is, in what form?

In the selected situational comedies (of domestic and foreign television production), we have observed the presence of various forms of *verbal sexism*. The most appearances of *verbal sexism* have been noted within the subcategory *usage of sexist vocabulary by the protagonists*. In the discussed subcategory, we have included mainly the expressions of the characters that clearly presented or insinuated sexual behaviour and similar scenes (e.g. when the statements of the protagonists contained words such as “sex”, “erotikuš”, “horny”, “perverted”, “balls”, etc.). *Verbal sexism* has also been registered in its other subcategories. In the subcategory *verbal sexist expression of a woman against a man*, we have noticed seventeen different expressions and, in the subcategory *verbal sexist expression of a man against a woman*, twenty different forms of sexual expressions. These displays from the similar subcategories were represented mostly by phrases such as “I’ll photograph you naked”, “look at my legs, if you want to”, “you are sexy”, “I’ll get a lover”, “honey, let’s get to it”, and others. We have observed one hundred and three heterogeneous forms of verbal sexism.

3. What forms of physical (situational) sexism appear in the selected domestic and foreign sitcoms?

In the situational comedies of domestic production, we have noted elements of *physical (situational) sexism* in all subcategories. However, the highest number of forms has been observed within the subcategory *sexist behaviour initiated by a female character*. We have registered eight different displays in total. In the Slovak sitcoms, six elements of *physical (situational) sexism* have been observed in the subcategory *sexist facial expressions and gestures* (e.g. intentional exposure of body to the opposite sex, sexual gestures, sexist movements while dancing, etc.) and two different forms of the phenomenon in the subcategory *sexist behaviour initiated by a male character* (undressing a female protagonist and passionate foot massage.). In the situational comedies of foreign television production, we have registered significantly less forms of *physical (situational) sexism*. The discussed

phenomena have only appeared within two subcategories, specifically in two representations of *sexist behaviour initiated by a male character* in situations when a man touched a woman's thigh or the male protagonist smacked the woman on her behind, and in the form of *sexist facial expressions and gestures*, when the protagonists watched the presence of half-naked women with their mouths open. Within the coding unit *physical (situational) sexism*, the subcategory *sexist behaviour initiated by a female character* is completely absent in the foreign sitcoms.

4. Do the selected episodes of the situational comedies contain pornographic elements?

In the situational comedies, we have registered the presence of pornographic elements. The analytical category of *pornographic elements* has, however, only occurred in two of the four analysed situational comedies. We have noted these forms of sexual scenes in the Slovak situational comedy *Som mama*, where these elements appeared within the subcategories *explicit depiction of sexual intercourse* and *close-ups showing the actors of sexual intercourse*. In both subcategories, we have only perceived one expression of the coding unit. To be specific, in the programme, the protagonists were displayed during sexual intercourse, while also presenting a close-up of the face and expressions of the female protagonist during sexual intercourse. In the sitcom of foreign production *Two and a Half Men*, we have noticed three forms of *pornographic elements*. All three elements appeared in the episodes within the subcategory *background sounds clearly representing sexual intercourse*. These occurrences were reflected by the sounds of quickened breath of the protagonists indicating sexual intercourse and passionate kissing.

Instead of Conclusion

Enormous number of almost identical programmes leads to constant competition between the televisions for recipients. They aim to present programmes that would catch the audience's attention, which directly implies better ratings. Television can still be described as the most preferred medium of all the existing means of communication. This thesis is also confirmed by the fact that it is perceived by heterogeneous groups of users, whose need of entertainment is primarily satisfied by this medium. Media contents that fulfil this criterion are mainly the programmes of television drama production, i.e. the situational comedies, TV series, and soap operas. Broadcasting of these genres is often scheduled during prime time. Their popularity is determined, among others, by how frequently they are broadcast. Televisions do not broadcast only foreign programmes, but also many shows of domestic production. With an aim to increase the viewership of their media contents, the producers incorporate elements of violence, narcissism, and sexuality into their narrative structures. Situational comedy, or a sitcom, has, nowadays, become one of these products. Current broadcast programming is literally oversaturated with this type of programme, as it contains situational comedies of both the foreign and domestic drama production. The presence of images of sexuality in television drama production, specifically in the genre of situational comedy, has thus become the subject of the submitted study.

The primary objective of the paper was to interpret the existing knowledge about the selected topic and to clarify the occurrence of various forms of sexual scenes in media reality, or in television production aimed at situational comedies. We have fulfilled our objective mainly thanks to the processing of the theoretical reflection, i.e. the specification of the medium of television, television drama production, and the particular selected genre – situational comedy. We have also considered it essential to describe the element of sexuality, which

currently represents one of the main instruments used by the producers of media contents. As the images of sexuality were primarily present within the socio-cultural reality, we deemed it appropriate to focus our attention also on this topic, while not forgetting its media presentation. Our ambition – to attain knowledge about heterogeneous expressions of sexuality in television drama production – has been achieved also by a suitable application of a research method (qualitative content analysis), by setting analytical categories and research questions, and by describing the relevant research material. Thanks to the data obtained from the conducted qualitative analysis, we have specifically identified a clear presence of *erotic scenes* within all the analysed materials. This analytical category was observable in all forms such as, for example, depiction of naked female bodies in swimsuits, presentation of naked male bodies in underwear or towels, kissing of the protagonists, passionate touches or seductive looks between the characters. *Verbal sexism* also occurred in the selected situational comedies. The actors used sexist vocabulary and verbal sexist expressions, in the form of expressions of a man against a woman or a woman against a man (e.g. in situations when men were discussing women; when a woman suspected her husband's infidelity; or when the new relationship of one of the characters was the subject of conversation). Within *physical (situational) sexism*, various forms of sexist behaviour initiated by both the male and female character or sexist facial expressions and gestures (e.g. intentional, sexually intended, moving of the protagonists towards each other; flirting with body movements; lip biting or indirect display of sexual intercourse by the characters) were applied. Besides the aforementioned expressions of sexism, the analysed situational comedies also contained *pornographic elements*, which were noted within the subcategories such as explicit depiction of sexual intercourse, close-ups showing the actors of sexual intercourse, and background sounds clearly representing sexual intercourse (e.g. depiction of sexual intercourse of two characters; close-ups of the facial expressions of a woman during sexual intercourse or groans of protagonists indicating sexual intercourse). Although a clear achievement of the primary objective follows from the aforementioned, the results are significantly generalized and need to be constantly reconfirmed, but they could be considered a foundation for later research related to a similar topic.

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POST-TRUTH ERA AS A GLOBAL MEDIA PHENOMENON. WHAT DOES IT MEAN, WHAT ARE ITS CONSEQUENCES, AND WHERE HAS THE GLOBAL CRISIS OF TRUST ORIGINATED?

Branislav Oprala

ABSTRACT:

The objective of the paper “*Post-Truth Era as a Global Media Phenomenon*” is to provide the reader with a brief, but comprehensive, account of historical development of media and political events that have significantly influenced this phenomenon to become what many authors know and define today, as from the establishment of this term in 1992 up to 2016, when the Oxford Dictionaries declared it the word of the year and it became a global “trend”. The study also gives an insight into definitions of this term and terms closely connected to it – disinformation and manipulation – from the point of view of several authors and offers supporting arguments in a form of statistical data clearly indicating the seriousness of this problem linked with global crisis of trust in media, governments, institutions, and, last but not least – to the overall system of democracies.

KEY WORDS:

crisis of trust, disinformation, manipulation, media and propaganda, post-truth

1 Introduction

The term truth, in a sense as we had known it before¹, is no longer important for some people occupying the media environment. A new trend of “alternative” information, dissemination of which is guaranteed by the constitutionally-enshrined freedom of expression, is coming to the forefront.² Unverified, erroneous or even fabricated information are available practically everywhere (not exclusively) on the internet, and verification of their truthfulness in practical life is, despite the growing influence of media education, still more of a domain of media experts than general consumers of the media. Due to information overload, a common recipient mostly does not have enough time, but mainly – oftentimes the necessary level of media competence or a will to look up the sources of information presented in the concrete media products.³ Nowadays, Europeans spend more time online than offline, often as many as 8 hours per day.⁴ Media recipients are thus subjected to unverified information or, many times, a very sophisticated targeted media and political propaganda much more frequently and easily. A part of media spectrum is in an ever-growing conflict with the traditional concept of journalism and information-giving in the media, which, as Remišová states, still must adhere to the fundamental ethical principles of journalism – to bring accurate and verified information,⁵ respect others’ right of freedom of expression, and, primarily, to be accountable for one’s actions and consequences of these actions.⁶ Since 2016, at the latest, the world has been captured by the term that combines all the aforementioned negative symptoms of the digital media era, as described by Brečka⁷, into one interdisciplinary definition – post-truth. In the submitted study, we attempt to define the basic terms connected to the post-truth era,

¹ DUROZOI, G., ROUSSEL, A.: *Filozofický slovník*. Prague : Nakladatelství EWA, 1994, p. 233.

² JIRÁK, J., KÖPPOVÁ, B.: *Masová média*. Prague : Portál, 2015, p. 126.

³ REIFOVÁ, I. et al.: *Slovník mediální komunikace*. Prague : Portál, 2004, p. 45.

⁴ MARKOŠ, J.: *Postfaktuálna doba je ľudská slabosť v priamom prenose*. [online]. [2020-01-08]. Available at: <<https://dennikn.sk/638688/postfaktualna-doba-je-ludska-slabost-v-priamom-prenose/>>.

⁵ REMIŠOVÁ, A.: *Etika médií*. Bratislava : Kalligram, 2010, p. 87.

⁶ Ibidem, p. 88.

⁷ BREČKA, P. et al.: *Od tamtamov po internet*. Žilina : Eurokódex, 2009, p. 287.

but mainly to inform the reader of the brief overview of the origins of this term, continuing to the turning points that have led to the era that can now be called post-truth.

2 Terms Closely Connected to Post-Truth Era

To be able to work with the term post-truth, it is necessary to formulate brief definitions of some terms as they are seen by various authors who deal with areas of journalism, media studies or political sciences and marketing, and which are closely connected to, or even inseparable from, the term of post-truth, as it is their combination that creates this globally accepted term. Terms that we find most tied in with the term of post-truth are: disinformation (here, we can also include the terms *hoax* and *fake news*)⁸ and media manipulation. Nutil, in his publication *Média lži a příliš rychlý mozek (Media, Lies, and a Too Fast Brain)*, calls **disinformation** by the English expression **hoax**. He defines it in a broad framework and describes it as shocking, conspiratorial, and scaremongering news that is, according to him, inherently connected to the rise of electronic media and social networks. He finds some of them relatively harmless, while others, such as the dissemination of hoaxes from the area of medicine, a much more serious.⁹ Furthermore, he defines a hoax as an intentionally fabricated falsehood that masquerades as the truth. Hoaxes can include a false report, a rumour, a canard or simply a joke.¹⁰ Gregor and Vejvodová regard the term **disinformation** and the expression *fake news* as synonyms. According to them, the basis of disinformation is false or, at the very least misleading, information that has a single goal – to influence and to manipulate its recipient. They, however, draw attention to the fact that in order for it to spread across media environment successfully, it must be believable and at least partly based on truth.¹¹

Apropos, the term disinformation has its origin in the Russian word *dezinformatsiya*, first reference of which dates back to 1923 and is connected to Russian secret service (GPU) that designed a department specializing in disseminating disinformation as a part of secret intelligence operations.¹² Reifová in the *Slovník mediální komunikace (The Dictionary of Media Communication)* confirms the definition of the abovementioned authors. She classifies **disinformation** as deliberately false or misinterpreted information that aims to influence opinions of an opponent in a desirable way or to deceive them. At the same time, she regards it as a part of the so-called black (hidden) propaganda that is an age-long instrument of military and political competition.¹³ Based on the aforementioned opinions of the authors, who concur in the definitions, we can, thus, link the “local” Czech and Slovak term *disinformation* with the expressions *hoax* and *fake news* used abroad. In the Slovak media discourse, all of these terms are frequently used as equivalents, without clear definitions being set and differences stated. **Disinformation** can thus be characterized as deliberately created false or misleading information that is meant to appear truthful with an aim to influence opinions and attitudes of the recipient. The second term closely connected to the post-truth era is media **manipulation**. Žantovský in his book *Média a politika v digitálnom svete (Media and Politics in Digital World)* states that power, especially the political power, has a natural tendency to pursue its own

⁸ GREGOR, M., VEJVODOVÁ, P.: *Nejlepší kniha o fake news, dezinformacích a manipulacích!!!*. Brno : CPress, 2018, p. 8.

⁹ NUTIL, P.: *Média lži a příliš rychlý mozek – průvodce postpravdivým světem*. Prague : Grada Publishing, 2018, p. 136.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 137.

¹¹ GREGOR, M., VEJVODOVÁ, P.: *Nejlepší kniha o fake news, dezinformacích a manipulacích!!!*. Brno : CPress, 2018, p. 8.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 10.

¹³ REIFOVÁ, I. et al.: *Slovník mediální komunikace*. Prague : Portál, 2004, p. 45.

interests, using all available means of public communication that are capable of influencing the public in its decision-making. He adds that manipulative techniques can be brutal and easily detectable. As examples of clear media manipulation by the political power, he mentions concealment of certain parts of reality, formation of artificial authorities, creation of a fake “virtual” reality¹⁴, or the so-called *cherry picking*, i.e. a selective use of such facts and arguments that fit with the presented description of a situation.¹⁵ **Manipulation** is also briefly defined by Nutil as:

- “A process of influencing individuals, groups or a society that leads to a significant change in opinions and attitudes of the target group without them necessarily realizing it.”

He follows up on his opinion by stating that manipulation techniques can be found in advertising as well as in political marketing.¹⁶ The last term crucial for our study that needs to be defined is the word **post-truth**, which became the Oxford word of the year in 2016. The Oxford Dictionaries define this word as:

- “A word relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief.”

As the Oxford Dictionaries further state, the word *post-truth* exemplifies an expansion in the meaning of the prefix. Rather than simply referring to the time after a specific situation or event, as in post-war, the prefix in post-truth has a meaning more like:

- “Belonging to a time in which the specified concept has become unimportant or irrelevant.”¹⁷

Therefore, after stating several definitions of the terms disinformation, manipulation, and post-truth era, we have come to our own short summary: Manipulation is a deliberate **process** of influencing individuals, groups, or the public that uses disinformation spread in media environment as its **means**. Its long-term application and influence on media audience naturally lead to a **consequence** - the object of our study, i.e. the post-truth era. In short:

Process (manipulation) → **means** (disinformation) → **result** (post-truth era)

3 Entry of the Word Post-Truth into General Language

The definition of the word of the year 2016 announced by the Oxford Dictionaries can be understood as an attitude of a certain part of the current generation that has given up on looking for objective, factual information and prefers their personal feelings and emotions to the weight of facts and relies on their own subjective perception of the world.¹⁸ The phenomenon

¹⁴ ŽANTOVSKÝ, P.: *Média a politika v digitálním světě*. Vendryně : Nakladatelství Beskydy, 2018, p. 171.

¹⁵ *Cherry picking*. [online]. [2020-01-08]. Available at: <<https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Cherry%20Picking>>.

¹⁶ NUTIL, P.: *Média lži a příliš rychlý mozek – průvodce postpravdivým světem*. Prague : Grada Publishing, 2018, p. 19.

¹⁷ *World of the Year 2016*. [online]. [2020-01-08]. Available at: <<https://languages.oup.com/word-of-the-year/2016/>>.

¹⁸ GÁLIK, P.: On Ontological Definition of Media Truth and the Role of Media. In *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2018, Vol. 15, No. 1, p. 2.

of the post-truth era, as we have mentioned before, fully developed in 2016. Around this time, the use of the word post-truth in media environment had increased by around 2000% compared to the previous year. It had two main reasons.¹⁹ Surprising results of the United Kingdom EU membership referendum, also known as Brexit, in which Britain decided to leave the European Union²⁰ and even more surprising victory of the Republican candidate, business magnate, Donald Trump in the election for the 45th president of the United States of America in November 2016.²¹

4 Post-Truth Era as Global Crisis of Trust

The World Economic Forum in Davos had noticed the phenomenon of the upcoming post-truth era much earlier than the Oxford Dictionaries editors. In 2013, it warned against disinformation as “a global threat”. In *The Global Risk Report*, it stated that the post-truth political debate undermines the efficiency and legitimacy of democracies, as well as the political capacity to efficiently solve social problems and global challenges the world is facing.²² In Martin Kasarda’s book *Pravda & lož – Sloboda prejavu v kontexte moderných technológií (Truth & Lies – Freedom of Expression in the Context of Modern Technologies)*, Radičová aptly describes the era of post-truth politics as popularity of populism and internationalization of nationalism. She states that we have been witnessing the weakening of democracy in Western and Eastern Europe and in the USA from 2006. She considers the main reasons to be the decreasing participation in elections, declining trust in traditional institutions, lack of interest in politics, and a resulting growing gap between the political elite and the voters.²³ Radičová thus mentions some of the possible causes of the onset of the post-truth era, mostly connected to the weakening of democracy. However, we will also introduce some other supporting arguments, mostly statistical data, which, in our opinion, confirm that the world is encountering a global crisis of trust; whether it is the trust in the traditional media, institutions and politicians, scientifically proven facts, or the actual importance of democracy as a political system. A survey by *The Edelman Trust Barometer* on a sample of more than 33,000 respondents in 28 countries conducted in 2017²⁴ clearly shows the decrease in trust in the four basic types of institutions – government, media, business sector, and NGOs. Trust in media underwent the sharpest fall. It fell from 48 percent in 2016 to 43 percent in 2017. The survey shows that in 2017 people considered internet search engines a more trustworthy source of information than the traditional media.²⁵ A year before that, the Eurobarometer had registered

¹⁹ FLOOD, A.: 'Post-truth' named word of the year by Oxford Dictionaries. [online]. [2020-01-08]. Available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/nov/15/post-truth-named-word-of-the-year-by-oxford-dictionaries>>.

²⁰ Brexit: Europe stunned by UK Leave vote. [online]. [2020-01-08]. Available at: <<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-eu-referendum-36616018>>.

²¹ FLEGENHEIMER, M., BARBARO, M.: Donald Trump is Elected President in Stunning Repudiation of the Establishment. [online]. [2020-01-08]. Available at: <<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/09/us/politics/hillary-clinton-donald-trump-president.html>>.

²² HENDRICKS, F., V., VESTERGAARD, M.: *The Post-truth Democracy: Markets of Attention, Misinformation and Manipulation*. [online]. [2020-01-08]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327536319_The_Postfactual_Democracy_Markets_of_Attention_Misinformation_and_Manipulation>.

²³ KASARDA, M.: *Pravda & lož – Sloboda prejavu v kontexte moderných technológií*. Bratislava : Paneurópska vysoká škola, 2018, p. 12.

²⁴ 2017 Edelman Trust Barometer [online]. [2020-01-10]. Available at: <<https://www.edelman.com/research/2017-edelman-trust-barometer>>.

²⁵ GEIST, R.: *Nedôverujeme vládám, médiám, firmám ani mimovládkam*. [online]. [2020-01-10]. Available at: <<https://euractiv.sk/section/buducnost-eu/news/nedoverujeme-vladam-mediam-firmam-ani-mimovladkam/>>.

a similar trend in Europe. In November 2016, it published a survey²⁶ which revealed that more than half of the EU citizens do not believe in the freedom of press in their country and only 53 percent think that media provide trustworthy information.²⁷

We can observe similar results in the United States. A survey by the Monmouth University in New Jersey from April 2018 indicates that more than three quarters of Americans believe that major media participate in the spread of disinformation. They link causes of this increase to President Donald Trump²⁸, who has repeatedly blamed traditional media, such as CNN or NBC, for spreading disinformation.²⁹ The USA has thus also encountered a significant year-on-year growth in distrust of traditional media. In a similar survey in the previous year, only 63 percent of the respondents expressed their concerns about dissemination of disinformation by media outlets.³⁰ However, the post-truth era has caused that even the absolutely fundamental scientific knowledge is being contested. Until recently, it would have been unimaginable that the relevance of such knowledge would be discussed in mainstream media. According to a survey of a data analytics firm YouGov on a sample of more than 8,000 respondents, only two of three Americans firmly believe that the Earth is round.³¹ Similar results were obtained by a poll conducted by the Ifop institute on behalf of the Foundation Jean Jaures think-tank and the Conspiracy Watch web server on a sample of 1,252 people above 18 years of age. According to it, every second Frenchman thinks that the ministry of health cooperates with pharmaceutical companies to conceal the dangers of vaccination, and every tenth Frenchman believes that the Earth is flat.³² The last statistics speaks about democracy itself and we find its results the most serious. American organization *Freedom House*, in its annual report on the state of freedom and democracy in the world, warns that democracy in 2018 faced the most serious crisis in the last decade. It marked the 12th consecutive year, when there were more countries that had registered declines in political rights and democracy than those registering gains.³³ As stated by Nutil, it is thanks to the internet that we have within our reach a fount of wisdom and an unprecedented amount of knowledge and facts that we could have only dreamt of in the pre-electronic times. It is, however, this ease and availability, together with the openness of the internet that puts us into a paradoxical situation that, according to him, Will Rogers warned against a long time ago:

- “It isn’t what we don’t know that gives us trouble; it is what we know that ain’t so.”³⁴

But how could we let our opinions or world views be formed by deceit, manipulation, and disinformation? In the following part, we will attempt to outline some historical events,

²⁶ *Media pluralism and democracy*. [online]. [2020-01-10]. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/image/document/2016-47/sp452-summary_en_19666.pdf>.

²⁷ *Viac ako polovica Európanov neverí v slobodu médií*. [online]. [2020-01-10]. Available at: <<https://medialne.etrend.sk/tlac/viac-ako-polovica-europanov-neveri-v-slobodu-medii.html>>.

²⁸ *Fake News’ Threat to Media; Editorial Decisions, Outside Actors at Fault*. [online]. [2020-01-10]. Dostupné na: <https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/reports/monmouthpoll_us_040218/>.

²⁹ McDONALD, P.: *Donald Trump says NBC, MSNBC are worse than fake news CNN*. [online]. [2020-01-10]. Available at: <<https://www.newsweek.com/trump-says-these-news-outlets-are-worse-fake-news-cnn-1286062>>.

³⁰ *Väčšina Američanov si myslí, že veľké médiá šíria fake newp*. [online]. [2020-01-10]. Available at: <<https://medialne.etrend.sk/internet/vacsina-americanov-si-mysli-ze-velke-media-siria-fake-newp.html>>.

³¹ NGUYEN, H.: *Most flat earthers consider themselves very religious*. [online]. [2020-01-10]. Available at: <<https://today.yougov.com/topics/philosophy/articles-reports/2018/04/02/most-flat-earthers-consider-themselves-religious>>.

³² *8 in 10 French people believe a conspiracy theory: survey*. [online]. [2020-01-10]. Available at: <<https://www.france24.com/en/20180108-8-10-french-people-believe-conspiracy-theory-survey>>.

³³ *Freedom in the World 2018 – Democracy in Crisis*. [online]. [2020-01-10]. Available at: <<https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2018>>.

³⁴ NUTIL, P.: *Média lži a príliš rýchly mozek – průvodce postpravdivým světem*. Prague : Grada Publishing, 2018, p. 13.

interplay of which has led the 21st century world to an era where the truth is a lie and a lie is the truth.

5 How Reagan's Affair Iran-Contras Contributed to Origination of the Term Post-Truth

*"If everybody always lies to you, the consequence is not that you believe the lies, but rather that nobody believes anything any longer. And a people that no longer can believe anything cannot make up its mind. It is deprived not only of its capacity to act but also of its capacity to think and judge. And with such a people you can then do what you please."*³⁵ Already in 1975, the abovementioned idea about a continuous cycle of deception that results in displacement of the truth and facts from media discourse was expressed by Hannah Arendt. She was one of the most influential political philosophers of the 20th century and devoted a large part of her professional life to research of totalitarian regimes, particularly Nazism and Stalinism.³⁶ The aforementioned quote from an interview with a French writer Roger Errera³⁷ is related mostly to one of the effects of propaganda in totalitarianism. Propaganda can be interpreted as an absolute restriction of free press, flooding the media environment with information transmitted and controlled by the government, and, as stated by Reifová, it is one of the most effective forms of social control.³⁸

What, however, does a thought expressed in 1977, i.e. in the time of the Cold War between the USA and the Soviet Union, have to do with a significantly freer today?³⁹ As we already know, we have been encountering the terms *"post-truth"* or *"post-factual"* in the global media environment for several years now. The word *"post-truth"*, however, first appeared quite a long time ago. According to the Oxford Dictionaries, it was registered for the first time in January 1992 in an article by the Serbian-American playwright Steve Tesich that dealt with the Iran-Contras Scandal of the President Ronald Reagan Administration in the Persian Gulf. The scandal was related to illegal arms sales to Iran and a consequent covert funding of the opposition rebel groups *"Contras"* in Nicaragua with an aim to overthrow its left-wing regime.⁴⁰ In the article, Tesich writes that although the whole affair was publicized in 1986, Reagan felt that the public did not really want to know the truth and had accepted without much resistance his trivial explanations that he had used to avoid responsibility for the affair. American public thus had, according to Tesich, only followed the tradition of perceiving press censorship as a necessary evil that the government can accede to as it wishes, as long as it serves the national interests. Tesich found the consequences of such a decision of the public for the future of America to be terrifying, when he stated *"We are rapidly becoming prototypes of a people that totalitarian monsters could only drool about. All the dictators up to now have had to work hard at suppressing the truth. We, by our actions, are saying that this is no longer*

³⁵ Hannah Arendt: *From an Interview*. [online]. [2020-01-10]. Available at: <<https://www.nybooks.com/articles/1978/10/26/hannah-arendt-from-an-interview/>>.

³⁶ Hannah Arendt. [online]. [2020-01-10]. Available at: <<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/arendt/>>.

³⁷ Hannah Arendt: *From an Interview*. [online]. [2020-01-10]. Available at: <<https://www.nybookp.com/articles/1978/10/26/hannah-arendt-from-an-interview/>>.

³⁸ REIFOVÁ, I. et al.: *Slovník mediální komunikace*. Prague : Portál, 2004, p. 192.

³⁹ *The Economist Intelligence Unit Democracy Index*. [online]. [2020-01-10]. Available at: <<https://infographics.economist.com/2019/DemocracyIndex/>>.

⁴⁰ MATTHEWS, R.: *Iran-Contra Affair*. [online]. [2020-01-10]. Available at: <<https://www.britannica.com/event/Iran-Contra-Affair>>.

necessary. *We have freely decided that we want to live in some post-truth world.*"⁴¹ Joshua Meyrowitz in his book *No Sense of Place* also agrees with these statements. He claims that, concerning Reagan, the Americans have simply accepted the fact that a president must also be an experienced actor and it should suffice that he can perform the role of President rather than really be President. They voluntarily started to tolerate a "sidestage" view. While Reagan's term in office was filled with as many administration scandals and policy failures as those of the previous Presidents, he had consistently acted as if nothing terrifying had occurred. And, surprisingly, just as both the authors claim, the public had allowed him to do so.⁴² Thanks to the Iran-Contras affair and Steve Tesich, the post-truth era, at least from the point of view of terminology, can be dated to the beginning of the 1990s. The phenomenon of influencing the public opinion through lies and argumentation based on opposing the scientific knowledge had, however, appeared in democracies much earlier. And, incidentally, it was in the USA again.

6 Tobacco Lobby – The Battle of Marketing and Corporations Against Scientific Evidence

Things that the present media experts consider to be dangerous manipulation and an impugning of the exact scientific research were experienced by the American public as early as in the 1950s, i.e. in the times when the first scientific articles about the harmful effects of smoking had been revealed to the public. At the time, tobacco companies came up with one of the most controversial advertising campaigns ever. The campaign combined credible scientific articles about the progress of medicine with a marketing slogan "*More doctors smoke Camels than any other cigarette*", implying that smoking is a fashionable or even a healthy trend. The battle between the tobacco industry and the serious scientific research continued until the 1960s, when the unshakable weight of evidence made the companies admit the harmfulness of smoking. However, even then, they found a way to clearly manipulate the public – by trivialization of smoking through the idea of individual freedom that, according to them, characterized America. They presented any state interference against smoking as a violation of freedom of choice and compared it to the practices of "*the red devil from Moscow*"⁴³, not refraining from an obvious manipulation of the public with an ideological undertone.

7 Media of Mass Destruction

One of the best-known examples of influencing public opinion through lies and disinformation is the third Gulf War – the American military invasion of Iraq and the so-called fight against terrorism. As stated by a political scientist Radovan Geist in his essay *Alternatívne fakty, postfaktuálna doba a chvála bláznivosti (Alternative Facts, Post-Truth Era, and Praise of Foolishness)*, in order to support and excuse the war, the whole arsenal of post-truth politics had been used. According to him, this was based primarily on the Bush administration lying about weapons of mass destruction owned by Iraq and scaring the American public that the Saddam Hussein regime is not afraid to use them; and, secondarily, on covering up information

⁴¹ *Post-truth and its consequences: What a 25 year old essay tells us about the current moment.* [online]. [2020-01-10]. Available at: <<https://www.thenation.com/article/post-truth-and-its-consequences-what-a-25-year-old-essay-tells-us-about-the-current-moment/>>.

⁴² MEYROWITZ, J.: *Všude a nikde – Vliv elektronických médií na sociální chování.* Prague : UK in Prague, Nakladatelství Karolinum, 2006, p. 249.

⁴³ ČUPKA, M.: *Cigaretka na dve storočia. Už odstavuje komíny?* [online]. [2020-01-10]. Available at: <<https://zurnal.pravda.sk/spolocnost/clanok/394587-cigaretka-na-dve-storocia-uz-odstavuje-kominy/>>.

about war victims and distorting the reality about life in the “liberated country”.⁴⁴ Post-truth politics of the American government during and after the war in Iraq showed two attributes, on which several authors agree (Stadtrucker in his book *Teória masmediálnej (dis)komunikácie (Theory of Mass-Media (Dis)Communication*, Jakubowicz in *Média a demokracie v 21. storočí (Media and Democracy in the 21st Century)*, or Gregor and Vejvodová in *Nejlepší kniha o fake news (The Best Book on Fake News)*), these being: a conspicuous politicization of the media and a game with fear. Stadtrucker noticed the politicization of media thanks to a permanent consensus of the mass-media,⁴⁵ mainly those from the media empire owned by Rupert Murdoch, which had, as per usual, followed a clear ideological path (siding with the Republicans) and all of which (175 newspapers) had supported the war in Iraq and the Bush administration.⁴⁶ Jakubowicz calls this politicization of media, which, instead of providing factual information, fulfil a role of a defender or an advocate, a *foxification of news* and adds that Murdoch has been using mass-media to support political powers inclined towards his interests also in other countries.⁴⁷ Consequently, it only remained to lrsd the public to the desired result through one of the most effective forms of appealing to emotions – the aforementioned game with fear.⁴⁸ In this case it was through scaring the American households with Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, which the investigation in the following years proved to be lies and targeted media manipulation.⁴⁹

8 Financial Crisis as an Accelerator

The year of 2008 has brought a turning point in a form of financial crisis that caused assets of the low-income and middle-income groups of population to stagnate or decline, while the income of billionaires continued to grow confidently. And people began to notice shortcomings. Suddenly, globalization appeared to be more beneficial to corporations than their employees; corruptness of political leaders and their sponsors also becoming more visible.⁵⁰ As stated by Geist, the painful but necessary measures further enhanced the gap of unequal distribution of costs and benefits.⁵¹ In times when ordinary people were experiencing existential gravity of the financial crisis, governments used public money to save banks and experts suddenly had to explain to the public that, as stated by Slačálek:

- “*However, there are certain groups and institutions that should get all of their wishes fulfilled, as it is for the good of us all.*”

Therefore, it is not surprising that the consequences of the financial crisis from 2008 have only deepened the citizens’ underlying mistrust of governments and institutions. If then comes

⁴⁴ GEIST, R.: *Alternatívne fakty, postfaktuálna doba a chvála bláznivosti*. [online]. [2020-01-10]. Available at: <<https://zurnal.pravda.sk/esej/clanok/420806-alternativne-fakty-postfaktualna-doba-a-chvala-blaznivosti/>>.

⁴⁵ STADTRUCKER, I.: *Teória masmediálnej (dis)komunikácie*. Bratislava : Vydavateľstvo Spolku slovenských spisovateľov, 2007, p. 450.

⁴⁶ Ibidem, p. 451.

⁴⁷ JAKUBOWICZ, K.: *Média a demokracie v 21. Storočí – Hľadání nových modelů*. Brno : Masarykova univerzita, 2017, p. 148.

⁴⁸ GREGOR, M., VEJVODOVÁ, P.: *Nejlepší kniha o fake news, dezinformacích a manipulacích!!!*. Brno : CPress, 2018, p. 73.

⁴⁹ *Iraq war WMDS an intelligence failure, or white house spin?* [online]. [2020-01-11]. Available at: <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/03/22/iraq-war-wmds-an-intelligence-failure-or-white-house-spin/>>.

⁵⁰ DANIŠ, D.: *Prečo ľudia neveria systému a médiám*. [online]. [2020-01-11]. Available at: <<https://www.aktuality.sk/clanok/407272/komentar-daga-danisa-preco-ludia-neveria-systemu-a-mediam/>>.

⁵¹ GEIST, R.: *Alternatívne fakty, postfaktuálna doba a chvála bláznivosti*. [online]. [2020-01-11]. Available at: <<https://zurnal.pravda.sk/esej/clanok/420806-alternativne-fakty-postfaktualna-doba-a-chvala-blaznivosti/>>.

someone who does not beat their brains out trying to explain economic formulas or political theories and simply declares that everything can be fixed, the public is much more inclined to believe such oversimplified populism⁵² and there is not much difference in whether it is Donald Trump or the populist, nationalist or extremist parties in Europe.

9 Struggle for Spheres of Influence – Pro-Russian Propaganda in Ukraine

Kyryl Hovorun, a professor at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles and a director of the Huffington Ecumenical Institute, claims that the eastern part of Europe had experienced post-truth era long before the word “post-truth” was announced the word of the year by the Oxford dictionaries.⁵³ In 2014, Ukraine went through a bloody repression of revolution in the Kyiv Independence Square, now known worldwide as Maidan. Protests against the suspension of the association agreement with the European Union led to hundreds of the dead, the downfall of Viktor Yanukovich’s pro-kremlin presidency, and an ongoing hybrid war in the Eastern Ukraine.⁵⁴ Hovorun, however, does not examine the war itself, but rather the wave of post-truth, as he calls it, which tried to wash away the results of the Ukrainian Maidan. A clear example of this, according to him, was the television channel Russia Today and an army of Russian paid trolls at online forums that presented the Ukrainian revolution as a resurgence of nationalism or even fascism. They did not at all take into account the fact that none of the Ukrainian nationalist parties had passed the gates of the parliament in the election that took place shortly after Maidan. Hovorun in his commentary also claims that global awareness of the “post-truth” has spread like a hurricane from war-afflicted Ukraine further west – to Netherlands, Germany, and France, until reaching the shores of the USA. He believes that Donald Trump’s rhetoric during the presidential campaign and after his election for president is an ideal example and “a textbook” of post-truth⁵⁵, or, as we have decided to call this term for the purposes of clear terminology, - a textbook of the post-truth era. We could have found many other more current and, in our opinion, more “textbook” examples of the post-truth era symptoms – we have not addressed more closely the current “trend” of contesting scientific evidence of global warming, a widely publicized and, in the end, successful campaign for the withdrawal of the UK from the EU also known as Brexit from June 2016,⁵⁶ or the manipulative disinformation campaign of Donald Trump in November of the same year. Nevertheless, we consider the examples mentioned within the study a sufficient excursus on the history of the development of this phenomenon called the post-truth era, no longer affecting only the media.

⁵² HAMPLOVÁ, Š., SLAČÁLEK, O.: *Pravda nikdy nevládla. Hovorí o problému postpravdivé doby Ondřej Slačálek*. [online]. [2020-01-11]. Available at: <<https://www.e15.cz/the-student-times/pravda-nikdy-nevladla-rika-k-problému-postpravdivé-doby-ondrej-slacalek-1330187>>.

⁵³ HOVORUN, K.: *Ako porazit postpravdu? Učte sa od Ukrajincov*. [online]. [2020-01-11]. Available at: <<https://komentare.sme.sk/c/20710924/ako-porazit-postpravdu-ucte-sa-od-ukrajincov.html>>.

⁵⁴ KARIAKINA, A.: *Five years on from ‘Maidan’, Ukraine’s small successes are its real revolution*. [online]. [2020-01-11]. Available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/mar/06/five-years-ukraine-maidan-revolution-2014>>.

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⁵⁶ *Brexit: Europe stunned by UK Leave vote*. [online]. [2020-01-11]. Available at: <<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-eu-referendum-36616018>>.

Conclusion

On the previous pages, we have tried to outline the phenomenon of post-factual era from the view of the definitions of this term and the related terms. Above all, however, we attempted to map historical development of the media and political events that led to the year of 2016, when this word became a global “trend”. But how are we supposed to proceed in the era of post-truth? In the era dominated by media manipulation and disinformation? Although, has there ever been an era of truth in the history? According to the political scientist and publicist Ondřej Slačálek, such a myth is dangerous and foolish. One thing that is different in the internet era is the rise of decentralization that allows the spread of various kinds of lies. The centralizing power of television and the hierarchy of press gave us the feeling that everything is still all right and that something like the “prevailing truth” exists. In an interview for a Czech portal e15.cz, Slačálek adds that the public opinion is currently being formed chaotically and interactively, thus creating an unprecedented space for media manipulation through disinformation spread.⁵⁷ However, according to Nutil, electronic media help forming a more equal and freer society not despite their availability to everybody who wants to express their opinions without restrictions but because of it. Nutil expands the idea of the role of television and press as a past form of the centralizing power outlined by Slačálek and goes even further, as he claims that these traditional media have always served to strengthen the position of the elite. “*It is precisely the values of freedom and equality that we should keep in our minds while considering the possible restriction or filtration of the disinformation, propaganda or other alternative content.*” For Nutil, as he says himself, it is simple math. Either freedom is our value, or it is not. And this is valid also in the case when people voluntarily succumb to manipulation and disinformation. He finds free access to information to be more important than some “protection” of minds and hearts of the media consumers controlled from the top. He puts emphasis on individual responsibility and decisions of an individual.⁵⁸ He says that disinformation has always been and always will be an integral part of the internet environment that must be accepted.⁵⁹ Although we agree with this statement of his, we must add that a freer society cannot be achieved by giving up the values of truth and the fight for it. Therefore, it is necessary and desirable to keep on fighting for it and set the post-truth era some boundaries. After all, the goal is not to conceal information or play some global media censors, but rather the systematic education of future generations to be a curious, knowledgeable, but also open and critical audience capable of finding the truth even within the flood of lies, disinformation, and manipulation.

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⁵⁸ NUTIL, P.: *Média lži a příliš rychlý mozek – průvodce postpravdivým světem*. Prague : Grada Publishing, 2018, p. 90.

⁵⁹ Ibidem, p. 91.

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THE WORLD OF MEDIA HAS BEEN CHANGED (?) BY THE BLACK SWAN

Slavka Pitoňáková

ABSTRACT:

The aim of this article is to offer the current insights focused on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the media and media production. Furthermore, the paper attempts to contribute towards the discussion about the media, which nowadays stand on the verge of various changes. Predominantly, three areas are explored – the interest of media from the standpoint of media consumers, spectators' preferences in relation to the media contents, and the change concerning advertisers. The media market upheaval and changes in the field of media production arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic are discussed in the contextual relation to the so-called black swan theory.

KEY WORDS:

black swan, COVID-19, journalism, media, media production, reporting

1 Introduction

The title of the article *The World of Media has been Changed (?) by the Black Swan* is based on a bestseller book by Nassim Nicholas Taleb, who in his book *The Black Swan*¹ offers his perspective on the scrupulous predetermined world of different types, mainly economic, academic, and business, to which the society as well as individuals tend to incline to on the basis of “empirical” knowledge. Its relevance holds true until something unexpected happens. We trust various “models” even though we experience numerous unexpected events in our lives on a daily basis – events which would be very difficult to predict, or which can only be anticipated using a great deal of imagination. The text is compositionally divided into several parts:

1. Why the black swans?
2. Has anything changed?
3. Is anything going to change?
4. Do we want the black swans?

The article was being written in a hectic period of the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic and attempts to offer a constructive and critical viewpoint on various aspects of its impact on the media. The paper can be regarded as a reaction to the current situation with an endeavour to map a relatively short time period (16th march 2020 – 20th April 2020), during which it was not possible to conduct a more rigorous and in-depth research. This is the reason why individual parts arose out of surveying information provided by the media, the media theory, and out of interviews with people working in the media. Observing the media and its media contents which was delivered to the media consumers in the time of the coronavirus pandemic in the selected time period resulted in several insights. In the given context, this paper discusses the media, which nowadays indeed stand on the verge of various change.

¹ For more information, see: TALEB, N. N.: *Černá labuť. Následky vysoce nepravděpodobných událostí*. Prague : Paseka, 2011.

2 Why the Black Swan?

In the prologue of his book subtitled “The Impact of the Highly Improbable”, Taleb² narrates a story about the inhabitants of the Old World who, before discovering Australia, believed that all the swans are white. Their persuasion was “indomitable”, based on “seemingly indisputable empirical evidence”. The people were surprised when they saw the first black swan. During their existence, humans were confronted with all sorts of black swans, which took the world (as it is often said) by surprise. Taleb’s theory examines, predominantly in the economy, but also in other spheres of society, extreme events with significant consequences, which are difficult to predict. The black swan is in his book referred to as an unexpected phenomenon with a dramatic impact, which is retroactively explicable and predictable only after its first occurrence. The following can be included in this category: 9/11, Black Monday, the commencement of the Internet... These are all events which surprised its contemporaries, but also inventions that created unexpected but profound impact on the world.³ The newest member of the category is the COVID-19 coronavirus disease. The pandemic was so unbelievable that despite the information from China from as early as 29th January 2020, the Slovak media provided its readers with the headline “Careful Optimism: Investors are Panicking, but the Coronavirus does not seem to be the Black Swan”. (...) And although it is exceedingly difficult to quantify the economic costs, *the coronavirus will have a subtle influence on the global economy*, and it is highly probable that the impact will be of a short-term nature.”⁴ However, within a span of several weeks, the media ran completely different headlines, which copy the media perception of the situation. The Coronavirus Unexpectedly Strikes the Economy. It is the Case of the Black Swan.⁵ The Coronavirus Represents a Perfect Black Swan for Markets, Analysts Say.⁶ The Black Swan has Returned. It Threatens to Cause the Worst Economic Crisis of our Time.⁷ This global black swan has struck individuals, society, countries, and the whole world, including the media. In connection with the Taleb’s book, it should be noted that although some criticise the Taleb’s theory by claiming that it is more about “intellectual deceit”⁸, it can be regarded as a nice metaphor how some situations can surprise us, and when put in the contemporary media language, how they can shock us (which is also supported by the media processing and the media language).

3 Has Anything Changed?

The aim of this article is not to offer rigorous and definitive statements for now, but rather point out the fact that neither society nor the media were prepared for sudden changes, by which the virus disrupted our relatively stable functioning. The virus distorted up-to-now well-known and

² See also: TALEB, N. N.: *Černá labuť. Následky vysoce nepravděpodobných událostí*. Prague : Paseka, 2011.

³ Ibidem.

⁴ *Opatrný optimizmus: Investori panikária, ale koronavírus zatiaľ nevyzerá ako čierna labuť*. [online]. [2020-18-04]. Available at: <<https://openiazoch.zoznam.sk/cl/201314/Opatrný-optimizmus-Investori-panikaria-ale-koronavirus-zatial-nevyzera-ako-cierna-labuť>>.

⁵ *Koronavirus nečakane zasiahol hospodárstvo. Ide o čiernu labuť*. [online]. [2020-18-04]. Available at: <<https://www.ta3.com/clanok/1178009/koronavirus-neocakavane-zasiahol-hospodarstvo-ide-o-ciernu-labuť.html>>.

⁶ *Koronavirus je pre trhy perfektná čierna labuť, hovoria analytici*. [online]. [2020-18-04]. Available at: <<https://finweb.hnonline.sk/financie-a-burzy/2111651-koronavirus-je-pre-trhy-perfektna-cierna-labuť-hovoria-analytici>>.

⁷ *Čierna labuť sa vrátila. Hrozí najväčšou ekonomickou krízou našej doby*. [online]. [2020-18-04]. Available at: <<https://www.trend.sk/spravy/cierna-labuť-vratila-hrozi-najvacsou-ekonomickou-krizou-nasej-doby>>.

⁸ *Labuť a zvon*. [online]. [2020-18-04]. Available at: <<https://www.tyzden.sk/casopis/5401/labuť-a-zvon/>>.

common economic principle of the development and functionality of the media, which entered the history of media as the so-called Northcliffe Revolution.⁹ This revolutionary change arose out of changing economic conditions of publishing newspapers – more accurately, it was the case of rapid growth of incomes from advertisement, which have become the primary source of profit. The profit had become the key factor in terms of newspaper functioning and the new function of newspapers, as a source of entertainment, came to the fore.¹⁰ Gradually, almost all the media were under a substantial influence of the economic principle. The contents were adjusted to the needs of people who wished to read, listen, and watch to a larger degree... The higher the viewership, the higher the profits. The corona crisis has disrupted this, what can be easily expressed through a marketing slogan – *higher consumption of the media, lower volume of advertisement*. The American daily newspaper The Washington Post has expressed this thought aptly. “Numerous American newspapers will not survive the current problems. Due to the massive decrease of advertisement in the media, newspapers are on the budget and people are being dismissed in spite of the fact that the interest in reliable information in these times is paradoxically on the increase.”¹¹

It is necessary to highlight that a quality journalism plays a powerful role, and that journalism is often discussed in academic and professional environments. However, it is limited in the practice, also when there is no crisis, not only because of the restricted financial means, but also due to the deficiencies at the level of professionalism (what often arises out of what has been already expressed in the first part of the sentence). Although it cannot be generalized, it can be argued that it is also the Slovak journalism which, being under the financial pressure, is more focused on competition including the social media, rather than on the traditional values of a quality journalism such as accuracy, analytical approach, or professionalism. The amount of journalists and the editorial costs were reduced (the corona crisis has made the numbers even larger), and the reporting gap was being filled in by common stories, which do not provide a lot of important information, but they can seal the gap. It is a case of the infotainment; it is not a novelty as the commercialization of the media has continued since the Northcliffe times (although it should be mentioned that, as far as the contents are concerned), there were differences between the American and European production). Today, it is particularly important to point out quality and professional journalism, which is able to deliver really relevant information to the recipient in the time of the so-called infodemic, persuasively disprove (media) hoaxes posing as facts in order to perform its mission – provide people with important information, which form the grounds for their further decision-making. It is possible to divide the dramatic change into three categories: the interest in the media from the media consumer standpoint, audience preferences in relation to the media content, and changes concerning advertising customers.

In the same way, as the Taleb’s inhabitants of The Old World did not believe that the black swans would exist, it was also the contemporary Europeans who perceived the information from WuChan from the end of 2019 only tangentially. It was only later when people, under the influence of the media information whose quality can be disputed in certain cases, begin to realize that their usual lifestyle would have to change. The black swan has brought interesting consequences in the form of certain (for the time being short-time) changes of the media behaviour of the media recipients and severe consequences regarding the financial impact of

⁹ JIRÁK, J., KÖPPLOVÁ, B.: *Media and Society*. Prague : Portál, 2006, p. 34.

¹⁰ Ibidem.

¹¹ *Mensšie médiá krízu neprežijú. V USA uvažujú o záchrane cez vládnu pomoc*. [online]. [2020-18-04]. Available at: <<https://medialne.etrend.sk/tlac/mensie-media-krizu-nepreziju-v-usa-uvazuju-o-zachrane-cez-vladnu-pomoc.html>>.

the corona crisis on the media. The governmental measures focused on fighting the coronavirus were also noticeable within the interest in the media. According to surveys (survey companies MEDIAN SK, KANTAR SLOVAKIA) which were regularly presented in the media during the times of the coronavirus outbreak, *the consumption of the electronic media and the Internet has increased. It is mainly the television whose ratings are at an all-time high, and the interest in news channels and formats has also grown up.* In the period from 9th March 2020 to 29th March 2020, the survey company MEDIAN SK was observing through the project of cross media and cross platform measurement adMeter changes in the media consumption of some types of media caused by the coronavirus pandemic. The consumption was at its all-time high in the week from 16th March to 20th March 2020.¹² According to the surveys, the month of March was in Slovakia a month with the highest television rating since its measurement as of 2004, “overcoming also the traditionally strongest month of December. The TV was watched daily on average by a million viewers. The children’s viewership was increasing in particular as they spent twice that much time in front of the TV than the last year. The TV viewership increased along with the employment of the preventative measures against the coronavirus. The largest difference in comparison to year 2019 was achieved between 16th March and 29th March. During this period, the Slovak people watched TV more than 5 hours a day; one year ago, it was 3 hours and 48 minutes per day, the Kantar Slovakia company reports.”¹³

TV and radio web portals were successful too. The viewership of various forms of the media were on the increase – it is the case of the so-called multiscreening. Its growth was the most systematic during workdays (the increase took place more often when compared to weekends). Multitasking, on the other hand, appeared to have stagnated.¹⁴ “The TV viewership is coming back to the long-term averages, the web televisions becoming more and more successful – their impact still increasing”¹⁵ In the week from 23rd March to 29th March, most of the global platforms kept their average ratings from the long-term perspective. Predominantly, it was the Facebook platform which experienced an increase. On the other hand, YouTube exhibited a decrease despite keeping its ranking higher by one third when compared to an average week in February. The communication platforms Messenger and WhatsApp exceeded above average regardless of whether they were accessed via a web page (despite its intermittent decrease) or a mobile app in comparison to an average week in February.¹⁶ As far as the print media were concerned in comparison to the electronic and online media, the situation was different from a long-term perspective as numerous newspapers and magazines encountered problems, which were even more acute due to the coronavirus. “This virus is a double derailment for the already weakened media”, said Eric Fottorino, who discussed the situation surrounding the COVID-19 disease in the Le 1 newspaper.¹⁷ The French people began, after the quarantine was enforced,

¹² *adMeter a koronavírus – zmeny v mediálnej konzumácii TV, rádii a internetu Slovákov.* [online]. [2020-18-04]. Available at:

<https://www.median.sk/pdf/OSTATNE/MEDIAN_SK_adMeter_koronavirus_media_20200407.pdf>.

¹³ *Marec bol na Slovensku mesiacom s najvyššou sledovanosťou televízie v histórii.* [online]. [2020-18-04]. Available at: <<https://e.dennikn.sk/minuta/1855060>>.

¹⁴ *adMeter a koronavírus – zmeny v mediálnej konzumácii TV, rádii a internetu Slovákov.* [online]. [2020-18-04]. Available at:

<https://www.median.sk/pdf/OSTATNE/MEDIAN_SK_adMeter_koronavirus_media_20200407.pdf>.

¹⁵ *Minulý týždeň sledovali Slováci médiá v priemere 6 hodín a 55 minút denne.* [online]. [2020-17-04]. Available at: <<https://e.dennikn.sk/minuta/1843785>>.

¹⁶ *adMeter a koronavírus – zmeny v mediálnej konzumácii TV, rádii a internetu Slovákov.* [online]. [2020-18-04]. Available at:

<https://www.median.sk/pdf/OSTATNE/MEDIAN_SK_adMeter_koronavirus_media_20200407.pdf>.

¹⁷ *Koronavirus znížil predaj tlačných médií, niektoré prestali vychádzať.* [online]. [2020-16-04]. Available at: <<https://strategie.hnonline.sk/media/2120545-koronavirus-znizil-predaj-tlacnych-medii-niektore-prestali-vychadzat>>.

to supply themselves with newspapers and magazines; later, however, a severe slump occurred. “According to the data from the French media distribution company Presstalis, the sale of daily newspapers has decreased by 24% on Monday, 16th March, and by 31% on Tuesday. The sale of magazines decreased by 22% and 12% respectively in these two days. A really severe slump took place on Wednesday, 18th March, when the incomes from both of these categories declined by 45%.”¹⁸ In Slovakia, the sale of the printed media decreased “as a result of a lowered mobility of people and closed distribution centres by 15% in the first week, and by 30% in the second week. After a partial optimization and consumers’ adjustment to the current situation, the slump decreased to 20%. It is not sure whether all the magazines will continue to exist.”¹⁹ “Currently, we are evaluating the potential future strategy of individual products. Apart from advertising incomes, our decision will be determined, mainly in the print media, by the distribution and change of consumers’ behaviour. This is the reason why it is now appropriate to consider the periodicity of some titles”, said Michal Teplica, the general manager of the News and Media Holding.²⁰

In spite of high rankings/consumption of some media types, it cannot be stated that the above mentioned would have a positive financial influence. It is not reasonable for companies to invest money in advertising, if the consumers are not able or are limited in spending their money, or when they do not want to buy their products, which results in the collapse of advertisement incomes. Consequently, the Slovak media revise this year’s management plans, many of them reducing the number of external and internal employees or cutting their wages. “According to the original prediction made by the media group GroupM, the advertising costs were supposed to be at 372.5 million EUR this year, what would mean an increase by 2.2%. Nowadays, it is clear that there will be a decrease in these costs, but it is nearly impossible to estimate how severe the slump will be. The dynamic of investing money in the media will be influenced by the health status of population, which is closely linked to the alleviating the measures – getting back into the groove as far as shopping behaviour is concerned.”²¹ The coronavirus decreases the sale of the printed media worldwide. For example, the sales have dropped by half in France – The Guardian reported at its webpage about “negative impacts of the spreading coronavirus on the field of local economy,” what is most noticeable mainly within the free of charge newspapers which are dependent on advertisement.²² The local newspapers cease to be published completely, and numerous readers are not provided with the necessary information. The situation is even worse in Ukraine, where “the nationwide newspaper ceased to be published. Many editors are in the preventative quarantine, the publishing houses are involved in the stoppage, the distribution is paralysed, and kiosks are also closed. The newspapers such as Korrespondent, Fakty, Vesti, or Segodňá ceased to be published, and a part of daily newspapers started to be published online. The publishing of Holos Ukrayiny, which provides official information, as well as some regional newspapers continues. The majority of Kyiv’s daily newspapers are not available in print because the incomes from advertising are in a slump.”²³ The French report that even though the interest of readers gradually shifts online, “editorial offices are not able to exploit this shift so as to increase their incomes from the Internet advertising and to increase the subscription rates, Les Echos reports”²⁴

¹⁸ Ibidem.

¹⁹ Ibidem.

²⁰ Ibidem.

²¹ Ibidem.

²² Ibidem.

²³ Ibidem.

²⁴ *Koronavirus znížil predaj tlačných médií, niektoré prestali vychádzať.* [online]. [2020-16-04]. Available at: <<https://strategie.hnonline.sk/media/2120545-koronavirus-znizil-predaj-tlacnych-medii-niektore-prestali-vychadzat>>.

The pandemic caused by the coronavirus and problems connected with it are destroying the media industry also in the USA. Information from the US market print media according to medialne.etrend.sk²⁵ - Tampa Bay daily newspaper has not omitted a single print edition for nearly 96 years, until last week. During the corona crisis, 11 journalists were dismissed, and the newspaper had not been published in the print edition for five days. The weekly *Stranger* dismissed 18 employees, and the print edition has been completely cancelled. It is also other newspapers which make their employees redundant. Only large nationwide daily newspapers such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, or *The Washington Post* seem to be in a good condition as they can lean on a large network of advertisers and millions of subscribers.²⁶ “One of the most famous magazines, *Playboy*, has also become the victim of the coronavirus; its print version has ceased to be published after 66 years of publishing. For the sake of completeness, it should be mentioned that this magazine had been experiencing problems for some time.”²⁷ A lot of media appeals to its supporters for support, contemplating the governmental support, which has been up-to-now an unimaginable thought. This, however, encounters the clash of interests. The coronavirus, as it is with people, causes damage primarily to those who were already weakened before its outbreak. In the media market, it is primarily the case of the print media – their sales have decreased, and some of them completely ceased to be published. Many of them (even before the crisis), tackled the decreasing interest in advertising, and they also had to *tackle the logistic distribution or the sale itself* during the corona crisis. “This situation can force some smaller players into liquidation. Even a lower amount of subjects were prepared for the current development in comparison to 2008, but the specificity, when compared to the crisis which took place more than 10 year ago, lies in introducing preventative measures, which forces people to consume even less.”²⁸ “The stoppages will have a dramatic impact in the form of millions, or maybe even tens of millions of EUR” said the CEO of the *Petit Press* publishing house and the chairman of the *Slovak Print and Digital Media Association*, Alexej Fulmek. The association expects the decrease of 50% in advertising profits, which can climb up to 70% in the worst-case scenario.²⁹

In connection with the current situation, an ad hoc interview was conducted with the commercial manager of the weekly divisions *MY|ECHO* |*PARDON*|*SME CONFERENCES* of the *Petit Press* publishing house. The statements can be summarized as follows. “The crisis become noticeable in the middle of March – the black Friday – 13th March, 2020 triggered the precautions regarding the spread of coronavirus. The business sector and actually all the fields of our potential clients (self-government, associations, employers...) adopted a safe mode almost instantaneously. April is the first relevant month, in which the slump can be evaluated from the point of view of month-to-month or year-on-year comparisons, which are at the level of minus 60%. Within the network of regional weeklies, it is a case of real numbers, amounting to tens of thousands of EUR. The wages decreased by 10% against what was planned, and they will be lower by at least 20% in April, and we are considering dismissals, or alternatively, shortening the worktime. The interest of readers shifts towards online platforms for obvious reasons, which is understandable. Here, the interest in contributions can be measured through

²⁵ *Menšie médiá krízu neprežijú. V USA uvažujú o záchrane cez vládnu pomoc.* [online]. [2020-18-04]. Available at: <<https://medialne.etrend.sk/tlac/mensie-media-krizu-nepreziju-v-usa-uvazuju-o-zachrane-cez-vladnu-pomoc.html>>.

²⁶ *Ibidem.*

²⁷ *Playboy kvôli koronavírusu prestáva tlačiť časopisy. Po 66 rokoch ho v stánku nenájdete.* [online]. [2020-18-04]. Available at: <<https://strategie.hnonline.sk/media/2115548-playboy-kvoli-koronavirusu-prestava-tlacit-casopisy-po-66-rokoch-ho-v-stanku-nenajdete>>.

²⁸ *Čierna labuť sa vrátila. Hrozí najväčšou ekonomickou krízou našej doby.* [online]. [2020-18-04]. Available at: <<https://www.trend.sk/spravy/cierna-labut-vratila-hrozi-najvacsou-ekonomickou-krizou-nasej-doby>>.

²⁹ *Ibidem.*

the PW but, for example, selling subscription at webpages, which grew at a record level in March, sme.sk overcame the number of 50 thousand subscribers” (Ad hoc survey: Interview with Ing. Š. Korman – commercial manager of the weekly divisions MY|ECHO |PARDON|SME CONFERENCES of the Petit Press publishing house). Questions connected to the preferences of media products are also a part of the current discussion about the impact of corona crisis on the media. The coronavirus pandemic in the world of media has changed to information pandemic – infodemic – arising out of the increased demand for reporting, discussion and talk programmes, publicistic products, which were focused on the current topic from different angles. In the world of infodemic, the informative function of journalism with the emphasis on a quality journalism came to the fore. The first recorded case of the coronavirus disease in Slovakia (in the middle of March) attracted considerable interest in news reporting, discussions, and evening specials. It was especially the rating of evening TV reporting, which was on the increase, but also listening to the selected radios and accessing news portals increased too. Introducing the preventative measures in relation to the coronavirus had increased the viewership of news reporting also in other countries, including China. “A significant growth of viewership in China correlates with the approved measures of curfew and Chinese New Year holiday and, gradually, in connection to the alleviation of measures, the viewership comes back to the same level as in 2019. In Europe, the preventative measures were introduced in the middle of March 2020. As of 12th March, the gradual increase in viewership is observed, which corresponds with the increasing numbers of measures,” Kantar Slovakia reports. The increase in viewing TV in Slovakia, Spain, and Turkey is at 100 minutes a day, while mainly in Norway and Denmark, there were only minor changes in the viewership.³⁰

The unifying factor of increasing the viewership of reporting is the launch of measures intended to fight the COVID-19 disease. The gradual alleviation of the measures is connected with returning to the standard viewership values, comparable to those of the last year. The interest in reporting continues, but gradually decreases as far as the special programs are concerned, and programs which cause relaxation, such as film premiers, TV series, and entertainment programs come to the fore.³¹ The stopped production of programs remains to be a problem, broadcasting premiers is also paused; these are replaced by reruns, and further development will depend on the economic situation of advertisers, who buy advertisements in the media. The black swan has also endangered the world of media celebrities. The media culture is from a long-term perspective affected by “personalities”, about whom common consumers learned primarily from tabloid articles (not only) written by tabloid media, “personalities” who are only known because they were famous³² and, according to Rusnák (paraphrasing Rushkoff, 1996) – in the contemporary media culture, they had the so-called virological status – a celebrity is “common author work of media and their audience according to the indication of culture, which enabled this common author act. Rushkoff had already ascertained that spreading media information conspicuously resembles the way of surviving virus organisms.”³³ The COVID-19 disease also poses a threat to “celeviruses” (the combination of words celebrity and virus reflecting the “virological” character of celebrities in the media environment). Although we do

³⁰ *Marec bol na Slovensku mesiacom s najvyššou sledovanosťou televízie v histórii.* [online]. [2020-18-04]. Available at: <<https://e.dennikn.sk/minuta/1855060>>.

³¹ *Markíza už stihla mimoriadne relácie naplánovať na celý apríl! Sledovanosť večerných špeciálov padá.* [online]. [2020-16-04]. Available at: <<https://mediaboom.sk/sledovanost-vecernych-specialov-pada-markiza-uz-stihla-mimoriadne-relacie-naplanovat-na-cely-april>>.

³² BOORSTIN, D.: *The image. A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America.* New York : Vintage. 1992, p. 47.

³³ RUSNÁK, J.: *Extenzita a výkyv: Poznámky o povahe celebrit vo veku interaktívnych médií.* In BOČÁK, M., RUSNÁK, J. (eds.): *Médiá a text 3 – Mediálny text: variácie mediálneho diskurzu – popkultúra.* Prešov : PU in Prešov, 2012, p. 143. [online]. [2020-04-20]. Available at: <<https://www.pulib.sk/web/kniznica/elpub/dokument/Bocak2/subor/rusnak.pdf>>.

not have more detailed results at our disposal at the moment, on the basis of exploring the media content in the chosen period, it has been observed that the share of information about celebrities and their “stories” during the corona crisis period decreased in favour of contributions devoted to other topics – politics, healthcare, economy, education... The commencement of “coronatopics” decreased the interest in tabloid content from the world of ostentatious life of celebrities so much that when some of them were occasionally presented, they were confronted with very negative comments by the discussants. And due to the fact that for keeping the status of celebrity, it is very important its immediate spreading and current control of the largest possible (mainly media) space,³⁴ several celebrities adjusted to the situation. Within the context of this situation, it can be said that they “mutated” – and the “*image condensate of their characteristics*”³⁵ adapted to the situation. (They do not represent themselves with costly way of life, they appear in home clothes, without make-up, and they spend their time baking, cooking, or exercising. Some of them try to arouse the interest through designer masks). The future will tell whether this is a short-term phenomenon, or the crisis will change the media preferences of the majority audience, and the celebrities will have to vary their “legacy” for a longer period of time. In this context, it is interesting that there is a growing interest in programs with church themes, primarily it is the live coverage of services. For instance, three times more viewers than last year watched the church service during the Easter Friday. The live coverage of the Easter blessing *Urbi et Orbi* experienced an increase of 60% (viewed by 207 thousand people)³⁶ The situation surrounding the sports journalism is also interesting – cancelled sporting events made it practically impossible to deliver news in the field of sport, and this stoppage has been replaced by more comprehensive and analytical journalism, but it is also articles which do not devote their attention to athletes’ performances, but rather to the tabloid information about the lives of athletes.

4 Is Anything Going to Change?

From the long-term perspective, the media attempted to increase incomes while minimising the costs (this could be regarded as a downside, especially within the reporting). The media text began to be perceived through a prism of market value and commercialisation, tabloidization, or infantile approaches towards processing the content come to the fore. It was also the information function of journalism that occupied a defensive status until the coronavirus pandemic, and it is the entertaining function which is significantly brought to the fore. Neil Postman, an important media theorist, has already brought infantilization and tabloidization to attention, especially that of the TV media.³⁷ The media processes were adapted to attempts to generate the highest possible profit (this way was displayed within the media contents). Nowadays, it is a case of the media antinomy – the demand for reporting quality information and other selected media products is increasing (electronic and online media in a broader context), but simultaneously, the interest of advertisers to invest money in advertising is decreasing, which creates a difficult situation for the media. It was relatively easy from a long-term perspective – if there was an increase in demand for the media (programme...), the

³⁴ RUSNÁK, J.: Extenzita a výkyv: Poznámky o povahe celebrit vo veku interaktívnych médií. In BOČÁK, M., RUSNÁK, J. (eds.): *Médiá a text 3 – Mediálny text: variácie mediálneho diskurzu – popkultúra*. Prešov : PU in Prešov, 2012, p. 143. [online]. [2020-04-20]. Available at: <<https://www.pulib.sk/web/kniznica/elpub/dokument/Bocak2/subor/rusnak.pdf>>.

³⁵ Ibidem, p. 142.

³⁶ ŠTEFÁNIK, I.: *Veľké porovnanie: Televízna Veľká noc v čase koronakrízy*. [online]. [2020-04-20]. Available at: <<https://strategie.hnonline.sk/media/2132697-velke-porovnanie-televizna-velka-noc-v-case-koronakrizy>>.

³⁷ See also: POSTMAN, N.: *Ubavit se k smrti*. Prague : Mladá fronta. 2010.

advertising price went up, and the advertisers did not hesitate to pay large sums of money for it. The already mentioned black swan has disrupted this model, which worked for years. Some media achieve in the time of coronavirus pandemic record-breaking rankings, but this does not reflect the volume of advertisement. The news reporting is experiencing a renaissance, but since it was, from a long-term perspective, pushed towards the infotainment, it was not paid sufficient attention at the personal and financial levels. Thus, it cannot be maintained that it can comprehensibly answer all the current questions. It is necessary to emphasize the importance of quality journalism and quality media production in the media space, and point out the fact that the current situation shows that the model in which the media production is dependent only on advertisement, without the innovative approaches, does not have to be sustainable in the cases of sudden and crisis (now, we can even say unpredictable) situations. Therefore, some of its components will have to be transformed to other forms, and they will have to be reevaluated.

No medium was properly prepared for the model of extremely high interest in quality reporting information in combination with dramatically decreasing interest in advertisement, which reduces the economic ability to provide for editorial processes. It can be stated that, in the world of infodemic, there is a large supply of information (hoaxes belong to a separate category), but also demand for information. However, providing people who will deliver the information seems to be a serious problem. It should be noted that journalists who were defrauded by the media tabloidization in the long term are extremely needed in the time of crisis. The trend of bringing reporting closer to entertainment during the times of crisis is not a good move, and it should be emphasized that quality journalism has been, and still is, financially and morally underrated. It is also the significant role of media which has been demonstrated and confirmed; apart from providing information, the media bring relax and enjoyment to the masses (in this instance also for those who have only one connection with the world – through the media). Every crisis reveals even more weaknesses of any system or subject, but for some, it can create great opportunities. Many smaller, predominantly print media will battle huge problems, and many of them will not succeed. The crisis can be then exploited by the strongest players on the media market – those who are capable of taking the digital market, but the crisis represents opportunities also for those who are currently able to fully use their abilities and skills, or they can look for inspiration by the difficult situation. Various media projects illustrate examples for this.

In reaction to the current pandemic, the Czech television decided to offer a “pandemic” TV series with a characteristic title *Love in the Time of Corona* (the title is probably inspired by the Márquez book *Love in the Time of Cholera*). The spectators are encouraged to contribute to creating the script. The producers have adapted to the situation – the script and organisation of film making were created during teleconferences. The actors will not wear masks – their life partners will act with them. The shooting will be done by the robotic cameras.³⁸ At an individual level, opportunity can be exploited by quality journalists, who are able to work effectively and deliver quality information – smaller producers of audio-visual works that can be helpful also within the currently highly demanded live coverages, the interest in (within our conditions) marginal genres (in the US, there is demand for editors who are capable of writing obituaries) is also increasing. If we were to discuss bolder and less traditional plans – in the field of print journalism, it is possible to find solutions in the data journalism and in the so-called slow journalism. “Almost everyone dismisses their journalists, lowers the editorial budgets, and uses common stories to fill in the gaps. We send every cent from the subscription to *Delayed*

³⁸ *Česká televize připravuje serial: Lásky v čase korony*. [online]. [2020-18-04]. Available at: <<https://www.omediach.com/cesko/17708-ceska-televize-pripravuje-serial-laska-v-case-korony>>.

Gratification – back to following and publishing great articles from journalists and photographers. In Delayed Gratification, we do not use advertisements, which means that it is real journalism financed by its readers.”³⁹

It is also the investigative part of journalism that cannot be forgotten – this element has been discussed more and more as a result of other events. An interesting example of offering an active solution to this current situation can be also found in Slovakia. The project was prepared by the journalists in an online space, aiming at delivering quality information, increasing the monthly profit share at the same time. “The coronavirus and situations in the form of closed companies, shops and the “curfew” or “ban on organizing events with larger amounts of people” represent new challenges for us. We are now more focused also within the business on online projects, which corresponded with the new conditions. The project of online discussions achieved the greatest success – here, the guests from business environments, self-government, education, and sport are invited. The partners are interested in supporting these discussions, in which the guests contemplate about the current situation, seeking for solutions and ways out of this situation. The viewership of these programmes ranges approximately from 15 to 20 thousand viewers, what can be exactly measured on the web, and our partners request these statistics. The project of online discussions helped the profits at the level of roughly 20% of the plan, which forms a significant share on the current monthly profits.” (Ad hoc survey: an interview with Ing. Š. Korman – commercial manager of MY|ECHO |PARDON|SME CONFERENCES Petit Press, plc.). The current situation addresses various questions: How can be financing sustained during the health and economic crisis? How can be the realization of medial production sustained (from reporting to all media formats)? How not to lose the trust of recipients? How not to lose recipients? How not to lose advertisers? How to persuade advertisers? These questions are linked with one key moment – common demand and need. The media have been, are, and will be important to society – for informing people, offer them entertainment and relax through the formats of non-journalist nature.

Much can be taught from the black swan in the form of coronavirus, both from the perspective of the media and their consumers. It is important to consider various models of financing of media production, place emphasis on (really) quality and professional journalism, and support also quality media production. Moreover, the eradication of investigative journalism ought to be eliminated and, what is very important, media consumers should be approached in a cultivated manner, with an emphasis on quality media production as well as on cooperation within the support of media literacy of various ages through all the layers of society. In the long term, it can be argued that information can be regarded as goods, and quality information requires good financial compensation. Common media consumers still take having access to the media for granted. On the other hand, there are projects, which prove otherwise – they convince us that profit can also arise out of the quality content, and not only from advertising. Moreover, the content does not have to be necessarily an advertisement supplement. This article attempts to offer certain contemplation of media, which have recently succumbed to a larger degree to commercialization, some of them to manipulation, and many of them to “deprofessionalization”. At the same time, many of them face unfavourable comments from politicians, laymen... In the time of the coronavirus pandemic, it is, however, primarily the media, which deliver information, allow people to get familiar with various issues, and it is the media which help people pass the time during the quarantine. In terms of the functionalistic approach to behaviour towards media in society, the needs of society members are saturated by

³⁹ *The world's first Slow Journalism magazine*. [online]. [2020-20-04]. Available at: <<https://www.slow-journalism.com/>>.

fulfilling the societal functions – informing, entertaining, but also socializing – explaining and making comments about the significance of events and gaining – agitating for socially important goals, which are determined by the value orientation of the society. The media have a tremendous opportunity during this situation to persuade also the media sceptics that they have their rightful and important place in the society. The journalists have a chance to prove that quality information are indeed important for people, and that this profession deserves an appropriate status.

5 Do We Want the Black Swans?

How is the current crisis changing the world of media? Unquestionably, many of them will be destroyed, and many will overcome this crisis with considerable losses. Financial and personal impacts will be enormous. This complicated situation ought to be perceived as an opportunity to seriously take the functioning of media into consideration (in terms of functionalistic approach to the media behaviour in society) and look for new approaches. The already mentioned Taleb's book is predominantly about our blindness towards accidents and big deviations from the norms. "The whole story highlights mainly the fact that learning by observing or by experience is significantly limited and that human exploration is very fragile. A single observed case means that the old truth does not suddenly work, even though it had been confirmed by millions of white swans for thousands of years. The only single (allegedly ugly) black bird."⁴⁰ Purely market approach to media production, mainly to the products of journalist nature is unsustainable in the long term. It is important to grow quality in the media space, consider innovative approaches, increase supply in an online space as well as build and support local projects. Appeal to increasing and promoting the media literacy among all age categories poses undeniably an enormous challenge. Getting back to the standard "norm", in terms of which we are not able/we do not want to predict things, although we have all the necessary information at our disposal, will result in "building" the so-called Maginot line, which is considered as historical example of (un)preparedness for the black swan.

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⁴⁰ TALEB, N. N.: *Černá labuť. Následky vysoce nepravděpodobných událostí.* Prague : Paseka, 2011, p. 1.

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WAR WITH A THOUSAND FACES: “MILITAINMENT” IN AMERICAN WAR FILMS

Jana Radošinská

ABSTRACT:

The paper offers a reflection on the phenomenon of “militainment” in mainstream film production. The present theoretical outlines are followed by an overview of contemporary (mostly American) war movies containing various spectacular portrayals of warfare, displays of human suffering during war conflicts and/or obvious elements of military propaganda. The text is particularly focused on topics and ideas disseminated by films portraying war events. The author works with the assumption that the term “militainment” refers to a wide spectrum of media products or events, which often merge military images and entertainment in order to engage media audiences’ attention. As much as this *portmanteau* expression seems to result from contemporary scholarly views on cultural imperialism and media propaganda, it is, in fact, connected to various communication phenomena dating back to the beginning of the 20th century.

KEY WORDS:

mainstream film production, media entertainment, militainment, military propaganda, movie drama, war film

1 Introduction: War as a Part of Media Discourse

Any reflection on the ways media portray armed conflicts and wars has to acknowledge the fact that military propaganda and glorification of war have been parts of various media discourses for decades. As noted by Andersen, several governments used verbal and visual strategies to effectively influence mass public opinion in favour of war even during World War I. Throughout the whole 20th century, technological developments and advances in communication have tried to promote positive public attitudes towards war – however, with varying effectiveness. The author remarks that these communication strategies resulted in terms such as “public diplomacy”, “media campaign”, “information management”, “stagecraft”, “spin” or, most recently, “militainment”.¹ Another important theoretical outline leading to the current understanding of the military-entertainment hybrid was mentioned in Walter Benjamin’s ground-breaking essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. As a member of the Frankfurt School and thus a highly critical social scientist reflecting on mass culture, Benjamin pessimistically claimed that the very being of German Nazism depended on the introduction of aesthetics into political life.² According to Stahl, Walter Benjamin also referred to Filippo Tommaso Marinetti’s *Manifesto of Futurism*, which had been written in 1909. The Futurism art movement “*unreservedly celebrated the triumph of industrialism, speed, and the obliteration of time and space*” as humankind’s highest achievements. The union of man and machine, especially in the pure act of war, was deemed marvellous. This pre-World War I *Manifesto* was distinctively militaristic, seeing war (along with militarism and patriotism) as the world’s only ‘hygiene’.³ Marinetti’s words clearly merge the essence of his own art movement with an idealistic or rather naïve (and therefore also dangerous) idea of war as a source of social and cultural progress.

¹ ANDERSEN, R.: War Propaganda. In DONSBACH, W. (ed.): *The Concise Encyclopedia of Communication*. Chichester : Wiley-Blackwell, 2015, p. 651.

² BENJAMIN, W.: The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction. In ARENDT, H. (ed.): *Illuminations*. New York : Schocken Books, 1968, p. 241.

³ STAHL, R.: *Militainment, Inc.: War, Media, and Popular Culture*. New York, Abingdon : Routledge, 2010, p. 7.

Even though we can date the roots of military propaganda (as we know it today) back to the beginning of the 20th century, the notion of “militainment” we are interested in is a result of deep social, cultural and economic transformations occurring at the turn of the 21st century. Pravdová, Hudíková and Panasenko are right to point out that the era of late capitalism, i.e. the post-modern, post-modernism, and popular culture have brought about different kinds of extremes. The contemporary media world is filled with experiments, peculiarities, provocations and attractions, but also full of paradoxes.⁴ We believe that one of these paradoxes, militainment, reflects the contradictory nature of the world of today, which turns terms that once were binary oppositions into multifunctional communication hybrids. According to Corner and Parry, it is worth noting that a good deal of research at the intersection of military and the media emerges not from the field of media and communication, but rather from scholars who position themselves, broadly speaking, in sub-disciplines or fields such as security studies, war studies, popular geopolitics, military sociology, critical military studies or feminist international relations.⁵ Very interesting is, for example, Fischer’s study on American culture of militarism expressed through media events related to National Football League (NFL). Focusing on the National Football League’s ceremonies on the 10th anniversary of 9/11, the author sees these events as sports-media-military hybrids, which spread across multiple games, broadcasting channels and geographic locations.⁶ As for domestic scholarly reflections on the topic in question, media and communication studies in Slovakia discuss the mediated militarism quite rarely. However, we have to mention Panasenko, Greguš and Zabuzhanska’s study on semantic aspects of reflecting war in mass media.⁷ Furthermore, militarism in the context of media communication (especially in terms of digital games based on the game principle *agon*) has recently been discussed in various studies.⁸

As for movies portraying armed conflicts and wars, they became a prominent film genre after the outbreak of WWI. Today, some of them may tend to include implicit expressions of protest against war, condemning its reasons and summarising its tragical consequences. Many contemporary war films thus include strong anti-war messages, displaying the horrors of war events and suffering of individuals, various groups of people, civilians and/or soldiers, or even the world and nature, via fully fictional narratives or stories based on real events. However, other motion pictures were and still are being created to generate public support for ongoing war conflicts or in order to disseminate war propaganda disguised as entertainment.⁹

⁴ PRAVDOVÁ, H., HUDÍKOVÁ, Z., PANASENKO, N.: Homo Corporalis as the Communicated Muse and Centerpiece of Commercialized Culture. In *European Journal of Media, Art and Photography*, 2020, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 68.

⁵ CORNER, J., PARRY, K.: The Media and the Military: Editorial. In *Media, Culture & Society*, 2017, Vol. 39, No. 1, p. 4-5.

⁶ See also: FISCHER, M.: Commemorating 9/11 NFL-Style: Insights into America’s Culture of Militarism. In *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 2014, Vol. 38, No. 3, p. 199-221.

⁷ For more information, see: PANASENKO, N., GREGUŠ, E., ZABUZHANSKA, I.: Conflict, Confrontation, and War Reflected in Mass Media: Semantic Wars, Their Victors and Victims. In *Lege Artis: Language Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow*, 2018, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 132-163.

⁸ See, for example: BUČKOVÁ, Z., RUSŇÁKOVÁ, L.: Historical Reflection of the Game Principle Agon and Its Application in the Current Creation of Media Reality. In *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2016, Vol. 12, No. 5, p. 25-37.; RUSŇÁKOVÁ, L., BUČKOVÁ, Z.: Culture of Digital Games in the Context of Media Studies. In *SGEM 2017: 4th International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on Social Sciences and Arts: Science & Humanities Conference Proceedings. Volume I: Human Geography, Media and Communications, Information and Library Science, Demography and Women’s Studies*. Sofia : STEF92 Technology, 2017, p. 149-156.; MAGO, Z.: Violence and Digital Games: Facts Beyond Myths. In *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2016, Vol. 12, No. 5, p. 135-144.; MAGO, Z.: Virtuální herní a sociální světy. In SVĚTLÍK, J. et al: *Reklama: Teorie, koncepce, modely*. Rzeszow : WSIZ, 2017, p. 312-353.

⁹ BERGAN, R.: *Film: Velký ilustrovaný sprievodca*. Bratislava : Slovart, 2008, p. 171-173.

One way or another, war movies that present stories set in the past offer their viewers (especially those born and living in peaceful times) an opportunity to acquire a wider awareness of serious threats the previous generations of people had to face. Nevertheless, we have to acknowledge that most anti-war movies still encourage large groups of viewers to accept gruesome images of war as a specific kind of entertainment.

Another important fact is that military-entertainment hybrids appear in various kinds of films, not only in war movies. As noted by Stahl, militainment's influence goes well beyond the war film genre; some of its biggest projects have been the *Transformers* and *Iron Man* franchises. We may also mention movies such as *Battleship*, *Man of Steel*, *Godzilla*, *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* and many more. The author also mentions that the *Transformers* and *Iron Man* movie franchises have been subject to thorough analyses for this particular reason.¹⁰ Furthermore, Andersen is right to notice that war is not only understood and interpreted but also justified and judged “*through the images and narratives that tell the stories of war*”. That is why most ordinary people (i.e. civilians) tend to draw their impressions regarding wars not from the battles occurring in distant parts of the world, but rather from the manner these events are portrayed by the media. Any war stories are thus constructed from “*the bits and pieces of favoured myths and stories of past battlefield heroics*”. What we would call “militainment” therefore always mingles fictional forms with those of non-fiction. As the author claims, people engaged in “*the battle over public opinion*” on war conflicts are well aware that public interpretations of the role war plays in our society (and their impact on global relations) largely influence the ways we imagine international peace and stability.¹¹ Moreover, the current trends in producing globally disseminated war movies often lead to ignoring the boundaries between the real and the fictional. Real events related to war are thus highly stylised and spectacular, personalised by male and female heroes who move across the land struck by war. That is why characters appearing in war movies have to be analysed in light of their gender-related, racial and ideological features.

The roles women play in war movies are discussed only occasionally, certainly less often than male heroes most of these films are centred on. However, there are noteworthy studies focusing on this particular matter, e.g. multiple scholarly texts written by Tasker. Explaining various phenomena that outline the relationship between women and their audio-visual portrayals associated with the military, the author claims that most “*military movies are characterized by a structuring tension between exceptional individuals, who are clearly the focus of screen and narrative attention, and the group they represent*”.¹² The question of female presence in war movies is highly topical, as the current trends in producing war movies, especially those portraying recent armed conflicts, more and more focus on female soldiers, presenting them as war heroes who struggle to find balance between their female essence and masculine character traits. This paper works with the assumption that the ways media (particularly feature films) present armed conflicts should also be discussed in terms of philosophy and ethics. According to Capozzi, the overabundance of the portrayals of war in films and digital games and the effects of ensuring ‘clean’ war images in order to gain

¹⁰ STAHL, R.: Dispatches from the Militainment Empire. In BOYD-BARRETT, O., MIRRLEES, T. (eds.): *Media Imperialism: Continuity and Change*. Lanham, Boulder, New York, London : Rowman & Littlefield, 2020, p. 153.; See, for example: MIRRLEES, T.: Transforming Transformers into Militainment: Interrogating the DoD-Hollywood Complex. In *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, 2017, Vol. 76, No. 2, p. 405-434.; MIRRLEES, T.: How to Read Iron Man: The Economics, Politics and Ideology of an Imperial Film Commodity. In *Cineaction*, 2013, Vol. 92, No. 1, p. 4-11.

¹¹ ANDERSEN, R.: *A Century of Media, a Century of War*. New York : Peter Lang, 2007, p. 16, 21.

¹² TASKER, Y.: *Soldiers' Stories: Military Women in Cinema and Television Since World War II*. Durham, London : Duke University Press, 2011, p. 117.

compliance have turned war into a spectacle, “an event to be watched, enjoyed, and consumed”. These efforts create “a binary of humanizing and dehumanizing effects”. The good guys are often over humanized “to engage the viewer in their struggles and triumphs”. However, the enemies are mostly dehumanized, despicable, often faceless and nameless. The author warns that this spectacularisation of war makes it impossible to draw a clear line between real war and digitally enhanced (mediated) war.¹³ Another serious problem is associated with the fact that the existence of militainment blurs the barely existing lines between the formerly opposite phenomena even further. Burston remarks that media entertainment has been understood as (somehow) more oriented towards the private (or domestic) sphere. However, many binaries formerly established by media and communication studies and similar disciplines (e.g. hard news/soft news, information/entertainment, public/private, masculine/feminine) have become entirely untenable. Militainment, a militarism-entertainment hybrid, ignores the remaining differences between the public and the private, pushing the entertainment industry towards the most serious parts of the public sphere.¹⁴ In other words, armed conflicts and their media portrayals utilise entertainment frameworks to further merge our private lives and public discourses we follow and reproduce.

The following chapters of the paper intend to discuss the phenomenon of “militainment” in relation to its contemporary contexts, acknowledging that war movies are only a small part of this broad and serious discourse. We see the term “militainment” in accordance with Andersen, who claims it is a new hybrid format used (predominantly, but not exclusively) by the U.S. media and military to represent war: “*Militainment and ‘stagecraft’ are attempts to control the meanings of war through fictional formatting, information management, and media choreography.*” As the author remarks, one of the most visible expressions of militainment was the moment when Pentagon officials approached Hollywood producers after 9/11, requesting they join the fight against international terrorism. The collaboration resulted in various successful projects, e.g. the war movie *Behind Enemy Lines* (2001, directed by John Moore) validating the questionable American military actions in former Yugoslavia in the 1990s, or the ABC’s reality show *Profiles from Front Line* about the Afghanistan war.¹⁵

2 The Notion of “Militainment” – Media Entertainment Based on Militarism

Just like “charitainment”, the expression “militainment” was first included in a journalistic piece, more specifically in the article published by the news portal of the globally available TV news channel *CNN*. Poniewozik, the article’s author, used this *portmanteau* word to describe the cultural situation in the United States shortly after the terrorist attack involving two commercial planes crashing into the buildings of the World Trade Centre, New York, in September 2001. Poniewozik analysed new trends in reality TV, which – quite openly – promoted the military intervention of the U.S. and their allies in Afghanistan and Iraq that followed the events of 9/11. Probably the most obvious example of such television programming was the above-mentioned reality show *Profiles from the Front Line*.

¹³ CAPOZZI, P.: Spectacular War: Media, Militainment, and the New Imperialism. In McLOUGHLIN, K., FORTE, M. C. (eds.): *Emergency as Security: Liberal Empire at Home and Abroad*. Montreal : Alert Press, 2013, p. 116.

¹⁴ BURSTON, J.: War and Entertainment Industries: New Research Priorities in an Era of Cyber-Patriotism. In THUSSU, D. K., FREEDMAN, D. (eds.): *War and the Media*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi : Sage, 2003, p. 165.

¹⁵ ANDERSEN, R.: War Propaganda. In DONSBACH, W. (ed.): *The Concise Encyclopedia of Communication*. Chichester : Wiley-Blackwell, 2015, p. 652.

The show's content included moments when multiple members of the American military personnel deployed in Afghanistan or Iraq shared their life stories.¹⁶ However, following the previously discussed theoretical outlines, we have to point out once again that militainment is, in fact, much more than a set of media products which openly disseminate military propaganda. It also includes war movies and similarly themed episodic television dramas, media-covered military parades organised on selected holidays and memorial days, publicly presented information on military training programmes or manoeuvres, military recruit campaigns and related advertisements. Particularly important part of the militainment discourse refers to first-person shooters and other kinds of digital games that often spectacularly visualise real or fictional, even futuristic armed conflicts.

One of the most serious consequences of militainment's overall popularity and strong media presence lies in its paradoxical nature. In Stahl's words, on the one hand, militaristic forms of media entertainment are necessarily perceived as an unwelcome expression of military propaganda; on the other hand, portraying war as a media spectacle does no justice to victims on both sides of an armed conflict and underestimates the tragedy of war. The term "militainment" is an oxymoron, because real war is anything but amusing.¹⁷ As remarked by Corner and Parry, the close relationship between the military and the entertainment genres that celebrates their values has led to various coinages. Such studies vary in their chosen sites and methods of inquiry, whether on the design of digital games as recruitment tools, the pleasures of playing or watching war, or the companies who benefit financially from selling both weaponry and media content.¹⁸ These terms include "military-entertainment complex" proposed by Lenoir in 2000,¹⁹ "military-industrial-media-entertainment network" coined by Der Derian in 2001²⁰ and "militainment, Inc." preferred by Stahl.²¹ The variety of expressions shows very clearly that academic discussions on militarism-entertainment hybrids taking place in the new Millennium include many problems that have been addressed only partly or have not been addressed at all.

Even though we have to agree with Stahl's opinion that real war is anything but entertainment, Roderick offers a convincing thought that smooth and seemingly natural merging of two supposedly incommensurate words – militarism and entertainment – may suggest that these phenomena are not so contradictory as we would like to imagine. He defines the term "militainment" simply as "*any form of media that spectacularises warfare*". According to the author, "militainment" is often seen as "*a wide range of different mass media forms from films that collaborate with and venerate the military to news coverage that depends upon largely decontextualized combat news footage for its news value*". Expressions of militainment often rely upon the blending or hybridizing of fact and fiction. However, as the author further argues, media audiences must deem these fictional representations of

¹⁶ PONIEWOZIK, J.: *That's Militainment! The War on Terror Gets the Cops Treatment. Evil Axis, Evil Axis, What You Gonna Do?* Released on 25th February 2002. [online]. [2020-03-09]. Available at: <<http://edition.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/time/2002/03/04/militainment.html>>.

¹⁷ STAHL, R.: *Militainment, Inc.: War, Media, and Popular Culture*. New York, Abingdon : Routledge, 2010, p. 6.

¹⁸ CORNER, J., PARRY, K.: The Media and the Military: Editorial. In *Media, Culture & Society*, 2017, Vol. 39, No. 1, p. 7-8.

¹⁹ For more information, see: LENOIR, T.: All but War Is Simulation: The Military Entertainment Complex. In *Configurations*, 2000, Vol. 8, No. 3, p. 289-335.

²⁰ See also: DER DERIAN, J.: *Virtuous War: Mapping the Military-Industrial-Media-Entertainment Network*. Boulder : Westview Press, 2001.

²¹ See, for example: STAHL, R.: *Militainment, Inc.: War, Media, and Popular Culture*. New York, Abingdon : Routledge, 2010.

combat (including war films) realistic – especially in terms of the used weaponry, uniforms and their particular details, adequate language (military slang) and so on. Roderick’s own work mostly discusses non-fiction militainment present within television programming that enthusiastically appreciates and even admires military technologies.²² Thomas’ opinion is that the term “militainment” can be used to “*describe the cooperation of software companies and the military to produce simulations, war movies and so-called ‘military soaps’ as well as the morale, recreation and welfare activities of artists and media protagonists. (...) However, militainment does not refer to crisis related efforts of the military (and their political leadership) to control images and information*”. As the author states, the portmanteau word may be seen as the “*cooperation between the military and the media and culture industry on an everyday basis that goes beyond war and crises*”.²³ Another definition of “militainment” mentioned by Reed claims that it is an increasingly “*deep intermixture of popular entertainment and the military*”, which has raised a number of critical questions, both within the military and amongst civilian scholars.²⁴ According to Stahl, various interested academics are right to claim that the military-entertainment complex (“militainment”) plays a broader role within the processes of cultural imperialism. It is therefore problematic that we have often ignored “*the ways that the military, in a literal sense, has worked to shape the messages emanating from Hollywood, television, and other entertainment industries. (...) Commercial culture not only functions like classical military power; in many cases it is a direct expression of military power.*”²⁵ Given the fact that militainment is often discussed in relation to American audio-visual media products, it is no surprise that several scholars mentioned above (e.g. Stahl, Mirrlees, Andersen) tend to use various war movies as suitable examples of how militainment actually works and what kinds of narratives its producers utilise to present certain morals, values, points of view, ideologies and/or agendas associated with military propaganda.

3 Elements of “Militainment” within American Mainstream Cinema

As noted by Mirrlees, globally distributed American films do not tend to reproduce the real and authentic American values, but rather their distorted, partial and highly selective representations merged with fiction. Some conservative critics even argue that globalised Hollywood entertainment disseminated all round the world may generate a certain amount of antipathy against the United States and the American cultural environment. This (rather) right-wing opinion is based on the assumption that some less cognitively capable ‘traditionalists’ living in other parts of the world (outside the U.S.) perceive only such trivialised images of America’s true nature. Basing their opinions solely on Hollywood movies they have watched, these viewers often see the U.S. as a country driven by random violence, sex, silly teenagers, consumerism and political corruption. On the other hand, liberal political forces stress Hollywood cinema’s ability to portray the United States as a world of multiculturalism, democracy, freedom, vast opportunities to succeed and technological

²² RODERICK, I.: Military Hardware and Affective Objects: Towards a Social Semiotics of Militainment Television. In MACHIN, D. (ed.): *Visual Communication*. Berlin, Boston : DeGruyter, 2014, p. 72, 76.

²³ THOMAS, T.: Gender Management, Popular Culture, and the Military. In SCHUBART, R. et al.: *War Isn’t Hell, It’s Entertainment: Essays on Visual Media and the Representation of Conflict*. Jefferson, London : McFarland & Company, 2009, p. 106.

²⁴ REED, T. V.: *Digitized Lives: Culture, Power, and Social Change in the Internet Era*. New York, Abingdon : Routledge, 2014, p. 148.

²⁵ STAHL, R.: Dispatches from the Militainment Empire. In BOYD-BARRETT, O., MIRRLEES, T. (eds.): *Media Imperialism: Continuity and Change*. Lanham, Boulder, New York, London : Rowman & Littlefield, 2020, p. 149.

progress. These differing perspectives are, of course, ideologically incompatible and scientifically questionable as well. Moreover, the author is right to point out that many people's proclaimed aversion to the U.S. foreign policy does not prevent them from seeking and consuming globalised American entertainment.²⁶ This means that militainment's driving force and strength lie in the fact that people in Europe, Asia or Australia and elsewhere may express their disagreement with American foreign policy or military interventions resonating on a global scale, but this disapproval rarely manifests itself when they watch, appreciate and discuss numerous war dramas and other films produced in Hollywood.

The questions of Hollywood's cultural hegemony (and reproduction of American cultural imperialism as an intrinsic feature of other types of fully globalised media products) become even more serious when we consider the ways universal (mainstream) taste patterns are formed. Croteau and Hoynes follow Barnet and Cavanagh's work to legitimately state that globally available media products (including Hollywood movies) do not tend to form any 'global awareness' regarding serious problems of the past, present or future world.²⁷ However, Artz remarks that these media narratives may not truly support social progress worth fighting for, but they are certainly able to pretend doing so. In other words, globally popular American movies tend to declare their solidarity towards a full spectrum of social conflicts (e.g. they might portray everyday problems of ordinary people or stress the need to address ethnical, gender-related and racial inequalities), but such portrayals mostly remain fully symbolic and commercially driven. Nonetheless, Hollywood films that would offer more complex reflections on these serious issues are produced quite rarely. According to Artz, the economic dominance of Hollywood movies which only pretend to care about the most serious global problems suggests that cultural hegemony truly fulfils its objectives by successfully pretending to understand ordinary people's problems, i.e. by offering us fictional film heroes who effortlessly overcome roughly the same complications.²⁸ As for Hollywood war movies, most of them prefer to portray a strangely consistent, yet diverse and somehow incompatible group of individualistic characters. On the other hand, those war dramas that focus on real and highly significant historical figures (politicians, artists, scientists) tend to be centred on those particular persons. However, we cannot forget that these narratives often use the portrayed armed conflicts only as emotionally engaging backgrounds which help to define the particular characters' exceptional actions and life stories.

The American Civil War, a result of the long-term controversy over the enslavement of black people and other serious social and economic problems, is nowadays portrayed quite rarely. Even though this particular war is one of the first armed conflicts that were photographed and thus there are many visual references to follow, the Civil War mostly functions as a spectacular background that demonstrates all the dangers the people of America had to face back then. This approach was used successfully in late Anthony Minghella's Oscar-awarded romantic war drama *Cold Mountain* (2003). Both *Cold Mountain* and the director's previous successful project, *The English Patient* (1996), are based on successful literary works – their screenplays were written by Minghella himself. *The English Patient* is, of course, not set in the Civil War era, as its story emerges during WWII in Italy, Europe. *Cold Mountain*'s main storyline is focused on a wounded deserter from the Confederate Army (quite paradoxically,

²⁶ MIRRLEES, T.: *Global Entertainment Media: Between Cultural Imperialism and Cultural Globalization*. New York, Abingdon : Routledge, 2013, p. 222-224.

²⁷ CROTEAU, D., HOYNES, W.: *Media/Society: Industries, Images, and Audiences*. 5th Edition. Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi, Singapore : Sage Publications, 2014, p. 346-347.

²⁸ ARTZ, L.: *Global Entertainment Media. A Critical Introduction*. Malden, Oxford, Chichester : Wiley-Blackwell, 2015, p. 195-199.

played by the popular British actor Jude Law), who tries to return home to reunite with his lover (Nicole Kidman). The movie is therefore a romantic drama situated in the war-torn American South that offers an attractive portrayal of a soldier who abandons his duty to be with the woman he loves. The secondary storyline is quite interesting as well, as it includes a group of women who have to help each other and rely on their own abilities to survive and make a living. The theme involving a wounded deserter (only this time an Irishman fighting for the Union Army portrayed by Colin Farrell) also appears in 2017's melodrama *The Beguiled* (directed by Sofia Coppola). The Civil War offers a convincing explanation why the present young Southern women live alone, far from anyone else; the given circumstances make their decision to provide Farrell's character with a shelter and medical care even more incomprehensible. The true reason is, of course, that all women living in the girls' boarding house do their best to attract the soldier's attention, competing for his affection. However, their fascination leads to multiple expressions of betrayal and shocking violence. The female empowerment angle is quite visible here as well. The Civil War is also prominent in Steven Spielberg's biographical drama *Lincoln* (2012). This film received worldwide critical acclaim, not only because of Daniel Day-Lewis' remarkable acting performance but also thanks to its production value marked by Janusz Kamiński's cinematography and the original score composed by John Williams. The dramatized events of the Civil War explained via President Lincoln's personal story, marriage, political career and deeds of his allies and political opponents, function as a rich portrayal of American history, even though this movie is not a war drama in the true sense of the word.

Given the fact that the US was involved in the first global war conflict only partially, it is no surprise that American producers and audiences do not explore WWI as much as WWII. However, Hollywood filmmakers have recently increased their generally low interest in WWI. Worth mentioning is, above all, Steven Spielberg's technically perfect and obviously old-fashioned film *War Horse* (2014). The director's stable creative team consisting of the cinematographer Janusz Kamiński, the editor Michael Kahn, the renowned production designer Rick Carter, and the prominent composer John Williams offers an epic adventure of a thoroughbred English horse trapped between two raging armies. The rather sentimental key topics of a British family torn apart due to World War I and an extraordinary friendship between a teenage boy and his horse, Joey, are clearly dominant. On the other hand, they are combined with gruesome images of the trench war, barb-wired no man's land around Somme, repeated gas attacks and suffering experienced not only by young soldiers on both sides of the conflict but also local farmers and their children, various animals and, most prominently, horses Joey and Tophorn, which are now forced to haul German heavy artillery. Joey the horse is, in fact, placed in the leading role instead of his owner Albert (played by Jeremy Irvine).

Steven Spielberg's visual aesthetics and storytelling capabilities can be clearly seen in his previous war dramas – the award-winning biographical film *Schindler's List* (1994) and the popular war movie *Saving Private Ryan* (1998), which is known for its graphic and shockingly violent second scene portraying the events related to the Allied Forces' first wave of landing on the Omaha Beach. A similar approach that is obviously inspired by Spielberg's work is used in the recently resonating British-American WWI drama *1917* (2019, directed by Sam Mendes). Like in case of *Saving Private Ryan*, the main storyline introduces a small group of soldiers (or, more precisely, a duo – Schofield and Blake) trying to fulfil their mission (however, they are not looking for an unknown private, but rather for an endangered regiment which includes Blake's brother). The story is therefore intentionally more personal than the above-mentioned Spielberg's 1998 war epic, which, in contrast, worked with the idea

of war's impersonal nature and coldness. A less experienced viewer may think that the whole story is told in a single shot; however, the film's immersive continual flow of scenes, seemingly unflinching and uninterrupted by cuts, was achieved thanks to Roger Deakins' superior (and Academy Award-winning) cinematography based on long takes and rigorously choreographed shots. The topic of WWI is also inherently present in the Australian-American drama *Water Diviner* (2014, directed by Russell Crowe). Crowe's debut in the director's role and his acting performance are both remarkable. He portrays a widowed father of three sons, Joshua Connor, who is an Australian farmer and water diviner, and his journey to Turkish Gallipoli. All his sons were members of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps and are presumably dead, buried somewhere around the Gallipoli battlefield. Connor's persistent search for his deceased sons is intertwined with the cruel aftermath of WWI in Turkey (the former Ottoman Empire) and personal stories of local people, especially a young war-widowed woman Ayshe, who runs a local hotel. The film thus provides a rare portrayal of a newly formed country that faces another (Greek) invasion, in which an Australian man, who has never left his home before, looks for the bodies of his sons to ensure their proper burial close to his household.

Another highly personal WWI story is offered by the 2014 British romantic war drama *Testament of Youth*, which is based on the autobiographic book of the same name, written by the renowned British feminist writer and life-long pacifist Vera Brittain. The movie focuses on young British people living at the beginning of the 20th century, whose lives are completely lost or torn apart due to WWI. Brittain's personal experience as a volunteering nurse and a young woman who lost both her fiancé and her brother during the conflict is crucial; the movie ends with a clear warning that the philosophy based on the 'an eye for an eye' principle is slowly but surely destroying the world. According to Andersen, World War II "has become the frame of reference that confers legitimacy to war". In other words, many war movies portraying the events of WWII refer to the necessity to join the fight against tyranny, brutality and dangerous ideologies.²⁹ However, the recent trends suggest that other than American heroes can attract the target audiences' attention as well. All these films are fully fictional and often based on books. For example, the 2019 drama *The Aftermath* (directed by James Kent) is set in post-war Germany. In 1945, a British officer's wife arrives to Hamburg to be with her husband who helps to rebuild the destroyed city. The essence of the story lies in the couple's cold relationship (their only son died during German airborne attacks targeting London) and unfolds around the fact that the main character, Rachael Morgan (Keira Knightley), falls in love with a widowed local architect Stephen, with whom she shares her grief – Stephen lost his wife during the war. Referring to the narrative style established by the 1942 masterpiece *Casablanca* (directed by Michael Curtiz and starring Ingrid Bergman and Humphrey Bogart), *Allied* (2016, director Robert Zemeckis) centres on a turbulent WWII romance between a Canadian intelligence officer stationed in France (played by Brad Pitt) and a French Resistance fighter (Marion Cotillard). A different perspective is established in Brian Percival's war drama *The Book Thief* (2013). The story of a young girl living with her adoptive German family during the Nazi era focuses on Germany's cultural and ideological downfall related to WWII. Although the girl, Liesel, is illiterate, her elderly foster father teaches her how to read. Her actions involve 'borrowing' (in many cases forbidden) books, reading them with Max, a young Jewish refugee hiding in her foster parents' house, and sharing adventures with her friend Rudy, a promising athlete who, unaware of the true nature of Nazism, openly admires the African-American Olympic champion Jesse Owens.

²⁹ ANDERSEN, R.: *A Century of Media, a Century of War*. New York : Peter Lang, 2007, p. 22.

Other line of WWII movies is focused on extraordinary individuals and their true stories. One of the most impressive of them is Mel Gibson's film *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016). The story centres on Desmond Doss, an American combat medic who refused to carry or use a weapon of any kind, thus becoming the first recipient of the Medal of Honour who was a 'conscientious objector'. Gibson's direction has earned notable critical acclaim, as well as Andrew Garfield's acting performance in the leading role. Especially remarkable is the fact that the movie positions religious belief as warfare's ideological counterweight (one of the most impressive characters is Desmond Doss' father, an alcoholic with post-traumatic stress disorder resulting from WWI, played convincingly by Hugo Weaving). Gibson intertwines these ideological aspects with brutal images of the Battle of Okinawa. Worth mentioning are also two biographical dramas, the first of them focusing on the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and his actions during WWII (*The Darkest Hour*, 2017, directed by Joe Wright), and the second one (*The Imitation Game*, 2014, directed by Morten Tyldum) offering a unique portrayal of the life and remarkable scientific career of Alan Turing (Benedict Cumberbatch), the British cryptographer and mathematician. The story offers an insight into the process of analysing the German coding machine Enigma. The movie also outlines Turing's close relationship with the female cryptanalyst Joan Clarke and his hidden homosexuality, which was the implicit reason of his untimely death by suicide (resulting from a cruel and dangerous medical procedure – chemical castration – ordered by the authorities). Two similarly personal movies, both telling the story of Operation Anthropoid, the WWII assassination of Reinhard Heydrich by a group of Exile Czechoslovak soldiers, were produced in Europe. These films are titled *Anthropoid* (2016, directed by Sean Ellis, starring Cillian Murphy and Jamie Dornan) and *The Man with the Iron Heart* (2017, director Cédric Jimenez).

A rather unique creative approach is used in David Ayer's drama *Fury* (2014), the story of an M4 Sherman tank crew led by Don 'Wardaddy' Collier (Brad Pitt). After losing their veteran assistant driver and gunner, the crew of 'Fury' is joined by Norman Ellison (Logan Lerman), a young clerk who was transferred by mistake. The story is marked by a series of unfortunate events related to increasingly fanatical German resistance and everyday lives of ordinary German people, especially women, who starve, suffer, and are beaten, raped or killed; either for alleged cowardice and/or collaboration by their compatriots or by infuriated and often brutal Allied forces pushing through the land. The viewer experiences the horrors along with terrified Norman; unlike other war movies, this one is utterly claustrophobic, as some of its key scenes happen inside the tank named 'Fury'. A commercially significant segment of American militainment cinema is associated with blockbuster movies which focus on spectacular visuals and epic battle scenes instead of unique individuals and their personal stories. This line of war dramas was partly established by Michael Bay's *Pearl Harbour* (1998), in which real events (the surprising military strike by the Imperial Japanese Navy and aircrafts upon the United States, specifically on its Hawaiian Naval Base Pearl Harbour) merge with a fictional love story involving two American pilots and an attractive young nurse. However, the romance is of secondary significance, since the main storyline mostly follows the circumstances of the attack, driven by Hans Zimmer's remarkable original score including the theme song titled Tennessee. Almost identical ideas and mostly the same (although exclusively real) events are portrayed in *Midway* (2019, directed by Roland Emmerich). The film's visuals only confirm Emmerich's long-time specialisation, which lies in making catastrophic movies and creating spectacular scenes of destruction. It is also necessary to note that exactly the same events were presented in the 1976 movie of the same name, which was directed by Jack Smight and included multiple Hollywood celebrities such as Henry Fonda, James Coburn and Charlton Heston. On the contrary, an utterly unique

approach is taken by the British director Christopher Nolan and his technically brilliant, yet highly impersonal movie *Dunkirk* (2017), which depicts the infamous and humiliating evacuation of the British Army from the French port Dunkerque. *Dunkirk* portrays the evacuation from three different perspectives – land, sea and air. It includes only a small amount of dialogues, as the director intended to visualise the events through cinematography and music (once again, remarkable, composed by Hans Zimmer).

Contrary to WWII movies, films that portray the events of the Vietnam War tend to refer to the conflict's senselessness, brutality and lack of legitimacy: “*On the other hand, when war goes wrong, it is told through the problematic narratives of brutality that characterise the popular memory of Vietnam.*”³⁰ This thematic framework was well established by various acclaimed war dramas produced in the 1970s and 1980s, e.g. by Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* (1979), Oliver Stone's *Platoon* (1986) and Stanley Kubrick's *Full Metal Jacket* (1987). The same idea was shared by the 2002 movie *We Were Soldiers*, which was directed by Randall Wallace and led by Mel Gibson and Madeleine Stowe. Recent motion pictures that include or refer to the disturbing images of the Vietnam War are *Last Flag Flying* (2017, directed by Richard Linklater) and *The Last Full Measure* (2020, directed by Todd Robinson). In the former case, the movie portrays three Vietnam veterans, now middle-aged, who try to confront their war-induced traumas by helping one of them to retrieve the remains of his son killed in Iraq. The obvious connection between two war conflicts (in Vietnam and, much later, in Iraq) refers to multiple generations of American military men and women coping with their actions. The latter film is similar to *Hacksaw Ridge* in terms of both the main idea and ideological message, as it focuses on a young, ambitious bureaucrat who seeks selected Vietnam veterans to decide whether William H. Pitsenbarger, a war hero and victim of the Battle of Saigon, deserves to receive the Medal of Honour Award (or not).

Movies relating to armed conflicts in Africa are scarce and almost exclusively based on real events. They are also typical for their tendency to depict brutal violence and horrible consequences of foreign military interventions. The most prominent of them is certainly Ridley Scott's *Black Hawk Down* (2001). As noted by Howell, the movie *Black Hawk Down*, based on an actual event, portrays the unsuccessful attempt of the U.S. Delta Forces and Army Rangers to capture Somalian warlord Mohammed Farrah Aidid, which took place in 1993. According to the author, the film is adapted to the purposes of militainment in a new era of screen combat; its specific aim is to revise public perception of one of the most notorious failures of the post-Cold War U.S. military.³¹ Less spectacular, but still markedly brutal are movie portrayals of other armed conflicts that occurred in African countries – it is necessary to mention *Hotel Rwanda* (2004, directed by Terry George), which was introduced a decade after the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Currently, American war dramas reproducing militainment largely focus on recent armed conflicts, especially on the United States and their military interventions in the Middle East that occurred after the events of 9/11. Some of them present heroic deeds of exceptional individuals deployed in Afghanistan or Iraq. One of the most critically acclaimed films in this category is Clint Eastwood's *American Sniper*, an engaging and detailed portrayal of Chris Kyle, who is thought to be the deadliest marksman in U.S. military history. Kyle's life story includes many moments when he takes lives anonymously and addresses related moral questions. However, the film's core idea lies in the devastating effect Chris Kyle's military accomplishments inflict on his family life and psyche. As mentioned above, today's war dramas increasingly include female lead characters, which

³⁰ ANDERSEN, R.: *A Century of Media, a Century of War*. New York : Peter Lang, 2007, p. 22.

³¹ HOWELL, A.: *Popular Film Music and Masculinity in Action: A Different Tune*. New York, London : Routledge, 2015, p. 110-115.

is the case of *Megan Leavey* (2017, directed by Gabriela Cowperthwaite), a rather modest feature film telling the story of a young female Marine and her combat dog named Rex. The film's political framework is clear in the moment when Megan Leavey, now a wounded veteran, is granted the right to adopt Rex, since the aging dog suffers from facial palsy.

Being as narratively appealing and visually elaborated as Eastwood's *American Sniper*, though not based on real events, Kathryn Bigelow's *Hurt Locker* (2008) provides a raw insight into the everyday life of military pyrotechnics and engineers. The film follows Sergeant First Class William James, the new team leader of a U.S. pyrotechnic unit that is deployed in the Iraq War. James' questionable actions and symptoms of unstable mental condition (stressed by Jeremy Renner's noteworthy acting performance) offer the viewer suspenseful experience of anti-heroism in its raw form. Other important additions to the militainment discourse are movies *Lone Survivor* (2013, directed by Peter Berg) and *12 Strong* (2018, directed by Nicolai Fuglsig). *Lone Survivor* focuses on the unsuccessful U.S. Navy SEAL mission Operation Red Wings, during which a group of four reconnaissance and surveillance specialists tried to track and potentially kill a local Taliban leader in Afghanistan. The film's story is based on the memories of the sole survivor of the campaign, Marcus Luttrell, here played by Mark Wahlberg. The way human survival instinct is depicted strongly collides with expressions of graphic violence and displays of shockingly convincing gunshot wounds or other types of injuries. The movie's marketing strategy was unique as well, since the director decided to screen it to multiple professional American football teams in order to increase its social media presence through the reactions and impressions posted by the included players. Once again, it is a suitable example of merging sports, media, military and entertainment. Working with a similar premise, *12 Strong* also follows a group of soldiers during the first phase of the American military campaign in Afghanistan. However, this movie portrays the twelve American soldiers as allies of the local military authorities who try to eliminate various radicalised organisations. The spectacular images of 'horse soldiers', since the Americans are eventually forced to ride horses in order to overcome the complicated terrain, are combined with various expressions of heroism – at the end, all of them survive, which makes the story both visually compelling and inspirational, although still morally questionable.

Less commercially successful, but still socially important are various American movies that do not portray any parts of the military campaigns led in Afghanistan and Iraq, but rather their aftermath and society-wide or personal consequences. Probably the most important film of this kind, *Zero Dark Thirty*, was directed by Kathryn Bigelow in 2013. Hasian Jr.'s essay provides its readers with a feminist critique of *Zero Dark Thirty*, claiming that the film's producers, Kathryn Bigelow and Mark Boal, have marketed this visual artifact as a liberating cinematic representation that shows how a dedicated woman led the manhunt for Osama bin Laden, but the author argues that this is more of a populist, postfeminist representation that advances militarist causes.³² Other movies that depict the Afghanistan and Iraq War veterans, their struggle to return back to the normal life and the conflict between a soldier's duty and their moral convictions, are *Stop-Loss* (2008, directed by Kimberly Peirce) and *Fort Bliss* (2014, directed by Claudia Myers). The former film portrays a group of young soldiers from Texas returning home after two tours in the Middle East and constantly remembering their own failures. One of them, Brandon (Ryan Phillippe), is eventually 'stop-lossed' (returned to active duty after his contract has been fulfilled, against his will). He decides to desert, while Steve (Channing Tatum) drinks and enacts one of the most remarkable scenes of the whole

³² See also: HASIAN, JR. M.: *Zero Dark Thirty* and the Critical Challenges Posed by Populist Postfeminism During the Global War on Terrorism. In *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 2013, Vol. 37, No. 4, p. 322-343.

movie, in which he runs around almost naked, digs a hole in his own front yard and strikes his fiancée Michelle. Tommy (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) becomes depressed after being discharged and commits suicide. The film thus offers an open view on problems war veterans experience in the 21st century, including clinical depression, alcoholism, violent reactions and, as in case of Brandon and Steve, eventual return to active duty utilised as an escape mechanism. In contrast, *Fort Bliss* focuses on a decorated female medic (Michelle Monaghan) returning home from Afghanistan. Being a single mother, she experiences serious problems while trying to reconnect with her son and establish a new personal life.

Conclusion

The above-mentioned expressions of audio-visual militainment are certainly associated with various questions of misrecognition on a global scale and serious problems related to global safety.³³ Even though we have focused on American feature films or movies created on basis of international co-productions involving the United States and other countries (in most cases the United Kingdom, France and Germany), films that are distinctively militaristic or work with the war drama genre are also created in Russia, China and other countries with strong domestic markets. It would be naïve to think that non-American expressions of militainment do not use exactly the same methods to build their narratives and present their messages. It can be concluded that the widespread acceptance of war images as a source of entertainment results from the general popularity of war movies, militaristic television programming, certain genres of digital games (especially first-person shooters) and international news.³⁴ In case of Hollywood movies the vast machinery of militainment employs the practices by which “*the most powerful military in the world leverages the most powerful entertainment industry in the world for public relations purposes*”.³⁵ However, the same would be true if we talked about many American episodic television dramas that portray war events. Some of the most successful ones (and those that are critically acclaimed) were produced by *Home Box Office*, becoming an important part of the company’s original programming. We talk about Steven Spielberg and Tom Hanks’ *Band of Brothers* (2001, WWII in Europe), *The Pacific* (2010, WWII in the Pacific Ocean), and *Generation Kill* (2008, the 2003 invasion of Iraq). *Generation Kill* was created on basis of the autobiographical publication written by the former *Rolling Stone* journalist Evan Wright. The drama’s protagonists often ironically comment on the military campaign they are a part of, remembering, for example, a military advertisement appealing to young men like them that would potentially be interested in joining the U.S. Marine Corps. The given advertisement used ‘fairy tale’ references and portrayed a knight in a blue armour slaying a dragon.³⁶

³³ See, for example: 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.; BITTAR, E.: The Era of Global Disputes and Mass Media Distortions. Dialogue on Recognition, Justice and Democracy (Interview with Marek Hrubec). In *Communication Today*, 2017, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 146-154.

³⁴ CAPOZZI, P.: Spectacular War: Media, Militainment, and the New Imperialism. In McLOUGHLIN, K., FORTE, M. C. (eds.): *Emergency as Security: Liberal Empire at Home and Abroad*. Montreal : Alert Press, 2013, p. 112.

³⁵ STAHL, R.: Dispatches from the Militainment Empire. In BOYD-BARRETT, O., MIRRLEES, T. (eds.): *Media Imperialism: Continuity and Change*. Lanham, Boulder, New York, London : Rowman and Littlefield, 2020, p. 148.

³⁶ GUNTHER, L-S.: Innocents Abroad? *Generation Kill* in the Three-Block War. In STRETCH, C., RÍSQUEZ, C. A. (eds.): *Innocence and Loss: Representations of War and National Identity in the United States*. Newcastle Upon Tyne : Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014, p. 154-155.

The previous analysis of selected American war dramas suggests that audio-visual militainment is able to work with a variety of topics – for example, with the idea of deserting to return back to the loved ones (*Cold Mountain*). Portrayals of significant historical figures influencing the course of events are quite frequent (*Lincoln*, *The Imitation Game*, *The Darkest Hour*), as well as sentimental views of friendship, family and mutual bonds overcoming the horrors of war, not necessarily related only to human beings (*War Horse*). Some of these movies are able to deliver both spectacular visuals and cinematographic excellence (*Dunkirk*, *1917*), while other focus solely on rich computer-generated imagery to provide their viewers with immersive experience (*Pearl Harbour*, *Midway*, etc.). Militainment also includes highly personal true stories (*Testament of Youth*) and fictional narratives centred on ordinary people who have to face war conflicts and/or their consequences (e.g. *The Book Thief*, *Fury*, *The Aftermath*). World War II is generally seen as a setting that provides war stories with a sense of legitimacy and seeking justice (*Hacksaw Ridge*), while the Vietnam War is a preferred source of real or fictional narratives displaying brutality and meaninglessness of American military interventions (*Last Flag Flying*, *The Last Full Measure*, but also older movies such as *Apocalypse Now*, *Platoon*, *Full Metal Jacket* or *We Were Soldiers*). Movie portrayals of wars and armed conflicts occurring in Africa, South America or anywhere else than in Europe, the Pacific and the Middle East are seen only rarely (*Black Hawk Down*). However, we have to acknowledge that audio-visual reflections on the modern-day war conflicts, especially those occurring in Afghanistan and Iraq post-9/11, are increasingly popular. These stories may be highly personal and based on real events (*American Sniper*, *Megan Leavey*, *The Lone Survivor*), but some of them are fictitious instead, yet impressively elaborated (*Hurt Locker*, *Stop-Loss*).

Hollywood militainment has attracted some of the most talented and acclaimed movie directors (e.g. Steven Spielberg, Mel Gibson, Clint Eastwood, Christopher Nolan), cinematographers (Janusz Kamiński, Roger Deakins) and composers (John Williams, Hans Zimmer). Female creators of war dramas are not a rarity anymore (e.g. Kathryn Bigelow's *Hurt Locker*, Kimberly Peirce's *Stop-Loss*). Militainment's overall popularity and spectacular nature stretch far beyond the war drama genre, as well as far beyond the topic, scope and purpose of this paper. It is therefore necessary to perceive its (often implicit) presence in all kinds of feature films and media products, since this militarism-entertainment hybrid is a powerful tool, which is often used to justify and/or explain questionable or even controversial war conflicts and foreign military interventions.

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FROM OFFLINE BEING TO ONLINE BEING: TRANSFORMATION OF AN ORDINARY PERSON INTO A CELEBRITY

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ABSTRACT:

The study focuses on the phenomenon of celebrity as a partial aspect of the paradigmatic change in human being that occurred after the advent of online media into the everyday life of ordinary people. Celebrities, or media-famous personalities, have been successful professionals in their fields in the offline world. Online reality, however, allows everyone to show up, shape, and eventually establish themselves in their own communication arena as a celebrity—regardless of their profession. It seems that the skill of ideological leadership rather than the former professional excellence is necessary to gain online celebrity status. The aim of the study is to compare the nature and manifestations of the celebrity phenomenon in the offline and online epochs, and thus point to the degree of deepening mediatization of society.

KEY WORDS:

celebrity, mediatization, mediatized habitus, offline being, online being, online media, traditional media

1 Introduction

The research in the fields of celebrity and celebrity culture is one of the growth industries for the humanities and social sciences in the 21st century. “Psychologists warn us of the dangers of ‘celebrity worship’, sociologists interrogate young people about their personal expectations of fame, and even a discipline with as attenuated a relation to popular culture as literary studies now studies such things as ‘post-colonial celebrity’. The textual richness of celebrity culture is proving irresistible, and so the fetish for textual analysis that dominated so much of the 1980s has found itself right at home in the study of celebrity.”¹ There are also different approaches to celebrity analysis in the very field of celebrity studies.² Some authors focus on textual and discursive aspects, others focus on economic production related to celebrity, celebrities and celebrity culture, on areas related to the production of celebrity media content, i.e. celebrity journalism, as well as on consumerism of celebrity content, i.e. media audience.³ Nevertheless, these are fields that, according to some experts, remain undertheorized. This study aims to contribute to theorizing the role of media in circulation of media-mediated fame. In doing so, however, it has encountered many challenging questions, many of which could not be fully answered in this paper. Instead, the aim has been to offer considered indications that can be the premise for more detailed examinations in the future. In an example of the process of celebrization of an individual and way of his establishment and recognition as a celebrity, the study focuses on multiplied mediatization of habitus within society as a result of the advent of online media. Starting with definitions of celebrity, celebrity culture, and mediatization, online celebrity will be conceptualized by looking specifically at the sequence pattern: success in particular field – fame – a celebrity status, which is typical for the media-mediated fame in the traditional, i.e. offline media, in opposition to the sequence pattern present in the online arena: self-presentation – fame – a community celebrity status – success in the field. Comparing habitus of an individual shaped by the offline and online media, the study deals with the nature and manifestations of the

¹ TURNER, G.: Approaching celebrity studies. In *Celebrity Studies*, 2010, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 11.

² For more information, see: INGLIS, F.: *A Short History of Celebrity*. Princeton, Woodstock : Princeton University Press, 2010.

³ See also: BENNETT, J.: Approaching celebrity studies. In *Celebrity Studies*, 2010, Vol. 6, No. 3, p. 269-271.; TURNER, G.: Approaching celebrity studies. In *Celebrity Studies*, 2010, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 11-20.

celebrity phenomenon, and thus points to the degree of deepening mediatization of society in the online era.

2 Concepts of Celebrity, Celebrity Culture and Mediatization

As with all kinds of culture and societal phenomena, celebrity as well as celebrity culture have also proven difficult to define. Nevertheless, we find several approaches, descriptions and definitions of them in the media studies. The very word “celebrity” has come from the Latin *celebritas* (multitude, fame) and *celeber* (frequented). The first known use comes from 15th century, in the meaning of fame, of the state of being celebrated.⁴ The author of the broadest concept of celebrity as we know and use it today, is American historian Daniel Joseph Boorstin. He is well known for understanding celebrity as a “new kind of eminence” and he has also coined a well-known phrase “a person known for his well-knownness” as a definition of celebrity.⁵ However, it is important to add that Boorstin treated celebrities, “big names” in trade jargon⁶, as a pathological phenomenon of “pseudo-events”⁷ of the 20th century mass culture. For P. Daniel Marshall, an Australian cultural critic and Professor of New Media, Communication and Cultural Studies, celebrities (as embodiment of success) are not only by-products of the boom of the media accompanying the democratization of the Western society, but also the ultimate construction of false value.⁸ The academic study of stars, celebrity and fame has arisen as an accepted part of the academy after the publication of monograph *Stars* by Richard Dyer in 1979.⁹ Thus, a celebrity is usually defined as a person “famous for being famous”. He is a subject of media interest and does a lot to become and remain a subject of media interest. In order to get to the centre of media visibility and audibility, the celebrity performs various political, cultural, and economic activities. This is his business, which he manages at a more or less professional level. Although many authors agree that celebrities act as a global, ecumenical phenomenon across the planet, that they do not belong to any particular territory, there are also research studies confirming that celebrities are established and accepted not only at the global but also at the local level, that there are supra-national as well as sub-national celebrities.¹⁰

The specificity of celebrity culture is media-mediated fame. On the side of the actor of his celebritization, it is a process of becoming famous, being famous and staying in that fame, so that there is a reason to be presented in the media. But the reverse is also true. Repeated presence of a person in the media is itself a symbol of that person’s celebrity status. “The process of celebritisation is widely seen as transformative but with markedly varying political significance; at one end of the spectrum of opinion, it would be described as a form of

⁴ *Celebrity*. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/celebrity#h1>>.

⁵ BOORSTIN, D. J.: *The Image: Or, What Happened to the American Dream*. New York : Atheneum, 1962, p. 57.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 58.

⁷ Remark by the author: A ‘pseudo-event’ is such an event that is manufactured specifically in order to be reported in the media (e.g. press conference), it is a „new kind of synthetic novelty which has flooded our experience“.; BOORSTIN, D. J.: *The Image: Or, What Happened to the American Dream*. New York : Atheneum, 1962, p. 9.

⁸ See also: MARSHALL, P. D.: *Celebrity and Power: Fame in Contemporary Culture*. Minneapolis, London : University of Minnesota Press, 1997.

⁹ For more information, see: DYER, R.: *Stars*. London : British Film Institute, 1979.

¹⁰ See also: DRIESSENS, O.: Theorizing Celebrity Cultures: Thickenings of Celebrity Cultures and the Role of Cultural (Working) Memory. In *Communications: European Journal of Communication Research*, 2014, Vol. 39, No. 2, p. 109-127.

enfranchisement and empowerment, but at the other end as a mode of exploitation or objectification. In its most extreme and worrying instances, celebritisation can produce something close to abjection (think of Britney Spears or Jade Goody at various points in their public careers).¹¹ Thus, celebrity culture is, so to speak, a state of society in which celebrities as the embodiment of media-mediated fame play a central role in the media content. Celebritization is then a process of public recognition of an individual as a celebrity and his subsequent media-mediated establishment as a celebrity. Without modern mass media, there wouldn't be celebrities as the stars in the broadest popular expression. It is important to note, that "film studies in particular has historically used the term 'star', and the concept of the star [...] was used in this context to refer to a representational interaction between the on/off-screen persona. In comparison, work outside film studies has more often used the term 'celebrity' to indicate a broad category which defines the contemporary state of being famous."¹² The collocation "on/off-screen persona" seems to be significant in the context of this study, because it shows how celebrity, celebritization, and celebrity culture in general operate. Advent of broadcasting media resulted in a huge increase in the number of available radio and television celebrities. This is related to the process of mediatization of offline culture and society of the West at the end of the 20th century. Nevertheless, current online era allows to even multiply this phenomenon. Let us look at mediatization in more detail.

The world of everyday life originally mediated through the media has become daily media self-presentation of individuals performed through media logic and media optics (knowingly or unknowingly). With some degree of simplification, it can be said that people have begun to perceive, portray, and judge the world as well as their own position in it as if through the eyes and ears of the mass media. At the same time, in the middle of the 1980s, two social scientists on both sides of the Atlantic drew attention to this phenomenon: Swede Kent Asp on the European continent and American media theorist Neil Postman in the U.S.A. In his famous work *Amusing Ourselves to Death*,¹³ Postman tried to demonstrate that "to enter the great television conversation, one American cultural institution after another is learning to speak its terms. Television, in other words, is transforming our culture into one vast arena for show business. It is entirely possible, of course, that in the end we shall find that delightful, and decide we like it just fine."¹⁴ "The nature of its discourse is changing as the demarcation line between what is show business and what is not becomes harder to see with each passing day. Our priests and presidents, our surgeons and lawyers, our educators and news-casters need worry less about satisfying the demands of their discipline than the demands of good showmanship."¹⁵ The same were the conclusions of analyses of the communication within political environment summarized by Kent Asp in his dissertation entitled *Måktiga massmedier: Studier i politisk opinionsbildning (Powerful Mass Media: Studies in Political Opinion Formation)*.¹⁶ He found out that politicians and policy in general are too much adapted to the demands of the mass media and media view of appropriate coverage or non-coverage of particular political topics: "the political system is influenced by the media to a large extent and it is adjusted to the media demand for media coverage of the policy."¹⁷ This

¹¹ TURNER, G.: Approaching celebrity studies. In *Celebrity Studies*, 2010, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 13.

¹² HOLMES, S., REDMONT, S.: A Journal in Celebrity Studies. In *A Journal in Celebrity Studies*, 2010, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 4.

¹³ See also: POSTMAN, N.: *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*. London : Penguin Books, 1986.

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 80.

¹⁵ Ibidem, p. 98.

¹⁶ For more information, see: ASP, K.: *Måktiga massmedier: Studier i politisk opinionsbildning*. Stockholm : Förlaget Akademitlitteratur AB, 1986.

¹⁷ Ibidem, p. 359.

high degree of adaptation of politicians to the media demands (both content and formal), Asp has called *Politikens medialisering* (mediatization of policy). The Danish media researcher Stig Hjarvard has been a direct successor to the conceptual development of mediatization in the Aspian tradition. Hjarvard has explored the mediatization of different areas of personal and social life. For example, mediatization of policy (*From the Press to Opinion Industry*), of language (*The Globalization of Language*), of games and toys (*From Bricks to Bites*), of religion (*From the Faith of the Church to the Enchantment of the Media*), of media audience (*Seernes reality*), of media in society as a whole (*Media and Communication Studies in a Mediated World*), etc. In the context of this study on celebrityization, we will be interested in his analysis of the mediatization of habitus¹⁸ (*The Social Character of a New Individualism*). Let us first explain how Hjarvard, who is also the author of the theory of mediatization, understands the very mediatization:

“Mediatization is defined as the process whereby culture and society to an increasing degree become dependent on the media and their logic^[19] and this process is furthermore characterized by a duality in that the media have acquired the status of a semi-independent institution in society at the same time as they become integrated into the very fabric of social life.”²⁰ Mediatization can only occur where the social saturation and flooding of the society by the media and their logic is so extensive that the media cannot be considered separate from other institutions within society. To put it another way, mediatization of society occurs where society as a whole (both its individuals and institutions) behaves according to the logic of the media. As Postman and Asp have indicated, where private as well as public life is perceived, portrayed, and judged as if through the eyes and ears of the media. Mediatization thus only entered the life of Western society in the last decades of the 20th century, i.e. at the turn of the offline and online era.

3 Habitus in the Offline and in the Online Era

The concept of habitus has been introduced into philosophy and sociology by Pierre Bourdieu as a structured set of practical, cognitive, affective, and physical dispositions that accompany the interpretation and action of the individual. The individual gains his habitus by being exposed to the influence of social institutions, their norms and rules (from family, school, work, hospitals, interest groups, to the media). The specific form of habitus is adapted to the social conditions in which it originated. It involves the embodiment of various social structures, e.g. race, gender, physical disposition, (non-)discrimination of social class and other living conditions of the individual, including media consumption. These are ultimately translated into his taste, preferences and action. Habitus, however, provides neither a full interpretation of the situation nor instructions for action. Different types of institutions, with their norms and rules, shape people with different behaviours and expectations. In the same way, people with similar dispositions, with a similar place in the social structure, have the same habitus. Habitus thus defines not only individuals but also social groups. In their tastes, preferences and actions, habitus restores (reproduces) the social conditions that created it. Habitus always arises in practice and is directed towards practice. The practice of media consumption is no exception.

¹⁸ HJARVARD, S.: *The Mediatization of Culture and Society*. Abingdon, New York : Routledge, 2013, p. 137-152.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 153.

An integral part of the media-mediated world has always been not only information on events in the world of politics, culture, science, sport or weather, but also information on safety, health, education, fashion, lifestyle, gossip or entertainment. In short, information on consumer choices. Technological improvements to the ever-newer “new media” (from newspapers, movie, radio, television, satellite, the Internet, to social networking) have not only expanded, but also multiplied these consumer opportunities. Original circulation, listening, and audience surveys have resulted in a continuous online survey that produces and evaluates user data for a variety of indicators so that the media can provide more and more targeted information to their audience. Media consumption today can be referred to as common social practice, because the consumer habit of manifesting its own preference by clicking on a specific location of its individual communication medium (I call it a “click plebiscite”) has become an immanent part of reading, listening to or watching the online information stream. “Earlier, the media were either in service to other institutions, addressing a socially defined group according to, e.g., political interest (the partisan press), or the media were cultural institutions addressing a generalized public by promoting a common national culture. Today, the media are less steered by such social interests or common cultural values, and are more likely to produce a circulate content in ways that will meet the lifestyle preferences of different segments of the population. Lifestyle magazines, format radio, and cable television are examples of mass media that allow more individualized, lifestyle-based consumption patterns to emerge, but the spread of digital and interactive media has multiplied the ability of the media and users to converge around shared lifestyles, i.e., practices and representations with a shared value orientation that are positioned *vis-à-vis* the other media consumption patterns of other groups.”²¹

In a highly modernized society, according to Hjarvard, the mediator of the cultural and social hierarchy is precisely the lifestyle and not political parties, unions or the church. They hold a less important social position than in the past. Audience lifestyles determine the content and form of media content. Those produced by non-professional authors of texts, sounds and images on social networks, but also those produced by professionals in the field of mass media. The media institutions are very interested in reading, listening to and watching their content, so the content is constantly updated and optimized according to the results of the audience’s “click plebiscite”. “The role of guide and advisor for modern individuals also ensures that the media content will emphasize the discussion of new developments and trends, rather than recycling existing knowledge, but the intensity and direction of such renewal will, of course, vary according to the particular lifestyle segments that are addressed.”²² Half a century ago, the mass media was there to inform, educate, cultivate and also entertain its audiences through the content covered by a media institution and chosen and processed by professionals. The 21st century media is governed by a different logic. The logic of a kind of information-publication self-service of the public. It is not only professional editors, photographers, cameramen, screenwriters or editors who determine what, when, to what extent and in what form the audience will read, listen and watch. On the contrary, both the choice and the decision in the same act are made by the audience itself by clicking on the place of the display that represents the consumer preference. The original role of the mass media—to inform, educate, cultivate, and also to entertain—has not been changed, but the technique for achieving this has. This is an important thesis for our further development of the topic of celebrity in the online era.

²¹ HJARVARD, S.: *The Mediatization of Culture and Society*. Abingdon, New York : Routledge, 2013, p. 148.

²² *Ibidem*, p. 149.

A contemporary media user who is both the creator (producer) and the recipient (consumer) of media content has become the reality of a mediatized Western society. Media consumption has become a banal social practice. And the fact of media consumption as a social practice has changed the habitus of the media consumer. Instead of the habitus of a more or less active or passive recipient of media content, he has acquired the habitus of its producer (creator, author). He thus filled those gaps in the media content that he himself considered to be publishable according to his own preferences. Every reader, listener or viewer of contemporary media and thus also producer of their media content (texts, sounds, images) creates a kind of his own “public privacy” and at the same time his own “private public”. This is the arena where he can publicly fulfil his authorial or editorial ambitions, experience the satisfaction associated with publishing his own work, and finally, emotionally or even commercially evaluate the possible success. Zygmunt Bauman summed up this trend by saying: “The arrival of the internet has put within the grasp of every Tom, Dick and Harry a feat that once required night escapades by a few trained and adventurous graffiti artists: making the invisible visible, rendering the neglected, ignored and abandoned blatantly, jarringly present – in short, making one’s being-in-the-world tangible and irrefutable. [...] Seen against this background, gaining being-in-the-world with the help of Facebook carries an advantage over daubing graffiti, calling for no hard-to-acquire skills and being ‘risk-free’ (no police breathing down your neck), legal, widely recognized, acknowledged and respected.”²³

The audience has never been a passive recipient of media content. People more or less critically considered and evaluated it on their own habitus. The online media world, however, provides every literate person (with access to the Internet) with a public arena where they can freely, without the intervention of institutionalized publishing elites, search for, as well as publish, matching information (regardless of their authorship and source), while presenting their own visuals and comments to the private or public events. On the other side, the Internet also offers a space for “public privacy”. There, as a producer (creator, author), every literate person can publicly fulfil their authorial or editorial ambitions, experience the satisfaction of publishing their own work, and ultimately the emotional ups and downs associated with the recognition or non-recognition of their production of texts, sounds, images. At the same time, they run the risk of public defamation, which they are not always fully aware of. People who put their own texts, sounds, images on the Internet do not want to be disgraced. On the contrary, they do so in order to gain recognition, which can then eventually be transformed into fame and then into personal or career success. “In a mediatized society, the very representation and visibility of an individual or group may be a valuable recognition, both as a private, public, and social person. Many social networking media such as Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, etc. are not only forums for communication and contact, but also media for the recognition of various private, social, and public achievements. [...] As the media project sociability as a dominant mode of interaction in many institutional contexts, the media come to influence how recognition is exercised as love, respect, and esteem. Due to the partly private, partly public nature of sociability, recognition through the media will often assume both an emotional and rational form.”²⁴

²³ BAUMAN, Z., LYON, D.: *Liquid Surveillance. A Conversation*. Cambridge, Malden : Polity Press, 2013, p. 110.

²⁴ HJARVARD, S.: *The Mediatization of Culture and Society*. Abingdon, New York : Routledge, 2013, p. 150-151.

Celebrities are a good example of this phenomenon.²⁵ Celebrities show off their profiles and form “friendships” on the Internet and social networks. For them, what is a close emotionally strong matter of basic recognition, what they online disclose as their positive and important personal qualities, becomes a matter of not only emotional appraisal from the outside, but also rational general (public) perception. Celebrities who want to recognize their follower or an event will not only do so through rational appropriate statement, but also through their own media performance in which they seek to express their affinity with the follower or for the event. And if they want to express their incompatibility of opinions and attitudes, dishonour their opponent or reject the event, they also reach not only for rational procedures, but also for emotionally strong media performance. This brings them closer to their audience. Online media provides them with an almost unlimited arena for such activities.²⁶ It is independent of the editor’s opinion, it has no time and space limitations: no deadlines, no limited number of pages or limited program duration. In the next paragraph, we will look at the simplicity of the transformation process of an ordinary person into a celebrity in the online era.

4 Celebrityization Based on a Binary Opposition of “Us” Versus “Them”

As mentioned above, many authors agree that celebrities act as a global and ecumenical phenomenon across the planet, that they do not belong to any particular territory. Nevertheless, there are also research studies confirming that celebrities are established and accepted not only at the global but also at the local level, that there are supra-national as well as sub-national celebrities. It is also crucial to keep in mind that “media cultures are embedded in a material geography, since through their infrastructures and institutions they are anchored in specific territorial and/or linguistic spaces.”²⁷ A media sociologist Olivier Driessens understands sub-national celebrity cultures “as the collection of dominant mass-mediated celebrity culture, in addition to several niche and subcultural celebrity cultures, organized around niche media and specific interests and groups of people. [...] (Sub)national celebrity cultures can be seen as a binary construction of ‘us’ versus ‘them’.”²⁸ This theory of binary opposition has become a key argument of the next paragraph of this study describing process of celebrityization of ordinary people through the online media. The meaning of “them” is twofold. Firstly, it represents internationally known celebrities and celebrity cultures, especially American and British, which serve as an example of the highest level of celebrity professionalism (e.g. Hollywood stars). Secondly, the meaning of “them” means celebrities and celebrity cultures at particular national level. “They are at times less professional, relying on a celebrity industry that is not as developed or mature, with a celebrity press that does not push the limits as far as the paparazzi, certain tabloids and gossip blogs do in the US or UK.”²⁹ The ‘us’ in the ‘us and them’ binary represents “localebrities”,

²⁵ Remark by the author: In another example—of literary criticism, this phenomenon is described by media linguist Mária Stanková.; See also: STANKOVÁ, M.: Fenomén literárnej kritiky v 21. storočí. In SÁMELOVÁ, A., STANKOVÁ, M., HACEK, J. (eds.): *Fenomén 2019: Súčasná profesionálna žurnalistika a jej reflexie*. Bratislava : Univerzita Komenského, 2019, p. 64-75.;

STANKOVÁ, M.: Literary Criticism – From Hero to Zero. In *Megatrends and Media 2020: On the Edge*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2020, in press.

²⁶ Remark by the author: For a comprehensive study of the role of emotions in today’s world.; For more information, see: WAHL-JORGENSEN, K.: *Emotions, Media and Politics*. Cambridge : Polity Press, 2019.

²⁷ DRIESSENS, O.: Theorizing Celebrity Cultures: Thickenings of Celebrity Cultures and the Role of Cultural (Working) Memory. In *Communications: European Journal of Communication Research*, 2014, Vol. 39, No. 2, p. 117.

²⁸ Ibidem, p. 118.

²⁹ Ibidem.

i.e. “figures who are known only to those within a very specific geographical national or local area”.³⁰

The theory suggests that people perceive and recognize celebrities at multiple levels from transnational and more national to regional and local. Moreover, online media allows them to establish a kind of micro-locality, i.e. “community celebrities” and “community celebrity cultures”. What connects them is not only particular celebrity affiliation to particular online locality (as a geographical aspect of the nature of given community), but also a specific speech culture (as a linguistic aspect). Such a trans-local understanding of celebrity and celebrity culture “steps away from the idea that a culture coincides with a particular nation or social group. Conversely, it focuses on networks, crossroads, and connectivity.”³¹ Thus, “community celebrity” is a person famous only within a particular online community. Regardless of its “size” or frequency of followers. A “community celebrity culture” then consists of those celebrities (famous individuals within the online community) who only circulate in given online community media micro-cultures and who appear only in media content of given online community. The traditional media (newspapers, magazines, radio, and television) has created a basis for a high cultural and social demand for fame. Gradual media-mediated adoration of successful professionals who were the then political, artistic, sports, scientific, medical, etc. leaders in their fields, then made them “persons known for their well-knownness” – celebrities. Note that the process has moved from leadership based on unquestionable achievements in particular fields to celebrity status. The online media, however, has inverted this sequence. In the online media, everyone can draw the attention of the audience to themselves within a close online community, and they may not reach excellence (success) in their professional career. Being interesting for members of a given online community suffices to gain their fame within the community. The online community members must only be interested in the potential celebrity’s statuses, memes, photos, sound adaptations, videos, or telling jokes. A “click plebiscite” provides evidence of this interest. With fame also comes recognition which eventually grants the individual the status of celebrity at a given community level as a kind of mentioned “localebrity”. An example are the thousands of permanently emerging YouTubers, bloggers, vloggers, influencers who have not reached a previous career success worthy of publishing in the traditional media (i.e. reviewed by experts and editors in the field and in journalism). On the contrary, their career of fame has begun in self-presentation and continues to develop in self-media-mediated communication of personal success. More specifically, in self-presentation of their “public privacy” in their own medium with the “private public”. These “localebrities” then become leaders of media-mediated communication in many areas of a given community life. Because their “private public” is interested not only in their privacy and life-style, but also in their opinions on almost everything, from politics to sports.

This change in the very pattern of celebritization also reflects different levels of mediatization in the offline and online worlds. In that offline, celebritization has operated in a pattern “from outstanding success and mastery-based leadership in the field to edited media-mediated fame and subsequent grant a celebrity status”. The online world, on the other hand, allows media audiences to be divided into increasingly smaller communities that decide for themselves, who will be recognized as famous and reach a celebrity status. Being “famous for being

³⁰ McELROY, R., WILLIAMS, R.: Remembering Ourselves, Viewing the Others: Historical Reality Television and Celebrity in the Small Nation. In *Television & New Media*, 2011, Vol. 12, No. 3, p. 197.

³¹ DRIESSENS, O.: Theorizing Celebrity Cultures: Thickenings of Celebrity Cultures and the Role of Cultural (Working) Memory. In *Communications: European Journal of Communication Research*, 2014, Vol. 39, No. 2, p. 120.

famous” has become a trendy matter and the pattern has been inverted. The online community celebritization begins with media-mediated fame based on self-presentation within one’s own media, continues with the award of community celebrity status – “localebrity”, and culminates in ideological leadership, which, if professionalized, then allows for celebrity benefits, i.e. to start a professional career in what individual has become a celebrity in the community, including economic and financial benefits.

Conclusion

The paper is focused on transformation of an ordinary person into a celebrity. In an example of the process of celebratization of an individual and way of his establishment and recognition as a celebrity, the study deals with multiplied mediatization of habitus within society as a result of the advent of the online media. Starting from definitions of celebrity, celebrity culture, and mediatization, online celebrity will be conceptualized by looking specifically at the sequence pattern: success in particular field—fame—a celebrity status, which is typical for the media-mediated fame in the traditional, i.e. offline media, in opposition to the sequence pattern present in the online arena: self-presentation—fame—a community celebrity status—success in the field. What they have in common is that leaders are firstly labelled “famous person” before they become celebrities. Comparing habitus of individuals shaped by the offline and online media, the study points out the degree of deepening mediatization of society in the online era. This paper originally aimed to contribute to theorizing the role of online media in circulation of media-mediated fame. In doing so, however, it has encountered many challenging questions, many of which could not be fully answered in this paper. Instead, the aim has been to offer considered indications that can be the premise for more detailed examinations in the future.

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JOURNALISM ON TIKTOK

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ABSTRACT:

The TikTok social network attracted the attention of the young generation of teenagers and it immediately became popular thanks to its nature. Fast and funny videos with a musical background become viral and competes with the Instagram. Influencers also found a place for their job on TikTok and gradually the media began to appear on this platform. In this study, the authors will deal with the content that selected media disseminate on this social network and how they fit into the context of their journalistic work. They will try to name the intentions of communication on the TikTok social network and also to define the basic trends and procedures for creating journalistic content on the TikTok social network.

KEY WORDS:

Daily Mirror, Facebook, GEO, Guardian Australia, informing, Instagram, interaction, media, social network, TikTok

1 Social Networks

According to Cambridge Dictionary, social media are „forms of media that allow people to communicate and share information using the internet or mobile phones.“¹ So it is a set of digital media that encourage users to participate, interact and share various kinds of information. Of course they provide great opportunities for users as well as for the entrepreneurs while using various tools and forms to attract attention – posting, sharing and commenting texts, pictures, videos, podcasting, blogs, vlogs, etc. Social media are one of the most popular and sought-after websites on the Internet. Statistics claim that during the last year (January 2019 - January 2020) the number of social media users increased by more than 9 percent (321 million new users) and so until January 2020 „nearly 60 percent of the world’s population is already online, and the latest trends suggest that more than half of the world’s total population will use social media by the middle of this year.“² Among the most spread social networks in the world there are Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Twitter, Pinterest, Flickr, Google+ and many others. In recent years, TikTok has aroused enormous interest, success and influence. So they all belong among the most downloaded apps today.

1.1 Perennials Facebook and Instagram

R. Adámik mentions the main social media platforms that are necessary for setting up the right strategy for attracting users and motivating them to use, share and create content on the social media (and thus generate profit for advertisers). According to the thematic focus of the study (sharing information among young people using TikTok and its spread), we perceive as important primarily:

- **social networks:** the most common platforms for social interaction are Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat (specialized on the consumer environment), LinkedIn (business environment) and Twitter (both environments).
- **social newcasting:** most newspapers and magazines have their online form so the readers can easily engage in discussions through comments below the articles.

¹ *Social Media*. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/social-media>>.

² KEMP, S.: *Digital 2020: 3,8 Billion People Use Social Media*. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/blog/2020/01/digital-2020-3-8-billion-people-use-social-media>>.

- **social streaming:** concerns media that focus on photos (Pinterest), videos and podcasts.³

The first social medium was **LinkedIn**, launched in 2003 by Reid Hoffmann and a few co-workers from PayPal and Socialnet.com. It is employment-oriented online service specialized on finding jobs (for job-seekers) or employees (posting and offering jobs) - with options of uploading curriculum vitae (including career information, education, working positions etc.), saving references and creating professional profiles of all people who joined it. It is not focused on people and their social interactions (chatting with friends, seeing their pictures but also the pictures and posts of their friends). Facebook came up with this idea. As we all know, **Facebook** (FB) is an American company offering social networking services. It was launched in February 2004 (developed from former Facemash 2003) by the students of Harvard University. The most well-known is Mark Zuckerberg, others are Chris Hughes, Dustin Moskovitz and Eduardo Saverin. According to M. Hall in 2012 it became the largest social network in the world, with more than one billion users. Access to Facebook is free of charge, so the company earns most of its money from advertisements published directly on FB. In addition to the classic options (creating a new profile, adding text documents, photos, videos, joining an existing group, creating a new group, commenting, sharing, etc.) FB has many other components including Timeline, Status, Live feed incorporated into Newsfeed. Due to many advantages it spread very quickly – firstly among the students from Harvard University, then among the students of various universities and since 2006 Facebook’s membership is opened not only to students but to anyone over the age of 13. Since then the advertisers were also able to create new and effective customer relationships that were not possible before and many companies began using the social network(s) also for marketing and advertising.⁴ What concerns social media, FB still dominates (and is in the first place).

Instagram (IG) application is the work of American Kevin Systrom (computer programmer and entrepreneur) and Brazilian Mike Krieger (software engineer and entrepreneur). They created a photo sharing app that they named Instagram (based on the words: Instant Camera, and Telegram). They did it in 2010. According to New Audience Media the main aim of this app was to provide the users with “Polaroid-like” photos, that they can tweak with filters and share, they can also share short videos (max. 15 seconds). In 2012 IG was bought by Facebook. It brought many changes – new filters and features were added (e.g. Photo Maps, Mobile Photo Pages, Web Profiles, since 2013 also private messaging called Instagram Direct is available, etc.). “*Today, Instagram has over 150 million active monthly users. At average, there are 16 billion photos that are being shared daily, 55 million photos posted, and 1.2 billion likes every single day.*”⁵ According to Digital 2020 the average internet user spends online almost **7 hours each day**. If we sleep for 8 hours it means that we spend more than 40 % of our waking lives online, and more than one-third of that time we spend using social media. More than half of all the “online time” we spend on mobile phones.⁶ Of course, the amount of time spent online varies – and it differs for each country and user.

³ ADÁMIK, R.: *Sociálne médiá a ich platformy*. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://budmanazer.sk/socialne-media-a-ich-platformy-2/>>.

⁴ HALL, M.: *Facebook: American Company*. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Facebook>>.

⁵ *Brief History of Instagram*. [online]. [2020-04-08]. Available at: <<https://newaudiencemedia.com.au/brief-history-of-instagram/>>.

⁶ KEMP, S.: *Digital 2020: 3,8 Billion People Use Social Media*. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/blog/2020/01/digital-2020-3-8-billion-people-use-social-media>>.

1.2 The New Kid on the Block – TikTok

The developer and owner of this short-form video app is ByteDance. It is the first Chinese Internet startup company (already existing for 7 years) whose app has spread around the world.⁷ The origin of the title TikTok comes from Chinese Douyin. It was launched in China in late 2016 as Douyin - only available in its home market. In 2017 the app was rebranded and pushed to international markets as TikTok. Later that year ByteDance bought already famous similar US market app Musical.ly. The two apps were separately operated by the same owner until 2018, Musical.ly in United States and TikTok in other markets. In August that year ByteDance decided to merge them by practically shutting down Musical.ly and automatically moving all its existing profiles to the TikTok, thus making the app available also in the US.⁸ These days the video-sharing platform Tik Tok is very popular especially among teens and tweens. It is designed for creating and sharing short videos. Its users can upload and publish short video clips (up to 15 seconds) and short videos (up to 60 seconds). The range of topics is really wide - you can find food, travel, pets, everyday life. However, dance and music content dominates the app. What differs TikTok from other apps is its home screen. It is not filled by the posts, pictures and videos of people you are following. TikTok searches for new clips, not to share only already known and popular ones. As D. Dočekal says, ByteDance appeared in the world's media at the end of 2018, when there was a huge increase (407%) in downloading of one of its applications - the social network TikTok. The jump from the app being available for download in 130 countries in 2017 to 660 countries in 2018 could not be overlooked.⁹ It is favoured especially by the members of Generation Z. *“This app is favoured by under-25s, who make up its core audience, TikTok this year surpassed Facebook and WhatsApp as the world’s most downloaded non-gaming app.”*¹⁰ As Ch. Stokel-Walker claims it was *“downloaded more than two million times a day worldwide last year by users mostly aged between 16 and 34”*.¹¹ Although Tik Tok requires users to be at least 12 years old, there are many negative reactions because the app does not verify the identity and age of a user, so anyone with technical capabilities and skills can download it. In 2018, it became the most downloaded application on

⁷ Remark by the authors: Several authors warn against TikTok’s pitfalls in connection with its origin – Chinese communist ideology and strong influence on young (not so well-oriented) people. S. Fischer calls it “viral Chinese karaoke” and mentions that *“Chinese-owned app could be a national security threat to Americans”* since *“more young teenagers use TikTok than Facebook.”* In FISCHER, S.: *More younger members of Generation Z use TikTok than Facebook.* [online]. [2020-04-08]. Available at: <<https://www.axios.com/tiktok-facebook-generation-z-use-a414a30b-4184-415e-9945-949b59727d17.html>>; F. Struhárik says *“TikTok faces criticism for censoring posts about Hong Kong, Tibet’s independence, or protests in Tiananmen Square. Contributions about LGBT are also penalized, even in countries where homosexuality is not illegal. The propaganda of the Islamic State has already appeared on the network, there is a lot of hate speech on it and the problem is also pedophiles who have access to children’s videos through the application, even without the need to register.”* In STRUHÁRIK, F.: *MediaBrifing: Najväčšie slovenské a české účty na TikToku sledujú státisíce ľudí, no sociálna sieť má problémy.* [online]. [2020-04-18]. Available at: <<https://dennikn.sk/1645211/mediabrifing-najvacsie-slovenske-a-ceske-ucty-na-tiktoku-sleduju-statisice-ludi-no-socialna-siet-ma-problemy/>>.

⁸ LESKIN, P.: *Inside the rise of TikTok, the viral video-sharing app whose ties to China are raising concerns in the US.* [online]. [2020-04-20]. Available at: <<https://www.businessinsider.com/tiktok-app-online-website-video-sharing-2019-7?fbclid=IwAR2d7jD3b5RB5b1aN7ZRIzKSuVlxUW8dKzqEXT19AKMwnymb-hfnW3okEGc/>>.

⁹ DOČEKAL, D.: *Facebook se TikToku bojí. Marketéři a rodiče by měli též.* [online]. [2020-04-20]. Available at: <<https://www.lupa.cz/clanky/facebook-se-tiktoku-boji-marketeri-a-rodice-by-meli-tez/>>.

¹⁰ KHAN, C.: *TikTok is the social media sensation of lockdown. Could I become its new star?.* [online]. [2020-04-08]. Available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2020/apr/14/tiktok-is-the-social-media-sensation-of-lockdown-could-i-become-its-new-star.>>.

¹¹ STOKEL-WALKER, Ch.: *Bosses tell social media celebrities: TikTok on your own time.* [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2020/feb/15/tiktok-bosses-tell-social-media-own-time>>.

the App Store. In the neighbouring Czech Republic, it is already being installed by 9-year-old children.¹² Therefore, experts (psychologists, sociologists) recommend parents to turn off the location visibility in their children's app (so that other users do not know where the child is connected and where it is located).

Its future and development are questionable. It can manage to succeed, keep its attention and grow like Instagram or it can shine, but go out relatively quickly such as Snapchat. ComScore figures from June 2018 compare total US adult (18+) unique visitors on Facebook (about 200 million), Instagram (139.7 million), Snapchat (134.1 million), and TikTok (latest March 2019 count of 14.3 million). So it is still quite small.¹³ According to Digital 2020 Tik Tok has 800 million monthly active users, however, around 60% of them are Chinese, so there are roughly 300 million active users outside of China. In 2019 it got to the sixth position in the global mobile app rankings by monthly active users. So there are five „better“ apps: WhatsApp, Facebook, WeChat and Instagram. Despite the huge success, it should be noted that FB, IG, and Snapchat „have all reported increases in their advertising audience reach over the last few months, even amongst users aged 13 to 17.“¹⁴

1.3 Media on the Social Networks

It is a fact that the media have a great interest in social networks and they use them for publishing their own various contents. **Facebook** is popular among all kinds of media that can publish and share text documents (articles), audios or even audiovisual recordings. On **Instagram** they share primarily pictures (photos, illustrations, cartoons, infographics, tables). Most of them are supplemented by a short text describing more specific information. Usually they make so-called “stories”. Media on **TikTok** share short videos.

2 Methodology

Main objective of our study is to find what purposes media use social network TikTok for and why they decided to join this platform. We have established few partial objectives as well. First one is to investigate topics media portray on TikTok and how they proceed their adaptation to TikTok conditions. We also would like to generalize creative methods media use on very peculiar social network. In the end we are going to count how many interactions posts have and what affected numbers. In our study, we are going to use quantitative and qualitative analysis of content including comparison and generalization. We are going to analyse and compare three main categories: First one is about topic, journalistic processing of topic, main goal of the TikTok post. Second group of analytic categories describes TicToc posts from another point of view. We are going to analyse audiovisual character of the TikTok, whether it is animation, video, photography or canva and what music is used in TikTok as it si defining character of social network. We also going to describe text accompanying posts in the feed focusing on number of letters and hashtags used in posts. We are also focusing on journalists and persons presenting information in video as we want know the role of media workers in this field. In the

¹² MIKISOVÁ, M.: *Prevalcuje aplikácia Tik Tok oblúbené sociálne siete? Odborníci varujú rodičov*. [online]. [2020-04-21]. Available at: <<https://uzitocna.pravda.sk/skola/clanok/500560-prevalcuje-aplikacia-tik-tok-oblubene-socialne-siete-odbornici-varuju-rodicov/>>.

¹³ *TikTok: How Fast Is It Growing in the US, and Who's Using It?* [online]. [2020-04-21]. Available at: <<https://www.marketingcharts.com/digital/social-media-108342>>.

¹⁴ KEMP, S.: *Digital 2020: 3,8 Billion People Use Social Media*. [online]. [2020-0411]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/blog/2020/01/digital-2020-3-8-billion-people-use-social-media>>.

end, we are going to compare number of interactions and frequency of posting new content on TikTok. As it is still not very usual social media tool used by media, we chose three TikTok accounts for our analysis: Daily Mirror, GEO, Guardian Australia which we analysed during April 2020.

3 Results

Guardian Australia

This medium has 17k fans according to TikTok. The medium has only 51 videos on this platform and in the month of April they published 11 videos. Most of them were monothematic and all the topics besides the one were connected with the coronavirus. All of the posts are videos and only two videos had a person talking directly to the audience in it. It was a doctor explaining and showing how to wear a face mask and gloves during pandemia. Another 7 videos are hyperlapses of the 80 kilometers long walk from Bondi Beach to Manly and most of them were published at the same day 24th April. Guardian wants to show its audience beautiful spots of the coast in times of home isolation. Videos are accompanied by the soft orchestra music made for the Guardian TikTok profile. Video also contains noises of particular situations like car honking, birds chirping or opera singing when the audience meets Sydney Opera House. In those videos there is also graphic of coast relief which person in video goes through as well as subtitles with the names of important places passing by. In this case, camera also slow down or turn in 180 degrees to emphasize various places. Authors of the posts use another colorful subtitles in the videos to underline important places as well as to invite people to watch whole journey live. Last two videos are not made by The Guardian. Those recordings are from external sources. First one is very ironical. It is Donald Trump explaining we should protect against coronavirus by injecting disinfections and lady, probably doctor, sitting in front of him looks very funny listening those lies. This video has funny music which helps rise satiric atmosphere. Also the text under the video is full of sarcasm but on the other side it explains hoax and warn people not to do that. Last one video is recording of “ufo” by Pentagon with commentary of pilots accompanied by subtitles in yellow as pilot’s talk is not very clear. Text is also very amusing saying “We’re not saying it was aliens but...the Pentagon has released these ufo videos. Really.” Communication with the audience is very personal in every video and authors talk to the people in friendly way. For example: “We are almost at manly beach. Just one more leg.” Comments are short, at average it is 57 letters per one post. Sometimes, they also use emoticons in subtitles (swipe right) and in the text under the video and also exclamation marks. For example in ufo recording, they used ufo and alien emoticon. In every post, authors substituted words by hashtags, for example #bondibeach, #manly, #factcheck. They also use hashtags but not many, from two to six and they are always very close to the video topic (australia, sydney, aussielife, stayhome, healthheroes and more general tiktokaustralia). In three videos, Guardian uses swipe function to promote content and one time there is link in our bio promotion. Videos regarding the topic of coronavirus have always hyperlink concerning new information about pandemia. We can assume that Guardian Australia is serious newspaper and they try to keep this standard in their TikTok communications. Despite that they choose more soft topics, not the hardnews. They created some graphic and audiovisual style, mostly in hyperloop videos but we appreciate their own orchestra music for the videos. Guardian Australia do not have a lot of followers on TikTok and as we can see in the table below the interaction with the audience is very low comparing to influencers on the TikTok.

Table 1: Analysis of Guardian Australia’s TikTok videos No. 1

Category	16th April	17th April	22th April	22 th April	23th April
Topic	coronavirus	coronavirus	tourism	tourism	tourism
Music	No	No	Original sound	Original sound	Original sound
Person in the video	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Number of letters in text	43	43	67	51	56
Number of hashtags	3	2	6	5	6
Likes	98	35	129	44	57
Comments	3	3	7	5	7
Views	1402	514	1301	588	1115
Shares	1	2	7	9	2

Source: own processing

Table 2: Analysis of Guardian Australia’s TikTok videos No. 2

24th April	24th April	24th April	24th April	24th April	28th April	Average
tourism	tourism	tourism	tourism	hoaxes/politics	soft news	
Original sound	Original sound	Original sound	Original sound	The Sound of Silence	No	
No	No	No	No	Yes	No	
72	50	53	52	65	83	57,7
5	5	6	6	5	2	4,6
125	84	50	76	1005	981	244
6	18	7	10	65	60	17,4
1434	1222	1224	1298	15800	166600	17499,8
6	2	0	1	278	49	32,5

Source: own processing

GEO

TikTok GEO profile has only 2103 followers and 41 uploaded videos. They published only 10 videos in the month of April. All of the audio-visual content is dedicated to the animals. GEO shows how animals live in the bioparc which is some kind of the zoo. In every video, they present one animal and they explain how and where it lives with many interesting facts about it. They record animals in one shoot if it is a small animal like bird but they also use various angles with bigger animals. They also use subtitles which contains information about animals. There is no voiceover. Subtitles are white with green parts focusing on the most important information. Unfortunately, in the first half of videos we could not read subtitles very well because they were under the text description of the video but authors realised it and put subtitles upper. Videos start with the logo zootherapy and usual theme song and graphic. Authors communicate all of the videos as a view into the zoo during pandemia and they emphasize fact that life did not stop in biopark. Text under the video is always the same and it says that “During these times, life in Biopark La fontaine continues”. Average number of letter is 29 as the last four videos do not have any description. They say it the subtitles in the beginning as well as in

the text below. Music in the videos is the same, GEO uses original music which is very calm and ambient. Also GEO uses usually two or three hashtags: name of the project #zoothérapie, #animal and hashtag with name of the presented animal and one time they used stay at home hashtag as well as same name GIF in the last four videos. The interaction with the audience is very small due to low number of video playbacks and followers who do not comment very much as well as they do not like. GEO is a medium about travelling, history, culture, fauna and flora. We would like to recommend not to devote all the content only to one subject but to be more diversified. It is always efficient to use some infotainment tools and be more amusing. It is always possible to create funny videos with the animals.

Table 3: Analysis of GEO's videos No. 1

	1st April	2nd April	3rd April	10th April	22th April
Topic	Animals/Education	Animals/Education	Animals/Education	Animals/Education	Animals/Education
Music	Original sound	Original sound	Original sound	Original sound	Original sound
Person in the Video	No	No	No	No	No
Number of letters in text-	54	54	57	54	54
Number of Hashtags	2	2	2	2	2
Likes	32	8	12	10	3
Comments	0	0	1	0	0
Views	246	282	206	174	75
Shares	0	1	0	0	0

Source: own processing

Table 4: Analysis of GEO's videos No. 2

24th April	25th April	26th April	29th April	30th April	Average
Animals/Education	Animals/Education	Animals/Education	Animals/Education	Animals/Education	
Original sound	Original sound	Original sound	Original sound	Original sound	
No	No	No	No	No	
17	0	0	0	0	29
3	3	3	5	3	2,8
19	9	15	6	17	13,1
1	0	0	0	1	0,3
233	246	260	262	291	227,5
0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: own processing

Daily Mirror

During the April, british website and daily newspaper published 15 TikTok videos. All of them deal with the topic of global pandemia of Covid-19 but not in very serious way. They try to amuse their audience with funny videos and vlogs. They try to navigate people through the corona times showing activities we can do during home isolation, for example exercising with old retro DVDs. They explain in very emotive way how to polish nail at home due to closed

nail salons. Daily Mirror also ironically reacts to people at home doing various activities and developing hobbies. Person in video tries to learn draw according to YouTube tutorial but not very successfully. Daily Mirror also offers many instructions how to make homemade product as shampoo or food recipes. In one video, medium invites people to their online quiz. There are also two videos which are not amusing in the first place but they belong to the soft news. First one presents books we can read during the pandemic and second one shows how we can enjoy summer during isolation at our balconies in certain kind of timeline. We can assume that topics in Daily Mirror are strongly ironic and sarcastic with one and only goal to make fun of current events and process news in amusing way. They do not inform but they use news as a base for satira. Daily Mirror is the only TikTok medium which sometimes uses a person in the feed. We cannot say if it is a journalist from the Daily Mirror or social media manager but he is quite creative despite lack of graphic skills. The level of graphic appearance is very low and not very striking and vivid. They do not use any template besides the TikTok filter. On the other side, person in Daily Mirror's TikTok videos is very good actor and uses acting skills a lot. Music used in videos is complementary with the topic in ironic way authors want to achieve in their TikTok posts. Only three videos are accompanied by music which do not accent the topic. Daily Mirror uses emojis and gifs images most often as it is a very informal way of sharing information. Videos are mostly cut from different shoots. Also, they emphasize sarcasm in text description under the videos, for example: "New hobby fail" or "Pulled out the old exercise DVDs!" Communication in the text as well as in videos is very informal and personal ("Wish me luck!") and not very complicated with only 29 letters per one video. At average, Daily Mirror extend their feed with three hashtags. Mostly, they are connected with the topic (#stayathome, #DIY). Daily Mirror has 15,4 followers but interaction with the audience is not very intensive. During the April, they received 32 likes and 9 comments per post at average. Number of likes is much higher, it is 1534 likes per one video in average. 47 642 people watched one video at average. This high number is caused of three videos which had more than 200 000 replays regarding nail decoration during pandemic, recipe for the hair mask made from home supplies and tutorial for right preparation of british tea. Daily Mirror is tabloid newspaper and their keep the same level of informing also on their TikTok page. We can assume they try to attract younger generation with entertaining content which is not difficult to process.

Table 5: Analysis of Daily Mirror's videos No. 1

	1st April	2nd April	3rd April	3rd April	4th April
Topic	Retro/Sport	corona/beauty	hobbies, corona	corona, lockdown	corona, reading tips
Music	Workout Music	Unbreak my Heart	100 Way	What Won't You Do for Love	Blinding Lights
Person in the Video	No	No	No	Yes	No
Number of letters in text	25	15	13	47	38
Number of Hashtags	2	3	3	6	2
Likes	159	6986	81	1079	1560
Comments	5	26	4	25	8
Views	1276	203900	560	21700	123300
Shares	0	23	0	4	9
Filter	-	-	-	Face Tracking	-

Source: own processing

Table 6: Analysis of Daily Mirror’s videos No. 2

9th of april	16th April	17 April	17 April	20 April	21 April
corona, coming summer	invitation for the quizz	recipe, corona	cooking, recipe	Netlifix	cooking
Tequila	Sinking	Spa Music	Ratatouille	Original sound	IDK You Yet
No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
18	37	45	31	20	39
3	3	2	5	2	3
213	109	4751	53	237	6483
3	5	34	1	8	332
917	631	209700	531	17100	208100
2	2	29	-	-	44
-	-	-	-	Face tracking	-

Source: own processing

Table 7: Analysis of Daily Mirror’s videos No. 3

22 April	23 April	29 April	30 April	Average
isolation/working out	isolation/games	dogs	Daily Mail	
Don’t Start Now	Super Mario Soundtrack	Dancing On My Own	Waltz	
Yes	No	No	Yes	
37	36	21	18	29,3
3	3	2	4	3,1
601	112	311	275	1534
10	4	11	5	32,1
69700	564	16000	1110	58339,3
2	-	2	1	9,8
-	-	-	-	-

Source: own processing

Conclusion

Social network TikTok is still not the first choice for media to share their content. We had serious problem to find media for our analysis with regular and new content. The reason why is TikTok is not a medium or a social network designed for sharing serious media content. It is used by mostly young generation to share meaningless videos made only for fun. It would be dishonorable for journalists to make such kind of content. On the other side, there is huge potential for quality media to create a concept for sharing news among people of young age to inform them in the way they accept news. The other reason for small activity on TikTok is low number of followers and not very interactive audience which sends a signal to the media not to devote energy and time for TikTok content creation. Young people rather follow popular

influencer than media accounts. In general, we can assume that analysed media use TikTok to share soft news and to make audience relaxed and amused. The communication with the audience is very personal, sometimes ironical comparable with interaction among friends. Text are not very long: it is 38 letters per video at average. It is very common to use text in the video to illustrate topics and also it is important to apply at average three hashtags related to the topic to get more viewers. Very important part of videos is music which should illustrate the topic of the video content as well as it should describe the atmosphere. The most watched videos are always topics which contain something people can relate to. In the end, after the deep analysis we are persuaded that video publication on the TikTok does not have many things in common with journalism except from the topic selection and creative process of its processing.

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COMMUNICATION OF CHURCHES AND RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN SLOVAKIA VIA SOCIAL NETWORKS

Ján Višňovský – Pavel Bielik

ABSTRACT:

Social media are nowadays extremely popular and widely used communication tools. At the same time, social media have powerful economic and marketing potential that can compete with well established media, such as print, radio broadcasting and television. Given the fact that people spend a lot of time connected to social media, companies and organizations, including religious and church-related ones, use these media to communicate with their supporters and general public, too. The article deals with registered churches and religious communities and their communication via social networks. The authors investigate if churches and religious subjects have set accounts on the most used social media and how much do they use their accounts for communication with their church-goers.

KEY WORDS:

believers, Facebook, church goers, churches and religious communities, social media, social network

1 Introduction

It is believed that social media are nowadays used not only as social communication tools of individuals who use them to join into communities but they are used by companies, organizations and associations, too, for the purpose to communicate information about their functioning. They stay in touch with their members and clients. Social media are developing extremely fast, they are dynamic tools of social, economic, political and marketing actions. At the same time they are extremely popular with young generation and middle-aged people.¹ The increase in social media usage is the main reason why traditional media, such as print, radio broadcasting and television, and not only them, but also private and public institutions, organizations and companies have created social media accounts. Churches are no exception. Currently, when even Slovak church and religious communities face the decrease in number of believers and active church goers, social media can start to be communication tools of church with their believers² to get in closer and immediate contact. Even though social media are a phenomenon of the 21st century, theoreticians and experts have not yet provided a clear definition of what a social medium actually is. British theoretician T. Harcup clears it out as follows: „social media include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and countless other forums, and in just a few years they have become as important a way for journalists to find stories and sources as they are for news organizations to promote their brands.”³ This suggests that social media are not exclusively social networks created for any specific purpose but social media are web platforms of wide range, consisting of blogs, vlogs, chat rooms, social bookmarking, etc. Millions of social media users who communicate among themselves – either they communicate via chat, they comment each-others status, eventually they share

¹ RADOŠINSKÁ, J.: *Mediálna zábava v 21. storočí: socio-kultúrne aspekty a trendy*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2016, p. 25.

² See also: VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J., MINÁRIKOVÁ, J.: Church Periodicals as a Means of Communication Between Church and Believers. The Case of Weekly Magazine *Evanjelický posol spod Tatier*. In MAGÁL, S., MENDELOVÁ, D., PETRANOVÁ, D., APOSTOLESCU, N. (eds.): *ESRARC 2018: 10th European Symposium on Religious Art, Restoration & Conservation*. Torino : Kermes, 2018, p. 214-215.

³ HARCUP, J.: *Dictionary of Journalism*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 282.

multimedia content – created an ideal environment for effective marketing and advertising message spreading supposing high level of efficiency.⁴

Social media usage is at the same time risky.⁵ An example of social media being risky was the case of Cambridge Analytica Ltd, a British consulting agency who collected personal data of 87 million *Facebook* users for the purpose of being able to influence election decisions of social media users. It was proven that the application *This Is Your Digital Life*, that should have been gathering data exclusively from users whom agreed on it, have been gathering *Facebook* users' personal data also from those who did not provide their agreement with the cause. The scandal of misused personal data out-broke in March 2018 when foreign media published a testimony of whistleblower Christopher Wylie, a former employee of Cambridge Analytica Ltd that clarified the relationship of *Facebook*, the consultancy agency and politicians.⁶ Even though church and religious communities use for communication with believers and public primarily print media (newspapers, magazines, books, bulletins, reports) or that they have their own private radio and television channels or specialized programs-except of communication via church services and face-to-face meetings, they should not forget to use social networks. On the other hand, church and religious media deal with topics regarding church and religious communities happenings, they inform about these and often comment on major social and moral topics, too. In regards to typology, this type of media may be identified as community media⁷ that come up with specialized religious content.⁸

The most popular social networks in Slovakia are currently *Facebook* and *Instagram*, as well as video sharing network *YouTube*.⁹ They have millions of users who visit their web sites several times a day and spend there significant amount of time. As such, it is reasonable to suppose that social media would make the communication of church and their believers more effective. A result of that would be a positive influence on their mutual relationship.¹⁰ Currently, there are 18 registered churches and religious communities in Slovakia. According to Population and housing census back in 2011, there are 62,2% of Roman Catholic Church goers, which makes it the most populated church in Slovakia. Then there are 5,86% of people who belong to Evangelical Church of Augsburg confession and other 3,83% of Greek Catholic Church goers.¹¹ Nearly 76% of Slovaks identify themselves as believers. The state significantly supports registered churches and religious communities in their religious mission and community service (mostly charity related) activities. The state finances salaries of clergy

⁴ ČÁBYOVÁ, E.: *Marketing a marketingová komunikácia v médiách*. Łódź : Księży Młyn Dom Wydawniczy Michał Koliński, 2012, p. 48.

⁵ GÁLIK, S.: Influence of Digital Media on Religion: Possibilities and Limitations. In MAGÁL, S., MENDELOVÁ, D., PETRANOVÁ, D., APOSTOLESCU, N. (eds.): *ESRARC 2018: 10th European Symposium on Religious Art, Restoration & Conservation*. Torino : Kermes, 2018, p. 189-190.

⁶ *Facebook to send Cambridge Analytica data-use notices to 87 million users Monday*. [online]. [2020-05-04]. Available at: <<https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/social-media/facebook-send-cambridge-analytica-data-use-notices-monday-n863811>>.

⁷ For more information, see: ŠKRIPCOVÁ, L.: Motivations and Incentives of Community Media Content Creators: A Case Study of Spodnás. In *Communication Today*, 2017, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 31-41.

⁸ See also: KVETANOVÁ, Z., RADOŠINSKÁ, J.: Expressions of Postmodernism Within the Dimension of Digital Games. In *European Journal of Media, Art & Photography*, 2020, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 84-96.

⁹ *Počet používateľov na sociálnych sieťach*. [online]. [2020-05-04]. Available at: <<https://strategie.hnonline.sk/blogy/2001335-rozdelujete-peniaze-do-online-reklamy-spravne-5-infografik-ktorevam-to-ukazu?fbclid=IwAR17zvtG-T9iAkmD79DrbxTUIysg-SosQcvs57Moi29Aj56Km52PDu4io68>>.

¹⁰ HUDÍKOVÁ, Z.: Current TV production trends in Slovakia. In *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2017, Vol. 13, No. 6, p. 199-208.

¹¹ *Obyvateľstvo podľa pohlavia a náboženského vyznania*. [online]. [2020-05-04]. Available at: <<https://census2011.statistics.sk/SR/TAB.%20118%20Obyvate%BEstvo%20pod%BEa%20pohlavie%20a%20n%E1bo%9Eensk%9Eho%20vyznania.pdf>>.

and their taxes by means of direct financial allocation via budget category of Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic and provides allowances to fund operational expenses of bishops offices.

2 Operational Goals and Methods

The article deals with communication of registered churches and religious groups in Slovakia on the most used social media, on specific social networks *Facebook*, *Instagram* and *YouTube*. The authors acknowledged that church and religious groups set up social media accounts, the authors studied how many followers they have and their activity (based on social media monitoring of published posts from November 1st, 2019 to February 22nd, 2020). The main aim of the authors is, based on social media monitoring, to define the level of social media usage as communication tool with believers and public.

3 Results: Registered Churches in Slovakia and Their Social Media Activity

In Slovakia, there are 18 registered churches and 7 religious societies. Only a few of them use social networks, moreover in insignificant amount. They use social networks for communication with believers and the public. Eight of them (44,4%) use social network *Facebook* and only six of them (33 %) use internet database *YouTube*. The rest of churches and religious communities do not even have social media accounts. *Facebook* is used by the following churches/ religious communities: Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Slovakia and Evangelical Methodist Church. Apostle church in Slovakia, Baha'i Church in Slovak republic, Seventh-day Adventist church, Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints, Orthodox church in Slovakia and Old Catholic church in Slovakia. Czechoslovak Hussite church utilizes one site for both their Czech and Slovak believers. Centralized Alliance of Jewish religious communities in Slovakia uses *Facebook* since October 2011. Roman-Catholic church who have more than 3,3 million believers use *Facebook* only in scope of their parish. *YouTube* channels are used to pass simple messages but the site is not run on regular basis. Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Slovakia is the only one who uses *Instagram*.

3.1 The Number of Facebook Fans

There are only six churches and religious communities fan pages that have more than thousand fans (Chart 2). A surprising fact comes out of comparison of the number of registered believers and the *Facebook* fans. The most popular church on *Facebook* is the fan page of Evangelical Church (7938 fans/ 316250 church goers), followed by Orthodox Church (1857 fans/ 49133 church goers), and Czechoslovak Hussite Church (1661 fans/ 1782 church goers). The forth place in popularity is taken by the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints (1113 fans/ 972 church goers). Apostles Church (5.831 believers) and Baha'i Church in Slovakia (1 065 believers) have 1.076 fans. The least popular in regards to number of fans on *Facebook* are Seventh-day Church (600 fans / 2.915 believers), Evangelical Methodist Church (301 fans / 10.328 believers) and Old Catholic Church (229 fans / 1.687 believers).

3.2 The Number of Posts on Facebook

We were also interested in online activity of religious subjects in terms of the number of posts and frequency of their publication (Chart 3). We studied the matter from November 1st 2019 to February 22nd 2020. The highest number of posts were posted on the site of Orthodox Church (60 posts), followed by the Seventh-day Adventist Church (51 posts) and the third most active was the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints (41 posts). Less active *Facebook* fan pages are the ones of Czechoslovak Hussite Church (with 25 posts), the Old Catholic Church (25 posts), the Evangelical Methodist Church (24 posts) and the Apostles Church (12) posts. The fan page administered by Baha'í Church in Slovakia can be overall perceived as inactive (2 posts).

3.3 Traditional Religious Media on Facebook

Almost every significant religious and church medium has already set up its account on the most widely used social networks. They use social media primarily to communicate with their recipients. Through social networks they provide information on content or topics that will be published in the press or broadcast. They also bring photos or videos, for example, of church ceremonies and events. The title *Evanjelický posol spod Tatier* currently has 385 followers on *Facebook*,¹² *Katolícke noviny* report 2832 followers¹³ and *TV Lux*¹⁴ 41 413 followers. Commercial Catholic radio station *Lumen* started its broadcasting on 7th April 1993. Currently, its daily ratings reach approximately 2.5% (113 000 regular listeners) and has 16 555 followers on *Facebook*.¹⁵ These numbers of followers show that the audience of religious media consists of mainly older generation, which uses traditional forms of information dissemination, especially the press and television.

Conclusions

Communication via social networks is interesting primarily for small religious communities. Roman Catholic Church that is in terms of size the biggest church in Slovakia uses *Facebook* only for communication with local parishes and they do not even have accounts on *Instagram* or *YouTube*. Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Slovakia as the second biggest church in Slovakia in terms of numbers (5,86% of believers) uses both, *Facebook* and *Instagram*. These social networks are not used either by Greek Catholic Church (3,83 % believers) or by any Reformed Christian Church. (1,83 % believers). Our research showed that 68% of churches and religious communities registered in Slovak republic do not communicate with their church goers and public via Facebook or Instagram, except of local parishes. Social networks enable small communities to communicate about their activities, they publish dates when the church services are held, eventually they inform about news and some events they organize. There are 2,5 million people in Slovakia who use *Facebook* (56% of Slovak population) out of whom 2,1 millions are less than 50 years old. More than 90% of Slovaks aged 15 to 30 have their own *Facebook* account. *Instagram* is regularly used by

¹² *Evanjelický posol spod Tatier*. [online]. [2020-05-04]. Available at: <<https://sk-sk.facebook.com/ev.posl/>>.

¹³ *Katolícke noviny*. [online]. [2020-05-04]. Available at: <<https://sk-sk.facebook.com/tyzdennik.katolickenoviny/>>.

¹⁴ *TV Lux*. [online]. [2020-05-04]. Available at: <https://sk.facebook.com/pg/televizialux/posts/?ref=page_interna>.

¹⁵ *Rádio Lumen*. [online]. [2020-05-04]. Available at: <<https://www.facebook.com/R%C3%A1dio-Lumen-606811289387431/>>.

923.000 users (23%).¹⁶ The numbers are really high and the churches could benefit from social networks users' interest if they were active on these. Greek Catholic Church is the only registered church that communicates exclusively via their *YouTube* channel. Another interesting fact is that Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints and Baha'i Church in Slovakia have more fans on *Facebook* than registered church-goers.

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¹⁶ *Počet používateľov na sociálnych sieťach*. [online]. [2020-05-04]. Available at: <<https://strategie.hnonline.sk/blogy/2001335-rozdelujete-peniaze-do-online-reklamy-spravne-5-infografik-ktore-vam-to-ukazu?fbclid=IwAR17zvtG-T9iAkmD79DrbxTUIySg-SosQcvs57Moi29Aj56Km52PDU4io68>>.

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MEDIA EDUCATION, POLICY AND ETHICS

**MEGATRENDS
AND MEDIA**

ON THE EDGE

THE CORRELATION OF PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN THE INTERNET: KEY CHALLENGES BASED ON THE ANALYSIS OF ARMENIAN LEGISLATION

Lilit Avagyan

ABSTRACT:

In the current world digital tools and technologies pose serious threats to the implementation of fundamental human rights such as right to privacy and freedom of expression. Indeed, one's right of freedom of expression may violate the right to privacy of another. The advent of digital technologies enhanced the tension between these two rights. Even though digital technologies play a key role in promoting freedom of expression and information, their use significantly increased the likelihood of human rights violations and restrictions on freedoms. Digital technologies especially interfere to exercise of the right to privacy, as personal data can be collected and distributed at an unprecedented rate and at minimal cost. At the same time, the application of personal data protection laws and other measures to protect privacy may have a disproportionate effect on the legal application of freedom of expression.

KEY WORDS:

cybercrime, data protection, freedom of expression, human rights, law

In 21st century no one questions the fact that both freedom of speech and right to reputation are core values in almost every society of the world. Because of the mere reason that these rights are deemed as inherent to the dignity of all human beings, every individual is provided with the possibility to claim against the State on which territory his/her rights were violated. It is clearly mentioned in the preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) that freedom of speech is one of the weighty aspirations of ordinary people¹. The utmost importance of freedom of expression is connected with the fact that it gives appropriate ground to everyone to express and discuss viewpoints on various public matters, to disseminate ideas worth to draw attention to and finally realize each individual's right to self-development and fulfilment. The importance attached to freedom of expression is not a new idea. Freedom of expression is a key human right, in particular because of its fundamental role in underpinning democracy. According to the European Court of Human Rights "Freedom of expression constitutes one of the essential foundations of a democratic society, one of the basic conditions for its progress and for the development of every human being."²Freedom of expression exists independently from anyone and is based on the freedom of thinking. It is safeguarded as a fundamental human right, which is equally essential for implementation of other rights. Thus, the freedom of expression is considered as one of the basic human rights, hence enshrined in numerous core international human right documents. Article 19 of the *Universal Declaration on Human Rights* (UDHR), a United Nations General Assembly resolution, holds the leading definition of the right to freedom of expression and guarantees it in the following terms: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes the right to hold opinions without

¹ *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)*, UN General Assembly Resolution 217A(III). Released on 10th December 1948. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <<http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>>.

² *Handyside v. United Kingdom*. Application No. 5493/72. Released on 7th December 1976. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <<file:///C:/Users/Nay/Downloads/001-57499.pdf>>.

interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers.”³

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)⁴ ratified by the Republic of Armenia in 1993 elaborates on many of the rights set out in the UDHR, imposing formal legal obligations on State Parties to respect its provisions. Article 19 of the ICCPR guarantees the right to freedom of expression virtually identical to those found in Article 19 of the UDHR, particularly, it states that: “Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.” Freedom of expression is also protected in the regional human rights systems. Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)⁵, which was ratified by the Republic of Armenia in 2002, provides in part “Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers”. The guarantee of freedom of expression applies to all forms of expression, not only those that fit in with majority viewpoints and perspectives. The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) has repeatedly stated: “Freedom of expression is applicable not only to “information” or “ideas” that are favourably received or regarded as inoffensive or as a matter of indifference, but also to those that offend, shock or disturb the State or any sector of the population. Such are the demands of that pluralism, tolerance and broadmindedness without which there can be no “democratic society.”⁶ Besides above mentioned international documents, the right to free speech is established by various national constitutions. In particular, the first amendment of the United States Constitution safeguards the right to free speech and free press. The amendment guarantees the free speech by stating that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”⁷

While those international documents enable very broad protections for expression, however, freedom of speech is not an absolute right and is subject to number of limitations. Even in that case, the international law permits limited restrictions on the right to freedom of expression in order to protect various interests, one of which is person’s reputation and dignity. Going back to French Declaration of Rights of Man 1789, it will become obvious that regardless of its significance, the rights to free speech can be subject to limitations. The Declaration states that citizen shall be responsible for abuses of the freedom of communication of ideas and opinions.⁸ This means that in certain situations when it is not possible for the states to comply with its obligation regarding the freedom of speech, they can impose justified restriction in the exercise

³ *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)*, UN General Assembly Resolution 217A(III). Released on 10th December 1948. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <<http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>>.

⁴ *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*. UN General Assembly Resolution 2200A(XXI). Released on 16th December 1966. [online]. [2020-04-04]. Available at: <<http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>>.

⁵ *Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR)*. Released on 4th November 1950. [online]. [2020-04-04]. Available at: <http://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention_ENG.pdf>.

⁶ *Handyside v. United Kingdom*. Application No. 5493/72. Released on 7th December 1976. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <<file:///C:/Users/Nay/Downloads/001-57499.pdf>>.

⁷ *United States Constitution, 1st Amendment*. Released on 25th September 1789. [online]. [2020-04-30]. Available at: <<http://constitutionus.com>>.

⁸ *Declaration of Rights of Man*. Approved by the National Assembly of France. Released on 26th August 1789. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/rightsof.asp>.

of this right. In particular, one of the common basics for limitation the right to freedom of expression under international and regional human rights instruments is protection of reputation of others. Indeed, defamatory and libellous expression does not benefit from the protection of freedom of expression. The exercise of the rights regarding freedom of expression carries "special duties and responsibilities" and therefore "... be subject to certain restrictions."⁹ ICCPR as well as ECHR have stated possible parameters where right to freedom of expression can be limited. It is stipulated in the Article 19 of the ICCPR that right to freedom of speech can be restricted either "for respect of the rights or reputations of others or for the protection of national security or of public order or of public health or morals. Similarly, Article 10(2) of the ECHR lays down the benchmark, stating: "The exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary. "The American Convention on Human Rights (ACHR) has also envisaged restriction on freedom of expression and includes respects for the rights and reputation of others as one of the basis. The convention says that such restriction shall be expressly established by law to the extent necessary to ensure the respect and reputation.¹⁰ In accordance with the provision 10(2) of the Convention, the ECHR has developed its jurisprudence relating to three-part test regarding the restriction on freedom of expression cases. Firstly, the Court highlighted that any action undertaken with the purpose of limiting this right should be "prescribed by law". In *Busuioc against Moldova*¹¹ decision, in particular, the European Court found that one of the requirements flowing from the expression "prescribed by law" is the predictability of the measure concerned.

The second requirement is that any restriction must fulfil one of the legitimate aims listed in the second clause of Article 10 of ECHR or Article 19(3) of the ICCPR and the final part of the test holds that a restriction on freedom of expression must be indeed necessary¹² for the achievement of its aim and what is more important that the measures used by appropriate bodies should be proportional with the final goal. To be able to substantiate the imposed restrictions as necessary, it is very important that they should not be arbitrary, unfair or based on irrational considerations and should limit freedom of expression as little as possible.¹³ As a justified ground for such kind of limitation can serve a "pressing social need". Overall, as it is mentioned by ECHR "the reasons given by the State to justify the restriction must be "relevant and

⁹ *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. UN General Assembly Resolution 2200A(XXI)*. Released on 16th December 1966. [online]. [2020-04-04]. Available at: <<http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>>.

¹⁰ *American Convention on human Rights. Pact of San Jose". Article 3*. Released on 22nd November 1969. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <<https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%201144/volume-1144-I-17955-English.pdf>>.

¹¹ *Busuioc v. Moldova. Application no. 61513/00*. Released on 21st December 2004. [online]. [2020-04-04]. Available at: <<https://www.legislationline.org/documents/id/6310>>.

¹² *Laptsevich v. Belarus, Communication No. 780/1997. U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/68/D/780/1997*. Released on 13th April 2000. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <<http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/undocs/session68/view780.htm>>; *Goodwin v. the United Kingdom. Application No. 17488/90*. Released on 27th March 1996. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <<https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/fre#%7B%22itemid%22:%7B%22001-57974%22%7D%7D>>.

¹³ *The Sunday Times v. United Kingdom. Application No. 6538/74. Paragraph 49*. Released on 26th April 1979. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <<https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/rus#%7B%22itemid%22:%7B%22001-57584%22%7D%7D>>.

obligation of the State to protect them.¹⁹ The Constitutional Court in its findings stated that “revealing of constitutional legal content of concepts “defamation” and “insult” has a basic importance for examination of the case”.²⁰ Specific criteria were set where each of them is necessary and all together are mandatory to qualify the action as an insult or defamation. Particularly, the Court emanates that the features, specific to defamation, are:

- They are statements of facts,
- They do not correspond to the reality,
- Have been submitted publicly,
- They defame one’s honour, dignity, business reputation,
- They do not concern only statement of facts, presented via media.²¹

In order to evaluate the concrete expression as an insult the simultaneous presence of the following requisites are required:

- to defame one’s honour, dignity, business reputation,
- with the intention to abuse the honour, dignity or business reputation.

The main difference of evaluations of words “insult” and “defamation” in international legal practice, is that in case of defamation it refers to defaming one’s dignity through intentional dissemination of false facts, statement of facts which are not in accord with reality, accusing one’s of a crime or delinquency on the basis of facts not in accord with reality, and insult deems intentional and premeditated derogation of a person. Except from right to freedom of expression RA Constitution also guarantees the right to privacy and family life. Specifically, Article 31 enshrines that everyone shall have the right to inviolability of his or her private and family life, honour and good reputation. According to the Article 34 “Everyone shall have the right to protection of data concerning him or her. 2. The processing of personal data shall be carried out in good faith, for the purpose prescribed by law, with the consent of the person concerned or without such consent in case there exists another legitimate ground prescribed by law. 3. Everyone shall have the right to get familiar with the data concerning him or her collected at state and local self-government bodies and the right to request correction of any inaccurate data concerning him or her, as well as elimination of data obtained illegally or no longer having legal grounds. 4. The right to get familiar with personal data may be restricted only by law, for the purpose of state security, economic welfare of the country, preventing or disclosing crimes, protecting public order, health and morals or the basic rights and freedoms of others.”²² Concerning to the correlation of above mentioned fundamental rights of freedom of expression and personal data protection, in certain circumstances the European Court of Human Rights has relied on a right to protection of reputation to find a violation of Article 8 of the Convention, which guarantees the right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence. Indeed, there exists a continuous debate on a following question: how to

¹⁹ *Decision SDVo-834 of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Armenia*. Released on 20th October 2009. [online]. [2020-04-04]. Available at: <<http://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?docid=54372>>.

²⁰ *Decision DCC-997 of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Armenia*. Released on 15th November 2011. [online]. [2020-04-04]. Available at: <<http://www.concourt.am/english/decisions/common/pdf/997.pdf>>;

Decision LD/0749/02/10 of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Armenia. Released on 27th April 2012. [online]. [2020-04-04]. Available at: <https://ypc.am/upload/Analysis%20of%20Armenia%E2%80%99s%20Judicial%20Practice%20in%20Cases%20of%20Libel%20and%20Insult_eng.pdf>.

²¹ *Decision YEKD 0807/02/11 of the Cassation Court of the Republic of Armenia*. Released on 4th July 2013. [online]. [2020-04-04]. Available at: <[https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-REF\(2017\)030-e](https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-REF(2017)030-e)>.

²² *Constitution of the Republic of Armenia*. Released on 6th December 2015. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <<https://www.president.am/en/constitution-2015/>>.

balance the freedom of expression and the right to protection of one's reputation in certain situations. What is more important to consider in this case is that there is no priority or hierarchy between these two internationally recognized rights and under each specific circumstance special criteria should be set and implemented to secure both of them. The European Court of Human Rights first identified the existence of a conflict between the freedom of expression and the right to protection of reputation in defamation cases, and particularly in *Chauvy v. France*²³ case after having established that the right to protection of one's reputation is protected by article 8 ECHR. The Court later confirmed the existence of a right to protection of reputation under the European Convention on Human Rights in the article 8 case *Pfeifer v. Austria*.²⁴ The ECHR defamation case law clearly suggests a solution regarding the conflict between freedom of expression and the right to reputation and according to it neither right can be granted absolute preference. Thus, the Court propose to find a middle ground between both rights because the freedom of expression does not grant an unlimited right to make statements that influence another's reputation, and because the right to reputation does not warrant an entire protection against all critical statements.²⁵

It is of course proved that frameworks of general public international law and of international human rights law are equally applicable online and offline and same notion is affirmed in the UN General Assembly Resolution on "Privacy in the Digital Age", which stated that "the same rights that people have offline must also be protected online, including the right to privacy".²⁶ "Internet governance arrangements must ensure the protection of all fundamental rights and freedoms, and affirm their universality, indivisibility, interdependence and inter-relation in accordance with international human rights law". The UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression rightly stressed that: "access to the Internet and other digital means of communication has become essential to full and free participation in social, cultural and political life".²⁷ Indeed exercising this right becomes more widespread after the technological boom and the development of computer systems. Current world is digitalized than ever before and this new environment created new pace of the activities in the local, regional as well as international level. As of today we all are actively sharing and expressing different thoughts on various aspects using internet space, thus exercising our fundamental human right of freedom of expression enshrined in above mentioned many local and international instruments. However, the global character of internet challenges the legislators and legislation of the states, because of free flow of information and its international character. Hence, local crimes become into transnational crimes in the presence of internet space. Indeed, ECtHR in its case law recognized explicitly the right of individuals to access the internet. The court confirmed that Internet publications fall within the scope of Article 10, however sets out certain restrictions on freedom of expression on the Internet. The Court asserted that the internet has now become one of the principal means of exercising the right to freedom of expression and information.²⁸ In

²³ *Chauvy v. France. Application No. 64915/01*. Released on 29th June 2004. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <[https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#{%22itemid%22:\[%22001-61861%22\]}>](https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#{%22itemid%22:[%22001-61861%22]}>).

²⁴ *Pfeifer v. Austria. Application No. 12556/03*. Released on 25th November 2007. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <<https://www.5rb.com/case/pfeifer-v-austria/>>.

²⁵ SMET, S.: Freedom of expression and right to reputation: Human rights in conflict. In *American University International Law Review*, 2010, Vol. 26, No. 1, p. 236. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <<http://digitalcommons.wcl.american.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1700&context=auilr.>>.

²⁶ *The UN General Assembly Resolution 68/167 on Privacy in the Digital Age*. Released on 18th December 2013. [online]. [2020-04-24]. Available at: <<https://undocs.org/pdf?symbol=en/a/res/68/167>>.

²⁷ LA RUE, F.: *Report of UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression*. Released on 10th August 2011. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Opinion/A.66.290.pdf>.

²⁸ *Ahmet Yildirim v. Turkey. Application No. 3111/10*. Released on 18th December 2012. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <[https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng-press#{%22itemid%22:\[%22001-115705%22\]}>](https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng-press#{%22itemid%22:[%22001-115705%22]}>).

the judgment of *Shtekel v. Ukraine*²⁹ the Court, for the first time, acknowledged that Article 10 of the Convention had to be interpreted as imposing on States a positive obligation to create an appropriate regulatory framework to ensure effective protection of journalists' freedom of expression on the Internet. In *Flinkkilä and Others v. Finland* the Court stated that the principle is that Article 8 protects personal information which individuals can legitimately expect should not be published without their consent.³⁰ The case-law of the ECtHR confirmed that using a person's first name alone without their consent can also, in certain cases, interfere with the person's private life, for example where the first name is mentioned in a context that makes it easy to identify the person concerned and when it is used for the internet.³¹ Private life includes the privacy of communications, which covers the security and privacy of mail, telephone, e-mail and other forms of communication; and informational privacy, including online information.³²

Although the Republic of Armenia is not a member state of the European Union and is not legally bound by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), there is a reasonable expectation that such data, which of course amount to "personal data" benefit from a special protection. The Directive 2002/58/EC is about the confidentiality of personal data and electronic communication, which, above all, enshrined by international conventions like ECHR. In particular Article 8 of the Convention underlines that new digital technologies implies an obligation the protection of the confidentiality of personal life and personal data. As a contracting state, in fact, it must provide protection of an appropriate degree to personal data as an essential part of the right to private life enshrined to Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Right."³³ Consequently Article 5 of the Directive 2002/58/EC makes an obligation for Member States to have a national legislation in place which will ensure the confidentiality of communications and the related traffic data by means of a public communications network and publicly available electronic communications services.³⁴ The protection of personal data is a state obligation with providing such technical and organizational measures that will provide a safe environment of protection of personal data, from illegal or random deletion or loss, from unauthorized modification, use, access or disclosure. Indeed, Article 144 of RA Criminal Code prescribes illegal collecting, keeping, use and dissemination of information pertaining to personal or family life. The article reads as follows: "Information which is considered to be a personal or family secret used without one's consent or dissemination by public speeches, publicly demonstrated works or through mass media, or collecting or keeping, unless this is envisaged by law, is punished with a fine in the amount of 200 to 500 minimal salaries, or correctional labour for up to 1 year, or with arrest for the term of 1 to 2 months"³⁵ Moreover, in 2006 Armenia ratified the main international treaty on Cybercrime – Budapest Convention,

²⁹ *Shtekel v. Ukraine*. Application no. 33014/05. Released on 5th May 2011. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <[https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#{%22itemid%22:\[%22001-104685%22\]}](https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#{%22itemid%22:[%22001-104685%22]})>.

³⁰ *Flinkkilä and Others v. Finland*. Application no. 25576/04. Released on 6th April 2010. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <<file:///C:/Users/Nay/Downloads/001-98064.pdf>>; *Saaristo and Others v. Finland*. Application no. 184/06. Released on 12th October 2010. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <<file:///C:/Users/Nay/Downloads/001-101017.pdf>>.

³¹ *Bohlen v. Germany*. Application no. 53495/09. Released on 19th February 2015. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <<file:///C:/Users/Nay/Downloads/002-10519.pdf>>.

³² *Copland v. the United Kingdom*. Application no. 62617/00. Released on 3th April 2007. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <<https://www.5rb.com/case/copland-v-uk/>>.

³³ POLLICINO, O.: *Legal analysis of draft amendments to the civil code of the republic of Armenia*. 2014. [online] [2020-04-24]. Available at: <<http://www.osce.org/fom/116911?download=true>>.

³⁴ *Directive 2002/58/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council*. Released on 2nd July 2002. [online]. [2020-04-26]. Available at: <<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32002L0058>>.

³⁵ *Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia*. Released on 18th April 2003. [online]. [2020-04-26]. Available at: <<https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/65062/61317/F1716776223/ARM65062.pdf>>.

which requires states parties to make illegal certain acts provided by the Convention criminalize under their national law. Its Additional Protocol requires states parties to criminalize the dissemination of racist and xenophobic material (hate speech).

It is worth to mention, that in 2015 the Law of the Republic of Armenia on the Protection of Personal Data was adopted. Moreover, the Personal Data Protection Agency launched its activities as an authorized body inside of Ministry of Justice. Mainly, the Agency is responsible for overseeing the application of the requirements of the law in the field of personal data protection, develops guidelines and regulations, as well as provides legal assistance. However current legislation in place is not fairly balancing the right to Freedom of Expression and Right to Privacy due to the wordings of the articles set forth in Civil Law which gives wide space of interpretation to the Courts. Moreover, Substantive Criminal and Procedural Law do not include specific provisions, similar to the many other countries, prescribing separate clause as "illegal use of personal data" which will help to impose a liability for illegal obtaining, maintaining, processing and using personal data. This must have a differentiated approach having regarded the effect and damage. To summarize, the crimes conducted via internet challenged the basic human rights of citizens inside States which lead to the new approaches of current changing environments that goes beyond traditional interpretation of ECHR, but extended alongside to the negative obligation to the positive obligation, which requires states to make such an environment through the adequate legislation and sophisticated mechanisms. It is a mere fact that every state's obligation is to elaborate their national legislation, technical support or input other effective mechanisms for the whole pocket of combat as it is an effective cybersecurity is the important cornerstone to ensure safe society, where basic human rights are protected, particularly. Private Life and Freedom of Expression. Indeed, laws must provide effective protection in regard to the dissemination of offensive statements which become the most common problem in line with the development of the Internet. But the provision of Civil and Criminal Code must be stipulated in a way that will preclude the exemption of liability in favour of defamatory speech. The existence of such provisions may pose a threat to protection of right to respect for private and family life of Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights and is likely to be determined to be a violation. Thus, solutions to the problems posed must be addressed by international law, through adequately adopted international legal instruments and consequent ratification and follow-up by the states by amending and updating legal frameworks.

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FORMS OF INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM IN SLOVAK MEDIA

Pavel Bielík

ABSTRACT:

The paper presents a coherent set of information about investigative journalism with an emphasis on the practice and its position in the Slovak media environment. The scientific study is of a theoretical character and critically evaluates knowledge related to the phenomenon of investigative journalism, based on which the author formulates a definition of investigative journalism in the Slovak media environment. Within the text, the author also deals with the misuse of the term “investigative journalist” in media within the context of an issue, which aims to categorize, who presently is an investigative journalist, why investigative elements can be perceived in any journalistic activity but a boundary that would determine what is not a subject of investigative journalism, does not exist.

KEY WORDS:

investigative journalism, journalist, media

1 Introduction into Slovak Investigative Journalism

In our country, investigative journalism started to form in the 1990s, representing an important instrument of public interest protection, but currently is disappearing from the practice of the contemporary Slovak media. Main reasons for this include that it is time-consuming and costly and the expectations on this area of journalistic profession are fundamentally different. An author of such socially important texts should be precise in searching, exploring, verifying, and comparing available sources, as they produce extensive contents that should be based on unshakeable facts.¹ We must not forget also the question of their safety and a personality that must be able to cope with possible intimidation. Therefore, we find it important to dig deeper into the social significance of investigative journalism in Slovakia. In our paper, we put emphasis on definitions by various theoreticians of the area of investigative journalism and the issues connected to defining who presently is and who is not an investigative journalist in Slovakia. Through comparison of theoreticians and the investigative journalists themselves, we are finding differences between theoretical premises and the practice. Journalists in our country are facing a major challenge – not to give in to corruption, evil, and growing fear in society. Školkay, in his publication *Investigatívna žurnalistika (Investigative Journalism)*, in which he analyses the state of Slovak investigative journalism in the previous decade, writes that, in our country, “*there is a latent fear of potential threat to lives of investigative journalists from the organized crime. Luckily, there hasn't been a case of murder of a journalist thus far, but we have encountered cases of intimidation, also in the form of destruction of a journalist's property.*”² Recent events, however, contradict his words – besides intimidation, organized crime committed murders of an investigative journalist J. Kuciak and his fiancée M. Kušnírová on 21st February 2018 in their house in Veľká Mača.³ The police have confirmed that the work of the 27 year old member of investigative team of online portal Aktualisty.sk was the main motive of the

¹ TUŠER, A. et al.: *Praktikum mediálnej tvorby*. Bratislava : Eurokódex, 2010, p. 122.

² ŠKOLKAY, A.: *Súčasná slovenská investigatívna žurnalistika*. In PASTI, S., SLÁDEČKOVÁ, D., HRUBALA, J. (eds.): *Investigatívna žurnalistika. Rady právnikov, úvahy, postrehy, komentáre*. Bratislava : Repro Print, 2004, p. 11.

³ ČUNDERLÍKOVÁ, J., VÝBEROVÁ, P.: *Vo Veľkej Mači robili rekonštrukciu vraždy Kuciaka a Kušnírovej*. [online]. [2020-04-28]. Available at: <<https://www.aktuality.sk/clanok/695929/vo-velkej-maci-robili-rekonstrukciu-vrazdy-kuciaka-a-kusnirovej/>>.

murder.⁴ A. Zsuzsová, Z. Andruskó, T. Szabó, and M. Marček, charged with the murder of the aforementioned couple, were, on the 14th August 2019, also charged with preparation of premeditated murders of prosecutors Maroš Žilinka and Peter Šufliarky and the lawyer Daniel Lipšic. T. Szabó and M. Marček had allegedly been hired by Zsuzsová through Andruskó to execute the killings of M. Žilinka and D. Lipšic in autumn of 2017.⁵ Murder as a precedent in the Slovak journalistic environment is noted also by a Denník N journalist M. Tódová, who says that “before the murder, we the journalists would never have thought of fearing for our lives. Saying it crudely, we could have written whatever we liked and they could have kept on steeling as much as they liked.”⁶

2 Who Is an Investigative Journalist?

Investigative journalism is one of the most difficult and most risky of the current journalism genres and methods of journalistic work. B. Osvaldová and J. Halada define it in *Praktická encyklopédia žurnalistiky (Practical Encyclopaedia of Journalism)* as a term derived from English, “to investigate” – explore, inquire into.⁷ Work of investigative journalists is characterized mostly by a thorough collection, verification, and connection of evidence in areas of corruption, patronage, or other antisocial activities that can lead to significant cases, affairs or prosecution. Its objective is to publicize information important for the society that would otherwise remain covered up. M. Follrichová in this case reminds us that “expressions of investigative journalism are currently topical not only for journalists, but also for the whole society. It is the investigative journalism that is the example of realizing the mission of journalism – to expose power abuse and thus protect the society from corrupted officials and negative tendencies. Journalism is a watchdog of democracy and investigative journalism is one of its most efficient weapons.”⁸ A. Valček, a journalist of the daily SME, sees investigative journalism from a practical point of view in a similar way and states: “For me, investigation is a synonym of the real purpose of journalism, i.e. the public control. I think that the objective of investigative journalism is to be a public watchdog of the government; this way people control government through media.”⁹ T. Harcup speaks about the principle of journalism in similar fashion. According to him, the goal of journalism is to uncover something that somebody wants to keep hidden, and this requires a meticulous and time-consuming work of a journalist or a group of journalists, who investigate potential illegal or antisocial activities.¹⁰

⁴ TÓDOVÁ, M.: *Motívom vraždy kuciaka a kušnírovej bola jeho práca, sú už len dve verzie, prokurátor zverejnil identikit.* [online]. [2020-04-30]. Available at: <<https://dennikn.sk/1233165/motivom-vrazdy-kuciaka-a-kusnirovej-bola-jeho-praca-su-uz-len-dve-verzie-prokurator-zverejnil-identikit/>>.

⁵ HUTKO, D.: *Za vraždu Šufliarskeho 100-tisíc, za Lipšica 200-tisíc, poprava Žilinku za 70-tisíc.* [online]. [2020-04-30]. Available at: <<https://spravy.pravda.sk/domace/clanok/524554-za-vrazdu-sufliarskeho-100-tisic-za-lipsica-200-tisic-poprava-zilinku-za-70-tisic/>>.

⁶ BEZÁK, B., ČIKOVKÝ, K.: *Monika Tódová: Priala som si, aby to nebol Kočner.* [online]. [2020-04-30]. Available at: <<https://dennikn.sk/1697893/monika-todova-vrazda-ma-zmenila-dospela-som/>>.

⁷ OSVALDOVÁ, B., HALADA, J. et al.: *Praktická encyklopédie žurnalistiky.* 2nd Edition. Prague : Libri, 2002, p. 245.

⁸ FOLLRICHOVÁ, M.: *Investigatívna žurnalistika – žurnalistický žáner i metóda žurnalistickej tvorby?* In HORVÁTH, M. (ed.): *Žurnalistika, médiá, spoločnosť.* Bratislava : Stimul, 2011, p. 34.

⁹ KUČOVÁ, M.: *Investigatívny novinár Adam Valček: Nechceme sa zmieriť s tým, ako to tu funguje.* [online]. [2020-03-30]. Available at: <<https://soda.o2.sk/pribehy/rozhovor/investigativny-novinar-peter-valcek-nehceme-sa-zmierit-s-tym-ako-to-tu-funguje/>>.

¹⁰ HARCUP, T.: *Oxford Dictionary of Journalism.* New York : Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 144.

According to H. Burgh, an investigative journalist is a man or a woman who aims to expose the truth and to identify antisocial activities through instruments that are available to them. This act is generally called investigative journalism and is different from seemingly similar work conducted by police, lawyers, auditors, and regulatory bodies in that it is not limited as to target and usually earns money for publishing media.¹¹ M. Follrichová considers investigative journalism to be a very topical and significant component of contemporary print and electronic mass media. Opinions on it differ. It is defined as an independent journalism genre, a type of reportage, and also as a method of journalistic work. Although its definitions differ, everyone agrees that it serves the society and its democratic development.¹² Despite our approval of the aforementioned definitions, nuances that could challenge them can be found also in the Slovak journalistic environment. As an example, we could use controversial M. Daňo, Slovak entrepreneur, journalist, YouTuber, and an unsuccessful candidate for president in 2019. He has become famous for his videos on YouTube and in his, in certain ways, untraditional approach to journalistic work. M. Daňo describes himself as an investigative journalist, but has not had any activities in relevant newspapers. On 10th December 2017, he even became a founder of an investigative GINN (Global Investigative News Network) that, according to him, serves to protect public interesting, to fight corruption, patronage, nepotism, and injustice.¹³ His GINN also issues press passes. However, in December 2018, M. Daňo was first accused of tax fraud and then, after a few days, of vandalism and inciting.¹⁴ The question of who is an investigative journalist and what should be considered an investigative expression thus remains. An American reporter and editor of the New York daily Newsday, R. Green, perceives investigative expression as the journalistic material built, as a rule, on own work and initiative on an important topic which some individuals and organizations would like to keep secret.¹⁵ According to M. Follrichová, one of the methods of building the investigative journalistic expression is “*creating a detective sujet. This means that a journalist describes in detail everything that he has done, thus allowing readers to feel that they themselves have walked the journey of discovery.*”¹⁶ J. Hrabala adds that the term “investigative journalism” has not yet been quite established in our language and we do not always interpret its content in the same way, but we could agree on the statement that it is the investigative journalism when a journalist moves from the comfortable position of describing, commentating, and glossing... to the position of investigating and analyzing.¹⁷

Although several of the aforementioned statements of experienced journalists or theoreticians describe basic principles of investigative journalism, they do not answer the problem of its possible misuse. P. Tóth, a former agent of the Slovak Information Service (hereinafter SIS) and author of books about unpublished information from behind the scenes of secret services, Slovak politics and Bratislava underworld or the case of Cervanová that still remains

¹¹ BURGH, H.: *Investigative journalism*. 2nd Edition. Abingdon : Routledge, 2008, p. 10.

¹² FOLLRICHOVÁ, M.: *Investigatívna žurnalistika – žurnalistický žáner i metóda žurnalistickej tvorby?* In HORVÁTH, M. (ed.): *Žurnalistika, médiá, spoločnosť*. Bratislava : Stimul, 2011, p. 33.

¹³ *Aktuality*. [online]. [2020-04-30]. Available at: <<https://www.ginn.press/home?seid=LDXKAB56BMM56AW&pn=1&q=>>.

¹⁴ PRUŠOVÁ, V.: *Vianoce strávili vo väzbe a ani na Nový rok si nepripijú na slobode. Prečo hrozí Daňovi a Vaskému väzenie*. [online]. [2020-04-30]. Available at: <<https://dennikn.sk/1698128/vianoce-stravili-vo-vazbe-a-ani-na-novy-rok-si-nepripiju-na-slobode-preco-hrozi-danovi-a-vaskemu-vazenie/>>.

¹⁵ HEVESI, D.: *Robert Greene, 78, Dies: Investigative Journalist*. [online]. [2020-04-30]. Available at: <<http://www.nytimep.com/2008/04/12/nyregion/12greene.html.>>.

¹⁶ FOLLRICHOVÁ, M.: *Investigatívna žurnalistika – žurnalistický žáner i metóda žurnalistickej tvorby?* In HORVÁTH, M. (ed.): *Žurnalistika, médiá, spoločnosť*. Bratislava : Stimul, 2011, p. 43.

¹⁷ HRUBALA, J.: Slovo na úvod. In PASTI, S., SLÁDEČKOVÁ, D., HRUBALA, J. (eds.): *Investigatívna žurnalistika: Rady právnikov, úvahy, postrehy, komentáre*. Bratislava : Repro Print, 2004, p. 7.

unresolved, had also been perceived as an investigative journalist. P. Tóth, who became a SIS officer after the establishment of the Dzurinda's first government in 1998,¹⁸ was accused of a spying game in the case of interception of the daily SME¹⁹ and, in October 2018, he confessed to the police that before the murder of J. Kuciak, he had been monitoring him and other journalists for M. Kočner.²⁰ Both actors of the problem – M. Daňo and P. Tóth – had, at one point, been working on identifying antisocial activities and protected society from corrupted officials or negative tendencies, but have then misused their knowledge in the areas of media, secret services, and law, and became corrupted themselves. To help ourselves with the definition of investigative work, we can use *Slovník vybraných pojmov z mediálnych štúdií (Dictionary of Selected Terms from Media Studies)*, which states that “the role of an investigative journalist is to expose the truth and identify the untruth,”²¹ and also words of A. Valček, who says that regular debates and meetings in editorial offices about how to treat a concrete topic in a right way are a part of the investigative work; while these, often hours-long, debates are more about values than technical details.²² This raises a question of moral principle and the impact of investigative journalism on the democratic system as one of the main pillars of investigative journalism which is missing in definitions of some authors. We will build on theoretical pillars of a scientific article *Commercial News Criteria and Investigative Journalism*, in which the critics of commercialisation of media address the effect the investigative journalism has on democracy, which has led to two theories that regard its impact as negative. The first theory is based on the following logic:

- investigative journalism is positive for democracy,
- commercialisation of media restrains investigative journalism,
- for this reason, commercialisation has negative implications for democracy.

The second theory is based on a different logic:

- investigative journalism is negative for democracy,
- commercialisation of media stimulates investigative journalism,
- for this reason, commercialisation has become negative for democracy.²³

Both theoretical premises suggest mutual influence of journalism, democracy, and commercialisation of media, while we are not going to contest either of the logical postulates. Wider spectrum of opinions in expert discussion illustrates the problem with definition of what is and what is not the investigative journalism. Investigative elements can be observed in any journalistic activity, but there is no boundary that would define what is not considered a subject of investigative journalism. According to A. Školkaý, every good journalistic work is, in a way, investigative.²⁴ This is also acknowledged by A. Valček, the daily SME journalist,

¹⁸ *Sme*. [online]. [2020-04-30]. Available at: <<https://domov.sme.sk/t/5397/peter-toth>>.

¹⁹ VAGOVIČ, M.: *Dva životy Petra Tótha*. [online]. [2020-04-30]. Available at: <<https://www.tyzden.sk/casopis/14854/dva-zivoty-petra-totha/>>.

²⁰ TÓDOVÁ, M., ČIKOVSKÝ, K.: *Peter Tóth policii priznal, že pre Kočnera pred vraždou sledoval Kuciaka a ďalších novinárov*. [online]. [2020-04-30]. Available at: <<https://dennikn.sk/1269330/peter-toth-policii-priznal-ze-pre-kocnera-pred-vrazdou-sledoval-kuciaka-a-dalsich-novinarov/>>.

²¹ MORAVČÍKOVÁ, M.: *Investigatívne novinárstvo*. In PRAVDOVÁ, H., RADOŠINSKÁ, J., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J. (eds.): *Slovník vybraných pojmov z mediálnych štúdií*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2016, p. 106.

²² KUČOVÁ, M.: *Investigatívny novinár Adam Valček: Nechceme sa zmieriť s tým, ako to tu funguje*. [online]. [2020-03-31]. Available at: <<https://soda.o2.sk/pribehy/rozhovor/investigativny-novinar-peter-valcek-nehceme-sa-zmierit-s-tym-ako-to-tu-funguje/>>.

²³ For more information, see: ROLLAND, A.: *Commercial News Criteria and Investigative Journalism*. In *Journalism Studies*, 2006, Vol. 7, No. 6, p. 940-963.

²⁴ ŠKOLKAY, A.: *Korupcia na Slovensku: Strážcovia cností a žurnalistika morálneho rozhorčenia. Investigatívna žurnalistika a jej základné prvky*. Bratislava : Róbert Vico, 2011, p. 82.

currently the leader of investigative projects, who, in an interview for the weekly Trend, said that during the time of murder of J. Kuciak, SME went through an organizational change that allows him to work on the investigations more than before.²⁵

3 Differences between Definitions and Practice in the Slovak Investigative Journalism

We can illustrate basic conditions of success of investigative journalism that would be: undeniable support from the publisher (financial and moral), support from the society in its political system, but also support from the judicial and executive powers. A. Školkaý says that *“investigative journalism lies in a triangle, where the other two sides consist of the police investigation and scientific research. A policeman has relatively best material and technical resources and conditions to investigate, while a scientist probably has the most time and peace for investigation.”*²⁶ Thus, combination of both elements would be ideal, as the investigative journalism needs more time and more money. *Slovník vybraných pojmov z mediálnych štúdií (Dictionary of Selected Terms from Media Studies)* states that *“despite the fact that procedures of investigative journalists have many similarities with, for example, police activities, investigators, or lawyers, the main difference is that investigative journalism has no legal basis, does not have a limited goal, and its results earn money for media owners.”*²⁷

Here, however, we are also able to find differences between theoretical premises and the actual practice, which the investigative journalists describe in different ways, depending on their own experience in places where they work. We must stress that not every newsroom in Slovakia contains an investigative team of journalists; on the contrary, in some cases, the situation is critical. Furthermore, authors of investigative texts face several obstacles. Despite all this, according to the journalist M. Vagovič, *“the investigative journalism in Slovakia is better than it used to be in the past, because in every medium, there are journalists that do it honestly. It is, naturally, also given by a much better access to open sources.”*²⁸ T. Nicholson says that *“ethics is the main problem. Journalists face political, economic, and social pressure and do work that is neither precise, nor independent, nor conflict of interest-free. The main purpose of service to the reader remains, but the things being published or broadcast often carry a label of higher interest – to serve the political and commercial intentions of media owners.”*²⁹ T. Harcup draws attention to the fact that compared to other forms of reporting, the investigative journalism may involve an investigative team that needs to invest more time and money on the content than it would for a routine story,³⁰ which constitutes a significant problem in the Slovak media environment.

²⁵ TVARDZÍK, J.: *Novinár Valček: Po vražde Kuciaka som obozretnejší, možno už trochu paranoidný.* [online]. [2020-04-30]. Available at: <<https://medialne.etrend.sk/tlac/novinar-valcek-po-vrazde-kuciaka-som-obozretnejši-možno-uz-trochu-paranoidny.html>>.

²⁶ ŠKOLKAY, A.: *Korupcia na Slovensku: Strážcovia cností a žurnalistika morálneho rozhorčenia. Investigatívna žurnalistika a jej základné prvky.* Bratislava : Róbert Vico, 2011, p. 81.

²⁷ MORAVČIKOVÁ, M.: *Investigatívne novinárstvo.* In PRAVDOVÁ, H., RADOŠINSKÁ, J., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J. (eds.): *Slovník vybraných pojmov z mediálnych štúdií.* Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2016, p. 106.

²⁸ SUDOR, K.: *Novinár Vagovič: Výhrady Penty k mojej práci sú smiešny balast.* [online]. [2020-04-30]. Available at: <<https://dennikn.sk/351566/novinar-vagovic-vyhrady-penty-mojej-praci-su-smiesny-balast/>>.

²⁹ NICHOLSON, T.: *Investigatívna žurnalistika na Slovensku: Nátlak na zneváženie etiky.* In NAGYOVÁ, I., ŽITŇANSKÝ, E. (eds.): *Korupcia na Slovensku a jej spracovanie v médiách.* Bratislava : Róbert Vico, 2011, p. 103.

³⁰ HARCUP, T.: *Oxford Dictionary of Journalism.* New York : Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 144.

A. Valček sees the state of the Slovak investigative journalism in a more positive light and states that the death of Ján Kuciak is also a reminder for the journalists and their future work – to cooperate more closely and help each other across the newsrooms. He sees solidarity among investigative journalists as a trend that will continue, “because Slovakia is a small country and not every publisher can afford to fund a large department of investigative journalists. Therefore, the cooperation of the publishers to cover major topics together logically presents itself.”³¹

P. Fejér, former member of editorial staff of the investigative programme Reportéri (The Reporters), also speaks about the lack of personnel at the time: “The programme was unquestionably under-staffed, and not only in reporters. We lacked a dramaturg, a spotter, someone who would be able to bring topics that could be worked on. Reportéri was a fast travelling train, there was a settled team of reporters and you would have to ask each one of them, why they had not gone into an open confrontation with the politicians.”³² Journalist M. Vagovič also points out insufficient personnel and funding in our country. He says that “our newsrooms lack personnel and, therefore, not enough people are working on cases. Besides, it takes time and money, while the outcome is often uncertain. We embark on topics where we are not able estimate the result ahead. In addition, many media are owned by oligarchs and this raises doubts about the level of journalists’ freedom in uncovering important affairs.”³³ Vagovič then adds that there is another problem of frequent lawsuits that the investigative journalists are confronted with. His words about lawsuits are also confirmed by a case from December 2019, where we again encounter differences between definitions (this time of law) and the practice. We are talking about a case, in which the Office for Personal Data Protection of the Slovak Republic calls on investigative journalists from Czech investigative website Investigace.cz to identify the source of the recording of M. Kočner and D. Trnka, otherwise they are facing a fine of ten million Euro.³⁴ In October, the website Investigace.cz publicised a recording, in which M. Kočner installs a spy camera in the office of former general prosecutor. The Office also asks them to explain, whether they possess other recordings and where these are. The response of Investigace.cz was clear: “Out of principle, we protect our sources. As all good journalists and, according to European legislation, it is not only our right, but a direct obligation, to protect them.”³⁵ It is an absurd situation, as the journalistic source protection is enshrined in the Act No. 167/2008 Coll. on Periodical Press and Agency News Service (Press Law), which states that “a periodic press publisher and press agency shall be obliged to keep confidential the source of information obtained for publication in the periodicals or in agency news and also the content of such information, so that the identity of the source cannot be established...”³⁶ The obligation to

³¹ KUČOVÁ, M.: *Investigatívny novinár Adam Valček: Nechceme sa zmieriť s tým, ako to tu funguje*. [online]. [2020-03-31]. Available at: <<https://soda.o2.sk/pribehy/rozhovor/investigativny-novinar-peter-valcek-nehceme-sa-zmierit-s-tym-ako-to-tu-funguje/>>.

³² MIKUŠOVIČ, D.: *Pavol Fejér zo zastavených Reportérov: Nevie, komu je Rezník zviazaný, nerozhodol sám*. [online]. [2020-03-31]. Available at: <<https://dennikn.sk/999196/pavol-fejer-ze-zastavenych-reporterov-neviem-komu-je-reznik-zviazany-nerozhodol-sam/>>.

³³ JANOČKO, J.: *Marek Vagovič: Naši čitatelia oceňujú, že vieme vysvetliť zložité kauzy jednoduchým spôsobom*. [online]. [2020-03-31]. Available at: <<https://gaudeo.sk/marek-vagovic/>>.

³⁴ STRUHÁRIK, F.: *MediaBrifing: Úradníci strašia investigatívov 10-miliónovou pokutou*. [online]. [2019-03-31]. Available at: <<https://dennikn.sk/1693680/mediabrifing-uradnici-strasia-investigativcov-10-milionovou-pokutou/?ref=suv>>.

³⁵ *Investigace*. [online]. [2020-04-30]. Available at: <<https://www.investigace.cz/prohlaseni-redakce-investigace-cz-zdroje-chranime/>>.

³⁶ *Zákon č. 167/2008 Z. z. o periodickej tlači a agentúrnom spravodajstve a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov (tlačový zákon)*. [online]. [2020-03-31]. Available at: <<https://www.ustavnyud.sk/zakon-o-periodickej-tlaci-tlacovy-zakon->>.

protect the source is also confirmed by the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights, as well as by the Slovak Syndicate of Journalists and its code of ethics that says that: “*the journalist is obliged to keep his information sources secret as long as he is not exempted from that duty by the informant.*”³⁷ The case, when the Office or other public authorities interfere in activities of the journalists uncovering cases of corruption might not be isolated; it suffices to look at the results of the OECD survey (Economic Surveys and Country Surveillance), which was conducted in 2017 and received a total of 101 responses from 43 countries. The main objective of the survey was to find out how investigative journalists investigate and uncover corruption stories and also their opinions on the interaction with authorities. According to the survey, 35% of the responding journalists obtain primary information on possible corruption activities from so-called whistleblowers. Only 22% of them feel safe reporting on corruption cases and 58% had been contacted by law enforcement authorities in connection to their investigation.³⁸

Conclusion

Defining investigative journalism is like defining good art or good literature – it is easier to point to examples of its practice, write V. Stetka and H. Örnebring in a case study that examines the state of investigative journalism in Europe.³⁹ According to their results, majority of investigative journalists in Slovakia have relative autonomy. In this regard, we ranked higher than the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Lithuania or Bulgaria.⁴⁰ Although the aforementioned research is a few years old, we can agree with its results even today. In the light of socio-political conditions in central Europe, Slovakia is still a country, where the highest constitutional actors do not interfere with the independence of press in a significant way. In Poland, the government has taken control over the media,⁴¹ and in Hungary, we are also witnessing continuous efforts of its Prime Minister V. Orbán to gain more and more control over the legal and regulatory framework for media, which has been confirmed by a survey of AP agency published by the American non-governmental organization Freedom House.⁴² Whether we are talking about case studies, results of surveys or comparisons of individual definitions, we find it especially important to sensibly assess each case, situation or personality that is connected to the term “investigative journalism”, so that the term that represents a meticulous, concentrated, and respectable work of journalists is not abused by those who try to undermine its values, as investigative work involves greater risks for the journalists and their sources, whether these are lawsuits, vindictive attacks or murders. As an example, we present an assassination of Martin O’Hagan, a journalist from Northern Ireland, from 2001 or a shooting of the Russian journalist Anna Politkovská in 2006.⁴³ Unfortunately,

³⁷ *Slovenský syndikát novinárov*. [online]. [2020-04-30]. Available at: <<http://www.ssn.sk/eticky-kodex-novinarov/>>.

³⁸ *The Role of the Media and Investigative Journalism in Combating Corruption*. [online]. [2020-04-30]. Available at: <<https://www.oecd.org/corruption/anti-bribery/OECD-Survey-Results-on-the-Role-of-Media-Investigative-Journalism-Combating-Corruption.pdf/>>.

³⁹ See also: ŠTĚTKA, V., ÖRNEBRING, H.: Investigative Journalism in Central and Eastern Europe. In *The International Journal of Press/Politicp*. 2013, Vol. 18, No. 4, p. 413-435.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁴¹ KRČMÁRIK, M.: *Pol'ská vláda ovládla médiá. Priliš rýchlo, priliš napevno*. [online]. [2020-03-31]. Available at: <<https://svet.sme.sk/c/20144302/polska-vlada-ovladla-media-prilis-rychlo-prilis-napevno.html?ref=av-center>>.

⁴² *Svoboda médií? Barma se lepší, Maďarsko padá*. [online]. [2020-03-31]. Available at: <https://www.tyden.cz/rubriky/media/tisk/svoboda-medii-barma-se-lepsi-madarsko-pada_233119.html>.

⁴³ HARCUP, T.: *Oxford Dictionary of Journalism*. New York : Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 144.

we do not have to go that far to find a similar case in our country. Although the murder of the investigative journalist J. Kuciak is a precedent in the Slovak media environment, there is evidence of spying and surveillance of other Slovak journalists that could have led to similar tragedy. Therefore, investigative journalism needs more support from the government, law enforcement authorities, and also the public. In the seminary thesis, we have placed emphasis on the definitions of theoreticians in the area of investigative journalism and the issues related to defining who is an investigative journalist (not only) in Slovakia today. Through comparison of theoreticians and investigative journalists, we have stated differences between theoretical premises and the practice, which we have translated into the state of the Slovak investigative journalism and the problems and challenges it is currently facing, as we consider it important to gain a better insight into the social significance of investigative journalism in Slovakia.

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EDUCATION AS A PREREQUISITE FOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IN THE ICT SECTOR

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ABSTRACT:

As development of the Information and communication technologies (ICT) influences the competitiveness of all business sectors and overall economic growth, the authors conducted a research on factors influencing the ICT sector's development. In identifying business development factors the surveyed ICT professionals emphasized the role of state activities in ensuring favorable and encouraging business environment and quality high education. The quality education is of high importance as inability to reduce shortages of skilled ICT professionals can negatively affect innovation, profitability and earnings of ICT companies. Following these findings, the research of the existing skill gaps and the relevance of the education for the ICT sector growth was conducted. The aim of the research was to evaluate success of the current education model in following ICT sector needs. In analysing the results of the survey conducted on 120 ICT professionals it was found that they believe that the education is most important activity by which the state and its institutions can influence the development of the ICT sector where most of them consider that the state should intensify education of ICT key personnel in order to stimulate the sectors growth. As well, this research revealed most important specific fields that should be taught in more extent and with involvement and coordination with the ICT professionals.

KEY WORDS:

business environment, education, industry needs, information and communication (ICT) sector, skill gaps

1 Introduction

Commonly known characteristics of Information and communication (ICT) sector are rapid changes that affect the development of all other industries and the global economy.^{1,2,3,4} By infiltrating in all business spheres the ICT gradually started to transform the industrial economy into a knowledge based economy⁵ influencing the labor efficiency and businesses profitability. It is obvious that the advantage of the benefits provided by this development flywheel have to be used to ensure the dynamics of future economic development. In this sense, it is necessary to identify development prerequisites and needs of the ICT sector and provide a favorable and supportive business environment that will enable its further growth. Previous authors' research observed the ICT sector's growth perspectives and identified the economic key factors that are influencing its development. It was concluded that the strategic long-term perspective approach to the development of the national ICT sectors is essential. In identifying the obstacles for the Croatian ICT sector development, the inadequate number of

¹ CIOACĂ, S. I. et al.: Assessing the Impact of ICT Sector on Sustainable Development in the European Union: An Empirical Analysis Using Panel Data. In *Sustainability*, 2020, Vol. 12, No. 592, p. 2-15.

² DRACA, M. et al.: *The Evolving Role of ICT in the Economy: A Report by LSE Consulting for Huawei*. London : London School of Economics and Political Science, 2018, p. 4-7. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <<http://www.lse.ac.uk/business-and-consultancy/consulting/assets/documents/the-evolving-role-of-ict-in-the-economy.pdf>>.

³ ROSARIO, C. et al.: The Impact of Information and Communication Technologies on Countries Economic Growth. In DA SILVA, A. L., TOMIC, D., GRILEC, A. (eds.): *Sustainability from an Economic and Social Perspective*. Varaždin : Varaždin Development and Entrepreneurship Agency, 2019, p. 414-420.

⁴ YIE, M. S., NAM, S. J.: The Impact of ICT Sector on Economic Output and Growth. In *Informatization Policy*, 2019, Vol. 26, No. 2, p. 25-44.

⁵ HOVE, D.: *A fit-gap analysis of the National Certificate (Vocational)—Information Technology and Computer Science curriculum against the needs of the South African ICT industry*. [Master's thesis]. Stellenbosch : Stellenbosch University, 2019, p. 98. [online]. [2020-04-26]. Available at: <http://scholar.sun.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10019.1/105914/hove_national_2019.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

high-skilled employees was emphasized.⁶ It is clear that one of the areas where continuous improvements need to be implemented is the labor market and the education of skilled work force. The public education system is the first in a line of those responsible for the development and qualification of young ICT professionals as “the current technological revolution widens the gap between education and work; as the introduction of new technologies, changes the nature of knowledge and skills required by companies.”⁷ “This situation poses important challenges for university managers and academics as there is an urgent need to find a way that allows a better alignment between universities and business.”⁸ However, Llorens Garcia and associates have shown that the Universities are not taking into consideration the needs of the dynamic and changing industry where the profile of the young ICT professionals after graduation, in terms of soft skills, stayed the same during the last decade. The authors argue that if Universities do not succeed to recognize the businesses needs the ICT sector could lose its competitive edge. The aim of this research was to contribute to the ongoing discussion and to identify possibilities for improvements of the education model in the ICT related study programs thus indirectly influencing better business perspectives of the ICT sector. Following, after the recent literature review the authors have set up following research questions: Is the education model following the ICT industry expectations?; Which knowledge and skills should Universities teach at a greater extent in the future?; What state activities are the ICT professionals considering as most important for the development of the ICT sector? The authors conducted a review of the recent literature and a survey on the sample of 124 ICT experts (of which 120 valid questionnaires were included in the further analysis) whose results are presented as follows. The next chapter gives a review of previous empirical studies on the existing skill gaps in the ICT industry and the relevance of the quality educational model for the ICT development. Following literature review, the research methodology and the results of the empirical study were presented. The last chapters are giving discussion on research findings, conclusion and recommendations for policy-makers, limitations of this research and recommendations for the future research.

2 Literature Review

Development of the information and communication technologies (ICT) is setting the newest challenges towards Universities, their teachers and students and state institutions.⁹ They are challenged to change the ways of teaching and learning, to adopt their study programs to the latest digital trends regardless of the primary fields of study. Per example “many university or college business programs offer majors or concentrations of small business management, but few of them offer a course of information technology (IT) for small business, despite the fact

⁶ BESTVINA BUKVIĆ, I.: Impact of Business Environment on the Development of Regional ICT Sector: Case Eastern Croatia. In TONKOVIĆ, M., CRNKOVIĆ, B. (eds.): *7th International Scientific Symposium Economy of Eastern Croatia – Vision and Growth*. Osijek : Faculty of Economics in Osijek, 2018, p. 11-20. [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <<https://www.dropbox.com/s/9mqur gla6jl8kq/GIH%202018.pdf?dl=0>>.

⁷ HOVE, D.: *A fit-gap analysis of the National Certificate (Vocational)—Information Technology and Computer Science curriculum against the needs of the South African ICT industry*. [Master’s thesis]. Stellenbosch : Stellenbosch University, 2019, p. 98. [online]. [2020-04-26]. Available at: <http://scholar.sun.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10019.1/105914/hove_national_2019.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

⁸ LLORENS GARCIA, A. et al.: ICT skills gap in Spain: Before and after a decade of harmonizing the European Higher Education Area. In *Computer Applications in Engineering Education*, 2019, Vol. 27. No. 4, p. 934.

⁹ DAS, K.: The Role and Impact of ICT in Improving the Quality of Education: An Overview. In *International Journal of Innovative Studies in Sociology and Humanities*, 1990, Vol. 4, No. 6, p. 98-102.

that ICT plays an important role in the management of innovative small businesses.¹⁰ Consequently, integration of ICT is setting open issues in front of Universities some of those are: lack of awareness, knowledge and positive attitude of authorities, staff and policy-makers, lack of availability of adequate ICT infrastructure high operational costs and high level of obsolescence rate of ICT infrastructure and knowledge.¹¹ Furthermore it is important to harmonize state instruments and measures and to analyse the achieved results with the aim of continuous adjustments of the existing state policies, development measures and activities.¹² There are numerous researches analysing the existence of the skill gaps and shortages between the ICT industry (employers) expectations and the University study programs, i.e. the skills that are actually being acquired by students. At the same time, new technologies are developing the demand for new skills that are not being taught on the University, which, during time, further increases the insufficiency of qualified workforce¹³ while the outdated programs are losing their attractiveness. Per example, the rare “strong evidences to show that the market for traditional programming languages is on its way to extinction.”¹⁴ As the result, some of the young professionals after graduation face obstacles and need to upgrade their knowledge as of the misalignment of the knowledge and skills acquired on their Universities with the industry needs.¹⁵ Additionally, Loyalka and associates state that the quality of the study programs and the skill gained in computer study programs considerably differ across countries. They analysed comparable study program results in China, India, Russia, and the United States and found that there were potentially higher skill gains in the United States that could be the result of the “higher quality teaching or stronger linkages between college performance and employment outcomes”¹⁶ This finding is significant as it shows the comparison of the computer science skills among students coming from “four major economic and political powers that produce approximately half of the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics graduates in the world.”¹⁷

Additionally, it has to be emphasized that the ICT businesses are preferring industry certifications over academic certificates. The reasons for that are: “Firstly, industry certifications are developed by industry itself. Therefore, the certifications are considered relative and in line with industry requirements. Secondly, industry certifications are current; that is, most industry certifications expire after a period of three years, with others having an

¹⁰ WANG, S., WANG, H.: Design and Delivery of a New Course of Information Technology for Small Business. In *Journal of Information Systems Education*, 2015, Vol. 26, No. 1, p. 37.

¹¹ MIR, S. A.: ICT Integrated Higher Education: Prospects and Challenges. In *International Journal of Research in Economics and Social Sciences (IJRESS)*, 2019, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 3.

¹² BESTVINA BUKVIĆ, I., ĐURĐEVIĆ BABIĆ, I.: Catching the ICT Development Trends: What are the Odds?. In BUČKOVÁ, Z., RUSŇÁKOVÁ, L., SOLÍK, M. (eds.): *Megatrends And Media – Digital Universe*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2019, p. 35-53.

¹³ BRUNELLO, G., WRUUCK, P.: Skill Shortages and Skill Mismatch in Europe: A Review of the Literature. In *IZA – Journal of Labor Economics*, 2019, Vol. 8, No. 12346, p. 26.

¹⁴ KOONG, K. S. et al.: A Study of the Demand for Information Technology Professionals in Selected Internet Job Portals. In *Journal of Information Systems Education*, 2020, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 24. [online]. [2020-4-20]. Available at: <<https://aisel.aisnet.org/jise/vol13/iss1/4>>.

¹⁵ AKDUR, D.: The Design of a Survey on Bridging the Gap between Software Industry Expectations and Academia. In JOZWIAK, L., STOJANOVIC, R. (eds.): *8th Mediterranean Conference on Embedded Computing (MECO)*, Budva : MECOnet Institute (Mediterranean Excellence in Computing and Ontology), 2019, p. 1. [online]. [2020-4-20]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333635133_The_Design_of_a_Survey_on_Bridging_the_Gap_between_Software_Industry_Expectations_and_Academia>.

¹⁶ LOYALKA, P. et al.: Computer science skills across China, India, Russia, and the United States. In *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 2019, Vol. 116, No. 14, p. 6735.

¹⁷ Ibidem, p. 6732.

expiration period as low as twelve months.,¹⁸ This is forcing the ICT professionals to stay in line with the new technologies, tools, practices and concepts. For previous reasons the ICT integrated programs are usually not sufficiently widespread and are having a limited number of students. Except relative rapid obsolescence of knowledge acquired within ICT study programs there is an issue of existing differences among understanding of Universities and industry with respect to the importance of certain skill categories. In analysing this question, Aasheim and associates encountered on significant differences and mismatch in expectations and what is actually being taught between Universities and the industry. Although the ICT sector is placing more importance on “hardware concepts, operating systems, leadership skills, entrepreneurial/risk taker traits, high overall college grade point average, packaged software skills, and work experience“ on a broader level “both groups ranked the importance of these categories in the following decreasing order: interpersonal skills, personal skills, technical skills, organizational skills, experience, grade point average.“¹⁹ In identifying underrepresented areas in ICT study programs on Moscow universities Platov and associates found that those are “programming, working with open software, the principles of ICT functioning.”²⁰ The survey was conducted in 2019 on 250 students of which 83% had work experience. The most important ways that the students were using to acquire digital skills were combination of university study programs (85%), self-learning (53%) and work experience (51%). They emphasized that the programming (41%), work with software on independent platform (37%) and principles of ICT (33%) were not sufficiently represented on study programs.²¹ Of course, it has to be taken into consideration that different positions in ICT sector require different set of skills and certifications, but at this point of time, the sector is still highly volatile and not developed to the extent that the specific skills could be observed separately within the sector.²²

Additional problem is relative unattractiveness of the ICT related study programs as Kaarakainen found that less than 5% of future Finnish students are planning to study or work within the ICT sector.²³ This is interesting information as the young are using ICT technology and keeping track with technology and digital innovations on a daily basis but it seems that they are not equally interested to work in the industry itself. For previous reasons the ICT integrated programs are usually not widespread and are having a limited number of students. Although questions risen are more complex that could seam at a first look, the authors wanted to investigate the importance of Universities in providing the skilled future employees where attitudes of the ICT professionals on education as activity by which the state and its institutions should influence the development of the ICT sector and the knowledge and skills that should be thought at a greater extent in the future, were risen. Based on these research questions, the following research statements were formed:

¹⁸ HOVE, D.: *A fit-gap analysis of the National Certificate (Vocational)—Information Technology and Computer Science curriculum against the needs of the South African ICT industry.* [Master’s thesis]. Stellenbosch : Stellenbosch University, 2019, p. 99. [online]. [2020-04-26]. Available at: <http://scholar.sun.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10019.1/105914/hove_national_2019.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

¹⁹ AASHEIM, C. A. et al.: Knowledge and Skill Requirements for Entry-Level Information Technology Workers: A Comparison of Industry and Academia. In *Journal of Information Systems Education*, 2009, Vol. 20, No. 3, p. 354.

²⁰ PLATOV, A. V. et al.: Gaps in educational programs in the context of global digitalization. In *Advances in Economics, Business and Management Research*, 2019, Vol. 105, No. 1, p. 728.

²¹ Ibidem, p. 730.

²² DESPLACES, D. E. et al.: What Information Technology Asks Of Business Higher Education Institutions: The Case of Rhode Island. In *Journal of Information Systems Education*, 2020, Vol. 14, No. 2, p. 195.

²³ KAARAKAINEN, M. T.: ICT Intentions and Digital Abilities of Future Labor Market Entrants in Finland. In *Nordic journal of working life studies*, 2019, Vol. 9, No. 2. p. 120.

- H1: The ICT experts which believe that the most important activity by which the state and its institutions can influence the development of the ICT sector is education will more probably consider that that the government should intensify education of key personnel in order to stimulate the growth of the ICT sector.
- H2: Most ICT professionals believe that the Universities should teach Development in a greater extent.

3 Methodology and the Results of the Research

The research was conducted in 2019 and on 124 ICT experts from which 120 valid questionnaires were included in the further analysis. The ICT experts participated in this research are mainly from Croatia (91.07 %) working in companies with different dominant ICT activities. Their answers on questions regarding their firms' dominant activity (V1), place of firms' registration (V2), approximate total revenue for the previous year (V3), firms' size (V4), number of firms' employees (V5), participants role in firm (V6), whether or not they believe that currently the most important activity by which the state and its institutions can influence the development of the ICT sector is education (V7) as well as do they think or not that the government should intensify education of key personnel in order to stimulate the growth of the ICT sector (V8) and do they think that Universities should teach at a greater extent in the future: Business apps and processes within digital workplace (V9), Development (V10), Design (V11), Gaming (V12), Cloud Development (V13), Project management (V14), Planning Basics (v15), Time management (V16), PR and social networks (V17) or some other knowledge and skills (V18) as well as their opinion whether or not a stimulating business environment should have openness of educational and scientific institutions to changes in study programs to achieve ICT sector development. (V17), were analysed for this research. More than one third of participants (36.61%) expressed that *J62.0.1 - Computer programming activities* is the dominant activity of their company and 43.75% of participants stated that their company was registered in capital city, Zagreb. Also, more than a third of participants (34.82%) claimed that their company approximately had total revenues more than 2.700.000 EUR in 2018 year. In addition, more than a third participants (36.61%) revealed that their company is a medium size company and little less than a third claimed that their company has more than 150 employees. The largest number of participant (43.75%) stated that their role in the company is team member.

62.5% of participants believe that education is currently the most important activity by which the state and its institutions can influence the development of the ICT sector. The greatest number of participants (66.96%) thinks that the government should intensify education of key personnel in order to stimulate the growth of the ICT sector. When it comes to their opinion regarding which knowledge and skills should Universities teach at a greater extent in the future, more than a half of them (54.46%) consider that it should be the *Business apps and processes within digital workplace*, majority of them (78.57%) believes that it should be the *Development*, more than a half (59.82%) that it should not be the *Design*, majority (74.11%) that it should not be the *Gaming*, more than a half (58.93%) that it should not be the *Cloud*, 54.46% of participants that it should be the *Project management*, more than a half (53.57%) that it should not be the *Planning Basics* or the *Time management* (57.14%), majority of participants indicated that it also should not be the *PR and social networks* or some other areas (99.11%). Furthermore, more than a half of participants (54.46%) consider that a stimulating business environment should have openness of educational and scientific institutions to changes in study programs to achieve ICT sector development. The Chi-square

test of independence was used to discover whether or not the variable V7 is associated with any other variable. The test showed that at the level of significance 0.05 there is statistically significant association between V6 and V7 ($\chi(4) = 13.55$, $p = .0089$) as well as variables V6 and V14 ($\chi(1) = 7.26$, $p = .007$). Additionally, Cramer's V measure of strength showed that there is strong association between variables V6 and V7 (.35) while Phi measure revealed moderate (.25) association between variables V6 and V14. The Statistica 13 software was used to generate association rules. Altogether, 132 rules were extracted whose minimum support and confidence were not lower than 50%. Overall, 98 rules had lift value higher than 1. (see Table 1).

Table 1: The obtained rules with sufficiently good lift values

Body	==>	Head	Support (%)	Confidence (%)	Lift
V8_1	==>	V7_1	53.57143	80.0000	1.280000
V7_1	==>	V8_1	53.57143	85.7143	1.280000
V7_1, V18_0	==>	V8_1	52.67857	85.5072	1.276908
V8_1	==>	V7_1, V18_0	52.67857	78.6667	1.276908
V7_1	==>	V8_1, V18_0	52.67857	84.2857	1.275676
V8_1, V18_0	==>	V7_1	52.67857	79.7297	1.275676
V12_0	==>	V18_0, V11_0	54.46429	73.4940	1.228556
V11_0	==>	V18_0, V12_0	54.46429	91.0448	1.228556
V18_0, V12_0	==>	V11_0	54.46429	73.4940	1.228556
V18_0, V11_0	==>	V12_0	54.46429	91.0448	1.228556
V12_0	==>	V11_0	54.46429	73.4940	1.228556
V11_0	==>	V12_0	54.46429	91.0448	1.228556

Source: own processing

Based on the obtained lift and confidence value, the most important obtained rule stated that probability that ICT experts will consider that that the government should intensify education of key personnel in order to stimulate the growth of the ICT sector, if they believe that currently the most important activity by which the state and its institutions can influence the development of the ICT sector is education (85.00%). Although, this rule has the lift value the same as another rule, it has higher confidence than that rule. Figure 1, gives association rules with sufficiently good lift values.

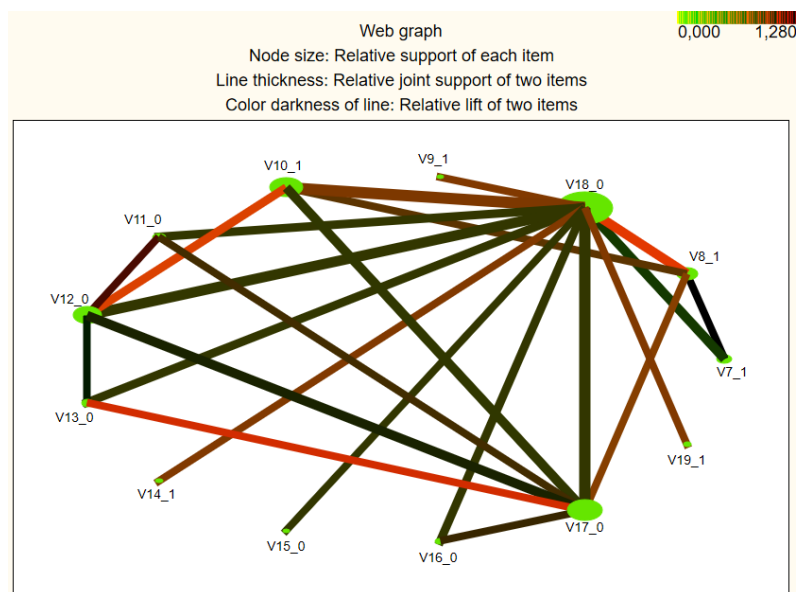


Chart 1: Association rules with sufficiently good lift values
Source: own processing

As shown by Figure 1, the highest individual support was achieved by the nod V9_0 (business apps and processes within digital workplace should not be taught to greater extent) while the V8_0 (other than already stated skills or knowledge should not be taught to greater extent) and V17_0 (PR and social networks should not be taught to greater extent) have the highest relative joint support and V7_1 (Education is currently the most important activity by which the state and its institutions can influence the development of the ICT sector.) and V8_1 (the government should intensify education of key personnel) the highest lift.

4 Discussion

The results of this research indicated that the state should be involved in a development of its ICT sector through positive development measures that was confirmed by previous authors' studies.²⁴ The novelty was found in the statement which was given by the most participants that the education is currently the most important activity by which the state and its institutions can influence the development of the ICT sector where government should intensify education of key personnel in order to stimulate the growth of the ICT sector, which confirmed the first research statement. The reason for that was found in a fact that "skill shortages and mismatch are costly to individuals, firms and society because they negatively affect earnings, productivity, innovation and productivity growth. The effects on earnings can be quite persistent."²⁵ Nevertheless the skill gaps on a labor market continuously persist.²⁶ It seems that that in shaping the new study program curriculums, Universities are not taking into full consideration the needs of the industry thus contributing to preservation of existing of

²⁴ BESTVINA BUKVIĆ, I.: Impact of Business Environment on the Development of Regional ICT Sector: Case Eastern Croatia. In TONKOVIĆ, M., CRNKOVIĆ, B. (eds.): *7th International Scientific Symposium Economy of Eastern Croatia – Vision and Growth*. Osijek : Faculty of Economics in Osijek, 2018, p. 11-20. [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <<https://www.dropbox.com/s/9mqur gla6jl8kq/GIH%202018.pdf?dl=0>>.

²⁵ BRUNELLO, G., WRUUCK, P.: Skill Shortages and Skill Mismatch in Europe: A Review of the Literature. In *IZA – Journal of Labor Economics*, 2019, Vol. 8, No. 12346, p. 26.

²⁶ LLORENS GARCIA, A. et al.: ICT skills gap in Spain: Before and after a decade of harmonizing the European Higher Education Area. In *Computer Applications in Engineering Education*, 2019, Vol. 27, No. 4, p. 935-941.

mismatch between skills and industry needs.²⁷ For that reason the authors were investigating which skills and competences should be taught in a greater measure with the aim of developing recommendations for the Universities and policy-makers. The research statement which claims that most of the respondents believe that the Universities should teach Development in a greater extent is accepted as 78.57% respondents gave affirmative response to this field. It is interesting to see that majority of respondents out of ten categories selected following three: *Development, Business apps and processes within digital workplace* and surprisingly *Project management*. The importance of project management skills was emphasized in study given by Desplaces and associates²⁸ which confirmed that project management skills are significant for the ICT industry positions, where the higher compensations were connected to „higher educational levels, higher number of database administration or architecture certifications, and higher number of project management skills.“²⁹ In addition, *Development* field (especially programming Languages and Web Development) was accounted as important by Koong and associates where it was found that coding skills in contemporary languages were required by most jobs posted. Only a quarter of job posts required communication skills,³⁰ where it seems that, in line with the results of this research, soft skills overall are not so highly positioned, but the technical skills are. The soft skills that were found significant to mention were “communication, creativity, information, objective oriented, and problem solving“.³¹

In this research, at the other hand, majority of participants indicated that skills that should not be taught in a greater measure are the *PR and social networks* but *Gaming, Design and Cloud* that was found surprising as those are fast growing subsectors.³² In conclusion, “companies spend crucial resources to train these personnel, who are not “ready” for the industry. Hence, academia must know what skills are needed to adapt the educational programs via an effective curriculum.“³³ The input should be given by the industry and supported by the state. In that way mutual cooperation between ICT industry, University and state institutions could be developed with an aim of support and development of the ICT sector. This collaboration would be in line with a concept of Quadruple Helix and the goals of the European Union policies.³⁴ Another reason for development of this cooperation model would be increasing the continuity of obtaining new information and knowledge from the ICT and case studies

²⁷ HOVE, D.: *A fit-gap analysis of the National Certificate (Vocational)—Information Technology and Computer Science curriculum against the needs of the South African ICT industry*. [Master’s thesis]. Stellenbosch : Stellenbosch University, 2019, p. 99. [online]. [2020-04-26]. Available at: <http://scholar.sun.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10019.1/105914/hove_national_2019.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

²⁸ DESPLACES, D. E. et al.: What Information Technology Asks Of Business Higher Education Institutions: The Case of Rhode Island. In *Journal of Information Systems Education*, 2020, Vol. 14, No. 2, p. 195.

²⁹ Ibidem.

³⁰ KOONG, K. S. et al.: A Study of the Demand for Information Technology Professionals in Selected Internet Job Portals. In *Journal of Information Systems Education*, 2020, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 24. [online]. [2020-04-20]. Available at: <<https://aisel.aisnet.org/jise/vol13/iss1/4>>.

³¹ LLORENS GARCIA, A. et al.: ICT skills gap in Spain: Before and after a decade of harmonizing the European Higher Education Area. In *Computer Applications in Engineering Education*, 2019, Vol. 27, No. 4, p. 939.

³² For more information, see: *Digital economy compas 2018*. Hamburg : Statista, 2018.

³³ AKDUR, D.: The Design of a Survey on Bridging the Gap between Software Industry Expectations and Academia. In JOZWIAK, L., STOJANOVIC, R. (eds.): *8th Mediterranean Conference on Embedded Computing (MECO)*, Budva : MECOnet Institute (Mediterranean Excellence in Computing and Ontology), 2019, p. 1. [online]. [2020-4-20]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333635133_The_Design_of_a_Survey_on_Bridging_the_Gap_between_Software_Industry_Expectations_and_Academia>.

³⁴ *Pillars of the Digitising European Industry initiative*. 2018. [online]. [2020-4-23]. Available at: <<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/pillars-digitising-european-industry-initiative>>.

coming from this dynamic and rapidly changing sector³⁵ for the needs of students' education. Accordingly, the coordination with state institutions would be necessary³⁶ for the development the strategic approach in order to reach the efficiency and upgrade of productive specializations.³⁷ This model is line with the results of this research, as more than a half of participants (54.46%) consider that a stimulating business environment should have openness of the University to the industry for the purpose of conducting changes in their study programs and to consequently (indirectly through competent and qualified, skilled young ICT professionals) contribute to sector's growth. At the same time, the responsibility for developing the skills requested by the industry should not only fall on state, University and industry but on the future young professionals (students) as well.³⁸ Although the reward for acquiring the necessary and rare skills is generous, since ICT professionals have above-average salaries and good working conditions, students' interest in enrolling in these study programs is still not sufficient to meet the needs of the fast-growing sector.³⁹

Conclusion

Through the literature review and survey conducted with ICT professionals, it was found that there are numerous open questions regarding the best approach to education in the ICT discipline. However, it is indisputable that the quality of the ICT future professionals' education has significant impact on ICT businesses and sector performance. For that reason, as confirmed by the research results, the strategic approach to this issue would be of valuable importance. In fact, ICT professionals consider that the education is the most important activity by which the state and its institutions could influence the development of the ICT sector where education of key personnel should be intensified in order to stimulate the growth of the ICT sector. Moreover, they majority of the respondents believe that the Development, Business apps and processes within digital workplace and Project management are the disciplines which should be in a greater extent taught in the future. Although the solution for the existing skills mismatch on the ICT labor market seems clear, there are numerous obstacles and challenges on the side of Universities which could be overcome through cooperation between ICT sector, universities and the government. Some of activities should be directed towards shaping more flexible ways of university study programs development and improvement, enabling more frequent changes according to industry needs and allowing higher level of industry participation in implementation of study programs. As well, the state and industry support is needed in provision of ICT infrastructure and equipment, continuous training and upgrading of teachers knowledge and promotion of ICT discipline among future students. Limitations of the research are including the relatively small scale at which the study was conducted on and the geographic area as most of the respondents are coming from Croatia, although it has to be emphasized that most of them are working in international environment. The limitations are imposing the recommendations for improvements in future research. The future research should be conducted at a larger scale with greater geographical

³⁵ BRUNELLO, G., WRUUCK, P.: Skill Shortages and Skill Mismatch in Europe: A Review of the Literature. In *IZA – Journal of Labor Economics*, 2019, Vol. 8, No. 12346, p. 26.

³⁶ GAROUSI, V. et al.: Closing the Gap Between Software Engineering Education and Industrial Needs. In *IEEE Software*, 2019, Vol. 37, No. 2, p. 76.

³⁷ GARCIA CALVO, A.: State-firm Coordination and Upgrading in Spain's and Korea's ICT Industries. In *New Political Economy*, 2020, Vol. 25, No. 5, p. 1.

³⁸ BRUNELLO, G., WRUUCK, P.: Skill Shortages and Skill Mismatch in Europe: A Review of the Literature. In *IZA – Journal of Labor Economics*, 2019, Vol. 8, No. 12346, p. 26.

³⁹ KAARAKAINEN, M. T.: ICT Intentions and Digital Abilities of Future Labor Market Entrants in Finland. In *Nordic journal of working life studies*, 2019, Vol. 9, No.2. p. 120.

coverage. As well, it should include more comprehensive examination including the ICT companies' managers and employees, Universities and upper level high school and university students to gain a deeper understanding of the problem of lack of skilled work force in the ICT sector and to design possible solutions.

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POPULAR – EDUCATIONAL TEXTS IN PRESS FOR CHILDREN AND MAKING TECHNICAL LEXICON UNDERSTANDABLE

Danuša Faktorová

ABSTRACT:

The text that brings professional content is difficult for a child's addressee. The aim of this article is to find out if the editorial staff of children's magazines publish texts with professional content. We conducted the analysis on a sample of 106 European and some non-European magazines. As an example, we used a comparison with magazines for children in one country – the Slovak Republic. By quantitative and qualitative analysis, we found that approximately two-thirds of children's magazines publish texts with professional content in the form of popular-educational articles adapted to the age of the recipients. The less known technical terms are making understandable to the readers implementing various approaches. One of them prefers the Slovak term to its foreign synonym and/or internationalism. Differently to other subsystems of press, the explanation of the foreign term by one sentence or its part is less frequent. Technical terms are more frequently explained by more sentences, i.e., descriptively. There is another interesting approach to make the technical terms understandable: usage of non-verbal synonyms – pictures, drawings and photographs. Being repeatedly used, the technical term becomes part of the reader's vocabulary.

KEY WORDS:

children's magazines, making understandable, popular-educational article, technical lexicon, vocabulary

1 Theoretical Background

The knowledge base of child addressees is considerably smaller compared to adult recipients, yet the editorial staff of children's magazines communicate professional content to readers, using a form appropriate to their age. Making professional topics receptive and publishing them in the media requires knowledge and use of modifying principles. "In principle, there are three basic methods:

- a) **adaptation of** professional or educational units for the needs of journalism;
- b) **transposition of** selected factual and abstract elements of theoretical-cognitive activity, i.e. transfer of scientific and technical information to more appropriate and receptive levels;
- c) **transforming**, that is a modification of an invariant information base which causes that it is the mediated presentation of knowledge, the means of indirect action that leads to the desired effects on the recipient.¹"

To put it simply, the popularization of expertise to reach a wider public means transferring information from the text of the educational style to the texts of the journalistic style, while „style is the way of expression, which arises from purposeful selection, legal arrangement and use of linguistic and non-linguistic means with respect to thematic, situation, function, intention of the author and the content components of expression."² While educational genres dominate in journals of professional and scientific focus, popular-educational texts dominate in print media for the child's recipient in texts with expert information, and the article as a genre in them. "The article is a smaller-scale contextual unit in which the results of scientific research are publicized, applied, popularized in a generally easier style. While new and previously unknown things are addressed and analysed in the dissertation and study, no such claims are made to the article. In an article - as opposed to purely scientific genres - the didactic aspect of the means of expression is further emphasized. The vocabulary of a ³"

¹ DROPPA, B.: *Vedeckotechnický rozvoj a žurnalistika*. Bratislava : UK in Bratislava, 1985, p. 8.

² MISTRÍK, J.: *Štylistika*. Bratislava : Slovenské pedagogické nakladateľstvo, 1985, p. 419.

³ Ibidem, p. 439.

popular-educational article in print media for the child's addressee is not so saturated with the technical terms that the child's addressee cannot understand it. The unknown or less known technical terms and concepts are explained in different ways in the articles⁴. The popular-educational article is richer in verbs compared to scientific texts. It is a monological genre, more subjective than scientific texts.

2 Occurrence of Professional Texts in Children's Magazines

The text that brings professional content is difficult for a child's addressee. The aim of this article was to find out if the editorial staff of children's magazines publish texts with professional content.

Table 1: Table of Popular-educational articles in foreign magazines for children's addressees

MAGAZINE NAME	STATE OF ISSUE OR DISTRIBUTION	ISSN / ISBN / IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	POPULAR-EDUCATIONAL TEXTS
Barbapapa	Belgium	not stated	8,33%
Nickjr.doeboek (Denksport)	Belgium	8710835815947	0,00%
Speelboek (Denksport)	Belgium	8710835813783	0,00%
Arti	Bulgaria	ISBN: 977-131-276-411-9	15,91%
Baraban	Bulgaria	not stated	29,17%
Brborino	Bulgaria	ISSN: 1312-2851	5,00%
Maša i Mečoka	Bulgaria	ISSN: 2367-6604	0,00%
Pčelica	Bulgaria	ISSN: 1312-5303	21,43%
Zanimavko	Bulgaria	not stated	0,00%
Xekoykoy	Cyprus	5282967004953	6,25%
Čtyřlístek	Czechia	ISSN: 1213-0141	7,14%
Materídouška	Czechia	ISSN: 0025-5440	20,83%
Matýsek	Czechia	ISBN: 121-358-100-9	25,00%
Pastelka	Czechia	ISSN: 1212-646003	22,00%
Sluníčko	Czechia	ISSN: 0231-7222	2,27%
Ribica	Monte Negro	ISBN: 977-18-4582-300-0	5,56%
Anders and junior	Denmark	ISSN: 1904-6510	13,89%
Kvik kids	Denmark	ISBN: 570-892-100-230-5	0,00%
Winx	Denmark	ISSN: 1901-2128	1,47%
Filly	Finland	ISSN: 2242-1963	0,00%
Moviestar planet	Finland	ISBN: 488-501-908-6	8,33%
Pets	Finland	ISSN: 1798-6060	41,67%
Astrapi	France	ISSN: 0220-1186	27,08%
P'tit Loup	France	ISSN: 0997-3745	27,63%
Titi	France	ISSN: 1964-9150	0,00%
Wapiti	France	ISSN: 0984-2314	69,23%
Filly	Greece	ISBN: 977-179-286-500-9	5,56%
Bobo	Netherlands	ISBN: 871-084-152-003-3	4,17%

⁴ For more information, see: FAKTOROVÁ, D.: Výskyt a sprístupňovanie odbornej lexiky v tlači pre detského adresáta. In *Global Media Journal*, 2016, Vol. 4, No. 2, p. 67-76.

Plus Penny	Netherlands	ISBN: 871-086-510-103-4	21,59%
Sesamstraat	Netherlands	ISBN: 871-084-162-002-3	0,00%
Tina	Netherlands	ISBN: 871-084-122-004-9	5,00%
Zapp Lente	Netherlands	ISBN: 90-77119-17-5	7,69%
Bojanka	Croatia	not stated	0,00%
Dječji klub	Croatia	ISSN: 1330-1349	0,00%
Dječji zabavnik	Croatia	ISBN: 977-184-782-300-8	40,79%
Junior Extra	Croatia	ISSN: 1332-3881	0,00%
Škrinjica	Croatia	ISSN: 1334-8080	5,36%
Zagonetke	Croatia	ISBN: 977-133-470-200-7	5,00%
Paw Patrol	Ireland	ISSN: 2396-9555	0,00%
Bing	Ireland	ISSN: 2056-3590	5,55%
Bitute	Lithuania	ISSN: 1648-0880	52,78%
Dambo	Latvia	ISSN: 1407-0464	0,00%
Kipars	Latvia	ISSN: 2029-2945	0,00%
Spicite	Latvia	ISSN: 1691-0540	0,00%
Peppa Pig	Luxemburg	M 05779-6-F	5,00%
Ablakképek	Hungary	not stated	0,00%
Dormogo Domotor	Hungary	ISSN: 0230-1032	8,33%
Kifestó	Hungary	not stated	0,00%
Dóra	Hungary	ISSN: 2062-4433	0,00%
Vakáció	Hungary	ISSN: 0239-1457	0,00%
Mia and Me	Moldova	ISBN: 978-606-651-110-0	7,69%
Neposeda	Moldova	ISSN: 1991-0568	0,00%
Basteln mit Kinderen	Germany	ISBN: 419-626-530-250-1	0,00%
Benjamin Blumchen	Germany	ISBN: 419-855-650-230-009	0,00%
Bummi	Germany	ISBN: 419-912-700-230-4	7,50%
Diddle	Germany	ISBN: 419-541-490-250-0	9,62%
Lowenzahn	Germany	ISBN: 419-511-840-230-6	50,00%
Pettersson und Findus	Germany	ISBN: 419-585-670-240-9	9,72%
Pumucki	Germany	ISBN: 419-489-490-260-406	9,72%
Rätsels pas	Germany	ISBN: 419-613-760-199-2	14,71%
Tabaluga	Germany	ISBN: 419-484-130-230-3	22,73%
Wissens Rätsel	Germany	ISBN: 378-861-322-X	69,44%
Dora	Norway	ISBN: 702-306-021-815-7	5,56%
Moshi monsters	Norway	ISBN: 978-820-241-659-1	0,00%
Naucz mnie mamo	Poland	ISBN: 978-837-316-731-5	0,00%
Truskawkowe Ciastko	Poland	ISSN: 2083-1234	0,00%
Zabawy z Tygryskiem	Poland	ISSN: 1640-2286	0,00%
Trabalhos manuais	Portugal	ISBN: 772-710-101-5	0,00%
Comunicare	Romania	ISBN: 973-706-082-2	0,00%
Incepe meciul!	Romania	ISBN: 978-606-602-579-9	0,00%
Benny	Romania	ISSN: 1843-5947	38,88%
Cei trei purcelusi	Romania	not stated	0,00%

Playmobil	Romania	ISSN: 2501-1421	0,00%
Jocuri creative	Romania	ISBN: 978-837-962-387-7	0,00%
Trolii	Romania	ISSN: 2451-4632	0,00%
Akademiki	Russia	ISSN: 2313-4666	0,00%
PoniMaška	Russia	ISSN: 1995-8145	0,00%
Uchtyška	Russia	ISSN: 2412-3617	22,22%
Maxík	Slovakia	ISSN: 1336-5029	12,50%
Zvonček	Slovakia	ISSN: 1336-6963	8,33%
Boni	Slovenia	ISBN: 977-185-401-800-8	0,00%
Cicido	Slovenia	ISSN: 0350-8870	0,00%
Duhec	Slovenia	ISBN: 977-131-891-001-5	0,00%
Junior extra	Slovenia	ISSN: 1332-3881	0,00%
Zmajček	Slovenia	ISSN: 1318-7449	3,13%
Boom E Rang	Serbia	ISSN: 1820-2772	21,05%
Igraonica	Serbia	ISBN: 977-133-473-400-8	17,86%
Zabavnik	Serbia	ISSN: 2217-4265	20,59%
Animais	Spain	ISSN: 2014-8976	55,56%
Peppa	Spain	ISSN: 2254-9358	0,00%
Pettson och Findus	Sweden	ISSN: 1652-6147	6,25%
Pyssel & Knap	Sweden	ISBN: 738-824-740-390-1	0,00%
Giocolandia	Italy	ISSN: 1972-4020	10,42%
Pico	Italy	ISSN: 1973-6428	5,56%
Caillou	Turkey	ISSN: 1309-7652	0,00%
Cocuk	Turkey	ISSN: 1301-2797	24,04%
Panini	Turkey	ISSN: 2148-8444	16,67%
Kehrypy	Ukraine	ISBN: 482-013-047-016-2	0,00%
Girls	USA	ISSN: 1535-3230	2,94%
Favourites	Great Britain	ISBN: 977-14-6163-000-6	6,25%
Fifi	Great Britain	ISSN: 1747-437X	0,00%
Mizz	Great Britain	ISBN: 977-095-501-199-4	0,00%
Princess	Great Britain	ISSN: 1462-7345	0,00%
Art	Great Britain	ISSN: 977-175-759-602317	5,55%

Source: own processing

The table shows that out of 106 children's magazines analysed, 47 of them do not publish popular-educational articles, representing 44.34%. The analysis shows that almost two-thirds of European and non-European children's magazines convey professional content in the form of popular-educational articles. In those European children's magazines that publish educational sections, their share varies, ranging from 1.47% of the total magazine content to 69.44% of the content. Higher incidence of professional content columns is in most countries' magazines of so called former Eastern Block, but those that are edited in the country (i.e. not only distributed in the language mutation of the country). This is related to the tradition of using journals in the teaching process and the related requirements for their content (mass demand at schools). For comparison, we will present an analysis of children's magazines published in the Slovak Republic.

Table 2: Table of Topics share in popular-educational articles in Slovak magazines for pre-school and younger school age children (in %)

Journal	ISSN	History	Geography	Astronomy	Health & Sport	Nature	Total
Adamko	1336-6505	0,00%	5,55%	0,00%	0,00%	5,55%	11,10%
Fifík	1335-020X	15,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	10,00%	25,00%
Fľak	1336-1252	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	5,55%	2,77%	8,32%
Lienka	1338-3329	0,00%	12,50%	0,00%	33,30%	12,50%	58,30%
Maxík	1336-5029	3,13%	6,28%	3,13%	3,13%	3,13%	18,80%
Slniečko	0139-911x	12,50%	4,16%	0,00%	0,00%	16,60%	33,26%
Šikovniček	1337-561x	2,50%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	5,00%	7,50%
Včielka	1335-6488	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	7,50%	7,50%
Vrabček	1335-5163	0,00%	2,77%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	2,77%
Zornička	0139-8962	0,00%	10,00%	2,50%	0,00%	10,00%	22,50%
Zvonček	1336-6963	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	8,33%	16,66%	24,99%

Source: own processing

Professional content is found in all Slovak magazines for children of preschool as well as younger school age with general focus. These are mainly regular columns on nature, space, European countries and so on. Articles with science content are most common. As the table shows, they are published by all Slovak children's magazines. Geography is significantly represented as a topic. Less frequent in particular magazines are articles focused on astronomy, health and sport and history. While popular-educational articles are found in all general-focus magazines published in Slovakia, there are only two-thirds of them in European and non-European children's magazines, which is a significant difference in their occurrence. „The most common topic in the popular educational articles published in children's magazines is the nature theme.“⁵

3 Expounding Technical Terms in Children's Magazines

Magazines communicate the text content to recipients:

- "Communication is defined as transfer of information from the sender to the individual recipient.

⁵ See also: FAKTOROVÁ, D.: Popuar-educational Texts in Print Medis for Child Adressee. In McGREEVY, M., RITA, R. (eds.): *CER Comparative European Research 2018*. London : Sciencce Publishing, 2019, p. 98-100.

- Media texts are sets of information.
- The essence of the information is reduction of uncertainty."⁶

The term information can be understood as "a linguistic expression in which certain facts are stated objectively, pertinently and documentarily."⁷ Technical terms in texts are very often new words for the child reader. Their use expands vocabulary, but if necessary condition is met: The addressee must understand the text, and therefore the term contained in it, and understand its content. If a lesser-known or unknown word appears in a periodical, it must be explained, made available to the addressee, in several ways. An extensive content analysis of Slovak children's magazines, carried out in the years 1996 to 2019, made them known. One way of expounding the content of a technical term is to prefer a technical term from one's own language to a synonym of foreign origin or internationalism, which are commonly used in communication in the relevant scientific field. For example: With the arrival of autumn, the edges of groves and forests slowly begin to turn red with rose hip pearls. These are the fruits of a beautifully blooming and fragrant wild brier plant. The Latin name *Rosa canina* is given in parentheses in the title above the text *wild brier plant*.⁸ Unlike, for example, in dailies or in popularization press with a scientific and technical focus, explaining an unknown term in one sentence or even only a part of it is less frequent in the children's press. In magazines for lower age categories of recipients, there is almost no explanation for putting a more familiar term in parentheses after a lesser known term. This method appears more often in magazines for older children and youth, i.e. from the researched group in *Domino* and *Elektrón + Zenit* magazines.

Child addressees need a more extensive explanation – at least one whole sentence. Much more often, the editors explain technical terms to them in several sentences. In the children's press subsystem this method appears to be more efficient, although it is less precise and the boundaries of the term often "merge" with other text. It is better for the child to understand the content of the term less accurately than if it did not understand it at all, or misunderstand it, with a challenging, comprehensive explanation. Let us give examples of explanations in several sentences: The power plant, which produces the same electricity as we talked about in connection with the Dobšiná waterworks, also belongs inseparably to Trenčín. Electricity, which is called "pure" because it "comes" from water. Its production saves the environment, no chimneys smoke.⁹ Can you imagine a plant that has no root or leaves? It only has a flower, but a huge one. It weighs up to 8 kg and its diameter is one meter. It is called *Rafflesia arnoldi* and can be found in the tropical rainforests of Borneo and Sumatra in Indonesia. It grows paratrophically on the roots of a climbing plant. It looks like a huge five-petalled flower crossed with a toadstool hat. It is orange-red with yellow spots. In the middle of the flower is a "tank" and 7 litres of nectar in it.¹⁰ The sun heats the air above the earth much faster than above water. The warm air moves up. Colder air over the sea or a large lake comes in its place. The masses of air get in move. Depending on how fast, we have a weaker wind, a stronger and sometimes even destructive storm.¹¹ In order for blood to be "cleansed," it must pass through a special paired organ called kidneys. In the kidneys, the blood "filters" from all harmful substances and creates a yellowish fluid – urine.¹²

⁶ McQUAIL, D.: *Úvod do teorie masové komunikace*. Prague : Portál, 2009, p. 365.

⁷ TUŠER, A.: *Ako sa robia noviny*. Bratislava : Eurokódex, 2010, p. 206.

⁸ In *Super Ohník*, 1996, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 8.

⁹ In *Zornička*, 1996, Vol. 48/58, No. 5, p. 6-7.

¹⁰ In *Slniečko*, 1996, Vol. 50, No. 5, p. 19, 25.

¹¹ In *Fífik*, 1996, Vol. 7, No. 2, p. 4.

¹² In *Maxík*, 2016, Vol. 12, No. 8, p. 19.

In *Bublina* magazine there is a Dictionary after the article called Electronic Music and it contains for example: DJ – the one who selects and plays foreign music without editing.¹³ In *Elektrón + Zenit* magazine, due to the older addressees and the narrow focus of the journal on the science of technology, an exact explanation in one sentence seems more appropriate compared to a description or characterization using several sentences, just for the possibility of better explaining the content of the technical term. Special sections are a separate way of expounding a technical term. Such is e.g. A section in the *Včielka* magazine. And where does it come from? Children get acquainted in it with foreign plants and their edible fruits. In the *Slniečko* magazine, under the heading *What is it?* on the thematic page *Children in Green*, an animal is described each time, and its name, i.e. the technical term for its naming, must be guessed. In the magazine *Super Ohník*, social science terms are explained in the *From Under the Bench* section, for example under the title *What is a symphonic poem?* An interesting way of explaining the technical term is contained in the above mentioned section *And where does it come from?* of the *Včielka* magazine. It is a combination using an artistic text – a poem – and an information text with a more detailed and exact explanation. For example, the poem *The Clattering Riddle* says: Look, a hand. What's clattering in it? Show me, Ľubka! Dry skin... I have it, hooray! It's a peanut! Are you a nut? It's a peanut! The following text further explains: And what do you think, where do peanuts – goobers – come from? Well, you wouldn't discover the truth above the ground, because peanuts are hidden in the clay like potatoes, except that their leaves resemble clover. This plant is rightly called earth pea.¹⁴ And the description, the explanation continues.

A picture, drawing is often used in children's press to explain a term. It is actually a non-verbal synonym. Its clarity is extremely strong. This is the case of the quoted *And where does it come from?* column in the *Včielka* magazine, where, in addition to the information text and the poem, there is always a picture of the mentioned plant and its fruit. Using a picture, *Kozmix* magazine shows children musical instruments¹⁵. The combination of text and illustration is regularly used by the *Maxík* magazine – in the section *There is no nut like the nut, In the animal kingdom*, the *Zvonček* magazine in the section *What animals tell us*. Like other non-verbal synonyms that serve to better understand the term, schemes are used. Among the monitored magazines, they were applied in the *Elektrón + Zenit* magazine. They require a certain degree of abstraction, and therefore older and more knowledgeable readers. An important content carrier, which can also be used to explain a technical term, is a photography. Although it could have a wider application, we find it mainly in the *Elektrón + Zenit* and *Táborový ohník* magazines. For example, under the title of *Rock Eagle* is a photograph of the bird.¹⁶ Thus the pictures help to explain the technical term in the text. But there is also the opposite way. It has been used, for example, in the *Slávik* monthly, which was published in the 1995/96 school year. Pictures of various flowers on the double page under the title of *Spring Herbarium* have been published. The task of the readers was to name them, i.e. to assign a technical term to them. The right answers could be found elsewhere in the magazine.¹⁷ By repeated use of the explained technical term it is possible to achieve that the addressee takes over the term into his vocabulary expanding and enriching it this way. At the same time, it can be assumed that some terms will be closer to the basic vocabulary (core vocabulary) of the addressees by using them. We intentionally do not use the term technical

¹³ In *Bublina*, 2018, Vol. 2, No. 7, p. 8-9.

¹⁴ In *Včielka*, 1995, Vol. 37, No. 6, p. 14.

¹⁵ In *Kozmix*, 2018, Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 32-33.

¹⁶ In *Táborový ohník*, 1996, No. 1, p. 16.

¹⁷ In *Slávik*, 1996, Vol. 1, No. 5, p. 4, 5, 32.

terminology in connection with the analysed periodicals. In linguistic literature, it refers to a set of terms.¹⁸

Conclusion

As results from the content and language analysis of seventeen children's magazines during the twenty-three years of their publication in Slovakia (1996 to 2019), there is no doubt about the use of technical terms in children's magazines. Unknown technical terms are used by the editors in the text in such a way that they are understandable to children. Several verbal and non-verbal methods are used for this purpose. The text that brings professional content is difficult for a child's addressee. The aim of this article is to find out if the editorial staff of children's magazines publish texts with professional content. We conducted the analysis on a sample of 106 European and some non-European magazines. As an example, we used a comparison with magazines for children in one country – the Slovak Republic. By quantitative and qualitative analysis, we found that approximately two-thirds of children's magazines publish texts with professional content in the form of popular-educational articles adapted to the age of the recipients. The less known technical terms are making understandable to the readers implementing various approaches. One of them prefers the Slovak term to its foreign synonym and/or internationalism. Differently to other subsystems of press, the explanation of the foreign term by one sentence or its part is less frequent. Technical terms are more frequently explained by more sentences, i.e., descriptively. There is another interesting approach to make the technical terms understandable: usage of non-verbal synonyms - pictures, drawings and photographs. Being repeatedly used, the technical term becomes part of the reader's vocabulary.

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¹⁸ MISTRÍK, J.: *Štylistika*. Bratislava : Slovenské pedagogické nakladateľstvo, 1985, p. 77.

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MEDIA IN GLOBAL PROCESS

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ABSTRACT:

Media are currently very powerful and have a great influence on formation of opinions, attitudes, and lifestyles. The essence of power lies in the fact that they participate in socialization of an individual, their inclusion into society, in informing the individual and thus shaping the society and relationships. Thanks to media, we are able to get to important information that we need; they are a source of numerous information that we are receiving from everywhere and in various forms. Media and their continual development, and, naturally, the closely connected technological progress, lead us to the topic of media globalization. Globalization has a strong influence on media and the consequent impact of media content on percipients. The most visible effect of globalization is the vast communication. The advent of newspapers, magazines, internet, and television has significantly improved the spread of information and has helped people around the world to become interconnected. This influence has its disadvantages but, on the other hand, also advantages. In the study, through theoretical sources, we describe terms such as media and globalization and, on the basis of theoretical evidence, analyze their intersection and influence of media on the process of globalization.

KEY WORDS:

effects, globalization, globalization process, media, media influence, role of media

1 Media – Theoretical Level

The term media is derived from the Latin medium (environment, middle) and, generally, this term means any fact that conveys other facts, i.e. in the process of transmission of information between two subjects, media function literally as an intermediary or transmitter which conveys information to a certain percipient or a group of percipients. In other words, media are a specific form of information transfer. In general, we can state that any means of communication can be considered a medium. According to authors J. Halada and B. Osvaldová, media, in a more scientific way, can be defined as the totality of means of mass communication that multiply the sharing of public character and simultaneously transmit a quantity of information towards a wide, public, dispersed, diverse, and individually anonymous audience.¹ Currently, we can state that they really are all around us, which is then closely connected to their great influence on the human kind. *“Media play an essential role in the creation and development of current society. Whether it is the influence on public opinion or the role of media as a source of information, they increasingly enter our lives through television, radio, press, and internet.”*² As we have mentioned above, media influence extends to every area of our lives. From an early morning, as we wake up, most of us immediately reach for their smartphones to turn off the alarm clock or use their morning coffee time to read the news on online portals or in the newspapers or television. From an early morning, we are “flooded” with an enormous number of information produced by the media. Media provide us with this information so we have general overview of the world, but are foisting exactly the information they want us to have. However, today we cannot even imagine life without the really vast media coverage. Thanks to media, we can reach a lot of important information that we need for our work, studies, or other purposes. In short, media are a source of a lot of diverse information that get to us from everywhere and in various forms. In connection to media and their continual development, closely linked to technological progress, we get to the topic of media globalization.

¹ HALADA, J., OSVALDOVÁ, B.: *Slovník žurnalistiky: Výklad pojmů a teorie oboru*. Prague : Karolinum, 2017, p. 146.

² *Mediálna výchova*. [online]. [2020-05-17]. Available at: <<http://medialnavychova.sk/globalizacia-medii/>>.

A layman or someone not quite acquainted with this topic might imagine this term to mean something global, large, majestic, etc. Globalization of media can thus also be understood as a global interconnection of media and media corporations aiming at better future and society. Because we live in a world, where all countries are somehow interconnected, the area of mass media has also not been left out and, therefore, we in our country are also receiving information, products, innovations from the areas of science and technology, etc., just because countries know about each other also thanks to globality/globalization, i.e. the worldwide media interconnection. First the print media – newspapers have emerged, then the film as a mass medium, radio and television, and eventually the internet.³ Currently, we understand the term media mostly as mass media. Petr Sak in his book *Človek a vzdelanie v informačnej spoločnosti (Individual and Education in Information Society)* characterizes media as follows: “Media are all things that transmit an idea or information to a recipient and that convey a message. In a way, media are also a language. In an inherent sense, however, we regard media as a means that stands between the transmitter and the recipient and allows their communication in one or both directions.”⁴ It can thus be stated that media are an everyday part of lives of people of all age categories. Currently, however, they do not only fulfil the role of a transmitting medium, or information transferer, but also strongly influence human thinking; therefore, the term media is often connected to the term opinion formation.

1.1 Influence of Media

The influence of media on people’s behaviour and concept of society, as well as their influence on human construction of reality, has in the recent years been the main subject of research of various human and natural sciences.⁵ The substantial power of media lies in their participation on socialization of an individual and their inclusion into society; in forming an individual and thus establishing the shape of society and relationships that prevail in the society.⁶ The term media of mass communication can be understood mainly as the periodical press, radio, film, television, and internet. Mass media as an institution are a part of the society structure and their production infrastructure is a part of economic and power bases, while the idea, images, and information spread by media are evidently an important aspect of our culture.⁷ Media and new information technologies have a major influence especially on children and youth, who have not yet formed stabile outlook and opinions on life. The transition from radio to television has meant the most significant developmental leap thus far. McLuhan, who has further expanded his ideas in his second book *The Understanding Media*, describes new impulses of television with an explorer’s enthusiasm. He compares the introduction of the new mass medium to the writing, clocks, or printing.⁸ Expansion of television and internet is indeed ground-breaking. Information and news no longer have a local character, they have become worldwide. The flow of information constantly circulates among countries; the information gap becomes blurred, people from one country have knowledge not only about news from their country, but from the whole world. This flow of

³ McQUAIL, D.: *Úvod do teorie masové komunikace*. 4th Edition. Prague : Portál, 2009, p. 23.

⁴ PETŘÍKOVÁ, J., ŠTĚPÁNEK, D.: *Média – prostředky transferu informací*. 1st Edition. Brno : Masaryk University, 1998, p. 11.

⁵ IŁOWIECKI, M., ZAŠEPA, T.: *Moc a nemoc médií*. Bratislava : SAV, 2003, p. 24.

⁶ BURTON, G., JIRÁK, J.: *Úvod do studia médií*. Brno : Barrister&Principal, 2003, p. 23.

⁷ McQUAIL, D.: *Úvod do teorie masové komunikace*. 4th Edition. Prague : Portál, 2009, p. 9.

⁸ KRAUS, W.: *Televize – nový kontinent: Kultura nebo chaos?*. 1st Edition. Prague : Československá televize, 1991, p. 43.

information is getting faster and more up-to-date. New media have broken down informational barriers and significantly participate in the current trend of globalization.⁹

2 Globalization

According to the Dictionary of the Slovak language, globalization generally means a process of unification of countries, cultures, religions, economies, monetary units, etc.¹⁰ Globalization first became a concept of academic and public debates in the 1990s. We encounter it at every step, in the press or academic literature, whether as laymen or experts. It is, therefore, a subject of innumerable discussions and thus has countless dimensions, but is accompanied by the fact that *“the more experiences this word pretends to make more transparent, the more it itself becomes opaque.”*¹¹ The term “globalization” is derived from the word *global*, meaning the whole, complex, overall. Globalization processes are primarily referred to as economic and secondarily as political, cultural, and social. The development of globalization and its formation works on the basis of transformation of three mutually dependent and decisive processes: the economic and financial strategy of transnational and multinational corporations, rapid development of information technologies, and socio-political, social, and cultural trends on a global scale.¹² Again, it can be defined as *“a process of concentration of ownership in mass media and monopolization of media subjects on a global scale. Media industry’s attributes are similar to those of other business areas: a tendency towards concentration, monopolization, and towards various forms of integration. It creates giant corporations extending across the borders of countries and operating in transnational dimensions.”* Media globalization is expressed also in the diversification of supply and ownership. It leads to a so-called media cross-ownership (for example, ownership of different types of media – a tabloid, a respectable daily newspaper or a radio or television channel). Since the 1970s, a rapid development of private entrepreneurship in media industry has occurred – in the USA, Europe, Japan, but also in other countries (South America, Africa, Asia, and Australia).¹³ In the modern perception of media, we often encounter the term media globalization. Bauman defines this term as *“a process of concentration of ownership in mass media and monopolization of media subjects on a global scale. Media industry’s attributes are similar to those of other business areas: a tendency towards concentration, monopolization, and towards various forms of integration.”*¹⁴

⁹ Compare to: PANASENKO, N., GREGUŠ, E., ZABUZHANSKA, I.: Conflict, Confrontation, and War Reflected in Mass Media: Semantic Wars, Their Victors and Victims. In *Lege Artis: Language Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow*, 2018, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 132-163; KVETANOVÁ, Z., RADOŠINSKÁ, J., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: To Thrive Means to Entertain: The Nature of Today’s Media Industries. In *Communication Today*, 2020, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 4-21; 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; 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.

¹⁰ *Globalizácia*. [online]. [2020-05-17]. Available at: <<https://slovník.azet.sk/pravopis/slovník-sj/?q=globaliz%C3%A1cia>>.

¹¹ BAUMAN, Z.: *Globalizácia. Dôsledky pre ľudstvo*. Bratislava : Kalligram, 2000, p. 15.

¹² PRAVDOVÁ, H., VOLKOVÁ, B.: Globalizácia médií, glocalizácia médií. In PRAVDOVÁ, H., RADOŠINSKÁ, J., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J. (eds.): *Slovník vybraných pojmov z mediálnych štúdií: Kľúčové termíny v súčasnej mediálnej komunikácii*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2016, p. 75.

¹³ BAUMAN, Z.: *Globalizácia. Dôsledky pre ľudstvo*. Bratislava : Kalligram, 2000. p. 43.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 46.

2.1 Impacts of Globalization on Media

Current times are strongly marked by processes of globalization. Media are a specific phenomenon, connecting and interlinking influences of economy, technics, politics, culture, and technology. The trends in economic development of Western civilization constitute another condition for media globalization. In the 1980s, a wave of liberalization and deregulation occurred and, although a little delayed, has also reached post-communist countries and eventually the third world countries. The politics of neoliberalism has initiated a process of privatization of sectors controlled by the state, the telecommunications market not excluded. It resulted in the establishment of dual broadcasting system, i.e. a system where the public, state sponsored, and private, commercial, media co-exist on the market.¹⁵ Media industry has established itself as one of the most progressive and profitable business areas and produces various kinds of commodities and services. Media institutions are trying to take control of means of production, resources, and distribution means on a multinational level in order to strengthen their position, profit, and influence.¹⁶ Globalization is a process, through which different cultures, societies, and economies integrate in all respects via global business and communication network. Essentially, it is a change of paradigm in economic thinking. During the Hellenistic period, commercial city centres focused on Greek culture extending from India to Spain. In those times, trade was a very important aspect and the idea of cosmopolitan culture appeared here for the first time. The impacts of globalization are diverse and influence various aspects of the world in order to bring positive progress. Its impacts shape not only financial conditions of a country, but also the industrial sector and culture of the participating countries. Globalization broadens access to numerous foreign goods meant for consumption of a large number of consumers as a result of market planning and policies adopted by various companies.¹⁷ Current process of globalization is fuelled by two main powerful engines:

- Development and spread of technologies, the fast development of information technologies such as – computers, telephones, satellites, optical fibres, etc.

All these technologies play a significant role in areas of globalized communication networks within the electronic mass media and internet networks. They manifest themselves mainly in mass consumption of media products, in various forms of multimedia communication, and in the areas of expansion of electronic trade, shares, stock-markets, etc.

- The second engine involves the processes of deregulation, privatization, liberalization of capital flows, opening national economies, abolishing customs, and expanding international trade.¹⁸

Globalization is accompanied by mutual interdependence of several subsystems and transboundary interactions between individual subjects of global politics. It is not only an international order, but also a factor of its changes. At the same time, it allows reconsiderations of roles and options of national states as decisive subjects of international relations. The rate of internationalization is currently exceeding the critical threshold and a

¹⁵ JIRÁK, J., KÖPPOVÁ, B.: *Média a spoločnosť*. Prague : Portál, 2003, p. 7.

¹⁶ *Mediálna výchova*. [online]. [2020-05-17]. Available at: <<http://medialnavychova.sk/globalizacia-medii/>>.

¹⁷ *Effects Of Globalization On Media Media Essay*. [online]. [2020-05-17]. Available at: <<https://www.ukessays.com/essays/media/effects-of-globalization-on-media-media-essay.php>>.

¹⁸ PRAVDOVÁ, H., VOLKOVÁ, B.: Globalizácia médií, globalizácia médií. In PRAVDOVÁ, H., RADOŠINSKÁ, J., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J. (eds.): *Slovník vybraných pojmov z mediálnych štúdií: Kľúčové termíny v súčasnej mediálnej komunikácii*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2016, p. 75.

new planetary structure of relationships is being formed. It is obvious that the primary and decisive character and role of economic processes and relations is being shifted from the inside of the state units to the global area. Economic processes, where the key position and influence are held by transnational actors – not only international institutions but mainly the transnational corporations – are becoming dominant and decisive.¹⁹ Morandini regards the following factors as the most important consequences of globalization:

1. new experience, but also the persisting social-political-economic, cultural, ethical, and religious levels – dramatic processes and changes;
2. accelerated interconnection of interests and creation of networks of various social subjects – integration processes;
3. phenomenon and growth of influence of transnational factors on the political, economic (high increase of influence on multinational corporations), and cultural area – transnationality;
4. loss or decline of political significance of national borders – internationalization;
5. discovery of new ways of thinking about different issues (interest groups such as G8 and the World Economic Forum, meetings in Davos), as well as the emerging environmental awareness, especially discussions about climate change, environment pollution; furthermore, new forms of partnerships aimed at achieving various goals on the global or continental level – globalization of consciousness and ecologization of conscience.²⁰

3 Media in the Globalization Process

Within the globalization process media play a major role of intermediary and transmitter of values of aesthetic structures and ways of life, as well as of an initiator of societal changes on a global scale. McLuhan created and introduced the term “global village” in his publication *Gutenberg Galaxy* from 1962 in connection to electronic media which are faster than traditional print media. McLuhan is of an opinion that the fast and immediate flow of communication is able to destroy geographical balance, thus creating one global village where information is spread in real time, here and now, similarly to what it used to be in countryside or a village. McLuhan’s predictions suggest that culture of individualism will be overridden by returning to tribal roots and collective identity – i.e. toward a complete dependency. According to him, the world is getting smaller and becomes readable, accessible, and familiar.²¹ There are three factors defining globalization of media: 1. transformation of media institutions into giant media concerns, 2. globalization of communication processes, 3. rapid expansion of electronically transmitted communication. In media practice, two main forms of integration are being distinguished: a horizontal and a vertical form. Horizontal integration is defined as formation of large organizations, conglomerates, and diversification of ownership. One owner is thus acquiring companies that could become their competition; for example, two competing periodicals on a local or national level merging within a single market. Vertical integration can be defined as a hierarchic arrangement of subjects subordinated to one, usually a holding, company. It is, as a rule, led by one entrepreneur, family or group.

¹⁹ WEISS, P.: *Globalizácia, integrácia a slovenský národný záujem*. [online]. [2020-05-17]. Available at: <https://euractiv.sk/section/zahranicie-a-bezpecnost/opinion/globalizacia-integracia-a-slovensky-narodny-zaujem/?fbclid=IwAR1sVDJdsJr9Vq9g2JScxxlkRv01jVORgzzn3_Gf6XFIsal68Fe-8DAgKCU>.

²⁰ MORANDINI, P.: *Globalizzazione. Per avviare la riflessione, Credere oggi*. [online]. [2020-05-17]. Available at: <<http://www.credereoggi.it/upload/2004/sommario139.asp>>.

²¹ PRAVDOVÁ, H., VOLKOVÁ, B.: Globalizácia médií, globalizácia médií. In PRAVDOVÁ, H., RADOŠINSKÁ, J., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J. (eds.): *Slovník vybraných pojmov z mediálnych štúdií: Kľúčové termíny v súčasnej mediálnej komunikácii*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2016, p. 76-77.

Typical example of vertical concentration is the act of buying up distribution companies and television stations by a newspaper publisher or controlling film studios and television stations by a producer of optical fibre cables (e.g. the film studio Paramount managing the storyline, realization, and distribution of a film).²²

Denis McQuail distinguishes other forms of media transformation based on concentration. “These are the concentration on the level of publishers and concentration on the target groups of recipients. Concentration on the level of publishers stems from the need to increase the factual power of the owners and the necessity for delegating some of the decision-making powers to the newspapers (e.g. an increase of newspaper chains consisting of several publishing houses or ownership of a network of television stations with a uniform editorial system).”²³ The level of media concentration is usually being measured on the basis of instantaneous availability of individual companies operating in the mass media industry. Several aspects are being considered: quality and number of labour force, distribution possibilities, audience rates or signal coverage. Efficient concentration assumes monopolization of ownership, production, and media production market. Media industry is controlled by a small group of owners that play key roles in giant transnational and multinational corporations. Activities of these media businesses are diverse and are reflected in all forms of media practice.²⁴ Besides internetization, the globalizing media concerns can consolidate their market position also by trying to speed up the distribution of production. As we have mentioned above, authors of the publication *Slovník vybraných pojmov z mediálnych štúdií* (*Dictionary of the Selected Terms from Media Studies*) also agree with the fact that these concerns buy up, for example, film production companies and their production before it is released in cinemas and sell it for the highest possible price on their paid channels. In the light of this fact, it is possible to assume that the funding of programmes will reach its ceiling in the future, gradually leading to charges for media services.²⁵ Media are related to various communication means, such as radio, television, internet, etc. They play an important role in forming human mind. Mass media are a part of media that is determined to attract large audiences. The majority of globalization theoreticians believe that media have played an important role in speeding up globalization. With the growing significance of the economic, cultural, and technological integration among countries, it has a large impact on personal life of our society. Globalization has caused an increased access to a wide spectrum of media.²⁶

Globalization has a strong influence on media and their consequent influence on us. Extensive communication is the most apparent impact of globalization. Introduction of newspapers, magazines, internet, and television has enormously supported the spread of information and has helped people worldwide to become connected. This influence has its disadvantages but, on the other hand, also advantages. We think that globalization has its pros and cons, the pros, however, prevailing. As it is stated above, it is obvious that the globalization process has led to more open minds. Since the emergence of mass media, they have been used by companies as a means of communication with an impact on a large number of people, who are informed

²² McQUAIL, D.: *Úvod do teorie masové komunikace*. 4th Edition. Prague : Portál, 2009, p. 37-45.

²³ HALADA, J., OSVLADOVÁ, B.: *Slovník žurnalistiky: Výklad pojmů teorie a oboru*. Prague : Karolinum, 2017, p. 32.

²⁴ *Globalizácia médií*. [online]. [2020-05-17]. Available at: <https://www.mediahub.sk/globalizacia-medii/?fbclid=IwAR0PMIxw1rKSF1Huk_SICoC8ZrCETM7DbpGBhZDTYv1x11o-jAz78Iinp4w>.

²⁵ PRAVDOVÁ, H., VOLKOVÁ, B.: *Globalizácia médií, globalizácia médií*. In PRAVDOVÁ, H., RADOŠINSKÁ, J., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J. (eds.): *Slovník vybraných pojmov z mediálnych štúdií: Kľúčové termíny v súčasnej mediálnej komunikácii*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2016, p. 78.

²⁶ *Effects Of Globalization On Media Media Essay*. [online]. [2020-05-17]. Available at: <<https://www.ukessays.com/essays/media/effects-of-globalization-on-media-media-essay.php>>.

about various products in this way. On the other hand, if people watch television and internet because of a certain product, they can maximize their benefit, as, thanks to media, they will be able to select the product that best suits their needs.

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CYBER-MOBING AS A FORM OF CYBERBULLYING AND A NEGATIVE PHENOMENON OF COMMUNICATION IN CYBER SPACE

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ABSTRACT:

The paper deals with the issue of digital communication in cyberspace and its risk aspects with a specific emphasis on the issue of cybermobbing, and has the character of a theoretical-empirical study. The main goal of the paper is, based on theoretical background and empirical research, to examine communication in cyberspace with a focus on the current state of cyber-mobbing, its occurrence, manifestations and platforms through which it is implemented. The theoretical part presents defining frameworks of the issue from approaches of various authors. The paper also focuses on the specifics of communication in cyberspace and the reasons for its negative misuse. The empirical part presents the most interesting results of the survey and in the conclusion, the authors provide summaries and suggestions for improving the current state and eliminating this negative phenomenon of digital communication.

KEY WORDS:

anonymity, communication, cyber-mobbing, disinhibition, Internet, victims

1 Theoretical Background of the Issue of Cyber-Mobbing

From the etymological point of view, the term mobbing originates in the English term "to mob" which means to oppress, humiliate, attack, offend¹. Kratz² defines mobbing as "a series of negative communicative acts committed by an individual or several persons against a certain person over a long period of time". Mobbing can also be defined as a form of hostile, irritating and unethical communication that is systematically controlled by an individual or a group of people, especially against a particular individual³. The definition of the Czech author Halík⁴, who defines mobbing in a very expressive way, is also very interesting; however, this statement is highly appropriate: "Mobbing is malicious manipulation, systematic humiliation, psychological terror, manoeuvres aimed at inducing stress." However, in the context of mobbing, it is often simply referred to as bullying and harassment in the workplace. It can also be a case when the superior terrorizes the subordinate in order to cover up his or her own weaknesses. Despite the fact that the definition of the term mobbing and its complex definition varies from author to author, it is always possible to see the consensus in the claim that it is a systematic violation of other person's rights in the workplace. Mobbing causes enormous mental suffering to its victims, which can damage their mental health while often having lasting consequences. On the victims' side, striving for leaving the job is a frequent consequence. It is obvious that the consequences for victims of mobbing are really serious, in addition to socio-economic interventions (e.g., need to give notice at work), health problems such as stomach problems, headache, insomnia, etc., as well as poor mental health (anxiety, nervousness, stress, depressions, self-destruction, etc.) are the result of mental terror in the workplace. For the victims, termination of employment is often a redemption, thereby ending the mobbing. There are, however, cases when mobbing is not limited within the workplace but spreads and penetrates into cyberspace and virtual environment. In this particular case, we are talking about the so-called cyber-mobbing. Cyber-mobbing is a specific type of cyberbullying that is linked

¹ NOVÁK, T., CAPPONI, V.: *Sám sobě psychologem*. Prague : Grada, 2003, p. 73.

² KRATZ, H. J.: *Mobbing, jak ho rozpoznat a jak mu čelit*. Prague : Management Press, 2005, p. 16.

³ DUFFY, M., SPERRY, L.: *Mobbing*. New York : Oxford University Press, 2012, p. 42.

⁴ HALÍK, J.: *Vedení a řízení lidských zdrojů*. Prague : Grada, 2008, p. 108.

to the area of work. It is therefore a modified form of mobbing implemented in cyberspace using information and communication technologies, digital media and the Internet. In this context, Kohut offers an interesting opinion⁵: *"Technologies provide treacherous weapons which have no limits, no boundaries, no conscience. The Internet has changed the world of the information society and made life in industrialized countries easier. However, it is a psychological weapon of unimaginable power."* This assumption is supported by Voštinár⁶. In the context of cyber-mobbing as one of the forms of cyberbullying, the aggressor is offered much more powerful and tricky weapons in the form of information and communication technologies⁷.

Cyber-mobbing therefore falls within the group of different forms and manifestations of cyberbullying with a specific link to the area of work and employment and for this reason, we consider it important to mention the classic definition of Belsey⁸, who states that cyberbullying *"involves the use of information and communication technologies to encourage intentional, repetitive and hostile behaviour of an individual or a group aimed at harming others."* Hollá⁹ defines cyberbullying, which undoubtedly includes also cyber-mobbing, as behaviour that involves harassment, threat, humiliation, stalking or other negative behaviour of an individual or a group using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones. The purpose of this behaviour is to harm the victim in the form of general insults, homophobic, sexist, racist and other discriminatory prejudices, with a significant mismatch in ICT skills between a cyber-mobber and a victim, and the victim being exposed to negative online material and attacks for a long time. Therefore, it can be stated that in both forms – mobbing and cyber-mobbing, it is possible to indicate common characteristic attributes, which include intention, regularity, disproportionate forces and damage. The nature and character of cyber-mobbing are determined by the very characteristics of cyberspace. *"The way a person behaves within it depends on the interaction of these traits with the personal characteristics of each individual"*.¹⁰ Some experts (Vybíral 2002; Šmahaj 2003; Hulanová 2012; Šmahel 2003) characterize cyberspace and the Internet as an unrestrained environment, which can have a negative effect. This is mainly related to the attribute of anonymity which further enhances the whole character of cyberspace and is very attractive for participants of the virtual environment – especially aggressors. As Šmahel sees it¹¹: *"...if an Internet user has confidence in his or her anonymity, and therefore in his or her security, they behave in a different way than if they did not have such confidence"*. It is undoubtedly possible to combine the disinhibition effect, which is one of the important elements of online communication, in correlation with anonymity and the character of cyberspace as an unrestrained environment. The effect of disinhibited behaviour can be described as the loss of social barriers. This term first came to attention of psychologists approximately in the 1960s – so it is not a completely new concept that is put into context exclusively with the virtual environment. Holdoš¹² refers to Zimbard (1977), who characterizes

⁵ KOHUT, M.: *The complete guide to understanding, controlling, and stopping bullies: a complete guide for teachers&parents*. US, Florida, Ocala : Atlantis Publish Group, 2008, p. 26.

⁶ For more information, see: VOŠTINÁR, P.: Creating mobile apps for teaching. In CHOVA, G. L., MARTÍNEZ, L. A., TORRES, C. I. (eds.): *INTED 2018 Proceedings*. Valencia, Spain : IATED, Academy, 2018, p. 811-816.

⁷ HLADÍKOVÁ, V., GÁLIKOVÁ-TOLANIOVÁ, S.: Cyberaggressors, their motives, emotions and behavioural tendencies in the process of cyberbullying. In *AD ALTA*, 2019, Vol. 9, No. 2, p. 72.

⁸ BELSEY, B.: *Cyberbullying*. [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <<http://www.cyberbullying.ca/>>.

⁹ HOLLÁ, K.: *Kyberšikana*. Bratislava : Iris, 2013, p. 4.

¹⁰ DIVÍNOVÁ, R.: *Cybersex: forma internetové komunikace*. Prague : Triton, 2005, p. 25.

¹¹ ŠMAHEL, D.: *Psychologie a internet. Děti dospělými, dospělí dětmi*. Prague : Triton, 2003, p. 14.

¹² HOLDOŠ, J.: Disinhibičný efekt používateľov internetu v čase sociálnych sietí. In HOLDOŠ, J., LAJČIAKOVÁ, P., ĎURKA, R. (eds.): *ALUMNI Conference of Graduates*, Ružomberok : VERBUM, 2016, p. 65.

this type of behaviour as *"any behaviour that is characterized by a reduction in fear of self-presentation and condemnation of others"*. It can thus be considered to be the opposite of social inhibition which includes impulse control, non-expression of emotions and overall social control. In general, according to Holdoš, disinhibited behaviour on the Internet could be understood as the behaviour which is less socially hampered than comparable behaviour outside cyberspace. According to Horská et al.¹³, disinhibition in the virtual environment means *"greater relaxation and daring of participants of electronic communication, loss of inhibitions, embarrassment, doubts. It thus becomes a source of greater openness and straightforwardness"*.

In the context of cyber-mobbing, it can also be stated that, as Vybíral¹⁴ sees it, typical manifestations of disinhibition can be as follows:

- loss or throwing out inhibitions, shame, shyness, feelings of embarrassment and inadequacy;
- circumvention of censorship (nothing is forbidden, everything is allowed);
- turning off the conscience ("call to responsibility" is turned off, I can unleash immorality);
- showing no restraint, impatience, speed (I do not have to be disciplined, I do not have to control my temper);
- interest in taboo topics (violence, extremism, paedophilia, etc.);
- increased curiosity;
- instinctive behaviour, impulsive decision-making;
- releasing the forces of "ID" (unconsciousness): behaviour is driven by an urge to pleasure or destructiveness (desire to enjoy something, desire to harm someone);
- exhibitionism;
- departure from reality and escape to the world of phantasy.

The consequences of disinhibited behaviour can also include increased aggressiveness in communication in cyberspace manifested e.g., in discussions under articles, blogs or videos on the web; partly these consequences can also include the boom of pornography on the Internet, superficiality, lack of interest in others, selfishness or lies. There is also an increased willingness to accept risky behaviour, either with oneself or with others (e.g., flirting with strangers, illegal downloading, spreading of spam and hoaxes, hate-filled content, etc.). Disinhibited behaviour can be both positive and negative. Suler¹⁵ provides a basic division between harmless (or *benign*) and harmful (or *toxic*) disinhibition. The first type allows us to better understand ourselves by losing barriers because it allows us to act as we would like to but in the offline world, for example, we would never dare to behave in this way. Thanks to harmless disinhibition, users in cyberspace sometimes behave more positively than in reality – they are more supportive and express their understanding, praise to each other. Harmful disinhibition is thus the opposite – it includes aggressive forms of behaviour and negative emotions, harsh criticism, hatred, threats and the like. It is obvious that if we deal with cyber-mobbing and cyberbullying, the second type of disinhibited behaviour is essential for us. A mobber – an attacker from the workplace does not limit his or her activities and attacks only to the physical space in the workplace but also continues to attack through the Internet. It is not a new phenomenon, but its digital form is guided by different laws and has also other consequences:

¹³ HORSKÁ, B. et. al.: *Internet jako cesta pomoci*. Prague : Sociologické nakladatelství, 2010, p. 18.

¹⁴ VYBÍRAL, Z.: Výzkum disinhibice u mladých uživatelů chatu. In PLAŇAVA, I., PILÁT, M.: *Deti, mládež a rodiny v období transformace*. Brno : Barrister&Principal-studio, 2002, p. 279.

¹⁵ SULER, J.: *The Online Disinhibition Effect*. [online]. [2020-04-19]. Available at: <<http://users.rider.edu/~suler/psyber/disinhibit.html>>.

1. Cyber-mobbing can take place almost continuously – the constant availability of digital media and the Internet supports the possibility of carrying out online attacks and at the same time, prevents the victim from escaping from them. Unlike mobbing, it does not end after leaving the workplace. However, a negative consequence of blocking all virtual accounts with the aim to prevent contact with a cybermobber can also cause a certain form of social exclusion as well as access to information and the like.
2. Cyber-mobbing reaches a wide audience – social networks, e-mails or SMS messages enable a rapid and immediate spread of negative content among the public. Once some data is published on the Internet, it is very difficult to delete it. Due to the fact that the Internet memory is unlimited, even deleted data could have been copied and archived before. Attacks or the spread of negative contents can be carried out in a very active and simple way, it is thus a never-ending audience.
3. Cyber-mobbing can also take place anonymously – aggressors often hide behind invented identities. On one hand, it can reduce disinhibited behaviour – cyber-mobbers do not have to face the reactions of victims and often do not realize the consequences of their attacks on victims. On the other hand, the anonymity of attackers is another source of fear and insecurity for the victims of cyber-mobbing.¹⁶

In the literature, there is ambiguity in the classification of the manifestations of mobbing and cyber-mobbing. By synthesizing and comparing several relevant sources and studies (Hollá, Šmahaj, Horváth, Ritomská, Dvončová and others) we have summarized the following lists of possible forms and manifestations of mobbing in offline and online environment:

Table 1: Manifestations of mobbing and cyber-mobbing

MOBBING	CYBER-MOBBING
1. Defamation – by defamation, the attacker gives false information about the other person (the victim of mobbing), trying to “win” a better position for himself or herself, while the topic of defamation may be from the private life of the attacked person or from the workplace.	1. Flaming – an Internet debate, a fiery quarrel using offensive language, insults and threats. It usually takes place in the environment of public communication, e.g., discussion forums, chatrooms and the like.
2. Mockery – the target of mockery can be a hairstyle, way of clothing, some personal characteristics and physical defects (stuttering, squinting, obesity and so on.). After a certain time, the victim of mobbing starts to avoid the team and thus gets into isolation, which can affect his or her performance at work.	2. Harassment – harassing the victim by repeatedly sending offensive or threatening messages through SMS/MMS, e-mail, chat, social networks. The aggressor sends a huge amount of messages, it is one-sided, it is a long-term process and causes emotional distress to the victims.
3. Withholding of important information – by withholding the information important for the performance at work, the bully tries to artificially create stressful situations for the other person, with people working under pressure being more prone to make mistakes, making wrong decisions, whereby	3. Defamation, slander – publishing and disseminating verbal, graphic or audio contents about the victim and the results of his or her work, which are derogatory, untrue, offensive, ridiculing. The victim is not a direct recipient of the messages, the aim is to destroy his or her reputation and to disrupt

¹⁶ See also: BUCHEGGER, B.: *Aktiv gegen CyberMobbing*. Wien : Österreichisches Institut für angewandte Telekommunikation, 2018. [online]. [2020-04-13]. Available at: <https://www.saferinternet.at/fileadmin/categorized/Materialien/Aktiv_gegen_Cyber_Mobbing.pdf>.

<p>the bully tries to create an image of the opponent as an unreliable and incompetent worker, and so the mobber tries to strengthen his or her position .</p>	<p>friendly relations, or possible social harm to the victim or exclusion. This includes, e.g., photomontages of victims which are injurious or sexual in nature.</p>
<p>4. Isolation of a worker - the result of defamation, mockery or so-called voluntary isolation of the victim in order to avoid negative attacks.</p>	<p>4. Imitating, identity theft – the aggressor introduces himself or herself and acts on behalf of the victim, uses negative communication, insults, slanders others, sends inappropriate, misleading, derogatory information or files as if sent by the victim himself or herself. The aggressor can communicate with the victim’s friends and cause considerable damage or even destruction of social relationships. This is a certain kind of hacking activity.</p>
<p>5. Administrative and work measures – used mainly by superiors. At short intervals, the employee is assigned to another workplace where he or she performs menial jobs that do not correspond to his or her qualifications. The loss of the employee’s interest in the assigned job is the consequence of these measures.</p>	<p>5. Disclosure of secret information and fraud – disclosing private, secret, intimate information about the victim without his or her consent. This is data that embarrasses the victim, damages his or her reputation and image.</p>
<p>6. Excessive workload – this can mean being assigned unnecessary and pointless tasks or being constantly assigned new tasks beyond the abilities and competences of the worker. This results in the worker being overtired and under constant pressure. This is one of the ways in which the superior tries to “remove” or “humiliate” a smarter subordinate, thus trying to gain his or her position. Excessive workload is not always related to mobbing but can be a sign of poor work organization by the superior, which can contribute to the creation of such an atmosphere that supports the occurrence of mobbing.</p>	<p>6. Exclusion and ostracization – intentional exclusion from an online group, or online meetings, online conferences and meetings and the like. It is a direct and purposeful ignoring of the victim, preventing access to digital data and materials.</p>
<p>7. Excessive criticism – this method is used by superiors as well as by employees at the same level. Excessive and constant criticism is frustrating and makes the bullied person question his or her abilities, reduces self-confidence. Criticism can be justified or often unjustified, and becomes generalized over time, ultimately resulting in apathy, resignation, insufficient performance of tasks assigned, and, in the worst case, to leaving the workplace “voluntarily” or</p>	<p>7. Stalking – it is tracking, sharing or stalking the victim and his or her loved ones through ICT means. A cybermobber repeatedly sends harassing and threatening messages, excluding extortion. These messages are extremely injurious, offensive and humiliating. An aggressor can often hide his or her identity behind anonymous means of communication.</p>

<p>“involuntarily”.</p>	
<p>8. Sexual harassment – these are women, rarely men, who are mainly exposed to sexual harassment by their superiors. It is important to distinguish between stating one’s affection and a real harassment, which can take various forms, e.g., verbal – defamation, suggesting a sexual intercourse; conative – stroking someone against their will; in more serious cases, also pressuring someone violently into sex, etc.</p>	<p>8. Happy slapping – this is a specific phenomenon which consists in the fact that the victim is recorded (most often on a smartphone) at moments when he or she is ridiculed or physically attacked. Subsequently, the record is published on the Internet and distributed virally. Fazing the victim and letting them lose self-control through indecent behaviour and the subsequent filming and publication of his or her negative reaction is also an alternative. It has fatal consequences, which can even lead to suicide of the victim.</p>
<p>9. Physical attacks – they rarely occur in the workplace because physical assault, in contrast to the above mentioned points, is punishable by law.</p>	<p>9. Cyber threats – these are electronic materials that, either generally or particularly raise concerns that their author intends to cause harm or violence. This includes the following technological attacks: hacking attacks, sending viruses, malware, creating automatic programs for simultaneous sending of thousands of e--mail messages which will cause an e-mail box to collapse, or accounts blocking and the like. Cyber threats also include phishing and pharming (trying to obtain passwords, especially for bank accounts, online online banking and others).</p>

Source: own processing

2 Main Aim and Methodology of Survey Research

The main aim of this paper is, based on theoretical background and empirical survey research, to examine the communication in cyberspace with specific emphasis put on the current state of cyber-mobbing, its occurrence, manifestations and platforms through which it is implemented. In examining these contexts, we decided to use a quantitative research strategy because it results in diverse data. The basic tool of the quantitative survey research was a self-designed questionnaire which contained several questions of various nature. When evaluating and interpreting the survey results, the methods of analysis, synthesis, comparison as well as generalization of data or its graphical representation were used. Since the survey was exploratory in nature (we identified the knowledge, occurrence, manifestations and platforms used in the context of cyber-mobbing), we did not formulate hypotheses in this case, but based on the comparison of literature and previous research on the subject, we drew on several assumptions. For the purpose of this paper, the following assumptions are present:

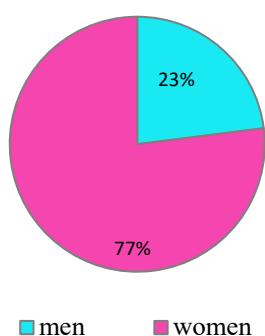
1. We assume that most respondents have encountered a certain form of bullying in the workplace.
2. We assume that cyber-mobbing (more precisely - cyberbossing) was most often initiated against victims by their superior.

3. We assume that cyber-mobbing is most often carried out through social networks.

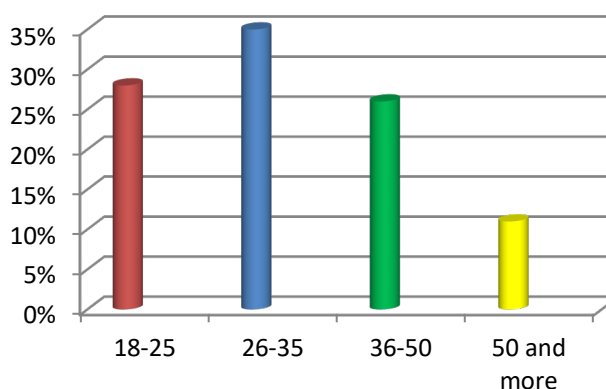
The obtained data were analyzed, evaluated and certain conclusions and positions were drawn from them which are presented in the following chapter of the paper.

3 Interpretation of Survey Research Results

The first part of the questionnaire dealt with demographic data of the respondents (sex, age). There were in total 231 respondents working in various fields (administrative positions and HR IT, economics, banking, finance, media and marketing, education, science, research, healthcare, services, catering and the hotel industry, state and public administration and others). In the following graphic overviews, the identification data of the survey respondents are presented.



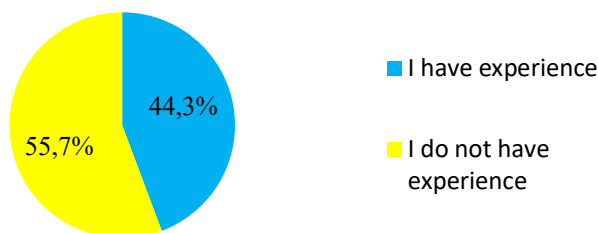
Graph 1: Sex of respondents
Source: own processing, 2020.



Graph 2: Age of respondents
Source: own processing, 2020.

In the introductory part, the respondents were asked whether they had ever encountered a certain form of bullying – mobbing in the workplace. The results of the survey show that the majority of the respondents does not have this experience. However, almost 45 % of the respondents said that they had already encountered some form of mobbing in the workplace. The results of this survey are also in line with previous research conducted in this context (Ondrejkoovič, Lovaš, Končeková) stating that in Slovakia, at least one third of employees have experienced mobbing, some even claim that 80 % of employees witness such behaviour. In this context, it can be stated that **assumption no. 1** stating that most respondents have encountered a certain form of bullying in the workplace, **was not confirmed.**

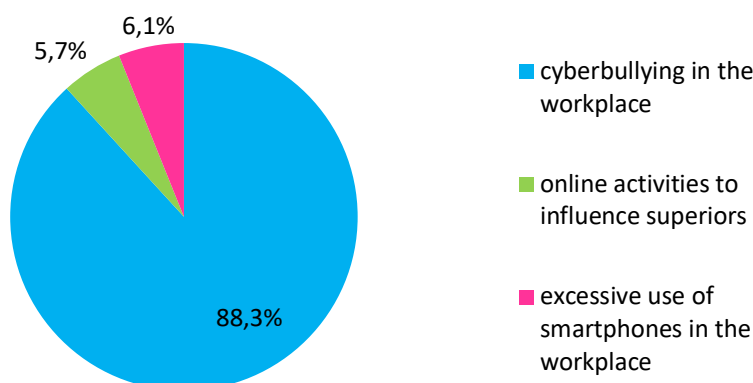
Experience with mobbing in the workplace



Graph 3: Experience of respondents with mobbing

Source: own processing, 2020.

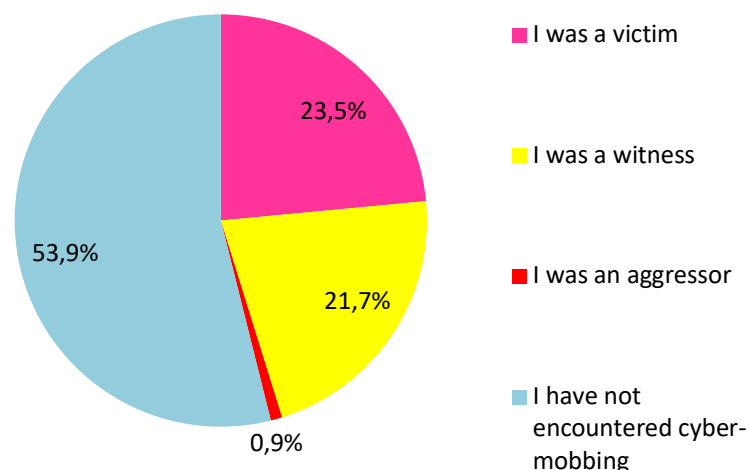
One knowledge question was included in the questionnaire, asking whether the respondents could correctly define the term pojem cyber-mobbing. The majority of the respondents (88.3 %) were able to answer correctly, stating that cyber-mobbing is bullying in the workplace and all its manifestations continuing in the electronic environment via the Internet and digital technologies. Less than 6 % of the respondents think that cyber-mobbing is represented by online activities aimed at influencing superiors' decisions, and about 6 % of the respondents also perceive cyber-mobbing as an excessive use of smartphones and other digital technologies in the workplace.



Graph 4: Defining the term cyber-mobbing

Source: own processing, 2020.

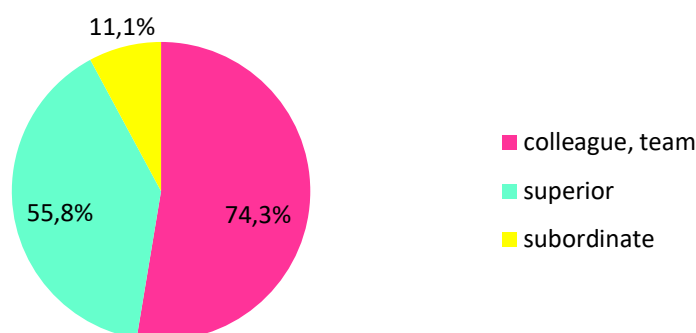
In the context of the experience with cyber-mobbing and its manifestations, the respondents were asked to state their position when encountering this issue. The respondents were given the opportunity to provide more than one answer to this question. 23.5 % of the respondents fell victim to cyber-mobbing, and almost 22 % of the respondents stated that they had witnessed such behaviour. These are most often cases when colleagues perceive the injustice that is present in the workplace; in relation to cyber-mobbing, these can be, for example, situations in which the victim purposely does not receive e-mail messages, information, documents or materials, or is publicly criticized and humiliated in bulk messages by a superior or other colleague. Two respondents even confirmed that they were cyber aggressors themselves and initiated mobbing in cyberspace.



Graph 5: Status of respondents in context of cyber-mobbing

Source: own processing, 2020.

Furthermore, the survey was focused primarily on victims of cyber-mobbing at which several connections associated with this negative phenomenon were examined. Respondents who stated that they had become victims of cyber-mobbing were in question no. 9 asked who had initiated the activities and expressions of cyber-mobbing against them. Respondents could mark several answers for this question. The results of the survey were interesting as the majority of respondents (74.3 %) stated that most frequently, the aggressors were their colleagues, or the team. Almost 56 % of respondents also stated that the actors of cyber-mobbing were their superiors, so in this context, this can be explicitly regarded as the phenomenon of cyberbossing. More than 11 % of respondents claimed that the cybermobbers were even subordinate to them, which is quite unusual in this context. In this context, it can be stated that **assumption no. 2** stating that cyber-mobbing (or more precisely – cyberbossing) was most often initiated against the victims by their superiors, **was not confirmed**.

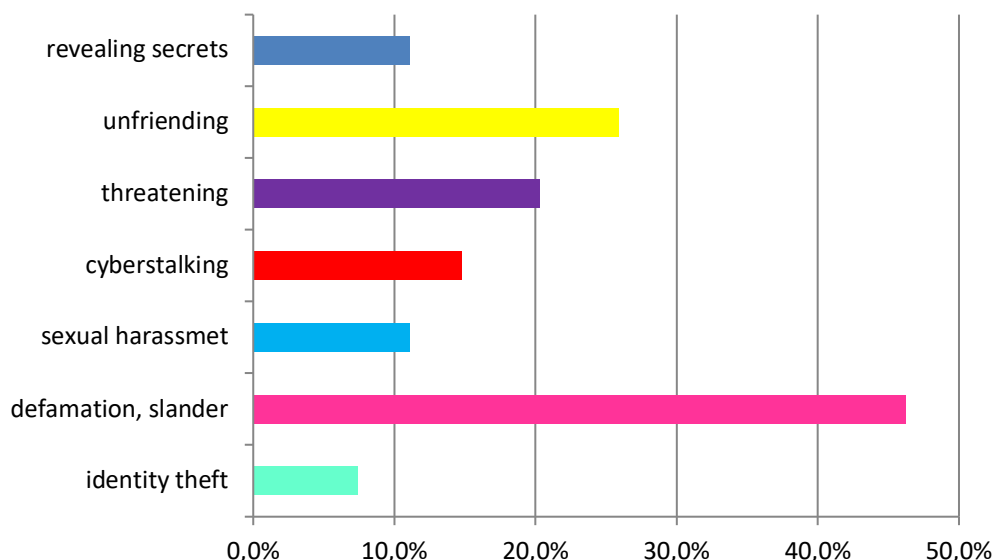


Graph 6: Initiator of cyber-mobbing by victims

Source: own processing, 2020.

In connection with cyber-mobbing, the respondents – the victims were asked which specific manifestations they had experienced. Anonymity, no control or regulation of any activity prove that bullying through the Internet is very simple. In the case of cyber-mobbing, there may be various manifestations of undesirable behaviour, so in question no. 11, respondents were asked which of the above manifestations they had experienced at first hand. As respondents may have had multiple experiences with different manifestations, they also had the opportunity to

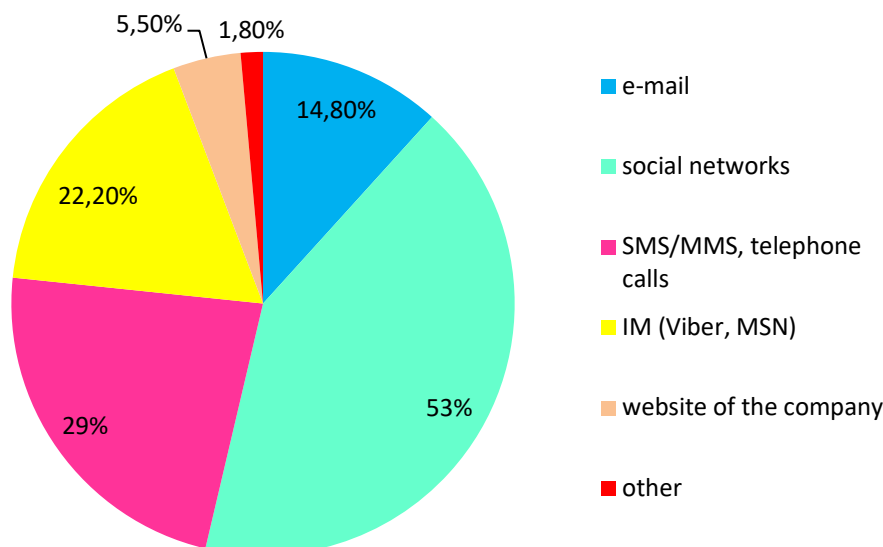
mark several answers. Most respondents (46.2 %) encountered slander and defamation in the electronic environment, and about a quarter of them (25.9 %) stated that one of the manifestations of cyber-mobbing was unfriending on social networks and general exclusion. Respondents also reported threatening (20.3 %), cyberstalking (14.8 %), as well as sexual harassment (11.1 %) or identity theft in cyberspace (7.4 %).



Graph 7: Manifestations of cyber-mobbing in victims

Source: own processing, 2020.

In question no. 12, the use of platforms in which cyber-mobbing took place in the Internet environment was investigated. Even with this question, the respondents were allowed to opt for several answers. Social networks are by far the most frequently used in the cyber-mobbing process. As many as 53 % of respondents stated that they had become victims within the social networks, the most common being Facebook and Instagram. SMS messages, MMS or telephone calls (29 %), instant messaging communication platforms (Viber, Whatsapp, Messenger) are also often used, which were identified by 22.2 % of respondents. Almost 15 % of respondents mentioned work e-mails as a space for cyber-mobbing, 5.5 % of victims even directly marked the website of the company in which they work, which may be considered to be public lynching of victims. Based on the above mentioned facts it can be concluded that **assumption no. 3 that cyber-mobbing is most frequently carried out through social networks was confirmed.**



Graph 8: Platforms used for cyber-mobbing in victims

Source: own processing, 2020.

Conclusions

Currently, there is no specific law in the legislation of the Slovak Republic yet, nor has an official institution or organization focusing exclusively on mobbing in the workplace, or its extension in cyberspace. This necessarily requires legislation, specifically, the explicit definition of the forms and manifestations of mobbing and cyber-mobbing in the workplace, the introduction of sanctions and penalties for mobbing actors, the competences to resolve individual cases, the method of filing legal remedies and other legislative contexts. However, in addition to legislation, it is also necessary to create relevant protection mechanisms and forms of counselling for victims and employers. We therefore call for prevention and early intervention in this area which can significantly help eliminate this undesirable phenomenon. At the same time, we consider it important to adhere to the principles of netiquette and cyber security, and to draw attention to possible risks in the whole society. Although the issues of mobbing and cyber-mobbing are discussed in part, we believe that employees as well as the general public still do not have enough information and knowledge in this area. Therefore, it is important to provide essential and crucial information and training for employees (e.g., through courses in the context of communication) as well as professionals who professionally deal with this issue, and it is also important to provide education and raise awareness of the whole society.

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ONLINE VS. FACE TO FACE TEACHING IN UNIVERSITY BACKGROUND

Denisa Kraľovičová

ABSTRACT:

This article originated in the current situation in the world dealing with global COVID-19 crisis. Generally speaking, it aims to focus readers' attention on this topic as well as stimulates discussion dealing with traditional and online way of teaching, hoping to stimulate discussion regarding both ways of communication. The paper will mainly focus on comparison of face-to-face and online teaching, while emphasising human approach of face-to-face teaching under normal conditions, out of the crisis. The partial goal of this paper will reflect the current situation in the world regarding COVID-19 in terms of teaching languages in university background, while underlining the need to use social media in education process as the crisis communication tool. The practical dimension of this paper is also made by some real-life examples dealing with a few international surveys regarding online teaching and way FMK UCM in Trnava, Slovakia deals with the recent situation. It emphasises the faculty development as a catalyst for change. Its hidden message is to exploit the chaos and threat of pandemics as a challenge to learn new knowledge and ways of thinking and use it reasonably in future development of university teaching practice.

KEY WORDS:

computer skills, COVID-19, face-to-face teaching, faculties, global crisis, language skills, online teaching

1 Reaction to Crisis Situation

„Institutions of higher education are under the pressure to make changes in their traditional ways of teaching that could change the entire environment of higher education. Perhaps, the largest driving force for change in higher education and teaching is the rapid growth of the Internet, enabling distance education and changing the way we gather and share information, gain knowledge, do business, collaborate, design and deliver instruction, and gaining the speed at which we accomplish these tasks. The wide availability of the Internet has advanced creative uses of new technologies, changed classrooms, and placed new and different demands on faculty.“¹ Regarding corona virus, the immediate reaction of social distancing appeared, no exception for education and teaching practices. The immediate action included changing physical classrooms into virtual ones. Of course, it affected all types of schools, private and public as well as all degrees. As far as the contribution is concerned, we will focus our attention on state schools, especially universities as we are familiar with this background. In this connection, several questions appear, which are as follows: What is online learning and what can we expect compared to face-to-face situations? What are the different types of online learning? Which is best for our course? Are we technically skilled enough to use PC to extend required? Are the teachers technically equipped enough to start online teaching process immediately? What about teacher's privacy and providing the lessons online? How to adapt a face-to-face course to online? What about motivation and engagement in online environment? How to ensure quality of participation? How can we add the "human touch" and maintain student retention? Which is the best tool (programme) to be used? How to choose the most suitable group for the program used and what about the remaining groups? How to make it tailor-made?

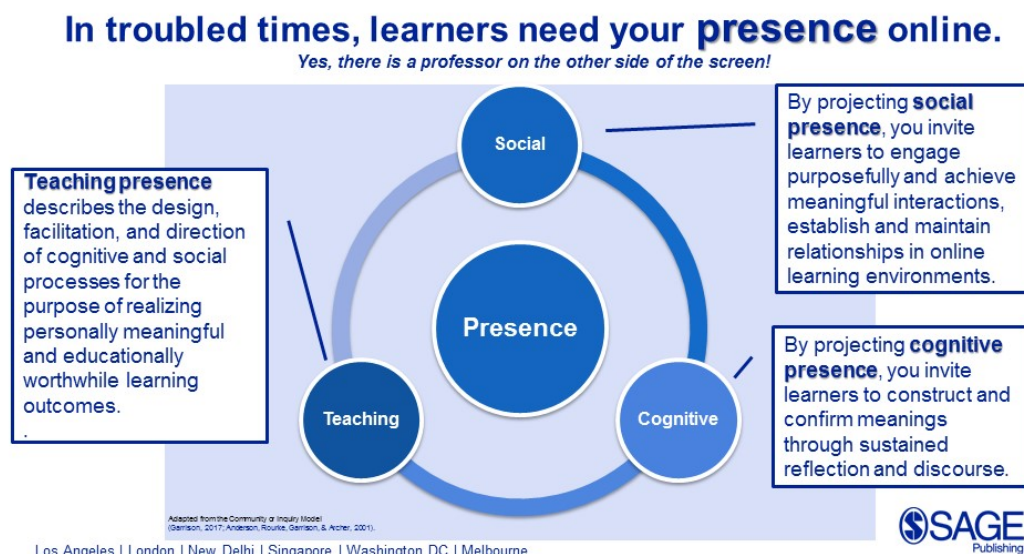
¹ McQUIGGAN, C. A.: Faculty development for online teaching as a catalyst for change. In *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 2012, Vol. 16, No. 2, p. 27.

1.1 Reaction of University Management and Faculties

Not only these, but many more questions have emerged in connection with online teaching in the current situation. The university teachers were forced to react immediately, as it happened at the very start of summer term. Loosing time in this connection means losing quality of educational process. And that is what we try to avoid in Slovakia. From a global perspective, some faculty members have embraced online education, but many are only at the beginning to integrate new technologies into their teaching. Plenty of the teachers have hardly any experience with online teaching, some of them have spend a lot of years as a learner in traditional face-to face classroom. As it comes to FMK UCM in Slovakia, we have switched to online teaching quite quickly, having sufficient skills to use new technologies. One of the reasons is definitely the fact of having quite young teaching staff with good teaching skills. What we find to be pretty important at the very start of such crisis situation is the way university management reacts, to which extend is the management open to new ways of thinking such as online teaching. What works as pretty motivational is the fact that the management itself uses the new technologies to communicate with the workers, providing online workshops, training the teachers and staff to be able to start teaching immediately. Of course, it is all connected with the teacher himself and his prompt reaction to situation arose. Even if the teacher has not been trained yet, he/she must communicate with the students from the very start and on permanent basis, providing the tasks to be fulfilled. Setting the deadlines and permanent remainders are found to work pretty well in terms of running the course. Once the teacher has been trained in terms of using technology, he/ she should evaluate the situation and tailor-made the courses to student needs. We would like to pause here for a moment to ponder the role of critical thinking and evaluation of every single course which is to be thought online. As we said earlier, it is also important to use some suitable communication tool to teach online. There are two important factors to be taken into consideration such as number of students in the group and the fact if the lesson is a lecture or seminar. You will hardly provide a high quality lesson with the programme, which is not tailor-made to it etc. The question dealing with number of lessons also arises here. Are we supposed to teach exactly the same amount of lessons as face to face? Is it meaningful? Following the practice, some personal reasons forced us to think critically during this crisis too. Our starting point was immediate communication with the students, setting the tasks and deadlines. Later on, after being trained to use Google Hangout Meet, we have provided the lessons for the students online. Our key factor to set the number of lessons were as follows: nature of the course, number of students in the course, tasks to be checked. Those were the most important ones.

1.2 Human Approach in Online Teaching Environment

More or less, there is an immeasurable partial factor of teacher's presence online. It works both, motivational as well as "pushy" for the students. As for the teacher, it is important to be a bit "pushy" in this situation, checking the tasks to be uploaded, reminding the students on permanent basis. As we said earlier, the question of privacy arises here. It depends on the teacher if he/she uses the video camera, sharing his/her way of living with the students. Our personal point of view is that the teacher becomes more human in their eyes and it all supports the humanistic principles of teaching. The following picture demonstrates necessity of personal presence of the teacher.



Picture 1: Personal presence of the teacher in online environment

Source: *16 Answers to your Questions about Teaching Online*. [online]. [2020-16-03]. Available at: <<https://www.socialsciencespace.com/2020/03/16-answers-to-your-questions-about-teaching-online/>>.

Bridging our article dealing with human connection in age of digital abundance, we dare say that face to face communication is considered to be more emotional, more human 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. These online way of teaching is very fine in terms of crisis situation to manage be managed, but we do not consider it to be an equal partner in terms of replacing the whole pedagogical process, neither at the universities nor any other schools in Slovakia. Having an international experience in online learning and teaching course, we find these tools pretty demanding and sometimes quite useless. On the other hand, there are various positive aspects, which might be implemented into teaching process out of the crises, such as “supplementary tools” for traditional face-to-face teaching, making this whole process a bit more juicy and flashy for the students. These will be discussed at the very end of this paper. We would like to quit this part with quotation of Paul Mihailides, from the School of Communication at Emerson College in Boston, MA, USA: “Teaching about access to information in age of big data media ownership Facebook and Google, advertising platforms, and mobile phones, led to what I believe was strong knowledge transfer for my students.”² Summing it up, we agree with him in terms of strong knowledge transfer. Regarding human approach, we consider online communication less effective than face-to-face, so that is one of the reasons why we are supporters of traditional ways of teaching.

2 Practical Part

Regarding practical part of this paper, we were inspired by two international case studies from abroad.

² MIHAILIDIS, P.: *Civic media literacies*. New York, London : Routledge Taylor & Francis, 2019, p. 10.

2.1 International Study from Pennsylvania State University – Harrisburg

This study considers faculty development for online teaching as a catalyst for change. In others words the study explored the change of face-to face teaching practices as a result of faculty professional development for online teaching. Faculty's teaching model follows the principles of what the teachers experienced as they were thought, as well as their later life experience with online teaching or learning as a student. The datas were collected through three rounds of action research. It included individual interviews, participant's reflective journaling activities, researchers' journal and field notes and classroom observations. There were quantitative data analysis steps, which included data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing and verification. „The results of the study indicated that learning to teach online has the potential to transform faculty's assumptions and beliefs about teaching, changing their face- to-face teaching practices. The identification of the aspects of professional development activities that were the most effective in helping faculty to reflect on and question their previously held assumptions and beliefs about teaching will assist administrators and faculty development specialists move from one-size-fits-all programs to a redesign within and adult learning framework that supports opportunities for change.“³

2.2 Case Study from University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, USA

It is well known and logical that the instructors, who have thought fully online courses have gained the new skills and have applied some pedagogical skills into online environment. However, it is still not clear enough if direct exposure to fully online teaching facilitates integration to new technologies into traditional classroom and if so, to which extend. „ This quantitative investigation examined the transfer of four experienced faculty members' pedagogical practices from online to face-to-face teaching. The results of this case study show that mutual connection between instructors' online teaching experience and perception and understanding online pedagogical strategies, transfer of pedagogical strategies back to the classroom is considered to be complex process, which is influenced by instructors' teaching style, satisfaction with working in the online environment and last, but not least, similarity of content and context between online and face to face courses.“⁴These findings have the potential to inform innovations in faculty training and development and promote further research in this area.Fetzner indicated that faculties change their teaching process and bring lessons learned in the online environment to campus-based classrooms. Guidera mentioned a faculty member, who claimed that he knows to use some online tools extensively and routinely to enhance his regular classroom courses. These findings, even thought limited to some extend, show that it is necessary to train the faculties in distance education methods and technologies and encourage them to use it back in the classrooms. Teaching practices of this case study were analysed from the perspective of the instructor, the up-dated teaching materials, syllabi, course plans and other course documents. The study followed a qualitative research design, a collective case study. The question, which motivated this investigation was: How does previous online teaching experience influence upcoming classroom teaching practice? As noticed earlier, there were four participants in this case study, all of them males, all of them experienced faculty members with extensive previous teaching experience in higher education, both, face-to-face and online courses. The following table shows much more details about the participants of this case study.

³ McQUIGGAN, C. A.: Faculty development for online teaching as a catalyst for change. In *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 2012, Vol. 16, No. 2, p. 27.

⁴ SCAGNOLI, N. I., BUKI, L. P., JOHNSON, S. D.: The influence of online teaching on face-to-face teaching practicies. In *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 2009, Vol. 13, No. 2, p. 115.

Table1: Participants' Background Information

Participant	Teaching Experience	Online Experience	Background	Department
Prof. Allen	14 years	2 years	Adult ed., organizational development	Human Development
Prof. Bilbao	33 years	8 years	Adult ed., Psychology	Teaching & Learning
Prof. Chang	14 years	6 years	Training and organizational development	Human Development
Prof. Davis	40 years	6 years	Psychology of teaching and learning	Teaching & Learning
Average	25.25 years	5.5 years		

Source: SCAGNOLI, N. I., BUKI, L. P., JOHNSON, S. D.: The influence of online teaching on face-to-face teaching practices. In *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 2009, Vol. 13, No. 2, p. 116.

Summing it up, the table shows that all of them were seasoned teachers with the majority having over 10 years of face-to-face teaching experience and at least 2 years of online teaching experience at the time of this study. As the following table shows, all the courses were within the social sciences field. What is important to be noticed is the fact that two participants were teaching the same course online and face-to-face, the other two were teaching two different courses in these modalities. This is important to be noticed in terms of later practical use of these results.

Table 2: Participants' Types of Course Assigned

Participant	Online course	Face-to-face course
Prof. Allen	Advanced graduate course (Summer)	Foundation course in Human Development (Fall)
Prof. Bilbao	Theories of Education (Spring)	Basic theory of Teaching & Learning (Summer)
Prof. Chang	Advanced course in Human Development (Summer)	Advanced course in Human Development (Fall)
Prof. Davis	Foundations of Teaching & Learning (Spring)	Foundations of Teaching & Learning (Summer)

Source: SCAGNOLI, N. I., BUKI, L. P., JOHNSON, S. D.: The influence of online teaching on face-to-face teaching practices. In *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 2009, Vol. 13, No. 2, p. 117.

As it comes to methodology, this case study included some multiple sources of information as well as multiple methods of data collection (used in six data collection stages). These six stages included focus interview, preliminary study of documents, open-ended interviews, in-depth study of documents, direct observation and follow-up interviews. The results were divided into two main areas, the first called Within-Case analysis and second Cross-Case Analysis and Discussion. Our aim is not to study these results very much in details, but point out some crucial facts, which can be pretty useful in terms of motivation for our faculties to be used or avoid in teaching process. What all these four cases took into consideration was teaching style of each professor. How does the previous online teaching experience influence upcoming classroom teaching practice? That was the crucial question of this case study. „The finding provided the evidence that online teaching experience has an influence on some face-to-face teaching practices, although not all instructors, who have thought fully online courses transfer online practices to the classroom.“⁵ Previous satisfactory experience in the online experience is also crucial as the teacher has had satisfactory previous experience, transfer is

⁵ SCAGNOLI, N. I., BUKI, L. P., JOHNSON, S. D.: The influence of online teaching on face-to-face teaching practices. In *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 2009, Vol. 13, No. 2, p. 115.

more likely to occur and when there is close similarity between the content and context of the face-to-face and online courses that the instructor is teaching. Summing up this study, it suggests that the experiences the faculty members acquire when teaching online can produce a change in instructors' perceptions and understanding of online learning. Their new understanding in turn, may result in changes to their face-to-face teaching practices. "The findings show that the technological skills and familiarity with distance education theories are not enough to assure the transfer of online pedagogical practices to face-to-face classes. The findings also suggest that the instructors' process of changing the instructional design of a face-to-face course to the online environment triggers a reflection of their own practices, or what the theory of transfer calls forward-teaching transfer. Results from this study have the potential to inform innovations in faculty training and development and encourage further research in this growing area."⁶

2.3 Practical Use of These Studies and Online Teaching as Such in Home Environment (FMK UCM in Trnava)

As mentioned above, there are various practical ways to use these findings at our faculty FMK UCM in Slovakia. We consider these findings pretty motivational in terms of making the following face-to-face lessons much more flashy and interesting for both, teachers and students as well. Following the experience of four teachers in the case study noticed, we find it pretty useful tool for teaching languages by practicing writing skills of the students e.g. essay writing or collaborative essay writing in wikis, uploading online materials for home studies, creating e-portfolios, online discussion forums as a starting point for later face-to-face communication activities. We also find it useful in some cases of „saving staff teaching capacities“ as these online methods may be used instead of switching men in cases of absence. Regarding first students' experience with online teaching at FMK UCM in Trnava, we would like to over bridge to a recent survey made at the faculty these days. The findings of these surveys are that the students definitely support the idea of studying from home environment, but they miss social contact. Up to 83% of students said that they are most comfortable with online lectures from the comfort of their home. Among other things, 36.4% of them claim that this form of education allows them to perform other activities during lectures and saves e.g. their time spent by traveling. Among other positives, almost 30% of students included the possibility of using an open chat, thanks to which they can drop barriers and ask questions during lectures without being in the center of attention. Expanding digital horizons and skills is what the students of these survey find to be positive too. 38.2% of students stated that they got to know new functions and applications of their computer thanks to online education, almost 37% became more interested in various webinars and 33% of students, according to the survey, expanded the range of their skills. There were also those to whom these new educational opportunities brought more stress and discomfort to their lives. They also pointed out some limitations of these lectures. The biggest shortcoming of online education for students is clearly the lack of social contact (44.5%) or poor picture and sound quality (37.9%). And what about exams? 311 (85.2%) of the interviewed students are clear about this. They prefer an online written test to an oral exam conducted via online video call. Generally, speaking (not result of this survey), the faculties find some limitations here, as there are various limitations in terms of checking these tests (the teacher does not see directly the student, so he/she can hardly see if the student works individually or with someone's help or study materials). Despite several negatives that this form of study brings, students are able

⁶ SCAGNOLI, N. I., BUKI, L. P., JOHNSON, S. D.: The influence of online teaching on face-to-face teaching practices. In *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 2009, Vol. 13, No. 2, p. 126.

to imagine online education in the future even during the current academic year without any special measures.

Conclusion

As we said earlier, what significantly influenced us in terms of this topic is the current pandemic situation in the world. Regarding inspiration from media world, it was an interview with a marketing expert Pavol Minar for TA3, which grabbed our attention. Regarding the interview, it is needy to highlight the fact that pandemics brings civilization change. The question is not when the crisis will end up, the question is who is better prepared to live in crisis. So we have been living on these days, our point of view to what is going on is pretty important. We can either complain or find it as a challenge to learn some new knowledge and experience, which is to be used later on. So let us end up this article with quote of George Herbert: “Do not wait; the time will never be ‘just right.’ Start where you stand, and work with whatever tools you may have at your command, and better tools will be found as you go along.”⁷

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MORALITY, THE NEEDS OF SOCIETY AND MEDIA

Janka Kysel'ová

ABSTRACT:

The article deals with the problem of definition of morality (normative definition, descriptive definition) and relationship of morality and media. The way morality is defined is crucial for the formulation of ethical theories. Advertisement and the media, which we perceive as commonplace and indispensable, have become an inseparable part of everyday life and one of the most influential socialising and educational means. We consider them distributors and bearers of value orientations, that is, they are involved in the creation of personality, identity, or other human qualities.

KEY WORDS:

definitions, education, identity, media, morality, needs, society

1 Introduction

The current stage of the societal development is characteristic with an unusually high dynamics of change. The process of socialization in society is taking place in significantly different circumstances compared to the past. The last decade of the 20th century and the first decade. Democratization within the society, as well as societal and political changes bring new impulses for the development in the fields of economy, society, religion, and culture. Transformation processes have brought about fundamental changes that affect not only public politics, market economy, but also the everyday life of common people in this country. However, the changes are also affecting the very foundations of traditional values, value systems, and orientations. The period of postmodernism and accelerated globalization has wreaked havoc in traditional social securities, but also in the well-established system of values and, in addition to progressive tendencies, generated new challenges on a global scale to address the current issues of human life as well as the potential for the emergence of conflicts of nowadays. Apart from the new trends, the social processes have also brought about a number of negative issues. Common people have started to use the following terms: unemployment, social network, poverty, social dependence, subsistence minimum, wealth, and others, again. Countries unfamiliar with these concepts up to this day now have to find solutions to these problems. Human life exists in the framework of mutual contact between people. Through its structure, society creates various departments of both official and unofficial nature and forms a social environment within them. The analysis of the social environment should take into account both the quantitative and qualitative aspects.

The social transformations and the consequences we encounter in everyday life are the results of the ongoing social conflicts and compromises. Each one of us endeavours to deal with both heterogeneity and radical changes according to their own abilities and will. It needs to be said, though, that we do not have that many choices. A special feature of the present era is the project designing and the effort required to implement projects. This process has been heavily deregulated and fragmented. Society's interest in new social phenomena occurs only when they manifest themselves in a very significant form. Social phenomena are not usually taken into account unless they become problematic. Thanks to the scientific analysis of social phenomena and the diagnostics of negative phenomena, the elimination of the negative manifestations of social factors is possible to some extent. The role of modern social sciences is to help people properly orient themselves in complex socio-cultural processes. The most important is the process of Europeanisation. Its nascent goal and a special challenge for social sciences (also in

the field of education) is the forming of an emerging European identity. Current geopolitical reformation of the world, including Europe, caused several political issues not only of the spatial nature. This is mostly true within the discourse of the future cultural national and European identity of the inhabitants of the European continent. The abovementioned notions closely and contextually relate to the phenomena featured in this monograph – morality, media, medial culture, needs of the society, and the way of human life.

2 Morality and Media Defined

The term ‘morality’ can be used:

1. descriptively – where the term describes the principles of conduct stated by society, or
 - a) a different group (e.g. religious) or
 - b) these principles are accepted by the individual;
2. normatively – where the term states the principles of conduct, adhered to by any sensible person in specific conditions.

The way morality is defined is crucial for the formulation of ethical theories, although often underrated. Applying the concept of morality to describe the actual principles of conduct is likely to lead to a certain form of relativism. The various conditions under which each sensible person would adhere to the principles of behaviour contribute to the formation of different kinds of moral theories among those who use the notion of morality in a normative way. Claim that there is no referent for the notion of morality in the normative sense, i.e. to argue that there are no principles of conduct under any convincing, more detailed conditions that would be presented by all rational persons, leads to moral scepticism. Therefore, the definition of morality is of a great importance, albeit not being discussed more broadly. The term ‘medium’ generally means a middle, middle member, a medium or an environment in which a particular phenomenon or its intermediary, an agent of the contact, or communication between people occurs. From this point of view, any meaning of the term is possible – every language (also in biology – DNA in protein production, technology – programming languages etc.), every writing (including Braille, music notation etc.), and even human spoken communication. (According to McLuhan, the term includes media such as newspapers, radio and television, the printing press, as well as the writing itself, the material instruments and technical inventions, means of transport, weapons, etc.).¹

Do we therefore also regard the writing as a medium (mediating, transmitting texts, products of verbal behaviour of people), or as a text, speech, and language (as a medium through which people relate to each other and to the world)? Definition and decision is very important in that process.² From the traditional point of view, the language as a system is also a kind of medium. Narrowing it down to this definition seem highly inappropriate, regarding all the recent knowledge and increasing awareness about the human language and speech. However, there is no denying that the language is a form of communication medium in certain regards. (Mediating the transmission of simple, clear, and factual information – language and speech in this process perform the function of a medium or an auxiliary tool.). Only the material tools that help the transmitting, retaining, or distribution of information or texts, i.e. individual realizations of speech, language, and communication will be included under the term media. Language, speech, and writing as such will not be included.

¹ For more information, see: McLuhan, M.: *Jak rozumět médiím*. Prague : Mladá fronta, 1991.

² Ibidem.

3 Morality and Media

Advertisement and the media, which we perceive as commonplace and indispensable, have become an inseparable part of everyday life and one of the most influential socialising and educational means. We consider them distributors and bearers of value orientations, that is, they are involved in the creation of personality, identity, or other human qualities. Thus, it is possible to talk about the impact of media and advertising on the formation of values of the younger and older generation. The term 'advertising' comes from Latin word 'reclamare' – to speak loudly, to call again, and to represent a distinctive type of public communication, the purpose of which is to inform the public about products and services and to offer them.³ Reifová et al. (2004) states that "Advertising is a specific way of influencing opinion, buying, moral and aesthetic attitudes." We anticipate that advertising will be used together with non-streaming communication to sufficiently capture the interest of customers. The primary role of advertising is to inform the addressee and to mobilize them towards certain behaviour. Mass media can be defined as "organized processes and technologies that enable mass communication."⁴

We view television, the Internet, film, radio, and the press as mass media, which we also understand as socializing institutions, because they can act on human awareness. In addition to television, which is the main protagonist of countless ads, their secondary source is the Internet, through which you can get a lot of information, anywhere and instantly. A huge quantum of information and data may pose a threat to the emergence of relativistic values, but there is also the risk of their complete spoilage. We can also talk about the deepening differences that arise between the Western world and the poor countries because of the unevenness of obtaining information. Digital literacy also causes differences between 'old' and 'young'. A similar situation is in advertising, respecting the differences between developing and advanced countries. In connection with the globalization of the media, it is necessary to remember the penetration of the America's dominant culture, the English language, and the increasing commercialism. People find themselves in the gap of advertising and the media, forgetting their own thinking, opinion, and identity, which changes the values and quality of life of an individual. Children are a particularly endangered group. "A child of pre-school age cannot yet distinguish the fiction and reality or differentiate advertising from the main programme, does not understand the function of advertising communication itself. A minor does not only take over patterns of behaviour, but fully believes the information in the ad."⁵

The target group of media and advertising is, however, the older generation (productive and post-productive age), which represents the most solvent group, while critically assessing the effect of the media in influencing and shaping its personalities. The resulting diametrical difference in the value system between the elderly and the younger generation is a contemporary phenomenon. In the older generation, we are talking about the value of the ability to adapt, which corresponds to the knowledge of their duties, discipline, willingness to make sacrifices and to help. On the contrary, the younger generation is characteristic by strong individualism, self-interest, fulfilment of their needs and desires in the shortest possible time. These facts relate to uncritical access to the media and distrust of institutions, norms, or authorities. In the awareness of the younger generation, there is an inability to distinguish between the virtual world and reality; they question absolute values such as love, family, society, freedom. In the older generation, it is also possible to find a more responsible treatment of media with regard

³ See also: GREGOVÁ, R., RUSNÁK, J., SABOL, J. S.: *Interpretácie textov elektronických masových médií*. Prešov : Prešovská univerzita, 2005.

⁴ McQUAIL, D.: *Úvod do teorie masové komunikace*. Prague : Portál, 2002, p. 31.

⁵ RANKOV, P.: *Masová komunikácia. Masmédiá a spoločnosť*. Levice : Bagala – L.C. A., 2003, p. 55.

to selectivity, the ability to distinguish between quality and poor media content, lesser susceptibility to influence and manipulation. Therefore, the axiological orientation in the older generation does not radically change, while at the same time they retain their traditional stances. “It has to be reminded that the mass media also bring positive feedback as they help the spreading of information and communication on a wide scale. They can create the impulse for charity, the spread of knowledge, and relaxation. Advertising and the media, as attractive means of communication, can become a tool for strengthening communication in the family or other social relationships.”⁶ Moral relativism, however, absorbs the present society, which, in many social situations, appears chaotic or reckless, rejecting clear-cut truths. An important factor that could positively influence and direct the occurring phenomena is the active adaptation to living in the media reality and the preparedness to adapt the media reality to our needs.

4 The Needs of Society and Media

The increased attention the social sciences give to the study of the way of life means increased intensity in new research of human needs. The issue of the human needs was already addressed in the past by the ancient authors Plato in his *Constitution* and Aristotle in the *Athenian Constitution*. Indeed, human needs have triggered the need for a state. Each of us has many needs, but no one is able to satisfy all of them by themselves. “The needs are the metaphorical red thread of human history and the behavioural background of each of us at the same time. We should therefore know what the needs are, how they emerge, and how they affect our behaviour.”⁷ It is understandable that living conditions greatly influence the form of human activities, the way of their realization and means. Needs are decisive for the internal content of the activities – the purpose for which they are carried out. There is a considerable difference between people’s values and desires. There may even be a contradiction between what I say I appreciate and what I really do appreciate. What is the unifying starting point for understanding human resources? This exactly is the field of human needs. „We are talking about the need to remove the lack of stimuli and conditions necessary for existence, everyday life, and thus for self-fulfilment and personal development. However, we encounter some problems here. A simple example: even a healthy person has a need to be healthy. It seems to us, therefore, justified not to address the need only to remove the perceived lack. The notion of need is wider. A person is aware not only of what he lacks here and now but also of what he is heading for or intending to pursue. A healthy person feels the need for health not because of its lack, but because good health is a condition for further existence.”⁸

Problems of needs have been addressed so far by psychology and by economics. Other social sciences were more or less satisfied with the take-over or the combination of both approaches. The psychological concept is characterized by accentuating the motivational function. A need is generally manifested as a state of lacking something important to a person’s life and results in a motivating activity to overcome this insufficiency. Needs are complex structures. They have a content aspect that expresses what is needed, what is lacking, or in a surplus. In addition, they contain an emotional aspect in which the individual dislikes the lack or excess. The third is an aspect of will aiming to remove the unpleasant state. A need is a state of the subject that reflects the contradiction between what is given and what the subject deems to be necessary for their life. At the same time, it is a state that encourages the entity to take action to address various insufficiencies. We can say, „the need not only reflects an objective state of the

⁶ AUFENANGER, S.: Familie und neue Medien. In *Medienimpulse*, 2004, Vol. 47, No. 12, p. 11-12.

⁷ GÁL, F., ALAN, J.: *Spoločnosť vo svetle sociológie*. Bratislava : Smena, 1987, p. 65.

⁸ Ibidem.

organism, but also the subjective feeling and the awareness of the particular state. It has a tremendous effect on the individual as well as on mankind. It is the happiness and the tragedy of man that the satisfaction of one's needs ensues in the emergence of many other needs, that the increasing degree of satisfaction of the needs simultaneously accelerates the appearance of others. However, this statement does not apply indiscriminately and for all the needs. In addition, individual needs have a different meaning for a person, varying depending on their living conditions."⁹ The general classification of basic needs:

- a) primary, i.e. elementary, lower, biological;
- b) secondary, i.e., developmental, higher, socio-cultural.

An important distinguishing criterion is the origin of the needs. Primary needs are innate. They belong to the biological equipment of a human being as a biological species. On the contrary, secondary needs are acquired, an individual gains them through socialization, and their content and the degree of adoption depend mainly on given social conditions. In the literature, other distinguishing features are often added to this basic criterion. A limited number of primary needs is highlighted, with the difference of a virtually unlimited number of secondary needs. Emphasis is on the immediate urgency of primary needs, the non-fulfilment of which the individual immediately registers and their fulfilment is virtually no longer possible to be postponed. Secondary needs, on the other hand, are much more complicated in terms of human awareness and their satisfaction can be delayed for a variety of reasons. The homeostatic character of primary needs and their fulfilment is desirable only to an optimal state. There are no internal limits for secondary needs. In this respect, their borders are practically unlimited. The orientation of primary needs on things and their consumption is often highlighted, while secondary needs are focused on activities and relationships to ensure their satisfaction. However, it has to be remembered that there is considerable inconsistency among the specialists in the field, which makes it difficult to apply the results of the psychological aspect of the problem. The primary needs are not only biogenic ones, but also a number of psychogenic and even sociogenic needs. At the same time, they often make up a foundation that reduces the higher needs.

One important and open issue is the relationship between organic and social needs. Social needs are often perceived as an evolutionary continuation of organic needs, as a product of the natural development of the deepening socialization of life. Another tendency in this psychological aspect rigorously distinguishes organic needs from the social ones. In particular, it is highlighted that even the lowest human needs are fundamentally socially irreversible or modified. Even Napoleon knew that the greatest enemy of his soldiers was not the hostile army, but their own hunger. Humans can be brought to an animalistic state by famine. This fact points to the mutual differences between lower and higher needs. Organic needs are internal, focused on the preservation of the subject. Higher needs are also characterized by identifying with internal requirements and higher social interests. Unlike animals, a human is characterized by being born in the biological sense, but becoming a human in the sense of the psychosocial in the process of humanization and socialization. People acquire their human heritage accumulated in society. There is a bond between nature and society, but in the sense of a reversal of their relationship, and that individual theories may infer the abovementioned categories from the natural ones. In this sense, the categories of needs are often replaced by concepts of inclination, instincts, and motives. Most of the needs of modern society are so socially mediated that their original biological basis plays an increasingly diminishing role. Similarly, the relationship between needs and activities has also been complicated. Psychological understanding of needs

⁹ GÁL, F., ALAN, J.: *Spoločnosť vo svetle sociológie*. Bratislava : Smena, 1987, p. 66.

implies a simplified idea of the immediate ability of an individual, who feels the lack of need, to satisfy it by their own activities. The immediate link of needs and activities does not apply in society. The complex structure of social ties and the social security system is also much mediated in this field.

The psychological notion of needs cannot pay enough attention to the fact that the satisfaction of many needs, with the continuous socialisation of the subject, outweighs its individual possibilities. The share of socially secured needs is growing significantly. From the point of view of psychology, emphasizing the motivational function of needs also emphasizes the importance of an objective knowledge. Especially in higher human needs, the gap between their objective form and subjective reflection is widening. This fact is essential for sociological and economic knowledge, while psychology puts it down as less important. Economic understanding of needs focuses mostly on material production. In this case, the needs in particular play a role as the driving force of economic development. Economic definitions characterize needs as hierarchically structured, inherited and acquired dispositions, the satisfaction of which is conditioned by the reproduction of man as a member of a particular society. The economic encyclopaedia characterizes the need in the most general sense of the word as the feeling of something desirable or necessary. Thus, economics has already dealt with the problem of the origin of human needs and their immediate relationship with man (in terms of the emotional aspect). The needs in economics appear in a certain whole, abstracted from concrete bearers. Their existence, size, structural diversity, and urgency are proven by consumption. This corresponds to the basic economic division of material and non-material, respectively economic and non-economic needs. The first of these can be satisfied with material utility values and the attention of economics focuses on them. The definition of the second group is rather vague and characterized in a simplified way – they are obtained otherwise.

Economic thinking also classifies needs as individual and group. The first division includes all the needs of members of the company, whose satisfaction are the conditions created for the development of the individual and mental abilities of the members of society. The second group includes all the needs arising from the organized life of society as a whole, which makes the variety of bodies of administration, security, defence, and others, necessary. Satisfaction of individual needs is indispensable for the preservation and development of an individual, satisfying group needs is necessary for the well-functioning of an organized society. The definition of group needs explicitly eliminates the psychological bond of the need to an individual. Economic understanding of needs does not underestimate the problem of the real bearer. Individual and group needs are only relevant in connection to the mechanism of economic reproduction of society. In terms of the economic approach to needs, we must not forget about the characteristics of the economic, i.e. real needs. We understand the economic needs as those that are necessary to ensure the standard of living and material growth. With real needs, we can truly meet people's demands in terms of the realistic socio-economic system. The economic definition of needs largely outweighs the psychological characteristics, but at the same time raises objections of a different nature. By putting the material needs at the centre of its attention, it inadvertently trivialises and distorts the importance and the specifications of non-material needs. Ignoring the genesis of needs also means a problem of their identification. Economics perceives needs in the form of formulated economic requirements. Economic goals can only be set after political decisions. In the absence of scientific criteria, we risk a certain absolutisation of the economic approach to needs. The importance of consumption is increasing as a measure of needs. The offer to the consumer begins to produce new needs by itself and thus becomes a goal, not a means of developing an individual or a social system.

The sociologic possibilities and concepts of needs. Sociology has been widely underrated over the last decade. Only the end of this century has enabled this scientific branch to create its own approach to needs. The possibility of constructing a sociological concept of needs has offered results obtained through a system approach in social sciences. A need is understood to be a lack of conditions and elements necessary to preservation and development of the given system. This deficiency creates internal tension in the given system as a source of activity to eliminate the deficiency. The new situation has made it possible to combine the needs and interests that belong to the whole society, group, or individual. Part of individual needs becomes social needs based on their cognition and willingness to recognize them. Even a relatively frequent individual need does not have to become a social need. The society can take an indifferent or a negative attitude towards an individual need. The need for drugs in drug addicts can be used as an example. The main issues of such a sociological concept of needs should be the problems of social recognition and acknowledgement of needs, the mechanism of their formulation, the establishment of scientific criteria, the analysis of the social consequences of potential disproportions between the existence of needs and their satisfaction. Most social sciences put the needs into a proper categorical apparatus. However, there is also the avoidance or criticism of this problem from the positions of naturalization and structural functionalism. We can mention two representatives. Malinowski, a British scientist of Polish origin, has created a naturalistic theory of culture, according to which the whole society is superstructure existing over basic biological needs. Needs are in the form of cultural responses that enable society to meet these basic needs. Subsequently, the basic need for metabolism corresponds to the cultural supply response; the basic need for reproduction produces the cultural reaction of the relationship, the basic need for health ensues into the cultural reaction of hygiene. The author describes these reactions as cultural imperatives, the most important of which is the need for social control, education, economic, and political organization.

The leading American representative of structural functionalism T. Parsons argues that society does not exist to meet the individual needs; it is the individual that serves to satisfy the needs of society. If a society meets the needs of an individual, it is only in order to avoid serious failures in its system. A certain degree of satisfaction of individual needs is Parson's functional prerequisite for running the company. It is not the only condition. In addition, the society needs a system of normative order through which the life of the population is organized. There is also a need for management and decision-making related to the means by which it can deal with the violation of its standards. Moreover, there is a need for integration that is implemented through a system of socialization and the need for a certain system of services that individuals perform in the context of social organization. These facts describe the features of society and express two tendencies:

- a) tendency towards self-esteem,
- b) tendency towards homeostatic balance.

The concept of the social system is so rigid that it does not leave room for socially transforming activity and excludes social movements. The notion of a society that meets more and more human needs is in complete contradiction to the concept of structural functionalism. Based on these facts we can say that humanistic and civilization development is progressive only if it is possible to preserve and develop the diversity of cultures of individual societies, each presenting irreplaceable wisdom, the experience that man acquires in dialogue with nature. From this point of view, it is necessary to consider the processes of homogenization and differentiation in relation to the way of life. The fundamental human rights in today's society include the right to freedom and the right to information, but those are changing with the shift in communication, with the new media. "Every old medium was new, and every new medium became old. This is

a well-known fact. However, the process and causes of the emergence of a new media are less clear.”¹⁰ A number of factors, including economic factors (media availability), communication and social skills of users, or their ability of critical analysis, influences new media, the birth of a favourite media, technologically or technically superior one. When marketing a product – in this case a media – the market does not decide on its promotion or its functionality but the interests of potential users and their real needs. It is here to achieve satisfaction in an individual in the interests and needs of the individual, and the desire for a given medium is so strong that they sacrifice their routine habits and stereotypes and reorient themselves to a new product for new skills or knowledge. However, it is unnecessary to make a deeper cross-section in the media development forecast, because there already have been futuristic visions that have not been successfully completed in history. Let us ask, however, how and why new media are created? A clear and satisfactory answer is for a long discussion, but let us try to get closer to the new media as defined by A. Sekota:

- “the maximum use of sophisticated computing,
- flexible hybrid character,
- the possibility of interactivity,
- public and private functions,
- a low level of regulation,
- interconnection”.¹¹

The media have great potential, but on the other hand, they also have negative aspects related to threats and their subsequent prevention. Therefore, the benefits of new media must be reflected from a wider perspective. Social and technical disciplines include the ethics of the media as well as ethics and morality in the media world as the object of its exploration. The most important part of the study is the content of the text combined with the behaviour and experience of the individual, and hence the responsibility of the media for the behaviour of people. The media affect the behaviour of an individual in these disciplines:

- Psychology – the influence of the media on people, their attitudinal orientations, and representation of models.
- Sociology – responds to the media in terms of their existence within society, as well as how media is influencing the behaviour of people.
- Politology – deals with the legal aspects of the media, the media policy, which means that the media is understood as a means to achieve medial goals.
- Economy – reflects the relationship of the consumer / client versus media / media content as a product.
- Linguistics – the centre of its interest is the clarity of media content.

Apart from the listed disciplines, the media is also a subject of study for philosophy, aesthetics, ethics, history, and so on. Modern media influences not only the individual, but also the creation of public opinion and therefore it is directly related to objectivity and truth. Public opinion has its own dynamism, expressing its own ideas, which can be changed and adapted, so that public opinion is changing and shaping. This process is possible through thoughtful methods and various means, so its subjectivity can be determined. According to P. Dinka “general judgments (opinions) may not be true just because they are general.”¹²

¹⁰ BREČKA, S. et al.: *Od tamtamov po internet: Prehľad dejín mediálnej komunikácie*. Bratislava : Bratislavská vysoká škola práva, 2009, p. 24.

¹¹ SEKOT, A.: *Sociologie v kostce*. Brno : Paido, 2006, p. 66.

¹² DINKA, P.: *Slovenské masmédiá. Metódy manipulácie*. Bratislava : Vydavateľstvo Spolku slovenských spisovateľov, 2008, p. 15.

The unethical aspects caused by the media themselves – the political context or control of media by interest groups – can get to the public through that very media. In a context of a change in values in Slovak media practice after 1989, E. Poláková and Z. Masaryková describe this phenomenon in a concise way: “In the competitive media environment, not the ethics of media work was the first, but the profit.”¹³ The tabloid phenomenon gradually controls the recipients and the public, therefore the mind thus loses the ability to perceive the boundary between abuse and constructive criticism. The paper of P. Dinka (2008) presents the work of the media and the situation of the media environment and its culture. In the context of discourses on the ethical aspects of modern media, it would be appropriate and expedient to evaluate each medium individually with a focus on the assessment aspect, since apart from the common features, each medium has its own specificity. In general, we can rely on E. Polák’s view that “from the point of view of the relationship of ethics of communication and media ethics, the distinctive aspect is the difference between mysterious and ignorant lies, half-truths, and the concealment of truth.”¹⁴ New media bear some social responsibility, ethical regulation, or self-regulation of media creators with regard to the reflection of ethical aspects, in which we look not only at concrete phenomena, but also at the consequences of these phenomena, manifesting themselves in the viewer, reader, listener, mobile phone or internet user.

Conclusion

The article aims to highlight the issues of the way of life, living standard, lifestyle, and living conditions. Despite a long-term research conducted in this field, no integrated and complex theoretical bases have been formulated yet. The difference of the theoretical opinions lies in a number of facts. Advanced Western countries have a relatively high standard of living and quality of life. However, the theoretical elaboration of their research is not very detailed and therefore it is difficult to use their experience methodologically. From our own experience, we know that in the countries of our region, life-standard issues are processed at a very good level, but the actual reality lags far behind the theory. A certain degree of isolation of our country has caused a part of its younger population to somewhat idealise the American way of life. This paper also deals with the role of the media. The need to collect and disseminate information is inherent to the human. Humankind could not evolve and move forward without dissemination and transfer of information. The way people communicate with each other is historically conditioned by their technical and scientific level of knowledge. Mass media communication has become the most important type of communication by which people receive.

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CHURCH AND MEDIA – MEDIA EDUCATION AT THEOLOGICAL FACULTIES

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ABSTRACT:

The Catholic Church is the only institution in the world that has paid attention to the media from the very beginning. Due to her responsibility to all people, she always tried to draw attention to the benefits and possible dangers. Throughout history, it offers a wide range of media documents. The Church also seeks to work in the field of education. Media education should be a very important part of the formation of future priests. However, for many reasons this is not yet the case. The author is based primarily on the experience and situation in the Czech Republic. In conclusion, the author offers a specific proposal for the introduction of media education in the formation of priests.

KEY WORDS:

education, church, media education, theology, Vatican documents

"If you live by the sea, it's better to teach your child to swim than to build a wall on the beach."

1 Church – Man – Media

The mass media has become a large and mysterious world of people. They are already a permanent component of culture and a sought-after "element of basic need." This unusually influential world experiences its natural development in the present. If we take a closer look at the "shock" caused by the conquering "imperialism" of the media, then we will discover the power, scope and consequences of their diverse influence. They are so deeply part of public life that they are now given the position of "first power" – a recent update of a belief that saw them as the "fourth power" – and therefore the most important - after the triple power of a democratic state. In their extensive work, the media are either the bearers of various goods, oriented towards individuals and society, or they become a factor spreading evil. This two-sidedness of the media is briefly underlined by the Vatican's instruction *Aetatis novae*: "The media can either strengthen or suppress traditional moments in the field of religion, culture and family".¹ They therefore constitute a moral problem in the personal and social life of the people of our time, which makes them also a challenge for upbringing and education at all their levels. It should be emphasised that the media not only display the existing reality, but are also able to change it at will. We can observe this mainly in the area of creating social myths. The moral problems arising from the media are not just pornography, cruelty and violence imposed on the human subconscious. It is also misleading advertising, sophisticated manipulation and a lack of responsibility among those press, radio and television journalists who put their independence and material benefits above the truth. It is for these reasons that pedagogical reflection on the means of mass communication is necessary and urgently expected today.

¹ Pastoral instruction "Aetatis novae" on social communications on the twentieth anniversary of *Communio et progression*. Released on 22nd February 1992. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/pccs/documents/rc_pc_pccs_doc_22021992_aetatis_en.html>.

The Church has always encouraged various attempts, with the aim of at least partially reducing the lack of publications on education and the media. Already in the 1960s, various "auxiliary materials", sketches, outlines, proposals, initially timid, appeared, which over time became a useful tool in the hands of clergy and catechists and through them also in the educational work of teachers and parents. These works were published exclusively in the form of typescripts and always with a note - for internal use. Only in this way was it possible to say something more than and escape the sharp intervention of censorship. Later, on a broader scale, the Catholic press focused on this issue, directing its readers' thoughts primarily on the dangers posed by the media, which have not yet been discussed publicly. He shaped mainly criticism among media recipients, showing the hidden mechanisms of propaganda. At that time, Catholic texts were an indispensable guide for their readers through the unknown empire of the media. After 1989, it was possible to fully publish views on the topic of the media, point out the terrible facts in mass communication and publicly reveal dangerous mechanisms of manipulation. Most statements on this topic should be published by the Catholic press, similarly to the world, where the authors of these publications also bring their conclusions and proposals into educational practice. It seems, then, that the time is right to give impetus to the development of media pedagogy within the Church. First of all, it is necessary to think of seminarian students who, in accordance with the recommendations of the Apostolic See, during their study of theology are obliged to acquire appropriate knowledge in the media in order to use them in practice in various areas of school and parish pedagogy.

2 Church – Education – Communication

First, let's try to briefly characterise the phenomenon of mass communication and describe its character. There are different views on interpersonal communication: For the philosopher, communication "means not only the exchange of information and the transfer of knowledge, as a kind of sharing view of reality and limited understanding of the world, but also participation in that view and understanding." In theology, communication is "such a message of a person that leads to a community of persons." Therefore, the *Communio et Progressio* instruction states that "Communication is really more than just expressing thoughts or feelings; in its deepest essence, the message of oneself is in love".² In the theological sciences, we discover various perspectives of communication: ecclesiological, Christological, and also pastoral or homiletic. In pastoral practice during the communist era (1945-89), the name *collective means of communication* was used almost exclusively. This was influenced by several facts. Communism, like any totalitarianism, is a system of monopoly solutions. By nature, therefore, any form of pluralism is fiercely opposed. Using the connection of the *collective means of communication*, the clergy and catechists wanted to arouse the right consciousness of the faithful in connection with the orthodox disponent of these means. Soon after World War II, they were in the hands of the usurper, the Communist Party, while at that time they were to be available to the entire community.³ Moreover, despite the resignation from the *mass* adjective to the *collective* adjective, the hierarchical Church wanted to show that even so, these means are able to socialise man and make him more open to others. After all, society is not "human flesh" that can be manipulated arbitrarily, but it is a living organism composed of persons

² Pastoral instruction "Communio et progressio" on the means of social communication written by order of The Second Vatican Council. Released on 23th May 1971. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/pccs/documents/rc_pc_pccs_doc_23051971_communio_en.html>.

³ MEZULÁNÍK, R.: *Pedagogika masových sdělovacích prostředků (pro duchovní a katechety)*. [Doctoral thesis]. Olomouc : Cyrilometodějská teologická fakulta Univerzity Palackého in Olomouc, 2003, p. 8.

capable of preserving its essence. Pope John Paul II. spoke of this in a speech delivered at the UNESCO headquarters in 1980: "If these means are 'mass' media, they cannot be merely a means of domination over others, either by the representatives of political power or by the financial magnates dictating their program and profile. It must become a means - and an important means - of expressing the community that uses them and, finally, its own. It must take into account the real needs of this community. It must deal with the culture of the nation and its history. They must respect the responsibility of parents. He must take into account the good of man, his dignity. They cannot be subject to the criteria of interest, sensation and immediate success - but in harmony with the requirements of ethics, building a "truly human" life must serve.⁴

From the statement of John Paul II. it is clear what function the term "mass" in the name of the media had until its emptying. It has become an urgent requirement, especially given the various abuses carried out in their use, especially in totalitarian systems. It is also necessary to add that all official church documents in totalitarian countries, ie. Pastoral letters and instructions have always and consistently used the name of the *collective means of communication*. Only since 1989, at the same time as the *collective means of communication*, have appeared in the documents of the Church, at first timidly, the designations: *mass media*, *media or means of mass transmission*. A certain terminological evolution can also be seen in the translations of the documents of the Apostolic See. This can be seen, among other things, in the publication of the Vatican pastoral instruction *Aetatis novae* from 1992 and previously in the instruction *Communio et progressio* from 1974. In both instructions it is possible to find the term mass media. Czech translations use the term *means of social communication*. Changes in the use of nomenclature in connection with mass culture can be seen even more markedly in the Catechism of the Catholic Church. In the French version of the (original) Catechism, several different terms are used, but there is a clear distinction between the term *collective means of communication* (les moyens de communication sociale) and the term *mass medias*, with some considerations in the Catechism being specifically devoted to the mass media (en particulier les mass médias). The Czech translation preserves the "traditional" terminology (*collective means of communication*), including paragraph 2496, in which (in the French text) a distinction is made between the *collective means of communication* and *the mass media*, indicating that not all mass media deserve the name of the **mass media**.

It is important to recall at this point what is the ideal of education in the concept of Catholic doctrine. This ideal becomes a model of education in pedagogical practice, so it fulfills an important role in pedagogy. The educational ideal was depicted in a new way on II. Vatican Council. Generally speaking, the ideal of Christian education on its unchanging basis is the attainment of a perfect Christian. The primary task of the Church is to guide man to salvation through spiritual improvement. Thus, spiritual perfection always determines the central content of the ideal of Christian education. However, because the Church carries out her missions in a specific time and culture, the circumstances of the time and place and the quality of the culture adequately model certain values, co-creating the type of perfect man. In this sense, there was another ideal of Christian perfection in the Middle Ages, another in the Renaissance, and another in the present, at a time called the age of the media. II. The Vatican Council confirms in the Declaration on Christian Education that the Church is committed to "providing her help

⁴ *Discorso di Giovanni Paolo II all' Organizzazione delle nazioni unite per l'educazione, la scienza e la cultura* (UNESCO – Parigi). Released on 2nd June 1980. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/speeches/1980/june/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19800602_unesco.html>.

to all people to the full perfection and building of a truly human world".⁵ The "ideal Christian" is a new man, living "in righteousness and sacred truth," a perfect image of Christ ("measured by the measure of Christ's fullness," Ephesians 4:13), contributing to the growth of the Mystical Body, bearing witness to hope, helping to shape the world, seeking the common good of his community, including through mutual dialogue. In shaping this ideal, teachers and educators are obliged to accept what is valuable in human knowledge and culture.

A person who wants to become a perfect Christian today faces various realities arising from the functioning of the media. In the pastoral instruction *Communio et progressio*, the media are called "the gift of God." This appreciation has its justification: "because, according to the decision of Divine Providence, they fraternally unite people to co-operate in God's work of salvation".⁶ However, the same document also contains a negative assessment of the media: "but ignorance and lack of goodwill can turn the use of these resources into the opposite: people understand each other even less, continue to diverge and the consequences are even worse."⁷ Thus, the media either help a person to become a perfect Christian, or he also prevents or directly destroys his spiritual development. This is also why help from educators (parents, teachers, clergy, catechists, etc.) is necessary. It is important to emphasize that pedagogy itself is a discipline close to the nature of the media. However, it is the science of education, always with the art of communication at its core. The media, on the other hand, as a means of mass communication, are able, as the Church says, through frequent contact, to accompany a person to a "deeper sense of communion".⁸ This pattern is an imaginary prognosis for the further development of media pedagogy.

3 Church Documents About the Media

The basic help for media education is the Church's teaching on this area. The pedagogy of the media continuously studies the Church's expression on this topic, especially the documents that deal with media issues *ex professo*. Four papers of this type are most often taken into account in the treatises on media education: the Council Decree on the Mass Media (*Inter mirifica*, 1963), *Recommendations for the Spiritual Formation of New Priests in the Media Field (Orientations)*, 1986), issued by the Congregation for Catholic Education, and the two pastoral instructions *Unification and Progress (Communio et Progressio)*, 1971) and *On the Threshold of a New Era (Aetatis novae)*, 1992) promulgated by the Pontifical Council for the Media. These documents are also a set of practical recommendations for teachers and educators, which show the far-reaching goals of the formation in the field of the media and warn of threats arising from the functioning of the means of mass communication. Each of these documents is related to educational practice in the field of media. A valuable addition to these documents are other

⁵ Declaration on Christian education "Gravissimum educationis" proclaimed by his Holiness Pope Paul VI. Released on 28th October 1965. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_gravissimum-educationis_en.html>.

⁶ Pastoral instruction "Communio et progressio" on the means of social communication written by order of The Second Vatican Council. Released on 23th May 1971. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/pccs/documents/rc_pc_pccs_doc_23051971_communi_o_en.html>.

⁷ Ibidem.

⁸ See also: Pastoral instruction "Communio et progressio" on the means of social communication written by order of The Second Vatican Council. Released on 23th May 1971. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/pccs/documents/rc_pc_pccs_doc_23051971_communi_o_en.html>.

statements of the Church, taking into account the phenomena and problems associated with the functioning of the media. It is necessary to list here the papal messages for World Media Days, as well as some encyclicals (encyclicals *Sollicitudo rei socialis* and *Evangelium vitae*) and adhortations (*Familiaris consortio* and *Christifideles laici*).

3.1 Some Other Sources

Before II. Vatican Council

Among the documents before the council, mention should be made of the papal encyclical "Mirari vos" of Gregory XVI of 15 August 1832, in which he condemns the church's hostile press and "freedom of the press without restriction" and reaffirms the meaning of the index of forbidden books. The encyclical of Pope Leo XIII "Etsi nos" of February 15, 1882, in which he calls for the spread of the Catholic press and the spread of sound ecclesiastical doctrine. Encyclical "Vigilanti cura" Pius XI. of 29 June 1936 on film, in which he speaks of the moral danger of film production and calls for the establishment of episcopal offices for film. Pope Pius XII's speech "On the Ideal Film" to the representatives of the film world in the audiences on June 21, 1955 and October 28, 1955, in which he says, among other things, that the film can be judged from three perspectives: in terms of relationship to a particular audience; in terms of content and in relation to society. Encyclical "Miranda prorsus" Pius XII. of 8 September 1958 on film, radio and television, in which the Church welcomes these means, is aware of the dangers associated with them and the Church's mission to use these means to proclaim her message, and in general there are many topics in this encyclical which develop and supplement the following ecclesiastical documents.

From papal messages to World Media Days

From the papal messages to World Media Day: In 1990, there was direct talk of the "computer culture" and it is stated that today no one speaks or thinks of the media only as tools and technologies. Rather, they are perceived today as part of a nascent culture, the consequences of which are still imperfectly understood and whose possibilities remain only partially revealed at this time. It gives hope to young people. The 1993 letter states that "We can, in fact, speak of a" new culture, "but at the same time points to the limits of the media, which will" Serve the transmission of faith, although they can in no way replace personal testimony. " is devoted to television with its pros and cons with regard to the family and discusses the tasks of parents in particular. The 1998 letter deals with media education and emphasizes that, before any other education, it must be a formation for inner life, for life according to the Spirit. that it is the forces that bring better communication that can also lead to the growth of alienation and the egocentre The need for friendship and cooperation between the media and the Church, which can lead to mutual enrichment and complementarity, is emphasized.

Papal Council documents for social media

These are mainly: *On Pornography and Violence in the Media* (May 7, 1989), *Principles for Ecumenical and Interreligious Cooperation in Communications* (October 4, 1989), *Ethics in Advertising* (February 22, 1997), which deals with both positives and negatives. advertising and presents appropriate ethical principles and proposes concrete steps. The media are not only a mirror of reality, but also shape this reality and sometimes distort its image.⁹ The media often adapt their program to the objectives of advertisers.¹⁰ In Article 14, he defines the morality of

⁹ *Ethics in advertising*. Released on 22nd February 1997. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/pccs/documents/rc_pc_pccs_doc_22021997_ethics-in-ad_en.html>.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

advertising in a simple way: "If advertising seeks to move people to make sensible choices and act in a morally sound manner that is of real benefit to themselves and others, then those in such advertising are doing what is morally right; Advertising seeks to move people to do bad deeds that are self-destructive and destructive to the real community, so they do evil. This also applies to the means and techniques of advertising: it is morally wrong to use manipulative, exploitative, corrupt or corrupt methods of persuasion and motivation. " *"Ethics in Communication"* (May 30, 2000). The introduction emphasizes that the great good or great evil that the media do is based on human decision, this responsibility lies mainly with the media. He also mentions the positive contribution of the media and the negative, and in the analysis of ethical issues it builds on previous documents. Ethical principles do not only concern the content of the media and the ways of communication, but also the basic structures and system of the world of media. He also mentions mistakes on the part of the church. The document also focuses on the issues posed by the new world of the Internet.

Papal documents

The media are mentioned, for example, in the social encyclical of Paul VI. *"Octogesima adveniens"* of May 14, 1971, encyclical of Paul VI. on the proclamation of the Gospel *"Evangelii nuntiandi"* of December 8, 1975, encyclical of John Paul II. on the mission of the laity *"Christifideles laici"* of December 30, 1988 and the expression, which has the greatest prophetic character, is in the encyclical of John Paul II. on the mission of the Church of the *Redemptoris missio* of December 7, 1990.

Vatican documents

Other Vatican media documents include: Instructions of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith *"On Certain Aspects of the Use of Social Communication in the Proclamation of the Doctrine of the Faith"* of March 30, 1992. Documents of the Congregation for the Clergy: *"Director for the Service and Life of Priests"* of 31 January and *"General Directorate for Catechesis"* of August 15, 1997. Document of the Congregation for Catholic Education *"Handbook of Education of Future Priests in the Means of Social Communication"* of March 19, 1986. Document of the Pontifical Council for Culture *"Towards a Pastoral Approach to Culture"* of June 4, 1999, which also talks specifically about the Internet. And also the Code of Canon Law, Media and Communication are mainly affected by the following canons: 211-212, 218, 300 103, 666, 761, 779, 804, 822-832 104, 1063, 1369 and the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Others

The 1985 documentary section of the US Episcopal Conference *"In the Sight of All. Communications: A Vision All Can Share"* discusses the relationship between church and communication in the United States in five main areas: 1 / style of church communication; 2 / communication as a service; 3 / use of church possibilities of communication; 4 / answers to the content of communications; 5 / issues of public communication policy. He also suggests practical steps and recalls that "the Church is public (we preach the gospel and form a community openly -" "in the eyes of all" ". Article 9). The call of the Committee of European Bishops for the Media (CEEM) to the Episcopal Conferences of Europe *"On the importance of media work in the Church"* is a re-reminder of the calls for documents for concrete steps in the field of media. Cardinal Roger M. Mahona's pastoral letter *"Filmmakers, Viewers: Challenges and Opportunities"* of September 30, 1992 speaks of media skills, entertainment and education, freedom and responsibility, the question of the media system and the responsibility of the viewer. It also raises specific questions to consider when evaluating films from a number of perspectives: the characters of the heroes, the conflict depicted, the development of the story,

relationships, sexuality, the portrayal of women, family, religion, work, property, authority and violence. Speech by Cardinal Roger M. Mahona at a meeting of the Pontifical Council for the Media on March 18, 1998, in which he asked the question: "Who speaks for the Church?" and calls first on the question "How do we speak in the Church" and then, among other things, on the Episcopal Conferences to regulate the use of the term "Catholic" in the various media, to carefully communicate the status, "seriousness". „*Comments on the Information Highway*" by Canadian bishops in March 1995. They predict that future technologies will revolutionize our lives. The benefits are interactivity and two-way or multi-directional communication, focus on the recipient and the huge possibilities that open up. The right to privacy and the whole image of man, including the religious dimension, must be respected. New technologies also raise greater demands on humans. Commercial interests and a monopoly should not be on top, although advertising and commercial activities will undoubtedly be essential for the very functioning of such an information highway. The statement of the US Catholic Bishops "*Your Family and Cyberspace*" of June 16, 2000 is basic information about the Internet. He positively appreciates the benefits of the Internet, he also sees the problems associated with it, such as anarchy and anonymity, pornography, etc. Mastering the world of the Internet is not easy even for adults, and children in particular face a number of dangers that parents should try to face. The documentary calls for parental activity, improved technologies for filtering inappropriate content, self-control of the Internet industry and the application of state laws to the Internet as well. In conclusion, it gives specific points as a guide for parents. He also mentions the problem of presenting the Catholic faith on the Internet. The "*Family Handbook for Media Use*" in the Communications section of the 1999 U.S. Episcopal Conference seeks to provide brief guidance on how to approach the media in the family. "*The reverence in the media*", the U.S. bishops' statement of June 16, 2000, is a reminder of the importance of decency in public speech inside and outside the church.

4 Media Education and Theological Faculties

One of the ways that can significantly help to realize one's own moral value and the value of life in general is education. **Cardinal** František Tomášek comments on upbringing as follows: "The upbringing of a child is his second birth. Therefore, it should be in the interest of every company to pay close attention to it."¹¹ Educating means acting on the child in such a way as to evoke the desired response of his abilities and talents in terms of intellectual, emotional and social, which are to develop under the guidance of the educator and help the child achieve life goals. Complete and perfect education cannot be left to the development of human natural abilities alone. Education must harmoniously develop all human abilities. And only Christian education can do that. Christian education is the deliberate action on a child to develop harmoniously all his physical, intellectual, emotional, social abilities and supernatural talents and to attain his earthly eternal goal. It is in the process of education that children acquire the basics of the future moral mature personality. The natural and irreplaceable environment for this activity is the family. The atmosphere of the family, the chosen lifestyle, the scale of values can be the reason that the child is left alone. Surrounded by all material gains, but without everyday concrete expression of love and understanding. Add to this the fear of self-realization, the lack of positive experiences, and television often becomes the only companion and creator of values at the same time. A school or other educational institution can very effectively help family education through educational subjects. In our conditions, religious education is one of

¹¹ TOMÁŠEK, F.: *Pedagogika (pro vychovatele a rodiče)*. Brno : Nibowaka, 1992, p. 2.

the subjects that can fulfill this role. The family and catechesis are of great importance, especially for religious education, thanks to which the "great house church" is growing.

Media and communication represent a very important source of experience, experience and knowledge for an ever-growing circle of recipients. Applying an individual in society requires the development of such skills as searching for, acquiring and sharing information and knowledge, understanding the connections between different phenomena, reflecting one's position towards others and mastering (or at least understanding) the prevailing value orientation. The ability to cope with these problems is increasingly based on stimuli of a mediated nature. The ability to process, evaluate and use stimuli that come from the outside world is increasingly equal to the ability to process, evaluate and use stimuli that come from the media, so far mainly from the press, radio and television, but increasingly also from the "new media" that are part of public communication (electronic dailies and magazines, etc.). The media thus become a decisive socializing factor, which can often overshadow other factors (such as school or family). At the same time, the messages offered to the media are very heterogeneous and require proper preparation for their proper evaluation. At the same time, the media, with their existence and the role they play, already have a clear (albeit fundamentally difficult to influence) influence on the behavior of the individual and society, on the lifestyle, on the quality of life in general. That is also why the functioning of the media in society is associated with various more or less justified fears, often reaching the brink of moral panic. Media communication is a very complex social phenomenon. It takes place at all levels of society, it significantly contributes to the form and quality of life of the individual and society. Successful management of media communication is a competence of its kind.

The fact that the media and media communication are important socializing factors have been reflecting the educational systems of various countries for many years through the introduction of media education. This is one of the proofs that media literacy is increasingly being promoted as one of the basic competencies that should be provided to a person living in an open, democratic society who is trying to fulfill his life in a world of personal, social, economic and political ties. The ability to participate successfully and independently in media communication is probably one of the conditions for an individual's socialization. This ability has two forms: on the one hand, it represents the acquisition of knowledge needed to acquire the ability to analyze and critically distance, ie "defenses" against possible media side effects, on the other hand, it contains the acquisition of knowledge that will enable the individual to maximize media potential. as sources of information, quality entertainment, active leisure, etc. Media literacy and its content has two dimensions: knowledge and skills. The individual's equipment for "living with the media" as a competence of its kind includes both the acquisition of some basic knowledge about the functioning and social role of contemporary media, their history, and the acquisition of skills that support self-confidence, active and independent involvement of the individual in media communication, especially his the ability to analyze the messages offered, then the orientation in the mediated contents and the ability to choose the appropriate medium as a means to saturate various needs, from obtaining information to fulfilling free time. As for the necessary knowledge, the field of media education includes, above all, knowledge of some of the regularities in the organization of mediated content, especially news, advertising and entertainment. Furthermore, an integral part of media education is the basic idea of the development of the media as an industry (the origin and development of the media).

This concept is generally based on the right to education at the beginning of the new millennium, experience with the introduction of media education in socially and educationally comparable European countries and a critical assessment of the role of the media in the last

decade of the 20th century in the Czech Republic. Given that the Catholic Church, as is clear from this work, has been systematically devoted to the media since its inception, individual dioceses should not be left out of this situation. It is mainly about the preparation of clergy and catechists for the teaching of these new subjects, or the involvement of religious education in a new context. It is mainly a transfer of basic concepts and knowledge from the media to the territory of Catholic education. The presented considerations can become a basis for the preparation of catechists and clergy for teaching a new subject Media Education at primary and secondary schools and serve as a basic orientation for all those interested in this field. Another fact is media education abroad in the form of a separate subject or the extension of the teaching of some subjects by the media aspect. In addition to state bodies, non-governmental and church organizations are active in this area in the world. Students of theological faculties would need, on the basis of the document Guidelines for the Formation of Future Priests in the Use of Means of Social Communication¹², which states in paragraph 26: “***This discipline should not be considered auxiliary or optional, but and theological studies to be included in the study program and is to end with examinations***”, to include a new subject. The basic goal would be to acquaint students with the use of social means of communication based on the tasks and needs of the Church. On a practical level, the aim would be to learn to use the media in the process of Evangelization. The outline could consist of some of the following points:

- MEDIA THEOLOGY – Trinity principle. Communication as a basic principle of the relationship between God and man. Execution of the command to build the kingdom of God through social communication.
- MEDIA DOCUMENTS – Before II. Vatican Council: Miranda prorsus, Vigilanti cura. After II. Vatican Council: Inter mirifica, Communio et progressio, Aetatis novae, Papal Documents. Documents of episcopal conferences.
- MEDIA FOR THE NEEDS AND TASKS OF THE CHURCH – The media as a means of preaching the Gospel in remote catechetical preparation. Media as a means of education. Media as a means of social activities of the Church.
- MORAL ASPECT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE MEDIA PRODUCT – Inner freedom from the media. Conscience education for receiving media products. Criticism of media products.
- MORAL ASPECT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE MEDIA PRODUCT – Moral principles of a journalist. Sensitivity of journalists to the external environment and feedback. Ethics of advertising and short forms of media. Responsibility for training. Service to the truth. Appearance in the media: preparation for the quality of the form of media products, preparation for the quality of the content of media products, preparation of liturgical festivities for media transmission.¹³
- CRITERIA FOR THE PROTECTION OF FAITH AND MORALS – Reasons for the protection of faith and morals in the media: The mission of the Church as the protector of the treasure of faith and morals according to the KKC. Protection of faith and morals in electronic media. Protection of faith and morals in the print media. Magisterium guarantees for media performers.

¹² *Guide to the training of future priests concerning the instruments of social communication*. Released on 19th March 1986. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/pccs/documents/rc_pc_pccs_doc_19031986_guide-for-future-priests_en.html>.

¹³ MEZULÁŇÍK, R.: *Pedagogika masových sdělovacích prostředků (pro duchovní a katechety)*. [Doctoral thesis]. Olomouc : Cyrilometodějská teologická fakulta Univerzity Palackého in Olomouc, 2003, p. 145.

Supporting disciplines for lay students of the subject Media Communication should be: Information Technology and Interpersonal Communication. Information technologies investigate methods of obtaining, processing information via the Internet and their use in church institutions and communities. The goal of interpersonal communication is to stimulate and develop students' communication skills needed for effective communication in school, the religious community, but also in private life.

Conclusion

The above considerations are based primarily on historical experience in the Czech Republic. However, we believe that they can help development in the field of media education not only in the Czech Republic, but also in other dioceses. The most common objection to the introduction of any form of media education in theological faculties is the excessive extent of the current formation of future priests. However, the pastoral question may be a counter-argument: How much do we need a priest today with a deep knowledge of Hebrew and Greek to talk daily to people from morning to evening who are under the influence of the media about whom he knows nothing? How can they respond to media addicts when they have no idea what the media is doing to them?

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INFLUENCE OF MODERN PHENOMENA IN THE MEDIA ENVIRONMENT ON CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Dominik Mičuda

ABSTRACT:

The use of technology and social media by children and young people is developing at a rapid pace, affecting their well-being. In order to understand these changes, there must be wider awareness of the types of social networking, as well as the effects of the modern phenomenon of influencers, which have a significant impact on juvenile development. A large number of juveniles have free access to social networks where many pitfalls await them. As they increasingly connect online via a mobile device or phone, their access has become more personalized, more common in a wide range of public and private spaces. Social networks encourage and rapidly evolve media practices that are increasingly rooted in other media areas - such as television, online games. As a result, social media are becoming a common feature of the daily lives of children and young people. However, social media is diverse and its effects on well-being of children and young people are increasingly focused on research, policy and service delivery and advertising.

KEY WORDS:

advertising, children, influence, influencers, media, social behavior, youth

1 Media Environment

In the past decades, a number of studies have investigated the effects of old and new media on children and teens. These studies have greatly improved our understanding of why youth are massively attracted to the media. And they also show how children and teens can be affected by the media, in positive and negative ways. Plugged in provides insight into the most important issues and debates about media, children, and teens. Over the last decade, we have seen social media grow rapidly in importance. According to the January 2019 We Are Social report, 3.484 billion people actively use social media - that's 45% of the world's population. Inevitably these people look up to influencers in social media to guide them with their decision making. Influencers in social media are people who have built a reputation for their knowledge and expertise on a specific topic. They make regular posts about that topic on their preferred social media channels and generate large followings of enthusiastic, engaged people who pay close attention to their views. Brands love social media influencers because they can create trends and encourage their followers to buy products they promote. You can separate different types of influencers in multiple ways. Some of the most common methods are by follower numbers, by types of content, and by the level of influence. You can also group influencers by the niche in which they operate. This means that influencers who may appear in a low category by one measure may seem more influential when looked at in another way. For example, many mega-influencers are also celebrities. Yet both these groups often have less real influence on their audience because they lack expertise in a dedicated narrow niche. Some micro and even nanoinfluencers can have a tremendous impact on followers in their specialist niche. They may be of significant benefit to a firm selling a product targeting that sector. In many ways, the best influencers have built their reputation online for being an expert in some particular niche. They are similar to key opinion leaders but usually have gained their reputation more informally through their online activity.¹ *And they have created that reputation through the quality of the social posts they make, the blog posts they write, the podcasts they speak, and the videos they craft and post on their YouTube channels. Although*

¹ *What is influencer.* [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://influencermarketinghub.com/what-is-an-influencer/>>.

nobody has yet created a generic term for these people, the British agency, PMYB, has come up with their trade-marked name – Chromo-influencers.² These are the agency's highest-performing influencers, based on 46 crucial factors that impact consumer behavior. These influencers have the best communication skills and engagement with their audience. They have enticed their followers and become recognized as experts in their field. Their follower numbers very much depend on their subject of expertise. However, you will find that these people have incredibly high followings in comparison to others in their niche.³

2 Youth and Media

*For some children, under some conditions, some television is harmful. For other children under the same conditions, or for the same children under other conditions it may be beneficial. For most children, under most conditions, most television is probably neither particularly harmful nor particularly beneficial. This may seem unduly cautious, or full of weasel words, or, perhaps, academic gobbledygook to cover up something inherently simple. But the topic we are dealing with. Is not simple. We wish it were. Effects are not that simple.*⁴ Over the past few decades, there have been several thousand studies about the effects of media on youth. And yet, somewhat paradoxically, we still have much to learn. In part, the gaps in our knowledge are due to dramatic changes in young people's media use. In the 1990s, children and teens spent on average four hours a day with media; these estimates have now skyrocketed to an average of six (for children) and nine hours a day (for teens). As a matter of fact, today's children and teens spend more time with media than they do at school. And indeed, some of us are less concerned about what youth are learning in school than about what they are picking up from their many hours with all those screens. Along with the significant growth in media use, the gaps in our knowledge are caused by the sweeping and rapid changes in the media landscape.⁵ New media and technologies are developing and replacing one another at a dramatic pace. Social media tools that we studied not long ago now seem as old. In 2015, virtually all teens had Facebook accounts, yet even a Facebook has to continually do its best to stay ahead of the competition and not lose its users to newer, more attractive interfaces such as Snapchat, Instagram, and so forth. Indeed, the truth of the epigraph from *Through the Looking-Glass* is compelling: in the new media landscape, we must run as fast as we can, just to stay in place.⁶

The changes in the media landscape are due not only to the development of new media but also to the repurposing of traditional media. Youth, and adults too, are watching television differently from the way they did in previous decades. They are watching more programs online, recording more programs to watch later, and often using a second screen while they

² WESTERMAN, D.: *Social Media as Information Source: Recency of Updates and Credibility of Information*. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/259189745_Social_Media_as_Information_Source_Recency_of_Updates_and_Credibility_of_Information>.

³ *What is influencer*. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://influencermarketinghub.com/what-is-an-influencer/>>.

⁴ For more information, see: SCHRAMM, W., LYLE, J., PARKER, B. E.: *Television in the Lives of Our Children. (With a Psychiatrists' Com Ment on the Effects of Television by Lawrence Z. Freedman, M. D.)*. Stanford, CA : Stanford University Press, 1961. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/001654926100700311>>.

⁵ SUBRAHMANYAM, K., SMAHEL, D.: *Digital Youth: The Role of Media in Development*. New York : Springer-Verlag, 2011, p. 135.

⁶ DROK, N., SCHWARZ, F.: *Youth, news media, and involvement*. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<http://obs.obercom.pt/index.php/obs/article/view/400>>.

are watching so that they can comment on a show, avoid advertising, or stay in contact with other people. No longer are they watching a series like *Pretty Little Liars* or *Gossip Girl* when it is scheduled to air. Now they watch the program when they feel like it, and sometimes for hours at a stretch by “binge viewing” with streaming services such as Netflix or Apple TV, on their television, tablet, or smartphone. And although most teens are still interested in the news, more than adults sometimes think, watching the evening news on TV and buying the (paper) newspaper is a thing of the past. Teens have become “news grazers”: the vast majority pick up the news from a variety of on- and offline sources, depending on which is most convenient at the moment. The commercial environment surrounding youth is experiencing major changes, too. Traditional TV advertising has lost its dominant position. The discrete thirty-second commercial is no longer the best way to reach young people. Instead, advertisers are being forced to create and implement other, often more covert forms of advertising, such as product placement and advergames. Today’s James Bond will gladly order a Heineken, and *Mad Men*’s Don Draper a Canadian Club whiskey, which, according to its makers, has boosted the sales of whiskey among teens.⁷ Then there is the world of games. In the 1990s, gaming was considered the domain of teenage boys, but it has increasingly become mainstream for young and old, male and female. Ten years ago, a mention of video games brought with it images of a home computer or a console player such as Nintendo or PlayStation. Games such as *Street Fighter*, *Super Mario Bros*, and *Counter-Strike* are probably among the first to come to mind. When we think of games today, our first thoughts are likely to be *Pokémon GO* or *Candy Crush* – games that can be played with smartphones or tablets. Touch-screen technology and the Internet have profoundly influenced what gaming looks like.⁸

We see now that even very young children are playing games with their parents’ smartphones, and that the gender divide is changing as girls find their own game spaces in virtual worlds such as *Club Penguin* and *Neopets*. Virtual gaming worlds, in general, have spiked in popularity: the game *Minecraft* is among the highest-grossing apps of all time. This increased access to gaming on touch-screen platforms, combined with a reliance on freemiums (that is, apps that are free to download and rely on advertising and “in-app purchasing”), has provided formidable competition to traditional console game manufacturers. So what is the truth? Have children changed over time? Yes, research partly confirms what many people already know: children have indeed changed. Youth today are more intelligent and self-aware than their ancestors, and they have more self-confidence. It is also important to see nuances in these developments. Reports that young people are happy or are doing well, as well as reports emphasizing the numbers of problem youth, can easily overlook individual differences. This caveat applies also to the many “generation books” stating that the new generation is narcissistic, or that the new generation is particularly media savvy.⁹ It should be clear from this chapter that just as youth have changed physically, cognitively, and psychosocially over

⁷ SCHMIDT, M. E.: *The Effects of Background Television on the Toy Play Behavior of Very Young Children, Child Development*. 2008. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/23185023_The_Effects_of_Background_Television_on_the_Toy_Play_Behavior_of_Very_Young_Children>.

⁸ See also: ROSE, J., MORSTYN, L.: *What makes you tweet? Young people's perspectives on the use of social media as an engagement tool*. Victoria : Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, 2013. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://www.yacvic.org.au/assets/Documents/WhatMakesYouTweet-YACVic-report-Jun2013.pdf>>.

⁹ For more information, see: SCHRAMM, W., LYLE, J., PARKER, B. E.: *Television in the Lives of Our Children. (With a Psychiatrists' Com Ment on the Effects of Television by Lawrence Z. Freedman, M. D.)*. Stanford, CA : Stanford University Press, 1961. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/001654926100700311>>.

time, views of childhood have also dramatically changed. Because of the emergence of television, rapid technological changes, and commercialism, there is no longer a dominant view of children and adolescents. Instead, various views can be placed on a scale between two extremes: the paradigm of the vulnerable child and that of the empowered child. In the paradigm of the vulnerable child, children are seen as passive, vulnerable, and innocent beings who must be protected from the evil coming their way (including the media). Diametrically opposed to this view is the paradigm of the empowered child – the child who has a strong need for autonomy and is able and ready to handle life’s stresses. These views, and those lying along the scale, represent the paradox of childhood today – that is, the view that children need protection and yet their autonomy must simultaneously be supported. This paradox, while complicated, highlights the idea that childhood is not just a developmental phase of life, but also a social construction influenced by historical, social, and economic factors.¹⁰ Regulation of the media, including electronic media, is largely a system of restrictions on the right of freedom of expression of its bearers. The vast majority of regulatory measures, standards or decisions in this area must therefore pass the test of constitutionality in direct contrast to the right to freedom of expression. Freedom of speech is essentially linked to the existence of democracy. Without the possibility of free dissemination, acceptance of opinions and information, the active participation of citizens in the administration of public affairs and their responsible decision-making in democratic elections is not possible. Freedom of expression is thus necessarily one of the conditions for a liberal-democratic constitutional establishment. The demand for freedom of speech stood at the very beginning of its ideological beginnings, as it was part of the first human rights declarations.¹¹

3 Children as Consumers

Youth have become an increasingly important commercial target group in recent decades. While marketers in the 1990s were interested in learning how to reach children as young as five, today they try to reach even younger audiences. Why has this cradle-to-grave approach become a mantra in marketing circles? Why are youth so commercially interesting? The most likely explanation is that marketers have realized that rather than representing one market, youth simultaneously represent three markets: a primary market, a market of influencers, and a future market. To begin with, children are – like adults – a primary market, a more or less distinct customer group interested in and able to afford specific products. More than ever before, children have ample discretionary money available to them. For example, more than 60 percent of American youth receive an allowance (typically beginning at eight years of age), and the amount of their allowances increases through primary school and high school.¹² Although specific amounts vary significantly across countries, nearly half of all children receive money for making good grades in school or for doing household chores (for example, walking the dog or washing the family car). By adolescence, this money is often coupled with earnings from small jobs such as babysitting or lawn care. For example, American children and teens receive on average about eight hundred dollars a year for allowance (excluding money from outside employment). How do children develop into full-fledged consumers? To

¹⁰ See also: NARDI, B. et al.: Why we blog. In *Communication of the ACM*, 2014, Vol. 47, No. 12, p. 41-46. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/1035134.1035163>>.

¹¹ MISTRÍK, M.: The Regulation of Freedom of Expression in TV Broadcasting. In ALLEN, E. (ed.): *5th Annual International Conference on Journalism & Mass Communications (JMComm 2016)*. Singapore : Global Science and Technology Forum, 2016, p. 134.

¹² For more information, see: NARDI, B. et al.: Why we blog. In *Communication of the ACM*, 2014, Vol. 47, No. 12, p. 41-46. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/1035134.1035163>>.

answer this question, it is most useful to turn to theories of consumer socialization, the spontaneous process in which children develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that they need in order to operate as consumers. Although there is no generally accepted definition of consumer behavior, many definitions share four components. A consumer is capable of taking action to fulfill his or her needs and preferences; choosing and purchasing a product; evaluating a purchase and comparing it with alternatives; and understanding the social and cultural significance of the product.¹³

4 Children as Influencers

Children are attractive as consumers not only because they form an important primary market but also because they have a sizable influence on family purchases. Besides influencing what groceries end up in the family home, they influence the family's choice of restaurants, vacation destination, and even the model of the new family car. This increasing influence of youth on family purchases began in the 1970s, and has since increased quite steadily. One of the main reasons for this shift, scholars believe, is that families have moved from an authoritarian style to a more authoritative parenting style. Until the 1960s, the most common parenting style was authoritarian, in which parents demanded obedience and respect from their children. When parents spoke, for example, children were expected to be quiet and listen. In today's families, parents value their children's input and encourage them to speak up. Understanding, equality, and compromise are now paramount. Modern families have fewer fixed rules. Family members negotiate family decisions and act in accordance with the outcome. Children influence their parents' purchases both directly and indirectly. Direct influence occurs when they ask for or demand a product, hint that they want something, or make a recommendation. And these direct requests happen often, particularly among young children. For example, research in the United States showed that when at the grocery store with their parents, four- to six-year-olds request a certain product every two and a half minutes. Similarly, work in the Netherlands found that children between three and five years old request a product, on average, once every four minutes. These direct requests are relatively successful. Studies have shown that with very young children (around age two), parents acquiesce about 14 percent of the time. By the time their children are about five years of age, this number increases to roughly 50 percent – and estimates are even higher if “postponed concessions” are included; after all, parents do not always give in to their children immediately, but may do so after a period of time has passed. The number of product demands declines once children reach the age of seven. This does not mean that they have less influence on family purchases. On the contrary, numerous studies show that children have more influence on family purchases as they get older. One explanation for this seeming paradox is that older children are more likely than younger children to influence their parents indirectly. Indirect influence occurs when parents account for their child's wishes and preferences when making purchases for the child. Many parents buy their children's favorite brands, without prompting, when shopping because they know precisely which brands their children prefer and want to do something nice for them.¹⁴

¹³ FLEW, T.: National Media Regulations in an Age of Convergent Media: Beyond Globalisation, Neoliberalism and Internet Freedom Theories. In FLEW, T., IOSIFIDIS, P., STEEMERS, J. (eds.): *Global Media and National Policies*. London : Palgrave MacMillan, 2016, p. 76-90.

¹⁴ SINKINSON, M.: Technology devices and social media as determinants of youth health and well-being: pre-service health education teachers interpret implications for their own practice. In *International Journal of Health Promotion and Education*, 2014, Vol. 52, No. 5, p. 236-243.

5 Discussion

The twenty-first century is, so far, the age of the network society. A society supported by social media networks, which have removed the spatial barriers that traditionally limited our communication, and have changed the world into a global village. In comparison with earlier societies, it is much more difficult to get a grip on the processes at work in a network society. In a network society, values and norms of conduct are less fixed and less shaped by place and social position. For example, in the homogenous societies of the 1950s, relationships were clear and largely predetermined. Father was the breadwinner, Mother was responsible for maintaining the household and raising the children, and children were expected to follow in their parents' footsteps. In many cases, families were part of a religion-defined subculture that influenced their school selection, sports clubs, and much more. Communication was clear and predetermined, occurring either face-to-face or through mass media, and was characterized by a one-way transfer from a sender (such as radio or television) to a receiver. In a network society, parents are confronted with a variety of conflicting, often short-lived beliefs about family matters, including, for example, messages about the appropriateness of media in children's lives or about the role that parents "should" play in managing their children's media use-making today's parenting ever more complex. In addition, the network society has resulted in unprecedented freedom for today's youth, and the personalized social media they enjoy requires more intense supervision and comprehensive judgment from parents than any earlier medium.¹⁵ Without the authoritative rules governing behavior that were once present in collective societies, our identity has become a matter of free choice, which, of course, demands more responsibility and self-regulation than ever before. This is the context that twenty-first-century families are living in. A context filled with opportunities and challenges. A context in which media and technological innovations are so tightly interwoven that it is hard to see where one stops and the other begins. And this is the context in which twenty-first-century academic research on youth and media is conducted. Of course, investigating how individual differences in development, disposition, and environment affect children's media selection, their processing of media, and the effects of media is no easy task. It is complex, messy, and challenging. But if we understand how and why media use influences youth, which youth are susceptible to positive and negative media effects, and how their social environment can maximize positive media effects and combat negative ones, the answers will be worth the effort. And by all accounts, today's plugged-in generation is most certainly worth the effort.¹⁶

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¹⁵ See also: RIDEOUT, V.: *The Common Sense Census: Media Use by Tweens and Teens*. San Francisco : Common Sense Media, 2015. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <https://www.common.sensemedia.org/sites/default/files/uploads/research/census_researchreport.pdf>.

¹⁶ ROBARDS, B.: *Leaving MySpace, joining Facebook: Growing up' on social network sites*. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://books.google.sk/books?id=KyDtAwAAQBAJ&pg=PA40&lpg=PA40&dq=ROBARDS,+B.:+Leaving+MySpace,+joining+Facebook&source=bl&ots=3VSFjK54Ma&sig=ACfU3U2GKhY4RvkCJTvrVVKRUDDMSDrGIA&hl=sk&sa=X&ved=2ahUKewiVusno2efoAhWMKewKHffTBxkQ6AEwA3oECAsQLA#v=onepage&q=ROBARDS%2C%20B.%3A%20Leaving%20MySpace%2C%20joining%20Facebook&f=false>>.

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CONTENT AND CONCEPTUAL TRANSFORMATION OF MEDIA EDUCATION IN THE CZECH LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Eva Niklesová

ABSTRACT:

The paper deals with conceptual and content aspects connected with reflections on media education in the Czech educational system from the 1990s to the present. The first part of the study is focused on the description of conceptual steps in the Czech educational and academic discourse of the 1990s in the area of media education. Furthermore, attention is paid to the analysis of initial reflections on topics and areas associated with the use of new media. We also reflect on political events that have significantly changed the view of the importance and need for media education. The study concludes with reflections on the concept and thematic areas for the implementation of media education in the context of contemporary “*life in the media*”.

KEY WORDS:

curricular reform, Framework Education Programs, media education, media literacy, new media, political literacy

1 Introduction

There are two topics that are being discussed frequently in the field of Czech media education at the time of writing (February and March 2020). The first topic is the responses to the public debate named *Media Literacy – Media Education*, organized by the Czech Radio Council on February 12th, 2020, attended by O. Neff, P. Žantovský, V. Petrov and M. Pokorný.¹ Although none of these panel speakers is an expert in the field of media education in the Czech Republic, and although none of the guests are involved in media education in pedagogical practice, P. Žantovský, who is a Czech News Agency councilor, said that media education in schools is “*amateurish*”, that “*not one educated teacher [takes part] in the One World in Schools Education Program*” and that all these amateurish activities should be “*cut off from schools*” etc.² In reaction to this, the *Teacher Platform*³ and the director of the *One World Education Program*, K. Strachota,⁴ disagreed with Žantovský's statements. D. Soukup, Chairman of the CNA Council (the control body in which Žantovský sits) also distanced himself from the statement.⁵ Obviously in connection with Žantovský's statements, the *Platform for Media Education*,⁶ which is an informal community of organizations and entities active in the field of media education, sent an open letter to the current Czech Minister of Education, R. Plaga, at the end of February 2020. The main message of this letter was to point out that too little time

¹ DOHNÁLKOVÁ, H.: *Audiozáznam veřejné debaty Rady ČRo na téma: Mediální gramotnost – mediální výchova*. [online]. [2020-03-15]. Available at: <<https://rada.rozhlas.cz/audiozaznam-verejne-debaty-rady-cro-na-tema-medialni-gramotnost-medialni-vychova-8148735>>.

² JETMAR, J.: *Učitelé kritizují Žantovského za výroky o mediální výchově*. [online]. [2020-03-15]. Available at: <<https://www.mediar.cz/ucitele-kritizuji-zantovskeho-za-jeho-vyroky-o-medialni-vychove/>>.

³ *Učitelé radnímu ČTK Žantovskému: Posuzujte mediální výchovu podle faktů*. [online]. [2020-03-15]. Available at: <<https://ucitelskaplatforma.cz/index.php/2020/02/16/ucitele-radnimu-ctk-zantovskemu-posuzujte-medialni-vychovu-podle-faktu/>>.

⁴ JETMAR, J.: *Učitelé kritizují Žantovského za výroky o mediální výchově*. [online]. [2020-03-15]. Available at: <<https://www.mediar.cz/ucitele-kritizuji-zantovskeho-za-jeho-vyroky-o-medialni-vychove/>>.

⁵ HLAVINKA, T.: *Spory o mediální výchovu. Podle odborníků je opomíjená, Plaga mluví o „vlamování do otevřených dveří“*. [online]. [2020-03-15]. Available at: <<https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/specialy/newsroom-ct24/3055502-spory-o-medialni-vychovu-podle-odborniku-je-opomijena-plaga-mluvi-o->>.

⁶ *Platforma pro mediální vzdělávání*. [online]. [2020-03-15]. Available at: <<https://www.jsns.cz/projekty/medialni-vzdelavani/platforma-pro-medialni-vzdelavani>>.

was allotted to media education.⁷ Among other things, the letter set out four points to improve the current situation: “1. naming the importance of media education, for example in the form of a methodological recommendation; 2. taking media literacy into account when doing a transparent review of the Framework Education Programs, 3. including media education in the education of students at faculties of education and 4. financial support for projects and activities of bodies active in this field, for example in the form of open grant calls”.⁸

The other topic that has currently been discussed is great interest in a feature-length documentary on cyber grooming. The film is named *V síti* and it was released to the Czech cinemas on February 27th. (It is rated PG-15 and is 100 minutes long.)⁹ For elementary schools, the authors made a shorter version (accessible from 12 years) called *V síti: Za školou*. This version contains didactic inputs and explicit scenes with sexual content are rasterized even more. Some have been shortened or omitted.¹⁰ Both these cases are substantial and, at the same time, highly publicized reflections on the problems associated with the concept of media education, the need for anchored education in this area and the area of child abuse on the Internet. This led us to write this study, which attempts to: 1. to summarize the development of reflections on the concept and themes of *Media Education* since its beginning as a cross-curricular subject to the present; describe the initial thoughts on the reflection of new media in educational materials and 3. suggest possible conceptual and thematic proposals for contemporary media education.

2 Media Education in the Czech Environment from the 1990's to the Introduction of Framework Education Programs

While in many countries media education has been constituted as a full-fledged component of education since the 1980s, in the context of Czech education due to political circumstances, discussions on systematizing the media education have only taken place since the 1990s.¹¹ Šebesta adds that “the situation in the Czech Republic differs significantly from the starting position of media education in Western education systems”, and that its constitution was influenced by four factors: “the state of the media scene, public readiness, school readiness, education in the field” and that “in all respects, media education in the Czech Republic encountered considerable problems”.¹² On a conceptual level there was one factor that determined the form of media education. It was the fact that even in the early 90s only one

⁷ HLAVINKA, T.: *Spory o mediální výchovu. Podle odborníků je opomíjená, Plaga mluví o „vlamování do otevřených dveří“*. [online]. [2020-03-15]. Available at: <<https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/specialy/newsroom-ct24/3055502-spory-o-medialni-vychovu-podle-odborniku-je-opomijena-plaga-mluvi-o>>.

⁸ HRONOVÁ, Z.: *Žáci v čase fake news. Prosazujte důraz na mediální výchovu, píší odborníci Plagovi*. [online]. [2020-03-16]. Available at: <<https://zpravy.aktualne.cz/domaci/zaci-v-case-fake-news-prosazujte-duraz-na-medialni-vychovu-p/r~6091e7ea540a11eab6800cc47ab5f122/>>; *Organizace vyzvaly ministra školství k posílení mediální výchovy*. [online]. [2020-03-15]. Available at: <https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/mediahub/medialni-vychova-skola.A200225_123633_mediahub_jpl>.

⁹ *Dokument V síti chytil nejen sexuální predátory, ale i diváky. Návštěvnost je rekordní*. [online]. [2020-03-16]. Available at: <<https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/kultura/3056916-dokument-v-siti-chytil-nejen-sexualni-predatory-ale-i-divaky-navstevnost-je-rekordni>>.

¹⁰ *Film V síti a školní projekce*. [online]. [2020-03-16]. Available at: <<https://www.aerofilms.cz/magazin/skolni-projekce-filmu-v-siti/>>.

¹¹ JIRÁK, J., ŠEBESTA, K.: Mediální výchova a její výhledy v ČR. In *Učitelství noviny*, 1995, Vol. 98, No. 20, p. 12.

¹² ŠEBESTA, K.: *Od jazyka ke komunikaci: didaktika českého jazyka a komunikační výchova*. Prague : Karolinum, 1999, p. 125.

mandatory educational program applied in which the media education was not considered.¹³ However, after the initial phase of unsystematic voluntary activities of schools or teachers, media education became part of the curriculum reform of primary and secondary education since the late 1990s¹⁴ and reflections on media education became part of communication education, a component of the Czech language subject. Communication education exceeded the previous framework of stylistic and linguistic teaching, and it is important for the purpose of this study that it reflected, among other things, “*changed characteristics of communication processes (a huge increase in communication mediated by electronic media)*”¹⁵ In the *Obecná škola* curriculum, which is one of three new educational programs that replaced the central curriculum for elementary schools and from which primary schools could choose (there were also the educational programs *Základní škola – 1996* and *Národní škola – 1997*), communication education was discussed for the first time in the area of Czech language teaching, especially in connection with stylistics teaching.¹⁶ As part of this curriculum, which emphasized the merging of subject matter into multiple subjects and emphasized cross-subject overlaps “*that elaborate the subject in different directions without preserving it within the subject framework*”¹⁷ (as it is today in the concept of so-called cross-curricular subjects) there were references to the mass media communications in version for primary school, although the term “media education” has not appeared yet.¹⁸ To illustrate the contemporary context, let us mention an excerpt from the educational program *Obecná škola (1. to 5. grade)*. The chapter called *Critical Listening* states that: “*Special emphasis (...) is put on critical television viewing and detecting attempts to manipulate the audience. Thus, after completing primary school, pupils should be able to: 1. distinguish facts from opinions and assessments, (...) 2. verify the communicated facts in a simple way (...), 3. recognize the apparent qualities, attitudes, and intentions of the person speaking and see how they are reflected in the spoken text (...), 4. to reveal simple cases of manipulative communication, especially in mass media.*”¹⁹

In addition to the introduction of new educational programs, in the context of the Czech educational discourse connected with media education, the project *Preparing the Concept of Media Education at Czech Schools*, which was carried out by the Center for Media Studies at the Charles University led by J. Jiráček and P. Kuchař. The project started in 1998 and was funded by the Open Society Fund. The purpose of the project was to propose the aim and concept of media education in the Czech Republic, to prepare basic teaching texts and also to offer methods of media education. The integration of the independent subject of media education into the

¹³ ŠEBESTA, K.: *Od jazyka ke komunikaci: didaktika českého jazyka a komunikační výchova*. Prague : Karolinum, 1999, p. 125.

¹⁴ JIRÁK, J., ŠTASTNÁ, L.: K periodizaci vývoje mediální výchovy a mediálního vzdělávání v českém prostředí v evropském kontextu, 9. 72. In *Sborník Národního muzea v Praze. Řada C, Literární historie = Acta Musei Nationalis Pragae. Series C, Historia litterarum*, 2012, Vol. 57, No. 4, p. 72.

¹⁵ ŠEBESTA, K.: *Od jazyka ke komunikaci: didaktika českého jazyka a komunikační výchova*. Prague : Karolinum, 1999, p. 60.

¹⁶ POLÁK, M.: Komunikační výchova a integrace poznatků v kontextu Rámcového vzdělávacího programu pro základní vzdělávání, oborových didaktik a přípravy učitelů. In *e-Pedagogium*, 2017, Vol. 17, No. 3, p. 47. [online]. [2020-03-10]. Available at: <<https://e-pedagogium.upol.cz/pdfs/epd/2017/03/05.pdf>>.

¹⁷ KOUBEK, P.: *Vzdělávací program Obecná škola (1–5. ročník)*. Prague : Národní ústav pro vzdělávání, 2013, p. 19. [online]. [2020-02-20]. Available at: <<http://www.nuv.cz/t/vzdelavaci-programy-platne-v-zakladnim-vzdelavani-pred>>.

¹⁸ ADAMCOVÁ, A.: Mediální výchova a její pojetí v programech povinného vzdělávání v České republice. In *Sborník prací Filozofické fakulty brněnské univerzity. U, Řada pedagogická = Studia paedagogica*, 2001, Vol. 49–50, No. U5–6, p. 122.

¹⁹ KOUBEK, P.: *Vzdělávací program Obecná škola (1–5. ročník)*. Prague : Národní ústav pro vzdělávání, 2013, p. 70. [online]. [2020-02-20]. Available at: <<http://www.nuv.cz/t/vzdelavaci-programy-platne-v-zakladnim-vzdelavani-pred>>.

Czech educational system began in 2000. The Ministry of Education then approached the authors of *Preparing the Concept of Media Education at Czech Schools* project to work on integrating media education into the design of newly completed and processed content of primary education.²⁰ Media education thus became part of the curriculum reform of primary and secondary education and documents related to it (national education standards, *National Program for the Development of Education in the Czech Republic: White Paper*). The *White paper* is the first document that officially mentioned media education in these words: “*Forming a critical relationship to the dissemination of information and attitudes through the media (so-called media education) is also an essential part of democratic citizenship education.*”²¹ Based on the National Program for the Development of Education in the Czech Republic, the so-called Framework Education Programs (FEP) were formulated. These cover the process of educating pupils from 3 to 19 years of age. Framework education programs were related to the curricular reform,²² to the Education Act, which introduced a new system of educational programs since 2005 and to the two-level curriculum development in primary and secondary education.²³ This system consisted of framework education programs (basic outlines of pre-school, primary and secondary education), while the Ministry of Education issued FEPs for individual fields of education, according to which schools created their school education programs (SEPs).²⁴

In 2005 the so-called “*period of pre-normative institutionalization of media education*” (2000–2005)²⁵ ended and since 2007/2008 elementary schools have been teaching according to the *Framework Education Program for Basic Education* (FEP BE), only four-year grammar schools and higher years of six- or eight-year grammar schools have proceeded according to the *Framework Education Program for Grammar Schools* (FEP G) since September 1st 2009.²⁶ In addition to the so-called key competencies,²⁷ these documents have included cross-curricular subjects that “*cross educational areas and enable the interconnection of educational content in fields, thereby contributing to the complexity of pupil education and positively influencing the process of shaping and developing pupils' key competencies.*”²⁸ Media Education, one of these cross-curricular subjects, should equip pupils with a “*basic level of media literacy. This*

²⁰ ADAMCOVÁ, A.: Mediální výchova a její pojetí v programech povinného vzdělávání v České republice. In *Sborník prací Filozofické fakulty brněnské univerzity. U, Řada pedagogická = Studia paedagogica*, 2001, Vol. 49–50, No. U5–6, p. 123.

²¹ KOTÁSEK, J. et al.: *Národní program rozvoje vzdělávání v České republice. Bilá kniha*. Prague : Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy, 2001, p. 15. [online]. [2020-02-15]. Available at: <http://www.nuv.cz/uploads/nuv/strategie/Bila_kniha_2001.pdf>.

²² *Školská reforma v pedagogickém výzkumu*. [online]. [2020-02-15]. Available at: <<http://www.msmt.cz/vzdelavani/skolstvi-v-cr/skolskareforma/skolska-reforma-v-pedagogickem-vyzkumu>>.

²³ KONOPA, R.: Mediální výchova – inspirační zdroje pro školní praxi. In MLČOCH, M. (ed.): *Příprava a realizace výukových materiálů pro podporu komunikační výchovy RVP ZV ve výuce českého jazyka a literatury na základních školách a víceletých gymnáziích*. Olomouc : Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci, 2011, p. 171–172. [online]. [2020-02-08]. Available at: <<http://komunikacnivychova.upol.cz/index.php/ke-stazeni/category/2-sborniky?download=2:sbornik-projektu-priprava-a-realizace-vyukovych-materialu-pro-podporu-komunikacni-vychovy-rvp-zv-ve-vyuce-ceskeho-jazyka-a-literatury-na-zakladnich-skolach-a-viceletych-gymnaziich-2011>>.

²⁴ *Rámcové vzdělávací programy*. [online]. [2020-02-08]. Available at: <<http://www.nuv.cz/trvp>>.

²⁵ WOLÁK, R.: *Mediální výchova v ČR: k zavádění nového tématu do vzdělávacího systému*. [Rigorous theses]. Prague : FSV UK in Prague, 2017, p. 83. [online]. [2020-03-16]. Available at: <<https://is.cuni.cz/webapps/zzp/detail/188076?lang=en>>.

²⁶ *Co pro gymnázia znamená schválení RVP G a RVP GSP?* [online]. [2020-02-19]. Available at: <<https://clanky.rvp.cz/clanek/c/GK/1541/CO-PRO-GYMNAZIA-ZNAMENA-SCHVALENI-RVP-G-A-RVP-GSP.html>>.

²⁷ *Klíčové kompetence* [online]. [2020-02-15]. Available at: <<http://www.msmt.cz/vzdelavani/skolstvi-v-cr/skolskareforma/klicove-kompetence>>.

²⁸ JEŘÁBEK, J., TUPÝ, J.: *Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání*. Prague : MSMT Prague, 2015, p. 125. [online]. [2020-02-02]. Available at: <http://www.nuv.cz/uploads/RVP_ZV_2016.pdf>.

includes both acquiring some basic knowledge of the functioning and social role of contemporary media (their history, structure of functioning), and acquiring skills supporting an informed, active and independent involvement of the individual in media communication."²⁹ Cross-curricular subjects have become a mandatory part of basic education. Schools must include all cross-curricular subjects listed in FEP BE and FEP G, while the scope and form of this implementation are not explicitly defined. (It may be a separate subject, part of other subjects, project days, project weeks, discussions, workshops, excursions, or a combination of all the above options).³⁰

3 The Content and Conceptual Framework of Educational Units in the Early Implementation of the Cross-Curricular Subject Called *Media Education*

The introduction of cross-curricular subjects meant that the teachers needed to accept this concept of teaching. Many teachers at primary and secondary schools did not know what to do with cross-curricular subjects. It was difficult for them to handle the content and the topics seemed too extensive for them. The teachers did not feel they were "*specialists in global warming, racism, the holocaust, manipulation, and other issues that belong to cross-cutting issues. And they did not want to accept that they also concern themselves personally.*"³¹ For teachers, the implementation of the Media Education cross-curricular subject often required the need for self-study; it was a part of or a whole new area of education with which teachers had little or no experience; the lack of courses or seminars was also a problem. Finally, there was a time allocation problem. The time allocated to cross-curricular subjects, in the opinion of many educators, detracted from time for "mandatory" subject content and that it was often a "*battle for lessons*" since "*the disciplines compete with each other for the extent of their application in the curriculum*".³² The summary of these pitfalls has led – along with the perception of this cross-curricular subject "*in practice, to the most challenging in terms of lesson preparation*"³³ – in some cases to the helplessness of teachers and to understanding this cross-curricular subject as a requirement that simply needs to be met.

In addition to these aspects, when the teachers first started implementing the cross-curricular subject of Media Education there was a problem with the lack of educational materials with specific topics for teaching. In 2005, when the FEP BE was approved, two publications were published in the Czech environment. The first was *Education for Media Literacy* by D. Bína et al., which considers media education to be "*a comprehensive concept of human education (including the meaning of school education at all levels and within all programs, subjects and focus) as education primarily for social communication competence and for media and*

²⁹ JEŘÁBEK, J., TUPÝ, J.: *Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání*. Prague : MSMT Prague, 2015, p. 137. [online]. [2020-02-02]. Available at: <http://www.nuv.cz/uploads/RVP_ZV_2016.pdf>.

³⁰ Ibidem, p. 125.

³¹ KONOPA, R.: Mediální výchova – inspirační zdroje pro školní praxi. In MLČOCH, M. (ed.): *Příprava a realizace výukových materiálů pro podporu komunikační výchovy RVP ZV ve výuce českého jazyka a literatury na základních školách a víceletých gymnáziích*. Olomouc : Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci, 2011, p. 175–176. [online]. [2020-02-08]. Available at: <<http://komunikacnivychova.upol.cz/index.php/ke-stazeni/category/2-sborniky?download=2:sbornik-projektu-priprava-a-realizace-vyukovych-materialu-pro-podporu-komunikacni-vychovy-rvp-zv-ve-vyuce-ceskeho-jazyka-a-literatury-na-zakladnich-skolach-a-viceletych-gymnaziich-2011>>.

³² JANÍK, T. et al.: *Kurikulární reforma na gymnáziích v rozhovorech s koordinátory pilotních a partnerských škol*. Prague : VUP in Prague, 2010, p. 120. [online]. [2020-03-20]. Available at: <<http://www.nuv.cz/vystupy/kurikularni-reforma-na-gymnaziich-v-rozhovorech-s>>.

³³ ŠINDELÁŘOVÁ, J., DRTINOVÁ, H.: Mediální výchova a její výuka na českých základních školách. In *Didaktické studie*, 2014, Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 94.

functional literacy".³⁴ Bína emphasized, among other things, that media education should be an essential part of all subjects, and gave concrete examples of linking education to media literacy with some subjects (e.g. physical education, music, and art education, etc.).³⁵ The book also includes suggestions, projects and ideas for education in media communication competence in the secondary school environment. The second publication on media education from 2005 – *Media education in the Czech Republic. Print media*³⁶ had a practical character and contained practical examples, image materials, test questions, etc. It was the first title on the Czech book market that "*promised an insight into the field of media education*"³⁷, but the book was conceived as a behind-the-scenes look at print media, such as – in the author's own words – "*a subjective point of view of a man in the business*".³⁸ The first Czech comprehensive methodological material supplemented by a CD-ROM designed for media education teachers was published in 2006, which was one year before the start of teaching Media Education at primary schools according to individual SEPs. Its name was *Understanding Media – the Basics of Media Education for Teachers*,³⁹ which contained the chapters called *Mass Media, News, Media Stereotypes, Media Regulation, and Self-Regulation, Media and Entertainment, Media and Politics, Marketing and Media, and Advertising*. These topics relate directly to the thematic areas of the Media Education cross-curricular subject in FEP BE,⁴⁰ especially in the field of receptive activities. The publication *Understand the Media – Fundamentals of Media Education for Teachers* was followed by the *Basics of Media Education*,⁴¹ which was published a year later in a modified and expanded version in the Portál publishing house. Both publications covered a substantial part of the topics on media education in FEP BE and FEP G. (Here the knowledge and skills components are already intertwined and the topics are as follows: *Media and media production, Media products and their meanings, Users, Effects of media production and media influence and Role of media in modern history*)⁴² and thanks to their conception (lesson plans, worksheets, homework suggestions, competitions, etc.), they have become popular materials for applying media education in teaching at primary and secondary schools. The *Methodological Portal rvp.cz*, which was launched in 2006,⁴³ was "*an important element supporting the implementation of Framework Education Programs*".⁴⁴ Today it still plays a key role not only in the area of media education because it contains many educational materials, ideas, information, and experience.

³⁴ BÍNA, D. et al.: *Výchova k mediální gramotnosti*. České Budějovice : Jihočeská univerzita v Českých Budějovicích, 2005, p. 4.

³⁵ Ibidem, p. 60–62.

³⁶ See also: ROTH, J. *Mediální výchova v Čechách. Tištěná média*. Prague : Tutor, 2005.

³⁷ WOLÁK, R.: *Mediální výchova v ČR: k zavádění nového tématu do vzdělávacího systému*. [Rigorous theses]. Prague : FSV UK in Prague, 2017, p. 85. [online]. [2020-03-16]. Available at: <<https://is.cuni.cz/webapps/zzp/detail/188076?lang=en>>.

³⁸ ROTH, J. *Mediální výchova v Čechách. Tištěná média*. Prague : Tutor, 2005, p. 5.

³⁹ For more information, see: JIRÁK, J., MIČIENKA, M. et al.: *Rozumět médiím: základy mediální výchovy pro učitele*. Prague : Partners Czech, 2006.

⁴⁰ JEŘÁBEK, J., TUPÝ, J.: *Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání*. Prague : MSMT Prague, 2015, p. 138–139. [online]. [2020-02-02]. Available at: <http://www.nuv.cz/uploads/RVP_ZV_2016.pdf>.

⁴¹ See also: JIRÁK, J., MIČIENKA M. et al.: *Základy mediální výchovy*. Prague : Portál, 2007.

⁴² KOUBEK, P.: *Rámcový vzdělávací program pro gymnázia*. Prague : Národní ústav pro vzdělávání, 2013, p. 79–81. [online]. [2020-03-18]. Available at: <<http://www.nuv.cz/file/159>>.

⁴³ *Metodický portál – příležitost pro učitele sborník k závěrečné konferenci projektu Metodika II*. [online]. [2020-03-18]. Available at: <https://rvp.cz/informace/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/sbornik_web.pdf>.

⁴⁴ ŠEBEŠ, M.: *Mediální výchova v Čechách: kontury a kontexty školního mediálního vzdělávání v České republice*. [online]. [2020-02-02]. Available at: <https://www.academia.edu/22432912/Medi%C3%A1ln%C3%AD_v%C3%BDchova_v_%C4%8Cech%C3%A1ch_kontury_a_kontexty_%C5%A1koln%C3%ADho_medi%C3%A1ln%C3%ADho_vzd%C4%9B%C3%A1v%C3%A1n%C3%AD_v_%C4%8Cesk%C3%A9_republice_Media_Education_in_Bohemia_Contours_and_Contexts_of_School_Media_Education_in_the_Czech_Republic>.

Topics in the period after the introduction of FEP BE and FEP G mainly reflected the nature of thematic areas in both Framework Educational Programs and concerned the nature of the media, their historical development, the specific features of mass media communication, the impact of the media on individuals and society, the effects of media production on the recipient and news coverage. (Frequently, students were asked to compare the news coverage in commercial and public media, analyze evaluation tools and bias in the news, etc.) Popular activities were focused on advertising communication (advertising psychology, manipulation, and persuasion in advertising, origin, history, functions, and types of advertising, the language of advertising,⁴⁵ ability to recognize hidden commercial messages impersonating news, etc.). Classes discussing and analyzing stereotypes in the media (stereotypes of ethnic minorities, stereotypes of aging, stereotypes of history, gender stereotypes, etc.) were also well-liked. There were also talks about relations between media and politics (political advertising, propaganda techniques, etc.), media and entertainment (motivation to watch reality shows, how to make news more entertaining, infotainment, entertainment journalism, etc.), media and violence, etc. Activities leading to the development of media literacy also touched on the regulation and self-regulation of media and media legislation, the internal functioning of the media (media organization structure, factors influencing editorial work), ethics in journalism, freedom of speech, types of media content, etc. From the conceptual and thematic point of view, these were thematic areas and activities that should be discussed at present, however – as we will demonstrate later in the text – over the next years it was necessary to reflect the fact that the ground plan of media education originated before the end of the century, that is at a time when the key channel of media communication was “traditional” media, meaning print and broadcast media, especially television.⁴⁶

4 Initial Reflection on the Development of New Media in Czech School Media Education

The rapid and fundamental changes in the media environment related to the emergence and development of new media resulted in the primary and secondary school pupils replacing traditional mass media with the use of new media increasingly, thus their education would have to focus on “*new media (electronic post-television media, the Internet, mobile phone and social networks) issues*” because “*the younger people/children are today, the less "old" media they mean to them.*”⁴⁷ The spectrum of methodological materials thematizing aspects associated with the use of new media was limited at the beginning of the implementation of FEP and FEP G, but for example, in 2006 the issue of child protection on the Internet and growing interest in children's activities on the Internet became the content of a lesson called *Love on the Internet*, which focused on chat communication in the aforementioned publication named *Understanding Media – the Basics of Media Education for Teachers*. One of the main goals of this lesson was to get acquainted with the basic rules for secure communication on the Internet and then to formulate these rules.⁴⁸ The launch of the E-Bezpečí project in 2008 was an important

⁴⁵ ŠEPSOVÁ, Z.: *Virtuální hospitace – Mediální výchova: Reklamní slogan*. [online]. [2020-03-19]. Available at: <<https://clanky.rvp.cz/clanek/c/G/8181/virtualni-hospitace-medialni-vychova-reklamni-slogan.html/>>.

⁴⁶ JIRÁK, J., ŠTASTNÁ, L., ZEZULKOVÁ, M.: *Mediální výchova jako průřezové téma podkladová studie – revidovaná verze*. Prague : Národní ústav pro vzdělávání, 2017, p. 19. [online]. [2020-02-02]. Available at: <http://www.nuv.cz/file/3222_1_1/>.

⁴⁷ BINA, D., NIKLESOVÁ, E.: *Mediální gramotnost a mediální výchova: studijní texty*. České Budějovice : Vlastimil Johanus, 2010, p. 63.

⁴⁸ JIRÁK, J., MIČIENKA, M. et al.: *Rozumět médiím: základy mediální výchovy pro učitele*. Prague : Partners Czech, 2006, p. 129–136.

achievement in the area of Internet-related risks. As a part of this project, which focuses on “prevention, education, research, intervention and awareness-raising related to risky behavior on the Internet and related phenomena” and has been implemented by the PRVoK Center and the Palacký University in Olomouc, “more than 60.000 primary and secondary school pupils and over 10.000 adults” have been trained as of March 11, 2020, and “the project has helped over 2,500 victims of cybercrime.”⁴⁹ In connection with the aforementioned documentary film *V síti: Za školou*, in February 2020 a methodological support for teachers was published by K. Kopecký, Head of E-Safety and PRVoK Center, from the Palacký University PF. This handbook contains – among other things – an analysis of the main themes, the individual scenes, suggestions for activities and suggestions for discussion.⁵⁰

In the context of the initial educational materials for the curriculum on new media and social networks, it is worth mentioning – for its time quite innovative – the inclusion of the chapter named *New Media* in the first Czech textbook on media education for secondary school students. This textbook, published in 2009, is called *Media Education* and it was written by J. Pospíšil and L. S. Závodná.⁵¹ This textbook essentially copied the “basic thematic areas of the cross-curricular subject called media education as defined in the curriculum documents”⁵² and filled the missing space of a textbook primarily intended for secondary school students. The New media chapter in this book focuses mainly on the history, nature, and functions of the new media, ie. Internet telephony and chat. In addition to theoretical information, attention was drawn to the dangers of using social networks (unprotected dissemination of personal information, possible misuse of sensitive data, etc.); the terms phishing and pharming were explained here (including the mention of the first case of phishing in the Czech Republic). In the note saying that “by using Internet services you leave traces of your activity, whether or not you want to”⁵³ the textbook also looked at the currently discussed issues of digital heritage. The chapter named *New Media* further dealt with the security of the mailbox against spam, forgery on the Internet, and false alarm messages (hoaxes). As a specific example of a hoax was given in the textbook.⁵⁴ Even in the context of the media coverage of events in which the study results (declaration of a global pandemic on March 11, 2020, following the number of people infected with COVID-19),⁵⁵ it is obvious that in the area of educational activities hoaxes are actually in place (cf. e.g. the hoax *Does Brufen and Ibuprofen worsen the effects of coronavirus infection?*).⁵⁶

⁴⁹ *Základní informace o projektu E-Bezpečí*. [online]. [2020-03-11]. Available at: <<https://www.e-bezpeci.cz/index.php/o-projektu/oprojektu>>.

⁵⁰ *Metodika k filmu V síti: Za školou je tu!* [online]. [2020-03-17]. Available at: <<https://www.e-bezpeci.cz/index.php/z-nasi-kuchyne/1803-metodika-k-filmu-v-siti-za-skolou-je-tu>>.

⁵¹ See also: POSPÍŠIL, J., ZÁVODNÁ, L. S.: *Mediální výchova*. Kralice na Hané : Computer Media, 2009.

⁵² WOLÁK, R.: *Mediální výchova v ČR: k zavádění nového tématu do vzdělávacího systému*. [Rigorous theses]. Prague : FSV UK in Prague, 2017, p. 93–94. [online]. [2020-03-16]. Available at: <<https://is.cuni.cz/webapps/zzp/detail/188076?lang=en>>.

⁵³ POSPÍŠIL, J., ZÁVODNÁ, L. S.: *Mediální výchova*. Kralice na Hané : Computer Media, 2009, p. 84.

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 85.

⁵⁵ *Pandemie onemocnění vyvolaného novým koronavirem (COVID-19): zvýšený přenos v EU/EEA – šestá aktualizace RRA ECDC*. [online]. [2020-03-16]. Available at: <<http://www.szu.cz/tema/prevence/pandemie-onemocneni-vyvolaneho-novym-koronavirem-covid-19>>.

⁵⁶ CEMPER, J.: *Zhoršuje Brufen a Ibuprofen následky nákazy koronavirem? Pravděpodobně ano*. [online]. [2020-03-16]. Available at: <<https://manipulatori.cz/hoax-brufen-zhorsuje-nasledky-koronaviru/>>.

5 The Paradox of Media Education in Czech Schools

The year 2009 concluded the so-called second phase – the “*period of experimental and practical implementation of media education in schools*” and the period of development of methodological manuals for teachers and the period of development of methodological handbooks for teachers “*in response to teachers' need to deal with the new topic*”.⁵⁷ Since 2009, Media Education has become an obligatory part of teaching at grammar schools too. In June of the same year the International Conference on *Media Education in Theory and Practice* was held at the University of West Bohemia in Pilsen. “*It was the first major meeting of Czech media educators in the Czech Republic focusing on the topic (...) and also welcomed important representatives of German media education*”.⁵⁸ Although professional interest in media education has grown, there has been a paradox in the field of teaching practice – many teachers have started to approach media education only in a formal way.⁵⁹

Around 2013, when the revised *Framework Program for Basic Education*⁶⁰ was being implemented and when sufficient tools were available for activities contributing to the development of media literacy (textbooks, methodological supports, scholarly texts, web portals, etc.) a somewhat paradoxical situation emerged concerning both conceptual and content grasp of media education teaching at primary and secondary schools. From the conceptual point of view, this was a problem of frequent formal realization of this cross-curricular subject, also due to insufficient reflection of new media in educational materials.⁶¹ Thus, at the end of the implementation of the cross-curricular subject called Media Education, educators found themselves “*in a similar situation as they were in at the beginning of the process. In the end, they indeed have a lot of material at their disposal, but few of them reflect the actual media reality of today's youth*”.⁶² In 2011, the National Institute for Education (Educational Research Institute Division) responded to this situation by publishing methodological support for teaching cross-curricular subjects at primary schools and grammar schools, in which the content of media education was extended to include new media topics (cf., for example, one of the recommended expected outcomes in the area under the heading Functioning and Media Influence in Society: “*The pupil is aware of how mediated communication (mobile phones, email, ICQ, Facebook, etc.) affects the way of communication and relationships with others*”).⁶³ It is interesting to note that in this methodical support, the Slovak project ovce.sk (Sheeplive.eu)

⁵⁷ WOLÁK, R.: *Mediální výchova v ČR: k zavádění nového tématu do vzdělávacího systému*. [Rigorous theses]. Prague : FSV UK in Prague, 2017, p. 89. [online]. [2020-03-16]. Available at: <<https://is.cuni.cz/webapps/zzp/detail/188076?lang=en>>.

⁵⁸ MAŠEK, J. Úvodem. In MAŠEK, J., SLOBODA, Z., ZIKMUNDOVÁ, V. (eds.): *Mediální pedagogika v teorii a praxi: sborník příspěvků z mezinárodní konference o mediální výchově a pedagogice: Plzeň, 17. –18. června 2009*. Plzeň : Fakulta pedagogická ZČU, 2010, p. 5.

⁵⁹ WOLÁK, R.: Methodological Materials for Teaching Media Education in the Czech Republic: Prematurely Obsolete or Insufficient Support? In *e-Pedagogium*, 2013, Vol. 13, No. 2, p. 107. [online]. [2020-03-17]. Available at: <<https://e-pedagogium.upol.cz/artkey/epd-201302-0009.php>>.

⁶⁰ *Upravený Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání platný od 1. 9. 2013*. [online]. [2020-03-17]. Available at: <<http://www.msmt.cz/vzdelavani/zakladni-vzdelavani/upraveny-ramcovy-vzdelavaci-program-pro-zakladni-vzdelavani>>.

⁶¹ WOLÁK, R.: Methodological Materials for Teaching Media Education in the Czech Republic: Prematurely Obsolete or Insufficient Support? In *e-Pedagogium*, 2013, Vol. 13, No. 2, p. 107. [online]. [2020-03-17]. Available at: <<https://e-pedagogium.upol.cz/artkey/epd-201302-0009.php>>.

⁶² WOLÁK, R.: *Mediální výchova v ČR: k zavádění nového tématu do vzdělávacího systému*. [Rigorous theses]. Prague FSV UK in Prague, 2017, p. 97. [online]. [2020-03-16]. Available at: <<https://is.cuni.cz/webapps/zzp/detail/188076?lang=en>>.

⁶³ VALENTA, J.: *Doporučené očekávané výstupy. Metodická podpora pro výuku průřezových témat v základních školách*. Prague : VÚP in Prague, 2011, p. 74. [online]. [2020-03-20]. Available at: <<https://digifolio.rvp.cz/artefact/file/download.php?file=28981&view=3951>>.

was mentioned as one of the sources of information, which, in a fun and appealing way, represented mainly the principles of safe use of the Internet and paying attention to prejudice and manifestations of intolerance. It “became a hit in a large part of Europe, but also in China and many other non-European countries”.⁶⁴ To reflect the topics related to the new media in the area of media education, it is important to note that the first four pilot episodes premiered in Slovakia in 2009.⁶⁵

6 Political Events – An Impulse to Emphasize the Importance of Strategic and Systematic Development of Media Literacy

The further development of media education in the Czech environment was significantly affected by several political issues, which substantially changed the view of the importance and necessity of media education. The coincidence of several issues concerning the dominant position of the media, in particular social networks, in the area of politics (so-called *post-truth politics* and *post-factual politics*, hybrid threats,⁶⁶ propaganda through social media, etc.), political marketing (realization of election campaigns) and the so-called alternative conception of news, caused a radical change in attitude towards Media Education because “only in the peak of the migration crisis, after the referendum on the UK's withdrawal from the EU and the election of Donald Trump as US President (...), did many people realize that the company's poor ability to discern misinformation or assess purposefully interpreted data can cause the society to polarize or change a country's strategic direction.”⁶⁷ Government officials have come to realize that more attention needs to be paid to media education and that the development of media literacy is one of the key skills for the 21st century. In this context, the National Security Audit issued by the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic became an important document. Its goal was to find out “how the state is prepared to face security threats in the areas that have been identified to be the most important and the state's resilience in confrontation with danger”.⁶⁸ This document was also published following the “extraordinary migration wave”⁶⁹ and, among other things, highlighted “weak or absent civil and media literacy”⁷⁰ and the lack of “the state's lack of ability to provide quality education in civic and media literacy”.⁷¹ One of the recommendations was “to introduce media literacy education”⁷² and “a requirement to add new topics to the school educational programs, whether it be education for security or supporting civil or media literacy (anthropogenic threats, natural threats, hybrid threats, foreign power influence)”.⁷³

⁶⁴ BUREŠOVÁ, L.: *Mediální výchova na Slovensku*. [online]. [2020-03-20]. Available at: <https://www.deti-a-media.cz/art/1819/medialni-ychova-na-slovensku.htm?page_idx=185>.

⁶⁵ *Projekt Sheeplive – základní informace*. [online]. [2020-03-22]. Available at: <<http://sk.sheeplive.eu/o-projekte/zakladne-informacie>>.

⁶⁶ *Co jsou hybridní hrozby*. [online]. [2020-03-20]. Available at: <<https://www.mvcr.cz/cthh/clanek/co-jsou-hybridni-hrozby.aspx>>.

⁶⁷ KADERKA, M.: *Analyza stavu mediálního vzdělávání na základních a středních školách v ČR*. Prague : Evropské hodnoty, 2018, p. 4. [online]. [2020-03-12]. Available at: <https://www.evropskehodnoty.cz/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Analyza_Stav_medialniho_vzdelavani_CR.pdf>.

⁶⁸ *Audit národní bezpečnosti*. Prague : Ministerstvo vnitra České republiky, 2016, p. 3. [online]. [2020-03-25]. Available at: <<https://www.vlada.cz/assets/media-centrum/aktualne/Audit-narodni-bezpecnosti-20161201.pdf>>.

⁶⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 2.

⁷⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 52.

⁷¹ *Ibidem*, p. 59.

⁷² *Ibidem*, p. 61.

⁷³ *Ibidem*, p. 4.

The fact that the *National Security Audit* did not reflect several years of teaching the cross-curricular subject of Media Education at Czech schools can be seen as an illustration of the lack of familiarity with the current concept of media education in the Czech education system. At the government level, the need to emphasize media education was addressed in April 2010, when the Round Table of the National Convention on the EU was held at the Liechtenstein Palace in Prague. The event was called *Media Literacy in the Context of Civic Education*, attended by representatives of the state administration, both chambers of the Czech Parliament, economic and social partners, representatives of European institutions and the non-profit sector.⁷⁴ The reason for this round table was as follows: “*Media literacy has come to the forefront of public debate in the European Union and its member states, mainly as a result of the boom in alternative media, rising distrust of the media and elites in general, and fears of possible external influencing of domestic policy. (...) The European Union and its member states are setting up institutions to deal with and correct so-called 'fake news'.*”⁷⁵ It is clear from this formulation that, above all, the concerns of political leaders about the potentially large and uncontrollable influence of the media on political decision-making processes 1. have shifted the area of media education from the previously accented level of educational discourse to the level of a topic discussed both among the public and at the level of state and European institutions and 2. indirectly raised the question about the need to develop political literacy as well (in the German environment, the concept of developing political literacy on the background of media literacy is discussed – *politikbezogene Medienkompetenz* – because the relationship between media competence and political education is insufficiently reflected, particularly in relation to the consequences of new media entering political processes).⁷⁶ The material printed for the round table we have already spoken about mentioned, for example, that, according to some theorists, media literacy can serve as a form of self-defense,⁷⁷ as already pointed out in 2005 by Bína: “*The main purpose of education lies in training for self-defense against power / manipulation, ubiquitous in social - and especially (mass) mediated - communication.*”⁷⁸ Also, the important challenges that Czech media education faces: “*1. it is a subject of a lower order, 2. media education and media literacy need to be monitored systematically, 3. it needs more educational and methodological support, 4. its content needs to be updated and 5. media education should be a topic of lifelong education.*”⁷⁹ The question of notable differences between the realization of media education at individual schools and the impossibility to study media education as an independent field at faculties of education has also been raised: “*So far, however, the situation in media education depends to a large extent on the will and enthusiasm of the school head, the school's financial capacity and then on the skills*

⁷⁴ Kulatý stůl: Mediální gramotnost v kontextu občanského vzdělávání. [online]. [2020-03-28]. Available at: <<https://www.narodnikonvent.eu/2017/04/19/kulaty-stul-medialni-gramotnost-v-kontextu-obcanskeho-vzdelavani/>>.

⁷⁵ Ibidem.

⁷⁶ GAPSKI, H., OBERLE, M., STAUFER, W.: *Medienkompetenz Herausforderung für Politik, politische Bildung und Medienbildung*. Bonn : Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2017, p. 22.

⁷⁷ ŠTASTNÁ, L.: *Mediální gramotnost v kontextu občanského vzdělávání Podkladový materiál pro kulatý stůl Národního konventu o EU Lichtenštejnský palác, 21. dubna 2017*. Prague : FSV UK in Prague, 2017, p. 2. [online]. [2020-03-26]. Available at:

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317427919_Media_Literacy_in_the_Context_of_Civic_Education_Mediální_gramotnost_v_kontextu_obcanskeho_vzdelavani>.

⁷⁸ BÍNA, D. et al.: *Výchova k mediální gramotnosti*. České Budějovice : Jihočeská univerzita v Českých Budějovicích, 2005, p. 5.

⁷⁹ ŠTASTNÁ, L.: *Mediální gramotnost v kontextu občanského vzdělávání Podkladový materiál pro kulatý stůl Národního konventu o EU Lichtenštejnský palác, 21. dubna 2017*. Prague : FSV UK in Prague, 2017, p. 5. [online]. [2020-03-26]. Available at:

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317427919_Media_Literacy_in_the_Context_of_Civic_Education_Mediální_gramotnost_v_kontextu_obcanskeho_vzdelavani>.

and enthusiasm of the responsible teacher. There is no possibility of a teacher specializing in media education while studying at the Faculty of Education. “⁸⁰ It is obvious that in some cases those are essentially similar points the improvement of which was requested in the open letter to the current Czech Minister of Education written by the *Platform for Media Education*, as stated in the introduction to this article. Also the understanding of media education as a subject of lower order and the demands for methodological support, which will be updated in terms of content, was thematized at the very beginning of the implementation of this cross-curricular subject.

Efforts to assess the current state of media literacy, the risks, and challenges associated with it, and to take steps to improve the current situation have become the public hearing, which took place on September 17th, 2018 in the Senate. The aim of this meeting was “*to reflect together on the theoretical and practical problems this area is currently facing and to discuss the breadth of the concept of media literacy, interdisciplinary overlaps, and specific challenges. The representatives of most of the institutions involved agreed that there was a need to create coordinated inter-ministerial platforms aimed at developing a long-term strategy for developing media literacy in the Czech Republic.*”⁸¹ Even these rather general conclusions are evidence of the development tendency that is typical for the field of Czech media education – constant attention to the challenges facing media education and the need for a strategic and systematic development of this educational field. Since 2018, there has been an increase in the area of media education on several levels:

1. implementation of researches analyzing the level of media literacy at Czech schools (e.g. survey of the Czech School Inspectorate *Media Education at primary and secondary schools in the school year 2017/2018*;⁸² a research named *Media literacy of high school students and their attitudes towards the media* carried out by MEDIAN agency in 2018 for the One World in Schools Education Project under the People in Need organization;⁸³ *Analysis of the state of media education at primary and secondary schools in the Czech Republic* prepared by M. Kaderka⁸⁴);
2. transforming the results of these surveys into news articles on Czech news sites,⁸⁵ thus evaluating the research results as a topic with predictable media attractiveness by focusing

⁸⁰ ŠŤASTNÁ, L.: *Mediální gramotnost v kontextu občanského vzdělávání Podkladový materiál pro kulatý stůl Národního konventu o EU Lichtenštejnský palác, 21. dubna 2017*. Prague : FSV UK in Prague, 2017, p. 6. [online]. [2020-03-26]. Available at:

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317427919_Media_Literacy_in_the_Context_of_Civic_Education_Mediální_gramotnost_v_kontextu_obcanskeho_vzdelavani>.

⁸¹ ČERMÁKOVÁ, D.: *V Senátu se uskutečnilo veřejné slyšení k budoucnosti mediální výchovy (17.09.2018)*. [online]. [2020-03-27]. Available at:

<https://www.senat.cz/zpravodajstvi/zprava.php?ke_dni=6.6.2017&O=8&id=2545&from=M>.

⁸² *Mediální výchova na základních a středních školách ve školním roce 2017/2018*. [online]. [2020-03-30]. Available at: <https://www.csicr.cz/getattachment/9556115a-a35b-4ee8-969c-1d87d14c9c55/TZ-Mediální-vychova_2017-2018.pdf;jpg;.aspx>.

⁸³ *Mediální gramotnost středoškoláků a jejich postoje k mediím*. [online]. [2020-03-27]. Available at: <https://www.jsns.cz/nove/projekty/pruzkumy-setreni/medialni_gramotnost_zaku_2018.pdf>.

⁸⁴ KADERKA, M.: *Analýza stavu mediálního vzdělávání na základních a středních školách v ČR*. Prague : Evropské hodnoty, 2018, p. 4. [online]. [2020-03-12]. Available at: <https://www.evropskehodnoty.cz/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Analyza_Stav_medialniho_vzdelavani_CR.pdf>.

⁸⁵ *Mediální gramotnost je v Česku nízká. Začíná to již ve školách, děti nedokážou číst zprávy*. [online]. [2020-03-27]. Available at: <<https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/domaci/2658896-medialni-gramotnost-je-v-cesku-nizka-zacina-jiz-ve-skolach-deti-nedokazou-cist-zpravy>>; *S mediální výchovou pomáhají školám nejvíce knihovny, zjistila inspekce*. [online]. [2020-03-27]. Available at: <https://zpravy.idnes.cz/medialni-vychova-ceska-skolni-inspekce-knihovna-redakce-p2a-/mediahub.aspx?c=A181126_085341_mediahub_jpl>; HYNEK, M.: *Jak naučit děti rozeznat dezinformace? A přitom nerozčítit jejich rodiče*. [online]. [2020-03-27]. Available at:

on so-called news values (a kind of news topos about the low level of media literacy of Czech pupils and students) and

3. increased demand for media education focused on hoax recognition, fake news, and misinformation.

The increase in the demand for media education focused on the recognition of fake news, hoaxes, manipulation, etc. was evident in the thematic focus of the newly created materials for teaching this cross-curricular subject,⁸⁶ whereby the Ministry of Education has mentioned, for example, lessons with the following topics: The World of Fake News, Hoaxes, Propaganda, and Manipulations.⁸⁷ This lesson is part of online open textbook media education called *World of media* (<http://svetmedii.info/>) and which includes four lessons (*Concepts and Introduction, Propaganda, Post-Factual Period* and *Post-Factual Media*).⁸⁸ However, the accentuation of this thematic and conceptual direction of media education in recent years has brought several controversial areas. The first is the need to focus not only on this area, but also on other topics, which is also pointed out by the author of the open online textbook *World of Media* and the creator of the aforementioned survey named *Analysis of the state of media education at primary and secondary schools in the Czech Republic*, M. Kaderka: “The current demand for media education focused on hoaxes and misinformation must not overshadow the fact that media education and literacy are a much broader complex of knowledge and skills. We will not achieve media literacy by educating pupils solely to recognize hoaxes and misinformation.”⁸⁹ Other pitfalls associated with lessons about fake news etc. are the ability (or lack thereof) and adequacy (or lack thereof) of evaluating information in the media in terms of their “truthfulness” because “in a world where traditional notions of the value of information on the “truth-lie” axis have fatally failed and a concept based on ‘believable-unbelievable’ value extrapolation has prevailed, it is necessary to look for ways to full-fledged individual and civic life based on critically evaluating any information, whatever the source”.⁹⁰ Last but not least, it involves the concerns of some parents and opponents of specific ways of realizing media education about the indoctrination of children and students.⁹¹ For paradoxically, some parents can understand media education as an instrument of propaganda.⁹²

<<https://www.blesk.cz/clanek/zpravy-udalosti/529793/jak-naucit-deti-rozeznat-dezinformace-a-pritom-nerozcilit-jejich-rodice.html>>.

⁸⁶ SLÁMOVÁ, P.: *Nová média – hoax*. [online]. [2020-03-27]. Available at: <<https://clanky.rvp.cz/clanek/c/Z/20665/nova-media-hoax.html/>>; *Fake News*. [online]. [2020-03-27]. Available at: <<https://www.jsns.cz/projekty/medialni-vzdelavani/bulletin-medialni-vzdelavani/analyza/fake-news/>>.

⁸⁷ *Vznikla nová pomůcka pro učitele k mediální výchově*. [online]. [2020-03-25]. Available at: <<http://www.msmt.cz/vznikla-nova-pomucka-pro-ucitele-k-medialni-vychove/>>.

⁸⁸ *Svět fake news, hoaxů, propagandy a manipulací*. [online]. [2020-03-30]. Available at: <<http://svetmedii.info/otevrena-ucebnice/svet-fake-news-hoaxu%CC%8A-propagandy-a-manipulaci/>>.

⁸⁹ KADERKA, M.: *Analýza stavu mediálního vzdělávání na základních a středních školách v ČR*. Prague : Evropské hodnoty, 2018, p. 12. [online]. [2020-03-12]. Available at: <https://www.evropskehodnoty.cz/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Analyza-Stav-medialniho-vzdelavani_CR.pdf>.

⁹⁰ JIRÁK, J., ŠTASTNÁ, L., ZEŽULKOVÁ, M.: *Mediální výchova jako průřezové téma podkladová studie – revidovaná verze*. Prague : Národní ústav pro vzdělávání, 2017, p. 20. [online]. [2020-02-02]. Available at: <http://www.nuv.cz/file/3222_1_1/>.

⁹¹ STREJČEK, I.: *Mediální vzdělávání Člověkem v tisni: další indoktrinace studentů*. [online]. [2020-02-02]. Available at: <<https://pravyprostor.cz/medialni-vzdelavani-clovekem-v-tisni-dalsi-indoktrinace-studentu/>>.

⁹² *Student.e15.cz: Rodiče a učitelé by si neměli jen notovat, že děti nic nedělají, říká Michal Kaderka*. [online]. [2020-03-25]. Available at: <<https://www.eduin.cz/clanky/student-e15-cz-rodice-a-ucitele-by-si-nemeli-jen-notovat-ze-deti-nic-nedelaji-rika-michal-kaderka/>>.

7 Conceptual and Thematic Notion of Contemporary Media Education and Future Perspectives

At the end of our study we will focus on the summary of conceptual and thematic directions of contemporary media education and the formulating the particular ways of its realization in the current context. Trying to summarize the trends associated with contemporary school media education, we see that there are concrete activities aimed at overcoming the intergenerational beliefs in connection with the use of new media initiated by university students, YouTubers, influencers, etc. In this respect, several projects have been initiated in recent years, initiated by university students (for example, the *Zvolši.info* project, whose authors travel across the Czech Republic and Slovakia with a workshop on media literacy for both primary and secondary schools and the wider public. They state they are impartial and do not have any hidden agenda;⁹³ an escape game called *Fakescape*, about media manipulation and misinformation in two versions: for elementary and high school),⁹⁴ or the personalities of the world of social networks themselves (e.g. the five-part show by a Czech YouTuber called *Kovy's media ring* containing practical tips for navigating the media world, realized within the educational program *One World in Schools Education Program* organized by the People in Need organization).⁹⁵ The realization of this type of media education lessons can provide benefits in the form of topical, conceptually current, and attractive media education lessons for primary and secondary school students. At the same time, topics (or phenomena) with which teachers may have little or no experience can be integrated (more intensively) into the classroom, as – in the opinion of a “young” teacher at a primary school in Prague – “most older colleagues have no idea what is happening with Internet influencers and how children can be at risk by following them”.⁹⁶

This brings us to the second level, which concerns the need for a “problem-free” acceptance of the fact that from a technical point of view pupils and students as users will always be a few steps ahead of some of their teachers. Speaking today of the alpha generation and the so-called *screenagers*, the generation that in some cases could have touch-screen mobile phones, tablets, etc. as their “nannies”,⁹⁷ it is obvious that the intergenerational gap inherent in intuitive, user, theoretical and practical skills and knowledge of digital media will grow more and more in the future. For this reason – in some cases – it is desirable and meaningful for educators to let themselves be “drawn” into the media world of children and students leading to listening to each other and discussing aspects of media use and reception, etc. At the same time, teachers should not rely on the premise that children are victims of the media world and should work with pupils and students to develop creative self-realization opportunities for digital technology users because the “future concept of media education will have to look for interfaces with ‘less common’ areas of education (e.g. art or music education) and elaborate the possibilities of creative self-realization of users of these technologies.”⁹⁸ In this context, it is a return to the original idea of the cross-curricular nature of media education, which is to be a topic

⁹³ *Zvolši.info*. [online]. [2020-03-21]. Available at: <<https://zvolsi.info/>>.

⁹⁴ *Fakescape. O nás*. [online]. [2020-03-21]. Available at: <<https://fakescape.cz/o-nas/>>.

⁹⁵ *Kovyho mediální ring*. [online]. [2020-03-21]. Available at: <<https://www.jsns.cz/lekce/226333-kovyho-mediální-ring/>>.

⁹⁶ *Mladá učitelka: Většina starších kolegů se v prostředí internetu neorientuje a nemohou o tom děti učit*. [online]. [2020-03-24]. Available at: <<http://www.ceskaskola.cz/2018/07/mlada-ucitelka-vetsina-starsich-kolegu.html>>.

⁹⁷ *Nastupuje generace alfa a s ní interakce nových rozměrů*. [online]. [2020-03-23]. Available at: <<https://www.mediaguru.cz/clanky/2016/07/nastupuje-generace-alfa-a-s-ni-interakce-novych-rozmeru/>>.

⁹⁸ JIRÁK, J., ŠTASTNÁ, L., ZEŽULKOVÁ, M.: *Mediální výchova jako průřezové téma podkladová studie – revidovaná verze*. Prague : Národní ústav pro vzdělávání, 2017, p. 20. [online]. [2020-02-02]. Available at: <http://www.nuv.cz/file/3222_1_1/>.

pervading different areas of education.⁹⁹ Another level is related to the fact that, unlike some other topics or subjects to which (more) attention is paid at primary and secondary schools, media education is and will be a necessary skill for everyday life. It does not have to be questions such as whether media education should be part of the school-leaving examination¹⁰⁰ (so-called matura exam), etc., which could bring more harm than good, but the fact that “*development of media communication, resp. media literacy, as competence of its kind, should become a fundamental organizational principle of all education, as its quality will determine the level of processes in that ecological system called communication.*”¹⁰¹ Activities aimed at developing media literacy should naturally be understood as a lifelong process and should also include social, emotional, communication and other skills (which partly touches Šebesta's concept of media education as a component of communication education from the 1990s): “*For a long time, media literacy has concentrated on cognitive or evaluative skills. (...) However, current social online practices like online gaming or cyberbullying indicate that emotional and social skills are often involved as well.*”¹⁰² A similar concept was proposed by Bína, according to which the common goal of all sub-programs, directions, and plans for education in the 21st-century school and its educational priority is “*comprehensive communication competence*” and “*media literacy*”. These objectives include a. protective media pedagogy, b. media literacy education as education for adulthood (adulthood conceived as “*responsibility for communication*” with emphasis on the need for so-called “*social communication condition*”) c. media science (probably the most widespread understanding of media education); d. didactics of media; and e. media communication self-defense.¹⁰³

Overall, the aim should be that media education ceases to be perceived as a limited topic. Instead, it should be perceived as an overarching competence and the main aim of the various forms of media education should be “*to understand the nature and manifestations of current trends in world development, especially integration and globalization processes, and to see how these trends are reflected in daily life and the long-term direction of society.*”¹⁰⁴ At the same time, we need to consider the deeper and sophisticated link between media education in the family and school media education, and we agree that “*it is appropriate to interconnect the paradigmatic conceptualization of media socialization and its subsequent reflection in the form of conscious pedagogical practice of media education in the family.*”¹⁰⁵ Another level is related to the dominance of contemporary understanding of media education as the ability to recognize

⁹⁹ BÍNA, D. et al.: *Výchova k mediální gramotnosti*. České Budějovice : Jihočeská univerzita v Českých Budějovicích, 2005, p. 60.

¹⁰⁰ ŠÁRA, F.: *Zkuste si učit mediální výchovu v zemi, kde politici běžně sdílejí dezinformace, říká pedagog*. [online]. [2020-02-02]. Available at: <<https://www.novinky.cz/veda-skoly/clanek/zkuste-si-ucit-medialni-vychovu-v-zemi-kde-politici-bezne-sdileji-dezinformace-rika-pedagog-40060375>>.

¹⁰¹ JIRÁK, J., ŠTASTNÁ, L., ZEŽULKOVÁ, M.: *Mediální výchova jako průřezové téma podkladová studie – revidovaná verze*. Prague : Národní ústav pro vzdělávání, 2017, p. 21. [online]. [2020-02-02]. Available at: <http://www.nuv.cz/file/3222_1_1/>.

¹⁰² RIESMEYER, C., PFAFF-RÜDIGER, S., KÜMPEL, A.: Media Literacy and Developmental Tasks: A Case Study in Germany. In *Media Studies*, 2012, Vol. 3, No. 6, p. 44. [online]. [2020-02-02]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/285583511_Media_Literacy_and_Developmental_Tasks_A_Case_Study_in_Germany>.

¹⁰³ BÍNA, D.: *Výchova k mediální gramotnosti*. In ODALOŠ, P. (ed.): *Zborník materiálov zo 6. medzinárodnej vedeckej konferencie o komunikácii Banská Bystrica*. Banská Bystrica : Pedagogická fakulta Univerzity Mateja Bela v Banskej Bystrici, 2006, p. 204–205.

¹⁰⁴ KOUBEK, P.: *Rámcový vzdělávací program pro gymnázia*. Prague : Národní ústav pro vzdělávání, 2013, p. 79. [online]. [2020-03-18]. Available at: <<http://www.nuv.cz/file/159>>.

¹⁰⁵ SLOBODA, Z.: *Mediální socializace v rodině: několik poznámek k její konceptualizaci*. In *Mediální studia*, 2016, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 106.

fake news, misinformation, etc.¹⁰⁶ Above all, instead of constantly focusing on analyzing the truth of information, which can lead to people ultimately not believing anything, it is necessary to: “*help pupils perceive the epistemological context of understanding the essence of the message.*”¹⁰⁷ Apart from lessons focused on the analysis of fake news, misinformation, etc., it is also possible to take a didactic approach to others, so far less reflected topics or tendencies concerning, for example:

- the legal and legislative framework related to new issues we have not encountered so far (digital memory or a digital footprint, legal aspects related to the reflection of motherhood in the media and possible disagreement of children with publishing photos and information from their childhood by their parents, etc.),¹⁰⁸
- advertising effect of influencers, YouTubers, etc.,¹⁰⁹
- ideological bubbles¹¹⁰ (or echo chambers),
- the possible fatal consequences of taking a selfie (or with different challenges) on weaned trains etc.,¹¹¹
- psychological aspects related to media use (e.g. so-called. Nomophobia,¹¹² which is “*morbid fear of losing mobile reception, the battery going flat, the inability to turn on your phone or you losing your phone,*” the boundaries between online lives on social media and offline lives, cognitive distortion¹¹³ etc.)

Conclusion

It has been 13 years since Media Education has become a compulsory cross-curricular subject at Czech Primary Schools. While at the beginning of the implementation of this subject, attention was focused mainly on the analysis of manipulative techniques and strategies in the mass media environment, aspects related to the advent and development of new media (among others including weakening the gap between public and private) brought new challenges and the need to redefine the content of media education in the Czech educational reality. Simultaneously with the need to make changes in the content level, the consequences of fundamental changes in the media environment posed a difficult task for the pedagogical and

¹⁰⁶ Česká televize zve pedagogy na akreditované semináře o mediální výchově. [online]. [2020-03-19]. Available at: <<https://www.ceskatelevize.cz/vse-o-ct/ct-podporuje/ct-podporuje-kulturu/seminare-pro-pedagogy/>>.

¹⁰⁷ BRDIČKA, B.: *Paradox mediální výchovy podle Danah Boyd.* [online]. [2020-03-18]. Available at: <<https://clanky.rvp.cz/clanek/s/Z/21734/PARADOX-MEDIALNI-VYCHOVY-PODLE-DANAH-BOYD.html/>>.

¹⁰⁸ CHLUPÁČEK, O.: *Děti jako oběti i pachatelé. Internet mění kriminalitu, nejsme připraveni.* [online]. [2020-03-18]. Available at: <<https://nazory.aktualne.cz/komentare/deti-jako-obeti-i-pachatele-internet-meni-kriminalitu/r~33a69e4a295611e991e8ac1f6b220ee8/?redirected=1550792264>>.

¹⁰⁹ *Skrytou reklamu na internetu pozná jen jedno dítě z deseti, zjistili výzkumníci z Univerzity Karlovy.* [online]. [2020-03-19]. Available at: <<https://fsv.cuni.cz/skrytou-reklamu-na-internetu-pozna-jen-jedno-dite-z-deseti-zjistili-vyzkumnici-z-univerzity-karlovy>>.

¹¹⁰ NEUMAJER, O.: *Jak vykouknout z informační bubliny.* [online]. [2020-03-29]. Available at: <<https://clanky.rvp.cz/clanek/c/Z/21419/jak-vykouknout-z-informacni-bubliny.html/>>.

¹¹¹ *Mladík lezl na vagon a popálil se od troleje. Lékaři mu museli amputovat spodní část těla včetně pánve.* [online]. [2020-03-29]. Available at: <<https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/domaci/2659571-mladik-lezl-na-vagon-a-popalil-se-od-troleje-lekari-mu-museli-amputovat-spodni-cast>>.

¹¹² PIVOŇKOVÁ, E.: *Nomofobie, strach ze ztráty mobilního signálu – příznaky, projevy, symptomy.* [online]. [2020-03-29]. Available at: <<https://www.priznaky-projevy.cz/psychiatrie-sexuologie/661-nomofobie-strach-ze-ztraty-mobilniho-singalu-priznaky-projevy-symptomy>>.

¹¹³ LHOŤANOVÁ, A.: *Proč je naše poznávání a myšlení zkreslováno?* [online]. [2020-03-25]. Available at: <<https://spomocnik.rvp.cz/clanek/21409/PROC-JE-NASE-POZNAVANI-A-MYSLENI-ZKRESLOVANO.html>>.

academic community in the form of meaningful and thoughtful reflection of these societal changes in curricular documents, teaching materials and teaching itself. Especially in terms of the technological development of media, their spectrum and ways of use, much has changed but conceptual issues associated with the teaching of this cross-curricular topic (misunderstanding of the nature of a cross-curricular subject, looking at Media Education “as a kind of residual topic that has not received proper time allocation”,¹¹⁴ teachers’ opinions that there is not enough time for media education because of extensive content in basic subjects, etc.) have remained largely identical. However, as evidenced, for example, by the interest of professionals and the general public in the documentary *V síti*, the area of developing a critical view of the media is undoubtedly a key skill for life, which should have a strong and irreplaceable position in the context of school media education (and of course media education in the family, too).

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¹¹⁴ JIRÁK, J., ŠTASTNÁ, L., ZEŽULKOVÁ, M.: *Mediální výchova jako průřezové téma podkladová studie – revidovaná verze*. Prague : Národní ústav pro vzdělávání, 2017, p. 21. [online]. [2020-02-02]. Available at: <http://www.nuv.cz/file/3222_1_1/>.

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DIGITAL PLATFORMS AND MARKETING

MARKETING
PLATFORMS
DIGITAL

**MEGATRENDS
AND MEDIA**

ON THE EDGE

OUTLINE OF CZECH AND SLOVAK COMMUNITY IN SECOND LIFE

Alexandra Alföldiová – Andrej Trnka

ABSTRACT:

The contribution outlines different aspects of users and their engagement with the virtual world Second Life. The author of the contribution focuses primarily defining the basis of the virtual world Second Life and interpretation of the results from quantitative analysis in a form of a pilot questionnaire. Based on the theoretical knowledge, which is determined mainly by foreign authors the definition of Second Life is explained from different aspects. The author demonstrates main incentives of Czech and Slovak residents, who actively engage and spend time within the virtual space. The results from the questionnaire serve as a guideline to creating own virtual space in Second Life to promote the Faculty of Mass Media Communication.

KEY WORDS:

community, Czech, FMK, incentives, second life, Slovak, virtual community, virtual world

1 Introduction

Being a part of the virtual environment encourages users to experience a different quality to live outside of real life. The constant innovations in technology allow more users now to become a part of the expanding virtual platform with a few clicks. The boom of the virtual world in 2008 brought attention of people from all around the world and most of them joined in to explore the virtual space as something else entirely, different from anything they might have done before. Some of them are still active and what is keeping them online are numerous different incentives. The virtual world is filled with opportunities and examples of good practices and installment of tools and virtual machines, which helps residents to expand their knowledge and gather new skills. Other aspect of virtual platform is the community and activities within it, which motivate the residents to come back. The applied pilot questionnaire reveals the key objectives of residents and allows the author to define main categories of activities done within the community.

2 Second Life

The San Francisco-based company Linden Lab started as a company interested in technologies related to the design of tangible virtual reality. However, they later discovered that their technologies were more important than the tactile components of the virtual world itself, which led to the creation of the virtual world called Linden World in March 2002.¹ The virtual platform was after launching renamed to Second Life and became available to the public on June 3rd, 2003.² It is currently one of the most popular multi-purpose virtual worlds. In many ways, Second Life is similar to the classic mass RPG genre, yet Linden Lab has stated that their world is not a game, as there is no story conflict in their world, nor challenges that need to be fulfilled.³ J. Kingsley confirmed the statement by saying that Second Life is a purely virtual company, with no pre-agreed goal. At the same time, it is

¹ BOELLSTORFF, T.: *Coming of age in Second Life: An Anthropologist Explores the Virtually Human*. New Jersey : Princeton University Press, 2015, p. 37.

² LINDEN, L.: *Virtual World Simulation Training Prepares Real Guards on the US-Canadian Border: Loyalist College in SL*. [online]. [2020-04-20]. Available at: <http://wiki.secondlife.com/wiki/Case_Study:_Loyalist_College>.

³ CHATFIELD, T.: *Digitální svět 50 myšlenek, které musíte znát*. Český Těšín : Slovart, 2013, p. 172.

considered a part of social media according to the classification proposed by C. Wiesner, the reason is the high level of social presence and self-representation.⁴ In the official handbook, the authors describe Second Life as a world that was and will be a representation of the world as we know it. Except for the difference that it is constantly changing, much more often than the real one. The inhabitants of Second Life can complete the world around them according to their ideas. It is an open space platform that is purely built and shaped by the users. What would take several years in real life can be completed in Second life in a few hours.⁵ Users of Second Life are known as residents and Linden Lab officially refers to the public as to residents. In addition to using the avatar within a three-dimensional space, Second Life provides other ways to build a sense of social presence, express personality, and establish new relationships that are not part of other text-based computer communications. A. Natsis commented on Second Life and its presentation of virtual space that it is similar to physical space yet can provide benefits for the development of interpersonal and group communications and behaviors that enhance the educational experience. It can also trigger social norms, lay the foundations for appropriate classroom behavior, or build on the structure of the educational environment.⁶

A platform such as Second Life provides a visual experience and the opportunity to be part of a creative learning environment. The purpose of this visual experience is to help you engage and adapt to various communities and be a part of a hang out, entertaining, educational or other groups. The importance of the visual essence in Second Life is the ability to learn in possibilities that would not be possible in real life. Ch. Wankel, L. Withers and L. Leonard described the situation in Second Life to be a versatile communication tool through which they can participate and collaborate in group discussions. Numerous universities own their representative islands in Second Life, such as Princeton, Vassar or Harvard. Libraries of these universities have no spatial boundaries and are available to the residents.⁷ These attract the current generation of young people in particular. The educational opportunities provided by Second Life are fully usable, regardless of the focus of teaching. Different faculties use Second Life for the same purposes, which are primarily used for 3D online education, group meetings, class discussions, or bringing together students in educational events from different regions and countries. Compared to other online worlds, Second Life provides a much richer experience that allows you to engage more senses.⁸

3 Overview of Czech and Slovak Community

To outline the incentives of residents from Slovak Republic and Czech Republic, the author applied a short pilot survey to support their research. The overview of interests is dedicated to the Czechoslovak community and its residents, who were selected as a target audience for pilot survey of the dissertation project. The author observed the Czechoslovak Second Life group called www.secondlife.cz, which has 3177 members as of 19th April 2020, and the

⁴ ASLEITNER, H., WIESNER, C.: An integrated model of multimedia learning and motivation. In *Journal of Educational Multimedia and Hypermedia*, 2004, Vol. 13, No. 1, p. 6.

⁵ SAVIN-BADEN, M.: *A Practical Guide to using Second Life in Higher Education*. Berkshire : Open University Press, 2010, p. 9.

⁶ MIKROPOULOS, T. A., NATSIS, A.: Educational virtual environments: A ten-year review of empirical research (1999–2009). In *Computers and Education*, 2011, Vol. 56, No. 3, p. 772.

⁷ WANKEL, Ch., KINGSLEY, J.: *Higher Education in Virtual Worlds: Teaching and Learning in Second Life*. Bingley : Emerald Group Publishing, 2009, p. 5.

⁸ FREEDMAN, R.: *How to Make Real Money in Second Life*. New York : McGraw-Hill Professional, 2008, p. 13.

author applied the pilot survey from 15th December to 31st December, 2019. Past 365 days till 15th December 2019, the total number of 359 members were online and the rest of the members have not logged in during this period therefore the author considered them as inactive users. The survey was distributed through one channel, the notices in group chat, and targeted all the members in the group. According to the population size of 359 members, with the 95% confidence level and 10% margin of error, the author calculated a valid sample size is 76 responses. After the survey period, 106 of collected responses were valid. The survey aimed the major reasons of residents and their attitude towards Second Life. Education is not the only incentive, why residents seek Second Life and the reason differ, depending on many factors, including social status, real life, personality, interests, education and other.⁹ The asked questions in the survey were structured to mainly identify the Czechoslovak community by gender, age and their opinion on Second Life. It is necessary to point out the interests of the residents to create a concept of educational workshop or other activity in order to fulfill their expectations.¹⁰ The questions were divided into four categories: demographic information, age and time spent in Second Life, activities, love life and privacy.

The first question “*Where do you come from in real life?*” was necessary to identify the dominating nationality of the Czechoslovak community. Out of the 106 responses, 66,04% (67) respondents came from Czech Republic and 33,96% (36) respondents were from Slovakia. From the results we can consider people from Czech Republic being more likely to be interested in joining in the virtual environment such as Second Life. Moreover, according to the results, 64,15% (68) of respondents were female and 35,85% (38) of respondents were male. To specify the genders by country, 26,42% (28) respondents were Czech male residents, 39,62% (42) Czech female residents, 9,43% (10) of asked respondents were Slovak male residents and 24,53% (26) were Slovak female residents. The following demographic question related to real life information was targeted as the age of residents. The results split residents into five main age categories, which author considers could have different interests. The first category aged 18-24 joined 6 respondents including 4 Czech residents and 2 Slovak residents. The following category aged 25-34 included 17 Czech residents and 6 Slovak residents. The third category aged 35-50, included most of the respondents, 32 Czech respondents and 10 Slovak respondents. The category aged 51-65 was the second most common answer with 14 Czech residents and 13 Slovak residents. Last category gathered residents aged 65 < including 3 Czech residents and 5 Slovak residents. Based on measured results, the average age of residents in Czechoslovak community was 44,16 years. The results show that the average of Slovak residents was 48,10 years while Czech residents were 42,15 years. The highest age average was calculated for Slovak male residents with 52,6 years. The average age of Slovak female residents was 46,34 years. The average age of Czech male residents was 42,25 years and the youngest residents were Czech female residents with 42,10 years.

⁹ BARTLE, R.: *Designing Virtual Worlds*. Indianapolis : New Riders Publishing, 2003, p. 27.

¹⁰ See also: MESSINGER, P. R. et al.: Virtual worlds – past, present, and future: New direction in social computing. In *Decision Support Systems*, 2009, Vol. 47, No. 3, p. 204-228. [online]. [2020-04-20]. Available at: <<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.321.8468&rep=rep1&type=pdf>>.

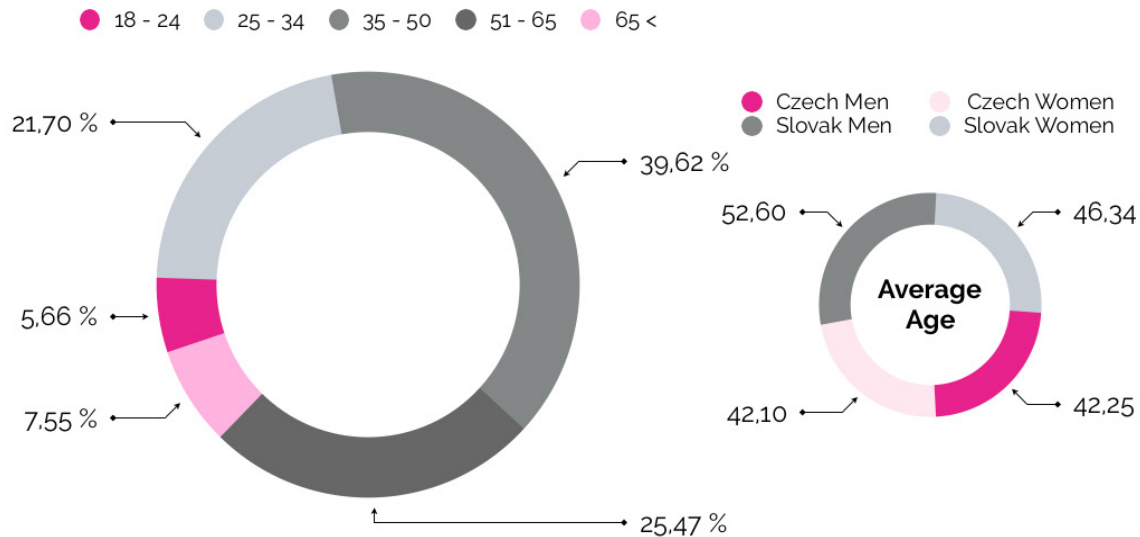


Chart 1, 2: Age of Respondents and Average Age based on Nationality and Gender

Source: own processing, 2020.

The last demographic question accessed to create the image of residents and their real-life status. Only 5,7% (6) of questioned residents were students, 1,9% of respondents were on maternity leave, while the majority was employed 42,5% (45) and freelancing 17,9% (19). Seniors on pension represented 13,2% (4) and the rest of the residents 18,9% (20) residents were unemployed. According the results from demographic section, the author outlines the community as a group of mature, active, working residents, who are interested in new technologies and are willing to learn. The section of following questions helps to define the incentives of residents and their experience in Second Life. The second section was limited to four questions and offers better insight into their attitude towards the virtual world. The first question allows to see connection between the residents and Second Life based on the age of their accounts. Majority of respondents, 67,9% (72) answered, that their avatars are 8 years and older. Second most common answer 18,9% (20), answered 4-7 years. The next represented category 9,4% (10) was a group with 1-3-year-old avatars and lastly 3,8% (4) of the respondents answered that their avatars were not older than 1 year. The last category with avatars younger than 1 month remained unselected. According to the statistics, the author points out devotion and willingness of residents to return to the virtual platform. The high number of older accounts displays the will to be present in the virtual environment and actively engage with other residents.

The following two questions define the most common times to reach them in Second Life and how many days a week they spend in the virtual environment. The rate by 88,7% (94) residents confirmed the active presence by ticking the answer every day. These users log into the virtual space on daily basis creating a repeating habit. The remaining percentages were split evenly between weekends only 4,7% (5) and working days only 6,6% (7) meaning, that the residents visit the virtual world any day they decide. The following question confirmed the previous statements and split the residents into two main categories. The first category includes very active users 71,7% (76), who are coming to the virtual world on daily basis and active users 22,6% (24), who log in at least 3 to 5 times a week. The second category includes fewer active residents 3,8% (4), who log in less than two days a week and almost inactive users, who check on Second Life approximately 5 times a month 1,9% (2). The option “less than 10 times a year” remained unselected. The last question targeted at their relation to Second Life in sense of trust and economic status in Second Life. The question refers to the

use of real-life currency in order to exchange Second Life currency and purchase items for their avatars or other in-world objects. 92,5% (98) respondents answered yes and only 7,5% (8) residents did not register their credit or debit cards to complete the purchase of virtual currency. According to this set of question, the community can be identified as financially independent and willing to spare money on virtual objects in order to satisfy their needs and desires. While the incentive of every individual differs, they all can be considered as residents, who are active on economy market of Second Life and log in often to interact with others or do activities, which are impossible in real life environment. The following question was targeted the most common activities Czechoslovak residents in time spent in Second Life. The respondents were to answer an open question “*What is the main activity you do in Second Life?*”. Based on the results the author identifies 5 major categories of people in the community. Four of the activities were very close in the percentage, yet one category gained the least percentage.

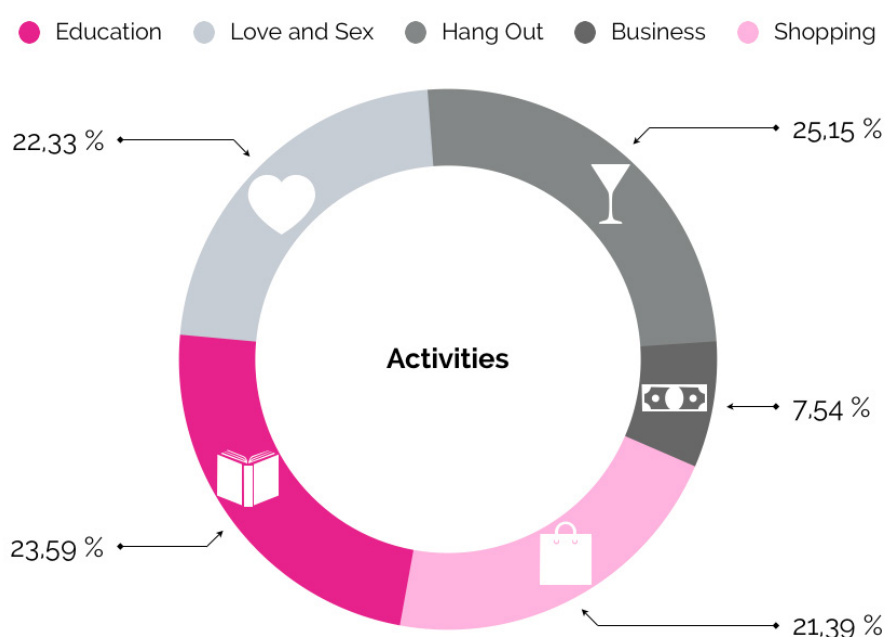


Chart 3: Activities of Respondents in Second Life

Source: own processing, 2020.

The category with the least percentage 7,54% was related to virtual business in a form of ownership of a public place, club, store, service, rentals. These residents consider their main activity in Second Life related to profiting and creating content for the community in different approaches. The following category with 21,39% is mainly connected with female respondents and represents shopping and fashion activities. This group of respondents and consumers and create profit for the other category. The shopaholic category of residents seeks shopping events, special offers and devotes to fashion. Next category is seeking in Second Life virtual relationships and adult intercourse 22,33%, shapes relationships with others and forms virtual families. Residents, who are relationship oriented in Second Life tend to be emotional and more opened to share personal information and create connections outside the virtual environment. Following category defines residents, who seek education and activities, which improve their skills and expand knowledge. 23,59% of asked respondents defined their major activities in Second Life with educational purposes on many levels. While most of the residents are learning how to take pictures, edit them in Photoshop program outside virtual world, other residents are interested in educating themselves by attending workshops and lectures in world on specific topics with international lecturers. Some of the respondents

attempt to improve their building skills and learning the LSL scripting language for programming commands. The largest group of respondents, 25,15% visit Second Life in order to meet new people, socialize and hang out with virtual friends. These users tend to be around the Czechoslovak region the most and use local chat to communicate with other residents around them. This group of residents can be seen in virtual clubs, as some of the responses pointed out the importance of music presence during their time in Second Life. In some cases, the border between friendship and love merge and some residents, who identified hanging out as their main activity can migrate to the relationship category.

The last couple of questions in the pilot survey were aimed at the love life and privacy of Czechoslovak residents. The question *“Have you ever been partnered in Second Life?”* was answered by five different perspectives. While 34% of residents are currently in relationship and display the partner in their profile to make it visible for other residents, 32,1% of residents used to have a relationship but is currently single and not seeking a new partner. 17,9% of respondents have a partner but keeps the relationship private without public announcements or partner displayed in avatar profile. Only 6,6% of respondents have never had a partner but are opened to a relationship and 9,4% respondents consider it unacceptable and don't want to create virtual relationship under any circumstances. The conclusion question referred to possibility of merging Second Life and real life. The question *“Have you ever met a Second Life resident in real life?”* gathered different responses. The first group of residents 32,1% has never met a Second Life person in real life but is opened to the option. The other two categories received the same number of responses. 21,7% of respondents met a resident from Second Life in real life once and other 21,7% would never meet a person from Second Life to remain anonymous. 15,1% of respondents created new friendships in Second Life, which evolved into real life friendships and 9,4% of respondents met their real-life partner in Second Life. According to the results of pilot survey applied on a small community in Second Life, the author concludes the different aspects of Second Life and the incentives of the residents. To analyze the intention of residents in depth, it is necessary to ask additional questions and widen the activities within the virtual space. The sample of respondents outlined the potential and diversity of the virtual platform.

Conclusion

The current technology evolution gives us access to virtual platforms such as Second Life to engage and communicate with other people. This type of virtual platforms challenges us to be present and active and offers numerous incentives and possibilities for interaction. Based on the results the author claims the key reasons for people to remain in-world is due to lack of interaction in real life and desire to communicate and bond with other residents. While some residents are focused on the social aspect of the platform, other residents seek positions to grow and educate themselves. The virtual platform allows residents to create and be present on seminars, classes, workshops and other activities, which help to gather new skills and improve in certain area. The wide range of incentives allows to create an image of interests of residents in Second Life and creates guidelines for building the Faculty of Mass Media Communication. When understanding the interests of residents in-world, the faculty can be designed as appealing to the public with the possibility to raise interest in the area, which can eventually serve as a good promotional tool in the future.

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SOCIAL MEDIA USING IN REGION FOR COMMUNICATION WITH ITS CUSTOMERS

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ABSTRACT:

The function of regional marketing is based on knowledge, which informs us about what product it can offer, what opportunities are there, which is one of its strengths and weaknesses. Regional marketing and its success is based on findings from continual monitoring and evaluation of quality of the state of region also through social networks. Internet and new technologies have been able to activate markets, but also to connect humans internationally. Today, we are witnessing new opportunities that are almost always available. Social media causes interaction and communication between users. Social networks are the best known subset of social media. We can observe different content variations, sharing of them, up to the comments of the users. Social networks have become an integral part of communication for ordinary users as well as for cities or regions. For regions, using social media is an advantage in form of their own statements on the issues addressed. Today, the information that the region publishes through social networks reaches the customer immediately. This ensures high level of information for their users as well as the dissemination of this information. The aim of this paper is to bring knowledge that reflects social media types used for communication with customers in a selected Slovak region.

KEY WORDS:

communication, customers, region, social media, social networks

1 Introduction

The use of the Internet has caused improving of our economy. Millions of people around the world have become accustomed to its daily use, and today we see it as an essential part of our lives. The power of the internet today is many times higher than it was ten years ago. In the middle of 2019, more than 4, 5 billion users were using the Internet. The global population was more than 7, 7 billion people in 2019. It is estimated that more than 5 billion people worldwide will be using the Internet by the end of 2020.¹ Science and technology development is unstoppable, constantly moving forward and coming up with the latest prototypes. The perspective of using mobile technologies and the social web has changed the attitude of people which use the internet. Innovations in this form have been able to connect humans with each other, creating a global environment. Few of us would be able to live without apps today.² Among the best known apps are e.g. WhatsApp, Facebook or Instagram. Users tend to stay in touch with family and friends around the world while using apps. Such social interactions that we can track on the internet are called social networks. Social network sites are currently the most powerful tool for managing and communicating social relations. We include social network sites in online services that we can use to build relationships. Interactions on social network sites arise between individuals or groups of people.³ Individuals who communicate on social networks are like nodes that create communication to connect with the outside world.⁴ Janouch⁵ commented on social network sites as web-based services by which an individual can create a public or semi-public profile within a designated system. Also, it can post a list of users with whom it shares its social interactions. The user

¹ *Internet usage statistics*. [online]. [2020-04-12]. Available at: <<https://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm>>.

² FTOREK, J.: *Public relations jako ovlivňování mínění*. Prague : Grada Publishing a.s., 2017, p. 32.

³ *Global Ad Spending Update*. [online]. [2020-04-13]. Available at: <<https://www.emarketer.com/content/global-ad-spending-update>>.

⁴ DORČÁK, P.: *eMarketing – Ako oslovit' zákazníka na internete*. Prešov : EZO, 2012, p. 47.

⁵ JANOUC, V.: *Internetový marketing*. Brno : Computer Press, 2010, p. 65.

can also view the list of connections created by other users in the system. According to White, social network sites are in any form that users can use to communicate, collaborate and connect with communities. It is about creating profiles on web apps that users connect to and share information in the designated space. Essentially, a social networking service is based on user profiles, creating social interactions between users, complemented by other services. A lot of social network sites operate on the internet. It allows users to exchange messages or emails worldwide in just a few seconds.

Social network sites have been able to inspire people's interest in innovation and have become a social and cultural phenomenon. More than 32% of the world's population is currently using social media. The primary goal of using social media by their users is mainly to connect other users. Virtual meetings of users who share common interests in this way share information with each other. When using social media, we can observe the interactions of users of different age, gender, race, culture, social background, political and religious opinions.⁶ The impact of social media on the population is enormous and more and more people are still connecting to the internet. The benefits that social network sites bring to their users can be seen primarily in a wide range of activities. These sites also aim to bring together users who share the same language, religious or racial identity, political opinions and or environmental behaviour. The sites that individuals use may vary. Their scope is diverse, so it may happen that one page has better communication background than another. Diversity is also noticeable at the level of information tools used. These include blogging, photo and video sharing, mobile and tablet connectivity. Social network popularity is determined by the functions and individual can use.⁷ The more features and services available to an individual, the more likely they are to remain loyal to the social network sites. If a social network sites do not meet the criteria required by an individual, he or she may want to meet his/her needs with another social network site. Social media uses two-way communication between users, also known as many-to-many. It is a communication model, the concept of which was introduced by the theorist Vin Crosbi. It is characterized by the possibility of disseminating individualized information to a potential unlimited number of people. It is further characterized in that any user, creator, distributor or consumer can do changes in the content and further distribute it. Conversely, the one-to-one mechanism is typical for a mass media, which are characterized in particular by the fact that the flow of communication goes in one direction and the absolute control over the spread has the creator.

2 Social Media and Region

The literature review for this article has revealed that social networking sites are constantly being updated and new sites are being created. The future requires the use of social networks. Some authors agree that communication mediated over the Internet is a depleted form in which sterile social interactions are exchanged in comparison to real ones. However, there are many studies that speak of the opposite and that interaction on social networks improves communication between individuals. For example, Dwyer⁸ confirmed in his research that social networks serve to maintain and deepen relationships as well as to develop new ones. Similarly, the finding that individuals have increased social productivity through social

⁶ SCOTT, D. M.: *Nové pravidlá marketingu & PR*. Bratislava : Easton Books, 2010, p. 21.

⁷ BEDNÁŘ, V.: *Marketing na sociálních sítích*. Brno : Computer press, 2011, p. 45.

⁸ DWYER, C. et al.: Trust and Privacy Concern within Social Networking Sites: A Comparison of Facebook and MySpace. In *Proceedings of AMCIS 2007*. Keystone, Colorado : dblp, 2007, p. 340-349. [online]. [2020-04-14]. Available at: <<http://ccsis.pace.edu/~dwyer/research/DwyerAMCIS2007.pdf>>.

networks has been confirmed. Modern times require up-to-date solutions to improve the situation. Cities and regions are increasingly aware of the importance of using social networks to interact with their customers. These are also called interactions in the G2C (government to customer) sector. By regional customer we mean a resident, tourist or entrepreneur in a selected region. It is hard to imagine that there are no social networks like Facebook or Instagram in today's world. According to Global Digital Report 2019⁹, social media use has increased by 9% since January 2018 and number of social media users also increased worldwide. Similarly, the survey pointed to the fact that social media are using unequally across countries. The top 5 countries using social media above worldwide average (45%) are UAE, Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong. The UAE achieved in January 2019 up to 99% active use of social media in the country. As far as European countries are concerned, Sweden ranked 10th place with 72% of active use of social media in the country. According to the survey, the least social media using countries are Nigeria (12%), Kenya (16%) and Ghana (19%). The source of this survey was active users of the most important social networks in comparison with the total population of the country. In the middle of 2019, the European Commission published results on the measurement of the digital economy and society (DESI)¹⁰. The aim of DESI is to monitor the overall digital performance of Europe and to monitor the progress of EU countries in the field of digital competitiveness. According to the results, connectivity has improved within the EU countries, but this is still not enough to meet new demanding needs. More than a third of economically active Europeans do not have digital skills, and most jobs require at least basic digital skills. Only 31% of Europeans have advanced digital skills when using the Internet.

The results of the survey point to an increase in the percentage of Europeans using the internet at least once a week (83%), and only 11% of the EU population has never been online. Businesses are increasingly using digital technology, but e-commerce is growing slowly. The Digital Agenda on Women points out that EU countries which are digitally competitive, are also leaders in the participation of women in the digital economy. However, inequalities between men and women persist in the ICT (information and communication technologies) field. Women earn on average 19% less than men in the industry and make up only 17% of ICT professionals. In 2019, Slovakia ranked 21st position among the 28 EU member states in DESI measurements.¹¹ Compared to last year, the country lost one position. Good measurement results in the country are mainly in the share of the population with basic and advanced digital skills, these are higher than the EU average. It is also an improvement in internet connectivity, the use of internet services and public digital services. Slovakia has 88% of households connected to the internet, which ranked 23rd place. However, the average of EU countries in the internet connection is up to 97%. The number of Slovaks who never used the internet fell to 13%. Up to 60% of Slovak companies stated that they could not fill jobs that require expertise in information and communication technologies. More and more people use online shops to buy and sell goods and services in Slovakia, almost three-quarters of them are involved in social networks. In the area of digital technologies integration by enterprises, Slovakia ranked 21st place among EU countries. Every second company in Slovakia has a very low digitization rate of 46% and only 13% of companies are highly

⁹ *Share of households with internet Access in Slovakia from 2007 to 2018*. [online]. [2020-04-13]. Available at: <<https://www.statista.com/statistics/377764/household-internet-access-in-slovakia/>>.

¹⁰ *Index digitálnej ekonomiky a spoločnosti (DESI)*. [online]. [2020-04-13]. Available at: <<file:///C:/Users/okay/Downloads/DESI2019LANGSlovakia.pdf>>.

¹¹ *Každá obec na Slovensku by do konca 2020 mala mať rýchly internet*. [online]. [2020-04-13]. Available at: <<https://www.vicpremier.gov.sk/aktuality/informatizacia/kazda-obec-na-slovensku-by-do-konca-2020-mala-mat-rychly-internet/index.html>>.

digitized. The EU average is 18%. In the open data indicator, the country reached 8th place above the EU average. On the contrary, in the area of digital public services, Slovakia ended far below the EU average.

Over time, social media has become a regular part of people's lives. The term social media is often changed with the term social network sites. Therefore, it is important to explain these two concepts. Social network sites divide users into different groups that hold back their common interests. The groups overlap and form a social network, thanks to which, for example, the regions can also present their opinions, share current information and news. Social users have the ability to share photos, videos and comment on other users' posts.¹² We can therefore say that social network sites bring people together in a certain way and serve primarily for communication between users. In addition to its own website, the region often uses social network sites to spread news. Information about the region is also provided on social network sites for residents, tourists or entrepreneurs. In many cases, the websites of the regions are directly linked to selected social network sites. Social media are intended primarily for the development of social contacts and their association. The biggest benefit is that each user can change, add, comment or share content. The condition is that the user must always be registered. Above all, social media provide a lot of space for new ideas that are easily spreading among all users. Social media also includes social network sites, but these are subordinate. Social media includes, for example blogs, wikis, chat groups, polls, images or videos.¹³ Thanks to social media, the region's customers are becoming active viewers and content creators. The advantage is that users choose what they are interested in and what they want to receive themselves. They can also actively comment on their selection. In the operation of the regions, it is important that each of them considers whether they can communicate with customers through social media and whether this communication will be effective and successful.

Social media has become a platform that is easily accessible to anyone with the Internet connection. Increased communication within the region through social media promotes awareness of it.¹⁴ Moreover, social media serves as a low-cost platform for regions to effectively run marketing campaigns. This modern form of marketing usually focuses on creating content that would attract the attention of the target group and encourage users to share it on social networks. Regions maintain regular communication with users through social media. This is the space through which regions can effectively attract their customers, sympathy and event visitors. The right use of social media by region allows showing its big potential.

3 Method

The aim of this paper is to bring knowledge that reflects social media types used for communication with customers in a selected Slovak region. We chose for our research Trenčín region. With this research, we wanted to find out which social media are used by customers of the region to search information about it, and which are most preferred among customers – residents, tourists and entrepreneurs of the Trenčín region. Our research sample

¹² TREADWAY, Ch., SMITH, M.: *Marketing na Facebooku*. Brno : Computer Press, 2015, p. 47.

¹³ MIKULÁŠ, P.: *Komunikačné preferencie užívateľov sociálnych sietí*. [online]. [2020-04-14]. Available at: <https://pmikulas.weebly.com/uploads/4/3/0/3/4303126/mikul_peter.pdf>.

¹⁴ BOYD, D., ELLISON, N.: Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship. In *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 2012, Vol. 13, No. 1, p. 211-229.

contained 121 respondents, who are residents, tourists or entrepreneurs of the Trenčín region. The survey has been conducted in March 2020. We chose a questionnaire as a research method. The questionnaire was compiled by the authors of this article and consisted of 19 multiple choice questions. The questionnaire was distributed through on-line platform Google Forms. In our research, we have established 4 hypothesis, which confirmation or refutation is contained in chapter 3 Results and discussion. The results of our research are presented in the same chapter.

4 Results and Discussion

The Trenčín region is one of the smaller regions in Slovakia and its area reaches only two thirds of the value for the average large region (4 500 km²). Trenčín region has almost 600 000 residents. It is located in the western part of Slovakia, surrounded by 4 regions – Žilina, Banská Bystrica, Nitra and Trnava region. There is also another one region but behind the borders with Czech Republic – Zlín. The cultural center of the region in Trenčín is a city of exhibitions and international fairs in the field of fashion. The dominant feature of the regional town is Trenčín castle. Tourists are attracted by many cultural and historical sites such as Bojnice, Beckov or Uhrovec. Popular destinations for the visitors are the spas in Trenčianske Teplice.



Picture 1: Trenčín region in Slovak Republic

Source: *Trenčiansky kraj*. [online]. [2020-04-14]. Available at: <https://www.tsk.sk/trenciansky-samospravny-kraj.html?page_id=116>.

A total of 64 residents, 39 tourists and 18 entrepreneurs of the Trenčín region took part in our research. Among all customers, the region was represented mainly by men (55, 39%). However, only in the group of tourists, women had the highest proportion (16, 52%). In the sample of residents, the group of people aged 26 – 35 years was the most represented. In the sample of tourists it was a group with an age variance of 36 – 45 years and in the sample of entrepreneurs also a sample with an age variance of 36 – 45 years. More than 47% of respondents who answered the questionnaire have completed High school.

Table 1: Sample of resident’s respondents

Residents		
Variable		Percentage
Gender	Female	23,14%
	Male	29,75%
Age	18 - 25	9,60%
	26 - 35	20,40%
	36 - 45	14,00%

	46 - 55	6,00%
	56 +	2,89%
Qualification	High school	26,89%
	Bachelor	10,00%
	Master	16,00%

Source: own processing

Table 2: Sample of tourist's respondents

Tourists		
Variable		Percentage
Gender	Female	16,52%
	Male	15,70%
Age	18 - 25	8,00%
	26 - 35	7,00%
	36 - 45	13,25%
	46 - 55	1,97%
	56 +	2,00%
Qualification	High school	17,00%
	Bachelor	8,40%
	Master	6,82%

Source: own processing

Table 3: Sample of entrepreneur's respondents

Entrepreneurs		
Variable		Percentage
Gender	Female	4,95%
	Male	9,94%
Age	18 - 25	4,00%
	26 - 35	3,11%
	36 - 45	4,20%
	46 - 55	2,50%
	56 +	1,08%
Qualification	High school	4,00%
	Bachelor	6,00%
	Master	4,89%

Source: own processing

The research includes 4 hypothesis, which confirmation or refutation we could verify on basis of the answers of the respondents.

- **Hypothesis 1: Respondents prefer to search for information about the Trenčín region on on-line media rather than on off-line media.**

The Internet is one of the most used resources by which we can work towards the information we are looking for. The results of recent research conducted by DESI point to an increase in the percentage of Europeans using the internet at least once a week (83%), and only 11% of the EU population has never been online. The Trenčín region tries to communicate with people via the Internet. However, the region tries most to communicate through social network sites, where it shares various actualities from the area of meetings, gatherings, events

or current projects in the region. The results in our questionnaire clearly show that respondents (62%) search for information about the Trenčín region mainly through the Internet. It is followed by a newspaper with only 18%. The result of this hypothesis is its confirmation. Respondents prefer the possibility of using the Internet as a source of information about the region.

5. What is your favourite source of information about the Trenčín region?

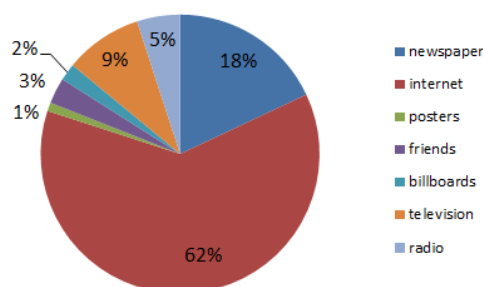


Chart 1: Favourite source of information of all respondents

Source: own processing

- **Hypothesis 2: More than half of the residents use social network sites to search for information about the Trenčín region.**

Social network sites form a subset of social media. The most well-known social network sites include Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and LinkedIn. Social network sites are not intended only for the B2C sector and that is why cities and regions are gradually realizing their power.

12. Where do you most often search for information about the Trenčín region?

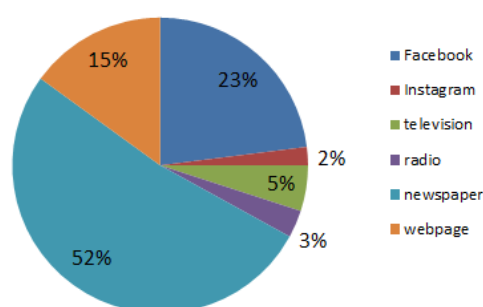


Chart 2: Primary source of information for residents

Source: own processing

However, despite this fact, social network sites are not among the primary sources of information about the region for residents. More than half of the residents (52%) said in the questionnaire that they search for information about the region most often through a newspaper. And the newspaper was followed by the social network site called Facebook, which was joined by 23% of respondents. The most represented group of residents were respondents aged between 25 – 36 years, which could affect the results. This is because people, after successfully completing their studies, tend to look for information in traditional media such as newspapers. The hypothesis is not confirmed in this case.

- **Hypothesis 3: Tourists search for information about Trenčín region rather on Facebook than on the webpage.**

Today the website is considered as the basis for the region's communication with outside world. It must be updated regularly and at least every citizen of the region should have access to it. Trenčín region has been using the website for about 15 years. In recent years, it has been redesigned to provide a modern and clear design that enables quick interaction with site visitors. In headline of web page, there are strategically positioned external buttons for other social media used by Trenčín region. These are Facebook, Google+, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube and RSS feeds. With a simple click-through, the visitor can view other pages or other news from Trenčín region. Facebook is one of the most popular social networks in Slovakia. Trenčín region is active in the use of modern social networks. On Facebook page has more than 5 500 fans.

16. Where did you search for information about Trenčín region before visiting it?

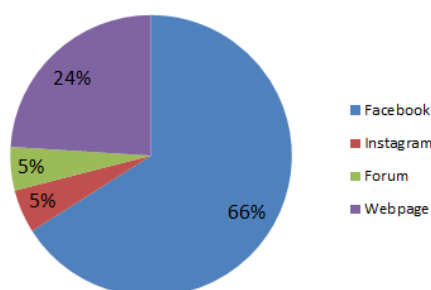


Chart 3: Tourist's source of information about region

Source: own processing

Tourists who are interested in visiting the Trenčín region search for information mainly on the social network site called Facebook (66%). Through this question, we found that it is easier for tourists to search for information on Facebook than on the webpage on the Trenčín region. Only 24% of tourists who are going to visit the region are looking for the information there. The hypothesis is confirmed in this case.

- **Hypothesis 4: More than half of entrepreneurs of the Trenčín region consider social media as a suitable form of presenting the region on them.**

More than half of asked entrepreneurs (54%) claim that the Trenčín region should continue to communicate through social media. However, 23% of respondents do not like the region's communication on social media. Entrepreneurs, from their point of view, evaluate the social media used by the region as insufficient for them. Entrepreneurs do not find significant actualities that could affect their business or future existence. The hypothesis is confirmed in this case, too.

18. Do you agree with the statement that Trenčín region should continue to communicate with people through social media?

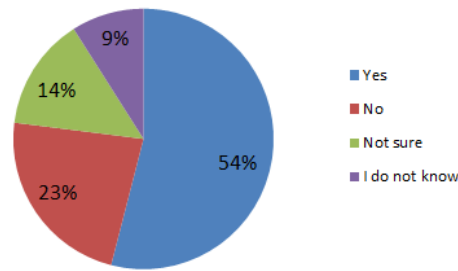


Chart 4: Statement of entrepreneurs to social media of region

Source: own processing

Social media is currently experiencing a big boom in human use. The number of social media users is constantly increasing and social media is trying to adapt to them. They create useful features, change and also constantly improve the visual interface of the site. Social media provide us with the opportunity to create content and then comment on it or contribute with our own ideas. This is a great advantage over traditional media, which their users are also aware of. And because of these things, social media is one of the favourite virtual places where people spend their free time.

Conclusion

Social media has undoubtedly become a phenomenon in society in recent years. Almost no one can live without social media, even it is private or public sector. Regions are not idle and are trying to take advantage of current social media trends that could make them more competitive. The daily competition between regions forces to think competent people a step forward as their opponent to overtake and become a perfect place for life, work, relax and also business. But there are regions that are trying to implement news more than others. This is also related to the use of social media. For example, some regions use only a web page and others are willing to build their identity on the other social media. The fact is that some countries are more socially open than others, and the use of social media also depends on this. In order to better target communication and to verify whether it is worth to use social media in the region, it is necessary for the region to conduct research. The research conducted by us in Trenčín region in March 2020 shows that:

- Respondents which participated on research are interested in up-up-date information about the region, mainly through the use of the Internet.
- For the residents of the Trenčín region, the local newspaper is one of the most sought-after sources of information, not the social network site called Facebook.
- For tourists who are planning to visit the Trenčín region, Facebook is one of the main sources of information about the region.
- Entrepreneurs consider communication of the Trenčín region on social media as a suitably chosen alternative to traditional media.

We are all witnessing how social media is becoming a leader in informing people. The media does not only play its primary role in bringing new information, but this is also possible way how to spend free time or entertainment. Therefore, it is indisputable that monitoring and research in this area is important for human society in several ways. A growing number of organizations and companies use social media on a daily basis to communicate with the

outside world. B2C (business to customer) is not just the only one sector which uses social media to communicate with others. The G2C (government to customer) sector is also increasingly beginning to communicate via social media, especially social network sites. It is essential for the regions to focus on those social media platforms that are popular in the country. For example, Facebook is more popular in Europe than Twitter, but in America it is the opposite. It is necessary for the region to know in which market it operates and what can drive it forward compared to its competitors. Alternatively, region can get inspired by the competitors, but it is preferable to implement proven news.

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COVID-19- OUR BEST CHANCE TO CHANGE UNIVERSITIES

Ludmila Čábyová – Alena Hrušková

ABSTRACT:

The authors respond to the current situation and the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic in education. They point to areas that may be affected by the corona crisis. Effective communication is a prerequisite for overcoming the crisis in higher education conditions. The authors conducted research and present the results of the use of social media during the first month of the crisis at seven faculties that organize education in the field of media and communication studies.

KEY WORDS:

Covid-19, crisis, Facebook, higher education, marketing communication, social media, universities

Introduction

In 1665, Cambridge University closed because of the plague. Isaac Newton decided to work from home. He discovered calculus and the laws of motion.

In March 2020, the problems of the COVID-19 pandemic began to fully emerge in Slovakia across all sectors and areas of social life. In this paper, the authors focus their attention on the field of higher education and the crisis situation that occurred over almost all the world. The crisis scenario is different in developed and developing countries. Universities in developed countries have remained closed and have converted full-time teaching to distance learning. Crisis communication of universities presupposes intensive communication in the online environment with its students and teachers. The method of communication needs to be adapted to the target group with which the schools communicate. In this paper, the authors present the results of research of the communication of Slovak universities using social networks and look for answers whether the universities communicate more intensively and effectively during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1 The Crisis and Education

Coombs¹ defines crisis as a significant threat to operations that can have negative consequences if not handled properly. Tench and Yeoman² (2006) note a crisis as an event that disrupts the normal operations of an organization and if, badly managed, can ruin hard won reputations. When a crisis does occur, events usually unfold rapidly, leaving little time for planning, therefore advance preparation is essential. From this we can note that every organization has to deal with some form of crisis during its existence, therefore effective planning and management of a crisis is essential for the survival of any organization. Higher education institutions play a critical role in the social, cultural and economic development of any country. Lerbinger³ identifies these types of crisis: natural disasters, technological crisis confrontational crisis, crisis of malevolence, crisis of organizational misdeeds, workplace violence, rumours. Crises in higher academic institutions in most developing countries could take several forms, like: (1) vandalism, (2) workers' strikes, (3) lockouts by employers, (4) non-commitment to contracts,

¹ COOMBS, W. T.: *Ongoing Crisis Communication: Planning, Managing and responding*. Thousand Oaks, CA : SAGE Publications, 2014, p. 74.

² TENCH, R., YEOMAN, L.: *Enhancing Public Relations*. Harlow : Prentice Hall, 2006, p. 115.

³ LERBINGER, O.: *The crisis manager: facing risk and responsibility*. Mahwah, NJ : Erlbaum, 1997, p. 84.

(5) students' cultism/terrorism, and (7) boycott of classes, amongst others.⁴ The crisis can be caused by man, but it can also exist independently of the will of man. It follows from the above that a crisis is an extraordinary situation that disrupts or changes the economic or social functioning of a particular entity, region, country. It is difficult to predict. Management of higher education institutions can avoid or be better prepared to handle crises, if they have a crisis communication plan in place and if they communicate effectively during these uncertain periods of time. Apart from having a crisis communications plan, public relations practitioners need to develop communication strategies and processes to influence the cause of conflicts to the benefit of the organizations' many stakeholders.

The crisis around the spread of COVID-19 in 2020 denies some of the basic characteristics of a crisis. It can be classified as a health crisis, with which the school system already has considerable experience in developing countries. However, the crisis in 2020 has affected the whole world indiscriminately, not limited to the lower social layer and not dependent on national borders. Unlike natural disasters, it is a long-term crisis, difficult to predict and affecting all areas of our lives. It is a crisis that has changed people's purchasing behaviour, restricted their freedom of movement and residence. The 2019–20 coronavirus pandemic has affected educational systems worldwide, leading to the widespread closures of schools, universities and colleges. As of 12 April 2020, approximately 1.716 billion learners have been affected due to school closures in response to the pandemic. According to UNESCO monitoring, 188 countries have implemented nationwide closures and 5 have implemented local closures, impacting about 99.4 percent of the world's student population.⁵ School closures impact not only students, teachers, and families, but have far-reaching economic and societal consequences. School closures in response to COVID-19 have shed light on various social and economic issues, including student debt⁶, digital learning, food insecurity,⁷ and homelessness,⁸ as well as access to childcare, health care, housing, internet, and disability services. The impact has been more severe for disadvantaged children and their families, causing interrupted learning, compromised nutrition, childcare problems, and consequent economic costs to families who could not work.⁹

In response to school closures, UNESCO recommended the use of distance learning programmes and open educational applications and platforms that schools and teachers can use to reach learners remotely and limit the disruption to education. School closures impact not only students, teachers, and families, but have far-reaching economic and societal consequences. School closures in response to COVID-19 have shed light on

⁴ See also: EFFIONG, A. I.: Managing reputation risk and situational crisis in higher educations of learning. In *Independent Journal of Management & Production*, 2014, Vol 5, No. 2, p. 458-479. [online]. [2020-04-02]. Available at: <<http://www.ijmp.jor.br/index.php/ijmp/article/view/158/388>>.

⁵ *Education: From disruption to recovery*. [online]. [2020-04-02]. Available at: <<https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse>>.

⁶ MITCHEL, J., JAMERSON, J.: *Student-Loan Debt Relief Offers Support to an Economy Battered by Coronavirus*. [online]. [2020-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.wsj.com/articles/student-loan-debt-relief-offers-support-to-an-economy-battered-by-coronavirus-11584735842>>.

⁷ TURNER, C., KAMENETZ, A.: *School race to feed students amid coronavirus closuers*. [online]. [2020-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.npr.org/2020/03/20/818300504/schools-race-to-feed-students-amid-coronavirus-closures?t=1586686756145>>.

⁸ NGUMBI, E.: *Coronavirus closings can strand poor foreign homeless college students column*. [online]. [2020-04-03]. Available at: <<https://eu.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2020/03/17/coronavirus-closings-can-strand-poor-foreign-homeless-college-students-column/5054621002/>>.

⁹ *Coronavirus deprives nearly 300 million students of their schooling: UNESCO*. [online]. [2020-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.thetelegram.com/news/world/coronavirus-deprives-nearly-300-million-students-of-their-schooling-unesco-419714/>>.

various social and economic issues, including student debt¹⁰, digital learning, food insecurity, and homelessness, as well as access to childcare, health care, housing, internet, and disability services. The impact has been more severe for disadvantaged children and their families, causing interrupted learning, compromised nutrition, childcare problems, and consequent economic costs to families who could not work. Perspectives on the crisis in education are different in developed and developing countries. While developed countries had to cope with a change in the teaching system, this is a more difficult process in developing countries: For the most vulnerable children, education is lifesaving. Not only, does it provide safety and protection, importantly, it also instils hope for a brighter future¹¹ Coping with COVID-19 is particularly complicated for universities, because they serve such a wide variety of functions. First and foremost, they are educational institutions, where undergraduate and postgraduate students learn and where faculties teach and conduct research. In addition, they function as small cities, complete with police forces, energy plants, sports facilities, and other civic institutions. They are also major local employers and important drivers of local and regional economies. Finally, many operate hospitals, placing them at the front line of the local healthcare system¹².

Due to the situation around COVID-19, educational institutions are facing an unpredictable situation that forces them to react quickly and operatively. They need to respond quickly to changes in teaching, manage the return of students and teachers from exchanges, arrange accommodation for foreign students, postpone the dates of scheduled events (meetings of the Scientific Councils, Academic Senates, state examinations, etc.) and postpone the academic year schedule. The situation in schools in Asia was all the more complicated because the outbreak was exactly at the time of the Chinese New Year when students and educators were on holiday at home and abroad. Schools have moved into the online environment. The basic feature of coping with this crisis situation is to continue with the set up educational, scientific and research activities and to effectively use the tools of crisis communication, which was mainly limited to the digital form. Wester Academy of Beijing has prepared Best Practice for School Communication during a Crisis.¹³ It is a kind of guidance for educational institutions on how to communicate during the COVID-19 crisis and how to respond to a crisis as quickly and professionally as possible. Crises are a time of great uncertainty and the community needs information to act on:

- Lead the conversation. Provide facts as they become available and keep the community updated on any changes as they happen. This is especially important during a crisis as fluid as COVID-19, where changes and new policies may appear daily.
- Become part of the solution. Let different groups in the community know in tailored, targeted communication what steps are being taken to ensure students are safe and that their quality of learning continues, together with the well-being of parents and school employees.

¹⁰ NADWORN, E., KAMENETZ, A.: *Education Dept. Says Disability Laws Shouldn't Get In The Way Of Online Learning*. [online]. [2020-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/03/23/820138079/education-dept-says-disability-laws-shouldnt-get-in-the-way-of-online-learning>>.

¹¹ *Education in emergencies. A neglected priority*. [online]. [2020-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.educationcannotwait.org/the-situation/>>.

¹² ILLANES, P. et al.: *Coronavirus and the campus: How can US higher education organize to respond?* [online]. [2020-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-sector/our-insights/coronavirus-and-the-campus-how-can-us-higher-education-organize-to-respond>>.

¹³ EISENACH, D.: *Coronavirus Crisis Communications: Strategies from Schools Around the World*. [online]. [2020-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.finalsite.com/blog/p/~board/b/post/coronavirus-crisis-communications-school-examples>>.

- Foster an environment of trust, respect, and transparency. This will go a long way to preserve and foster the great relationships the school has with its parents, students, employees, and the greater community.
- Creating and maintaining goodwill through caring, empathy, and feedback mechanisms can go a long way to preserving and fostering relationships with the community. Look to the school's mission and values to provide guidance.
- Finally, communicate with compassion.

However, let us also look at the positive aspects of the COVID-19 crisis. An interesting contribution entitled COVID 19 is our best chance to change universities by The Guardian.¹⁴ The author mentions a number of areas in which universities can improve their management and skills through “home office”, which in addition to the educational process in the academic environment also includes scientific research and project activities. The author also points out the positive aspects of the crisis, which can improve the situation in educational institutions. „If universities emerge from Covid-19 with trust won back from government – and, crucially, are willing to pass on that trust to frontline staff – post-pandemic higher education could look very different.“¹⁵

2 Presumption of Development in Slovakia

The internationalization of the education process has become a global trend in the last decade. In Slovakia, approximately 8% of students are foreign¹⁶. The impact of the crisis on mobility, on the number of foreign students, especially from Asia, will not be as significant in Slovakia as in other countries, because the percentage of foreign students compared to other countries is not so great at Slovak universities. A different situation will exist for example in the USA. According to the Institute of International Education, three-quarters of American colleges and universities have reported a negative impact from COVID-19 on recruitment this year. It is important to keep in mind that 370,000 students, or 33.7% of America's total international students, are from China. Decreased enrollment by Chinese students has already impacted the economies of Australia, New Zealand and Canada.¹⁷ The importance of online education, for which the Slovak schools were not prepared, will increase. Many of them have trained educators in a relatively short time and responded quickly to the need to educate online. Several companies have provided assistance to schools, students and parents in the form of various technological solutions that will help them to facilitate the situation in the field of education as well as process management in schools. E.g. Microsoft provided Microsoft Teams to schools to teach teachers to communicate with the whole class, share a document, and assign tasks. It is an excellent tool for explaining and presenting curricula, with the possibility of visual and audiovisual elements and sharing your screen. GAMO has made the Gamo Meet service available for organizing meetings, meetings and conferences. Similar services were provided by many other companies, e.g. KROS, the Ministry of Education made 588 textbooks from 14

¹⁴ JONES, S.: *Covid-19 is our best chance to change universities for good*. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2020/mar/31/covid-19-is-our-best-chance-to-change-universities-for-good>>.

¹⁵ Ibidem.

¹⁶ *Štatistická ročenka – vysoké školy*. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <https://www.cvtisr.sk/cvti-sr-vedecka-kniznica/informacie-o-skolstve/statistiky/statisticka-rocenka-publikacia/statisticka-rocenka-vysoke-skoly.html?page_id=9596>.

¹⁷ DENIS, M.: *How will higher education have changed after COVID-19?*. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20200324065639773>>.

publishing houses available for free download. The website www.ucimesanadialku.sk has been created. The aim of practical recommendations is to offer inspiration to school leaders and teachers in solving the situation during interrupted teaching at schools. More than 20 leading scientific publishers have made available coronavirus information resources free of charge while allowing the reuse of scientific data through PubMed Central or bioRxiv biology.

The number of activities for which immediate contact is needed will be narrowed and many activities will continue as 'home office'. Many universities have made the work of teachers conditional on working hours tied to a physical place at the university. In times of crisis, it can be understood that a university educator can work effectively at a distance, and there is no need to be physically present for eight and a half hours each day. However, universities have to set up a proper system for controlling the output of teachers. According to Ipsos¹⁸ 20 percent of the Slovak population currently work from home (26 percent of people with permanent employment, 40 percent of entrepreneurs and sole traders). Working from home has suddenly become normal. We just have to learn to follow the principles of working from home. The crisis will also have an impact on the amount of funding that schools have received from students. Due to the impact of the crisis on the economic situation of students, universities will not have as much income as expected, and even more, the interest in paid external study will reduce. However, interest in full-time study in Slovakia may increase mainly because students will be interested in studying closer to home.

3 Marketing and Communication of Educational Institutions in Times of Crisis

The basic characteristic of the behaviour of business entities in times of crisis is the minimization of funds for marketing purposes. It is understandable. People's shopping behaviour and needs have changed, businesses remained closed and events have been cancelled. Businesses struggle with the economic impact of the crisis and rely on state assistance. More than half of marketers (55%) are delaying campaigns or have put them under review as fears escalate over the global coronavirus outbreak. An exclusive survey based on 887 responses from UK brand marketers conducted by Marketing Week and its sister title Econsultancy, reveals that 60% of marketers have delayed or are reviewing their budget commitments in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. A further 55% have paused product or service launches. This sense of caution over the release of new campaigns and product launches is spreading to other parts of the business. Some 43% of marketers have delayed or are reviewing planned technology or infrastructure spending in light of the crisis, while a further 41% have put the brakes on any planned new hires. More than a third of marketers (39%) say their company has already experienced reduced demand for its services, while more than half (61%) expect to see this lowering of demand continue over the next two quarters.¹⁹ Universities in Slovakia closed their doors at the time of the largest activity in the first third of the summer semester, during the ongoing campaign for university applicants. Organization of promotional events such as open days or education fairs for visiting secondary schools could not take place. All promotional and communication activities of universities have been transferred to the online environment. Here, however, schools have many possibilities. Their advantage is that the target groups (current or potential students) spend their time online in times of crisis.

¹⁸ TIMORACKÝ, M.: *Čo všetko nám priniesol a ako nás zmenil prvý mesiac pandémie*. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://strategie.hnonline.sk/marketing/2129113-aby-dobre-bolo-alebo-comu-nas-nauci-epidemia-covid-19>>.

¹⁹ ROGERS, Ch.: *Majority of marketers delaying campaigns as coronavirus fears escalate*. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://www.marketingweek.com/marketers-delay-campaigns-coronavirus-fears-escalate/>>.

Thanks to the development of digital technologies used by most potential applicants, schools are able to target their communication more clearly and precisely to a specific group of applicants. Marketing costs in most Slovak universities are still only a very small part of their budget. They are also often viewed as a necessity and just another cost item in the school budget. However, marketing and marketing communications are additional investment and, if well targeted and strategically planned, results can be seen relatively quickly. The school will appeal to better applicants who achieve better results not only during their studies but also after their completion. They work to build a better school name. Thanks to a better reputation and image, it is easier and cheaper for the school to attract new and high-quality applicants.²⁰²¹ The advantages of the communication and presentation of the school in the online environment are, compared to other forms of communication (print, television, radio), lower costs and the ability to effectively reach the target group. Higher education institutions use communication (promotion) through websites and social networks (especially Facebook and Instagram), a smaller number of schools use other forms of digital marketing such as social networking, SEO, native advertising, email marketing (newsletters), or communications through press releases.

4 Communication of Educational Institutions on Social Networks in Times of Crisis

In the next part of the paper, we present the characteristics and overview of communication on social networks of seven faculties, which are offered by the field of media and communication studies. We compared social communication based on multiple criteria using Zoomsphere. We compared faculty communications in the first month of the COVID-19 crisis from 13 March to 13 April. Teachers and students have found themselves in a situation they have never experienced before. There were very many unanswered questions related to their future, completion of the semester or the entire study, state or entrance examinations. Many students were left without their personal belongings, which they had to leave to in their student residences. In this period it was, therefore, necessary to communicate with students very intensively and sensitively, and also with applicants for future study. In this paper, we compare the communication of seven faculties on the social networks Facebook and Instagram. On Facebook, we compared communication in terms of the number of fans (fan's trend), page posts (daily number of the posts) interaction (page storyteller, page interaction, the interaction of the week and hour), the way of responding to the posted post. (the type of reaction). Graph no. 1 shows the number of fans on the Facebook account of all faculties in Slovakia that offer Media and Communication Studies. The largest number of students from the comparison faculties are from the Faculty of Arts of Comenius University in Bratislava (3247), followed by the Faculty of Arts of the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra (2758 students), the Faculty of Mass Media Communication UCM in Trnava (2400 students) and the Faculty of Arts of Prešov University. The largest number of fans on FB belong to FMK UCM (33%), which is in third place in the number of students. FMK UCM communicates more intensively on the social network Instagram. The differences between faculties are significant. For smaller faculties, the number of fans depends on the number of students.

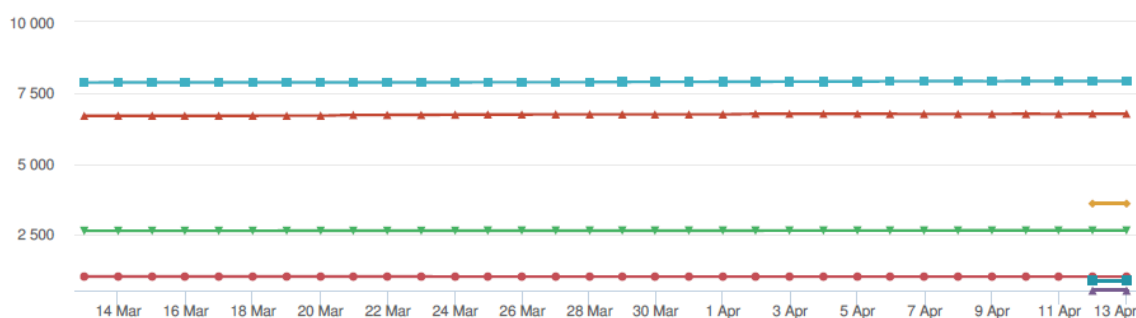
²⁰ PTAČIN, J., ČÁBYOVÁ, Ľ.: *Marketing, komunikácia a identita vzdelávacích inštitúcií*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2016, p. 105.

²¹ JURIŠOVÁ, V.: *Budovanie značky v online prostredí*. In *MMK 2015: mezinárodní Masarykova konference pro doktorandy a mladé vědecké pracovníky*. Hradec Králové : Magnanimitas, 2015, p. 318.

13 Mar - 13 Apr

Fan's Trend

The total number of Fans a page has on given days



Graph 1: Number of Facebook fans

Source: own processing

Table 1: Number of Facebook fans

		Students ²²	Funs	Share	Previos
	FF UK	3234	6780	28,80%	6713
	FF UKF	2758	2675	11,40%	2656
	FMK UCM	2335	7937	33,70%	7878
	FF PU	1710	3618	15,40%	
	FHV ZU	671	556	2,40%	
	FM PVŠP	325	1048	4,50%	1049
	FF KU	456	912	3,90%	

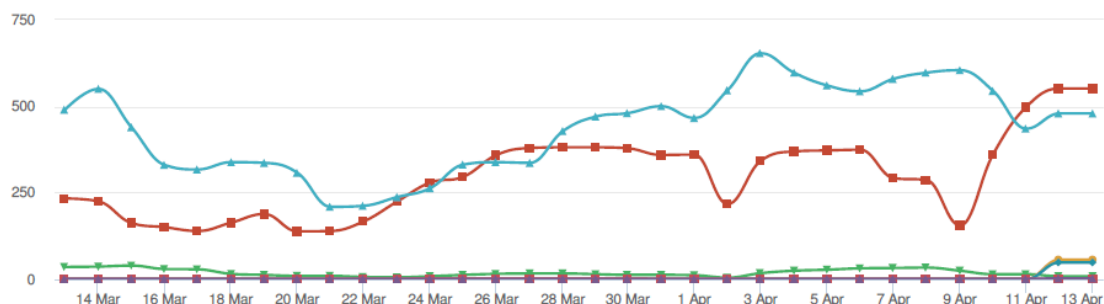
Source: own processing

Next, graph no. 2 gives us an overview of how often the site is used in other FB outputs, ie. how many people mentioned the FB page of each faculty. PTAT is a trailing 7-day metric that facebook used to measure how many people were performing actions on the page. There are several possibilities to increase the PTAT of the faculty's Facebook pages through likes, comments, shares, answer and question, RSVPs, photo tags, check-ins or recommendation-PTAT can also be influenced by paid Facebook advertising. The graph shows that only two faculties (FF UK and FMK UCM) have an above average PTAT. Other Facebook profiles are very active, there is minimal interest in them. An interesting figure in the table is the previous period before the reference period. FF UK achieved an average AVG value of up to 3105.44, in the period under review there was a decrease to 295.88. To conclude, activity has declined significantly during the period when the school was closed. This high value was achieved by the faculty's Facebook page, thanks in particular to the article Do you know that women in Slovakia have had voting rights since February 29, 1920 ? 107 comments, 2400 likes and 2,400 shares. A lower value of PTAT was also recorded by the FF of UKF. It follows that faculties that have active FB sites have not increased their activity during the COVID-19 crisis. A slight increase was recorded by the FMK UCM, which was caused mainly by the students' discussion on the change of the academic year schedule due to the crisis.

²² Zoznam vysokých škôl podľa počtu študentov. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://www.portalvs.sk/sk/informacie-o-vysokych-skolach/podla-poctu-studentov>>.

Page Storytellers (PTAT)

The number of people talking about your Page, by story type



Graph 2: Number of people who mentioned the page

Source: own processing

Table 2: Number of people who mentioned th page

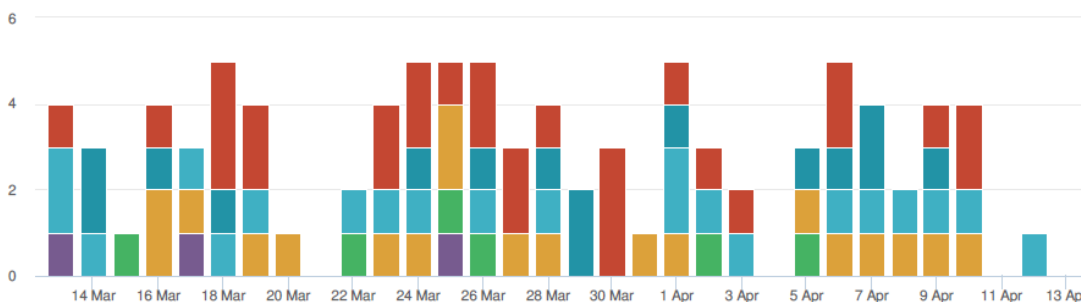
		AVG	Share (%)	Previous AVG
	FF UK	295,88	39	3105,44
	FF UKF	17,97	2,4	24,09
	FMK UCM	437,28	57,7	321,84
	FF PU	3,5	0,45	0
	FHV ZU	0,13	0,02	0
	FM PVŠP	0,22	0,03	0,91
	FF KU	3	0,4	0

Source: own processing

Graph no. 3 shows an overview of published posts during the evaluation period. Three faculties recorded a slight increase in the FB page, on the other hand, a decrease of three. The Faculty of Mass Media was not active at all. Posts are the fastest way to communicate faculties with their target groups. Most of the posts in the evaluated period were FF UK, followed by FMK UCM and FF PU. A large part of the faculty positions is devoted to the topic of coronavirus, especially in connection with the change in the organization of teaching, foreign students and their check-outs. Faculties create their own posts, but often share posts from other sites, especially from students, from the faculty or university website. FF UK has only 5 posts with its own content, the total of shared and linked links are 23. The FF PU in Prešov, FF KU in Ružomberok also communicate in a similar way. A minority of the FB faculty contributions are with their own content. Unlike them, FMK publishes its own content, which in comparison with other sites is more attractive – using video, own photos, event creation. The remaining faculties communicate only minimally.

Page Posts

The daily number of posts by each page



Graph: 3 Page Posts
Source: own processing

Table 3: Page Posts

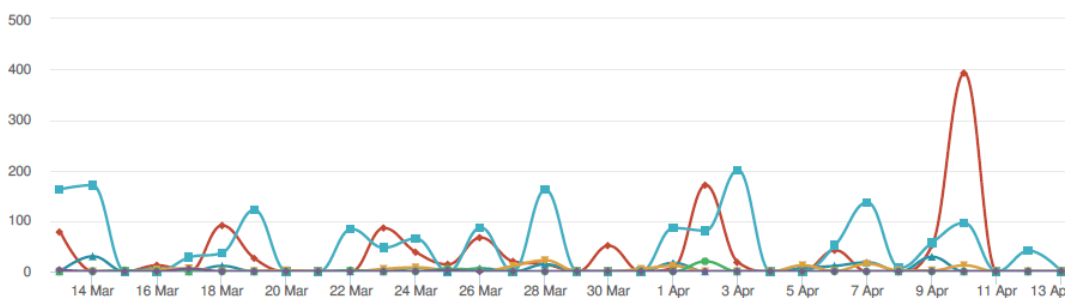
		Current	Share	Previous
	FF UK	28	30,4	23
	FF UKF	6	6,5	11
	FMK UCM	21	22,8	18
	FF PU	19	20,7	14
	FHV ZU	3	3,3	13
	FM PVŠP			
	FF KU	15	16,3	31

Source: own processing

Page interaction on graph no. 4 shows the number of likes, shares and comments per post in the period under review. The highest data in this metric is achieved by FMK UCM and FF UK. Values are similar to APTT. Above-average results were achieved by the FF UK on 10 April, when a post about what would have been the 50th birthday of the former dean of the faculty was published. The most successful post from FMK in the period under review was the publication of photographs of the faculty management at the on-line meeting of the Dean's College. The most successful days are Thursday and Friday when this metric reached the highest value for both faculties. The other faculties have a minimum page interaction value. (Graph 5). According to the information gathered, the highest interaction is between the hours of 14.00-16.00.

Page Interactions

The total number of interactions a page received each day



Graph 4: Page interaction
Source: own processing

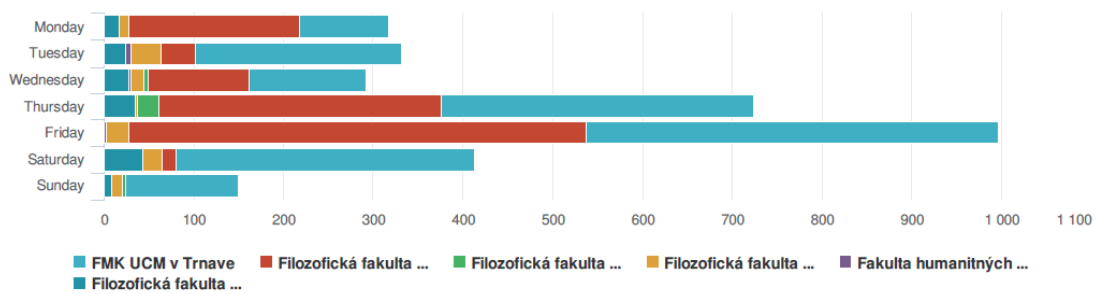
Table 4: Page interaction

		Current	Share	Previous
	FF UK	1180	36,6	5761
	FF UKF	32	0,99	78
	FMK UCM	1724	53,5	1449
	FF PU	121	3,8	309
	FHV ZU	10	0,31	36
	FM PVŠP			
	FF KU	157	4,9	86

Source: own processing

Interactions by Day of the Week

The number of interactions a page had, broken down by the day of the week they occurred



Graph 5: Interaction by Day of Week

Source: own processing

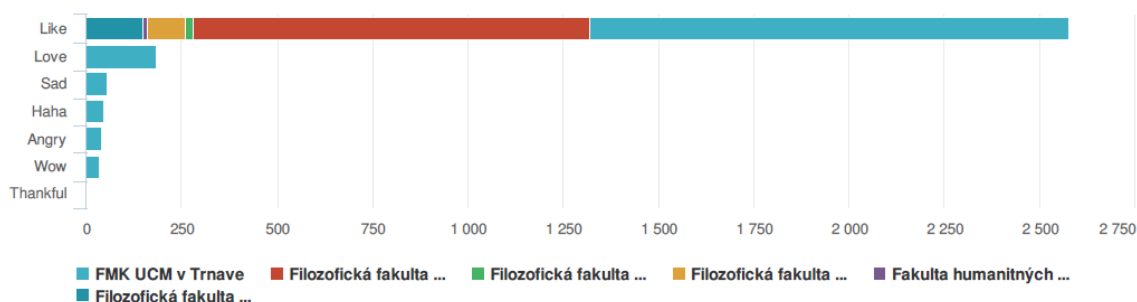
Table 5: Interaction by Day of Week

Friday	997	30,9	5656
Thursday	724	22,5	421
Saturday	413	12,8	236
Tuesday	332	10,3	305
Monday	317	9,8	465
Wednesday	292	9,1	286
Sunday	149	4,6	303

Source: own processing

Reactions by Type

The number of reaction broken down by emotion type



Graph 6: Reaction by Type

Source: own processing

Table 6: Reaction by Type

	Current	Share	Previous
Like	2575	87,8	4841
Love	185	6,3	167
Sad	53	1,8	6
Haha	48	1,6	8
Angry	38	1,3	2
Wow	35	1,2	6
Thankful	0	0	0

Source: own processing

Reactions are Facebook’s line-up of emoji that allow reactions to posts with seven different animated emotions: Love, Haha, Wow, Sad, Angry, Thankful and, the classic Like. „No matter how a user reacts to a post—even with sadness or anger—Facebook will register that reaction as a ‘Like.’ This means users get served up more of that type of content in their News Feed, no matter how badly they feel about it“ The realized research confirmed that the most commonly used emotion is Like (87.8%). Sad and Angry negative emotions were only recorded on FB FMK UCM. Students reacted negatively (through emotions and comments) to the report on the extension of the examination period and the change in the academic year schedule due to the pandemic. It is also interesting to note that in other faculties this report was almost without reaction and comment. The research shows that faculties with media and communication departments do not make sufficient use of this form of communication even during a pandemic.

Conclusion

Communication in the COVID-19 era should be very intense, as in a very short time there have been some significant changes that affect both students and teachers. There are several channels that schools choose to communicate via. These can be internal channels (e.g. through the academic information system, mailing lists), but also public channels through social networks. Only two of the investigated faculties (FF UK in Bratislava and FMK UCM in Trnava) communicate intensively and regularly. Only three faculties (Bratislava, Trnava, Prešov) have an Instagram account. The leader in communication is FMK Trnava. Its primary focus is on

Instagram. Content is interesting, creative. It leads in all statistics that Zoom Sphere offers us - Follower's trend, Account's posts, Account Interactions, The average number of Interaction per Fun). „The Millennials openly claim that traditional media (such as TV, newspapers, magazines) are not key for them anymore. They prefer social networks instead; social media are becoming their area of interest and they track them on a daily basis. They prefer visual content such as videos, photos or music and tend to ignore long written texts.²³ ²⁴ “Communication by educational institutions should also be adapted to this finding. Although social networking is a cheap and effective communication tool, many faculties do not make sufficient use of this method. We see some barriers in the distrust and disinterest of university management, as well as in staff barriers and the lack of school experts to engage in social network communication. With creative work, they build up the reputation of the university, hence it is easier and cheaper for them to attract new educated enrollees interested in studying there.²⁵ Universities in Slovakia use relatively little marketing communication. They communicate in particular at the time of application. Their communication should be year-round and intensified. They should learn the basics of communication strategy and media planning. In the process of media planning, especially when selecting the right type of media strategy, several types might strike us as ideal. As a general rule, every type of strategy is (or rather can be) effective; however, its efficiency depends on a number of factors that, in the end, affect its implementation²⁶. Choosing the right media strategy is influenced by the goal of the campaign and the target audience to be addressed by the media. The most appropriate media strategy in the field of higher education is the use of online communication via social networks, advertising on social networks (or on relevant websites), native articles in combination with offline communication through event marketing and road trips (personal communication in secondary schools).

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²³ KÁDEKOVÁ, Z., HOLIENČINOVÁ, M.: Influencer marketing as a modern phenomenon creating a new frontier or virtual opportunities. In *Communication Today*, 2018, Vol. 9, No. 2, p. 92.

²⁴ BRNÍK, A.: Reklama v rádiu a hlavné dôvody jej využitia. In ČÁBYOVÁ, Ľ., BEZÁKOVÁ, Z., MENDELOVÁ, D.: *Marketing Identity 2019: Offline Is the New Online – aktuálne výzvy onlinej a offlinej komunikácie*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2019, p. 20-22.

²⁵ ČÁBYOVÁ, Ľ., PTAČIN, J.: Benchmarking comparison of marketing communication of universities in Slovakia. In *Communication Today*, 2014, Vol. 5, No. 1, p. 69.

²⁶ Compare to: KRAJČOVIČ, P.: Strategies in media planning. In *Communication Today*, 2015, Vol. 6, No. 2. p. 29; KRAJČOVIČ, P.: Use of media to raise awareness of eco-innovations. In *Communication Today*, 2019, Vol. 10, No. 2, p. 120-131.

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FORECAST OF DISTRIBUTION AND SUPPLY PRICES OF ELECTRICITY IN EUROPE AND SLOVAKIA

Robert Halenár

ABSTRACT:

The Slovak household is relatively sensitive to rising electricity prices. The main reason is that payments are usually billed every month, so it is directly visible as it reduces the amount of funds for daily use. Another reason is that electricity prices determine the prices of other energies and goods and services across the economy. They are therefore an indicator of future development. The article deals with changes in prices of electricity production and distribution in the Slovak Republic in the medium term. It is based on findings and data available for the last 12 years. It explains and compares prices for individual components of the total energy price in different periods. In the end, it focuses on the last 3 to 5 years and, depending on the period, tries to predict electricity distribution prices for the next period.

KEY WORDS:

distribution price, electricity price, electricity production, visualization

1 Introduction

Electricity prices are often a topic to be discussed. They have a direct and indirect impact on our standard of living. The direct impact is evident in every-year payments for the supply and distribution of electricity consumed at the collection points, indirectly electricity prices are projected into other commodities and daily consumption items we buy. It is therefore clear that the lower is the total cost of electricity compared to our income, the higher could be the standard of living we can maintain at relatively constant consumption. A lower electricity price can therefore mean more savings to be used to buy other goods and services. Customers' shopping habits, however, sometimes contradict logic and are based on a purely emotional basis.¹

2 Costs of Electricity in Other Countries of Europe

Energy costs are on a continuous upward trend in Europe. In 2015 the average residential consumer's electricity price was 20.8 cents per kilowatt hour (cents/kWh), a 24% increase from the average price of 16.7 cents/kWh in 2010. These average values vary significantly across the European Union, ranging from 9.4 cents/kWh in Bulgaria to 30.7 cents in Denmark in 2015. In the past decade residential electricity prices increased by the average of 56%. The highest rise in cost was found in Greece (157%), the United Kingdom (142%) and Spain (110%). A very slight increase (0,1%) was recorded in the Netherlands. Between 2014 and 2015 the highest increase in private household electricity prices was recorded in Latvia (+20%), followed by Bulgaria (+13%) and the United Kingdom (+11%). The highest decrease was observed in Malta and Cyprus (-15%). In Europe, residential consumer prices for electricity have long exceeded the industrial prices, and the gap has even become bigger in recent years. The highest residential electricity prices are paid in Denmark (30.7 cents) and Germany (29.5 cents) for many years in a row now. The price per kilowatt hour is more than three times higher than in Bulgaria (9.6 cents). Italy (24.5 cents) and Ireland (24.3 cents) are

¹ For more information, see: TRNKA, A.: Statistical analysis of online shopping behavior of students. In MATUŠ, J., PETRANOVÁ, D. (eds.): *Marketing Identity : Digital Life – part II*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2015, p. 283-292.

competing for the 3rd and 4th place, while the prices in Spain (23.1 cents) went somewhat down in 2014. The energy prices in the EU depend on a range of factors, including taxation, network charges or environmental protection costs. Taxes and levies make the biggest difference. Residential electricity rates are taxed at an average of 32%. These values vary greatly from one country to another, with rates as high as 57% in Denmark and 52% in Germany (including a renewable energy tax 22%).²

The European Commission hopes that its Energy Union strategy will make the EU's energy supply more secure, affordable and climate-friendly. But the energy market is highly fragmented, and focused on national interests. The price that the average European household pays per kWh of electricity has risen from 12 cents in 2005 to 18 cents in 2014. However, the prices in individual countries varies significantly. In Bulgaria and Hungary, households currently pay around 10 cents per kWh. In Germany and Denmark, energy is three times more expensive. Factors that influence cost include a country's geographical location, energy resources, and world market prices. But energy policies are increasingly a significant factor. Energy subsidies are growing across the majority of countries in the European Union. Only Austria and Sweden decreased their subsidies from 2008 to 2012. The rest of the EU increased by 57%. Leading the way? Denmark and Greece, which increased subsidies by over 1000%, and Germany, which accounts for roughly 25% of all energy subsidies in the EU. But despite more subsidies, electricity prices are still increasing. While household electricity prices have risen by 50% from 2005 to 2014, the average price for industrial consumers has increased by 66%. These prices also vary significantly across the EU. In Germany and the Netherlands, prices for medium-sized industries have remained fairly stable, increasing by approximately 25%. In the United Kingdom and Poland, however, prices have gone up by as much as 100%. To build a successful Energy Union, the Commission has a tough job ahead of itself: harmonizing the different national policies, building a transnational infrastructure, and getting member states to work together, towards a common goal.³

Other countries have been successful in garnering electrical power via renewable options, allowing prices that are more budget-friendly than those seen in Italy and Germany. Electricity rates across 18 developed country can be seen illustrated within the table below. Note that electricity rates in our cheapest country, Sweden, are only 37% of those seen in Italy at the other far end of the spectrum.⁴ In different countries, however, there are also different habits that affect the overall consumption of electricity. Dependence may be individual at the level of technological, cultural or economic maturity, climate and climatic conditions. Due to this fact, the measurement is carried out under different conditions, which affects the total electricity consumption, the time it is consumed, the method of production and hence the price. For standard deviations, it would be more necessary to identify globalization or segregation impacts. Some aspects are dealt with by the literature.⁵ Specific ways of indicating the consumption of electronic devices are in place in different countries. Despite the well-known principles of electrical equipment efficiency labeling known in Europe,

² *Electricity prices in Europe – Who pays the most?*. [online]. [2020-03-30]. Available at: <<https://1-stromvergleich.com/electricity-prices-europe/>>.

³ LAMOS, E.: *Electricity prices in Europe*. [online]. [2020-03-21]. Available at: <<https://www.euractiv.com/section/electricity/video/electricity-prices-in-europe/>>.

⁴ DILLINGER, J.: *Cost of electricity by country*. [online]. [2020-03-10]. Available at: <<http://www.worldatlas.com/articles/electricity-rates-around-the-world.html>>.

⁵ PRAVDOVÁ, H.: Discrepancies of globalization processes and multiculturalism in media culture. In KLUS, M., ROUET, G. (eds.): *Médias et sociétés interculturelles : Société et médias dans le dialogue interculturel*. Paris : L'Harmattan, 2013, p. 119-128.

sovereign states may have additional regulations. This may cause confusion in assessing the efficiency of consumption of electrical and electronic equipment.⁶

3 Costs of Electricity in Household

The following tables show the consumption of electricity in the household of a specific three-member family of a regional city in Slovakia, which is a 3-room flat (65m²) in a panel house in which there is central heating, without natural gas supply and electricity is supplied in 3 phases. Consumption and cost of electricity are collected from invoices from the supplier during the years 2007 to 2019. During this period, the method of conversion of consumption was changed in 2011. By 2011, two components were counted (Tab. 1):

1. The fixed component – Payment for take-off point.
2. Variable component: Price of electricity consumed.

Since 2011, the electricity supply is billed and calculated in a way that is obvious from the following section (Tab. 2 and 3): It is divided into two basic parts, namely the supply and distribution of electricity.

Table 1: Electricity consumption in the ordinary household 2007-2010

	Billing period		Consumption kWh	Invoiced Amount EUR	Fixed monthly charge for one take – off point EUR	Price of electricity EUR
	From	To				
1	5.4.2007	10.4.2008	1178	224,26 €	73,39 €	150,86 €
2	11.4.2008	10.4.2009	1294	233,68 €	73,78 €	159,90 €
3	11.4.2009	9.4.2010	1756	283,43 €	41,19 €	202,92 €
4	10.4.2010	18.8.2010	574	95,53 €	48,86 €	46,67 €

Source: own processing

Table 2: Electricity consumption in the ordinary household 2011-2019 - supply

	Billing period		Consumption kWh	Invoiced Amount EUR	Power supply	
					Fixed monthly charge for one take – off point EUR	Price of electricity EUR
	From	To				
5	19.8.10	28.3.11	1079	182,51 €	6,14 €	81,29 €
6	29.3.11	23.3.12	1690	303,24 €	9,96 €	129,94 €
7	24.3.12	21.3.13	1496	279,72 €	9,88 €	116,88 €
8	22.3.13	21.3.14	1461	264,54 €	9,37 €	102,56 €
9	22.3.14	27.3.15	1358	240,16 €	9,53 €	80,90 €
10	28.3.15	23.3.16	1301	226,18 €	9,28 €	71,15 €
11	22.10.16	24.10.17	1541	226,44 €	4,66 €	58,00 €
12	25.10.17	23.10.18	1834	283,31 €	8,45 €	92,59 €
13	24.10.18	24.10.19	1817	307,52 €	10,57 €	117,47 €

Source: own processing

⁶ See also: IEKO, J., RUSKO, M.: Environmental marks for electronics and electronic devices in Austria. In *Journal of Environmental Protection, Safety, Education and Management*, 2015, Vol. 3, No. 5, p. 21-26.

Table 3: Electricity consumption in the ordinary household 2011-2019 - distribution

	Billing period		Distribution of electricity					
			Fixed monthly charge for one take – off point	Transfer to the Nuclear Fund	Payment for system services	Variable component of the tariffs for distribution	Payment for electricity losses during electricity distribution	Payment for system operation
			EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR
5	19.8.10	28.3.11	37,06 €	1,52 €	12,05 €	16,46 €	14,64 €	12,39 €
6	29.3.11	23.3.12	60,41 €	6,08 €	17,40 €	25,69 €	23,24 €	30,52 €
7	24.3.12	21.3.13	60,84 €	5,48 €	11,52 €	23,34 €	20,65 €	30,14 €
8	22.3.13	21.3.14	61,15 €	5,50 €	13,93 €	24,32 €	17,62 €	30,11 €
9	22.3.14	27.3.15	62,14 €	5,20 €	12,82 €	22,25 €	13,58 €	34,28 €
10	28.3.15	23.3.16	60,49 €	5,00 €	11,76 €	21,25 €	12,76 €	34,49 €
11	22.10.16	24.10.17	61,66 €	5,94 €	13,04 €	25,49 €	10,45 €	47,23 €
12	25.10.17	23.10.18	60,98 €	7,10 €	15,24 €	29,05 €	11,99 €	57,90 €
13	24.10.18	24.10.19	61,32 €	7,14 €	13,38 €	26,15 €	14,39 €	57,11 €

Source: own processing

The following are charts graphically expressing the reported data. Chart 1 reflects that vary the average monthly consumption (calculated as the average of the amount billed for the period) over the said period 2007-2019. The price is an aliquot part of that month, calculated from the total invoiced price. Chart was made in table calculator from tables reported higher and to achieve longer time may by archived as images, described in literature.⁷

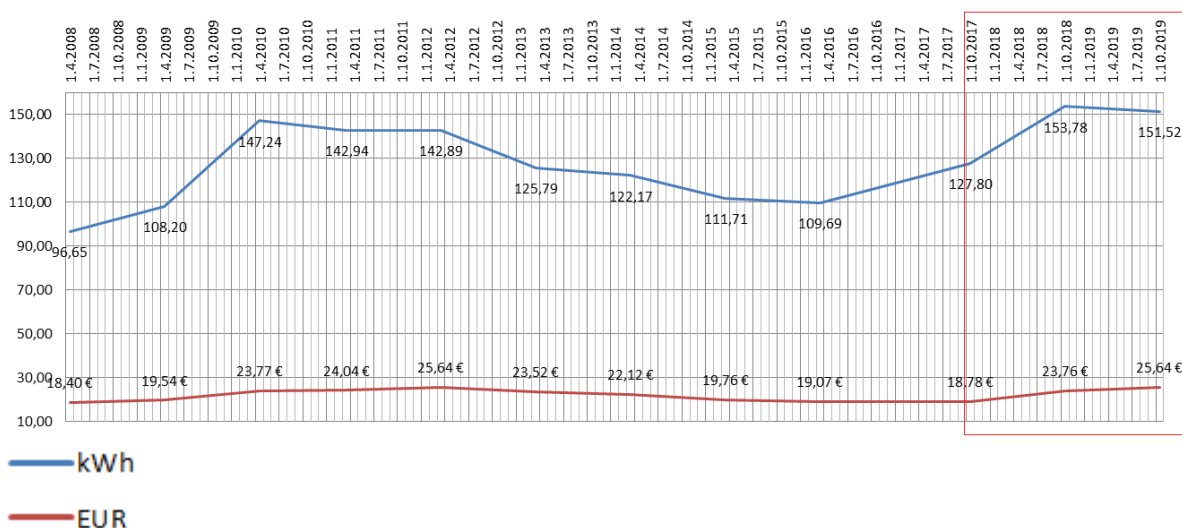


Chart 1: Average monthly electricity consumption in ordinary household 2007-2016

Source: own processing

⁷ HALENÁR, R.: Archiving documents in form of image using Matlab and Photoshop. In MATÚŠ, J., PETRANOVÁ, D. (eds.): *Marketing Identity : Digital Life – part II*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2015, p. 348-354.

It follows that the total average monthly price changes relatively little with respect to consumption in kWh. This is a consequence of the ratio of each variable and fixed component. Graph 2 shows the distribution and distribution costs.

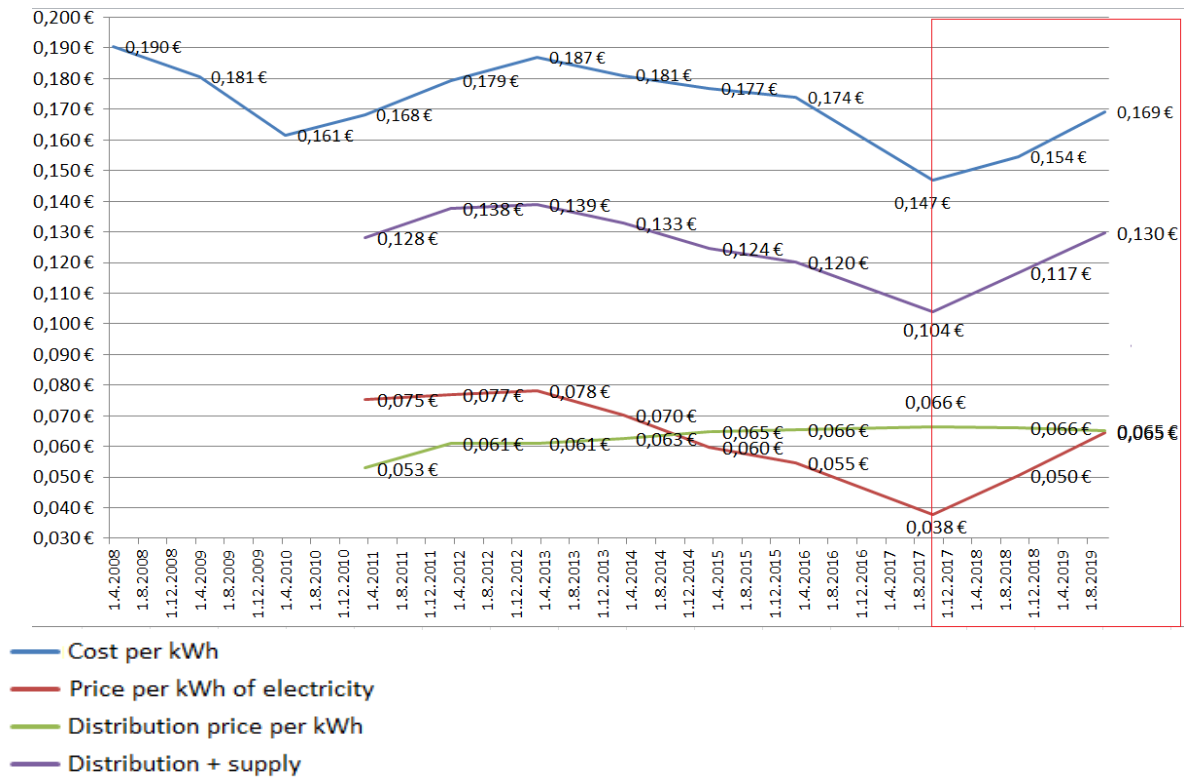


Chart 2: Average cost of electricity consumption in the ordinary household 2008-2016

Source: own processing

The next two charts (Chart 3 and Chart 4) show the evolution of electricity prices on the Prague Stock Exchange over the past twelve years and the subsequent development of the average monthly wage in Slovakia over the past eight years. The first of these graphs has a direct impact on the price of electricity supply, the second is directly related to the price of electricity distribution. In the global economy, it is important to monitor several factors on the market, as their impact is often cross-border and transnational. This causation is caused only by the awareness of the effect, which is almost instantaneous at the time of the Internet.



Chart 3: Development of electricity prices on the stock market 2008 - 2019

Source: *Elektrina – ceny a grafy elektřiny, vývoj ceny elektřiny 1 MWh – 1 rok – měna EUR*. [online]. [2020-03-30]. Available at: <https://www.kurzy.cz/komodity/index.asp?A=5&idk=142&od=24.10.2008&do=24.10.2019&curr=EUR>.

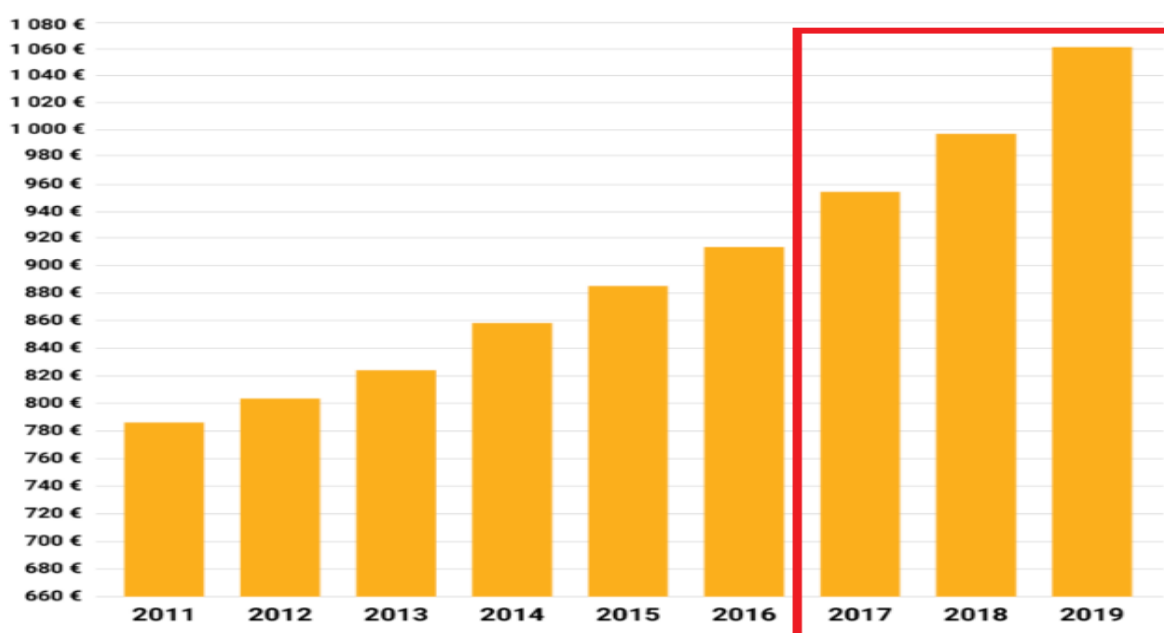


Chart 4: Development of the average wage in the Slovak economy 2011-2019

Source: *Priemerná mzda*. [online]. [2020-03-30]. Available at: <https://www.profesia.sk/kariera-v-kocke/mzdy/priemerna-mzda/>.

Conclusion

Electricity prices and electricity distribution prices should be differentiated. While electricity prices are derived from stock market prices, distribution prices are the product of average wages in a country's economy. Chart 3 therefore corresponds to the price of electricity (red line) in Chart 2. The increase in electricity prices on the stock market over the last three years is adequate taken into account, which is obvious. However, distribution prices have hardly

increased over the past five years (green line) in Chart 2, with the average wage in the Slovak Republic rising in recent years (Chart 4). It is therefore expected that in the coming years the price corrections of electricity distribution will be fundamentally upwards.

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THE MELTING POT OF COVID (A MASS SOCIETY OR A MASS OF INDIVIDUALS)

Jana Hubinová

ABSTRACT:

Even though it may seem incorrect to refer to a marketing strategy as to a melting pot, especially taking into account the fact that ahead of any marketing strategy there should be a phase of profound planning, well-organized implementation and subsequently a critical evaluation phase. All planned, everything organized. On the other hand, there suddenly has appeared a health and safety related incident imposing great social, economic and business challenges on both small and in-the-size entrepreneurs. Large international companies have been reporting minor but unexpected business related situations, too. Foreign market in Europe has been partially closed or strictly regulated. This paper does not intend to provide a universal know-how preventing entrepreneurs from losing their stable position; that would be much of a challenge for a pandemic halftime. If small and medium-size companies survive, they will need fresh ideas, either in new products and services creation or break throughs in marketing their old ones. Companies started to look for new perspectives. We come up with a silver lining of Covid19 pandemic and small but significantly important steps in marketing tendencies that may bring fresh air to manufacturers and service providers advertising their old products.

KEY WORDS:

Covid-19, mass society, segmentation of the market, social bubble, targeting

1 Introduction

Literally speaking, melting pot is “*a pot in which metals or other substances are melted or fused*”¹. It is an equipment, a rounded container in which all inserted materials, at some point, melt and they fuse. As a result, new materials originate. The ratio of materials decides upon the final product. The higher ratio of certain material the more properties of this material the blend will have. The fact is that this assumption works in metallurgy but not in genetics. In its figurative sense, a melting pot is “*a place where a variety of races, cultures, or individuals assimilate into a cohesive whole*”². The notion melting pot was often used to describe a country of nobody and everybody at the same time. Since 1492 when Columbus discovered America, the term melting pot referred to people of different races and cultures melting in newly founded land, later on named the United States of America. There, people mixed their genes and cultures and a whole new nation was born. A nation that has still got much ahead of them. Nowadays, the whole world has much ahead of ourselves. We live in challenging times of global climate change, zero-waste and no plastic movements, bio, eco-friendly and local products prioritizing, economic recession, Covid-19 pandemic awaiting a “*Greater Depression*”³ ... Different countries cope with these challenges in different ways. Some nations opt for precautionary measures (Slovakia) and some have already been building up their safety nets (Germany). None can ignore the reality of medical, economic, social and cultural impacts it will have on world population. Even remote indigenous tribes have already reported changes in their day-to-day lives caused by the pandemic, either health-related or ecological changes that they have encountered. People’s opinions on what is happening varies. Some fear health and lives of their

¹ *Melting pot*. [online]. [2020-04-26]. Available at: <<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/melting-pot>>.

² *Melting pot*. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/melting%20pot>>.

³ Remark by the author: A Greater Depression is a term some economists and economy analysts use to refer to expected economic impacts of Covid-19 pandemic. After financial crisis of 2007-2009 that took some 3 to 5 years to be overcome and in reference to the Great Depression lasting from 1929 to 1939, the worst economic downturn is expected in terms of businesses collapse having impact on nations' economies.

elderly kins are endangered, other fear tremendous economic impacts of pandemic and there even are those who believe that Covid-19 pandemic is a measure of some political conglomerate operating worldwide to induce economic crisis to stop our well-being. No judgement. The only fact is that the pandemic is happening right now and right here, and for the moment, no one can presumably forecast what it will eventually bring to our lives. There arises a question “*How is the world going to change?*” And, even more important, “*How are we going to change to keep the pace with the world changing?*”. Our job, as marketers, is to keep small and medium-size enterprises alive and if possible, utilize the crisis to make them thriving (again). We aim to come up with *silver lining* of current pandemic situation put into a clear set of points where an individual shall direct their attention in order to preserve their mental health, uphold their economic status and restrain themselves from losing control over the situation. Marketing related, of course!

2 Individual and Mass Bubbles

The Internet is full of motivational quotes and hashtags to help people overcome the period of much time (quarantine) to think about a thing (the pandemic) they cannot change. Adam Gopnik, a popular essayist and a staff writer for The New Yorker wrote: “*Aphorisms live because they contain human truth.*”⁴ Short notes, catchy phrases; these keep people going and they tend to stick in people’s minds. ‘*Keep calm and carry on*’, #*AllInChallenge*, *One World: Together at Home* and many others, worldwide and national challenges, catch phrases, even some “new age” copywriters’ texts for commercials stick in our minds and support our discipline in regards to staying either at home or keeping recommended distance and respecting given health related rules to prevent the virus from spreading. For the purpose of this paper we use the term a bubble, as we adopted the term “*social bubble*” in opposition to social-distancing rules during the lockdown. As mentioned, various countries took various precautions and as a result of some (for example the ones adopted in Slovakia before May 6th, 2020), residents of some countries must have created so-called social bubbles *A social bubble is “a small group of people with whom you’re legally allowed to hang out with in person. The idea is to allow a little more social interaction while still severely limiting the overall number of other people with whom an individual might come into contact.”*⁵ Still, for those nations, whose inhabitants live in isolation, their social contact is for now limited to one’s own household. They may meet up with roommates and closest family. That’s it.

2.1 Social Bubble- Target Group Marketing Is Insufficient

Social bubbles are of various kind. We form social groups of multiple aims and tend to stick to various social groups throughout our lives. Such a group is inconsistent in different dimensions- in regards to age, profession, interests, etc. One person plays various roles in their life, and as such, take part in multiple social bubbles, all at once. An individual is then an organized mess where they have several faces. How can marketing profit from social bubbles existence? A challenging phenomenon of *social media bubbles* existence as a thread to universal marketing strategy applied for certain target groups has been present in marketing ever since digital

⁴ ALLAN, D. G.: *Inspirational quotes to get us through the coronavirus shutdown*. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <<https://edition.cnn.com/2020/03/26/health/inspirational-quotes-coronavirus-wisdom-project-wellness/index.html>>.

⁵ MANNING, J.: *What is a ‘social bubble’, and could it be the next step towards lifting lockdown?*. [online]. [2020-05-13]. Available at: <<https://www.timeout.com/news/what-is-a-social-bubble-and-could-it-be-the-next-step-towards-lifting-lockdown-051120>>.

marketing started to evolve and has reached immense intensity; it inflicts our everyday lives in online environment. Our digital blueprints are traceable 'far far away' and their research has proven that “*social and algorithmic filtering may cause exposure to less diverse points of view*”⁶ as we tend to follow the herd. This seems to have nothing in common with marketing products and services, though, truth is the opposite. Speaking strictly of social aspect of bubbles, a marketer should in and shortly after the pandemic target rather social bubbles as target groups for their clients' products and services than try to approach what we have known by now as *target groups*. Actually, a better way how to refer to the old school diversification of potential customers is by the term *audience targeting* that is one of the processes in *target marketing*. The *STP model* of marketing is one of the most frequently used approaches to targeting in general. The abbreviation stands for Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning⁷. Mass marketing can work for a while only (proven by Henry Ford incredible business story) therefore *multisegment marketing* is used. *Segmentation* is focusing the offer on one segment only. There is a belief that a strong company with an elaborate business strategy would rather develop a set of products of wide range to suit the needs of buyers in various segments as they would never try to create one 'ideal' product for everybody. Segmentation is usually done according to various criteria, the most usually recognized segments of customers are the ones divided into target groups based on age range, gender, education, earnings, demography, social status, or people's lifestyle.

Next level in target segmentation was a transformation from single segment into multisegment targeting. The basic set of rules applied in STP model have been reorganized by the pandemic of Covid-19. Now, shortly ahead of marketing strategies renewals inevitably needed, multisegment marketing has become insufficient, too. There are countless options how to approach segmentation. However, the most commonly used criteria for stratification are unimportant; age, education, status... The borders outlined in real life are easily crossed and overstepped in online environment. First reason why it is so is that people can create any online identity who they wish to be (they easily fake their identity in digital space). The second reason is that the pandemic has mixed social groups and reorganized them based on their general approach towards life. Altogether, an existence of a completely new customer has been recognized. The new customer is rather *a persona* than a person of certain preferences. The persona is no longer a fictional character who represents an average user. The persona in Covid19 and post-Covid19 period has profiled by their world viewpoint, not vice versa. They are no longer created by environment, they co-create their social bubbles, their environment. Based on studied materials and a research executed among fellow sufferers, we believe that we should concentrate our attention on formation of three essential bubbles, one of those is well-recognized social bubble. By keeping the number of people one comes into contact with really tight and the set of individuals to meet stable, the rate of transmission of the virus slows down. Social bubbles, often nicknamed '*quaranteam*', are small groups of people who create their own tight-knit social circles⁸. As there has been no or very limited personal contact with other people, our lives has shifted into online environment completely. The role of influencers has increased and their socio-political and health-saving potential has been fully developed. International stars took action and supported world leaders in steps they had taken in regards to

⁶ NIKOLOV, D., OLIVEIRA, D. F. M., FLAMMINI, A., MENCZER, F.: Measuring online social bubbles. In *PeerJ Computer Science*, 2015, Vol. 1, No. 12. [online]. [2020-05-13]. Available at: <<https://peerj.com/articles/cs-38/>>.

⁷ 6.3 *Selecting Target Markets and Target-Market Strategies*. [online]. [2020-04-28]. Available at: <<https://opentext.wsu.edu/marketing/chapter/6-3-selecting-target-markets-and-target-market-strategies/>>.

⁸ *What to Consider Before You Try 'Quaranteaming'*. [online]. [2020-05-13]. Available at: <<https://www.healthline.com/health-news/what-to-know-before-you-consider-quaranteaming>>.

pandemic. Ellen DeGenres, Leonardo DiCaprio, Stella McCartney, Elton John, The Rolling Stones and others. Slovak celebrities are no exception. Live concerts and shows, fairytales readings, time-killing posts to keep people safe at home. Brand building live! A great example how to market a well-known trademark via now ever-present and pushy influencers is the one of Peugeot Slovensko who has just recently granted sponsorship to Emma Drobna (a popular indie singer)⁹. They are on their way to re-brand themselves from a family car company to a fancy car for young, creative people car trademark. Especially taking into account Emma Drobna's latest weeks and months posts via Instagram full of pro-quarantine funny posts and the fact that Peugeot has killed two birds with one stone. Emma Drobna's current boyfriend is Filip Šebo, a not less popular ex-footballer, currently an athlete, an inspirational trendsetter. Emma (with her more than 202k followers) and Filip (28k followers) form a strong couple of significant marketing potential.

2.2 Economic Bubble- A Financial Cushion Only Is Insufficient

A financial cushion is an economic term just like the term of *an emergency fund* and many people unfamiliar with the topic keep on confusing them. A financial cushion is a tiny balance, an irrespectively small amount of money in your regular bank account to avoid overdrafts. In fact, its amount depends very much on one's monthly salary and their living expenses. As they say, even a small saving is a saving, though, this amount of money does not have potential to save a family from bankruptcy in times of need. According to data from the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic for the year 2019, an average monthly Slovak wage was 1.092 Euro. Expected average monthly wage for 2020 was 1.163 Euro¹⁰. Clearly, the forecast was made before the pandemic. In fact, the most recent data from commercial surveyors for the month of March 2020 show that the average wage in Slovakia for previous 3 calendar months was 1.156 Euro a month. Taking all these financial data into account, a safety net of a recommended financial cushion for small extra expenses held in our current bank account should be around 300 or 550 Euro. Simply said, this is the tiniest amount of money that should be always held on a bank account of each family member over 18 years old. Then there is this other saved amount, so-called emergency fund. An emergency fund is a large balance—usually 3–6 months of living expenses—that you maintain in a savings account in case of major events like job loss and a medical emergency. These are separate concepts; your cushion is not an emergency fund. As the last months have proven, an emergency fund is a must of a healthy financial fund, too. It may be difficult to set the amount always available for emergencies correctly. Taking into account one's career stages (job positions), changing social status throughout their lives and facing different, usually family-related life situations, the sum available for emergencies may vary tremendously. Emergency funds are not meant to keep people uncomfortable or short of money they regularly put into this highly specialized fund. Though, the overall amount kept on emergency fund must provide a household with financial stability in economically challenging times (such as Covid-19 is) and it surely must cover all financial responsibilities for certain time frame.

In 2019, Slovaks were believed to be able to save in average 111 Euro a month which means that by the end of year, an average Slovak should have on their account approximately 1.300 Euro. The amount is, clearly, insufficient to cover basic life expenses of a four-members family for longer than 3 months period of time. How is this information relevant to marketers now, related to Covid-19 expected deep economic crisis? The answer is simple. People will have to

⁹ *emmadrobna*. [online]. [2020-05-13]. Available at: <<https://www.instagram.com/p/CAN-JkdHIza/>>.

¹⁰ *Priemerná mzda. Rok: 2019 a 2020*. [online]. [2020-05-23]. Available at: <<https://www.minimalnamzda.sk/priemerna-mzda.php>>.

learn to save some money if they had not been doing it prior to pandemic. Marketers must find now a way how to sell long-term and regularly paid products and services. Leasing, loans, hire-purchases... These products will be now needed more than ever but people will most likely tend to create a small financial reserve, too. As such, people will probably refuse to invest their money in short-term leases. It will be very difficult for the marketers to sell limited time of usage products as people have recently acquired a new priority very much influencing their buying behavior- they will try to save money to create a financial cushion and an emergency fund too, if they have not yet done so. Case studies of various post Covid19 Slovak banks commercials have shown that there are 3 basic steps how to promote long-term financial products successfully. At first, stay proactive (not reactive or defensive). Secondly, prepare a product/service that is smaller (precisely segmented, cheaper, but not cheap) and for shorter period of time (do not intend to tie your customers to long-term commitments). And third, hold on to your commitments. As simple as that. A great example of successful switch in sense of these three steps to be taken in marketing communication has been the communication of VUB bank, especially their online marketing shift¹¹.

2.3 Psychological Bubble – Set the Trend. Keeping Up Only Is Insufficient

People who value themselves, they are assertive, they value their mental health. It all starts with the main topic of motivational books that is no longer business success but personal success instead. The most recent trends keep on provoking humans to become rather a mass of individuals who do not fit stereotypes and may have unexpected reactions to both expected and unexpected situations. Given current circumstances with the pandemic of COVID-19, an unexpected situation has provoked us to act differently. We found ourselves thrown to all this fuss: a quarantine, a home office, limited time for shopping, given distance to be kept in presence of other people... Doctors and state representatives ask us to stay at home. Government officials restrict our free movement by introducing special security measures that go that far as to limiting opening hours for specific age groups to certain day times. Some products and services sellers started to apply their own rules in the name of prevention and they have limited their opening hours, too. Banks, insurance companies and many others make use of the situation and they shifted their activities to online environment. In fact, the services who have been forced to go digital because the trends dictate us to save money and time have spent enormous amounts of money to we start to realize less personal (staff), the At first, small entrepreneurs collapsed. We do what we are asked to do. On the other hand, the longer the pandemic lasts, the more we speculate and they m does not apply for genetics; the more potential genes the better DNA of the new individual. It certainly does not apply for society in general.

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¹¹ ŠEVČÍKOVÁ, P.: *Kriza je príležitosť, aby sme sa zmenili, hovorí šéfka marketingu VÚB banky*. [2020-05-27]. Available at: <<https://strategie.hnonline.sk/marketing/2150805-kriza-je-prilezitost-aby-sme-sa-zmenili-hovori-sefka-marketingu-vub-banky>>.

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ETHICAL ASPECTS IN THE COMMUNICATION OF REGIONAL AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES WITH THE PUBLIC

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ABSTRACT:

Political activity, especially in the context of its media dimension, has become a permanent element of public life. Political competition, which results in exercising power, requires constant search for political attractiveness, especially in the immediate area, in the region and municipalities. Shaping the public opinion has brought attention to the issue of ethics of behaviour of politicians, because the ethical, and especially unethical context of behaviour of public figures is an extremely attractive matter. The ability to formulate assessments using the criterion of ethics has become in this dimension a very important element of influencing the behaviour of the electorate. The purpose of the article is to indicate the basic categories of ethical behaviour required for the communication of regional and local authorities with the public.

KEY WORDS:

communication process, ethics political power, public relations

1 Introduction

Creating the image of politicians, especially with the use of traditional and new media is an increasingly expressive mechanism making use of the activities of Public Relations and Media Relations. They are an instrument of political market activities both during the exercise of power and during election campaigns. The professionalization of their management, understood in particular as an aspect of the diversity of instruments used in these activities, leads to gaining more and more influence on the recipient, which should force monitoring of these activities, especially in the context of their ethical dimension. Creating the image of regional and local power is part of the process of communication with the public. The ethical context of politicians' behaviour not only constitutes the durability of exercising power, but it also is a condition of public support necessary in their activities. Sensitising the public to the necessity of making assessments using the criterion of ethics enables one to decide about themselves, about their future, determined by the proper fulfilment of needs by the authorities. Its role is to ensure the conditions for regional and local development implemented in parallel with the provision of conditions for the individual development of members of the managed community. Media activity plays a substantial role in this process, which, by reporting the behaviour of politicians, shapes public opinion. In receiving the content of messages, ethical assessment is necessary in the ability to analyse content, structure it, bring out and read meaning, combine it with one's own experience, make decisions, act and evaluate. The indicated context is of particular importance in the programming of Public Relations activities carried out by regional and local authorities.

2 Ethics

The very concept of ethics has been known to mankind since ancient times. Ethics derives from philosophy, whose branch of science it still constitutes. In very general terms, the subject of its interest is morality and the construction of thought systems from which it is possible to derive appropriate moral principles. The most classical ethical systems include the ancient theory of Aristotle's golden mean, or Immanuel Kant's categorical imperative theory. John Stuart Mill was guided in his considerations by his so-called principle of usability,

which was to guarantee happiness for as many people as possible. Classical Christian ethics states: “Love thy neighbour as thyself”¹. Fraser Seitel, author of the already classical book on public relations in his definition of ethics, refers to the collective American publication *Effective Public Relations*. The concept of ethics is defined here as the relation of values that guides a person, an organisation or the public in their behaviour, primarily with respect to the opposites of: good — evil, justice — injustice, honesty — dishonesty. Behaviour is assessed not only in relation to a person’s conscience, but also in the context of the standards in a given environment in which the person functions². Ethical or unethical behaviour will therefore be implemented in this sense in relation to the set standards in relations with others. The meaning of the so-called cultural norm, which is also of great importance in formulating moral or ethical assessments. On the basis of a cultural norm, there are norms of conduct characteristic of different environments occurring within the same culture³. Rudolf Carnap, one of the most well-known ethicists in our times, divided the theories that create assessments of behaviour and conduct as follows⁴:

- motivism systems,
- effectivism systems,
- nominalism systems.

As part of the theory of motivism, the assessment of an action in terms of morality or lack thereof is shaped in the context of the motive that guided the action. So here we disregard the final effect, since according to these theories there may be a conflict between a motive and an action – the so-called good intention but no end result (objectively negative evaluation) or so-called bad motivation (dishonest, unfair) but a positive end result. Effectivism focuses primarily on the final effect of an action. We are dealing here with an objective assessment of the outcome of behaviour without probing into person’s intentions. An act can be considered morally right solely and exclusively when the effect is positive in moral terms. Nominalism systems focus neither on motives nor the effect, but rather evaluate a given course of action in terms of good and evil, which are in fact undefinable. In the light of this approach, these are original concepts, and therefore those on the basis of which other concepts are built, and they do not have their own definition. In this case, the assessment is determined by compliance with moral norms specific to the given environment. As can be deduced from the above, the concept of ethics has a long tradition and is defined on many levels in various areas. Regardless of the aetiology of the theory of ethics, however, it is inseparable from the moral action and being guided by the values considered to be right and righteous in a given circle or environment. Contemporary value systems are also based on ancient philosophical thought and the classical Judeo-Christian ethics.

3 Ethics in Politics

When considering the relationship between ethics and politics, in terms of the necessary symbiosis of these scopes, the legislator regulating the principles of social life in Article 7 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 1997, orders authorities to act on the basis of and within the law. According to J. Muszyński’s view, moral norms have an auxiliary function, supporting legal norms. This is due to the fact that the effectiveness of the functioning of power is doubly conditioned: legally, allowing the use of coercive measures to

¹ SEITEL, F.: *Relations w praktyce*. Warszawa : Felberg, 2003, p. 85.

² Ibidem.

³ Ibidem.

⁴ CARNAP, R.: *Empiryzm, semantyka, ontologia*. Warszawa : IFiS PAN, 2005, p. 32.

enforce the desired behaviour of people, and on the other hand — ethically, based on the authority of power, which should be determined by the morality of people exercising power. It is necessary to understand power as a moral authority, leading to the association that political power, regardless of the level of management, is guided not only by legal categories, but also by moral conditions⁵. How, in the light of the above statement, should we programme the activities of those in power, supported by relations with the public, the activities of Public Relations services, organising the process of communication with the environment in accordance with the principles of ethics? This process should not only represent the behaviour of those in power, but also their clear intentions. Understanding ethics as the set of norms and moral assessments valid for the public, defining what is good and what is bad in people's behaviour and conduct, K. Dziubka distinguishes four concepts of relations between politics and ethics:

- domination of ethics over politics – a politician should be guided unconditionally in his behaviour by the moral principles that form the basis of their political activity,
- domination of politics over ethics – a politician's conduct is marked by the interest of the subject, and in the event that the so-called conflict of values, political reasons should dominate over their moral aspect. This behaviour is illustrated by the Machiavellian maxim: "The ends justify the means",
- the authenticity of ethics and politics – each of the spheres deals with different issues, differently explaining political actions and processes, ethics indicates the obligations of the acting subject, and the politics emphasizes the effectiveness of actions,
- the interdependence of politics and ethics – this relationship has two contexts: political actions should be assessed according to their moral significance, but in this relation it is assumed that abstract moral norms should be assessed from the point of view of political effectiveness⁶.

To put it simply, the consistency of politicians' behaviour and the subsequent credibility of political communication should be characterised by the following determinants and criteria:

- decisions of political groups should aim at the careful selection of people who are candidates for political functions in elections, in effect those exercising power;
- implementing the fundamental principle that the basis of political action is a formed idea on which a programme is built, and the impact is aimed at uniting public support by identifying it with an indicated idea and clear, transparent goals of a political group;
- elimination of manipulation as a method of gaining influence;
- proper selection of Public Relations staff, who are guided by ethical norms as their priority.

The phenomenon of manipulation should be subjected to ethical evaluation, which is a frequent method of justifying the behaviour of politicians or at least disguising their true intentions being contrary to the public interest of an entire community. In particular, identifiable by specialists assessing in the process of exerting influence during an election campaign. L. Sobkowiak notes that despite the resounding declarations of respect for ethics in political activity and attempts to enforce various codes of desirable rules of conduct, the actions of some subjects of politics are far from these models. This results in a duality of behaviours, official declarations of sincerity, reliability, and the rejection of the aggression of controlling the recipients being inconsistent with the use of various forms of manipulation⁷.

⁵ MUSZYŃSKI, J.: *Leksykon marketingu politycznego*. Wrocław : Alta2, 2001, p. 51.

⁶ DZIUBKA, K.: Behawioryzm Etyka. In ANTOSZEWSKI, A., HERBUT, R. (eds.): *Leksykon politologii*. Wrocław : Alta2, 1999, p. 117-118.

⁷ SOBKOWIAK, L.: Działania polityczne. Teoria i praktyka. In JABŁOŃSKI, A., SOBKOWIAK, L. (eds.): *Marketing polityczny w teorii i praktyce*. Wrocław : Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2009, p. 37.

This practice is becoming more and more frequent. So what are the characteristics of manipulation?

- taking advantage of one's upper hand and a favourable situation to anticipate the other party in something, and especially for imposing one's will on a party,
- hiding actual goals from recipients,
- often coupled with diverting the attention or suggesting apparent goals as the proper goals,
- hiding the aims of action, its real nature and means; including one's own agency,
- use of deception,
- using and maintaining the unawareness or limited and false awareness of the addressees of actions, aimed at confusing the recipient or depriving them of influence on the situation and self-control of actions,
- repeatedly using other people as tools for one's own actions and achieving subjective goals,
- deliberately creating incentives, selectively emphasising public needs and values for falsely justifying one's own actions,
- direct or indirect objectification of the recipient,
- achieving one's own, particular benefits by using ethically reprehensible actions,
- achieving one's own goals at the expense of the interests of those who are taken advantage of and intentionally misled⁸.

The phenomenon of manipulation should be critically assessed, especially in the context of achieving its goals. One should strive to eliminate this method from the conduct of politicians. To this end, self-assessment of one's own attitudes in relation to the generally accepted system of values is necessary, with the basic criterion – distinguishing between good and evil. Manipulation leads directly to immorality. Immorality (like arrogance of those in power) is commonly felt to be inherent to politics and those in power. A simple reading of this principle is the assessment of candidates proposed for important social or economic functions – in relation to their declared values, especially competence, and their actual potential. Especially people who owe their position only to the fact of their presence in the government apparatus⁹. In seeking power in accordance with the principles of ethics, the required political communication is often marked by elements that conflict with these requirements. It is characterised by the use of negative campaign methods. According to the *International Encyclopedia of Propaganda*, a negative campaign contains significant elements of emphasising negative aspects in opposition to positive aspects and its basis is stereotyping aimed at denigrating the opponent, discrediting a competitive ideology or destroying the competitor's reputation¹⁰. J. Olędzki points to the following negative campaign techniques¹¹:

- *Smear campaign* – is the term used to describe a technique in a negative campaign consisting in misrepresenting the character of a person, a policy of a government, a party or any other organisation through innuendo, half-truths and lies. Its purpose is usually to eliminate opponents. It is based on the dissemination of unproven allegations of a depreciating nature: unlawful conduct, misconduct, gender discrimination, mobbing subordinates or colleagues,
- *Character assassination* – these are well thought-out and consistent actions, the aim of which is a one-off or continuous destruction of the opponent's reputation, usually by fabricating or manipulating information that is to damage their reputation. It is done so that

⁸ KARWAT, M.: *Sztuka manipulacji politycznej*. Toruń : Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 2001, p. 19.

⁹ MUSZYŃSKI, J.: *Leksykon marketingu politycznego*. Wrocław : Alta2, 2001, p. 52.

¹⁰ OLEĐZKI, J.: Czarne sztuczki – propaganda i PR. In TWORZYDŁO, D., SOLIŃSKY, T. (eds.): *Public relations w zarządzaniu firmą*. Rzeszów : Wyd. WSiZ, 2004, p. 4.

¹¹ Ibidem.

the truth cannot be found. The most commonly used techniques are: innuendo, exaggeration, biased interpretation of facts and their deliberate distortion, use of lies or misinformation in statements,

- *Labelling* – is a deliberate formation of a descriptive word or sentence that negatively categorises, characterises or stereotypes a person or a group of people.

As you can see above, in addition to recommendations aimed at creating an ethically ideal campaign, it is worth paying attention to the phenomenon of a negative campaign, which is ethically unacceptable because it grossly violates moral standards. A negative campaign is also dangerous because it is more expressive in its perception and it attracts attention more easily and stimulates emotions, and thus it may seem more convincing.

4 Public Relations Ethics

The ethics of Public Relations activities in the communication of those in power with the public should be guided by similar premises as it is guided in its activities in the ethical context in general. It should be remembered that regionally, and especially locally, the behaviour of PR services is less intensively assessed by the media, which in particular in municipalities, is characterised by a greater degree of dependence on local authorities. The Code of Professional Standards of the Public Relations Society of America states that PR professionals are obliged to act in accordance with the public interest, and values such as honesty and integrity should always come first. The goal of a Public Relations professional is primarily to increase the trust of the environment in the organisation whose interests it represents. In this case, it will increase confidence in a politician or a political party for which the professional works, and as a consequence create increased support and a possibility of winning elections. As Fraser and Seitel emphasise, the essence of the code of the International Association of Business Communicators is that people working in Public Relations promote and maintain “high standards of public service and ethical conduct”¹². As P. Bilangowski writes, all codes include certain norms and assumptions from which the following conclusions can be drawn:

- all codes refer to the UN Charter designating human rights. In particular, provisions on freedom of expression and the right to information,
- the codes emphasise provisions regarding the prohibition of representing conflicting or competing interests,
- stressing the fact that *each* code contains provisions warning against using false information,
- indicating that each of the codes specifies that PR activities are activities intended to benefit not only private interests, but also the public, which should enforce actions in line with the public interest,
- the codes are characterised by a high level of generality, which results in the fact that the codes do not attempt to formulate detailed provisions in the form of prescriptions of conduct¹³.

As Bilangowski claims, the lack of ethics in the profession of a PR professional, whose work is related to political activity is most explicitly evident during the election campaign. Then we are dealing with many activities that do not comply with the PR Code. The public can be

¹² SEITEL, F.: *Relations w praktyce*. Warszawa : Felberg, 2003, p. 85.

¹³ BILANGOWSKI, P.: *Etyka w public relations*. [online]. [2020-02-26]. Available at: <https://documen.site/download/etyka-w-public-relations_pdf>.

manipulated and used as puppets in a political game¹⁴. The issue of the so-called black PR, appearing in statements of some representatives can also be identified during the period of exercising power. It is a deliberately planned information activity to the detriment of another entity – an institution, an organisation, a nation or an individual person. It undermines the credibility of a person or a group of people by shaping their image¹⁵. Currently, which is a stupendous fact, these activities make use of formation and dissemination of fake news. New technologies allow for unrestricted provision of information whose true legibility is often dubious. The originator of disseminated information is difficult to identify, but its impact can be significant. Impersonal conduct of activities may result from the initiative of political opponents or their supporters. This fact significantly broadens the scope of political influence, and it may get out of control. Negative information is particularly harmful on a regional and local scale, where it can have lasting effects in the assessment of people, often easily identifiable. The victims of these activities can often be people not directly involved in political activity, and who may have had intentional, but also accidental contact with people against whom a negative information campaign is conducted. New technologies broaden the political market, and free access to communication tools does not always go hand in hand with their ethical use.

The indicated negative aspects of political communication are not a product of the present day. The author of the principle that best characterises the essence of black PR: “depict the enemy in a bad light and make him stay in it” was Samuel Adams, who announced it in the United States more than two hundred years ago. According to Ołędzki’s views, it was in the US where the manipulation of various information during election campaigns was perfected. An interesting fact is the way black PR is interpreted. In the US, instead of the term *black PR*, the term *black magic* is used more often¹⁶. Some political scientists believe that the primary goal of politicians is to gain power, and only later to gain recognition in the eyes of observers of this political game, which in practice may be tantamount to disregarding the principles of *fair play*. Ołędzki refers to Muszyński, who claims that in the struggle for political influence it is difficult to respect ethical principles precisely because the stake in this market game is power – that is, the right to impose one’s will on others¹⁷. Public Relations activities in the communication of those in power with the public are exposed to the influence of many factors that can lead to breaching, or at least violating the rules of ethics. Particular pressure from unethical politicians who place personal benefits from exercising power above the mission of acting for the good of the public. In this context, it seems very important to monitor activities in the area of political PR, as well as to educate the public about clear and ethical reading of political activities.

Conclusion

The exercise of power from a social delegation is one of the most important mechanisms of the democratic system of state management. Preceded by the vote ending the election campaign. The correct formation of social relations depends to a large extent on the correctness of political choices. Building social relations today depends on the actions of

¹⁴ BILANGOWSKI, P.: *Etyka w public relations*. [online]. [2020-02-26]. Available at: <https://documen.site/download/etyka-w-public-relations_pdf>.

¹⁵ OŁĘDZKI, J.: Czarne sztuczki – propaganda i PR. In TWORZYDŁO, D., SOLIŃSKY, T. (eds.): *Public relations w zarządzaniu firmą*. Rzeszów : Wyd. WSiIZ, 2004, p. 5.

¹⁶ Ibidem, p. 1.

¹⁷ Ibidem.

politicians. Shaping the education processes of future generations and strengthening their value systems depends on the quality of those in power and their understanding of their mission. Ethics should play a fundamental role in them. The ethical context of politicians' behaviour and the subsequent dimension of communication with the public, especially in the area of Public Relations, is of particular importance for the clarity of actions of the those in power. It is difficult to talk about acting for the benefit of the public when intentions and actions of politicians are unclear to the people. However, clarity alone requires thoughtful support, because techniques for obscuring subjective political interests are currently very diverse. The intensity of the presence of politics in social life, the mechanisms of action it uses, affects the shaping of behaviour patterns in other areas of social activity. Behaviour patterns, publicised by the media, which are contrary to ethics often become normal behaviour, because it is difficult not to justify one's unethical behaviour, when the example one can refer to is so spectacular. All the more so if bad behaviour is translated as legitimate by political allies. The ubiquity of Public Relations activities, many a time distant from ethical behaviour, should result in increased effort leading to their monitoring and their stigmatisation in the event of their occurrence. Because nothing worse can happen than social acceptance of unethical behaviour.

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MEDIA AS A MEANS OF MITIGATING THE IMPACTS OF DIFFERENT EXPECTATIONS IN THE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION OF RUSSIANS AND CZECHS IN THE INCOMING TOURISM OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Monika Klímová – Ondřej Pešek

ABSTRACT:

The aim of the paper is to state the possibilities and roles of media statements on the relations between Russians and Czechs during intercultural cooperation in the field of inbound tourism in the Czech Republic. The paper expands and complements the conclusions of the research of the co-author's dissertation. These became the theoretical basis for a contribution to the discussion of whether the media can contribute to a higher level of relations between the nations and possibly remove the different expectations of both Russians and Czechs in the provision of services and their use in inbound tourism.

KEY WORDS:

destination image, inbound tourism of the Czech Republic, intercultural cooperation, media, media influence, public opinion

1 Introduction

Inbound tourism is an integral part of tourism, in which intercultural communication plays an essential role.^{1 2} It primarily takes place between tourism organizers, it means service providers and visitors, as well as tourists, and secondarily, residents of the host country also participate in intercultural communication. The paper deals with the area of inbound tourism in the Czech Republic focused on Russian tourists and the role of the media as a creator of public opinion. With the role, where the media are a magnifying glass of content. The link between the media image and tourism is demonstrable and proven by the research of the authors of this article. Whether intentionally or unintentionally, mediated content can expand knowledge or reshape the ideas, images and attitudes of recipients³ (eg. about other cultures, history, etc.). The relationship of the population of the Czech Republic to Russia and the Russians changed mainly in connection with historical events during the 20th and 21st centuries.⁴ Significant events shaping the attitudes of the Czechs towards the Russians and the USSR, later the Russian Federation, were the end of World War II and the role of Soviet troops in the liberation of Czechoslovakia, the entry of friendly Warsaw Pact troops in August 1968, strong influence of the USSR and the annexation of Russian troops to the Crimea in 2014. Above all, the last two mentioned events are still reflected in the negative attitude of the Czech public towards the Russians and everything related to Russian culture and the Russian Federation. This situation is also observable in inbound tourism of the Czech Republic on the behavior of some service providers in inbound tourism, as well as on the behavior of some residents towards Russian tourists. The split occurs at the moment when the mentioned Czechs clash with Russian tourists in their homeland, because they usually have different expectations and ideas about the Czechs' relationship with them.

¹ For more information, see: KLÍMOVÁ, M.: *Interkulturní specifika a cestovní ruch*. Prague : Wolters Kluwer, 2017.

² See also: TRIBE, J.: *Philosophical issues in tourism*. Buffalo, NY : Channel View Publications, 2009.

³ Remark by the authors: From the perspective of the recipient of the message and the consumer of the media, we are talking about the so-called interpretive and cognitive function of the media.

⁴ *Отношение к Русским в Чехии*. [online]. [2020-05-02]. Available at: <<http://www.prag.ru/Czech/impres/7011/>>.

2 Theoretical Background

The aim of the paper is to state the possibilities and roles of media statements on the relations between Russians and Czechs during intercultural cooperation in the field of inbound tourism in the Czech Republic. The paper follows the conclusions of the research of the co-author's dissertation.⁵ Ethical aspects of the phenomenon of interculturality in inbound tourism in the Czech Republic focused on Russian tourists. These became the theoretical basis of the paper and the subsequent discussion of the authors, whether the media can contribute to greater awareness of both parties to the intercultural dialogue and remove different expectations of both Russians and Czechs in providing services and their use in inbound tourism. In the countries of both mentioned nations, the media currently have a strong influence on their inhabitants. Members of these nations are integrated into their society through the consumption of the media⁶. By their influence, the media can contribute to the minimization of conflicts arising from the described situations. The authors of the paper used analytical methods, whether situation analysis or analysis of primary sources. The tools for obtaining primary data became: long-term participatory observation, guided interviews, the method of questioning. In addition to long-term targeted observation, the authors selected respondents for their primary research in a targeted manner. Experts from practice and the academic environment were addressed in order to obtain relevant information from all layers of the tourism industry - from ministers, directors and managers of airlines, Czech and Russian travel agencies, tourism destination organizations, Czech and Russian guides, academics from the Czech Republic and the Russian Federation. The snow-ball method was also used secondarily, when the addressed experts or academics themselves recommended another respondent. The authors also used the analysis of secondary data, the method of synthesis and deduction.

3 Media as a Means of Mitigating the Effects of Different Expectations in the Intercultural Cooperation of Russians and Czechs in Inbound Tourism

The paper is based on the need to analyze and name the possible causes of clashes between two Slavic cultures in the incoming tourism of the Czech Republic – Czech and Russian, and the need to reduce friction between the analyzed cultures through the media. These occupy a very important place from two points of view:

- Undistorted and objective information has a significant impact on public opinion and may even contribute secondarily to the training of tourism professionals. The basis is to inform objectively and independently about facts, real events, history and current events⁷.
- Intercultural communication between stakeholders can be significantly negatively affected by the media.⁸ The scandals provoked, false, corrected information lead to mutual conflicts in the framework of intercultural cooperation in tourism, negative attitudes of the parties towards each other, even hatred. This is fundamentally reflected in the number of visitors to the host country, the relationship between residents and tourists, the increase in the point limit of the Doxey irritation index.

⁵ For more information, see: KLÍMOVÁ., M.: *Ethical aspects of intercultural phenomenon of Czech Republic inbound tourism focused on Russian tourists*. [Dissertation Thesis]. Prague : Charles University in Prague, 2019.

⁶ Remark by the authors: From the perspective of the recipient of the message and the consumer of the media, we are talking about the so-called socializing function of the media.

⁷ Remark by the authors: From the perspective of the recipient of the message and the consumer of the media, we are talking about the so-called information and orientation function of the media.

⁸ WHEELER, M.: Tourism marketing ethics: an introduction. In *International Marketing Review*, 1995, Vol. 1, No. 4, p. 39-48.

In tourism, more than anywhere else, there is a need to establish intercultural cooperation between participating cultures.^{9 10} If we perceive intercultural communication from the point of view of Saks¹¹, Sokol^{12 13}, Klímová¹⁴, Lehmannová,¹⁵ we can state that inbound tourism is an environment in which mutual intercultural communication is the basic building block. Cultures with different perceptions of reality, value system, verbal and nonverbal communication meet. Knowledge of these differences is essential.¹⁶ It is therefore necessary not only for tourism workers to have relevant information on these differences, but also for residents of the host country to have appropriate and unbiased information, at least partially explaining the differences in the behavior of arriving tourists. What is important is the resilience of residents towards incoming tourists, not the hateful mood or distorted view of the incoming tourist segment. It is in this case that the media play an unmistakable and indispensable role. By what information, in what intensity and frequency, in what order do the media present the information, the media influence the perception of the recipients of the messages. They can thus create public opinion that reflects the knowledge, attitudes, emotions of visitors to the destination, but also residents of the country towards visitors. In the minds of members of both these groups, they can create and influence the idea of other cultures. In particular, the mass media have a high level of authority among the recipients, the messages are almost always created by professionals or people who deal with the field (journalists, travelers, bloggers, influencers, etc.). Therefore, they are trustworthy with the recipients of the communication. Because the creator of the message and its recipient usually do not know each other, there is a considerable physical distance between them. In addition, it is emphasized by the social distance resulting from the greater experience of the provider of media messages, influence, wider awareness and acquaintance, position in society, unequal amount of resources and authority¹⁷.

If necessary, the media can weaken tourism (eg. in the case of overtourism) or conversely, support the strengthening of tourism (in the case where there is a significant financial income from tourism for the region, city, country, place etc.). After thorough analyzes, national tourism organizations use the media to create a positive image of the tourist destination and to strengthen inbound tourism in countries from which significant financially strong clients come.¹⁸ Russian tourists play an important role in Czech inbound tourism. Russian tourists played an important role in the inbound tourism of the Czech Republic as early as the 1980s. The 1990s and the turn of the millennium only confirmed their important market position. They arrive for a longer period of time than most other foreign tourists, they are also important in

⁹ For more information, see: KLÍMOVÁ, M.: *Ethical aspects of intercultural phenomenon of Czech Republic inbound tourism focused on Russian tourists*. [Dissertation Thesis]. Prague : Charles University in Prague, 2019.

¹⁰ See also: YOUSEFI, H. R.: *Interkulturalität und Geschichte. Perspektiven für eine globale Philosophie*. Reinbek : Lau-Verlag, 2010.

¹¹ See: SACKS, J.: *Důstojnost v rozdílnosti. Jak se vyhnout střetu civilizací*. Prague : Triton, 2017.

¹² For more information, see: SOKOL, J.: *Etika, život, instituce: pokus o praktickou filosofii*. Prague : Vyšehrad, 2014.

¹³ See also: SOKOL, J.: *Filosofická antropologie: člověk jako osoba*. Prague : Portál, 2002.

¹⁴ See more: KLÍMOVÁ, M.: *Interkulturní specifika a cestovní ruch*. Prague : Wolters Kluwer, 2017.

¹⁵ For more information, see: LEHMANNOVÁ, Z.: *Paradigma kultur*. Plzeň : Vydavatelství a nakladatelství Aleš Čeněk, 2011.

¹⁶ See: LEHMANNOVÁ, Z. et al.: *Kulturní pluralita v současném světě*. Prague : Oeconomica, 2005.

¹⁷ McQUAIL, D.: *Úvod do teorie masové komunikace*. Prague : Portál, 1999, p. 59.

¹⁸ *Strukturalizace výsledků šetření Příjezdový cestovní ruch 2009 – 2015 do jednotlivých krajů ČR*. [online]. [2020-05-10]. Available at: <https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:JAS1R0ot_bkJ:https://www.mmr.cz/getmedia/4088c894-741e-4d4e-94e9-175a51a35e9a/Souhrnna-srovnavaci-analyza.pdf%3Fext%3D.pdf+&cd=1&hl=cs&ct=clnk&gl=cz&client=firefox-b>.

terms of spending. Russian tourists are known for their desire for Czech souvenirs, and their shopping in bulk, high spending¹⁹ in luxury hotels and restaurants, and spending on entertainment.²⁰ Even today, as in the previous twenty years, it holds a high position in terms of spending in one day in the Czech economy. For comparison and easier understanding, a comparison of the spending of the Russian tourist segment with other important tourist segments, such as the Americans, the British and others, is presented. On average, Americans spend approximately 4,378 crowns per person per day in the Czech Republic. They are followed by the British with a spending rate of 4,116 crowns per person per day. In addition to the ruble depreciation, the number of Russians arriving in the Czech Republic was also affected by the annexation of Crimea.²¹ Many Czechs were opposed to the political event, calling the situation in Crimea a moral betrayal of Ukraine. Many tourism workers were inclined to believe that in this situation, the Czech Republic, or its specific cities, should not work with Russian tourists. The mayor of the Capital City, of Prague, Tomáš Hudeček, joined this group. The mayor issued a statement stating that we did not want Russians in Prague. The result of Hudeček's activities was the official suspension of Prague's partnership with Moscow. He saw the act as a protest against Russia's violation of Ukraine's sovereignty. According to Hudeček, he joined a number of other European countries and the USA. His statement did not go unanswered for a long time, both from the Moscow side and from the Czech hoteliers and restaurants:

One week after the publication of Mayor Hudeček's Statement, the Tourism Forum, which brings together tourism associations, sent him an open letter asking him *"to reconsider the position of the Prague City Council and to repeal Resolution No. 2255 of 2 September 2014"*. The letter states, inter alia:

- *"... We must state that we are very concerned about your measure, when the Council of the Capital City of Prague, at its meeting on September 2, 2014 under No. 2255, approves with effect from September 15, 2014 the suspension of the partnership of the City of Prague with the Russian cities of St. Petersburg and Moscow. We do not know what entitles you to decide for an entrepreneur without any prior consultation. Unfortunately, with this reckless measure, you are seriously damaging tourism, which is an important field in our capital.*
- *In 2013, 803 thousand Russian tourists came to the Czech Republic. A Russian tourist stays in the Czech Republic an average of 5 days and spends 4,000 crowns on each day of his stay. For every hundred crowns spent by tourists, the state receives CZK 41 in levies, not to mention the importance of tourism for the employment of the inhabitants of Prague and the Central Bohemian Region.*
- *In the monitored year 2013, 542 thousand Russian tourists visited Prague, who spent an average of 4 days there. Here we emphasize that the largest number of these tourists is mainly from Moscow. After the European Union imposed sanctions on Russia and some of our politicians publicly joined in creating anti-Russian sentiment, the Czech Republic was described as a "third country" in which it may not be safe for Russian tourists. There has been a significant decrease in the number of tourists coming from Russia. The number of days spent in our metropolis during the first quarter of 2014 decreased by as much as 114,000. By a simple calculation, it can be calculated that the loss is 456 million crowns.*

¹⁹ Remark by the authors: The term of spending per day in the terminology of tourism means how much a tourist spends crowns per day. It includes so-called direct spending, which is the purchase of souvenirs, payments for services on a given day, and so-called mediated spending, which means, for example, accommodation in the Czech Republic paid for through a travel agency or agencies abroad.

²⁰ See also: KLÍMOVÁ, M.: *Interkulturní specifika a cestovní ruch*. Prague : Wolters Kluwer, 2017.

²¹ ПУТИН, В.: *Обращения Владимира Путина по Крыму*. [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <<https://russian.rt.com/article/24532>>.

- *By your reckless measure, you have completely thwarted all our efforts to remedy the situation and to introduce the Czech Republic as a safe destination that Russian tourists value.*"²²

The appeal of the Tourism Forum did not go without the mayor's response, but it was as dismissive as his statement. The mayor refused in any way to respond to complaints or appeals from experts, or to comment on the views expressed by Czech workers in tourism. He completely ignored the fact that, from the point of view of professional ethics, he should act in the interests of those who elected him to the post of mayor of the capital. Personal opinions and private attitudes towards the current political situation do not belong to this level. As an immediate response to Hudeček's Declaration, Moscow advised its inhabitants not to go to Prague or the Czech Republic and choose other destinations. According to the hoteliers, the media response in Moscow was unprecedented, and hotels and travel agencies very quickly registered a drop in reservations for tourists from Moscow from their business partners by almost 30 percent. At the same time, St. Petersburg called the decision of the Prague councilors a hostile gesture and advised its citizens to do the same as Moscow. Moscow has been a partner city of Prague since 1995. In 2000, the both cities enter into an agreement on friendly relations and cooperation. Prague entered into a partnership with St. Petersburg in October 1991. Within the framework of signed agreements, the cities also cooperate in organizing social or cultural events. According to Prague, the decision of councilors does not affect commercial activities in any way. Despite the initial assumptions of the authors that the annexation of Crimea will appear in the questionnaires or answers of the respondents, it will appear as one of the reasons for the hostility of Czechs towards Russian tourists, this did not happen. None of the answers related to this event. Unlike the August "aid" in 1968. The commemoration of the events of August 1968 appeared as a reason for the hostility of the Czechs towards the Russians among both Russian and Czech respondents. The Crimean annexation was not marked by the respondents in any of the cases. The typical statement of the respondents was: *"It was the Russians who came to Czechoslovakia in 1968, not the other way around."* Since the summer of 2014, the situation in Czech inbound tourism targeted at Russian tourists has been very tense and arrivals of this tourist segment have registered a significant decline. The situation is shown below in graph - chart no.1.



Chart 1: Results of research – Numbers of Russian tourists in 2012 – 2017

Source: own processing; *Cestovní ruch. Český statistický úřad*. [online]. [2020-05-20]. Available at: <https://www.czso.cz/csu/czso/cestovni_ruch>.

²² *Hudeček zrušil partnerství Prahy s Moskvou. A toto mu vzkazují hoteliéři*. [online]. [2020-05-20]. Available at: <<https://www.parlamentnilisty.cz/arena/monitor/Hudecek-zrusil-partnerstvi-Prahy-s-Moskvou-A-toto-mu-vzkazuji-hotelieri-334811>>.

The graph shows that Russian tourists reduced the number of their arrivals, their marked decline lasted until 2016. At that time, the situation began to improve, thanks to the generous marketing support of CzechTourism. The Russians began to visit the Czech Republic again. The increasing trend in the number of arrivals has continued, especially since 2018, and continues to do so. The situation began to improve only with the generous marketing support of CzechTourism. The media play an important role in many areas of human activities, and tourism is no exception. In addition, it is important to always keep in mind that not only the host country but also the countries from which tourists come play a role in the intercultural communication of inbound tourism.²³ The fact is that Russians come to the Czech Republic with different expectations²⁴ than the reality itself during their stay in the Czech Republic. The research revealed the following findings:

1. The different expectations with which Russian tourists approach the visit to the Czech Republic are the most common cause of intercultural conflicts. Intercultural interaction in inbound tourism is often the cause of conflicts between stakeholders in its own right. The situation itself is complex, potential conflicts are inevitable and often do not offer the possibility of a conflict-free or easy solution. A certain starting point for non-conflict intercultural interaction may be a huge degree of tolerance of both participating parties and knowledge of the specifics of both cultures, their value paradigms, specific customs, or the most common patterns of behavior. In the case of Russian tourists heading to the Czech Republic, the discrepancy between expectations and reality is often caused by frequent misinformation by the Russian media²⁵ and tour operators, tourism organizers and service providers in the Russian Federation. There is a general belief in the Russian Federation that the Czechs are close to the Russians²⁶ - in character, opinion, Slavic, linguistic and the Czech side will welcome Russian tourists more warmly than other tourist segments.²⁷ This view is entirely purposefully supported by tour operators in Russia and other participating entities in tourism. Especially in the second half of the 20th century, the Czech Republic was literally a dream tourist destination for the Russians.²⁸ The effort, especially of the older and middle generation, to visit the Czech land at least once, continues to this day.²⁹ ³⁰On the part of the

²³ SOUKUP, O.: *Rusko si vychovává vlastence. Dozvědi se, jaké jsou mýty o SSSR a jak chtějí USA vytvořit chaos.* [online]. [2020-03-03]. Available at: <<https://zpravy.aktualne.cz/zahranici/vlastence-v-rusku-vychovavum-l-ze-statniho-rozpoctu-dostava/r~bd5f236cf4301e6bb37002590604f2e/>>; *Specialized agency of the united nations world tourism organization UNWTO.* [online]. [2020-06-03]. Available at: <<http://www2.unwto.org/search/node/tourism>>.

²⁴ *111 otázek a odpovědí k obchodování s Ruskou federací.* [online]. [2014-06-07]. Available at: <<http://www.irucz.ru/cz/zpravy/5/102-ceska-republika/10211-/000-/206-sluzby-podnikatelum/7536-seminar-k-publikaci-111-otazek-a-odpovedi-o-obchodovani-s-rf/>>.

²⁵ *Lži o Praze, neomylný Stalin a válka začala až v roce 1941. Tak ruská propaganda upravuje historii.* [online]. [2020-02-01]. Available at: <https://zpravy.aktualne.cz/zahranici/sovetske-myty-o-2-svetove-valce-co-je-pravda-co-je-lez/r~0a85c480542911e88b47ac1f6b220ee8/?utm_source=centrumHP&utm_medium=dynamicleadbox&utm_content=editor1&utm_term=position-1&redirected=1526369473>.

²⁶ See also: SLÁDEK, K.: *Ruská diaspora v České republice: sociální, politická a religiozní variabilita ruských migrantů.* Prague : Pavel Mervart, 2010.

²⁷ *Главная Федеральная служба государственной статистики.* [online]. [2020-06-03]. Available at: <http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/perepis2010/croc/perepis_itogi1612.htm>.

²⁸ MAKOVÍK, N.: *Láska na první pohled aneb Proč Rusové milují Česko.* [online]. [2020-05-27]. Available at: <<https://archiv.ihned.cz/c1-23058340-laska-na-prvni-pohled-aneb-proc-rusove-miluji-cesko>>.

²⁹ Remark by the authors: The dream of visiting Prague at least once in their life is mentioned by almost all Russian respondents, or some participants in the author's long-term participatory observation. The belief that the Russians consider the Czechs to be their "brothers" is stated as well as, for example, by Natalia Makovik (Hospodářské noviny, 2008).

³⁰ *111 otázek a odpovědí k obchodování s Ruskou federací.* [online]. [2014-06-07]. Available at: <<http://www.irucz.ru/cz/zpravy/5/102-ceska-republika/10211-/000-/206-sluzby-podnikatelum/7536-seminar-k-publikaci-111-otazek-a-odpovedi-o-obchodovani-s-rf/>>.

Czechs, whether residents or tourism workers, the welcome and negotiations with the Russians are far colder than Russian tourists expect. The answers of the respondents and the opinions recorded during long-term participatory observation showed that the attitude of the Czech people to the Russians is marked by historical events of August 1968 and the subsequent twenty-year occupation of the Czech Republic by Soviet troops, annexation of Crimea by Russia in spring 2014. Especially this attitude is based on the respondents' own experience or on opinions published in the media.

2. The tourist irritation of Czechs towards Russian tourists is relatively high. It can be stated, from the answers of the respondents and the evaluation of the data of long-term participatory observation, that the highest level of irritation concerns quite unsurprisingly large cities. There is a high concentration of tourists, in addition, seasonality does not usually play a significant role. The level of irritation, for example in Prague, Český Krumlov, Karlovy Vary, Liberec, ranges from the highest levels 3 – 4 (hostility to hatred) of the Doxey' irritation index, which is an alarming situation. In destinations where Russian tourists go less than to the named cities, the hostility of local residents towards Russian tourists ranges from levels 2 to 3 (indifference to dissatisfaction and hostility). Given the situation in inbound tourism and changes in the incoming segment to the Czech Republic, it can be assumed that this reason for the irritation of Czechs towards Russian tourists will alleviate. It can therefore be generalized that the irritation originating from their high number of arrivals is not specifically connected with Russian tourists, but with their number³¹.
3. Russian culture, like any culture, has its specifics. Of course, some of its specific manifestations and mentality in the behavior of Russian tourists during their stay in the Czech Republic have their origins in these specifics. Russians, like any other nation, have their cultural specifics, customs, values, relationship to morality. These are limited by geographical area, they copy the cultural, economic, political, historical development and social environment in society. In the defined geographical area of the state, specific manifestations of a given culture are characteristic, not disturbing or surprising. Conflicts can and do occur after arriving in a new unknown country. Questions asked during the primary research of the authors of the article "Should the tourist adapt to the environment, standards, customs of the host country? If so, to what extent? Does the same apply to the destination country and its inhabitants?" could also become a topic for media activities and media statements of politics, which have the opportunity to minimize or at least significantly reduce the different expectations and friction between Czech residents and workers in incoming Czech tourism and incoming Russian tourists.

Conclusion

Inbound tourism is an integral part of tourism, in which intercultural communication plays an essential role. It primarily takes place between tourism organizers, ie service providers and incoming tourists, secondarily, residents of the host country also participate in intercultural communication. The paper deals with the area of inbound tourism in the Czech Republic focused on Russian tourists, and the role of the media in it. The authors succeeded in proving the influence of information published in the print and audiovisual media on the relations of

³¹ Remark by the authors: This type of tourist irritation has been known for a long time and has been addressed at the global level in recent years. Destination managers, ministry staff, global world organizations and professional organizations know the solution - it is necessary to facilitate overcrowded destinations or only certain tourist attractions, places, geographical areas etc. to disperse tourists to other tourist attractions. Interviews with experts in the field of tourism show that it is important not to lose tourists, just to "redirect" them to other attractive, but less touristy places.

residents and tourism workers to a specific incoming tourist segment. The media can thus significantly influence mutual intercultural cooperation negatively and positively; they can also influence the arrival of a specific tourist segment of a specific country.

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VIRTUAL REALITY AS A USEFUL PLATFORM FOR THE TOURISM SECTOR

Petra Koudelková

ABSTRACT:

VR is still a relatively new platform, which has been experiencing a big boom in recent years and its further development can be expected in these days. The aim of the paper is to analyse the possibilities for using virtual reality in marketing and in business core for tourism sector. The using of the VR could be very effective for both firms and customers. It offers better promotion for destinations and other objects of tourism, as well as the opportunity to "fight" overtourism. It provides customers with the benefits of simpler and more efficient travel planning. For the research were used primary and secondary research methods and the research was focused primarily at young people who are more inclined to use the new technology. The questions are: Are Czechs (above all generation Z) ready to use virtual reality? Is the VR widespread among tourism's objects in the Czech Republic? The results are somewhat surprising. Despite expectations, VR is not actively used in the Z generation and is more often used by women than men. The results are valid for the Czech Republic. Originality of the research – This study combines primary and secondary research for deeper understanding the situation in the Czech Republic among young people. Research is important because of current developments in the world, and also because the VR has enormous potential in tourism.

KEY WORDS:

augmented reality, Czech Republic, generation Z, tourism, virtual reality, VR games in tourism

1 Introduction

We meet with virtual reality (sometimes just VR) in connection with tourist industry since 1995, when one of the first articles in the field of scientific literature: "Virtual reality and tourism: Fact of fantasy" was published by Hobson and Williams¹ and "The virtual threat to travel and tourism" was written by Cheong.² A high-quality summary of scientific literature on this topic can be found in the article: "New realities: a systematic literature review on virtual reality and augmented reality (hereinafter referred as AR) in tourism research."³ In this report it was discovered that even though virtual reality and augmented reality is used in practice on regular basis it stays a bit sidelined in the academic field. According to the research by Yung and Khoo-Latimore 46 scientific texts, which focus on research in virtual reality or augmented reality and about 60 more which touched the subject at least indirectly were created since 1995⁴. The most attention by the researchers according to this paper was payed to the use of virtual reality and augmented reality in marketing⁵; it is obvious, because majority of the biggest brands have combined virtual reality with their marketing strategy. It is very successful because as the client you can meet with the product through personal experience. Virtual reality is famous tool for destination marketers too. They often provide Web virtual tours in destination for customers. This trend started about beginning of the millennium⁶. Virtual reality as well as augmented reality are implemented in various sectors including tourism.

¹ WILLIAMS, P., HOBSON, J. P.: Virtual reality and tourism: fact or fantasy?. In *Tourism Management*, 1995, Vol. 16, No. 6, p. 425.

² CHEONG, R.: The virtual threat to travel and tourism. In *Tourism Management*, 1995, Vol. 16, No. 6, p. 418.

³ YUNG, R., KHOO-LATTIOMRE, C.: New realities: a systematic literature review on virtual reality and augmented reality in tourism research. In *Current Issues in Tourism*, 2019, Vol. 22, No. 17, p. 2057.

⁴ Ibidem.

⁵ Ibidem, p. 2059.

⁶ See also: CHO, Y. H., WANG Y., FESENMAIER, D. R.: Searching for experiences: The web-based virtual tour in tourism marketing. In *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 2008, Vol. 12, No. 4, p. 1-17.

In layman language, “Virtual” means artificial or digital and “Reality” is what we experience as a human being. In technical terms, Virtual Reality is a three-dimensional, computer-generated environment which can be experienced by a person just like the real world. Guttentag defined virtual reality as: “*The use of a computer-generated 3D environment – called ‘virtual environment’ (VE) – that one can navigate and possibly interact with, resulting in real-time simulation of one or more of the user’s five senses.*”⁷ Another definition says: “*‘Navigate’ refers to the ability to move around and explore the VE, and ‘interact’ refers to the ability to select and move objects within the VE.*”⁸ Virtual reality is often described as a computer simulated environment within which people interact⁹. Virtual reality means simulating bits of our world using computers and sensory equipment. Apart from games and entertainment we can find virtual reality in other areas as in Education, Medicine, Sport, Arts, Architecture, Marketing and much more. Besides virtual reality, Augmented Reality is often used as well. This technology puts computer-made elements into the real world. It is therefore about overlapping of the real world and virtual objects. That means that augmented reality is somewhere between the real world and virtual reality. Inserted virtual elements most frequently take the shape of graphic and audiovisual form, but augmented reality can relate to the senses of touch, smell or taste, because AR enriches our senses with digital information.¹⁰ Augmented reality should have a far more natural effect on our perception. „*Augmented reality is a medium in which the physical world is covered by digital information which are tied with it in terms of space and time and are interactive in real time.*”¹¹ „*Augmented reality provides an insight into physical real world in which electronic sensory perceptions such as audio, video, graphics or location increase the users’ experiences in the environment in real time.*”¹² Augmented reality is spreading in retail marketing. Customers only need their smartphone. The famous case is IKEA Place. It allows to place IKEA products into space.¹³

2 Implication of Virtual Reality in Tourism

Dawe Chen defined virtual reality in tourism: “*VR to tourism is like a free sampler to snacks. The customer sometimes doesn’t necessarily know what they are looking for when faced so many options and having just a small bite of the real experience can help them feel more assured.*”¹⁴ The most common way how to discover our reality is through our senses. Our experience of reality is mostly from our senses and how our brain reacts to them. VR used this idea to create three-dimensional computer-generated environment which can be explored by

⁷ GUTTENTAG, D. A.: Virtual reality: Applications and implications for tourism. In *Tourism Management*, 2010, Vol. 31, No. 5, p. 638.

⁸ For more information, see: GUTIERREZ, M., VEXO, F., THALMANN, D.: *Stepping into virtual reality*. London : Springer, 2008.

⁹ See also: DIEMER, J. et al.: The impact of perception and presence on emotional reactions: a review of research in virtual reality. In *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2015, Vol. 6, No. 26, p. 1-9.

¹⁰ ŽÁČKOVÁ, E.: *Počítačem generovaný svět rozšířené reality*. [online]. [2020-12-04]. Available at: <<http://www.klemens.sav.sk/fiusav/doc/filozofia/2010/4/378-382.pdf>>.

¹¹ See also: CRAIG, A. B.: *Understanding augmented reality: concepts and applications*. 2nd Edition. New York : Apress, 2012.

¹² For more information, see: NIEMEIER, S., ZOCCHI, A., CATENA, M.: *Reshaping Retail: Why Technology is Transforming the Industry and How to Win in the New Consumer Driven World*. Chichester : John Wiley and Sons Ltd, 2013.

¹³ *Apple IKEA Place on the App Store*. [online]. [2020-02-02]. Available at: <<https://itunes.apple.com/cz/app/ikea-place/id1279244498>>.

¹⁴ CHEN, H., RAHMAN, I.: Cultural tourism: An analysis of engagement, cultural contact, memorable tourism experience and destination loyalty. In *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 2018, Vol. 26, No. 1, p. 155.

person with sensory equipment such as gloves or headsets¹⁵. We can become part of this world and manipulate with the objects in it. We experience it as we were really there. VR allows the customer to experience something that she would be able to experience at her home. In case of tourism a new challenge emerges. Travel and tourism industry have started adopting the VR technology to maximize customer engagements and enhance the customer-centric marketing methods. We can find the roof of VR in tourism in the year 1994 or rather in 1995.¹⁶ It was certain that VR will play an important role in tourism already 25 years ago. Possibilities of its use were seen in creation of virtual theme parks, using VR in sales and promotion and creation of artificial tourism¹⁷. These prerequisites came true. In 2009 the most frequent areas of usage of VR in tourism were: planning and management of travels, marketing, entertainment and education¹⁸. Apart from that VR and AR were used for heritage preservation and as a tourism substitute¹⁹. Ten years later the trend continues, and it is most obvious in marketing²⁰. Many studies marked VR as a powerful tourism marketing tool.^{21,22} This tool allows the customers to visit the given destination and find out why they should visit it in real life by means of “try before you buy” experience. VR in tourism is used to promote the product (destination or trip), and thus, it increases the sales as seeing the destination in “reality” helps the customers to decide which destination they want to visit.

Research published in 2017 deals with the fact that locations that are shown in a movie attract people to travel there, moreover, this can be observed even with websites. If the destination has masterly created websites it is likely that more people would come to visit as after seeing it, they can easily imagine what to expect²³. It is because the tourism industry is selling the experience which virtual reality can perfectly portray. To create an image of the destination in tourist’s mind is crucial for the marketers while they usually have only limited amount of information and so VR can deeply affect their decision. Apart from that it is necessary to mention that VR has a significant influence on protection of the environment which is often being harmed because of “overtourism”. In this case we can talk about devastation of the environment which the tourists visit but also about wasting of resources and excessive amount of garbage produced in hotels, restaurants etc. We can find many attitudes within corporate social responsibility for protection of the environment and the effort to minimize the global threat of climate change by means of responsible management of tourism or sustainable tourism, ethical tourism, eco-tourism and many other forms.

¹⁵ CHEN, H., RAHMAN, I.: Cultural tourism: An analysis of engagement, cultural contact, memorable tourism experience and destination loyalty. In *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 2018, Vol. 26, No. 1, p.155.

¹⁶ WILLIAMS, P., HOBSON, J. P.: Virtual reality and tourism: fact or fantasy?. In *Tourism Management*, 1995, Vol. 16, No. 6, p. 425.

¹⁷ Ibidem.

¹⁸ GUTTENTAG, D. A.: Virtual reality: Applications and implications for tourism. In *Tourism Management*, 2010, Vol. 31, No. 5, p. 639.

¹⁹ Ibidem.

²⁰ YUNG, R., KHOO-LATTIOMRE, C.: New realities: a systematic literature review on virtual reality and augmented reality in tourism research. In *Current Issues in Tourism*, 2019, Vol. 22, No. 17, p. 2059.

²¹ See also: WILLIAMS, A.: Tourism and hospitality marketing: fantasy, feeling and fun. In *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 2006, Vol. 18, No. 6, p. 482-495.

²² HUANG, Y. C. et al.: Exploring the implications of virtual reality technology in tourism marketing: An integrated research framework. In *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 2016, Vol. 18, No. 2, p. 119.

²³ For more information, see: TIUSANEN, P. *Virtual reality in destination marketing*. [Master thesis]. Helsinki : Haaga-Helia, University of applied sciences, 2017.

2.1 Successful Cases of Using Virtual Reality in the Tourism Marketing

VR is one of the developing technologies that can change habits of people. Virtual reality has two important dimension. The first is “presence”. One could say that presence is a dimensional construct and it determines the extent to which customers feel present in a virtual reality environment.^{24,25} The second is emotion that means emotional experience and behavior such as joy, fear, anxiety etc.²⁶ VR was also used as a medium for investigating threat perception.²⁷ Both, presence and emotional, are important and necessary for huge experience in virtual environment. According to Guttentag, VR may be especially valuable for the tourism industry. It can be used in tourism organizations for management and marketing purposes, entertainment, accessibility, education or heritage preservation. Furthermore, VR as a marketing tool is very powerful for promoting destinations²⁸. VR also offers unbounded potential for mass to virtual visitation to many tourism destinations²⁹. Successful implementations of VR in tourism are mentioned below. At the same time, it is possible to talk about them as the most common with which the young Czech population encounters. It was possible to find there the successful campaign by the company CK Thomas Cook, which started off in 2015, and was called “Try before you fly”.

2.1.1 VR in Welsh attractions

In a bid to promote Welsh attractions, tourism businesses in Wales have been strongly encouraged to adopt virtual reality (VR). The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales received £30,000 under the Tourism Product Innovation Fund from Visit Wales to create two VR videos which include:

1. "Dolphin dive" off the coast of Pembrokeshire which takes its audience on an underwater adventure where one can get up close and personal with a pod of friendly Common Dolphins off the beautiful Welsh coast.
2. "Flight of the kingfisher" over Teifi Marshes Nature Reserve in Cilgerran which allows its audience to experience soaring like a majestic Kingfisher and gliding effortlessly through the magnificent Welsh countryside.

These experiences are presented in 360° videos, allowing viewers to drag and tap the video in order to change the viewing angles and see everything happening around them. The key objectives of this VR project are to showcase to the world the amazing wildlife that Wales has to offer, increase engagement with potential visitors and encourage them to visit Wales. The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales have presented these two videos at consumer shows, wildlife attractions and schools. This VR campaign has proved to be a huge success as the charity reported that it has received a very positive feedback from the public, as well as from Visit Wales and local tourist organisations who are keen to collaborate with them. It was also

²⁴ SCHUBERT, T., FRIEDMANN, F., REGENBRECHT, H.: The experience of presence: factor analytic insights. In *Presence Teleoperators & Virtual Environments*, 2001, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 266.

²⁵ BOTELLA, C. et al.: Cybertherapy: advantages, limitations, and ethical issues. In *PsychNology Journal*, 2009, Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 82.

²⁶ See also: DIEMER, J. et al.: The impact of perception and presence on emotional reactions: a review of research in virtual reality. In *Frontiers in psychology*, 2015, Vol. 6, No. 26, p. 1-9.

²⁷ MÜHLBERGER, A., BÜLTHOFF, H. H., WIEDEMANN, G., AND PAULI, P.: Virtual reality for the psychophysiological assessment of phobic fear: responses during virtual tunnel driving. In *Psychol Assessment*, 2007, Vol. 19, No. 3, p. 340.

²⁸ GUTTENTAG, D. A.: Virtual reality: Applications and implications for tourism. In *Tourism Management*, 2010, Vol. 31, No. 5, p. 641.

²⁹ TUSSYADIAH, I. P. et al.: Virtual reality, presence, and attitude change: Empirical evidence from tourism. In *Tourism Management*, 2018, Vol. 66, No. 1, p 150.

reported that a significant 85% of the audience who viewed the videos responded favourably to a survey, indicating they would visit Wildlife Trust attractions³⁰.

2.1.2 Marriott Hotel: “VRoom Service” and “VR Postcards”

Marriott’s “VRoom Service” is a first-of-its-kind guest service in the tourism industry which allows guests to order inspiring virtual reality experiences in the form of exotic, 360° travel videos and have them delivered to their rooms³¹. Guests are invited to call a dedicated VRoom Service extension or use Marriott’s Mobile Request application to request a Samsung Gear VR headset and accompanying headphones. This portable VR kit is delivered along with easy-to-use instructions and is available on loan to guests for up to 24 hours. In addition, Marriott also launched a virtual travel content platform – “VR Postcards”, allowing guests to travel and live vicariously through a handful of adventurers, inspiring one to plan a travel excursion. These VR postcards feature intimate and immersive travel stories that users can experience in 360° via a virtual reality headset. The experiences captured in the VR headset, feature the adventures of three travellers, taking the viewers to Chile’s Andes mountains, an ice-cream shop in Rwanda and Beijing’s bustling streets. Each of these “VR Postcards” offers a visual and aural experience with a panoramic and immersive glimpse into these unique destinations³². The “VR Postcards” are set to evoke a sense of wanderlust among its viewers and encourage them to take a leap and travel to another Marriott destination on the globe³³. In addition, one can experience Virtual Honeymoon in this hotel.

3 The Czech Republic in Numbers

The Czech Republic is a famous destination in the heart of Middle Europe. Every year the number of tourists that visit the country increases. It is not only about non-residents but as the graph suggest the residents are looking for holiday within the Czech Republic more often.

³⁰ GIDLEY, S.: *Virtual reality: Tourism firms use VR to attract visitors*. 2017. [online]. [2020-02-02]. Available at: <<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-41635746>>.

³¹ *Marriott Hotels Introduces The First Ever In-Room Virtual Reality Travel Experience*. [online]. [2020-21-02]. Available at: <<http://news.marriott.com/2015/09/marriott-hotels-introduces-the-first-ever-in-room-virtual-reality-travel-experience/>>.

³² MANSOOR, L.: *Marriott Launches An In-Room Virtual Reality Experience*. *Digital Agency Network*: 2015. [online]. [2020-02-04]. Available at: <<https://digitalagencynetwork.com/marriott-in-room-virtual-reality-experience/>>.

³³ KRAMER, S: *Marriott VR Postcards: How To Travel Afar From Your Hotel Room*. 2015. [online]. [2020-02-04]. Available at: <<https://www.forbes.com/sites/scottkramer/2015/09/18/marriott-vr-postcard-how-to-travel-afar-from-your-hotel-room/#3c4b4bc9249b>>.

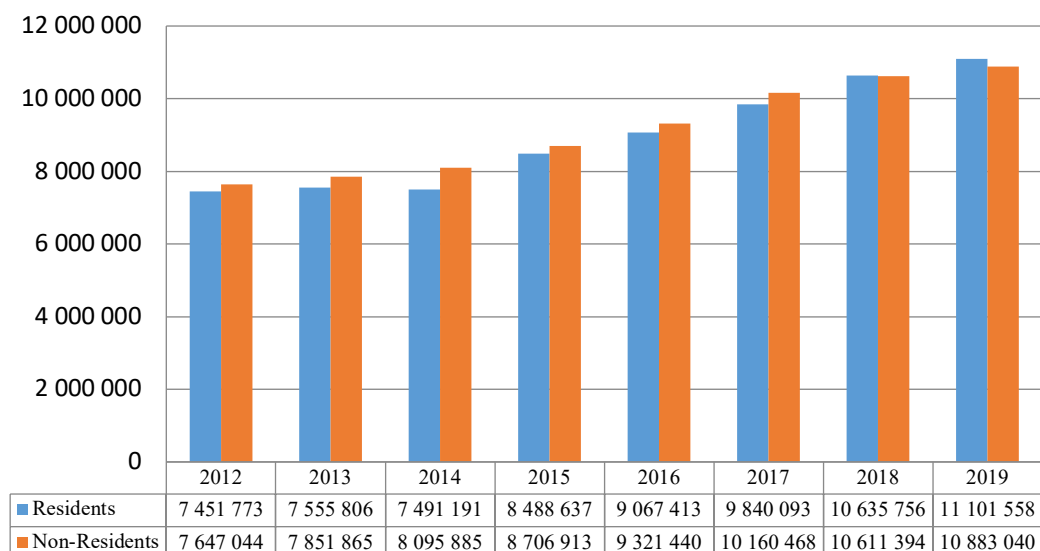


Chart 1: Visitors of Czech Republic in 2012-2019 ¶

Source: own processing

There are several places in the Czech Republic that are very popular both among foreign and domestic tourists. According to research carried out by the CzechTourism Agency the first place belongs to Prague Castle followed by Petřín funicular railway in Prague, Prague Zoo, but also Pilsner Urquell Brewery, Plzeň, Kostnice, Kutná Hora – Sedlec or the city Český Krumlov³⁴. Prague, as the capital city is the most visited city in the Czech Republic. In 2019 Prague was visited by 7.892.184 tourists in total from which 6.670.706 were foreign and 1.221.478 were domestic³⁵. The expansion of tourism in the country is without doubt supported by the economic situation of the state which allows the hotels and restaurants to buy better equipment, respond more quickly to current trends etc., which lure the foreign tourists. The Czech Republic - Prague in particular - is extremely popular among tourists from Asian countries who travel there because of the romantic appearance of Prague, its architecture and cheap offer of services. People of Asian nationality make use of ancient architecture of Prague in order to make wedding photographs. Economic growth and low level of unemployment helps the domestic as well as outgoing tourism, (macroeconomics factors are shown in Table 1).

Table 1: Macroeconomics factors in Czech Republic (2018-2019)

	Unemployment	GDP Growth	Average Wage
2018	2%	2,90%	1354 EUR
2019	2%	appr. 3%	1365 EUR

Source: Czech Statistical Office, 2020.

The phase of economic boom brings higher income to people, lowers the level of unemployment, increases the standard of living, which can have an impact on increase in traveling. Shorter and more frequent trips are trendy. People desire to get to know and enjoy more things. This desire is the most common among young people from generation Z and Y who are influenced by social networks. It is possible to perceive the Czech Republic as an

³⁴ *Turismus je černé zlato*. [online]. [2020-02-03]. Available at: <<https://czechtourism.cz/pro-media/tiskove-zpravy/turismus-je-cerne-zlato/>>.

³⁵ *Počet návštěvníků – Praha*. [online]. [2020-17-03]. Available at: <<https://www.icot.cz/incoming/p5/>>.

interesting destination from the information mentioned above. It is also a country with a vast potential in outgoing tourism.

4 Methodology

For this paper secondary as well as primary research was used. Secondary research is based on literature review and open data. The semi-structured questionnaire was used in primary research. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part 1 of the questionnaire was focused on the demographic profiles of the respondents and contains explanation of VR, AR and differences between them. Part 2 of the questionnaire consisted of items related to the virtual reality and augmented reality in tourism. There were 300 respondents from generation Z (mostly students of Czech universities) from the Czech Republic. Generation Z was included into the primary research. This generation was selected from the research because it has a vast potential in tourism and its representatives are currently active tourists. It is different from generation Y and X because members of generation Z have been growing up in the time of the Internet and Hi-technology. It is often said that they live more on-line than off-line³⁶. For that reason, there is a higher possibility that they will incline more toward the usage of VR and AR and other technological innovations. In addition, as Dimitriou and AbouElgheit said: “*These young consumers also represent tomorrow’s markets – they are now forming brand relationships that will affect their buying in the future.*”³⁷ Besides their interest in traveling, where it is possible to observe a growing trend in popularity in ecotourism, sustainable tourism, they actively make use of all the pros and cons of the on-line life and in addition, they have a common interest in taking care of the nature and the society. Based on this it is assumed that their usage of virtual reality can have many reasons. It is not only about the management of the travel but also about getting to know the nature in a harmless way etc.

The data were collected at the end of 2019 and at the beginning of 2020 in order to arrange for the most representative sample of respondents. The research deliberately excluded the students of tourism and hospitality industries because they come across the topic of VR in their classes. The responders are the students of humanitarian, medical and technical fields of study. The aim of the research was to find out how the young people from generation Z perceive VR and AR which means if they know VR and actively use it in the area of tourism industry. Based on this fact 2 hypothesis and 2 research questions were defined:

- H1: Is the usage of VR beneficial for the tourists according to generation Z?
- H2: Do Czech students actively use VR within the field of tourism?
- RQ1: Which example of usage of VR in tourism do they remember the most frequently?
- RQ2: For what reason do they use VR in tourism? (*in this case it was inquired whether it was for the purpose of getting to know the destination? or for the purpose of accommodation/hotel, for the purpose of planning the travel, for environmental and ecological reasons. For financial reasons etc.*)

³⁶ McCRINDLE, M., WOLFINGER, E.: *The ABC of XYZ: Understanding the global generations*. Bella Vista, NSW : McCrindle Research Pty Ltd. 2009, p. 14.

³⁷ DIMITRIOU, C. K., ABOULGHEIT, E.: Understanding Generation Z’s Social Decision-Making in Travel. In *Tourism and Hospitality Management*, 2019, Vol. 25, No. 2, p. 314.

4.1 Results – Up-to-date Examples of Usage in Czech Practice: Virtual Reality of Tourism Marketing in the Czech Republic

Nowadays VR is a perfect tool in tourism marketing. Lots of companies use VR technologies to attract their clients. “Virtual” tourists only have to put on a headset and take a look at their dreamed destination, hotel or resort in 360° view. However, this brings us to the question, if virtual reality is today perfectly used in promoting travels, could it be replaced in the future? One can find many successful cases of virtual reality in tourism in the Czech Republic. Special agencies and consultancy firms exist offering service in tourism marketing including VR campaigns. For instance, at the Holiday World trade fair in 2018 Czech Tourism in cooperation with Škoda Auto prepared a virtual ride through Prague in the 1930s in a model car for the visitors³⁸. However, the usage of 360° videos and the basic applications is still widespread (as shown in Table 2). The most used examples of virtual reality in tourism in the Czech Republic are shown in following table.

Table 2: The most used methods of Virtual Reality in the Czech Republic

VR 360° videos in sightseeing (e.g. castle Kuks)	VR via Google Earth VR
VR 360° videos for cities	Games in VR (a walk at the bottom of the sea, Golem VR)
VR presentation for trade fairs	VR visualisation of palace premises, accommodation establishments, etc.

Source: own processing

Virtual reality is used by accommodation establishments, especially hotels as well as some renowned restaurants, TIC, tour operators etc. There are also plenty of firms at the Czech market which provide these services and it is not necessary for the subject or object of the tourism industry to make VR themselves, but they can outsource it from the companies mentioned above.

4.2 Results of the Primary Research

Respondents were 6-19 years old. There were 204 women and 96 men (Chart 2).

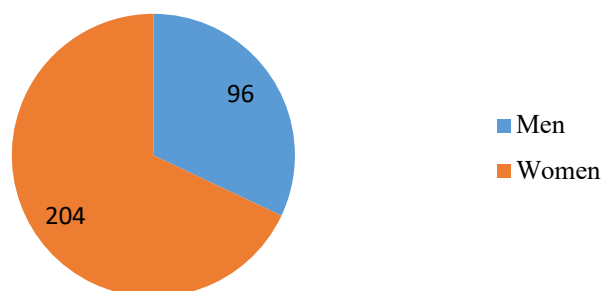


Chart 2: Respondents (men x women)

Source: own processing

The respondents were acquainted with the terms virtual and augmented reality in advance. Some of them had knowledge or experience with virtual reality in tourism.

³⁸ *Holiday World 2018: odborné semináře i virtuální realita*. [online]. [2020-02-03]. Available at: <<https://czechtourism.cz/clanky/holiday-world-2018-odborne-seminare-i-virtualni-r/>>.

Hypothesis 2 (H2) is not valid according to the results shown in Chart 5 and for that reason it can be denied.

Table 3: The most used methods of Virtual Reality in the Czech Republic

	VR is not useful for tourism	Have used VR for trip management	Have not used VR for trip management
Women	26	183	21
Men	12	77	19

Source: own processing

It is obvious from table 3 that young women are more open towards the usage of VR. It is interesting to notice that approximately twice as many women when compared with the number of men participated in the research. This phenomenon can become a model for further research which should find an answer to the question why women incline more towards the usage of VR in tourism. Do they have a tendency to plan things or do they just want to know more about the place where they are going or do they want to broaden their historical knowledge? Or is it the matter of finance? Can it even be related to their education? By means of open questions, answers to the research questions can be found.

- *RQ1 Which example of usage of VR in tourism do they remember the most frequently?* The most common examples of usage of VR were: virtual tour at castles and palaces, virtual tour around Aquapalace Praha Čestlice, visualization of hotels’ or wellness’ facilities, a walk around Prague with historical commentary and promotion of the capital city of Prague. One respondent also mentioned learning more about the target destinations e.g.: Sri Lanka. Except for one answer the rest were related to the usage of VR in the Czech Republic. That corresponds with the increase in domestic tourism.
- *RQ2 For what reason do they use VR in tourism?* VR in the Czech Republic is most frequently used when planning travels, then when inspecting accommodation facilities and then when people want to get to know the history of Czech castles and palaces or other historical places.

5 Discussion: Practical Implications, Opportunities and Threats

For a couple of years now, we attended the emergence of virtual reality. Even if it is the beginning of its development, some people view in it already a great “potential to revolutionize the promotion and selling of tourism.” For the purpose to understand this tourism marketing revolution, we should figure out before what are the main VR future issues. Media and experts agree to say that future innovations in VR field should help to solve different challenges. We are going to discuss three of them, which could have impact on the tourism development. From a technical point of view, VR should be upgraded for the purpose to improve users’ experiences. Today, the glasses’ weight and the screen quality do not allow a complete dive into the digital world. Moreover, it is difficult to travel in the virtual space. A lot of users want to explore the virtual content, but the “real space” where they move does not allow them to, because of predefined area, manoeuvrability or cumbersome cables. Google is researching a solution to this problem and tries to create “shoes VR” that give the feeling of walking in the digital world without moving in the real world. This point is linked with the second challenge. Nowadays, VR is focused on the vision. Thus, the next innovation step is to create a VR including other senses such as smell and touch. Thanks to the VR, we will be able

to smell typical meal, to feel vibrations when we will touch an object or to detect temperature change in the future. All these future innovations can revolutionize users' experiences, especially in the tourism field. As we could see during class, tourism is about experience and sensitivity. The future of VR gives people the opportunity to experience a new way to travel. For the moment, a VR experience may not substitute a real trip, even the one with an attractive content, but it can contribute to increase the desire to travel. And who knows VR may become the new future of tourism. Majority of people cannot believe that real traveling could be replaced by virtual experience; some experts say that at least some parts of travel industry could be substituted. 90% of respondents claimed that they would miss the full sensory experience of travelling, 52% of them said that they could imagine travel agents to be replaced by artificial intelligence, however they agreed that communication with staff and travel agents is better in person. 92% of survey respondents confirmed the fact, that virtual travelling could never replace the real travelling. One can still appreciate the full experience while tasting the local food, discovering new culture on our own, meeting new people and feeling the atmosphere of the place³⁹.

Indeed, tourism marketing wants to develop the “travel by procuration”, as Sophie Lacour searcher and executive director of *Advanced Tourism* explains⁴⁰. This innovation is related to the last VR challenge: the desire of television presence and virtual teleportation. In this manner, one person could travel with an “e-skin” and allow thousands of people to remotely travel with him. This concept will allow people with fewer resources to experience unique activities or visit places that would be out of reach for them in the real world. This VR technology could continue to function as an alternative to protect the environment. Nowadays, some regions are inaccessible or on the contrary are full of tourists. In fact, the number of tourists may become a significant problem. On the one hand, some of the world treasure may be forgotten but on the other hand, some of the ecosystems may be endangered (e.g.: Easter Island, The Great Barrier Reef...) or the indigenous people may become dissatisfied (e.g.: Amsterdam, ...). So, the travel by means of VR could be a future solution to this problem. As virtual reality is so close to the real one today, it can cause some problems too. If we concentrate on how virtual reality works in tourism marketing, we can find some cases which show the dark side of it. A positive example of VR can be observed in these days when half of the world is struggling with the viral illness called COVID19, which already caused an epidemic in several countries. People, due to the danger of spreading the virus even more, are not allowed to visit their favourite and desired destinations, their acquaintances etc. Virtual reality is a suitable substitute and when using classic and basic applications it may not be that expensive. It is uncertain whether these problems or the ones related to safety risks will continue in the future or not. For that reason, it is an opportunity to enjoy traveling without any boundaries.

Anyway, problems can still arise. For illustration an example of travel agency Dnata travel, which was ironical about group of activities, which are normally offered by tourists' agencies, is used. Dnata travel made a funny video of a man who is doing all the activities organised for the tourists on his own. The video utilizes the slogan: “Real travel is better.” The video shows a man during some kinds of activities where he would normally have to travel. Instead of surfing in Bali, he surfs directly from his bed, instead of meeting people in Munich during Oktoberfest, he is dancing on his own in his apartment. It shows the gist of it in a funny way,

³⁹ RYAN, C.: Future trends in tourism research – Looking back to look forward: The future of ‘Tourism Management Perspectives’. In *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 2018, Vol. 25, No. 1, p. 197.

⁴⁰ SAINTOURENS, T.: *Tourisme : comment voyagera-t-on dans 20 ans?* [online]. [2020-05-43]. Available at: <<https://usbeketrica.com/article/tourisme-comment-voyagera-t-on-dans-20-ans>>.

however if looked upon deeper, huge area of this topic shows that virtual reality can turn into non-reality. This applies to all factors of VR which could be dangerous especially for children during their coming of age. The boundaries between virtual reality and the real world can be very thin. The financial side of VR is also important. For many people it is not so expensive to buy VR goggles. But what about the expenses for the provider of the VR service? Will the virtual visits of destinations be charged for? Who is going to pay for and how much will she pay for the service? These questions remain unanswered for now. The travel agencies as well as hotels, restaurant, theme parks and other enterprises went down with this turnover in several last weeks. Virtual reality could be interesting opportunity for some of them. Where does the future of virtual reality lie? According to an expert team, which creates VR and keeps an eye on the market and the development of demand at the same time, it is in re-enactment of architectonic monuments, places⁴¹ and according to them it is also possibly in creating sci-fi and fantasy places.

Conclusion

The usage of virtual reality is not a matter of last couple of years. Scientific literature is focused on it for more than 20 years. People can encounter VR as tourists when planning their travels, getting to know the history of places and objects and from the point of view of companies it is the most used as a marketing tool which should entice customers and provide them with further information by means of an original method. Within tourism in the Czech Republic VR games and 360° videos for cities and castles are the most used, despite the fact that VR is utilized in the Czech Republic in many other industries on a far higher level. The most significant interest in VR is apparent in marketing, e.g.: when promoting destinations/objects of tourism or even ordering of services connected with holiday directly via VR goggles⁴² and in entertainment, not just in the Czech Republic, but globally. The young generation Z which is assumed to be using VR, does not utilize it within tourism very often. The members of generation Z suppose it could become handy in tourism, however only a low percentage of respondents have tried it. Women are more active in this regard. VR was often used when planning travels and its usage was also related to the Czech Republic rather than foreign destinations more frequently. Regarding the rapid development of VR in different fields, it is possible to assume further development of usage of VR in tourism. Opportunities can arise especially in technologically more developed approach to VR and AR and gradual withdrawal from 360° videos.

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⁴¹ KOLÁČKOVÁ, G.: *Výhody a nástrahy cestování ve virtuální realitě*. [online]. [2020-02-03]. Available at: <<https://www.icot.cz/vyhody-a-nastrahy-cestovani-ve-virtualni-realite/>>.

⁴² NOVÁK, A.: *Virtuální realita v cestovním ruchu vás přenesne na dovolenou snů*. [online]. [2020-12-03]. Available at: <<http://virtualjet.cz/2019/03/21/virtualni-realita-v-cestovnim-ruchu-vas-prenese-na-dovolenou-snu/>>.

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REFLECTION OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VELVET REVOLUTION IN THE MEDIA

Peter Krajčovič – Marianna Urmínová

ABSTRACT:

This paper deals with the reflection of the 30th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution in the media. It describes the significance of these historical events and the way they are perceived by the citizens in the Slovak Republic, as well as by the current young generation. It introduces the media importance and its role in the society and focuses on the analysis of media outputs in the context of the 30th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution. It compares the results with the number of outputs for previous years. The authors compare the number of outputs in individual types of the media. In the end, they present the results of their own survey on how the modern generation of 19 – 25-year-olds perceive November 17, 1989. At the same time, the paper pays attention to sources from which this generation obtains information about the Velvet Revolution and the role of the media. Based on the results of the analyses and surveys, it provides recommendations for the use of the media in informing, but also educating the young generation about important historical topics.

KEY WORDS:

Media, media outputs, social media, traditional media, velvet revolution

1 Introduction

In November 2019 we commemorated the 30th anniversary of the events that significantly marked the social and political leadership of the Slovak Republic. On this occasion, more than 300 events were held across the country where Slovak towns, villages, schools or various cultural or historical institutions honoured the important role the 17th November 1989 played. The commemorative event and discussion were also organised by the Faculty of Mass Media of the University of Ss Cyril and Methodius in Trnava named “Thirty years of freedom”. The media also published various articles or broadcast reportages and interviews. According to the research by the Sociological Institute of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, which was carried out on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution in the Slovak and Czech Republic, this historical event is perceived positively by more than a half of Slovak citizens. November 1989 as the historical event was mostly evaluated by the people aged 25 – 44. Only a third of Slovak citizens often or occasionally discuss November 1989 with their friends and relatives. More common are discussions what the life was like before 1989 as well as talks about the current political issues. The young were the least open to discussions about the post-November development.¹ Media attention and interest in these topics is regarded as crucial, notably the ability of media to appeal to large audience. From this point of view, media take up not only an informational but also educational function.

2 Importance and Role of the Media

The word “media” is the plural form of *a medium*, which means that media represent transport means or channels used for sharing or distributing information, fun, news, education and advertising. In the last few years, we have perceived massive penetration of mass media into the developing countries, which means that even traditional and distant societies can nowadays

¹ ŠČEPÁN, S.: *Nežná revolúcia a ponovembrový vývoj očami občanov SR a ČR*. 2019. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <https://www.sav.sk/index.php?doc=services-news&source_no=20&news_no=8526>.

have access to a radio, a television or, rarely, to the Internet.² Media and various platforms are designed for targeting large audience or a specific target group.³ In this modern era, these have become our everyday needs. They also play an important role in creating and forming a public opinion or making changes to people's opinions and habits.⁴ As a result, they help enhance or, on the other hand, weaken the society as a whole.⁵ In their principle, mass media have made the world smaller and closer. According to H.K Mehraj, the speed of media has enabled the people from all over the world to be connected to one another.⁶ According to M. McLuhan, this state can also be described as "a global village". A few years ago, this acclaimed theorist said that the world would be interconnected by an electronic neural system, thus having become the part of our popular culture before this really became a culture.⁷ This is to say that the whole world is getting smaller to become one large imaginable village. The Internet plays a similar role in this aspect. In addition, media play a key role in the consumer industry where they are used for promotion and advertising of various products and services. Mass media help the industry as well as consumers in many other fields of the market.⁸ Nowadays media have primarily become a source of amusement and one of the best recreational or entertaining tools. The media and entertainment industry entail various sectors interconnected within one vertical line.⁹ Trends and driving forces differ from segment to segment depending on geographical and other consumer fields. This vertical line is regarded as unique due to ongoing competitiveness, complementation and combination of particular segments the purpose of which is to satisfy the globally growing demand for entertainment and information.¹⁰

In the last decades, media have also become an important part of political communication in the world. Ch. E. Praestekaer declares that political representatives are forced to pay attention to norms and requirements presented by the media and adhere to so-called "media logic". According to Praestekaer, politicians tend to lose communication autonomy in interaction with the media.¹¹ The key objective of the media is to provide the public with information about what is going on in the world. In this respect, the media serve to people and simultaneously, receive back certain benefits and advantages by creating credibility and loyalty in relation to

² FERRARA, E. L.: Mass Media and Social Change: Can We Use Television to Fight Poverty? In *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 2016, Vol. 14, No. 4, p. 792-826. [online]. [2020-05-03]. Available at: <<https://academic.oup.com/jeea/article-abstract/14/4/791/2691352?redirectedFrom=fulltext>>.

³ *Media and Its Crucial Role in Our Society*. [online]. [2020-05-02]. Available at: <<https://www.mediaglobal.org/media-and-its-crucial-role-in-our-society>>.

⁴ Ibidem.

⁵ *Role of Media in Society*. [online]. [2020-05-02]. Available at: <<https://www.ssim.ac.in/blog/role-of-media-in-society/>>.

⁶ MEHRAJ, H. K. et. al.: Impacts Of Media on Society: A Sociological Perspective. In *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, 2014, Vol. 3, No. 6, p. 57-63. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <[http://www.ijhssi.org/papers/v3\(6\)/Version-4/L0364056064.pdf](http://www.ijhssi.org/papers/v3(6)/Version-4/L0364056064.pdf)>.

⁷ *Marshall McLuhan Predicts the Global Village*. [online]. [2020-05-03]. Available at: <https://www.livinginternet.com/ii_mcluhan.htm>.

⁸ MEHRAJ, H. K. et. al.: Impacts Of Media on Society: A Sociological Perspective. In *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, 2014, Vol. 3, No. 6, p. 57-63. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <[http://www.ijhssi.org/papers/v3\(6\)/Version-4/L0364056064.pdf](http://www.ijhssi.org/papers/v3(6)/Version-4/L0364056064.pdf)>.

⁹ MUKHERJI, P. K., SENGUPTA, S.: *Media & Entertainment Industry: An Overview*. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <<https://avasant.com/insights/publications/technology-optimization/media-entertainment-industry-an-overview/>>.

¹⁰ Ibidem.

¹¹ PRAESTEKAER, Ch. E. et. al.: Does Mediatization Change MP–Media Interaction and MP Attitudes toward the Media? Evidence from a Longitudinal Study of Danish MPs. In *International Journal of Press/Politics*, 2011, Vol. 16, No. 3, p. 383-402. [online]. [2020-05-03]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/254096765_Does_Mediatization_Change_MP-Media_Interaction_and_MP_Attitudes_Toward_the_Media_Evidence_from_a_Longitudinal_Study_of_Danish_MPs>.

unbiased information they provide. In this point, let's mention freedom of expression. In general, the media are regarded as interdisciplinary field processing topics according to public interest and attractivity with the politics ranking first.¹² These days, marked by politicians profiting from their positions with the mafia and criminal organisations impairing the life of ordinary people who are taken only as passers-by deprived of a voice or an opinion, media as the fourth pillar of democracy have taken up much larger responsibility. Today's media along with the jurisdiction, executive and legislative bodies play a complex role in dealing with injustice, pressure, humiliation, unfair conduct or various forms of social discrimination.¹³ Another important role of the media is enhancing people's awareness of fundamental topics, such as eco-innovations¹⁴ or various cultural, social or political issues.¹⁵ Therefore, we all should regard media as extremely important tools, especially in the field of public awareness as well as education and upbringing.¹⁶

3 The Velvet Revolution Reflected in the Media

The Velvet Revolution describes the events that happened from 17th November to 29th December 1989 in the former Czechoslovakia. These protests against the former Communist regime were firstly initiated by students, later joined by actors, artists as well as other citizens. Protests and activities that were organised those days gradually led to subsequent fall of the Communist regime and profound political and social changes. Immediately after the 17th November, various movements laid the groundwork for political pluralism, such as the Public Against Violence and the Civil Forum. The leaders of central Communist Parties were altered and the guarantee of the political status of the Communist Party was cancelled by the Constitution. In December, the first Federal as well as Slovak government were appointed with the majority of non-Communist members. The Communist President Gustáv Husák abdicated and Václav Havel was elected the President.¹⁷ The Slovak Republic commemorates these historical events every year on various commemorative occasions. Since 2001, 17th November has been declared a public holiday and referred to as the Day of Fight for Freedom and Democracy. The topic of "The Velvet Revolution" is widely discussed in the media as well.

¹² EJUPI, V. et. al.: The Mass Media and Persuasion. In *European Scientific Journal*, 2014, Vol. 10, No. 14, p. 637-645. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262802562_THE_MASS_MEDIA_AND_PERSUASION>.

¹³ *Media and Its Crucial Role in Our Society*. [online]. [2020-05-02]. Available at: <<https://www.mediaglobal.org/media-and-its-crucial-role-in-our-society>>.

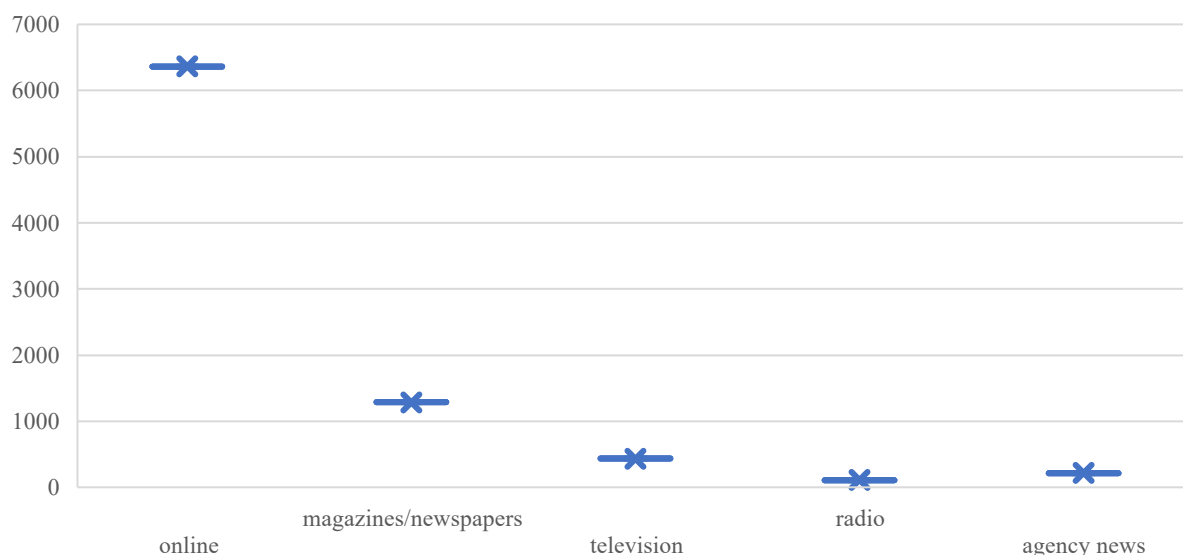
¹⁴ See also: KRAJČOVIČ, P.: Use of media to raise awareness of eco-innovations. In *Communication Today*, 2019, Vol. 10, No. 2, p. 120-131.

¹⁵ For more information, see: VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J., GREGUŠ, L., MINÁRIKOVÁ, J., KUBÍKOVÁ, K.: Television News as an Information Source and Its Perception in Slovakia. In *Communication Today*, 2019, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 41-60.

¹⁶ See also: 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; 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; KVETANOVÁ, Z., RADOŠINSKÁ, J., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: To Thrive Means to Entertain: The Nature of Today's Media Industries. In *Communication Today*, 2020, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 4-21; HUDÍKOVÁ, Z., PRAVDOVÁ, H., GAŽICOVÁ, A.: The Pragmatism of the Hybridisation Logic in Television News in Slovakia. In *Communication Today*, 2020, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 90-124; GÁLIKOVÁ TOLNÁIOVÁ, S.: Media and Truth in the perspective of the practice and life form of the modern "Homo Medialis". In *Communication Today*, 2019, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 4-19.

¹⁷ CHOVANEC, J.: Nežná revolúcia v novembri 1989 a pád vlády komunistov v Česko-Slovensku a na Slovensku – rozhodujúci predpoklad transformácie médií na duálny systém. In PETRANOVÁ, D., PRAVDOVÁ, H., SOLÍK, M. (eds): *Sex, lži a video: aktuálne otázky mediálnej kultúry. Zborník z medzinárodnej vedeckej konferencie Megatrendy a médiá 2013*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2013, p. 123-141.

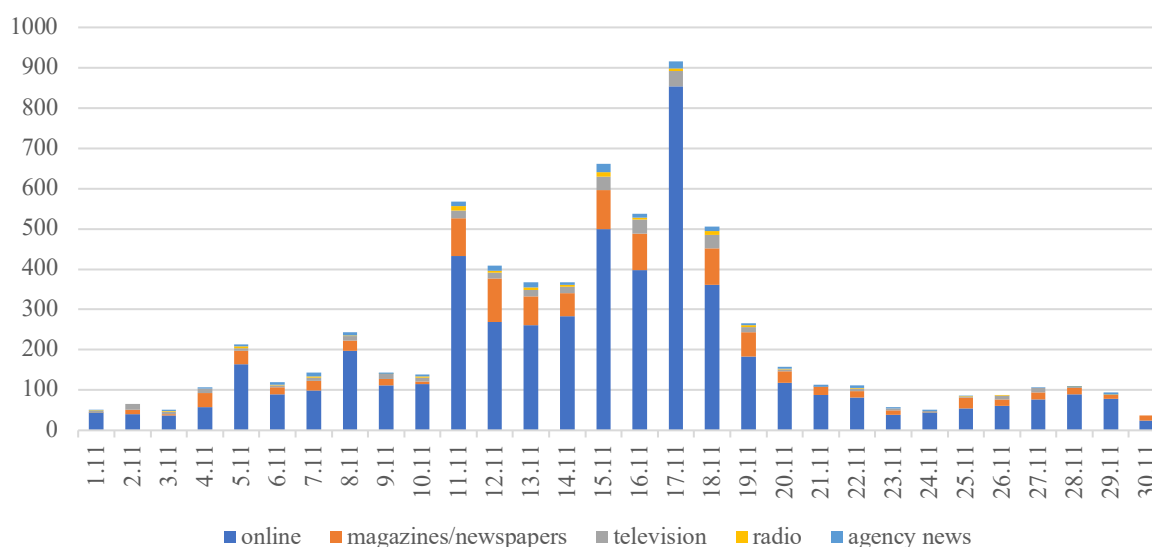
The 30th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution was celebrated last year with the large media coverage. For the period from 1st October to 1st December 2019, 8,407 articles on “The Velvet Revolution” or “November 1989” were published in the Slovak media. The majority of articles were published online (6,363), followed by the print media (1,285), the TV (433) and the radio (110). Besides that, press agencies published 216 press releases on these topics. The results are shown in the Graph 1 below.



Graph 1: Comparison of media outputs on the topic „The Velvet Revolution“ and „November 1989“ in particular types of media for the period from October 1st, 2019 to December 1st, 2019

Source: own processing, 2020.

The largest proportion of articles were published on 17th November 2019, i.e. 915 media outputs in total. As for the types of media, online media prevailed as they published 853 media outputs altogether, followed with the TV with 39 outputs on the 30th Anniversary of the Velvet Revolution. The radio broadcast 6 outputs and press agencies 17. The results are shown in the Graph 2 below.



Graph 2: The number of media outputs for the period from November 1st, 2019 to November 30th, 2019

Source: own processing, 2020.

In comparison with the previous years, we could report a substantial increase in media outputs, which can be directly linked to the anniversary in 2019. The average number of media outputs in the previous years (2018 - 2017) was approx. 1,354. Most outputs were reported in the online media. The comparison is shown in the Table 1 below.

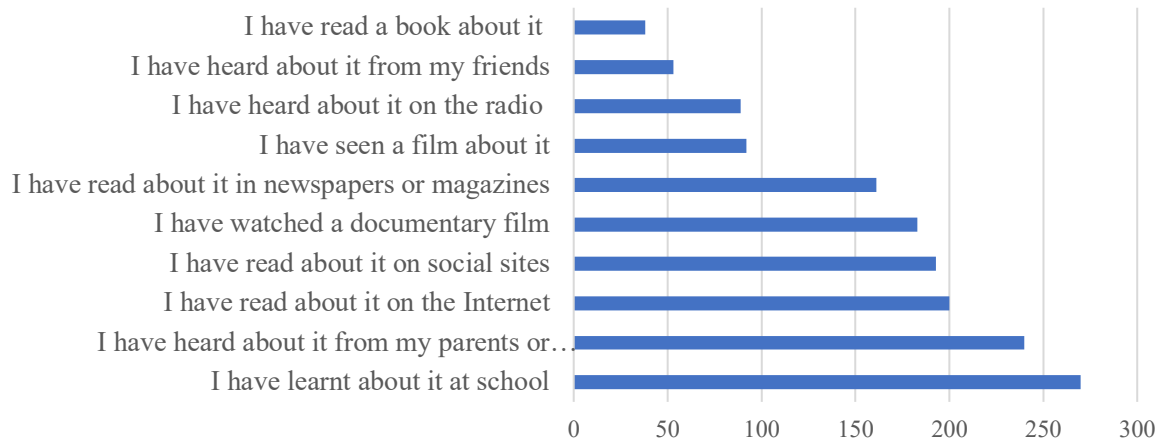
Table 1: Comparison of media outputs for the period from 2019 to 2017

Period from October 1 st to December 1 st	2019	2018	2017
online	6,363	1,199	1,138
magazine/newspapers	1,285	229	95
television	433	35	3
radio	110	2	2
agency news	216	3	3
TOTAL	8,407	1,468	1,241

Source: own processing, 2020.

4 Perception of the Velvet Revolution by the Young Generation

Despite a relatively high number of media outputs that are presented by the media each year, the modern generation only barely perceive these historical personalities and events. The young have only some basic information provided through school or from their parents. This is also confirmed by the research we carried out on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution involving the sample of 380 respondents aged 19 to 25. The findings have shown that most respondents understand freedom as their own liberty or the right to freedom of opinion or expression, the right to decide freely, to study and to travel. More than 95% of the respondents stated that they found their freedom very important or important. Almost 53% of the respondents link their freedom to the political situation in the country. Approximately 43% think that freedom is only partially influenced by the political situation. Only 3.8% of the respondents believe that freedom and the political situation are not interconnected whatsoever. More than a half of the respondents (57.5%) stated that they had never personally experienced freedom. On the contrary, 42.5% of the respondents have already experienced some sort of unfreedom. For the young generation, November '89 is the most often connected with the Velvet Revolution, uprising, revolt, changes or fight for freedom. For the majority of the respondents, the personalities representing the Velvet Revolution are mainly Václav Havel (72.4%) and Milan Kňažko (67.3%). Less popular are, for instance, Ján Budaj (27.3%), František Mikloško (23.2%) or Fedor Gál (16.2%). Almost 94% of the respondents have already heard about November 1989. In most cases, they learnt about it at school (70.9%) or heard about it from their parents or grandparents (63%). When asked if they had found out about these events through the TV, 48% answered "yes", whereas 42.3% read about it in newspapers or magazines and 23.4% heard about it on the radio. More than 50% of the young stated they had read about these events on the Internet or social sites. The more detailed results are shown in the Graph 3 below.



Graph 3: Sources of information - how the respondents found out about the November 1989 events

Source: own processing, 2020.

Conclusion

The topic of the 30th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution has substantially resonated through the Slovak media, which has also been confirmed by the number of corresponding media outputs reaching 8,407 in course of the three-month period. In comparison with previous years, this considerable growth could have been credited to the anniversary we commemorated last year. Despite a rather high number of articles the media published from 1st October to 1st December 2019, based upon the results of the research we may assume that the young generation mostly hear about November 1989 at school or from their parents. The highest number of outputs in the given period was broadcast by the online media, which may have been partially caused by their larger proportion in comparison with the traditional media as well as the limited space the traditional media can offer. The information from the online environment, especially from social sites, has proven as the most frequent source of information for the young generation. It also emphasises the role of unbiased and reliable information that is directly connected with the history of Slovakia and formation of our society. Commemorating and remembering these key moments as well as the personalities and the historical context is regarded as crucial, notably in relation to our future generations. The role and importance of the media is obvious as they can help us not only commemorate but also further develop and honour these moments. These days, young people happen not to know all important personalities connected with November 1989. With regard to the current trend of use of social media, it will be crucial to what extent this type of media will intermediate such information. New forms of communication they bring can also provide new opportunities for processing these topics and raising awareness of the young generation.

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DATA LITERACY ACROSS TARGET GROUPS

Michal Kubovics – Anna Zaušková

ABSTRACT:

Nowadays, businesses across various segments are trying to apply data into their decision-making processes. This procedure can only be accomplished by analysing opportunities for data collection and storage. If these data are not at disposal any longer, data literacy enables us to work with data and analyse them. Consequently, the company management may decide about the following strategic steps. The main goal of this papers is to observe and clarify data literacy in the Slovak business environment by means of the research. The paper compares data literacy in target groups and the impact of education on proper final values. The goals are accomplished by clarifying the data package of answers provided by the standardised questionnaire. These are subsequently sorted into eliminants which are intercompared and the conclusions are drawn herefrom. Target groups are defined into four main categories: baby boomers, Generations X, Y and Z. The outcome of the paper presents the need for data literacy in business entities while providing a clear picture of data literacy across the Slovak business environment.

KEY WORDS:

data, data literacy, data-driven marketing, marketing data

1 Introduction

The following chapters deal with the role of data in marketing decision-making procedures of the company executives. A certain value of data literacy is required across the whole society. Simultaneously, the paper describes the fundamental knowledge that is needed for data perception and processing.

1.1 Data-Driven Marketing

Data-driven marketing has gradually transformed from a certain innovation into everyday marketing world while becoming a basic part of advertising and business strategies. Businesses across countries use the acquired data in their decision-making processes. The company top management as well as ordinary employees should all have certain data literacy. Evolution of the society is based upon the objectives that can only be fulfilled through data, proper interpretation and perception. Data interpretation requires a creator to have a certain level of data literacy because they should take into account all the recipients and their expected level of data literacy. Data-driven marketing is based on the number of acquired data referred to as big data. Their subsequent analysis is transformed into an outcome. Data are collected by interactions with people, especially through so-called customer interactions. The outcome may serve as a forecast about future behaviour of our customers. Data literacy is also important from the point of view of perception of data that have already been collected or are to be collected and subsequently sorted, analysed and applied for better decision-making of the management.¹

1.2 Data Literacy

The notion of data literacy, as defined by Jarolímková, first belonged to the scientific field and was connected to informational and statistical literacy. It was even referred to as quantitative literacy. For several years, the authors were using the term of data-statistical-informational literacy where they interconnected the triad of key words. Then, mainly due to complexity of

¹ *What Is Data-Driven Marketing?*. [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <<https://emarsys.com/learn/blog/data-driven-marketing/>>.

this term, they took up the shorter version – data informational literacy – which was later transformed into data literacy. Data literacy involves:

- recognition of the need for data;
- creation of one's data or search / acquisition of already created data;
- critical assessment of data and their sources;
- data management, mainly their storage including long-term archiving;
- data sharing including open access;
- use of data including ethical and legal aspects.²

Ridsdale, Rothwell, Smit, Ali-Hassan, Bliemel, Irvine, Kelley, Matwin, Wuetherick, the authors dealing with the strategies and the best practices how to educate on data literacy, describe it as an ability of critical gathering, assessment processing and data application. It is essential to have a certain ability to handle elementary knowledge in the economic field. Data manipulation occurs in everyday processes across various sectors and disciplines. Proper understanding is important for any further decision-making. According to the abovementioned authors, it is crucial to acquire information derived from these data as well as to know how to collect, process, assess and apply them. Education in this field is rather complex and not unified at this moment. No matter if it relates to the public, private or academic sector, data literacy is quite unsystematic and takes a different form in each sector. As a result, there are large gaps in data literacy across specific fields.³

1.3 Key Knowledge for Data Literacy

Fundamental competences and knowledge, as defined by Calzada and Marzal, result from a long-term discussion and opinions of the most acclaimed scientific institutions reflecting on the question of specificity and standardised requirements how to cover data literacy. The authors declare that the key element is to understand data that are created by questions or findings what types of data are used by businesses and what their data possibilities are. The next phase focuses on acquisition and search for data where one has to get acquainted with the sources of data and the manner they are obtained. This is followed by reading, interpretation and assessment of data. The next step is data administration. This involves storage of data and meta data. The use of data is the last phase. The last category entails data manipulation and production of elements designed for data synthesis. The ethical use of data belongs to the last category.⁴ Education on data literacy is currently made available to the wide public thanks to online distribution. In order to acquire proper knowledge, one needs to have critical data literacy according to the segment and the need for application. The authors assume that critical thinking is based on generative thematization, problematisation and systematisation.⁵

² JAROLÍMKOVÁ, A.: Dátová (informační) gramotnost a výskumná data. In *ITlib*, 2017, Vol. 4, No. 1, p. 30-31. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <https://itlib.cvtisr.sk/buxus/docs/30_datova%20infor%20gramotnost.pdf>.

³ See also: RIDSDALE, Ch. et al.: *Strategies and Best Practices for Data Literacy Education. Knowledge Synthesis Report*. Dalhousie : Dalhousie University, 2015.

⁴ CALZADA, P. J., MARZAL, M. Á.: Incorporating Data Literacy into Information Literacy Programs: Core Competencies and Contents. In *Libri*, 2013, Vol. 63, No. 2, p. 124-133. Available at: <<https://www.degruyter.com/view/journals/libr/63/2/article-p123.xml>>.

⁵ BHARGAVA, R. et al: Data Murals: Using the Arts to Build Data Literacy. In *The Journal of Community Informatics*, 2016, Vol. 12, No. 3. p. 198-215. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<http://www.ci-journal.net/index.php/ciej/article/view/1276/1224>>.

2 Objectives and Research Methodology

The key objective of the research was to observe the current situation of data literacy in the Slovak environment. Partial objectives are linked to the complex assessment of the whole data package. We have decided to compare target groups according to their age and two most numerous groups according to the level of education acquired. The research was carried out from February to March 2020. The total collection period was exactly 28 days. The data were collected by means of the electronic questionnaire in the Slovak language. The questionnaire focused on the territory of the Slovak Republic. The data collection was performed on the questionnaire platform Survio. We used the standardised questionnaire from Gemignani, Galentino and Schuermann for the purpose of observation of data literacy.⁶ The questionnaire consisted of ten questions from the field of data and their processing. The traffic on the specific link with the questionnaire was 1,648. 440 respondents (26.7%) filled in all the questions in the questionnaire. The number of unfinished questionnaires was 0. The primary display was recorded in 1,208 cases (73.3%). The last phase referred to 439 answered and 2 unanswered questionnaires. The total return was 26.7%. The highest rate of replies was recorded on the 14th day, exactly in the mid-term of data collection. The average time for filling in the questionnaire ranked from 5 to 10 minutes for 44.3%, from 2 to 5 minutes for 35.2% and from 10 to 30 minutes for 14.3% of the respondents. Other time possibilities were close to 2%. Therefore, we came to the conclusion that the respondents carefully considered the questions and needed more time, which helped us exclude the possibility that their answers could have been given only accidentally.

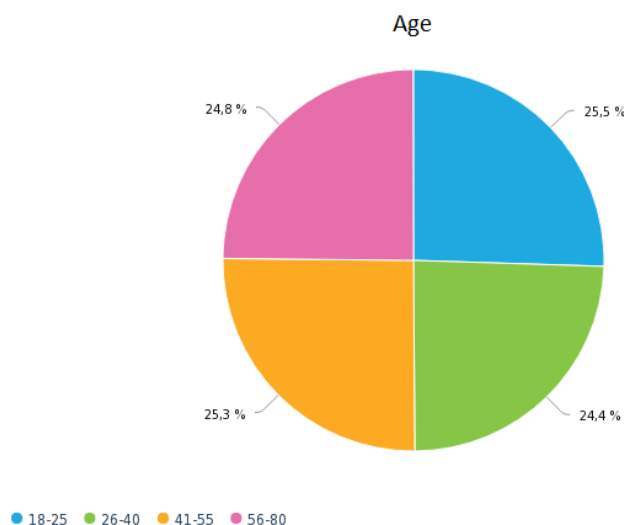


Chart 1: Respondents' age

Source: own processing, 2020.

The respondents' age was split according to the prevailing generations with regard to the current working environment.⁷ The questionnaire covered the youngest groups aged 18 – 25 of the Generation Z accounting for 25.5% (112). The respondents aged 26 – 40 from the Generation Y represented 24.4% (107). The third age group were 41 – 55-year-olds (111) referred to as the Generation X. The last and the oldest age category were 56 – 80-year-olds with the rate of 24.4% (109) described as baby boomers. When looking at the age categories of the respondents,

⁶ GEMIGNANI, Z. et al.: *Efektivní analýza a využití dat*. Brno : Computer Press, 2015, p. 206.

⁷ *Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z*. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://www.kasasa.com/articles/generations/gen-x-gen-y-gen-z>>.

we can observe a certain equality in the number of results. The outcomes are almost balanced and suitable for comparison across the generations. As for the sex, men represented 51.7% (227) and women accounted for 48.3% (212), which can be described as an equal representation of both sexes.

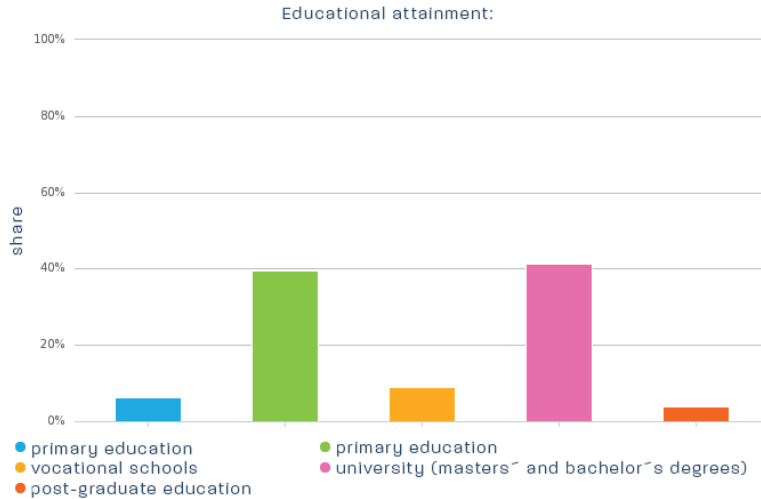


Chart 2: Level of education required
Source: own processing, 2020.

As for the level of education acquired, 41.5% (182) of the respondents had a university degree (either a bachelor's or a master's degree). The secondary school education ranked second with 39.4% (173), followed by vocational schools with 9.1% (40), primary education with 6.2% (27) and post-graduate education with 3.9% (17). The representation of the level of education is wide-spectrum, primarily referring to graduation from a particular university or a secondary school.

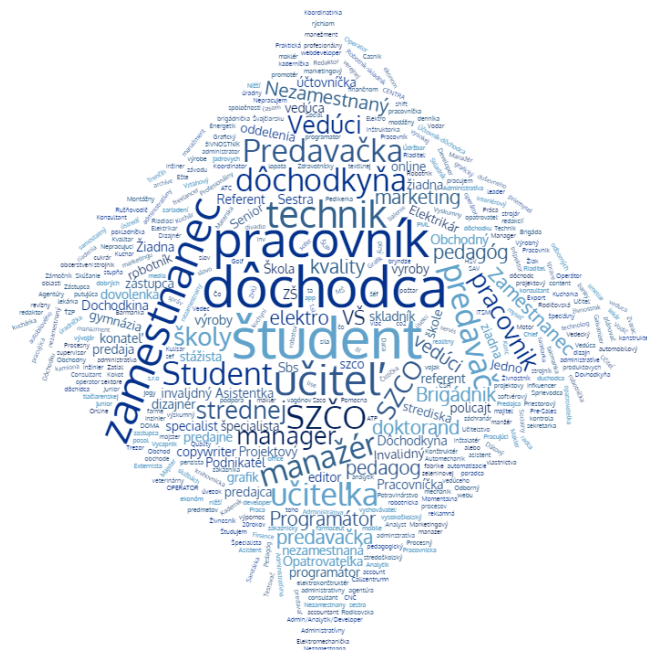


Chart 3: Working position
Source: own processing, 2020.

The working position took the form of an open question. The basic data were placed in the tag cloud including the most common answers such as a student, a retired person, a manual worker, an employee, a technician, a freelancer, etc. Therefore, we could observe the large specification of respondents' working positions.

3 The Outcomes and the Discussion

Overall, the assessment of the standardised questionnaire reflects the current state of data literacy in the Slovak society. The first question: Ms Mrkvová has recently obtained the following results in the comparative assessment of students (on the scale from 1 to 20): 15, 14, 14, 18, 15, 17, 14, 15, 15, 14, 17, 16, 14, 15, 18, 19, 2. What average index value should Ms Mrkvová use to summarise these results?

The correct answer "median" was globally stated by only 15.9% (70). In most cases, the respondents answered "average". The research demonstrated insufficient knowledge in the field of calculation of average index values. The target group of 18 – 25-year-olds did not demonstrate any substantial changes. Up to 75% of the respondents (84) stated "average" as the correct answer. In the target group of 26 – 40-year-olds, 26.2% of the respondents (28) were right. We can observe a higher rate of correct answers in contrast to the younger target group. The target group of 41 to 55-year-olds did not demonstrate any specific modifications either. The incorrect answer was marked by almost 66.7% (74). In the oldest target group of 56 – 80-year-olds, the incorrect answer "average" reached 70%. The correct answer "median" was marked only by 7.3% (8). As far as the level of education acquired is concerned, this has almost no impact on this question and the results are deemed comparable with the average.

The second question: The group of students are filling in the questionnaire "Assessment of Teachers" the main goal of which is to evaluate their teachers. The questionnaire is done three times within a school year. Every time, the students assess their teachers in the similar way. The values measured differ from the values the teachers reached in the different questionnaire where their performance was much better assessed. How would you find the questionnaire "Assessment of Teachers"?

Correct answer: it is reliable, but not valid was marked only by 11.4% (50). The most common answer was that it is valid, but not reliable. This answer is a mere contrast to the correct answer and this answer was marked by 51.9% (228). The results demonstrate insufficient knowledge of the respondents regarding the notions of validity and reliability of the questionnaire. In the target group of 18 – 25-year-olds, the correct answer was marked only by 3.6% (4). The target group of 26 – 40-year-olds demonstrates the tendency to copy the average results of the whole data package. The target group of 41 – 55-year-olds also reflects the average of the whole data package without demonstrating any particular abnormalities. Not even the target group of 56 – 80-year-olds diverged from the average data package. The comparison of results showed the comparable results with the average, even though 17.9% (31) of the secondary school graduates answered correctly. In contrast, only 4.9% (9) of the university graduates were right.

The third question: What is the students' race (ethnic origin) a good sign of?

The correct answer is nominal dimension where we can observe an increase in contrast to first two answers with the rate of 28.5% (125) of correct answers. The most common answer was average with 32.8% (144) followed by ordinal dimension with a 20% rate (88). The results

reflect a third of knowledge of the notions of dimensions and average. The target group of 18 – 25-year-olds did not demonstrate any substantial changes in contrast to the overall result. In the target group of 26 – 40-year-olds it can be observed that the correct answer was marked by most respondents, i.e. 37.4% (40). In contrast to the average, this target group is much more knowledgeable in the question of nominal dimension. The target group of 41 – 55-year-olds marked the incorrect answer in the largest proportion of 37.8% (42). In the target group of 56 – 80-year-olds, similar values can be observed as in the whole data package. When comparing the level of education acquired, the incorrect answer – average was marked by 37% (64) of the secondary school graduates and by 28.6% (52) of university graduates or post-graduates. No obvious modifications are observed if the level of education acquired is compared.

Fourth question: For what observation could the histogram “Assessment of Teachers’ Contribution” serve?

The correct answer – distribution of teachers’ contribution – was marked by 32.3% (142). A third of the respondents identified themselves with the meaning of the notion “histogram” and its determination. The most common answer was average values of teachers’ contribution accounting for 41.7% (183). The results demonstrate insufficient knowledge of the notion of histogram and its application. Almost 47.3% (53) of 18 – 25-year-olds stated the incorrect answer, which accounts for a half of the respondents. The target group of 26 – 40-year-olds, the incorrect answer was the most common – 44.9% (48), thus diverging from the average, and almost a half of the respondents in this target group marked the correct answer. The target group of 41 – 55-year-olds copies average values of the data package. Similar values can be observed in the target group of 56 – 80-year-olds, with a slight increase in the number of incorrect answers with 45.0% (49). No anomalies are observed when comparing the level of education acquired.

Fifth question: Mr Mrkva obtained his last assessment. He was said that he had ranked in the second quarter from his grade. Let’s assume that the values below represent teachers’ assessment in his grade: 7, 5, 3, 10, 15, 6, 12, 9, 14, 16.

What assessment might Mr Mrkva have obtained?

The correct answer 9 was marked by 39.6% (174), which was the most common answer. It was followed by a very close value of 10. This possibility ranked second with a 37.6% rate (165). The target group of 18 -25-year-olds did not demonstrate any anomalies from the whole group. The results of the target group of 26 – 40-year-olds are similar as the average of the whole data package. The target group of 41 – 55-year-olds marked the correct answer in 44.1% (49), which substantially exceeds other values in this target group. A certain change was observed in the target group of 56 – 80-year-olds, though. The most common answer was the incorrect one (10) accounting for 35.8% (39), followed by the correct answer in 33.9% (37) of cases. Assessment of the answers by comparison according to the level of education demonstrated the increased number of incorrect answers in case of secondary school graduates – 41.0% (71) while the correct answer ranked only second. University graduates were right in 42.9% of cases (78).

Sixth question: What is the interquartile range of the following values? 7, 5, 3, 10, 15, 6, 12, 9, 14, 16.

In this question, the respondents mostly opted for the incorrect answer – interquartile range of these values can not be calculated. The correct answer (8) was marked only by 13.4% (59). The knowledge of interquartile range was not confirmed. The target group of 18 -25-year-olds was

right in only 16.1% (18) of cases. This target audience marked the incorrect answer in 40.2% (45) of cases. To a large extent, this ratio does not differ from the total data package. The target group of 26 - 40-year-olds also copies the average. In the target group of 41 – 55-year-olds, the incorrect answer ranked last with only 8.1% (9). Thus, this target group demonstrates the least knowledge of interquartile range. In the target group of 56 - 80-year-olds, the ratio of the incorrect range drops to 11.0% (12), which is the least from all target groups. No further changes were observed when the level of education was compared.

Seventh question: What could be properly demonstrated in the alignment graph of student's performance in tests?

This question had the most correct answers from the whole questionnaire. The correct answer – student's progress in time – was marked by 47.6% (209) of the respondents. A half of the respondents were successful in their knowledge of graphs. The remaining answers were below 17%, which created a multilevel space between the correct answer and other results. The target group of 18 - 25-year-olds copies the average across target groups. The target group of 26 – 40-year-olds marked the correct answer in 61.7% (66) of cases, which is a net increase in correct answers. The target group of 41 – 55-year-olds is similar as the average of the whole data package. In the target group of 56 -80-year-olds we can observe a drop to 36.7%. When comparing the level of education required, we can find out that secondary school graduates were right in 41.6% (72) of cases. University graduates were correct in 58.8% (107) of cases.

Eighth question: What method will you use to determine the relation between discounted / free of charge lunches for students and their test results?

The most common and correct answer - the correlation coefficient – was marked by 41.5% (182) of the respondents. It beat other answers by more than a half. The result demonstrates respondents' knowledge of correlation coefficients and the ability to create relations between variables. In the target group of 18-25-year-olds we observed substantial anomalies in their answers. The target group of 26 - 40-year-olds marked the correct answer in 62.6% (67) of cases. We can observe more knowledge of the correlation coefficient and relations between variables. In their results, the target group of 41 – 55-year-olds was similar as the whole data package. The correct answer was marked by 37.8% (42). The target group of 56 – 80-year-olds was the one that marked the incorrect answer the most often – the Poisson distribution of probability – 33.0% (36). The correct answer was marked by only 21.1% (23). Comparison according to the level of education acquired confirmed that secondary school graduates were right in 32.4% (56) of cases. University graduates were correct in 54.4% (99) of cases.

Ninth question: What graphic demonstration is the most suitable for modelling the relation described in the question 8?

The most frequent answer was a bar chart with 27.1% (119). It is an incorrect answer. The proportion came second with 26.4% (116), a dot chart. The correct answer was marked by a quarter of the respondents. We could observe a rather low knowledge of relation modelling by means of a correct graph. In the target group of 18 - 25-year-olds, a dot chart was marked by 22.3% (25) and placing a correct answer ranked only third. In the target group of 26 - 40-year-olds we could observe a correct answer more frequently than on the average. The dot chart ranked first with 34.6% (37). The target group of 41 – 55-year-olds marked the correct answer in 30.6% (34) of cases, which was the most frequent answer in this target group. In the target group of 55 – 80-year-olds, the most representative answer was a bar chart with 31.2% (34).

The correct answer was marked only by 18.3% (20). The level of education acquired had not impact on the final results.

Tenth question: The students' results in state comparative tests copy the ordinary distribution. What percentage of values might be placed in one standard average deviation?

The last question was the one with most incorrect answers (50%) – 44.0% (193) of the respondents. The correct answer (68%) ranked second with 33.0% (145). The data speak about a third of knowledge of a standard average deviation. In the target group of 18 – 25-year-olds we may observe a certain average deviation. The most frequent is the correct answer (68%) with 46.4% (52) of cases. In this target group we may observe proper knowledge of a standard average deviation. The target group of 26 – 40-year-olds demonstrates the average with the most frequent answer, which is incorrect. In the target group of 41- 55-year-olds we may observe a slight difference compared to the average. The target group of 56 – 80-year-olds marked the incorrect answer (50%) in 54.1% (59) of cases. The results did not demonstrate any particular dependence on the level of education required.

Conclusion

For conclusion, we managed to verify the current state of data literacy in our territory. In general, we can speak about an intersection between quarter or one third success across various target groups. However, these results demonstrate rather low data literacy in our territory. In the target group of 18 – 25-year-olds we can observe an increased rate of incorrect answers, which can be caused by active school attendance. In the target group of 26 – 40-year-olds, the correctness is more dominant. In the target group of 41 – 55-year-olds, the success rate is decreasing even further until the oldest target group of 56 – 80-year-olds with the lowest rate of correct answers. Education has, to a small extent, an impact on the success rate of these results. University graduates seemed to be more successful in answering the questions. The clear picture of the current situation has informed us about the low level of data literacy, mainly in the modern target group of 18 – 25-year-olds and younger. Consequently, we should all care about education and completion of education in this field. This knowledge can lead us towards the analytical and critical thinking not only in marketing, but also in the whole segment and the future working life of people.

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ECOLABELLING OF PRODUCTS AS THE PART OF GREEN MARKETING AND ITS IMPACT ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

Alena Kusá – Marianna Urmínová

ABSTRACT:

The main role of ecolabelling within the environmental marketing communication is well-known and widely discussed in various scientific studies. However, we can currently observe a low level of ecolabelling awareness among consumers as well as across the society. The article consists of two parts. The first – theoretical – part deals with the green marketing tools, product ecolabelling and its impact on consumer behaviour. In the empiric part of the paper, the authors analyse the results of the questionnaire. The main goal of the paper is, through theoretical background, the analysis and comparison of various types of research in the impact of ecolabelling on consumer behaviour as well as through the empiric research, to emphasise the current role of consumer education in the environmental field. To be properly educated, consumers need to receive high-quality, clear and concise information on ecolabelling, especially through media or social sites.

KEY WORDS:

consumer, consumer behaviour, ecolabelling, education, green marketing

1 Introduction

Environmental awareness is constantly growing. In the last few years, people, businesses as well as the whole society have changed their consumer way of life into the ecological one and what is more, they have also become much more aware of the modern – environmentally friendly - lifestyle. They have started to understand that conventional sources of our planet are strictly limited. The lifestyle focusing on environmental friendliness is becoming a worldwide trend but also the main problem our society has to deal with as quickly and effectively as possible. Lots of businesses have recently been referred to as socially responsible and have started to make environmentally friendly products with a reduced environmental impact that are likely to bring certain advantages to an end user. Cleaner production brings a lot of advantages to the society, such as lower pollution, energy savings or improved economic effectivity. Nevertheless, if businesses want to promote corporate social responsibility in the field of environmental protection while remaining active players in business, they have to adhere to certain environmental regulations. On the other hand, a great deal of research has emphasised the significance of consumer behaviour and preferences while pointing to the fact that consumers shall not be merely perceived as passive individuals selecting from various commercial opportunities. On the contrary, consumers have become active players that can substantially influence the transition of the whole society towards sustainability by changing their habits, buying behaviour or thinking.¹

¹ HOJNIK, J. et. al.: Transition towards Sustainability: Adoption of Eco-Products among Consumers. In *Sustainability*, 2019, Vol. 11, No. 16, p. 1. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335088174_Transition_towards_Sustainability_Adoption_of_Eco-Products_among_Consumers>.

2 Green Marketing Tools

Nowadays, green marketing is becoming a key phenomenon in the consumer field that is regarded as one of the main opportunities how to restart economy and boost sustainability.² It was firstly introduced by Lazar in 1969 as a social parameter of marketing limiting availability of environmental sources and highlighting environmental impacts of conventional marketing while aiming at rendering various aspects of traditional marketing more ecological.³ The Dictionary of the American Marketing Association (A.M.A.) provides three basic definitions of green marketing. In the first definition, green marketing is said to be marketing for those products that are regarded as environmentally safe (the definition of retailing). The second definition relates to development of product marketing that is likely to minimise negative impacts on the physical environment or quality improvement (the context of social marketing). The third one is linked to the company's efforts to produce, promote, pack and regenerate products while respecting ecological interests (in the environmental field).⁴ In the previous 25 years, green marketing has been transformed into the philosophy of evolution that is reflected in the company communication focusing on environmental protection as well as the introduction of environmentally friendly activities that are likely to build company's image and the market performance.⁵ Green marketing tools are the crucial part of green marketing, its application and impact on consumers as such. Ecolabelling, eco-brand and environmental advertisement are all parts of green marketing tools that ease and enhance consumers' perception and awareness of functions and aspects of green products. The key objective of green marketing tools is the subsequent purchase of eco-products by consumers. The application of these political tools plays an important role in the volatile consumer behaviour and their orientation towards environmentally friendly products, thus reducing an adverse environmental effect of artificial products.⁶ Another part of the article will deal with the topic of ecological labelling as the factor that substantially boosts consumers' environmental awareness.

² CAVALLO, M.: *Handbook of Green Communication and Marketing*. Milano : FrancoAngeli s.r.l., 2012, p. 7.

³ LAZER, W.: Marketing's changing social relationships. In *Journal of Marketing*, 1969, Vol. 33, No. 1, p. 4. [online]. [2020-05-09]. Available at: <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/1248739?seq=1>>.

⁴ EFTHYMIOS, D. K. et. al.: Marketing: Evolution in Green. In SARMANIOTIS Ch., WRIGHT, G. (eds.): *International Conference on Contemporary Marketing Issues*. Heraklion : ICCMI, 2016, p. 327. [online]. [2020-05-09]. Available at:

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⁵ KUMAR, P.: State of green marketing research over 25 years (1990-2014): Literature survey and classification. In *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, Vol. 34, No. 1, 2016, p. 137. [online]. [2020-05-09]. Available at:

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/291312390_State_of_green_marketing_research_over_25_years_1990-2014_Literature_survey_and_classification>.

⁶ FUIYENG, W., YAZDANIFARD, R.: Green Marketing: A Study of Consumers' Buying Behavior in Relation to Green Product. In *Global Journal of Management and Business Research: E Marketing*, 2016, Vol. 15, No. 5, p. 21. [online]. [2020-05-09]. Available at: <https://globaljournals.org/GJMBR_Volume15/2-Green-Marketing-A-Study.pdf>.

2.1 Ecolabelling

Ecolabelling dates back to the years 1977 – 1978 when Germany introduced their first certification programme for ecolabelling that was centrally governed by a third party.⁷ Various green labels can be used for marking a product that meets certain ecological norms. Since 1989 Scandinavian countries have been using the ecolabelling “the Nordic swan” which is considered as one of the most complex and objective ecolabel systems in the world. The Blue Angel introduced in 1978 in Germany is regarded as the oldest European initiative. The European Union is trying to harmonise their ecolabelling as well. In 1991 they introduced their first EU ecolabel.⁸ In general, ecolabels help us identify products and services that are characterised by a reduced environmental impact in course of their life cycle, from exploitation of raw materials until their production, use and final disposal.⁹ They are also set to reduce an information gap between consumers and producers.¹⁰ Tang and coll. define an ecolabel as an information tool that is likely to be used as a logo to inform consumers about environmental impacts of purchase of such products.¹¹ According to Sammer and Wüstenhagen, ecolabelling is an essential tool how to overcome market failures due to information asymmetry of environmental products.¹² In their research, Muposhi and Dhurup assume that product ecolabelling confirms that a certain product is made in line with environmentally friendly procedures and brings substantial advantages for its consumers as well as the environment.¹³ Ecolabels play a strategic role when attracting consumers’ attention and providing ecological product variations to their consumers. According to Atkinson and Rosenthal, they should improve consumer’s interaction with a product in the point of sale.¹⁴ Interaction with a product is facilitated through provision of information related to environmental product features the main goal of which is to avoid an information gap perceived by consumers.

⁷ ZÁUŠKOVÁ, A. et. al.: Eco Innovations in Slovakia and Their Marketing Communication. In CHEN, L. (ed.): *International Conference on Applied Social Science Research*. Paris : Atlantis Press, 2016, p. 217. [online]. [2020-05-09]. Available at: <<https://www.atlantis-press.com/proceedings/icasr-15/publishing>>.

⁸ WITEK, L.: Sustainable Consumption: Ecolabelling and its impact on consumer behavior - evidence from a study on Polish consumer. In BALCERZAK, A., PIETRYKA, I. (eds.): *9th International Conference on Applied Economics Contemporary Issues in Economy*. Torun : Institute of Economic Research, 2017, p. 2. [online]. [2020-05-09]. Available at: <<https://ideas.repec.org/p/pes/wpaper/2017no142.html>>.

⁹ GÖKIRMAKLI, C. et. al.: Behaviours of consumers in EU Eco-Label: A case study for Romanian consumers. In *Bulgarian Journal of Agricultural Science*, 2017, Vol. 23, No. 3, p. 512. [online]. [2020-05-09]. Available at: <<https://www.agrojournal.org/23/03-24.pdf>>.

¹⁰ SCHUMACHER, I.: Ecolabeling, consumers' preferences and taxation. In *Ecological Economics*, 2010, Vol. 69, No. 11, p. 2202. [online]. [2020-05-09]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/223494230_Ecolabeling_consumers%27_preferences_and_taxation>.

¹¹ TANG, E. et. al.: Visual and verbal communication in the design of eco-label for green consumer products. In *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 2004, Vol. 16, No. 1, p. 85. [online]. [2020-05-09]. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1300/J046v16n04_05>.

¹² SAMMER, K., WUSTENHAGEN, R.: The Influence of Ecolabelling on Consumer Behaviour – Results of a Discrete Choice Analysis for Washing Machines. In *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 2006, Vol. 15, No. 3, p. 194. [online]. [2020-05-09]. Available at: <<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/bse.522>>.

¹³ MUPOSHI, A., DHURUP, M.: The Influence of Green Marketing Tools on Green Eating Efficacy and Green Eating Behaviour. In *Journal of Economics and Behavioral Studies*, 2017, Vol. 9, No. 2, p. 78. [online]. [2020-05-09]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317041445_The_Influence_of_Green_Marketing_Tools_on_Green_Eating_Efficacy_and_Green_Eating_Behaviour>.

¹⁴ ATKINSON, L., ROSENTHAL, S.: Signaling the green sell: the influence of eco-label source, argument specificity and product involvement on consumer trust. In *Journal of Advertising*, 2014, Vol. 43, No. 1, p. 35. [online]. [2020-05-09]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/256082268_Signaling_the_green_sell_the_influence_of_eco-label_source_and_argument_specificity_on_consumer_trust>.

In addition, ecolabels reduce costs and consumers' efforts for information search while enhancing consumers' recycling behaviour. From the marketing point of view, the penetration of ecolabels in the market should be regarded as a chance how to increase the sales volume through higher environmental sensitivity of consumers. According to Gökirmakli, ecolabels can be classified into two main categories: those that are financially supported by the government and those that are subject to a private initiative.¹⁵ Recent research and studies have focused on the growing number of empiric literature dealing with various aspects of ecolabeling and describing eco-labelled products and their impact on the whole market.¹⁶ For conclusion and in order to compare the outcomes of various authors herein involved, Paiva and Garcia mutually confirm that for ecolabelling and ecolabels to be successful, not only should the products meet certain environmental criteria, but also make consumers feel anxious about future impacts of environmental problems.¹⁷

3 Impact of Eco-Labeling on Consumer Behaviour

With regard to the current market situation, consumers may opt for various product ranges including environmentally friendly alternatives.¹⁸ The impact of ecolabelling has been largely studied and the interesting research has been done in this field. Let us present you some outcomes and analyses in the following chapter. In their research, Gökirmakli et al. declare that ecolabels influence consumer behaviour in two ways. Firstly, they introduce the green colour as a key attribute in the points of sale and secondly, they enable consumers to compare a traditional and a green business concept. Thanks to ecolabelling, environmentally aware consumers feel much better informed.¹⁹ At the same time, our research points to the fact that consumers are generally more worried about the environment they live in but still, they tend to support eco-products only in case their quality and performance are comparable with their traditional non-ecological variants. For conclusion, the research shows that the respondents assume eco-products are not that effective as their common equivalents.²⁰ The main goal of the study by Taufique and the coll. was to observe whether the environmental awareness can complement general environmental knowledge when forming consumers' attitudes towards the environment. In their opinion, these findings show that general environmental knowledge as well as specific environmental awareness have a positive impact on consumers' attitudes

¹⁵ GÖKIRMAKLI, C. et. al.: Behaviours of consumers in EU Eco-Label: A case study for Romanian consumers. In *Bulgarian Journal of Agricultural Science*, 2017, Vol. 23, No. 3, p. 512. [online]. [2020-05-09]. Available at: <<https://www.agrojournal.org/23/03-24.pdf>>.

¹⁶ TAUFIQUE, K. M. R. et. al.: Integrating General Environmental Knowledge and Eco-Label Knowledge in Understanding Ecologically Conscious Consumer Behavior. In *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 2016, Vol. 37, No. 1, p. 40. [online]. [2020-05-10]. Available at: <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212567116300909>>.

¹⁷ PAIVA, T., GARCIA, V.: ECO2SEIA–Low Carbon Green Label Products: A Green Marketing “Study Case”. In *HOLOS*, 2016, Vol. 8, No. 32, p. 243. [online]. [2020-05-10]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/316818933_ECO2SEIA_-_LOW_CARBON_GREEN_LABEL_PRODUCTS_A_GREEN_MARKETING_STUDY_CASE>.

¹⁸ HOJNIK, J. et. al.: Transition towards Sustainability: Adoption of Eco-Products among Consumers. In *Sustainability*, 2019, Vol. 11, No. 16, p. 2. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335088174_Transition_towards_Sustainability_Adoption_of_Eco-Products_among_Consumers>.

¹⁹ GÖKIRMAKLI, C. et. al.: Behaviours of consumers in EU Eco-Label: A case study for Romanian consumers. In *Bulgarian Journal of Agricultural Science*, 2017, Vol. 23, No. 3, p. 512. [online]. [2020-05-09]. Available at: <<https://www.agrojournal.org/23/03-24.pdf>>.

²⁰ Ibidem.

towards the environment.²¹ Various former studies have shown that general environmental knowledge had a rather positive impact on our environmental behaviour, whereas no study has so far dealt with the impact of specific knowledge on consumers' environmental behaviour. Thanks to the research by L. Witek combined with other theoretical findings, we have been able to determine the following hypotheses:

- **H1:** *Environmentally friendly products are perceived positively even though consumers have only general knowledge of ecolabelling.*
- **H2:** *Knowledge of ecolabelling depends on age and education.*
- **H3:** *The main obstacle in purchase of eco-labelled products is a lack of trust and scepticism in relation to eco-friendly products.*
- **H4:** *People who are acquainted with green products carefully read the labels, buy environmentally friendly brands regularly and are entitled to be trusted by producers.*²²

The outcomes of the research show the following:

- Consumers prefer ecological products, but they connect them with health rather than with environmental protection. Only a small group of respondents take into consideration the environmental impact of a specific product.
- The price is a key attribute for the respondents.
- The significant part of the respondents assumes to have a high level of knowledge of ecolabelling. They admit the labels are essential when providing information about certain product features while emphasising that ecolabels can help distribute precious information about environmental aspects of a product.
- Only a third of the respondents are able to read ecolabels correctly.
- Most respondents complain about not fully understanding all the information on ecolabels.
- More than a half of the respondents are not sure whether a specific label guarantees ecological features of a product and only a third of them show trust in ecological logos.²³

This study shows that consumers in general have a rather positive attitude towards ecolabels. However, the main issues seem to be partial or general knowledge of ecolabels, wrong identification of differences between them or insufficient trust in the declarations of producers that limit the selection of certified ecological products. A green product is often thought of as an expensive alternative that can be purchased only by the rich while an excessive number of labels that are placed on the packaging tend to create chaos, thus not helping select reliable and guaranteed information. The outcomes of this research are also shared by the authors Czarnecki and coll. who tend to link ecolabelling to certain normative worries. In their opinion, ecolabelling does not guarantee that consumers will change their buying behaviour and adopt an environmental approach. They also highlight a certain inequality in consumers' earnings that prevent them from purchasing eco-labelled products due to their high price.²⁴ The analysis of the previous research in the field of impact of ecolabelling on consumer behaviour is interlinked in various points. The main purpose of sellers should be to increase

²¹ TAUFIGUE, K. M. R. et. al.: Integrating General Environmental Knowledge and Eco-Label Knowledge in Understanding Ecologically Conscious Consumer Behavior. In *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 2016, Vol. 37, No. 1, p. 43. [online]. [2020-05-10]. Available at: <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212567116300909>>.

²² WITEK, L.: Sustainable Consumption: Ecolabelling and its impact on consumer behavior - evidence from a study on Polish consumer. In BALCERZAK, A., PIETRYKA, I. (eds.): *9th International Conference on Applied Economics Contemporary Issues in Economy*. Torun : Institute of Economic Research, 2017, p. 4. [online]. [2020-05-09]. Available at: <<https://ideas.repec.org/p/pes/wpaper/2017no142.html>>.

²³ Ibidem.

²⁴ CZARNECKI, J. et. al.: *Ecolabelling*. Warsaw : Elsevier, 2018, p. 4. [online]. [2020-05-10]. Available at: <https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3230440>.

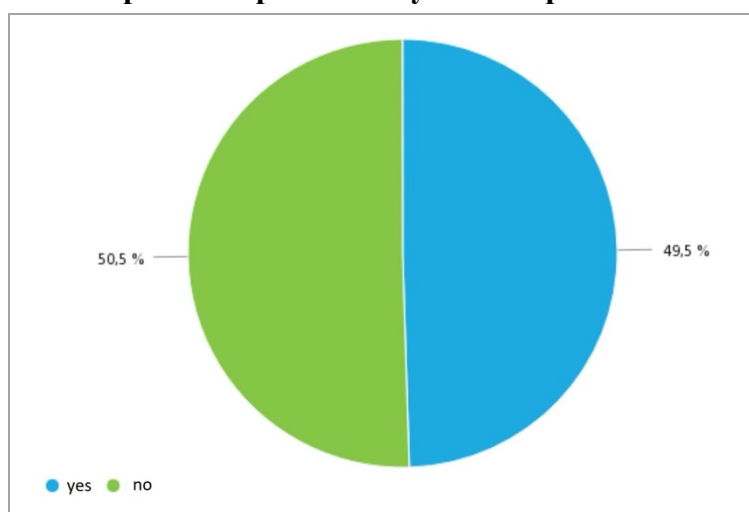
consumers' credibility and reduce their scepticism while promoting environmental news that are concise and comprehensible.

4 The Research Outcomes

Measuring the impact of product ecolabelling on consumers was the main subject of our online questionnaire involving 517 respondents, of which 64.4% were women and 35.6% were men. On average, the respondents were aged 18 to 26. For the purpose of proper completion of demographic data in the basic file, the respondents were from all the regions of Slovakia. The research by the questionnaire primarily focused on some key attributes:

- to what extent the respondents perceive any form of ecolabelling on products;
- to what extent the respondents are aware of specific ecolabeling;
- what is the most significant factor in the purchase of items of daily use;
- what is the least significant factor in the purchase of items of daily use.

To what extent the respondents perceive any form of product ecolabelling:



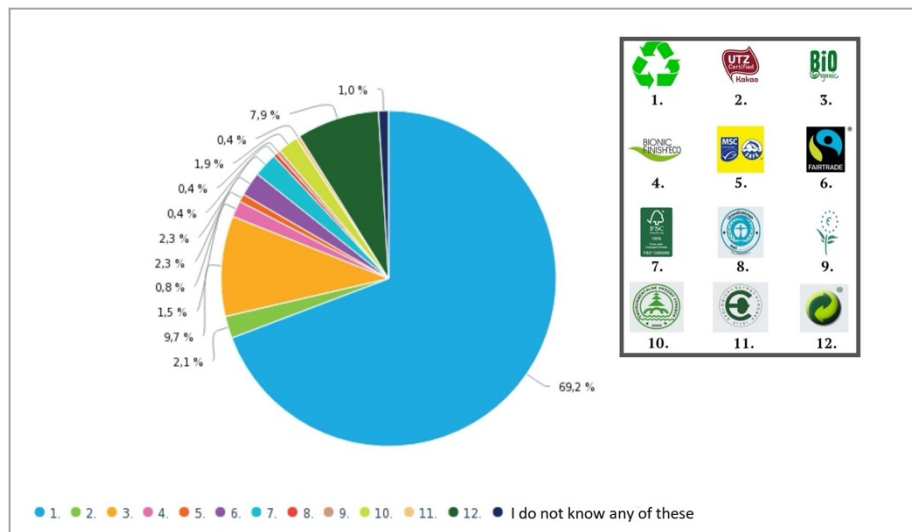
Graph 1: The rate of perception of product ecolabelling

Source: own processing, 2020.

The Graph 1 shows that the rate of perception of product ecolabelling is rather balanced. Despite this statement, almost 50% of the respondents do not perceive any ecolabelling on products they purchase. The more detailed and precise research in this field could be done by means of neuro-marketing tools. Application of neuro-marketing tools provides more room for interpretation and seems to be more objective than traditional forms of research. The results of eye observation follow the respondents' sight while identifying the elements that attract their visual attention first and for a longer time. At the same time, it is possible to track certain elements the respondents usually ignore. This can be really helpful when launching ecolabelling and advertising product campaigns and displaying information about the environment in the way that really attracts consumers' visual attention.²⁵

²⁵ LEWANDOWSKA, A. et. al.: Neuro-marketing Tools for Assessing the Communication Effectiveness of Life Cycle Based Environmental Labelling— Procedure and Methodology. In BENETTO, E., GERICKE, K., GUITON, M. (eds.): *Designing Sustainable Technologies, Products and Policies*. New York : Springer International Publishing, 2018, p. 171. [online]. [2020-05-10]. Available at: <https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-66981-6_19>.

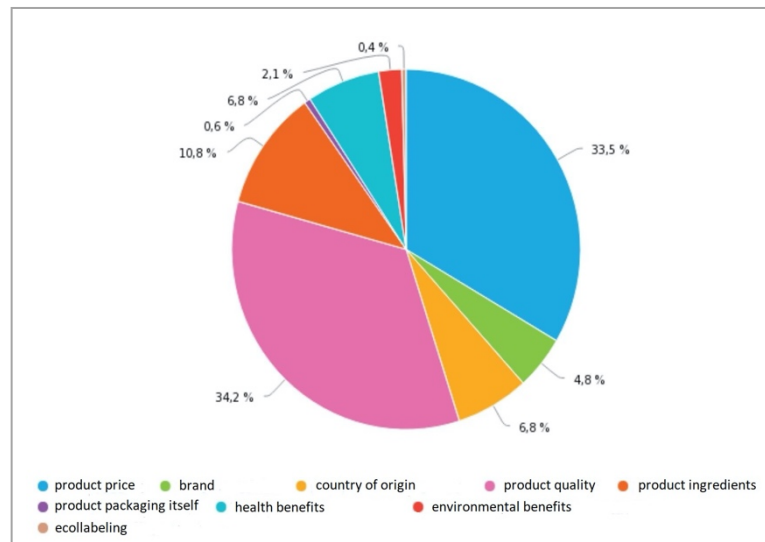
To what extent the respondents are aware of specific ecolabelling:



Graph 2: The rate of perception of ecolabelling
Source: own processing, 2020.

The Graph No. 2 expresses the extent of ecolabelling awareness that is mainly perceived by the young. Up to 69.2% of the respondents stated they most encountered the symbol of recycling named 'Möbi'. This is followed by the environmental label Bio Organic (9.7%) the respondents encounter at Lidl stores. 7.9% of the respondents also stated they know and register the ecolabelling "Green point". Other ecolabels cover only a small market share in contrast to the symbol of recycling 'Möbi'.

What is the most significant factor for the respondents in the purchase of items of daily use:

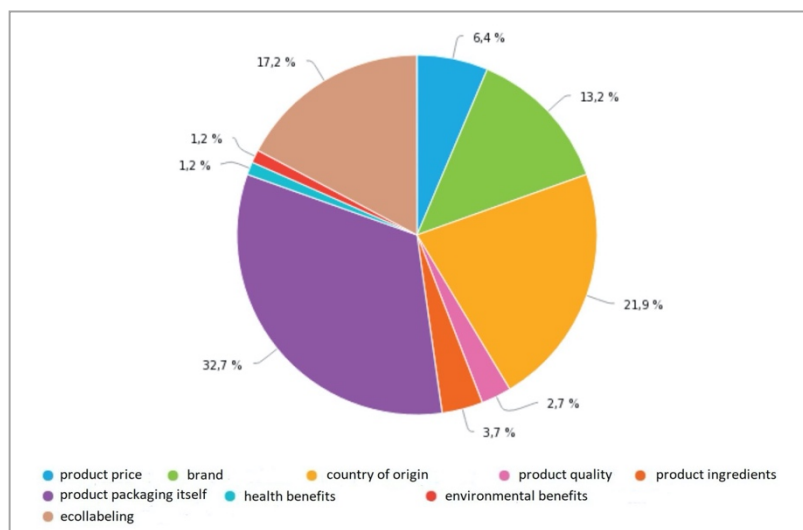


Graph 3: The most important factor of purchase of items of daily use
Source: own processing, 2020.

According to our research, the most significant factors influencing the product purchase are the quality and the price. There is a significant difference between these two factors, yet the price ranked second in our research (33.5%). The product quality ranked first (34.2%). Environmental benefits are significant for 10.8% of the respondents. It is rather strange that

only 0.4% of the respondents stated ecolabelling as the factor influencing their purchase decision.

What is the least significant factor for the respondents in the purchase of items of daily use:



Graph 4: The least important factor in the purchase of items of daily use

Source: own processing, 2020.

According to our research, the least significant factors in the product purchase are the product packaging (32.7%), the country of origin (21.9%) and product ecolabelling (17.2%). These are followed by the brand (13.2%) and health benefits (6.4%). The product ingredients, price or quality still play a crucial role in the purchase, which has been previously confirmed in the Graph 3.

Conclusion

Based upon the theoretical findings and the research we have carried out, it is obvious that despite a great deal of studies and research in the field of impact of environmental labels on consumer behaviour, it is still necessary to enhance people's awareness of ecolabelling. Our research has proven that more than a half of the respondents do not perceive product ecolabelling, most of them only know the universal recycling symbol 'Möbi' that is used to label the recycling process or those environmental labels that are ranked last among the key factors of purchase of ordinary goods or products. According to various authors, awareness of environmental brands is positively connected with consumers' attitudes towards the environment. Their education in this field is crucial as the ecolabel is an environmental communication tool the main goal of which is to promote consumer behaviour that is environmentally friendly and economical. Due to low knowledgeability, some consumers can interpret these symbols incorrectly or have wrong information about an eco-labelled product. For example, consumers may assume that eco-labelled products have certain features that are not a part of a given product. Therefore, marketing communication in product ecolabelling should mainly focus on high-quality and clear information provided to consumers in this field. This type of advertising can be initiated by the government, non-governmental organisations, etc. that are likely to enhance credibility of an eco-label.

Media can also play an important role in consumers' education. For this reason, more effective use of media could enhance people's environmental awareness. When boosting awareness and education, social media can not be omitted. They have all become an inseparable part of the life of both the young and the elderly. By means of social media, we are able to obtain a great deal of information and see how people form their opinions and assumptions. When increasing environmental awareness, it is necessary to focus on a proper selection of words and information as wrong data can have serious adverse effects on future environmental awareness of our consumers. Despite low knowledgeability in the field of ecolabelling, lots of people still believe that eco-products are our future and the demand for this type of products will be constantly growing hand in hand with ecological certification. There is one conclusion to be drawn herefrom: ecological products will be desired in the future and those businesses which would like to become ecological market leaders need to start right now.

Acknowledgement:

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MARKETING COMMUNICATION OF SELECTED AUTHORITIES IN TRNAVA REGION

Lenka Labudová – Denisa Jánošová

ABSTRACT:

The internal communication system, or internal communication tools such as the institution manages and requests for use for its employees greatly affects the level and degree of efficiency with which the employees subsequently communicate with the public, and this in turn affects the public's view of the institution. Therefore, it is necessary to pay due attention to the system of internal communication, as only informed employees can and are able to communicate effectively outwards, to the external environment. We dedicate the beginning of the article to a brief overview of regional marketing communication and internal marketing communication from a theoretical point of view. In the practical part of the article, we present selected questions of a pilot survey, which was carried out in order to narrow the issue for the needs of the dissertation. The questions are focused on the system and tools of internal communication in selected institutions of the Trnava region. The final part of the article is dedicated to the summary and conclusion, in which we try to underline the importance and significance of effective internal communication.

KEY WORDS:

authorities, employees, internal system of communication, marketing communication, region

1 Regional Marketing Communication

Marketing communication at a regional level „*is represented by all the instruments, means and methods, with which a town/city, municipality or region - their local government authorities - create a conception of their market value.*“¹ Local government must communicate primarily for the following reasons:

- acquiring of public support,
- informing of the public,
- increasing the interest of the public about the development of the area, city, municipality,
- acquiring of public understanding during problem-solving,
- reaching of a mutual agreement between individual subjects,
- to push through one's own territory on the market.²

The authors Bernátová and Vaňová define four basic groups, with which local government communicated with within its managed area. The first group consists of local inhabitants with permanent and temporary residence, local companies, public administration authorities, hobby associations, educational institutions, churches, local media, and similar. The second group is represented by tourists, students, traders, entrepreneurs, foundations and similar. The third group is represented by potential inhabitants, investors, entrepreneurs, visitors and similar. The last, fourth group, consists of public administration employees.³ Marketing communication should be planned by a local government authority for a full four years, the entirety of an election term. The authority's plan should contain the formulation of a goal, a definition of the target segments, analysis of issues, the Instruments and forms of image-building and finally, personal, financial and organizational security.

¹ HORVÁTHOVÁ, M.: *Marketing miest a obcí. S dôrazom na marketingovú komunikáciu a vplyv informačno-komunikačných technológií na jej rozvoj*. Košice : METROPOLA TRADE, 2012, p. 61.

² Ibidem.

³ BERNÁTOVÁ, M., VAŇOVÁ, A.: *Marketing samosprávy I. Marketing území. Príručka pre samosprávy. EFUMB, Inštitút rozvoja obcí, miest a regiónov*. Banská Bystrica : British KnowHow Fund, 2000, p. 64-67.

1.1 Marketing Communication Inside of Organizations

Along with external communication, internal communication constitutes the main component of public relations. Internal communication proceeds within the organization, in two directions. From top to bottom, from managers to employees or, conversely, from employees to company management or employees at the same level.⁴ The authors Smith and Mounter note 5 key points, which should not be forgotten when talking about internal communication:

1. internal communication for sharing necessary information between employees;
2. the credibility of the information is very important;
3. internal communicators need to continually improve their communication and commerce abilities and skills;
4. it is necessary to listen to each other during internal company communication;
5. the responsibility for the functioning of the internal communication lies mainly with the leadership of the company, the management of the company and the CEO.⁵

Information and management-relations interconnectedness in all aspects of company management can be dubbed as the basic goal of internal communication. This basic goal subsequently branches into:

- the securing of mutual cooperation and understanding, based on the reaching of understanding in common (i.e. shared) goals;
- the securing of the information needs of all company employees, and the information interconnectedness, that factors in the continuity and coordination of processes;
- the influencing and managing of employees towards desirable mindsets and behaviours within the company, the securing of stability and loyalty; the ceaseless maintaining of feedback and the implementation of acquired knowledge into practice, the improvement of internal communication.⁶

The influences that affect internal communication include vision, mission, company culture, technologies, the size and structure of the company, the type of management and communication skills.

2 Results of Pilot Survey

The pilot survey for the dissertation work was carried out in August 2019 and consisted of written questioning, in the form of a questionnaire, carried out at three local government authorities of the Trnava region – the City authority of Trnava, the Trnava self-governing region authority VÚC, and the Trnava district authority. In the pilot survey, we decided to focus on an approach, in which the specific authority (or authorities) features as a sender of the message. The goal was to ascertain the level and system of utilising communication Instruments at an internal and external level. Furthermore, based on these results, we wanted to determine the main direction of the dissertation work's primary research. The reason behind the survey on of internal and external communication use was the fact, that an internal communication system or instruments, managed by the institution and required for use by its employees, greatly influence the level and degree of effectivity, with which the given employees communicate with the public. This, in turn, influences the view of the particular institution in the eyes of the

⁴ BORSÍKOVÁ, B.: Personálny marketing a ekonomická demokracia. In MATÚŠ, J., PETRANOVÁ, D. (eds.): *Nové trendy v marketingovej komunikácii*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2011, p. 90.

⁵ SMITH, L., MOUNTER, P.: *Effective internal communication*. Philadelphia : Kogan Page, 2008, p. 24.

⁶ HOLÁ, J.: *Interní komunikace ve firmě*. Brno : Computer Press, 2006, p. 21.

public. We sent the questionnaires to the individual institutions and their departments in online form, via e-mail. Based on analysis of the hierarchical structure of the given institutions, we determined the number of the empty questionnaires in such a manner, that their number in every institution would be the same and would include every employee from the individual departments/sections of the authority. As already mentioned, the respondents consisted of employees of individual authorities. The employees of local government authorities constitute a subgroup of subjects in regional marketing, which includes inhabitants, companies, organizations groups and associations, institutions, and similar, living and doing work within the given area. From this group, a subgroup – the employees of the authorities – differs from the group in that it itself is a part and to a certain extent also the creator of the marketing communication for the given area. The questionnaire was divided into two parts, the first part of the questionnaire focused on ascertaining the method and system of internal communication at the individual authorities, and the second part having the goal of ascertaining the utilised communication instruments serving the external communication of the authority. We expected the number of filled-in questionnaires to be 99. The actually received number of questionnaires was altogether 64. We had received a reply in the form of at least one filled-in questionnaire, from every surveyed department, with the exception of the department of social affairs, which falls under the Trnava self-governing region.

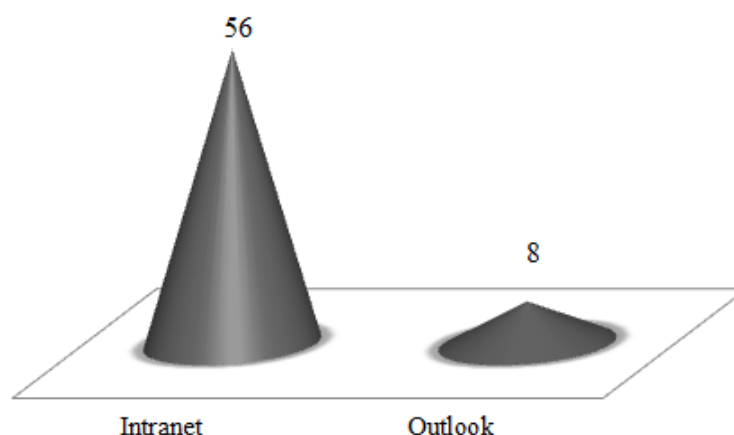


Chart 1: What computer/online communication system do you use at your authority?

Source: own processing

In the second question, in the first part of the questionnaire, we asked the respondents about the internal computer network they use at their workplace at the authority, with the overwhelming majority of the respondents answering, that they use their own Intranet. In numerical terms, the number was 56 respondents, i.e. 87% of them. The use of the Intranet signifies that they have at their disposal a computer network that utilises the same technology and is reserved for only small groups of users, e.g. the employees of a company, and in our case, of an administrative authority.

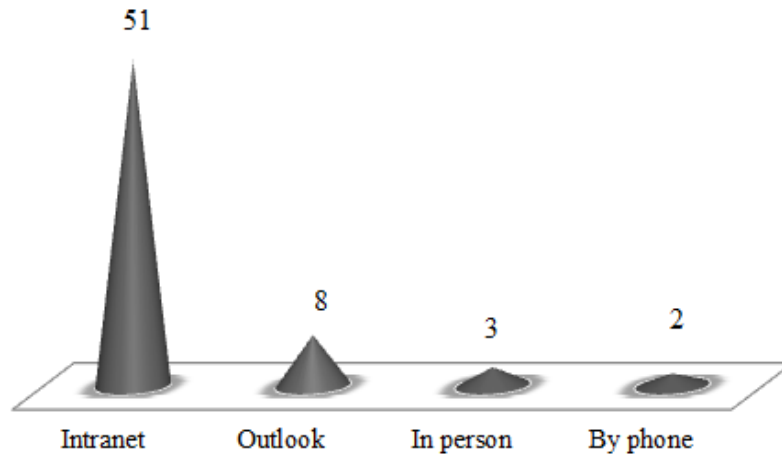


Chart 2: Which of the presented means of communication is most convenient to you?

Source: own processing

In the fourth question, an intranet network was marked by the respondents as a means of communication that is the most convenient to them as part of internal communication within an authority/office. 51 respondents, i.e. 80% of them, had marked it as their preferred choice. Currently, intranets (internal networks) utilised within the confines of a company or institution are one of the most used means of communication transfer within a single workplace. They represent a safe and fast method of spreading information, one in which all employees are involved.

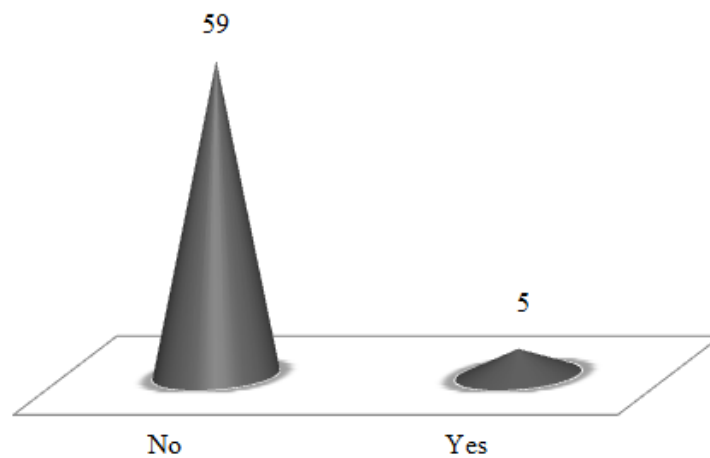


Chart 3: Do you have any suggestion for improving/increasing the effectiveness of internal communication means in your institution?

Source: own processing

The 5th question contained relatively surprising results. We asked, whether the respondents had any suggestions for improving internal communication. As many as 92% of the respondents replied negatively to the question. Based on this result, we presume that the system and method of internal communication at the individual authorities is sufficient. For curiosity's sake, we also note the responses of 5 respondents, who would welcome expanding communication towards the direction of social media, specifically Messenger, WhatsApp and Viber.

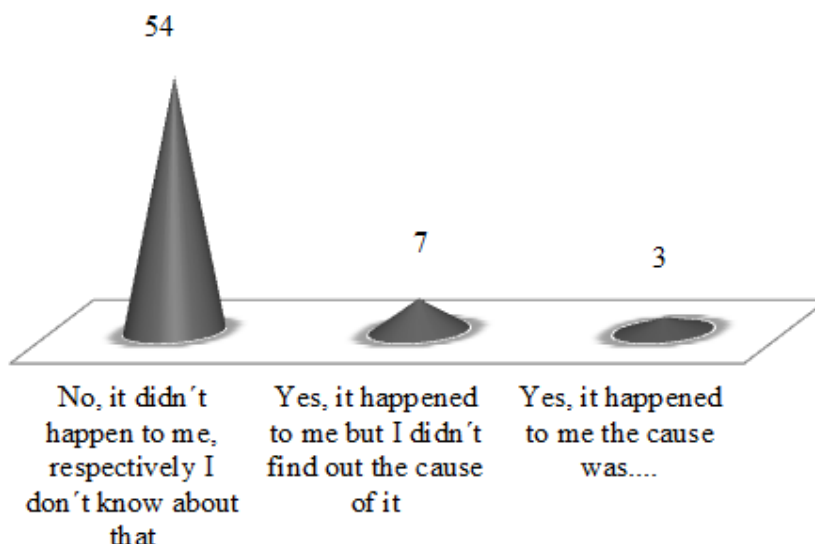


Chart 4: If you did not receive the necessary information, designated to you as part of internal communication at your authority, what was the cause?

Source: own processing

In the sixth question, we asked the respondents, whether they ever found themselves in a situation, where they did not receive the necessary information. A positive indicator was the number of negative responses – *No, such a thing did not happen to me*, was at 54, 84%, which we can regard as confirmation of the internal system of information transfer in the individual authorities working well. In turn, 10 respondents had already experienced such a situation. Of these, 7 of the queried respondents did not find out the cause of not receiving the necessary information and 3 respondents noted human error and the failure of the internal network as the main causes.

3 Summary

The results of the selected survey questions, whose results we describe in section 2.1, has brought us the following findings. The authorities we surveyed use their own Intranet computer networks for the purposes of internal communication. Besides this specific means, the employees also prefer telephone communication or personal communication, in cases where information needs to be reported to a co-worker. We had also ascertained that, of the other communication tools, the Intranet is the most convenient according to respondents. This finding was confirmed by the results of the sixth question as well, in which 54 respondents always received the needed information. Also, only 5 of the respondents had a suggestion for improving the internal communication system.

Conclusion

The principal part of every successful communication at a regional level are informed employees. By employees, we mean every single staff member, from isolated personnel to contact personnel, up to the members of the municipal council. They serve as the first intermediaries for information at the workplace, but also at home, as part of their social contacts. It is crucial that they be skilled in argumentation, since they can become the target of criticism or complaints at any time. Otherwise, they can not justify the steps and decision taken

by the particular local government, which needlessly harms their overall image. If employees learn crucial and relevant information only or primarily by way of the external environment, it can create the impression of the employer keeping significant information unavailable to the employees. Transparency, openness and up-to-dateness are therefore key for effective internal communication of municipalities.

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IMPACT OF SOCIAL NETWORKS ON WORK OF SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

Gordana Lesinger – Katarina Gagulić

ABSTRACT:

Social media networks have recently become a normal part of everyday life, and more and more companies recognize the benefits of using social media in their businesses - both for communicating with potential customers or connecting with audiences and for attracting new talent to their business. Communication through social media takes place daily, and the interaction is no longer one-sided. In this paper, an empirical study was conducted based on a structured interview with three Osijek-based IT companies, COBE Ltd., Factory and Inchoo Ltd. The research results indicate the positive impact of social media marketing on the performance of small and medium-sized enterprises in Osijek. Specifically, social networks have been shown to help communicate with audiences, partners, and clients, contribute to creating a company image in the marketplace and to bring in new employees. The marketing value of social networks is great, and the companies interviewed believe it is important to be present on them, but also believe there is still room for progress. By analyzing the theory and existing statistics on the use of social media networks in Croatia and around the world and researching them on IT companies in the city of Osijek, this paper aims to gain an insight into the importance of marketing through social networks to create the presence of small or medium-sized enterprises in the market and to realize any kind of profit through the active use of social networks.

KEY WORDS:

communication, enterprises, marketing, social media, social networks marketing

1 Introduction

Social media networks have become a part of everyday life, both in the private and business sectors. More and more companies recognize the benefits of social networks in their businesses, both for communicating with potential customers and for connecting with customers and attracting new talent to the business. Communication through social networks takes place daily, and the interaction is no longer one-sided. Through strategically thought-out publications, texts, photos, videos, and advertising, businesses create their image and become recognizable in the market. The purpose of this paper is to explain the impact of social networks on the business of small and medium-sized enterprises, and the purpose is to explore social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram in more detail and to demonstrate the extent to which the use of the same contributes to a company. For this paper, the author will use the literature of library centers, an online database, and information obtained from three Osijek-based IT companies. The research part of the paper is based on the answers obtained through in-depth interviews with COBE doo, Factory, and Inchoo. The following scientific methods have been used in the paper:

- method of analysis - breaking down complex concepts, opinions, and conclusions into their simpler parts and elements;
- inductive method - an inductive method of inference which leads to the conclusion of a general court based on an analysis of individual facts;
- descriptive method - the process of simply describing facts, processes, and objects in nature and society and empirically validating these relationships, without scientifically explaining and interpreting them;
- comparison method - method of comparison;
- method of compilation - retrieving the results of the scientific work of other authors (observations and conclusions of other authors);
- method of proof - a scientific method to determine the accuracy of cognition;

- interview method - collecting information through interviews and by asking questions, to use the answers provided for educational or scientific purposes.

2 Marketing in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises

Small and medium-sized enterprises have unique characteristics and differ significantly from large enterprises, and precisely in their uniqueness and limitations is the key to their marketing. The biggest limitation companies face is probably the limited human and financial resources, which automatically hinders the recruitment of marketing professionals and the allocation of larger amounts of marketing money¹. But it's not all about the money. Peter Drucker, a marketing expert, views marketing as a philosophy, or a way of doing business, with a focus on the customer and his desires and needs, because what the customer buys is never a product, but a benefit - whether for him personally or for his company. So, it is the customer that is crucial to the development of the business. And since the understanding of marketing leads to success and development of the market, an increase of sales and customer satisfaction, it can be said that the development of marketing strategy, in the long term, is a very important element of the success of small and medium-sized enterprises².

3 Web 2.0

With the advent of the web, social networks have experienced a complete turn in their development. The mode of communication and exchange of information has been relocated to the network environment, and from the beginning of 2017 to the mobile network environment³. Although the web has primarily been used as a source of information and a place where any data can be accessed wherever it is, lately the most represented on the web are social networks⁴. That's how the term Web 2.0 came about. Which is a specific way of using these social networks to achieve two-way communication between the user and the information server⁵. For every mention of the term Web 2.0, the first association for many people is social or social networking. Social networking sites such as Facebook or MySpace are a common topic of discussion, but not always necessarily in a positive context. Positive stories about the value and quality of social networks are intertwined with the negative experiences of children in using them or the political diversions that the web has served as a platform for engagements and collusion⁶. On the other hand, positive stories about the value and benefits of Web 2.0. platforms have become visible in the business world as well. Through this platform, companies have become more transparent and open to their audiences and are using it to publish articles, research, research results, and talk about the problems they face and the products and projects they work on. This all adds up to the importance of a firm. Sharing content with your audience

¹ BUTIGAN, R., MAHNIĆ, I.: Uloga marketinga odnosa u malim i srednjim poduzećima. In *Tržište: časopis za tržišnu teoriju i praksu*, 2011, Vol. 23, No. 1, p. 90-103.

² BIJAKŠIĆ, S., MARKIĆ, B., BEVANDA, A.: Upravljanje znanjem u marketingu za mala i srednja poduzeća. In *Mostariensia : časopis za društvene i humanističke znanosti*, 2014, Vol. 18, No. 1-2, p. 168-181.

³ HOLCER, D.: Smjernice za razvijanje usluga i korištenje društvenih mreža u narodnim knjižnicama. In *Vjesnik bibliotekara Hrvatske 60*, 2017, Vol. 4, No. 1, p. 148-158.

⁴ GRBAVAC, J., GRBAVAC, V.: Pojava društvenih mreža kao globalnog komunikacijskog fenomena. In *Media, culture and public relations*, 2014, Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 207-218.

⁵ PANIAN, Ž., STRUGAR, I.: *Informatizacija poslovanja*. Zagreb : Sveučilište u Zagrebu, Ekonomski fakultet u Zagrebu, 2013, p. 225.

⁶ Ibidem.

and therefore your potential customers create so-called long-term relationships with clients and an impression on them - all of which can lead to potential cooperation in the future⁷

4 The Relation of Social Networks on the Business of the Company

4.1 In the World

As explained earlier, with the strong growth of social networks and their popularity, which was most evident through the growing number of active users and their daily activity, many businesses wanted to “jump on that train”. The fact is that companies, from a business perspective, should not miss such an opportunity. Never before has there been such a large “open forum” and such a large platform through which real-time feedback on other businesses and clients can be obtained. So, companies can quickly find out what the masses of people think, listen to them, get valuable feedback, and eventually learn from them, through social networks. Besides, companies can better connect with clients in this way⁸. If they generate useful content for users, they will perceive them in the right light and, in the long run, ensure them new business success⁹. Thus, there is a clear pressure on businesses to join the social networking trend, although not everyone agrees that all businesses should and must be active on social networks. On the other hand, many criticize companies that set big goals while doing nothing concrete to meet them¹⁰. This also applies to the use of social networks, as numerous studies, including the ones conducted in this paper, prove that social networks have an impact on the achievement of company goals. At first, the largest number of businesses caught up in the social networking trend focused on several major networks, among which Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn are undoubtedly prominent. However, new social networks are emerging day by day. While some are still quite unsuccessful, others have been a great success, such as Pinterest, Tumblr and Instagram, which give businesses a myriad of new opportunities to create engaging content in diverse variants and reach new audiences. It has become natural for businesses to research and experiment with social networks, all to reach the desired number of users, customers or clients. Such diversification has proven to be very successful because, among other things, it builds the value of a company or a person through better recognition¹¹.

The way business-to-business communication ceases to be the same, and social networks have for some time helped businesses create and maintain relationships between clients and their employees, then create new customer service contacts, engage clients in brand promotion, in creating market leadership and in numerous other marketing strategies¹². Thus, for example, businesses began to increasingly use the Twitter social network for marketing or publicity purposes. As a result of the continued growth and development of social networking platforms, each company has developed greater opportunities for more frequent and intense interactions with its customers. This allowed her to collect valuable data that could further be used to create

⁷ BILOŠ, A., KELIĆ, I.: Marketing aspects of social networks. In *Economic research*, 2012, Vol. 25, No. 2, p. 158.

⁸ PANIAN, Ž., STRUGAR, I.: *Informatizacija poslovanja*. Zagreb : Sveučilište u Zagrebu, Ekonomski fakultet u Zagrebu, 2013, p. 219.

⁹ MEERMAN SCOTT, D.: *Nova pravila marketinga & PR-a*. Zagreb : Denona d.o.o., 2009, p. 23.

¹⁰ RUŽIĆ, D., BILOŠ, A., TURKALJ, D.: *E-Marketing*. Osijek : Sv. Josipa J. Strossmayera u Osijeku, Ekonomski fakultet u Osijeku, 2014, p. 159.

¹¹ Ibidem.

¹² PANIAN, Ž., STRUGAR, I.: *Informatizacija poslovanja*. Zagreb : Sveučilište u Zagrebu, Ekonomski fakultet u Zagrebu, 2013, p. 217.

new, increasingly enriching experiences for her clients¹³. As time goes on, social networks are increasingly maturing and their importance in business is growing. Businesses have begun to see that sponsoring their social networks makes sense. So, for example, the well-known American company Starbucks launched an initiative to edit and renew their brand and for this purpose began to advertise their web site mystarbucksidea.com on social networks and their enabled customers to become part of their strategy. Specifically, customers were allowed to make their suggestions and see how this would affect the promotion of the product, but also of the company itself, that is, it would only enhance the "Starbucks experience"¹⁴. Such an approach has created a significant connection between the client and the company. On the other hand, critics believe that joining social networks to one company does not guarantee success and that the reputation of a company and its market image will only be contributed by those individuals who successfully promote its brand¹⁵. Also, it may be that companies spend too much time and money on communicating with people, which in the end will in no way contribute to the business of the company. This is why a company should remain within the boundaries of its business and in some ways limits the ability to access social networks to those individuals or organizations that could harm the performance of the company. From a business standpoint, the point is that it only makes sense to use a social network when it can become a vehicle or tool for finding new markets and clients, then facilitating new partnerships and ventures, and ultimately, reducing costs¹⁶. The question is: "Do social networks bring more business benefits or harm?"

Gary Vaynerchuk, an entrepreneur and perhaps the biggest advocate of social networking in the world, says that quality customer relationship development is paramount to the success of a business. And how does that relationship develop? It is through social networks. Gary claims that Facebook, Twitter, and others are developing a one-on-one relationship with a customer base and that way they can find out what they think and what their experience is with a particular project/product. With their wishes and ideas in mind, businesses can finally work on creating personal and creative campaigns, not just posting recycled messages that are "pushed under their noses"¹⁷. The problem that arises is often found in the company management itself - many CEOs are afraid to make the change, even when it is in the long-term interest of the company. Such directors generally invest in traditional platforms, which does not mean that their goals will not be achieved, but the fact is that it is 2019 and everything revolves around social networks. Therefore, if some companies do nothing about it and other companies do - after a while, they will overcome them. And not because some are posting on Facebook and others are not, but because some have recognized that consumers' culture and expectations have changed in the last few years and that the real change is yet to come¹⁸. Also, it is believed that CEOs would invest a lot more on social media if they didn't have to worry about money as much as they had to. This investment makes sense because in this way the client becomes acquainted, the marketing person is better suited to him and they are more likely to buy from you or do business with you, depending on the purpose of the company¹⁹.

¹³ PANIAN, Ž., STRUGAR, I.: *Informatizacija poslovanja*. Zagreb : Sveučilište u Zagrebu, Ekonomski fakultet u Zagrebu, 2013, p. 222.

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 229.

¹⁵ Ibidem, p. 228.

¹⁶ Ibidem, p. 230.

¹⁷ VAYNERCHUCK, G.: *Ekonomija zahvalnosti*. Zagreb : Znanje, 2011, p. 5.

¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 35.

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 34.

4.2 In Croatia

The number of businesses in the European Union using social networks is on the rise, with Eurostat data from 2017 showing that almost every other company uses this form of communication, with companies in Croatia slightly below that average. Thus, in 2017 in Croatia, at least one social media was used by 45% of businesses, of which 41% related to social networks, blogs or microblogs. Also, a Eurostat report shows that 71% of Croatian companies have a website, and 39% of them also communicate via a website and social media²⁰

Najčešći ciljevi marketinga putem društvenih mreža



Chart 1: Use of social networks by companies

Source: own processing

Chart 1 shows how businesses use social networks the most to enhance their brand awareness in the marketplace, inform potential customers about their own products and services, and finally, to sell those same services. In 2018, a market research agency Masmi surveyed the business use of social networking sites. The survey was conducted among the marketing and communication departments of leading companies in Croatia, and found that as many as 88% of companies in Croatia use the Facebook social network in their business. Most companies, 58% to be exact, consider social networks a very useful marketing tool, while a smaller percentage, 28%, find that they do not benefit. In terms of benefits, 45% said that social networks help them communicate with customers and consumers, while 32% found new business partners, and Facebook is considered to be the most useful network. Also interesting is the fact that 36% of companies have been building their profile on social networks in the last two years only, and they have dedicated themselves to branding in the last year to the last 6 months. Most are satisfied with their presence on Facebook, and only a third, or 32%, are considered successful. Only a minority of them are unhappy with their Facebook activity, accounting for 11%. "These results show that communication and branding on social networks are increasingly being considered strategically. Businesses adapt their communications to new trends, and in many cases, a carefully planned strategy on social networks has had a positive impact on business results. However, given the almost daily novelties and the emergence of new social networks, it is not easy to keep up in this area" said Manuela Šola, director of Ping Pong Two-Way Communication²¹

Furthermore, the fact that 19% of them interact with their fans daily, and a third and several times a day, is confirmed by how serious companies take social networks. Thus, with the

²⁰ *Koliko tvrtke u Hrvatskoj koriste društvene mreže.* [online]. [2020-03-22]. Available at: <<https://www.energypress.net/koliko-tvrtke-u-hrvatskoj-koriste-drustvene-mreze/>>.

²¹ DOMINIĆ, K.: *Većina tvrtki u Hrvatskoj prepoznaje važnost komunikacije na društvenim mrežama.* [online]. [2020-03-18]. Available at: <<https://komunikacijskilaboratorij.com/vecina-tvrtki-u-hrvatskoj-prepoznaje-vaznost-komunikacije-na-drustvenim-mrezama/>>.

development of social networks, new roles and new functions and positions have emerged in companies that have never existed before, such as community managers, technology bloggers and the like²² Community management is a relatively new occupation, mostly conducted by a person within the company, and sometimes a freelancer or specialized agency will be employed to do the job. This is a person who interacts with audiences through social networks, works to grow the community, and to brand businesses. In addition, that person is actively exploring other branches of marketing, such as SEO. Search engine optimization, or SEO in short, is optimization, that is, customizing a website with the help of keywords, to make it easier for search engines to find it. And although this type of communication is given increasing importance, the budgets invested in it are still quite small. 67% of respondents answered that it allocated only 0-5% of its budget from its marketing and PR budget for communication on social networks, 5% allocates it to 10% of the budget, and only a smaller percentage allocates more than 15% of its budget for communication on social networks. Manuela Sola also pointed out that 40% of the surveyed social networks use to monitor the activities of competitors, while a third use them to monitor competitors' business move²³. According to a survey of Croatian companies in 2012, the BIPA retail chain proved to be active on social networks and their Facebook page at that time numbered 175,000 likes, while today, seven years later, the page has 463 791 likes. BIPI recognized the importance of social networks as an advertising platform and thus decided to approach their audience: "The budget is constantly increasing, depending on the campaigns and strategy for a particular year. We have been advertising continuously since the very beginning of the page. This is essential for the successful operation of the site" says Marijeta Duvnjak, BIPE's marketing manager²⁴.

5 Empirical Research

5.1 Aim and Purpose of the Research

As social networks have become an integral part of the communication of almost every leading company in the world, and the opportunities that companies have to use them, the author has aroused interest in the influence of social networks in small and medium-sized enterprises in Osijek, and especially in the IT sector. Thus, the research was conducted in three Osijek-based IT companies engaged in web and mobile application development. The research aimed to prove through the detailed questions the role of social networks in running small or medium-sized enterprises and to find out how social networks influence the profit of companies. Through the research, some of the questions that will be answered are "Do social networks play a role in bringing in new clients?", "Do social networks help build a company brand?", "Do you connect with your audience and customers through social networks?" and "Do social networks make money for businesses?".

²² BILOŠ, A., KELIĆ, I.: Marketing aspects of social networks. In *Economic research*, 2012, Vol. 25, No. 2, p. 154.

²³ DOMINIĆ, K.: *Većina tvrtki u Hrvatskoj prepoznaje važnost komunikacije na društvenim mrežama*. [online]. [2020-03-18]. Available at: <<https://komunikacijskilaboratorij.com/vecina-tvrtki-u-hrvatskoj-prepoznaje-vaznost-komunikacije-na-drustvenim-mrezama/>>.

²⁴ *Hrvatske kompanije sve više ulažu u društvene mreže*. [online]. [2020-03-15]. Available at: <<https://www.poslovnih.hr/lifestyle/hrvatske-kompanije-sve-vise-ulazu-u-drustvene-mreze-221540>>.

5.2 Hypotheses

By defining and identifying the subject, purpose, and purpose of the research, four major research hypotheses are put forward:

- H1: Small and medium-sized IT companies in Osijek make the most of Facebook to promote their businesses.
- H2: Paid advertising is not very important in small and medium enterprises in Osijek.
- H3: The largest organic reach for small and medium-sized IT companies in Osijek is through LinkedIn.
- H4: Social networks have a positive impact on the operations of small and medium-sized enterprises in Osijek.

5.3 Data – Sample

For this paper, the research was conducted using a problem-oriented (in-depth) structured interview method. This approach allowed for a more detailed entry into research issues and insight into the thinking of Osijek companies. The first part of the interview consisted of general, descriptive questions aimed at gathering basic company information. For this purpose, the following information was collected: company name, year of establishment, place of work, a field of activity, and number of employees to determine whether the company belongs to the category of small or medium-sized enterprises. The second part of the interview was problem-oriented and consisted of 15 questions. The questions were open-ended and the vocabulary was adapted to the respondent's dictionary. Each structured interview was conducted with one person from the marketing department of the selected company. Thus, for the research, an interview was conducted with Ivan Jurlin, HR Manager of COBE doo, Ana Musa, Marketing Manager of Factory, ie Blue Factory, and Zrinka Antolović, Event Manager of Inchoo doo Each interview with the mentioned persons was conducted individually and the questions relate to their position on the importance and impact of social media marketing on their business.

5.4 Results and Discussion

The results of an in-depth interview conducted on three Osijek-based IT companies made it possible to compare and present the real state of the importance of using social networks in small and medium-sized IT companies in Osijek. The questions are designed not to analyze the numerical values of companies, but to focus on their thinking about marketing through social networks and linking them to successful business operations. This gave a fairly objective picture of the marketing and role of social networks Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram in Croatian companies, with a focus on Osijek and the IT sector. The number of weekly posts varies from company to company, but on average all three companies have two to three posts per week on each of the social networks mentioned. Compared to last year, the number of posts has increased significantly and can be said to have doubled on certain networks, but not only that, the quality of posts has improved proportionately. In the past, it has been known to publish "queues" to test specific social networks and the impact they have and the audience that follows them. Accordingly, they came to conclusions that allowed them to develop a specific strategy on each social network separately. Today, much more time and money are being invested in publications, all for the purpose of achieving the goals of the company - reaching the audience and clients and encouraging them to visit the website. Of the social networks they use the most, they highlighted Facebook and LinkedIn. The reasons are that organic reach is greatest on them. This confirms Hypothesis H1 and partially confirms Hypothesis H3, which states that the largest organic reach of small and medium-sized IT companies in Osijek is achieved through

Facebook, but the research showed that this is about Facebook and LinkedIn as well. Facebook is the network where they have the highest number of followers and the best insight into what kind of followers they are about, which showed that their desired market niche and audience are on Facebook. Talking about LinkedIn, Factory has highlighted it as current as of the most desirable social network for their business, thanks to the reach they are making on it. The reach of the posts, of course, depends on their content. Thus, the companies interviewed pointed out that the content they publish depends on the platform on which they are published. It was concluded that Facebook and Twitter are mainly used to post articles, job vacancies or events they organize while displaying on Instagram their company culture, the projects they work on, the rewards they win and those new or old employees of the company. In doing so, they create a connection with their customers and clients, giving them insight into their office life and business style. In order not to miss the announcement, most of them are created by these people, not just one person. In just one case, one person is in charge of running social networks, although in all companies, these people agree on content to be published and coordinated with one another. There is an idea for each person in the team to be in charge of one social network to reach its full potential, and designers are mostly involved in the creation of visuals, to make the content that is published as high quality as possible so that everything is not on the marketing team.

What is common to all businesses is the desire for people involved in the marketing of social networks to explore the possibility of network advancement, advertising, and SEO while managing websites and creating ads for them. Because social networking involves not only publishing but also exploring the best ways to achieve your business goals. That is why paid attention has been getting more attention lately. It is very important for creating a market presence, and it should be used wisely. Hypothesis H2 is thus refuted because companies have highlighted paid advertising as very important in their business. Paid advertising is carried out several times a month in these Osijek companies, and the main goal of paid campaigns is to attract new customers, customers or employees. Every advertising is done thoughtfully - the results of the campaigns are analyzed, the results are collected and the conclusions are drawn, and changes are made and the subsequent campaigns optimized. Explore the ROI in marketing language known as ROI (Return of Investment), but the CPR, or *Cost per Lead*, because all the money invested must be justified. The main conclusion is that advertising is carried out with certain company goals, whether it is bringing clients or new employees into the company, gathering more followers on social networks, spreading awareness about the company or communicating with new or existing customers. And it is precisely for the communication with customers or business partners that social networks are desirable; namely, research has shown that they enable informal communication with business partners, which is evident in commenting, 'liking' and sharing with each other. Also, since job postings are posted on social networks, it happens that interested individuals respond via Facebook or Instagram, rather than by email. Thus, Ana Musa, from Factory, said that an average of five people was contacted weekly. This begs the question, "Would communication have been established so often that the possibility of answering only exists via e-mail?" Also, the question arises: "Would the ratio of sending open applications or just queries related to practice or work be so frequent?"

But as mentioned above, social networks are not only a channel for communication with potential employees but also for communication with business partners and clients. While they are not the primary way of bringing clients into the business, they help. Thus, the research confirmed that well-optimized campaigns, but also activity in groups on social networks can lead to new clients or new business partners. It can be read the importance of social networks - this is no longer defined as the only platform for sharing photos and gathering like URLs, have

become the true business platform that companies bring new projects and money. That is their marketing value. Social networks are what used to be a website; something necessary for the enterprise, but only if used in the right way and for the right purposes. That is why not only can announcements be made, but they must be worked on to develop a certain quality for both the company and the users for whom they are intended. But the fact is that they are helping to raise awareness of the company and thus the strength of the company in the market is stronger. Thus, this research proved that presence on social networks is essential for the success of businesses, and thus the hypothesis H4 is confirmed. Specifically, by analyzing the social media that a target audience of business is using, one can harness the full potential of social networks and thus bring great benefit to the business. Therefore, it is important to be present on social networks, build a brand, spread the word about the company, and ultimately redirect the audience to the website, which is the ultimate goal. In addition, what these companies have come to realize is that users and potential clients sometimes do not have enough of the information available on their website, so a link between it and social networks should be created in such a way that social networks mirror the personality of the company and provide insight into projects at that the company works with and those people who work on the projects mentioned, and the website then speaks more specifically about the product itself that the company wants to sell.

Conclusion

Social networking is not a new term. It has existed for over half a century, but only with the development of something called Web 2.0. it can be said that they have become one of the most significant means of communication. The benefits of this platform have been recognized by many experts, including many companies. Social networks, when used in the right way, can bring many benefits to one business - from making new contacts through connecting with new customers, to making money and succeeding with their business. Facebook, Instagram and Twitter have proven to be the three most popular and used social networks. Facebook was created in 2004 with the idea of connecting people who already know each other in real life online. Over time, Facebook has taken on a lot more roles, and today it serves as the perfect advertising platform. Twitter emerged just two years after Facebook, characterized by concise and clear messages. Twitter is more of a business platform, giving the user much more freedom (in the sense that it is acceptable to post 15 statuses on Twitter, unlike Facebook) and reach using hashtags. This way businesses can reach their target audience rather than Facebook (if organic reach). Instagram hit the market in 2010 and became particularly popular with young people who recognized the platform as a great business channel and saw an opportunity to grow their careers through it. The potential of these social networks, apart from the younger population, has been recognized by small and medium-sized enterprises.

Namely, social networks are no longer just used to share information or photos, but a completely new concept has emerged in companies, which is marketing through social networks. Not only did it enable two-way communication between businesses and clients, but by developing a strategy and analyzing audiences and announcements, it created a great opportunity to manage content and direct the audience towards the desired goal, such as direct to a web page. Also, social networks help build relationships with your audience and create a leading position in the market. Having a business and not using social networks would be reckless nowadays. The number of companies in Croatia using social networks is steadily increasing. Two years ago, it was 45%, and today it is even higher. Facebook is the most popular social network among Croatian companies, and companies have only recently started to focus

on strategy and branding through social networks. Their development has led to new roles and new functions and positions in companies that have never existed before, such as community managers. These are people who interact with audiences through social networks, work to grow the community, and work on branding businesses. Not all companies have community managers, but marketing is done through social networks by marketing managers, but what they all agreed is that the budget invested in it is still not as big as it should be given the impact that social networks have. For this paper, an empirical study was conducted - an in-depth interview with representatives of the marketing departments of three Osijek IT companies - COBE doo, Factory and Inchoo doo the interview consisted of five introductory questions that gathered general information about companies and 15 well-thought-out questions related to social networks and their relationship with their business operations. The answers to the questions provided insight into the impact of social networks on the business success of these companies. The results show that all three Osijek companies are actively using and successfully operating social networks, creating contacts with the audience, partners, clients and potential employees. They also build their brand in the marketplace and give people outside the company insight into their culture, projects and way of doing business, which puts them in a more favorable position than non-social media companies, thus attracting more users. They use different social networks for different purposes, and in addition to organic reach, they rely on paid advertising to promote job vacancies, blog articles and projects they work on. Also, the research confirmed that social networks provide an informal type of communication with partners through mutual "liking" and sharing of posts, as well as communication with users who often contact them with business inquiries. The companies have confirmed that there is marketing value from social networks, in the way that they have provided them with the advancement in business and claim that it is very important for the success of the company to be present on social networks, with the need to research which social networks the target audience uses and accordingly to this, to devote the most to them. Communication through social networks also creates trust between the company and the clients, because clients today are no longer sufficient to inform themselves only on the website, they are looking for more, and in this way, they gain insight into the personality of the company. The study confirmed hypotheses H1 and H4, partially confirmed hypothesis H3, and completely rejected hypothesis H2. Overall, the impact of social networks on business has been proven to be great. Comparing Croatian companies with foreign companies and smaller companies with larger ones, there is still a visible difference, but there is a time when everyone is aware of the impact of social networks, they just do not pay much attention to each other while others use their full potential. But in the last few years there has been a noticeable difference in Croatian smaller companies; more and more are being researched, analyzed and invested in social networks, leading to results.

Although social networks have proven to be a powerful tool in the business of small and medium-sized IT companies in Osijek, there is still room for progress. This research can serve as a guideline for further research, and in the future, it may be worthwhile to investigate in greater detail the figures available to businesses and find out the exact budget that companies invest in advertising and their ROI. Then, the time and money spent on creating social media posts could be compared to bringing new partners or clients to the business and paying more attention to analytics such as reach and pageviews over several years to track the success of the business.

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ORGANIZATION AND THE ROLE OF MARKETING IN HOSPITALS

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ABSTRACT:

Marketing and marketing communication have become a part of almost all sectors. We encounter it in the area of private sector, public sector, as well as in the area of non-profit sector. Healthcare, or the health-care market, is not an exception. Although the market of healthcare is relatively extensive, from pharmaceutical companies to health-care providers, it is necessary to mention that marketing is not yet fully established in all organizations operating on the health-care market. For marketing to be functional, it must be organized. The paper addresses organization and tasks of marketing and marketing communication in faculty and university hospitals in Slovakia.

KEY WORDS:

healthcare, marketing, marketing communication, organization, structure

1 The Basis of Marketing in Hospitals

Marketing manager in a hospital sector must keep up with the newest clinical technologies, legislation in the area of healthcare, and trends in the field of healthcare. They must be a notable “educator” and mentor for their colleagues and help them to understand hospital’s vision, which plays an important role in building confidence in the minds of the patients. They must be a diplomat, but also should be tenacious. This person must be a visionary that would be mindful of details – in short, they must be a marketing guru.¹ Hospital marketing mainly must not forget the patient. The patient has to come first. Most consumers do not think about the selection of hospitals before they are confronted with a health issue. However, when a person does have a health-related problem, they would certainly want a hospital at the top of their mind. The role of marketing is that it must want to keep the hospital to stay at that top.² All hospitals in any system cover certain catchment areas. This means that the patients should be able to access their local hospital in a certain time interval. Therefore, people usually visit their local hospital and form an opinion about it personally or based on the stories of their neighbours, friends, relatives, etc. Going to the hospital (hospital treatment) is usually an uncommon, singular experience. Therefore, most patients are not able to compare the care they receive in one hospital to the care they would receive elsewhere to find out, which one does a better job. A hospital thus only has one chance to do everything right. This is why the hospital needs to do all that is possible to make the first experience of the patient a good one.³ What is then the value of marketing in hospitals? Hospital marketing should run through the whole organization, work inwards (towards the staff) and outwards. Patient is not able to evaluate the quality of an operation, but can judge the attitude of the doctors, nurses, the cleanliness and equipment of the rooms, cleanliness of amenity rooms. Marketing in hospitals should thus inspire confidence of the patients in the hospital – because the patient entrusts the hospital with the most important thing – their health.

Another important role of marketing in healthcare is the crisis management. From the substance and legislative point of view, it is necessary to distinguish between the terms “exceptional occurrence” and “crisis situation”. The actual process of crisis management and

¹ For more information, see: BUCKLEY, P. T.: *The complete guide to hospital marketing*. 2nd Edition. Danvers, MA : HCPro. 2009.

² Ibidem.

³ Ibidem.

planning is naturally based on the type of a crisis situation.⁴ It is the marketing department in the organizational structure of a hospital that should be a part of crisis management and participate on establishing the crisis communication. This is also one of the reasons, why marketing department has a justified place in hospitals. For the marketing in hospitals to be organized, presence of staff and departments that deal with marketing is necessary. In the USA, the function of a vice president for marketing was created in 1975. Marketing departments have gradually become a part of organizational structures of hospitals. In the USA, there are three models of marketing department structures based on the size of a hospital:

- model of less than 200 beds,
- model of more than 200 beds,
- model for 10 hospitals and 1500 beds.

In our conditions, the existence of marketing departments is still not a matter of course. It is questionable whether the hospitals even address marketing and who performs marketing activities. Marketing department should have clearly defined activities that it would deal with based on a marketing plan drawn up in advance. Marketing department should be a department that communicates in an inward direction towards the hospital (the staff, other departments), but also in the direction outwards (towards the patients, sponsors).

2 Methodology

Our quantitative survey involved the faculty and university hospitals in Slovakia and was conducted in cooperation with the top management of the hospitals, marketing personnel, or the hospital spokespersons. We have chosen the method of inquiry by questionnaire for our quantitative survey. One questionnaire to be answered by one person has been created for each hospital. In the questionnaire, we have used a preselected 85 closed questions (multiple-choice questions), semi-closed questions, and open questions. The interviews have been conducted personally with the hospital managers or hospital spokespersons and marketing personnel. Overall, the survey involved six university and faculty hospitals.

3 Results – The Role of Marketing in Hospitals

At the beginning of the survey, we wanted to find out whether *the hospitals consider marketing an important part of managing a hospital* (Chart 1). This question was answered in the affirmative, i.e. by “yes, we consider marketing important in managing the hospital”, by five hospitals and only one hospital replied in the negative, i.e. that they do not consider marketing an important part of managing the hospital. The extent to which it is realized and organized is, however, questionable. We tried to find an answer to this issue through the following questions of the survey.

⁴ RENDKOVÁ, P.: International Relations 2018: Misie krízového manažmentu Slovenska v rámci Európskej únie. In CIBULA, A., GODA, N. et al. (eds.): *International Relations 2018: Current issues of world economy and politics*. Bratislava : Publishing Ekonóm, 2018, p. 628.

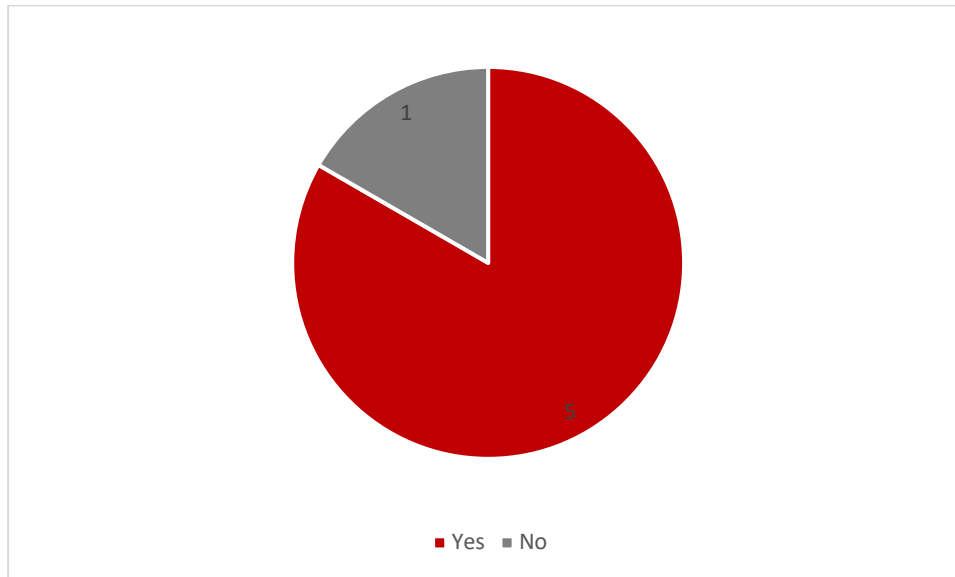


Chart 1: Perception of importance of marketing in managing hospitals

Source: own processing

In the survey, we also attempted to identify *how the hospitals organize their marketing* (Chart 2). We asked what the department is called or who performs and takes care of marketing in the hospital. In all surveyed hospitals, there is an employee responsible for carrying out marketing activities of the hospital. It is, however, necessary to note that only one hospital had a separate functional marketing department. One more hospital had it in their organizational structure, but it had not been carried out, as, in the time of the survey, there was no employee at this position. In some cases, marketing was conducted by several employees. In some hospitals, marketing was performed by both the hospital management and a spokesperson. This was the case in two hospitals. Names of the departments performing marketing tasks in these hospitals are:

- Department of quality,
- Section of the CEO,
- Department of marketing communication,
- Department of business activities and marketing,
- Department of public procurement.

Looking at the actual department, we can see that none of the hospitals has a separate marketing department. In one case, there is a department of marketing communication, which also performed marketing tasks, and in another case, we can see a department of business activities and marketing. In the survey, we also asked whether *the head of the department responsible for marketing has some experience with marketing*. In three cases, the head of department had experience with marketing, in two cases, they did not, and in one, there was an assumption that they did have such experience. From this part of the survey, we can deduce that marketing is not fully implemented in the managing structures of the hospitals and is not completely professionalized on the position of the person responsible for its management.

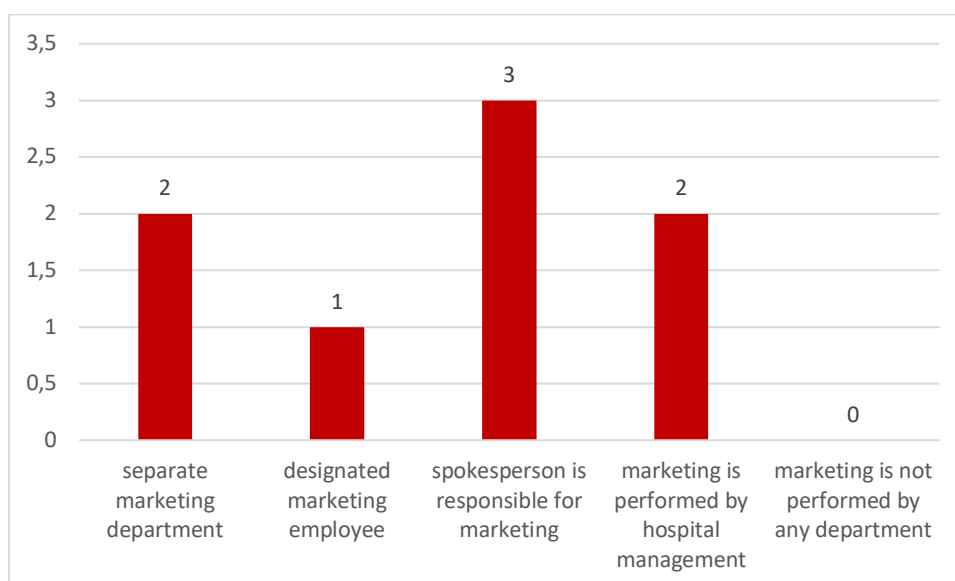


Chart 2: The form of organization of marketing in the hospitals

Source: own processing

Further, we tried to identify, *what the marketing activities in the hospitals are* (Chart 3). From the survey, we have found out that only in one of the six hospitals, marketing is also aimed at an activity of the sponsoring, although sponsoring can bring new resources in a financial or non-financial form to the hospital. In one hospital, marketing was also aimed at hiring new doctors and nurses, so we can state that it was also directed at personnel marketing. In one hospital, marketing also dealt with quality assurance. Marketing in faculty and university hospitals has several tasks; however, in our research we assume that marketing in hospitals is realized more in times of necessity than in an organized and targeted form. The survey shows that the main duties of marketing in hospitals are mainly:

- marketing communication,
- communication with the target groups,
- image building,
- surveying the needs of the patients.

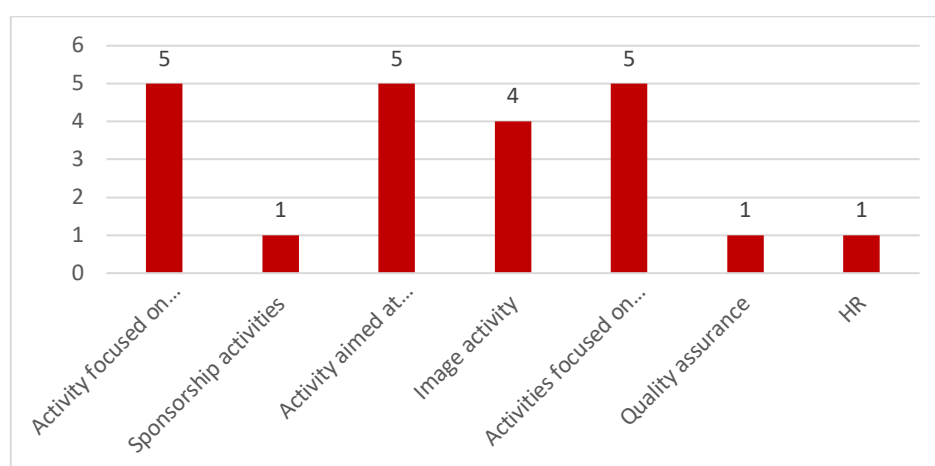


Chart 3: Duties of marketing in hospitals

Source: own processing

In managing a hospital, it is vital for the marketer to be involved in the important decisions of the top management. In four cases, the hospital marketer is **involved in all the important decisions of the hospital**, in two cases they are not. However, it is necessary to mention that

in one case, where there is an employee specializing in marketing, they do not have an opportunity to be a part of all decisions of the hospital. Since, in some cases, marketing is conducted by the top management of the hospital, it is involved in decision-making process, but its organization is not performed as well as it would be if there was a designated separate marketer. Further, we wanted to ascertain whether the hospitals have established a *post of a separate spokesperson*, as, especially in hospitals, a spokesperson is vital for communication with the media about various topics that do not have to be pleasant for the hospital and they should mitigate negative impacts for the hospital. Only three out of six hospitals had a separate spokesperson. Three hospitals did not have a spokesperson or an employee with a different job description was appointed to this post and only performed the activities of a spokesperson when it was necessary to deal with the media. Besides a spokesperson, we also wanted to know whether the hospital has established an institute of **an ombudsman as a defender of the patients' rights**. This institute serves to address remarks and complaints of the patients and to find sensible solutions to the patients' complaints through a settlement of both sides. This way, the hospital can avoid negative news in the media in cases of various complaints and dissatisfactions of the patients. Only one hospital from our sample has established and is fully using this institute. In the questionnaire, we asked the hospital representatives about *the strengths and weaknesses of the hospital*. All surveyed hospitals knew their strengths and weaknesses. Five hospitals use their strengths in communication with the target groups and one does not use this option. All hospitals have included elimination of their weaknesses in the hospital objectives.

For the proper functioning of the marketing and marketing communication in every organization, it is vital for it to have an annual budget for marketing and marketing communication. Therefore, we asked whether *the hospital has established a budget for marketing and marketing communication*. None of the surveyed hospitals had a budget for marketing and marketing communication. The hospitals address the financial costs of marketing communication as a reaction to the current situation, possibilities, and necessity. Four hospitals stated that financial resources for marketing are insufficient, one could not respond to this question, as it has not established a budget and does not plan any financial resources for marketing, and one hospital regards the resources for marketing as sufficient, as it has so far covered all expenses connected to marketing. In the questionnaire, we have also asked whether *the hospitals develop marketing plans*. Three hospitals stated that they do develop marketing plans or they are a part of some other strategic documents. From the three aforementioned hospitals, only one had a separate marketing plan. Other three hospitals do not create marketing plans, but establish strategic documents, which could contain activities that are a part of marketing; however, these could be included in several documents within one institution. From the results, we can see that the hospitals have not quite adopted marketing planning, as it is not drawn up and defined in a single document. In the questionnaire, we were also interested to find out whether the marketing plan (or other document of the hospital) contains *a plan and instruments aimed at the development of skills and knowledge of new medical procedures of the staff*. In five cases, these instruments were included in some strategic document of a hospital; in one case, they were not. From the theory of marketing communication, we can assume that personal selling is the most important instrument of marketing communication in the healthcare sector, especially in hospitals. In this case, the theory uses the term personal communication between a patient and a doctor. In the questionnaire, we asked whether the hospital *focuses on training their doctors in the area of communication with the patients*. All the selected hospitals were aimed at training their doctors in the area of communication. The training is carried out as follows:

- training provided by psychologists, lectures at congresses, specialized lectures and workshops,
- training provided internally (e.g. by a hospital psychologist) or externally by a company dealing with communication,
- training is usually carried out yearly, semi-annually, or when necessary,
- all doctors and nurses are obliged to undergo a training once a year, but in all cases, this is not complied with.

The hospitals should concentrate on training in the area of communication. It is the doctor and the nurse, who meet the patient on a daily basis and the patient leaves with a positive or negative impression based on their communication skills. Therefore, they can either improve or damage the hospital's reputation. The last question in this part of the questionnaire was aimed at finding out whether the hospitals have a defined ***employee code of conduct and established rights of a patient***. Two of the surveyed hospitals had these documents developed; four did not. From our point of view, the employee code of conduct is an especially important document, as it defines the ethical level of behaviour of the doctors and nurses. The hospitals should develop such a document for the medical staff to know how to treat the patients and what the ethical principles the hospital applies and recognizes are.

Conclusion

The article addressed the topic “*Organization and the Role of Marketing in Hospitals.*” The results of the research only concern the surveyed hospitals. They are a summary of findings that have emerged from a questionnaire conducted by personal interviews in hospitals:

- hospitals consider marketing an important part of hospital management,
- the way of marketing organization in hospitals is inconsistent and marketing tasks are performed by various departments,
- marketing department is absent in several hospitals,
- not all hospitals have established a separate post of a spokesperson,
- hospitals know their strengths, which they use in communication,
- hospitals are aware of their weaknesses,
- hospitals have not established a budget for marketing and marketing communication,
- hospitals do not develop separate marketing plans,
- hospitals conduct training of their doctors in the area of communication,
- not all hospitals have created documents such as the employee code of conduct and the rights of patients.

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CORPORATE COMMUNICATION – CONSISTENCY, COHERENCE, AND CLARITY OF CORPORATE MESSAGES

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ABSTRACT:

This article reflects the new framework conditions shaping corporate communication that have emerged in recent years as a result of both technological and socio-cultural innovations. Megatrends such as globalization, VUCA, agility, the digital transformation and Web 2.0 influence how – and with whom – companies (must) communicate today. This shift towards the pre-media space of social networks is rendered particularly clear when old certainties give way to new communication needs. This is illustrated by the example of German parent companies and their Slovakian subsidiaries. The question of how Consistency, Coherence and Clarity can be achieved under these conditions is becoming increasingly important.

KEY WORDS:

clarity, coherence, consistency, cross-cultural corporate communication, digitalization, globalization, VUCA

1 Introduction

With megatrends such as digitalization, technological and socio-cultural innovations are co-evolutionary. The following dilemma then arises: On the one hand, technological innovations are standardised (e.g. smartphones and laptops), while on the other hand the associated socio-cultural innovations are often culturally dependent and localised (e.g. memes in social networks).¹ The megatrend of globalization remains unchecked, as there are still competitive advantages to be gained by exploiting different cost levels and seeking proximity to the end customer. There are more winners than losers in globalization. Under the paradigm that free trade leads to increased prosperity for all, further global activities of companies can be anticipated, e.g. the establishment of subsidiaries in foreign markets and the continuing integration of global value chains. This is also the reason for the challenge of carefully standardising or localising corporate communication. Christensen and Cornelissen plead for Consistency, Coherence and Clarity within corporate messages.² Taking up this idea, this article examines the framework conditions of communication in general and in the particular case between both parent company and subsidiary in a cross-cultural perspective. How can clarity, coherence of content and consistency in corporate communication be ensured? In the specific case of Germany and Slovakia, the cultural dimension of power distance is used as an example to illustrate the challenges that arise when the dimensions of national cultures differ significantly in aspects deemed important for corporate communication. How can a corporate culture shaped by the national culture of the parent company be “translated” in a culturally sensitive way and, thus, be made connectable in the context of the subsidiary’s national culture? In the course of the transformation towards polyphonic communication, this article is based on three characteristics of corporate news: Consistency, Coherence and Clarity. *Consistency* describes the identity-forming part of a message. If the content is uniform, identical, and consistent in several successive communication contributions, the message is considered consistent and is perceived as responsible. *Coherence* describes the consistency of the inner

¹ *Memes*. [online]. [2020-04-19]. Available at: <<https://sz-magazin.sueddeutsche.de/internet/memes-internet-spas-bilder-87396>>.

² CHRISTENSEN, L. T., CORNELISSEN, J.: Bridging Corporate and Organizational Communication: Review, Development and a Look to the Future. In ZERFAß, A., RADEMACHER, L., WEHMEIER, S. (eds.): *Organisationskommunikation und Public Relations. Forschungsparadigmen und neue Perspektiven*. Wiesbaden : Springer VS, 2013, p. 43.

context of the message. This applies, for example, to publicly propagated values of corporate culture and the values actually embodied in reality. If there are gaps, the message becomes inconsistent and loses its credibility. Clarity means that a corporate message should be clear, concise and without any logical contradictions or paradoxes. The more a message is characterised by the property of clarity, the more it is descriptive and avoids contradictory perceptions.³

2 Framework Conditions of Corporate Communication

Corporate communication – both internal and external – is subject to fundamental change due to globalization and digitalization. Stakeholders across different markets must be adequately considered in terms of their communication needs and behaviours. Every target group demands Consistency, Coherence and Clarity in the way in which they are addressed. The following article focuses on internal corporate communication, as is the case in the procurement market, for example, as part of employer branding and employee retention. In principle, the statements pertaining to Clarity, Consistency and Coherence are transferable to all markets shown in Figure 1:

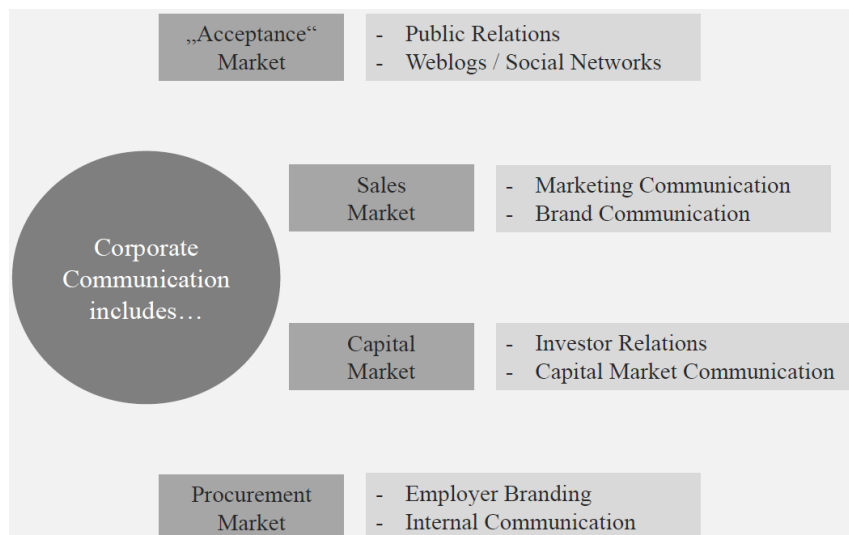


Figure 1: Stakeholder and Relevant Communication Tools

Source: BRUHN, M.: Strategische Kommunikation – eine Einführung in das Handbuch. In BRUHN, M., ESCH, F. R., LANGNER, T. (eds.): *Handbuch Strategische Kommunikation. Grundlagen – Innovative Ansätze – Praktische Umsetzungen*. 2nd Edition. Wiesbaden : Springer Gabler, 2016, p. 7.

2.1 Digital Transformation and the Acceleration of Communication

A characteristic of digital change – aside from its technological components – concerns the world of work. In the digital transformation, new forms of work such as project-based work and teamwork, new forms of organisation and work processes (for example, flat hierarchies)

³ CHRISTENSEN, L. T., CORNELISSEN, J.: Bridging Corporate and Organizational Communication: Review, Development and a Look to the Future. In ZERFAß, A., RADEMACHER, L., WEHMEIER, S. (eds.): *Organisationskommunikation und Public Relations. Forschungspfadparadigmen und neue Perspektiven*. Wiesbaden : Springer VS, 2013, p. 62.

are being tried out in many companies in order to achieve the necessary level of agility.⁴ One effect of this is the acceleration of communication processes, which also requires other skills from employees.⁵ Digitalization as a megatrend leads to Work 4.0 / New Work, which makes a changed leadership culture and a new understanding of leadership recognizable at all. Classical hierarchical levels and the understanding of roles are being transformed towards agility, empowerment and participation, as well as trust and cooperation.⁶

2.2 Medialization

Especially through social media applications and mobile telecommunication solutions, the process of medialization for companies is experiencing a new dimension. Medialization unleashes a flood of opinions and evaluations and companies must intervene to control it – while at the same time remaining helplessly exposed to it.⁷ Under the influence of medialization, corporate communication is primarily concerned with gaining (or regaining) trust in the company and its executives, crisis prevention and management, and meeting the increased demands for both social responsibility and transparency.⁸ In the context of medialization, Consistency, Coherence and Clarity play a greater role in corporate communication than ever before. If Consistency, Coherence and Clarity are goals of corporate communication, there is no way around an intensive study of communication cultures. Empirical studies have shown the necessity of mastering culturally sensitive communication strategies in a global context in order to play a more active role in opinion forming.⁹ This involves a change from a (mostly) centrally controlled corporate communication paradigm to a polyphonic or cross-cultural corporate communication approach that is partly oriented towards local needs and values.¹⁰ Triggered by the dynamic and fast-moving nature of social media communication, the idea that companies can control communication on their part and generate a uniform image for all target groups turns out to be an illusion. According to this statement, the communication of a company's core identity, which includes self-image, brand and organisational culture, to heterogeneous stakeholders is important for the relationship to one another, but is also faced with the inescapable challenge of resolving a paradox: Precisely because communicative uniformity is an illusion in a mediated world, clear, coherent and

⁴ MÜLLER, A., MÜLLER, A.: Das Unternehmen ohne Hierarchie – Messung und Umsetzung. In HERMEIER, B., HEUPEL, T., FICHTNER-ROSADA, S. (eds.): *Arbeitswelten der Zukunft. Wie die Digitalisierung unsere Arbeitsplätze und Arbeitsweisen verändert*. Wiesbaden : Springer Gabler, 2019, p. 470.

⁵ JACOBS, J. Ch. et al.: Aktuelle Studien zur Zukunft der Arbeit. In WERTHER, S., BRUCKNER, L. (eds.): *Arbeit 4.0 aktiv gestalten. Die Zukunft der Arbeit zwischen Agilität, People Analytics und Digitalisierung*. Berlin : Springer, 2018, p. 32-33.

⁶ WERTHER, S. et al.: Perspektiven auf die Zukunft der Arbeit. In WERTHER, S., BRUCKNER, L. (eds.): *Arbeit 4.0 aktiv gestalten. Die Zukunft der Arbeit zwischen Agilität, People Analytics und Digitalisierung*. Berlin : Springer, 2018, p. 48.

⁷ ZERFAß, A., DÜHRING, L.: Strategische Kommunikation – Zentrale Fragestellungen aus Sicht der Unternehmenskommunikation. In BRUHN, M., ESCH, F. R., LANGNER, T. (eds.): *Handbuch Strategische Kommunikation. Grundlagen – Innovative Ansätze – Praktische Umsetzungen*. 2nd Edition. Wiesbaden : Springer Gabler, 2016, p. 70.

⁸ ZERFAß, A.: Unternehmenskommunikation und Kommunikationsmanagement. Strategie, Management und Controlling. In ZERFAß, A., PIWINGER, M. (eds.): *Handbuch Unternehmenskommunikation*. 2nd Edition. Wiesbaden : Springer Gabler, 2014, p. 71-73.

⁹ See also: ZERFAß, A. et al.: *European communication monitor 2013. A changing landscape – managing crises, digital communication and CEO positioning in Europe, results of a survey in 43 countries*. Brüssel : EACD/EUPRERA Helios Media, 2013.

¹⁰ CHRISTENSEN, L. T., CORNELISSEN, J.: Bridging Corporate and Organizational Communication: Review, Development and a Look to the Future. In ZERFAß, A., RADEMACHER, L., WEHMEIER, S. (eds.): *Organisationskommunikation und Public Relations. Forschungsparadigmen und neue Perspektiven*. Wiesbaden : Springer VS, 2013, p. 61.

consistent communication is required. This becomes all the more important, the more every manager and employee is regarded as a company communicator. The task of corporate communication departments is evolving towards enabling all employees to communicate strategically.¹¹

2.3 Electronic Word of Mouth

Digitalizing the world of work and our way of life means a border-less networking of information in the form of its provision and its adaptation to different media representations, which can no longer be fully controlled by the company.¹² Social media communication strengthens the position of power among customers and (potential) employees, as well as other stakeholders. Current studies reveal that the product recommendations of customers communicated on online platforms are twelve times more trusted than the information provided by the respective manufacturers of the products themselves.¹³ Within the discipline of HR marketing, too, it is clear that the corporate image can no longer be fully controlled by the company. Applicants stated that they would not consider a company as a potential new employer if it had poor ratings. This shift of power in communication at the expense of the company is referred to by the term Electronic Word Of Mouth, i.e. a communication process in the pre-media space of social networks to influence the perception of companies, brands or products.¹⁴ The strategic task of corporate communication is integrated communication that takes this pre-media space into account.¹⁵

2.4 Cultural Diversity within Globally Operating Companies

In addition to these new, technology-induced requirements, globalization also poses a cultural challenge: To adapt the parent company's corporate culture, which always strives for standardisation, to the local cultural conditions in the home countries of its subsidiaries to the greatest extent possible. The term culture refers to the traditional, structured, regular, socially widespread and shared habits, lifestyles, rules, symbolisations and values attributable to a collective.¹⁶ Every culture (including corporate culture) represents a collective imprint that has evolved over the course of its socio-historical trajectory and which exerts a huge influence on people's orientation, identification and the communication of meaning.¹⁷ Culture as a system of values, ideas, expectations and goals shared by the members of a specific group of people also reveals differences vis-a-vis other groups through its specific design. Culture as a production

¹¹ ZERFAß, A., DÜHRING, L.: Strategische Kommunikation – Zentrale Fragestellungen aus Sicht der Unternehmenskommunikation. In BRUHN, M., ESCH, F. R., LANGNER, T. (eds.): *Handbuch Strategische Kommunikation. Grundlagen – Innovative Ansätze – Praktische Umsetzungen*. 2nd Edition. Wiesbaden : Springer Gabler, 2016, p. 69-71.

¹² SCHAPER, N.: Neue Formen der Arbeit: Das Beispiel Telekooperation. In NERDINGER, F. W., BLICKLE, G., SCHAPER, N. (eds.): *Arbeits- und Organisationspsychologie*. 4th Edition. Berlin : Springer, 2019, p. 611.

¹³ MONTAZEMI, A. R., QAHRI-SAREMI, H.: Electronic Word Of Mouth. Factors Affecting the Adoption of an Electronic Word of Mouth Message: A Meta-Analysis. In *Journal of Management Information Systems*, 2019, Vol. 36, No. 3, p. 970.

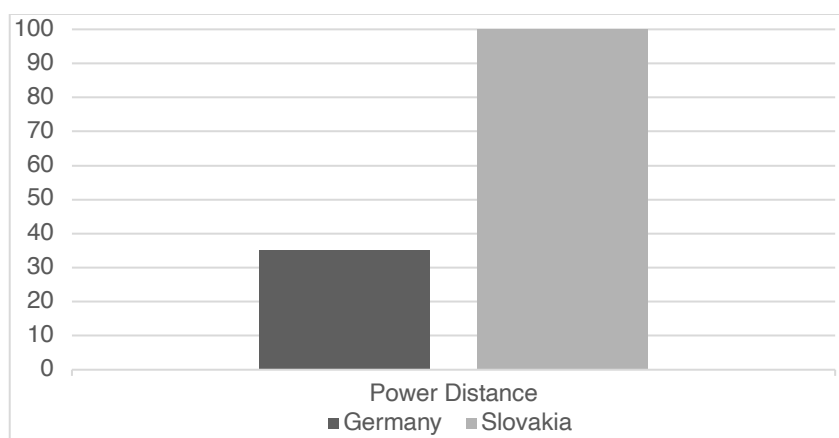
¹⁴ KUO, H. Ch., NAKHATA, Ch.: The Impact of Electronic Word Of Mouth on Customer Satisfaction. In *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 2019, Vol. 27, No. 3, p. 332.

¹⁵ BRUHN, M.: Strategische Kommunikation – eine Einführung in das Handbuch. In BRUHN, M., ESCH, F. R., LANGNER, T. (eds.): *Handbuch Strategische Kommunikation. Grundlagen – Innovative Ansätze – Praktische Umsetzungen*. 2nd Edition. Wiesbaden : Springer Gabler, 2016, p. 6.

¹⁶ ESSER, H.: *Soziologie. Spezielle Grundlagen. Sinn und Kultur. (Band 6)*. Frankfurt am Main : Campus, 2001, p. 4.

¹⁷ SACKMANN, S.: *Unternehmenskultur: Erkennen – Entwickeln – Verändern. Erfolgreich durch kulturbewusstes Management*. 2nd Edition. Wiesbaden : Springer Gabler, 2017, p. 59.

and exchange of meanings conveys connectivity within the group and functions like a mental software or collective train of thought.¹⁸ Dealing with cultural differences becomes a concomitant phenomenon of a company's communicative actions, for example in the relationship between the parent company (from Germany) and globally distributed subsidiaries (e.g. in Slovakia). These differences are exemplified by the cultural dimension of power distance according to Hofstede (on a scale of 0 - 100): Power distance: With a value of 35, German culture shows a low significance of social hierarchy compared to Slovakia with 100. Hierarchy is used in Germany on a purely functional basis. The willingness to accept differences in power between lower and upper positions within a hierarchy of, for example, a company is comparatively low in Germany. In Slovakia, on the other hand, status differences are more emphasised. This difference also affects employee communication, which prefers a participatory approach in Germany. Graph 1 shows the different forms:



Graph 1: Dimension of National Culture: Power Distance

Source: *Compare countries Germany-Slovakia*. [online]. [2020-04-25]. Available at: <<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/product/compare-countries/>>.

Effects on the design of corporate communication: The higher the power distance value, the more centralised top-down communication is used at the parent company along the hierarchical chain. On the part of the subsidiaries, there will again be a tendency towards a greater acceptance of the messages, the more the national culture there is characterized by power distance. Due to the low power distance value, German companies are usually prepared to communicate in a way that standardises basic values but is otherwise open to local deviations. The specifications of the German parent company are concrete, but rather culturally sensitive as opposed to apodictic. Standardisation is limited to the essentials. In the Slovakian subsidiary, such open communication can leave the impression that the parent company – as the standardising headquarters – only delivers a weak impact due to the great power distance. From the point of view of Consistency, Coherence and Clarity, high demands are placed on the corporate communication of the German parent company in Slovakia.

2.5 VUCA and Agility

Another megatrend for companies is the VUCA environment.¹⁹ *Volatility* describes a world that is constantly changing, becoming ever more unstable and in which even serious changes become more difficult to predict. Events lose their predictability, and understanding both cause

¹⁸ HOFSTEDE, G., HOFSTEDE, G. J., MINKOV, M.: *Lokales Denken, globales Handeln. Interkulturelle Zusammenarbeit und globales Management*. 6th Edition. München : dtv, 2017, p. 3.

¹⁹ MACK, O., KHARE, A.: Perspectives on a VUCA World. In MACK, O. et al.: *Managing in a VUCA-World*. Basel : Springer International Publishing, 2016, p. 3.

and effect becomes more difficult. Future working environments are characterised by digitalization, globalization, individualization and increasing flexibility.²⁰ Uncertainty means that the reliability of forecasts and the predictability of events is on the decrease and empirical values from the past lose their transferability to future events. *Complexity*: The world's complexity is increasing – changes in individual factors affect ever more units. The question of cause and effect is no longer easy to answer. The consequences of decisions become a network of reaction and counter-reaction that can no longer be completely controlled by the company. Ultimate solutions give way to temporary adjustments. *Ambiguity* prevents solutions from following the “one size fits all” approach. The orientation towards Best Practices is replaced by Best Thinking. In return, a multi-options paradigm is created, where colourful becomes the new black and white. Traditional leadership concepts are coming under pressure from contradictions and paradoxes so that the value systems anchored within corporate cultures are also becoming the subject of debate.²¹ Decisions require courage, a willingness to make mistakes and to innovate. All aspects of the VUCA environment present challenging contextual conditions for Consistency, Coherence and Clarity.²² In response to VUCA, a strategy is proposed to reinterpret the acronyms, as shown in Figure 2:

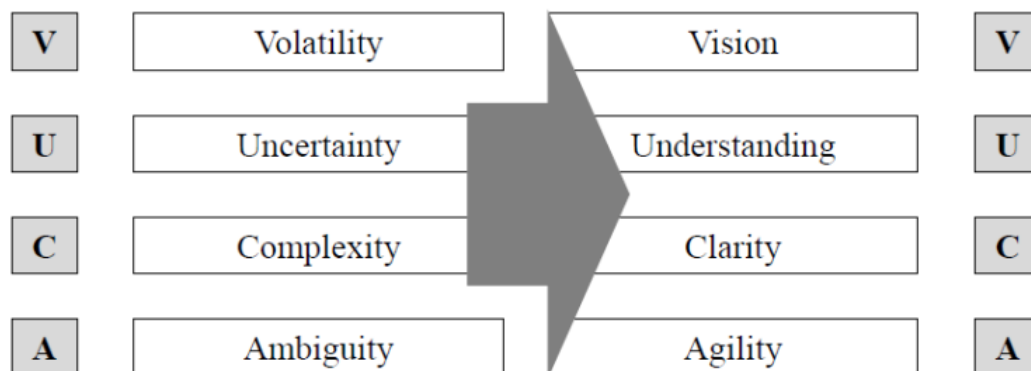


Figure 2: VUCA-Transformation of Corporate Communication

Source: own processing

This strategy, which is not explicitly aimed at corporate communication in the first instance, is remarkable in that it offers many starting points from which, ultimately, corporate communication also benefits. If volatility becomes *vision*, it must be formulated clearly, coherently and unambiguously and then communicated consistently in all organisational units of the company. If *understanding* grows from uncertainty, the cultural characteristics of the subsidiaries must also be taken into account. The change from complexity to *clarity* refers to the communicative ability of a company to reduce over-complexity to such an extent that it becomes manageable or understandable. The development from ambiguity to *agility* requires a new mind-set among both managers and employees – and calls, at least in part, hierarchy into question. However, the dissolution of old certainties can have a threatening effect in cultures with a high power distance, as these display a high level of hierarchical fixation. If agility is thought of holistically, a transformation is required that is based on different organisational

²⁰ BRUCKNER, L., WERTHER, S.: Allgemeiner Überblick über Arbeit 4.0. In WERTHER, S., BRUCKNER, L. (eds.): *Arbeit 4.0 aktiv gestalten. Die Zukunft der Arbeit zwischen Agilität, People Analytics und Digitalisierung*. Berlin : Springer, 2018, p. 16-17.

²¹ VAN SAANE, J.: Personal Leadership as Form of Spirituality. In KOK, J., VAN DEN HEUVEL, S. C. (eds.): *Leading in a VUCA World. Integrating Leadership, Discernment and Spirituality*. Basel : Springer International Publishing, 2019, p. 44.

²² HOLLAUS, G. A.: Internal Corporate Communication in a VUCA Environment. In MACK, O. et al.: *Managing in a VUCA-World*. Basel : Springer International Publishing, 2016, p. 130.

dimensions. Agility concerns, for example, the communicative dimension.²³ The decisive lever for successfully anchoring agile ideas is a company's corporate culture. Corporate culture can be used to determine whether it is only lip service or whether agility is actually embodied at all hierarchical levels and in all areas of the company (coherency). In agile companies, there is a distinct communication culture with a high dialogue density (which renders consistency more difficult) and a resilient relationship of trust (regarding clarity).²⁴

2.6 Digital Platforms

Social networks on the Internet or corporate Intranets, online-based ratings, search engines, in-house wikis, sharing- and media platforms increasingly determine the day-to-day life of companies and have a major impact on both internal and external corporate communication. When it comes to identifying target groups, employees, among other things, are considered to be a core target group with outstanding strategic importance.²⁵ According to Zerfaß and Dühring, the communicative measures must be coordinated and harmonised within the idea of integrated communication.²⁶ This note applies to internal and external digital platforms and the communication that takes place there, especially in cross-cultural management. Digital platforms, e.g. for employer evaluation, have become a pillar of orientation for potential applicants on the procurement market and must be borne in mind by the company. The statements made by employees on such platforms shape the external perception of the company.

3 Consistency, Coherence, and Clarity in Communication

After describing the framework conditions on which corporate communication is dependent, the study examines how Consistency, Coherence and Clarity in the company's statements can be ensured. The number of new media forms is constantly on the increase – in recent years, these have mainly been Internet-based exchange and advertising platforms such as social networks, weblogs or mobile media. At the same time, communication impulses have also increased strongly. This fact increases the importance of strategic communication.²⁷ The 4Ps (product, place, price, promotion) known from the sphere of marketing are being extended by the 4Rs: the right information, at the right time, in the right quality, and on the right channel.²⁸ The volume of information sent by companies creates information overload. For example, many

²³ FISCHER, S. et al.: Implikationen von Arbeit 4.0 auf die Personalarbeit. In WERTHER, S., BRUCKNER, L. (eds.): *Arbeit 4.0 aktiv gestalten. Die Zukunft der Arbeit zwischen Agilität, People Analytics und Digitalisierung*. Berlin : Springer, 2018, p. 106.

²⁴ Ibidem, p. 105.

²⁵ BRUHN, M.: Grundlagen der strategischen Kommunikation aus Sicht der Marketingkommunikation. In BRUHN, M., ESCH, F. R., LANGNER, T. (eds.): *Handbuch Strategische Kommunikation. Grundlagen – Innovative Ansätze – Praktische Umsetzungen*. 2nd Edition. Wiesbaden : Springer Gabler, 2016, p. 36-37.

²⁶ ZERFAß, A., DÜHRING, L.: Strategische Kommunikation – Zentrale Fragestellungen aus Sicht der Unternehmenskommunikation. In BRUHN, M., ESCH, F. R., LANGNER, T. (eds.): *Handbuch Strategische Kommunikation. Grundlagen – Innovative Ansätze – Praktische Umsetzungen*. 2nd Edition. Wiesbaden : Springer Gabler, 2016, p. 55.

²⁷ BRUHN, M.: Grundlagen der strategischen Kommunikation aus Sicht der Marketingkommunikation. In BRUHN, M., ESCH, F. R., LANGNER, T. (eds.): *Handbuch Strategische Kommunikation. Grundlagen – Innovative Ansätze – Praktische Umsetzungen*. 2nd Edition. Wiesbaden : Springer Gabler, 2016, p. 25.

²⁸ SÜTHOFF, H.: Digitale Transformation im Marketing: Voraussetzungen schaffen mit den „4Rs“. In DAHM, M. H., THODE, S. (eds.): *Strategie und Transformation im digitalen Zeitalter*. Wiesbaden : Springer Gabler, 2019, p. 92.

people react to the increasing flood of advertising by ignoring or rejecting it.²⁹ Addressing target groups is becoming more complex due to cultural diversity among customers (external) and employees (internal).³⁰ According to Etzold, in an over-communicated world, companies must remain audible, visible and thus differentiable – which, in turn, emphasises the importance of Consistency, Coherence and Clarity. Differentiated stories are useful here by creating images and arousing emotions.³¹ The core of integrated communication is the company's proprietary communication measures in strategic and tactical coordination with several communication instruments.³² Integrated communication focuses on the impact of the communication activities on the target groups. A systematic and coordinated approach to integrated communication is a strategic competitive advantage for companies. The communication concept can be traced back to qualitative changes (including changes in values and user behaviour) and quantitative changes (including an increase in media offerings and information overload) and requires coordination between the individual communication measures – in the sense of integrated corporate and marketing communication.³³

Web 2.0 offers new opportunities for participation, interaction and opinion-forming and is considered a catalyst for a change in social communication. With the emergence of pre-media space through social networks, users are given the opportunity to share their own knowledge and opinions, to offer them for discussion or to form an opinion together with other users. This creates fragmented public spheres and a relativisation of the role of the established media (which themselves are traditionally used by corporate communication).³⁴ A major driver for digital transformation is the mobile Internet.³⁵ With the Web 2.0 phenomenon, the question still arises as to whether it is a megatrend or just a fad. Users are actively integrated into Web 2.0 and its Internet applications and platforms – through their own content, comments or at least through their virtual presence. Web 2.0 is highly relevant for companies in all sectors and offers new opportunities for internal and external communication.³⁶ Clarity, Consistency and Coherence are also central features of successful corporate communication in Web 2.0. By actively shaping the medium, users also face the challenges of consistency. Upwards of how many contributions do users become relevant for opinion formation? For example, does a user communicate on an employer rating portal only once and without an extreme opinion, or frequently and with keywords that make his or her contributions attractive to the search engine

²⁹ ZERFAß, A., DÜHRING, L.: Strategische Kommunikation – Zentrale Fragestellungen aus Sicht der Unternehmenskommunikation. In BRUHN, M., ESCH, F. R., LANGNER, T. (eds.): *Handbuch Strategische Kommunikation. Grundlagen – Innovative Ansätze – Praktische Umsetzungen*. 2nd Edition. Wiesbaden : Springer Gabler, 2016, p. 59.

³⁰ MEFFERT, H., BURMANN, Ch., KIRCHGEORG, M.: *Marketing. Grundlagen marketingorientierter Unternehmensführung*. Wiesbaden : Gabler, 2012, p. 606.

³¹ ETZOLD, V.: Wenn Sie nicht anders sind, dann seien Sie besser billig – Wie sich Unternehmen mit einer guten Story in einer überkommunizierten Welt differenzieren. In SCHACH, A. (ed.): *Storytelling. Geschichten in Text, Bild und Film*. Wiesbaden : Springer Gabler, 2017, p. 5.

³² BRUHN, M.: Konzepte der Integrierten Marketing- und Unternehmenskommunikation: Übersicht und kritische Würdigung. In BRUHN, M., ESCH, F. R., LANGNER, T. (eds.): *Handbuch Strategische Kommunikation. Grundlagen – Innovative Ansätze – Praktische Umsetzungen*. 2nd Edition. Wiesbaden : Springer Gabler, 2016, p. 77.

³³ *Ibidem*, p. 75.

³⁴ PLEIL, T.: Public Relations im Social Web. In WALSH, G., HASS, B. H., KILIAN, T. (eds.): *Web 2.0. Neue Perspektiven für Marketing und Medien*. 2nd Edition. Heidelberg : Springer, 2011, p. 235-236.

³⁵ HÄMMERLE, M., POKORNI, B., BERTHOLD, M.: Wie Digitalisierung und Industrie 4.0 die Arbeit der Zukunft verändern. In WERTHER, S., BRUCKNER, L. (eds.): *Arbeit 4.0 aktiv gestalten. Die Zukunft der Arbeit zwischen Agilität, People Analytics und Digitalisierung*. Berlin : Springer, 2018, p. 5.

³⁶ WALSH, G., KILIAN, T., HASS, B.: Grundlagen des Web 2.0. In WALSH, G., HASS, B. H., KILIAN, T. (eds.): *Web 2.0. Neue Perspektiven für Marketing und Medien*. 2nd Edition. Heidelberg : Springer, 2011, p. 12-16.

algorithm? What influencing possibilities does the company being rated have? Can trolls and chatbots be trained/programmed for consistent communication or is consistency too robustly localised according to culture? Coherence will be generated if the messages shared by users are credible on an emotional level. At this point, cultural differences are again effective in the communicative interplay between parent and subsidiary companies. The requirement for clarity can be met by using typical symbols and idioms – but these are always culture-dependent.³⁷ The German parent companies influence all communication in the Slovakian subsidiaries – these have to adapt to maintain the uniform (standardised) overall image of the company. Digital platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or YouTube are used for both internal and external corporate communication – without any control over every post about the company. As a result, communication is also becoming increasingly uncontrollable.³⁸ In addition, the new generations Y and Z are demanding new corporate cultures in Germany (and also in Slovakia).³⁹

Culture and globalization are two inseparably linked phenomena. Cultural learning and intercultural competence are indispensable components of successful communication on the international stage.⁴⁰ This learning process also includes the culture-bound standards of Coherency, Consistency and Clarity. Findings from the GLOBE Study show a tendency towards a greater understanding of the culturally specific value systems of the host country.⁴¹ The observance of Coherency, Consistency and Clarity also means that buzzwords such as Dynaxity, Disruption or Empowerment must be communicated appropriately by the parent company. The simple translation of corporate mission statements and values of corporate culture is not enough to bring about successful communication in the host country.⁴² Coherency and Clarity, in particular, must not be neglected at this point. In today's times, employees in companies have become just as important as customers were in the past. All the more reason to make a company's approach to communication both strategically and culturally sensitive, as well as oriented towards Coherency, Consistency and Clarity, in order to create a uniform and holistic picture and understanding of corporate culture. Otherwise, it will not be possible to establish a “we” culture. Slovakia is an attractive location for German companies and the research question arises as to finding a suitable *modus operandi* for mass media communication for German companies in Slovakia, in order to create credible, i.e. culture-oriented, values in corporate messages beyond simple translation.

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³⁷ See also: SCHEIN, E. H., SCHEIN, P.: *Organisationskultur und Leadership*. 5th Edition. München : Vahlen, 2018.

³⁸ THODE, S., WISTUBA, L.: Strategisches Mindset in der VUCA-Welt am Beispiel der Polizei Niedersachsen. In DAHM, M. H., THODE, S. (eds.): *Strategie und Transformation im digitalen Zeitalter*. Wiesbaden : Springer Gabler, 2019, p. 108.

³⁹ DOEGE, I., THODE, S.: HR-Management in agilen Unternehmen – Ergebnisse einer explorativen Untersuchung. In DAHM, M. H., THODE, S. (eds.): *Strategie und Transformation im digitalen Zeitalter*. Wiesbaden : Springer Gabler, 2019, p. 77.

⁴⁰ GENKOVA, P.: *Interkulturelle Wirtschaftspsychologie*. Berlin : Springer, 2019, p. 153.

⁴¹ BRODBECK, F. C.: *Internationale Führung. Das GLOBE-Brevier in der Praxis*. Berlin, Heidelberg : Springer, 2016, p. 62.

⁴² STEIN, V.: Die Bedeutung der Unternehmenskultur für die Unternehmens- und Marketingkommunikation. In BRUHN, M., ESCH, F. R., LANGNER, T. (eds.): *Handbuch Strategische Kommunikation. Grundlagen – Innovative Ansätze – Praktische Umsetzungen*. 2nd Edition. Wiesbaden : Springer Gabler, 2016, p. 526.

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SLOVAK PUBLISHERS IN FACEBOOK ENVIRONMENT

Jana Paveleková

ABSTRACT:

Today, it is necessary to include available digital tools in the business communication mix. Slovak book publishers like to communicate with current or potential target group via social networks. A popular choice is Facebook. Facebook is an accessible social network where a marketing campaign can be effective with a small budget. Some businesses make maximum use of all of its capabilities, others do not. In this paper we analyze company accounts of Slovak publishers on Facebook. We will include a sample of selected small, medium and large publishers, which we will compare with each other. The condition is that they publish Slovak literature or Slovak translation literature, in 2019 they published at least one book and have an active corporate Facebook page. The aim of the paper based on the analysis is to recommend steps into practice that will improve the situation and marketing communication of businesses on the Facebook social network.

KEY WORDS:

Facebook, Slovak book market, Slovak book publishers, social media, social network sites

1 Theoretical Basis of the Solved Situation

Social media is used to transfer or share information among a large audience. They are available to the public, the condition is only the ownership of digital technology and internet connection. Fox describes social media as: *"refers to websites and applications that allow people to share content quickly and efficiently and in real time."*¹ *"Social media is a place with collective wisdom, where the opinion on the created product is mostly true,"* says Janouch.² It is Janouch's definition of social media that can help publishers on the Slovak book market to promote their products to the general public (mostly books and their own authors). Scott perceives: *"Social media can be textual, it can be audio, video or other image forms that unite communities, meet the needs of people who want to associate."*³ We can think of association as uniting online communities in a way that shares the same features and values. For example, they may live in the same location, work for the same employer or have the same hobbies. Read or purchase books from the same publishers or booksellers. *"A set of technical tools and platforms that allow you to share videos and pictures without having to install additional software,"* says Frey on social media.⁴ The ease of use of these platforms has been a sign of their widespread use and future of online social life. Social networks are part of social media. These are created in in content (for example, weblogs, applications, videos, etc.). Some time has passed since the launch of the world's first social network, and social networks have become an integral part of our daily lives. Six Degrees entered the online space in 1997. The essence of this social network was to upload a profile photo and find friends among other users. In 1999, it gained popularity and opened the door to creating similar or different projects.⁵

¹ FOX, V.: *Marketing ve věku společnosti Google*. Brno : Computer Press, 2011, p. 191.

² JANOUCH, V.: *Internetový marketing: Prosaďte se na webu a sociálních sítích*. Brno : Computer Press, 2010, p. 210.

³ SCOTT MEERMAN, D.: *Nové pravidlá PR a marketingu*. Bratislava : Eastone books, 2010, p. 38.

⁴ FREY, P.: *Marketingová komunikace. Nové trendy 3. 0*. Prague : Management Press, 2011, p. 59.

⁵ JONES, M.: *The Complete History of Social Media: A Timeline of the Invention of Online Networking*. [online]. [2020-01-01]. Available at: <<https://historycooperative.org/the-history-of-social-media/>>.

1.1 Facebook

Currently Facebook is the most popular social network not only in Slovakia but also in the world. This social network was launched on February 4, 2004 for Harvard University students. Facebook was the first to surpass more than 1 milliard users.⁶ It is a social network where users create their own profile and share photos, videos and messages with their surroundings. The advantage is the translation of the application into 37 different languages.⁷ It contains functions:

- marketplace: the feature allows users to post, read and respond to ads;
- groups: Users in groups can find communities with similar interests, get to know each other, and interact. In the book community on the Slovak market, groups for the sale, purchase and exchange of books or reading clubs and communities grouping book lovers are formed;
- pages: users can create, respond to, or read pages. The pages are based on a specific topic. The advantage for business is that support for published content can be paid for on the site. The website is used by Slovak bookstores, publishing houses, authors or book influencers, libraries and the like;
- events: Users can follow their favorite events in events (for example, by interest or location), invite guests, and also follow the news in their updates. Book publishers most often use events to promote or baptize their books;
- presence technology: users can find out which contacts are online and then chat with them.⁸

Up to 68 % of users go to social networks to search for information. They don't just use Google for this feature. Already in 2017, Facebook was used by 2.5 million Slovak users.⁹ According to 2Muse, there were exactly 2,552,000 Slovak users on Facebook.¹⁰ If we rely on these two statistics from 2017 and 2018, the number of Slovak users has not changed significantly and the position of the social network in Slovakia still maintains its strong position. Facebook offers users many features that can help them in their business. Marketing campaigns that use Facebook as one of the communication tools will gain benefits that will help them meet their goals more easily. Above all, ym is a business model of advertising, where the site administrator (most often a marketer from a publishing house) can choose on Facebook:

- pay-per-click (meaning that the publisher doesn't pay for the ad to appear, but only for the click on the ad post);
- pay-per-view (publisher pays to display an ad, regardless of whether or not someone clicks on it).¹¹

⁶ 65+ Social Networking Sites You Need to Know About. [online]. [2020-01-01]. Available at: <<https://makeawebsitehub.com/social-media-sites/>>.

⁷ ROUSE, M.: Facebook. [online]. [2020-01-01]. Available at: <<https://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/Facebook>>.

⁸ Ibidem.

⁹ Internet nie je iba Google. 6 obľúbených sociálnych sietí, na ktorých nájdete, čo potrebujete. [online]. [2020-01-01]. Available at: <<https://www.swan.sk/domacnosti/blog/internet-nie-je-iba-google.-6-oblubenych-socialnych-sieti-na-ktorych-najdet>>.

¹⁰ Kolko Sloveniek a Slovákov používa Facebook, Instagram a LinkedIn?. [online]. [2020-01-01]. Available at: <<https://www.facebook.com/prieskum.trhu/photos/a.344408865632730/2487949257945336/?type=1&theater>>.

¹¹ Reklama na Facebooku a sociálnych sieťach. [online]. [2020-01-01]. Available at: <<http://marketing.krea.sk/clanky/reklama-na-facebooku/>>.

1.2 Advantages and Disadvantages of Advertising on Facebook

Facebook offers publishers many advantages, but also disadvantages. Among the most common benefits we can include:

- easily set up and run an ad campaign;
- the possibility to choose a business model;
- the ability to precisely target the current or potential target group of users;
- accurate statistical tracking of campaigns.¹²

It is up to the publisher's marketing department to support their favorite and organically successful posts with paid advertising on Facebook. Nowadays, however, it is a necessity because it may not have a stable base of followers and customers. It is not necessary to set aside a large budget for the Facebook campaign, but rather a creative idea. Facebook, as a tool of a marketing campaign, brings with it certain disadvantages, with which the publisher must be understandable. Therefore, it is not effective to direct all your marketing activities to just one social site. Among the disadvantages we can mention:

- not all users provided correct information about themselves;
- marketing activities need a specific approach;
- advertising on Facebook is not directly effective for sales promotion;
- requires daily monitoring and response to ad statistics;
- it is important to coordinate the Facebook page with current marketing activity.¹³

2 Research Methodology and Goals

In this article, we will focus on the analysis of Facebook pages of Slovak publishers as an active tool for marketing activities. Through the Zoomspere program, we analyze 3 groups of selected publishers and compare them with each other. The aim of the paper is to recommend steps in practice based on their own analysis, which will lead to the improvement of the current situation. We divided 3 groups of publishers as follows:

- small publishers (1-10 books published in 2019);
- medium publishers (11-20 books published in 2019);
- large publishers (more than 21 books published in 2019).

By answering the following research questions, we should achieve our goal of the paper:

- What's the difference in statistics between publishers in own category? (small, medium and large publishers).
- Which publisher has the best statistics in its category for the period under review? (14.4.2020 – 14.5.2020).

3 Analysis of Facebook Pages of Small, Medium and Large Publishers

We have selected the following publishers for our research (Table 1). Slovak publishers are stable on the market and offer readers popular book titles.

¹² *Reklama na Facebooku a sociálnych sieťach.* [online]. [2020-01-01]. Available at: <<http://marketing.krea.sk/clanky/reklama-na-facebooku/>>.

¹³ *Reklama na Facebooku.* [online]. [2020-01-01]. Available at: <<https://www.marketing-tu.sk/reklama-na-facebooku/>>.

Table 1: Selection of Slovak publishers

	Small publishers	Medium publishers	Large publishers
1	Michaela Zamari	Absynt	Ikar
2	Art floyd	Artis Omnis	Slovar
3	Emily D. Beňová	Grada	Albatros media
4	Vydavateľstvo Magna	Elist	Vydavateľstvo Motýľ
5	I can academy	MAFRA Slovakia	Tatran

Source: own processing, 2020.

First, we compared small publishers through Zoomsphere. We could not include Magna Publishing in the statistics because the Facebook page was deleted in a recent time.

	Current	Share	Previous	Difference
Total:	107 153	100%	99 678	+7 475 (7%)
I Can Academy - osobný rozvoj	99 765	93.1%	99 678	+87 (0.1%)
Michaela Zamari	4 877	4.6%		+4 877 (100%)
Emily D. Beňová - Písanie je môj život	1 981	1.8%		+1 981 (100%)
Art Floyd - vydavateľská činnosť	530	0.49%		+530 (100%)

Chart 1: Fan's trend

Source: own processing, 2020.

The Facebook page of the I can academy publishing house has the most followers, and they are also the most involved. Their interaction can be caused by published content, which in the case of this Facebook page of the publisher differs from the others. The content of the posts is also focused on personal development in the form of quotes, videos, notes and other texts.

	Current	Share	Previous	Difference
Total:	116	100%	108	+8 (7%)
I Can Academy - osobný rozvoj	63	54.3%	61	+2 (3%)
Michaela Zamari	23	19.8%	20	+3 (15%)
Emily D. Beňová - Písanie je môj život	19	16.4%	25	-6 (24%)
Art Floyd - vydavateľská činnosť	11	9.5%	2	+9 (450%)

Chart 2: Page post

Source: own processing, 2020.

Most posts in the period 14.4. 2020 to 14.5.2020 is published by the Facebook page I can academy. More frequent postings can be due to the varied content.

	Current	Share	Previous	Difference
Total:	11 341	100%	7 287	+4 054 (56%)
Thursday	3 216	28.4%	1 468	+1 748 (119%)
Monday	1 832	16.2%	932	+900 (97%)
Tuesday	1 684	14.8%	2 038	-354 (17%)
Wednesday	1 625	14.3%	857	+768 (90%)
Friday	1 280	11.3%	597	+683 (114%)
Sunday	943	8.3%	541	+402 (74%)
Saturday	761	6.7%	854	-93 (11%)

Chart 3: Interactions by day

Source: own processing, 2020.

	Current	Share	Previous	Difference
Total:	11 341	100%	7 287	+4 054 (56%)
3pm	2 618	23.1%	25	+2 593 (10 372%)
7pm	1 792	15.8%	4 157	-2 365 (57%)
8pm	1 647	14.5%	146	+1 501 (1 028%)
10am	1 198	10.6%	744	+454 (61%)

Chart 4: Interactions by hours

Source: own processing, 2020.

Followers of 4 small publishers achieve the greatest interactions with published content on Thursday, Monday and Tuesday and by 3 PM, 7 PM and 8 PM.





Name	Fan's/Follower's	Fan's/Follower's change	Interactions	Admin Posts
 I Can Academy - osobný rozvoj	99 765	87 (0.09 %)	likes: 5236 comments: 232 shares: 1190 Total: 6658	links: 6 videos: 6 photos: 51 Total: 63
 Michaela Zamari	4 877	0	likes: 2667 comments: 822 shares: 567 Total: 4056	links: 4 photos: 19 Total: 23
 Emily D. Beňová - Písanie je môj život	1 981	4 (0.2 %)	likes: 510 comments: 46 shares: 15 Total: 571	links: 4 photos: 15 Total: 19
 Art Floyd - vydavateľská činnosť	530	0	likes: 52 comments: 2 shares: 2 Total: 56	statuses: 2 links: 5 videos: 1 photos: 3 Total: 11

Chart 5: Page summary table

Source: own processing, 2020.

From the overall overview, we can say that the I can academy publishing house has a strong base of followers with high interactions on its Facebook page. It also adapts to different content, different formats, which is not primarily focused only on and products offered.

	Current	Share	Previous	Difference
Total:	60 485	100%	53 344	+7 141 (13%)
■ Evitovky	41 624	68.8%	41 699	≈ -75 (0.2%)
■ Absynt - reportážna literatúra	11 737	19.4%	11 645	≈ +92 (0.8%)
■ Vydavateľstvo Artis Omnis	3 077	5.1%	≈	+3 077 (100%)
■ GRADA Slovakia	2 220	3.7%	≈	+2 220 (100%)
■ Vydavateľstvo Elist	1 827	3%	≈	+1 827 (100%)

Chart 6: Fan's trend

Source: own processing, 2020.

Despite the decline, the Facebook page of Evitovky (MAFRA Slovakia) holds the first place in the statistics of the base. The publishing house focuses not only on publishing nonfiction for women.

	Current	Share	Previous	Difference
Total:	105	100%	94	+11 (12%)
■ Vydavateľstvo Artis Omnis	34	32.4%	23	≈ +11 (48%)
■ GRADA Slovakia	33	31.4%	38	≈ -5 (13%)
■ Absynt - reportážna literatúra	26	24.8%	26	≈ 0
■ Evitovky	8	7.6%	5	≈ +3 (60%)
■ Vydavateľstvo Elist	4	3.8%	2	≈ +2 (100%)

Chart 7: Page posts

Source: own processing, 2020.

In the period from 14.4.2020 to 14.5.2020, the publishing house Artis Omnis published the most posts. The posts are focused on reading with the authors, the project Save a book in the time of the COVID 19 pandemic, and information about the books that this publisher has in its publication plan.

	Current	Share	Previous	Difference
Total:	5 962	100%	7 495	-1 533 (20%)
Thursday	1 938	32.5%	1 421	+517 (36%)
Monday	1 141	19.1%	1 007	+134 (13%)
Wednesday	1 135	19%	2 250	-1 115 (50%)
Tuesday	798	13.4%	973	-175 (18%)
Friday	407	6.8%	1 073	-666 (62%)
Sunday	306	5.1%	389	-83 (21%)
Saturday	237	4%	382	-145 (38%)

Chart 8: Interactions by day

Source: own processing, 2020.

	Current	Share	Previous	Difference
Total:	5 962	100%	7 495	-1 533 (20%)
Noon	1 437	24.1%	146	+1 291 (884%)
8pm	1 010	16.9%	345	+665 (193%)
6pm	622	10.4%	218	+404 (185%)
2pm	539	9%	658	-119 (18%)

Chart 9: Interactions by hours

Source: own processing, 2020.

In the category of medium-sized publishers, the interaction decreased in 5 days compared to the previous period. The strongest days were Thursday, Monday and Wednesday. Interactions during the hours are strongest again in the afternoon, over 8 PM and 6 PM.






Name	Fan's/Follower's	Fan's/Follower's change	Interactions	Admin Posts
 Evitovky	41 624	-75 (-0.18 %)	likes: 78 comments: 1 shares: 1 Total: 80	photos: 8 Total: 8
 Absynt - reportážna literatúra	11 737	92 (0.78 %)	likes: 1773 comments: 146 shares: 72 Total: 1991	statuses: 1 links: 5 videos: 2 photos: 18 Total: 26
 Vydavateľstvo Artis Omnis	3 077	1 (0.03 %)	likes: 843 comments: 169 shares: 118 Total: 1130	statuses: 1 links: 7 videos: 8 photos: 18 Total: 34
 GRADA Slovakia	2 220	4 (0.18 %)	likes: 1720 comments: 759 shares: 254 Total: 2733	links: 5 photos: 28 Total: 33
 Vydavateľstvo Elist	1 827	0	likes: 22 comments: 3 shares: 3 Total: 28	links: 1 videos: 1 photos: 2 Total: 4

Chart 10: Page summary table

Source: own processing, 2020.

Absynt and Grada published the most interactions, even though they do not have the most followers. However, we positively evaluate their efforts to publish varied content. At Elist Publishing, we noticed minimal activity on the Facebook page.





	Current	Share	Previous	Difference
Total:	142 021	100%	101 552	+40 469 (40%)
 Bux.sk	87 516	61.6%	87 209	+307 (0.4%)
 Vydavateľstvo Motyl	32 164	22.6%		+32 164 (100%)
 Albatrosmedia.sk	7 948	5.6%	7 789	+159 (2%)
 Vydavateľstvo TATRAN	7 656	5.4%		+7 656 (100%)
 Slovart - vydavateľstvo najlepších kníh	6 737	4.7%	6 554	+183 (3%)

Chart 11: Fan's trend

Source: own processing, 2020.

Ikar publishing does not have its own Facebook page. For your needs, it uses the Bux.sk bookstore. Influencers cooperating with Ikar also refer to this. Therefore, it has the highest statistics of followers, share and previous, but the content is made up only of information about books from their production. The second strongest publishing house thus becomes Motyl publishing.











	Current	Share	Previous	Difference
Total:	267	100%	288	-21 (7%)
 Bux.sk	116	43.4%	111 	+5 (5%)
 Sloart - vydavateľstvo najlepších kníh	67	25.1%	68 	-1 (1%)
 Vydavateľstvo TATRAN	35	13.1%	44 	-9 (20%)
 Albatrosmedia.sk	28	10.5%	41 	-13 (32%)
 Vydavateľstvo Motyl	21	7.9%	24 	-3 (13%)

Chart 12: Page post

Source: own processing, 2020.

In the period from 14.4.2020 to 14.5.2020, the Facebook page Bux.sk published the most, which recorded the only growth compared to the previous period. The second best was the Sloart Facebook page.

	Current	Share	Previous	Difference
Total:	21 643	100%	20 366	+1 277 (6%)
Thursday	3 996	18.5%	3 497	+499 (14%)
Friday	3 518	16.3%	2 523	+995 (39%)
Wednesday	3 224	14.9%	3 636	-412 (11%)
Tuesday	3 175	14.7%	2 780	+395 (14%)
Saturday	3 128	14.5%	3 524	-396 (11%)
Sunday	2 836	13.1%	2 585	+251 (10%)
Monday	1 766	8.2%	1 821	-55 (3%)

Chart 13: Interactions by day

Source: own processing, 2020.

	Current	Share	Previous	Difference
Total:	21 643	100%	20 366	+1 277 (6%)
6pm	12 742	58.9%	1 597	+11 145 (698%)
1pm	1 651	7.6%	1 811	-160 (9%)
11am	1 412	6.5%	2 014	-602 (30%)
8am	1 340	6.2%	7 926	-6 586 (83%)

Chart 14: Interactions by hours

Source: own processing, 2020.

The most interactive days of major publishers and their Facebook pages are Thursday, Friday and Wednesday. We pay attention to the most interactive lesson. The high increase was reached by an hour of 6 PM.






 Bux.sk	87 516	307 (0.35 %)	likes: 13183 comments: 1473 shares: 1137 Total: 15793	links: 2 photos: 115 Total: 117
 Vydavateľstvo Motýľ	32 164	-1 (-0 %)	likes: 1387 comments: 193 shares: 87 Total: 1667	links: 2 videos: 1 photos: 18 Total: 21
 albatrosmedia.sk	7 948	159 (2 %)	likes: 1136 comments: 23 shares: 179 Total: 1338	links: 3 videos: 2 photos: 23 Total: 28
 Vydavateľstvo TATRAN	7 656	2 (0.03 %)	likes: 1330 comments: 531 shares: 261 Total: 2122	links: 12 videos: 7 photos: 16 Total: 35
 Slovart - vydavateľstvo najlepších kníh	6 737	183 (2.72 %)	likes: 805 comments: 27 shares: 84 Total: 916	links: 21 videos: 7 photos: 39 Total: 67

Chart 15: Page summary table

Source: own processing, 2020.

We see the published data on publishers that the biggest interactions and also the observable base have a Facebook page Bux.sk, which does not publish content only from the published publishing house Ikar. A similar increase in statistics also occurred in the category of small publishers, specifically in the case of the I can academy publishing house. If a publisher publishes relevant content not only about their books, it arouses the interest of its followers. Not only does this increase their number, but especially their interaction. This is a step that every publisher should consider. The number of posts for the period under review is also an important indicator. The higher the number of posts using all the options that the Facebook page offers to publishers, the greater the interaction. We encourage publishers to create a Facebook posting schedule. Posts can be scheduled directly in the Facebook application or used and external applications (Froby, Hootsuite, Postplaner). By planning a contribution, the publisher can not only be able to measure its activities more statistically more effectively, but also focus on the days and hours when the followers achieve the greatest interaction. The interaction by hours was similar in all categories - in the afternoon. It doesn't make sense for publishers to publish content sooner or later, because if they don't have a stable base for followers who search for the content themselves, they just won't see the posts. It is an advantage if the Facebook page, as a marketing tool, is included in the used tools of marketing campaigns of Slovak book publishers. However, building relationships and strengthening trust with a current or potential target group of common interest should not be forgotten. Books with Slovak translation. Thanks to the statistics examined, we found out where publishers are making mistakes, which they should change or strengthen. The results may not be reflected immediately, but we recommend measuring them and setting further steps and goals based on them.

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GAMIFICATION (ON THE EDGE OF WORK AND ENTERTAINMENT)

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ABSTRACT:

The term of gamification has now gained a reputation with both the public and the academic community. Gamification is aimed at integrating gaming elements into a non-gaming environment. Thus, it is situated, as the name itself may suggest, at the intersection of work and entertainment. It shows a very close relationship to game studies, but it doesn't represent a game directly, especially in terms of visual and narrative character. In practice, gamification makes use of a large number of motivational elements which inspire the user not only to start the required action, but to accomplish it as well. This thesis is aimed at defining the term of gamification itself, presenting information related to the term of gamification, such as its origin and evolution, gamification classification, practical uses of gamification and, last but not least, showing some examples.

KEY WORDS:

gamification, HR, information and communication technologies, marketing tool, social media, use of gaming elements

1 Introduction

Gamification represents a relatively new term for management, at least in Europe. It is a frequently used term with management departments in many companies. The added value consists in specific, unique ways of how to strengthen work morale and integrate employees into the working process. Currently, gamification is a largely widespread element representing one of the most effective marketing tools, mostly abroad. In the Czech Republic, it is still not too widespread, but it wants to attract still more attention. Gamification represents an integral part of marketing processes and it can be applied in many areas, depending only upon how we use it. Gamification is to be dealt with both in information and communication technology (including social media), and in tourism or in everyday activities, such as shopping in a supermarket. The aforementioned trend dates back to 2002. In this year, Nick Pelling, a British programmer, started to deal with a real implementation of gaming elements in non-gaming environment. The first company that started to deal with the gamification system, was the Bunchball company, founded in 2005. This company was developing a web interface combining both practical dimension and gaming elements. Also, Bunchball was the first company to deal with gamification in a marketing environment, even if the term "Gamification" started to be used only in 2008.¹ In 2008, one of the first blog comments about the "Website gamification" is published by Bret Terrill. In this comment "Social Gaming Summit 2008" is described and also the website gamification topic is mentioned. It is worth mentioning, it is the first documented on-line comment about gamification.² In the following years, gamification developed both as a term and as a discipline. There was a controversy at the University of Pennsylvania caused by a statement made by Ian Bogost in 2010. It was somewhat expressively claimed that "gamification is a non-sense". With the author's words, however, it was not an attack or a provocation, but a philosophical view. The author rather focuses on evaluation of the use of gamification from a

¹ *The history of Gamification: from the very beginning to right now. Growth Engineering.* [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <<https://www.growthengineering.co.uk/history-of-gamification/>>.

² *My coverage of Lobby of the Social Gaming Summit, Bret on Social Games, a reasonably good analysis of the social games industry.* [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <<http://www.bretterill.com/2008/06/my-coverage-of-lobby-of-social-gaming.html>>.

monetary point of view.³ Another controversy was started in 2014 caused by a statement made on several websites that the aforementioned year should represent the year of end of gamification. However, the current evolution shows that the websites were absolutely wrong on that point.⁴ An interesting view on this issue was brought up by Gallup institute – M2 research. The institute foresaw in 2016 that gamification would evolve into an industry worth circa two billion US dollars in total.⁵ As foreseen by the M2 research team, gamification gained reputation in the following years and, these days, it represents a trend that is still applicable even now. The principles of gamification are actively used in more fields than ever before, e.g. in marketing or education. 2015 was the year which represented a substantial milestone for the development and implementation of gamification. The study shows that a very low percentage of employees – millennials in the United States is really keen on doing their job. It is possible that this fact is likely to have triggered the introduction of a large number of gamification applications focused on tackling this issue.⁶

2 Modern Gamification

Gamification is a constantly growing market. The value of the worldwide gamification market amounted to 6.8 billion US dollars in 2018. The value is expected to reach 40 billion in 2024. One reason for this prediction is a constantly growing demand for a larger involvement of workers and creating a better image with customers.⁷ At the moment, the largest customer of gamification is the private sector. The annual growth of provided services related to gamification is expected to be approximately 54% in the upcoming five years all over the world.⁸

2.1 Theoretical Elements of Gamification

2.1.1 Gaming Elements of Gamification

Gamification can be loosely defined as the use of gaming elements (elements of computer games) in non-gaming environment, specifically in the corporate environment. This thesis is aimed at the functioning of gamification in the corporate environment, however, in a modified form it can be applied in various other fields as well, e.g. marketing or education as mentioned previously.⁹ Primarily, gamification is aimed at the use of electronic devices

³ See also: BOGOST, I.: Why gamification is bullshit. In WALZ, S. P., DETERDING, S. (eds.): *The gameful world: Approaches, issues, applications*. Cambridge, MA : The MIT Press, 2015, p. 65-79.

⁴ *The history of Gamification: from the very beginning to right now*. [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <<https://www.growthengineering.co.uk/history-of-gamification/>>.

⁵ POLITES, J.: *Why the Gamification market industry will grow 500% to \$11 Billion by 2020*. [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <<https://blog.atrivity.com/why-gamification-industry-will-grow-to-11-billion-by-2020/>>.

⁶ ADKINS, A.: *Majority of U.S Employees Not Engaged Despite Gains in 2014*. [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <<https://news.gallup.com/poll/181289/majority-employees-not-engaged-despite-gains-2014.aspx>>.

⁷ *Global Gamification Market By Solution By Deployment, By Organization Size, By Application, By End-User Vertical, By Region, Competition, Forecast & Opportunities, 2024*. [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <https://www.reportlinker.com/p05762137/global-gamification-market-by-solution-by-deployment-by-organization-size-by-application-by-end-user-vertical-by-region-competition-forecast-opportunities.html?utm_source=prn>.

⁸ ADKINS, S. S.: Executive Overview: Game-based Learning Goes Mainstream. In ADKINS, S. S. (ed.): *Metaari's 2019-2024 Global Game-based Learning Market*. Monroe, Washington, USA : Metaari, 2019, p. 20. [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <https://seriousplayconf.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Metaari_2019-2024_Global_Game-based_Learning_Market_Executive_Overview.pdf>

⁹ *Co může využívání herních principů přinést vzdělávání?*. [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <<https://www.eduin.cz/clanky/co-muze-vyuzivani-hernich-principu-prinest-do-vzdelavani/>>.

(smartphones, computers) and applications created to support gamification (as the trend might show since the expansion of smartphones), however, gamification elements can be applied even without the use of electronic devices. The gamification is basically classified into internal and external gamification. Internal gamification is focused on people in gamified corporations. This can be a gamification of a corporate environment for employees, or a gamification of teaching methods. The basic principle consists in a larger involvement of participants in a monitored process. External gamification is focused on larger subjects. It is frequently used in corporate marketing and it is focused on raising interest of the subjects in corporate products or the corporation itself.¹⁰ In the first definition gaming elements were mentioned. What gaming elements gamification will be based on largely depends upon the fact of what discipline should be gamified. As a simplification, several general, most used elements that could serve the purpose of gamification will be introduced.¹¹

It has already been stated that gamification makes use of gaming elements. There can be a large number of such gaming elements, of which, the two most frequent ones are: points, badges and rankings. They are the elements most easily integrated into corporate processes. Points are used to monitor progress and tasks accomplished by every employee. In relation to points, rankings and related badges or other rewards for successful employees are used. Another option is to integrate a story into the required process. The aim of this element is to depersonalize the working process and to replace it by something which brings about a more intense involvement of the gamers in the process. The story might also be considered a linking element that gives sense to the elements stated above. Integration of a story is a less frequently used method by corporate recruitment departments. More practically, it is applied in marketing, staff management or employee education. A common gamification element, used as a reward for a task accomplishment, job completion, or as a reward for achieving the most points, is represented by badges. Badges are considered a universal reward that can be given for many various successes. However, as for badges, it is recommended to use one of the most advanced gamification elements, specifically, the lack of badges which prevents badges from losing its significance and „preciousness“. Should badges (or any other similar rewards) be available in excessive amounts, sooner or later, gamers will lose interest in this element, and the element itself stops to be effective. Should the reward stay limited in quantity, it will become more in demand.¹² It is important to praise success and not to emphasize the loss. This is the only way to build up motivation for better performance effectively. However, a risk of loss can be effective as well. E.g., the participants can lose the aforementioned points. Quite logically, gamers fear the loss of justification of their previous efforts, which means that this option can be used to induce a greater involvement. However, too strict penalties can be a reason for a loss of motivation.¹³ The motivation and specific types of “gamers” are treated in the following chapter.

2.1.2 Motivation, Types of Gamers

Gamification is integrally related to motivation. The principle of a game is to win and the victory is the gamer’s motivation to progress in the game. This is what gamification is based upon. It tries to motivate gamers, (as it is with gamification in staff management) to give a

¹⁰ SZYMAŃSKA, D.: *Gamifikace je více, než hra*. Released on 6th September 2017. [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <<https://www.hrnews.cz/lidske-zdroje/rizeni-id-2698710/gamifikace-je-vice-nez-jen-hra-id-3148546>>.

¹¹ PATROVSKÝ, Š.: *Marketingová Gamifikace jako výstřelek moderní doby?*. [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <<https://www.webhostingcentrum.cz/marketingova-gamifikace/>>.

¹² MARCZEWSKI, A.: *52 Gamification Mechanics and Elements*, [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <<https://www.gamified.uk/user-types/gamification-mechanics-elements/>>.

¹³ Ibidem.

better performance and it uses gaming elements as a motive for completing a job. However, every employee is different and every one of them belongs to one of the elementary groups that their expectations and gaming preferences derive from. This fact needs to be taken into account when developing a game so that, ideally, all gamers are involved in the game equally. Every gamer can be classified into one of four elementary groups: achievers, explorers, socializers and killers (the basic motivation of these groups is represented by: success, discovery, socializing and victory/loss of someone else).¹⁴ “Achievers” are only interested in progress and the victory in a game. However, the primary goal is not the victory, but efforts to bring about a personal development in the game. If the gamer has nowhere else to progress or if the advancement is aimless, the gamer, sooner or later, starts to lose interest in the game. “Explorers” have set discoveries as their primary goal. It can be a discovery of the gaming world, gaming principles or a game itself or small details. They are frequently gamers who prefer discovering a game to taking part in a challenge that other gamers participate in. However, it must be ensured that there are things to be discovered. Otherwise, this group starts to lose interest. “Socializers”, primarily, take part in a game due to social interaction. They are gamers who often cooperate with the others, and, in some cases, such cooperation is the main reason for them to stay involved in the game. “Killers” represent a specific group of gamers. Like achievers, they also want to win. Unlike them, however, they don’t need others to lose. On the one hand, this group is the least numerous, but it can infect a gaming atmosphere under poor conditions.

In order to achieve an effective gamification, all four options must be taken into account and there must be such an environment that will make all participants feel happy. It is considered a crucial prerequisite to identify all types of gamers and to make the game ready depending on the resulting representation so that an effective atmosphere can be created. Ignoring specific types of gamers can cause gamers to lose interest in the game and, as a result, to make gamification elements with the specific group of participants ineffective.¹⁵ The expectations of individual gamers can also be used to modify the gamified environment in such a way as to make every gamer feel involved in the game as much as possible. This can be achieved by accurate identification of gamers and modification of the game by means of specific elements. “Socializer” will expect to be involved in activities and given rewards related to social interaction and hierarchy. On the other hand, “achiever” will expect to be enabled to make a personal contribution. It can be a physical reward or a less tangible contribution, such as learning new things.¹⁶ None of these gamers is better or worse, they can make a good team all together. It is necessary to manage and understand the game properly. As of now, there are already companies dealing with the development of games for corporate environments by means of which an employer can educate and motivate his/her own employees and help them achieve better results. These companies are described below. Based on the conducted surveys, on-line courses are completed by 25 % of employees which is not financially sustainable. Therefore, it is appropriate to apply gamification and to raise employees’ interest and enhance¹⁷ the overall result. By using gamification, an employer can not only gain a higher percentage of participating employees, but practical training for and feedback from his/her

¹⁴ PATROVSKÝ, Š.: *Marketingová Gamifikace jako výstřelek moderní doby?*. [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <<https://www.webhostingcentrum.cz/marketingova-gamifikace/>>.

¹⁵ KUMAR, J. et al.: *Bartle's Player Types for Gamification*. [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <<https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/article/bartle-s-player-types-for-gamification>>.

¹⁶ MARCZEWSKI, A.: *52 Gamification Mechanics and Elements*. [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <<https://www.gamified.uk/user-types/gamification-mechanics-elements/>>.

¹⁷ *Gamifikace je více než jen hra*. [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <<http://www.personalista.com/rozvoj-pracovniku/gamifikace-je-vice-nez-jen-hra.html>>.

own employees, which is also of a great importance to him/her. Companies dealing with gamification for HR departments try to tackle following issues:

- How to avoid theories and provide experimental learning.
- How to turn education into entertaining and interesting competition.
- How to raise motivation to complete the training and achieve a 90% success rate in completing the course thanks to gamification.

Based on a quality-related survey among students who are most familiar with games due to the age group they belong to, a respondent stated that gamification can be tracked back to its origin, i.e. to computer games that came earlier, e.g. Dungeons and Dragons etc. These games are based on the principle of group creation of a story and narration with one person being the central one who is supposed to create a world and lead the gamers. Another role to be taken over by this person is to actively involve gamers in the game. In order to do so, he/she must get to know his/her teammates and modify the story and the plot. As a result, there are situations offering specific ways of solving a problem to the gamers or to be given specific rewards. This practice is based on the same principle like the aforementioned game modification for various types of gamers. According to the same student, it is a good method not to create specific situations for every gamer as such a solution is very preparation-demanding, and, as a consequence, it seems to be, more or less, unfair to certain gamers. This issue can be tackled by preparing a wide variety of options where every participant can select those ones that fit him/her best and he/she can draw the greatest personal reward from.

3 Use of Gamification in Tourism

In this chapter, respondents focused on the use of gamification in tourism companies. After conducting an analysis, they suggested a potential application of gamification in staff management of tourism companies.

3.1 Analysis of the Use of Gamification

Gamification is widely used in tourism, however, according to information and statements from respondents, it is limited to external gamification, i.e. to marketing and customer-oriented approaches. Its use in staff management is considerably limited. VSO-students were tasked with finding respective examples of gamification in the Staff management course. Based on our survey, gamification in tourism is customer-oriented (i.e. marketing) and is not used in staff management in tourism. From the point of view of external gamification, gamifying activities are used that primarily strengthen the interest in the destination (i.e. gamification is related to destination management). Such activities include e.g. geocaching (outdoor activity where participants search for objects registered in geocaching system using GPS system). This activity is frequently used in the Czech Republic and helps tourists get to know the environment better as they explore at the respective moment.¹⁸ Another frequently used activity that has become widespread in the Czech Republic recently, are so-called “Escape games”. They are held on enclosed premises and they are based on an elementary motive (as per gamification definition, a story element is used here). In this game, gamers try to accomplish tasks given by using their own knowledge and escape the premises. Such games can, at the same time, if the story is right and well-prepared, serve as an education tool.

¹⁸ *The beginners' guide to geocaching*. Released on 12th February 2015. [2020-04-01]. Available at: <<https://www.countryfile.com/go-outdoors/days-out/the-beginners-guide-to-geocaching/>>.

The detective game “Exit Game” can serve as a good example for this. This game is aimed at cooperation. This can help emphasize strengths and weaknesses of team members and their mutual cooperation. The detective game “Exit Game” is basically a game for children that is adapted to the corporate environment. The participants are forced to cut themselves off from professional barriers and “enter a fighting game” that can be held even on space-limited premises. The “Exit Game” is used when dull topics are to be presented, e.g. health and safety measures at work and the respective compliance. The information can be presented by playing games, not by giving a presentation which means it can be remembered better than reading typical presentations packed with long texts. Tailored games that fit the needs of all employees – from top managers to helpdesk specialists – help companies make initial training in health and safety measures at work more effective.¹⁹

Furthermore, there are outdoor escape games where gamers are to go to marked places and accomplish tasks assigned by using smartphones and GPS system. Such games are held e.g. in Prague and can lead gamers to places known from books or movies (related to by the story), however, that are not commonly visited by tourists. Thus, it has been proven that gamification in tourism marketing is an effective and frequently used tool. There are many other examples of use and even companies that are focused on creating events and activities, at least partly, which strengthen the interest in the destination. However, the same thing can’t be applied to gamification of tourism companies and their employees. Our student respondents haven’t found any example of the use of gamification in staff management. Thus, it can be noted that gamification is not a widespread tool in tourism companies or travel agencies. According to our respondents, one explanation for this can be in the fact that gamification in staff management is primarily focused on modification of office premises that are infamously known for a large number of workers in little space who do routine and uninteresting jobs. The variability of a job in travel agencies can represent one of the reasons why such measures are not necessary. Another reason for this can be represented by the variability of the environment employees of these companies work in, which is why it only allows for a mediocre evaluation and implementation of gamification. And the last reason, following from this issue, is represented by a small number of workers involved, i.e. the implementation of gamifying elements is ineffective. After a quality-oriented survey on this issue has been conducted, quantity-oriented survey will follow in travel agency workers. (There is a question coming up, whether we, seeing the current situation related to the coronavirus quarantine, don’t conduct any other survey).

3.2 Particular Examples of the Use of Gamification

An easier orientation in user environment ensures the use of gamifying elements. Thanks to this system, the program can guide us through the registration process on the new website and the user can notice it or he/she can be interested by pages he/she would not notice anyway. In combination with the websites or smartphone applications, gamification is mostly applied in form of rewards for users for various actions done by them on the website. It is applied on forums where you can acquire a wide range of benefits for the particular number of contributions. The gaming techniques can be viewed in various environments, for example by collecting badges or by use of other visualisation methods.

¹⁹ *Gamifikace je více než jen hra.* [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <<https://www.hrnews.cz/lidske-zdroje/rizeni-id-2698710/gamifikace-je-vice-nez-jen-hra-id-3148546>>.

3.2.1 Foursquare

In the last couple of years, the most familiar gamified application was the application developed by Dennis Crowley. Specifically, it is a smartphone application focused on Chekin. Chekins can be acquired by launching an application monitoring our location thanks to GPS signals and finding all locations entered in this application. Subsequently, we can select our current location and get “checked in” here. For this activity, called a “Chekin”, we can be granted points and compete with our friends for a greater activity and number of points granted.

3.2.2 Health Month Application

The Health Month application helps maintain a healthy lifestyle. It helps to check the monthly plan and rewards the users for its accomplishment. The user is to set such activities at the start of every month that lead to enhancement of the lifestyle. It can be sports, healthy diet, healthy lifestyle, and on the other hand, he/she can set activities he/she wants to avoid, e.g. smoking, drinking alcohol, bad diet. The game starts with every user being granted a particular number of lives. The user can take a wrong step in the game, and so he/she will lose a life. Caution must be exercised. The priority aim of this game is that every user completes every month retaining a positive number of lives. He/she can increase the number of lives by doing the right activity. For the right activity, he/she is then granted points in form of fruits, he/she can then use to buy further lives. In this game, users – gamers can offer help, but it is left up to them alone how they use it.²⁰

3.3 Use of Gamification for Employees

Life is a game, but this saying doesn't apply so much at work, as it is mostly an everyday routine. However, it doesn't have to stay so forever. It has been the case for quite a while that a game is not only for children and the term “Gamification”, which made motivational tool for corporate employees from common games, has been used. Gamification is a motivational and entertaining process that makes connections and a natural impression. It can be used in the recruitment process, team productivity enhancement or as a motivational tool for business people etc. There are already many companies all over the world using gamification as a standard tool. E.g. L'Oréal company, which seeks for new talented staff for its brand, is one of them. The candidates must accomplish various challenges created by the company. The candidates must deal with various case studies viewing different situations within L'Oréal and resolve them. The best-performing candidate is then given the dream job. Likewise, the same process is applied in Heineken. The company uploaded a video on *youtube* showing the uniformity of all interviews. Still the same questions, still the same answers, who then is the company actually likely to pick? That's why they selected specific tests a candidate must pass whereas the tests don't need to be directly related to his/her employment. The first step was to lead the candidate to a conference room holding his/her hand, then, the candidate was to show he/she can give first aid, stay calm and act quickly. This step had very different outcomes as there was a candidate who fled away, there was another one who didn't know what to do and who was just looking on, but there were also candidates who started to act instantly and really gave first aid. Here, it is quite evident that all interviews don't need to be dull and boring, but a true picture of everyone who is sitting in front of you can be acquired by a game. The term “Gamification” is not yet used too often in the Czech Republic, even if there already many gamifying elements. One of the companies using gamification is Česká Pojišťovna. This company encouraged its employees during the Olympic Games to take selfie pictures on

²⁰ Gamifikace v online marketingu. [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <<https://is.cuni.cz/webapps/zzp/detail/125932/>>.

watching the Games among fans and with a flag in hand. Gamification is not just a game as it mainly serves the purpose for employees to be able to affect things and activities in the company, i.e. it enables employees to experience personal growth. Employees can start a discussion or a so-called journal used to communicate information or know-how, corporate values or meet new workmates, help each other and give advice. For HR managers, on the other hand, gamification is a motivational tool showing employee activity, the steps they take, the way they get integrated in the team, work on themselves or get trained etc.²¹

3.4 HR Gamification in Tourism

As noted above, there is not much experience with gamification in tourism in the Czech Republic related to employees. In relation to experience from abroad, gamification in employees in tourism is really not a frequent occurrence or there are not so many articles from this year (2020) dealing with this topic. In the first case, they only mention the following statement: “Gamification is the process of applying features of game playing to motivate and engage employees.”²² Another article deals with the issue of gamification mostly in terms of staff trainings and personal growth. The use of gamification is more appropriate than classic e-learning which is mostly boring and formal according to the author. According to^{23,24}, one of the first uses of gamification in tourism was Marriott International Inc (Bethesda, MD, USA). Their on-line game, My Marriott Hotel, was launched in June 2011. The game was developed as a Facebook application in English, Spanish, French, Arabic and Mandarin Chinese version to experience a quick expansion outside of the USA by addressing new potential workers, e.g. the millennials. The users from 120 countries “caught” potential employees in the game on carrying out various tasks whereas 30 % users “clicked” the button „Give it a real try“, that redirected them to the career website Marriott. (Table 1). Gamification can be defined as gradual adding of elements usually related to games for a stimulation and monitoring process in order for competitiveness and performance to be increased. However, gamification can also raise ethical issues, like the use of rankings in Disneyland where the work performance and speed of room attendants was monitored and viewed. For example, there were activities like folding pillow covers, bed sheets and other objects to wash in the washing machine that were evaluated. The names of the respective employees were viewed along with the efficiency ranking: green, should the performance be very good, and red, should it be below expectations. The purpose of the gamification process was to raise the staff productivity. However, it was a feeling of fear that was the result with these low-income employees who were feeling bad. There was a pregnant employee who was especially affected. The employees started to call it the “electronic whip”. This example can show us the importance of social awareness, as it is with gamification, even if managers simply want to encourage workers by using games. In the United States, there was another undesirable aspect related to this case, as it was considered an issue of racism and sexism because these jobs are mostly done by Afro-American or Latino women.²⁵ Therefore, it is

²¹ *Gamifikace v praxi*. [online]. [2020-04-06]. Available at: <<http://www.businessanimals.cz/ba/clanky/gamifikace/>>.

²² For more information, see: HEERY, E., NOON, M.: *A dictionary of human resource management*. 3rd Edition. Oxford : Oxford University Press, UK, 2017.

²³ *Marriott. My Marriott Hotel Opens Its Doors on Facebook*. [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <<http://news.marriott.com/2011/06/my-marriott-hotel-opens-its-doors-on-facebook.html>>.

²⁴ MAISTER, J.: *Gamification: Three Ways to Use Gaming for Recruiting, Training and Health & Wellness*. [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <<http://www.forbes.com/sites/jeannemeister/2012/05/21/gamification-three-ways-to-use-gaming-for-recruiting-training-and-health-amp-wellness/>>.

²⁵ LOPEZ, S.: *Disneyland Workers Answer to “Electronic Whip”*. [online]. [2020-04-09] Available at: <<http://articles.latimes.com/2011/oct/19/local/la-me-1019-lopez-disney-20111018>>.

necessary to consider a generally accepted ethical code even in gamification, not only in the Czech Republic, but also all over the world.²⁶ According to UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization), the economical and social aspect is the most important sustainability element in tourism which is integrated in the concept of “employment quality” whose aim is “to strengthen the number and quality of local jobs created and supported by tourism, including the level of pay, conditions of service and availability to all without discrimination by gender, race, disability or in other ways”²⁷

Table 1: Benefits of gamifying the relationship tourism organisation—tourism employees (HR)

Type of Gamification Applications by Activities	Economic Effects	Social Effects	Environmental Effects
1. Training (Costa)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving learning, better knowledge regarding facts, rules, procedures at lower costs • Improving clients’ experience as a result of observable skills improved in daily activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing employee’s confidence in their knowledge and skills. • Increase the employability on the labour market for trained employees. • Provide an element of fun 	Reduce resource consumption for trainings in terms of money, traveling (carbon footprint) and manpower.
2. Recruiting (My Marriott Hotel)	Innovative way to market job openings bypassing classical methods. Increase brand awareness and target performance. Targeting specific recruiting sources (the Millennials).	Gamification practices in recruitment and selection can promote equal opportunities by focusing on performance and not on race, experience, education, etc.	Targeting simultaneous potential employees at international level, lower resource consumption.
3. Stimulating & monitoring productivity (Disneyland)	Increased labour productivity. Ability to monitor performance and compare “players”. Inject adrenalin into the company.	Delicate area considering the potential adverse effects: fierce competition between employees—they tend to work individually not as a team members; discrimination (e.g.,	Reduction of resource consumption.

²⁶ See also: CAHA, Z., VOKOUN, M.: The Impact Of The Presence Of A Code Of Ethics On The Economic Prosperity Of A Company In DVOULETÝ, O., LUKEŠ, M., MÍSAŘ, J. (eds.): *5th International Conference Innovation Management, Entrepreneurship and Sustainability (IMES)*. Prague : Nakladatelství Oeconomica, 2017, p. 72-80.

²⁷ For more information, see: *Making Tourism More Sustainable. A Guide for Policy Makers*. Paris, Madrid : United Nations Environment Programme, World Tourism Organization, 2005. [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <<http://www.unep.fr/shared/publications/pdf/DTIx0592xPA-TourismPolicyEN.pdf>>.

		for pregnant employees).	
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Source: NEGRUSA, A. L. et al.: Exploring Gamification Techniques and Applications for Sustainable Tourism. In *Sustainability*, 2015, Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 11174.

3.5 Companies Dealing with Gamification in the Czech Republic

In the Czech Republic, there are several organisations dealing with the corporate culture and providing gamified platforms. They are companies like Court of Moravia or Conectio.

3.5.1 Court of Moravia

It is a company dealing with gamification in HR departments. This company has been seated in Brno since 2007 and counts 11–50 employees. They are very good at operating in the following areas: Playful design, Gamification, Service Design Thinking, Edutainment, Human Centered Design, HR consulting. Court of Moravia can be easily characterized by the motto stated on its website: “Gamification in HR departments, e v HR, change management and customer experience. Encourage, improve mutual bonds and strengthen the loyalty. Take your work with other people to the next level. We’ll take your target group where you want it to be and they will even enjoy it! We do it playfully. Gamification adopts gaming principles people love and brings them to the corporate life. Its greatest benefits consist in activities related to motivation, encouragement and engaging of all of your teams.”²⁸

3.5.2 Conectio

This company was founded in 2010 under the name of Sales2Win, in 2016, it was renamed to CONECTIO and it has been operating under this name ever since. It is focused on the development of managerial skills, communication, HR management and sales activities. In order to achieve the best results, they use digital technologies by worldwide leading companies (e.g. those ones by Microsoft and PwC), a friendly approach and constant innovation. Conectio tries to help companies develop HR potential and business growth thanks to digital innovations. In April 2018, the company published „*Průvodce přípravou vzdělávacího programu založeného na gamifikaci*” (“*Guide to the preparation of education programmes based on gamification*”) on its website. This guide was created on the basis of ten-year experience in game development and findings gained from real situations and experience of more than 1 500 corporate clients. The guide provides a set of instructions on how to improve the degree of engagement of employees in the course and how to enhance the resulting effect after its completion. This guide can be downloaded on the company website.²⁹

3.6 Applications for Modern HR

Currently, there is a vast number of applications, mostly developed for smartphones, thanks to smartphones. It is quite interesting that we can come across the so-called HR applications used by companies for recruitment and the HR system of a company. Furthermore, two applications used by many companies are presented.

3.6.1 Posli.com Application

Posli.com is an interesting application connecting employees in a company through in-house communication. The application takes care of: customer satisfaction, corporate culture, HR

²⁸ *Cour of Moravia*. [online]. [2020-04-06]. Available at: <<https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/gamifikace-v-hr>>.

²⁹ *Conectio*. [online]. [2020-04-06]. Available at: <<https://www.conectio.eu/single-post/2018/04/24/vyberG>>.

marketing, onboarding, job rotation and internal trainings. The application is focused on cooperation, specifically, on the efforts to make employees cooperate, not just work next to each other.³⁰ Principle of the application: On the first login, basic data, gamer skills and learning preferences must be entered. They can be working skills, but personal hobbies as well, i.e. dancing, sports, cooking, languages etc. After completing the profile, the gamer will be shown what courses are scheduled that he/she could teach (other employees are interested and he has the knowledge) and that he/she could learn. So, he/she can either attend the courses or he/she can create his/her own, new courses. This application is used by companies like Adobe, Uber or Lego.³¹

3.6.2. Face Match Application by STRV

This is a very unusual application, but this application is definitely a very good and very suitable one for employment. Not all employees, mostly in large corporations, are likely to be familiar with each other. This application should do away with that situation and make all employees familiar with each other. In this application, every employee has a picture with a brief personal profile in it. When the application is started, a picture one of the employees is viewed and one is required to choose the right name out of 4 options offered. Should the answer be right, a brief CV of the respective person is shown. In principle, it is a quiz to guess right the names of one's own workmates. For every right answer, points can be collected and the respective position in the overall ranking is shown.³²

3.6.3 SLACK Application

A tool used especially for team communication and data sharing, it is possible to say that this tool can replace modern e-mail and it is starting to become very popular. Should we compare it with other applications, it is a tool that is very similar to Twitter. The communication takes place in various chatrooms which are either generally accessible or reserved for members of a particular team. Every user has his/her own profile with a nickname and a picture (an avatar). Should we want to tag someone, we can do so very easily, like on Instagram the special character @ is entered and, then, the nickname of the person we want to tag. Thanks to this process, the respective person can read our message more easily and faster. It is also possible to use hashtags or send *Direct messages* to particular users. Generally, the point is to make the boring sending of e-mails and documents more interesting as we know it from our everyday life which makes for a more agreeable atmosphere and communication on its own.³³

Conclusion

Even if society must deal with other issues due to the coronavirus pandemic than work or games, hopefully, there will be enough room for the intended quantity-related survey of the external and internal gamification in tourism, and, we believe this interesting phenomenon which is situated somewhere at the intersection of entertainment and work to contribute to better address not only customers but also employees of travel agencies. Currently, this can be very much needed should we address the millennials, or even younger clients and employees of travel agencies. However, employees must enjoy this type of motivation and they must find it entertaining. They can't see it as a way of exploiting some groups of employees. Thus, this

³⁰ *Gamifikace*. [online]. [2020-04-06]. Available at: <<http://www.businessanimals.cz/ba/clanky/gamifikace/>>.

³¹ *Moderní HR aplikace*. [online]. [2020-04-06]. Available at: <<https://lovec-hlav.cz/blog/moderni-hr-aplikace/>>.

³² *Ibidem*.

³³ *Ibidem*.

approach should be used by managers in a very sensitive way, in particular, when they can't realize in some cases how much their decision can affect the work of ordinary employees.

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BEYOND THE EDGE OF THE ESTABLISHED STEREOTYPES OF COMMUNICATION OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Igor Piatrov – Martin Vanko

ABSTRACT:

The status of social networks in current modern marketing is practically clear. We no longer speak about them within the terms of some trend, but rather consider them a full-fledged marketing communication channel of the majority of brands. Their importance is increased especially for brands whose majority target groups consist of the audience using social networks, i.e. mainly the younger generations of the population. Communication via social networks can often shift any boundaries defined by stereotypes stemming from the communication established in the society. Communication on social networks in specific areas, such as e.g. communication of educational institutions, can to a great extent seem limited due to unexciting topics or its formality. However, it is overstepping of these limits that determines the achievement of relevant results. The objective of the paper is to categorize and characterize elements overstepping the boundaries of the established communication stereotypes in this part of the market on the basis of an analysis of communication of an educational institution on social networks. The paper will point out the elements of communication of an educational institution on social networks, which, in certain moments, have a tendency to operate on the edge, or beyond it, of the field in question, thus overstepping the stereotyped limits and contributing to stretching the limits of communication of educational institutions in the social media environment.

KEY WORDS:

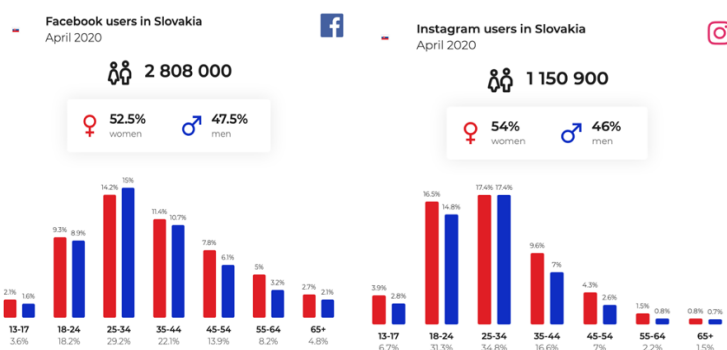
educational institutions, Facebook, Instagram, marketing, marketing communication, social media, social networks

1 Introduction

Following the statistics of the portal *Napoleoncat.com*¹, presented on the whole in the Picture 1, we can state that social networks Facebook and Instagram represent a key instrument of any marketing communication in Slovakia. This statement is based mainly on the number of users of the aforementioned social networks – while the Instagram is used by 21.1% of the population, more than half of the total population of Slovakia (51.5%) is active on the social network Facebook. Within the context of a more detailed description of the presented picture, it is necessary to point out the share of individual age groups of users. According to recent statistics from April 2020, the already mentioned 21.1% of the Slovak population is present on the social network Instagram, the largest group being the users from 18 to 34 years of age. Within the social network Facebook, the most numerous group are the users of the age scope of 18 to 44 years. It is precisely for the reason of the number of individual target groups and their activities on the social networks in question that we consider social networks Facebook and Instagram unique instruments that need to be used mainly in the context of communication of an educational institution, such as university, with its primary target group – university students, most of whom belong to the age scope of 18 to 34 years, in case of both the full-time and external students. The authors of the submitted paper will point out the overstepping of the established stereotypes within the context of communication of educational institutions on social networks – if the target group is actively present in individual social networks, it is necessary not only to attract their attention, but also to retain it, which can seem slightly limiting within the academic online environment. The paper focuses on communication of a selected educational institution – the Faculty of Mass Media Communication of the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava (hereinafter FMC UCM in Trnava) on the social networks

¹ *One social media tool to manage it all.* [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://napoleoncat.com>>.

Facebook² and Instagram³ with regard to the elements indicating the overstepping of the established stereotypes.



Picture 1: Facebook and Instagram Users in Slovakia

Source: *One social media tool to manage it all*. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://napoleoncat.com>>.

2 Beyond the Boundaries of Communication on Facebook

Although social networks have been established primarily for the purpose of connecting individual users and creating certain online communication, in the year of 2020 they should be looked upon from several points of view. The submitted part of the paper addressing the communication of educational institutions beyond the boundaries of the established stereotypes is, to a large extent, oriented on the most popular social network worldwide – the Facebook.⁴ For the reason of its full use in any process within the context of marketing communication, it is essential to point it out as a stable part of almost every social media communication strategy of brands, whether businesses or educational institutions. On the basis of statements made by academia theoreticians, the social network Facebook can be considered a kind of virtual world, principles of which are primarily based on openness and transparency with a shared objective – to interconnect its individual users. It is also confirmed by R. Lieb, according to who the greatest advantage of Facebook and other social networks is the ability to build a network of individual users, who are both the recipients of various news and contents as well as those who create and disseminate such news and contents. However, she adds that it is not possible to leave all content creation to the users and it is important to interactively engage the users in the published content within the context of boosting traffic to external websites.⁵ T. Chatfield also comments on the external websites and regards these websites as the most significant part of digital marketing, mainly because it allows internet users to not only surf the websites, but also to create their own websites.⁶ We, however, side with A. Chris, who sees great potential not only in the websites, but particularly in social media and the social network Facebook. Simultaneously, he adds that digital marketing also includes banner advertisement, email marketing, mobile marketing, SEO, or anything else that the users can imagine in the online environment. P. Frey also agrees with this and, although he considers Facebook a central tool of digital marketing communication, he claims that digital marketing does not consist solely of

² Facebook FMC UCM v Trnave. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://www.facebook.com/FMC.UCM/>>.

³ Instagram FMC_ucm. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <https://www.instagram.com/FMC_ucm/>.

⁴ New global social media research. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://www.smartinsightp.com/social-media-marketing/social-media-strategy/new-global-social-media-research/>>.

⁵ LIEB, R.: *Content marketing: Think Like a Publisher – How to Use Content to Market Online and in Social Media*. Indiana, USA : QUE, 2012, p. 63-64.

⁶ CHATFIELD, T.: *Digitálny vek. 50 myšlienok, ktoré by ste mali poznať*. Bratislava : Slovart, 2013, p. 3.

online communication, but anything that uses digital technologies. “It thus includes online marketing, mobile marketing, and social media.”⁷

Facebook is also considered a central tool of marketing communication by several contemporary experts from advertising practice. P. Žilková, an editor of the marketing magazine *Stratégie*, speaks of the social network Facebook as of a platform that is constantly evolving and adjusting to needs of its more or less demanding users. She mentions this mainly within the context of the coronavirus pandemic. “The Facebook company is trying to adjust to the current situation caused by the pandemic and, based on the findings that suggest that online video calling has grown by 70%, it has introduced Messenger application for desktop.”⁸ Although Facebook has been the most popular social network of the recent years, it is necessary for it to bring innovation not only for the reasons of the rising of new media social platforms and attracting new users, but also to keep the attention of the existing ones. P. Žilková adds that it is this step that could be referred to as logical within the context of increasing the number of users who predominantly use the Messenger application as a part of the Facebook platform.⁹ We are of the same opinion as P. Žilková and want to add the view of subjects using the social network Facebook as a primary instrument of marketing communication as a way to increase the number of fans and users. This is also the reason why the authors of the submitted paper point out the importance of abandoning the established stereotyped communication that could lead to stagnation of the subjects in the context of communication on social networks. The selected subject of FMC UCM in Trnava and its communication on social networks is an actual example of an institution that, in principle, has no boundaries set and does not even conform to those that the society determines as stereotyping, which enables it to set trends in current communication of educational institutions in Slovakia.

2.1 Categorization of Posts on the Basis of Their Content

The authors of the submitted paper specify the basic functions of social networks, through which they determine the content published on social networks by the selected subject FMC UCM in Trnava. These are mainly the informational, educational, and entertainment functions, as well as the function aimed at community building. Within the categorization of the published content, the authors of the submitted paper accentuate content diversity, i.e. not concentrating on just a single type of communication on social networks – sharing the most important content created on the website fmk.sk, which the primary target group of the selected educational institution regards as the central instrument of communication. We believe that the content from the website should be communicated also through social networks, although it is necessary to emphasise the need for creating other content aimed at the aforementioned functions of social networks – besides offering information, it should also provide entertainment, education, and community building. Every educational institution in Slovakia could get beyond the boundaries of the established stereotypes in communication, if their content reflects not only the needs of the management and the institution itself, but also the needs of the primary, secondary, or even tertiary target groups, in our case the current students, potential students or graduates, and the external environment. Stemming from the Picture 2, in which we present examples of the most successful posts published on the social network Facebook by the selected institution FMC UCM in Trnava, we can state that the selected subject communicates with its target group primarily through visually attractive and personalized content in a uniform visual form. These are not only posts related to specific students or pedagogues, but also posts reflecting current

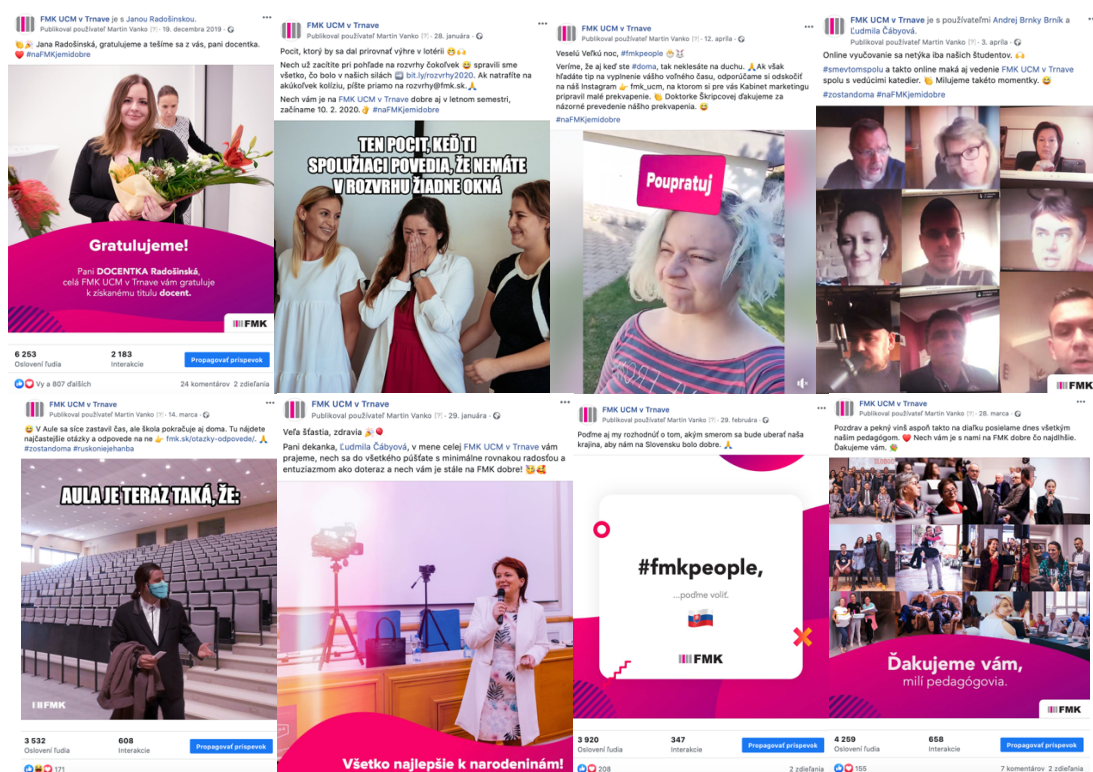
⁷ FREY, P.: *Marketingová komunikace. Nové trendy 3.0*. Prague : Managment Press, 2011, p. 53.

⁸ ŽILKOVÁ, P.: Ožilo ICQ a Facebook sa prefarbil. In *Stratégie*, 2020, Vol. 26, No. 4, p. 4.

⁹ Ibidem.

trends required in communication with chosen generations. We can thus regard the following types of posts as the main pillars of communication on social networks:

- information posts, through which the selected subject informs its target group about current events not only on the academic scale, but also within the society;
- entertainment posts, for which it uses a format of memes that can provide significantly more information that cannot be expressed by text and simultaneously can convey any idea or understanding faster than a pure text form can¹⁰;
- posts aimed at fulfilling leisure time and retaining attention, for which the selected subject uses mainly the social network Instagram and is able to refer and direct attention to them through communication on Facebook;
- authentic posts, where it is not possible to focus on their quality but rather their content created in real time and depicting academic background;
- topical posts that, thanks to the right timing, can arouse not only engagement, but also awareness.



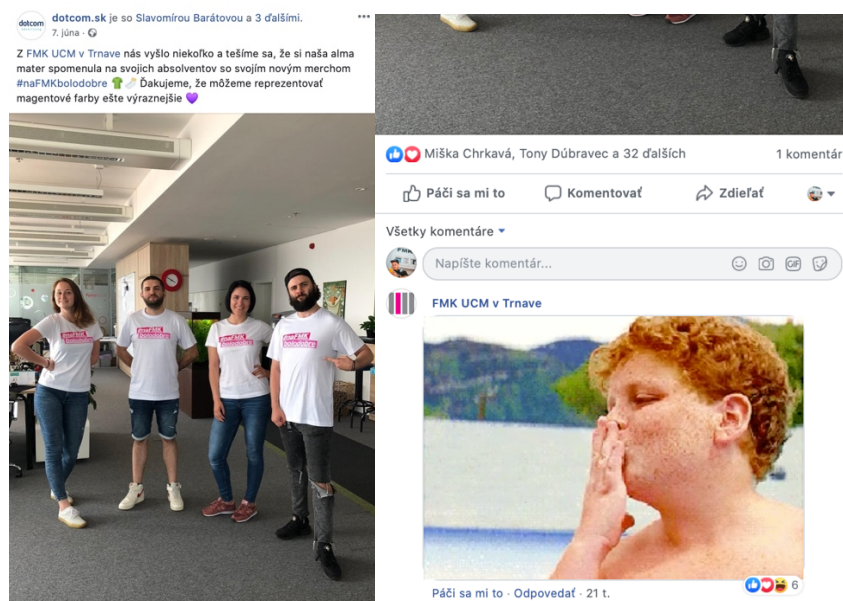
Picture 2: Content on the Social Network Facebook FMC UCM in Trnava

Source: Facebook FMC UCM v Trnava. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://www.facebook.com/pg/FMC.UCM/posts>>.

At the same time, it is important to point out communication of the so-called third parties, where the focus is not only on the creation of the published content, but also on a subsequent response to the content concerning the subject in question. As an example, within the context of communication of FMC UCM in Trnava, we present a reaction to a post made by the agency dotcom.sk on their social network page, posting an image of the educational institution's graduates wearing new merchandise, to which the selected subject reacted in the comment section with a popular GIF¹¹ format.

¹⁰ What is meme. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://www.digitaltrends.com/computing/what-is-a-meme/>>.

¹¹ Gif – nový žurnalistický žaner. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://www.tyzen.sk/nazory/21700/gif-novy-zurnalisticky-zaner/>>.



Picture 3: Post Published on Social Network by dotcom.sk

Source: *Dotcom.sk*. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://www.facebook.com/agenturadotcom.>>.

2.2 Categorization of the Posts on the Basis of Their Form

Within the categorization of the content based on the form of individual posts published on the social network Facebook on the official profile of the educational institution FMC UCM in Trnava, it is important to point out the wide spectrum of the used formats that have a tendency to overstep the boundaries of established stereotypes in communication of educational institutions. The basic communication element of the selected subject is the combination of static images and video content. Positive effect of using video content is also confirmed by the collective of authors of the publication *Online Marketing*, who highlight the basic positive impact of the video format on marketing communication – video helps to raise organic search, increase conversion rates, improve brand awareness or increase the number of links on a webpage.¹² At the same time, the selected subject avoids using plain text as a communication instrument on the social network Facebook, which we, based on practice, find a correctly chosen strategic step. Our statement is also confirmed by the aforementioned collective of authors – they do not recommend using plain text on social networks. *“Contrary to text, video cannot be simply skimmed through. Since it is a combination of text and audiovisual elements, it enables us to communicate a substantial amount of condensed information in a short period of time and, as such, establishes an immediate emotional connection with the audience.”*¹³ Within the identification of preferred content formats used on the social network Facebook by our chosen subject, we speak mainly of:

- static images, which have a tendency to generate an increased engagement in case of an organically published content;
- videos that, as stated above, can be regarded as trends of communication on social networks in the last 5 years;
- animations, in which any messages can be effectively communicated through audiovisual content;
- infographics – posts in text form written in graphically adjusted and visually uniform templates that, based on their format within the context of categorization of content, can be

¹² *Online marketing – Současné trendy očima předních expertů*. Brno : Computer Press, 2014, p. 174-175.

¹³ *Ibidem*.

classified as static images, but they are a combination of text and graphic elements, while the above defined static images are described mainly as photographs in their basic form or with addition of graphic elements creating visual uniformity;

- events, through which our selected subject covers the aforementioned basic function of social networks aimed at community building;
- links from third parties that can generate results of engagement mainly in the context of spreading content from various websites.

Building on the aforementioned formats used in communication on social networks, we can consequently speak of overstepping boundaries of the established stereotypes in communication of educational institutions, which the society perceives as unattractive, uninteresting, and unwilling to reflect modern trends. If the educational institutions effectively combine all available communication formats used on social networks with content creation reflecting the needs of their target group even at the cost of breaking down the established stereotypes, they can gradually contribute to raising the awareness of the educational institution brand itself and to building correct and stable relations with the primary, secondary or tertiary target group – current students, potential students, graduates or the external environment.

3 Beyond the Boundaries of Communication on Instagram

In the paper's introduction, we have already mentioned some statistics that underline the importance of using social networks in general, but the Picture 1 also shows a much larger audience of age group of 18-24 on the social network Instagram than on Facebook, while it is exactly this age category that can be seen as key group for the FMC UCM, because this group comprises the majority of potential applicants for studies at this faculty. If we exclude chat social media, the so-called messengers, it is the Instagram that is the third largest social network in terms of the amount of monthly users, the number being one billion. To compare, the largest Facebook has almost 2.5 billion users, the second YouTube 2 billion.¹⁴ Number of users and their year-on-year increase suggest that Instagram is a social network of a constantly growing popularity. In 2019, Instagram's global annual increase in advertising reach represented 4.4% and, in 2020, its rate was 5.7%. In comparison, the social network Facebook grew globally by 0.9% in 2019 and 1.0% in 2020. As the submitted paper specifically deals with the region of Slovakia, it is necessary to present the growth of Instagram in its territory. In 2019, the audience reachable by Instagram's advertising in Slovakia increased by 10% and in 2020, the increase represented 7.8%. Although the growth is slowing, we can claim that Instagram as a social network is still on the increase in Slovakia.¹⁵ The actual character of the Instagram platform precludes the ability to overstep and stretch the limits of the established communication mainly in two dimensions. One of these is the Instagram Feed and the other one is the Instagram Stories. Instagram Feed represents a dimension that aggregates permanent content, i.e. the content, existence of which is not a subject of time limits (in contrast to Instagram Stories). This dimension accumulates posts that can contain static media – photographs or dynamic media – videos, or their combination in one post in the carousel format which allows inserting a series of videos, photographs, or their combination, into one post. The second dimension – Instagram Stories, as we have already indicated, contains temporary, or vanishing, content, because its

¹⁴ *We Are Social: Digital in 2020*. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/digital-2020/>>.

¹⁵ *Datareportal: Digital in Slovakia*. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <https://datareportal.com/digital-in-slovakia?utm_source=Reports&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=Digital_2020&utm_content=Country_Link_Slide/>.

existence is limited by time. Content in this dimension is visible only for 24 hours from its upload and can contain both the static and dynamic media.

3.1 Categorization of Posts in the Dimension of Instagram Feed

Although Instagram Stories are presently very popular and, to a certain extent, even more popular than Instagram Feed, Instagram Feed still has a lot to offer and its communication function continues to be very important. It is this dimension that can be considered a showcase of brand communication on Instagram and it is usually a first point of contact of a fan or potential fan with the brand. Communication of an educational institution on Instagram might appear at first sight quite limiting. However, the opposite is true. Instagram Feed also offers numerous ways to adapt the practically commercial types of contents to the communication of an educational institution in order to disrupt a prejudice that communication of such an institution cannot “move with the times”.

Informative content is the first type of content that can, in a way, be described as must-have content. It is the content that informs about what is happening, or, retrospectively, what has happened, in the faculty. These are posts communicating important events, lectures, visits by special guests, etc; eventually, they retrospectively show already realized events and bring a short visual report (images or videos) complemented with text information in the post’s captions. Although this content might appear dull, it is of great value. This type of content is especially important, as it presents to the public what the faculty is actually doing and what value it creates for the society. The brand does not need to publish every “little thing” it does, but only essential information. High frequency of such content might easily exceed a bearable level of purely informative content and can lead to losing fans through them unfollowing the account. And, naturally, visual design of this type of content is important, as this content is usually neither entertaining, nor interactive and its visuality must then make up for its shortcomings and make it appealing at least to the eye as much as possible.

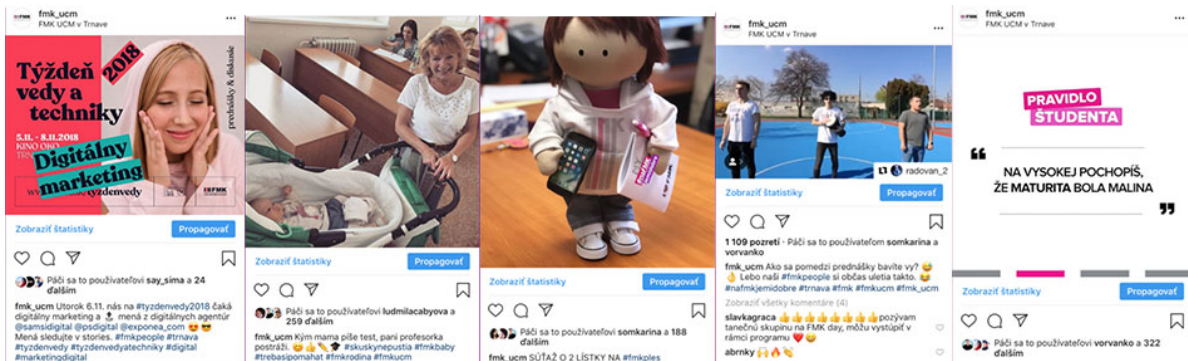
Backstage content. During its existence, Instagram has profiled itself for many brands as an instrument revealing the backstage of a brand. Naturally, both the brands and the users have gotten used to this. For brands, showing their backstage is a very good way to draw the fan into the activities of the brand and to build an even stronger relationship with them. For the fan, it is a kind of added value of the brand communication that brings them a certain feeling of uniqueness. Just like commercial brands, an educational institution has its backstage happenings that are not always visible. One of the types of contents published by the FMC is the backstage content. Photographs from team building activities of the pedagogues, a professor taking care of a student’s child during an exam, a vice-dean making new seats for students during summer holiday... These are contents that are not thought of as priority in the communication of educational institutions, but their role might paradoxically be the most significant. This type of content humanizes the brand, communicates emotions, and, ultimately, creates an authentic image of the brand by reminding that although it is a brand, there are real people behind it.

Interactive content. Social networks are built on the possibility of reciprocal communication between the participants. It is thus important for the brands not to forget to lead a dialogue with their audience or directly include the audience in their communication. These can be various contents, whose text descriptions or captions directly in the medium contain questions or explicitly encourage fans to respond. Possibilities of creating such content are very broad, from various riddles, as e.g. when the fans of FMC profile were asked to guess, who a fabric doll in

a picture impersonates, to various competitions where the fans could win prizes, promotional items, or tickets to various events. Besides the benefits of strengthening relationships and building the brand, this type of content also has a positive influence on the metrics of the Instagram profile. Interactive content, which aims to build engagement, also includes communication through meme pictures. It is a type of internet humour that is very popular among young people, i.e. also in the target group of the FCM UCM. In a way, it might seem that this content is outside the limits for communication of an educational institution, but it is necessary to realize that this type of content and communication is a normal part of life of the target group and, therefore, should without prejudice have a full place among the content types of brand communication with young target groups. In connection to social networks, an algorithm that evaluates profile activity and adjusts what is then displayed in a profile is often mentioned. If a profile posts content that produces activity taken into consideration by the algorithm, it can help the profile by, for example, showing the profile or its posts to more fans.

UGC content is another type of content related to fans' inclusion into communication. UGC abbreviation means User-generated content. As the name implies, it is an implementation of content created by the fans into the communication of a brand. Many global brands use UGC as a common part of their communication on Instagram. As an example, we can use the GoPro, a company producing action cameras. Consumers buy these cameras to capture their moments. When they document some moment, they often publish it on their Instagram account and tag the camera producer in the captions of their post. If the content is created by a fan and satisfies the attributes of communication of the GoPro brand, the brand often shares this user-generated content on its profile. This has several benefits. Besides the brand building its image as a user-friendly brand, it also communicates maximally authentic content – as content from fans is not professionally edited, coloured, etc. At the same time, the brand saves resources, as it need not spend them on content creation, because a fan has done it for the brand. Similarly, UGC can be used in communication of educational institutions. It should be borne in mind that the audience are just people and have different interests, talents, and daily create different content. If a brand “teaches” them to tag the university profile on activities connected to their studies, it can become a very beneficial source of authentic content in the long run. An example of this could be a funny video from students, who posted it on their profile, but tagged their faculty that has then further shared it or a photograph of students with a famous person during an event that they have visited on behalf of the faculty, photographs and videos of students taking part in academic mobility, etc. Again, there are many options; educational institution only needs to think about a normal day of a student and look for moments that intersect with the studies.

Periodical content is the last categorized type of content in the Instagram Feed environment. Serial content, i.e. the content that is generated with a certain periodicity, can still be considered the current trend on social networks. FMC has adapted to this trend and has, for instance, created a section called “A student’s rule.” Each Wednesday, this section brings a post with a similar visual design containing a short sentence expressing some true statement that most students agree with. If a brand creates a sufficiently interesting serial content, it can arouse curiosity in their fans and teach them to visit its profile regularly.



Picture 4: Informative, Backstage, Interactive, UGC, and Periodical Instagram Feed Content

Source: *Instagram FMC_ucm*. [online]. [2020-04-10]. Available at: <https://www.instagram.com/FMC_ucm/>.

3.2 Categorization of Posts in the Dimension of Instagram Stories

As we have already mentioned, Instagram Stories is a very popular function of the Instagram. Besides the existence of content in this dimension being limited by time, this space offers much greater possibilities for creativity than the Feed. Media in this dimension can be supplemented with various interactive elements, such as Stickers which allow the user to add polls, quizzes, music or enable the audience to ask questions. The visual of the media can also be shaped by using GIF stickers or adding own hand-drawn graphics. There are really many options to design content in a creative way and thanks to this fact Instagram Stories can be considered the most popular feature and interface of the Instagram. Within the dimension of Instagram Stories, we have also categorized several types of content that can help to overstep the limitations of stereotypes in communication of an educational institution. *Flash news* is the first type in this dimension. The role of this content is to provide the audience with information that is either very important for the audience or essential, so to speak breakthrough, for the faculty. Content of this type is visually distinguished from other content in this dimension. Visual difference is achieved by using the same layout for every post of this type. Continual usage of the same visual ensures fast recognisability of content by the target audience. In a way, it can be stated that the audience learns that this is an important message and recognizes at a glance that it is this type of content and it requires attention. However, appropriateness of selecting this type of content needs to be carefully considered. As it is not content that would be interactive or entertaining, overloading Instagram Stories with this content could bore the audience and, at the same time, content of this type would become meaningless and pointless. Therefore, it is necessary to consider both the periodicity of such messages and the overall content in the sense of deciding which messages should be communicated in this way. For instance, the FMC UCM has used flash news to publish the signing of cooperation with the News Agency of the Slovak Republic, inform about the visit of the US ambassador or to inform and remind of interesting lectures that would take place within 24 hours.

Instagram Stories from Events represents content from events that the FMC UCM either organizes or takes part in. Characteristic feature of this content is that it is made in real time and shows the audience actual moments from a concrete event. It is thus a sort of an immediate coverage of the event. This content also has the advantage that it provides the audience with scenes from an event that the audience does not partake in, which is in itself a sufficient added value for this audience. On the other hand, this format allows presenting backstage content from various events to the audience and thus creating even more attractive content. Simultaneously, the Instagram Stories features also allow making this content highly interactive by using the aforementioned stickers, through which the audience itself can be involved in the content and the event. An example of this could be, for instance, various polls with questions

of what content the audience wishes to see or various other questions that invite the audience to respond, drawing it deeper into the event, retaining its attention, and eliminating the rate of followers leaving the content. FMC UCM uses this type of content, for example, for Instagram Stories from scientific conferences, which allow presenting this topic even to audience without specialist knowledge in an attractive and interactive way. Naturally, contents from faculty events are a matter of course. *Takeovers* are a similar type of content as Stories from events. They are also usually created in real time, but the difference is that their creator is not the owner of the Instagram profile but another person, e.g. a fan or, in case of the FCM UCM, a faculty student. The basis of this content is to give a person with interesting content space for its presentation and show the audience valuable content from its creator's point of view. The content creator thus takes control of the Instagram account and creates content about agreed topic for an agreed period of time independently. In case of FMC UCM, a good example is the takeovers by students of academic mobility. For one day, they are given an opportunity to show their normal day in a country where they currently study. This content is highly mutually beneficial. It provides the largest added value to students considering academic mobility, as they are able to obtain unique, first-hand, information through this form of content. We can also see value for audience that has never taken part in academic mobility and does not plan to do so, but is able to form a picture of what such mobility looks like. At the same time, they are able to ask the content creator any additional questions that might interest them, which further increases meaningfulness and informative character of this type of content. As this is again the case of the user-generated content, its advantage for the profile administrator is also the fact that through takeovers they get valuable content without any financial or time costs needed to create content, as is the case for other types of content.

Driving traffic content is the last categorized content in Instagram Stories. The role of this content is to refer a follower to some other place. By other place we mean, for example, other communication channel of a brand or Instagram Feed. Due to their popularity and ability of fast penetration of the target audience, Instagram Stories is a suitable means of building knowledge about other official communication channels. These Instagram Stories can refer to important posts on the faculty website, on profiles of faculty radio, television, magazine, etc. It can also refer a follower to a post on Instagram Feed, in case they have missed it and the faculty finds it important that the post is seen by as many people as possible. Posts referring to the information outside the Instagram channel of the FMC UCM are also visually differentiated by using a uniform layout, so that the followers could immediately recognize the character of such post.



Picture 5: Flash News, Event Story, Takeover, Driving Traffic Content in Instagram Stories
Source: internal resources of FMC UCM, 2020.

Conclusion

With the advent of social networks, the communication opportunities have been vastly enriched. Big brands attach particular emphasis on their communication in this environment, considering it their benchmark, but there still are areas of the market where communication on social network appears to be limited. One of these is the area of educational institutions, whose product, or service, might seem quite unattractive, which does not give their communication space for being imaginative. If we want to summarize the view of communication of educational institutions in the environment of social networks, we could state that overstepping the limits of the established stereotypes of communication stems from determination. By determination we mean, on the one hand, following communication trends of global brands on Facebook and Instagram and, on the other hand, making an effort to find ways to transform and implement these trends from a practically commercial sphere to the sphere of educational institutions. Communication needs to be interactively adjusted to the behaviour and preferences of a target group. If the communication corresponds to the mindset of the target group, it can be assumed that the target group will identify with it and consider it credible and such communication will then allow the brand to grow not only among the already existing but also among the potential customers – in our case, potential applicants for studies.

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APPLICATION OF SOLOMO MARKETING IN THE PRESENTATION OF ECO-INNOVATIONS IN SELECTED BUSINESS ENTITY

Monika Rezníčková

ABSTRACT:

Trends in marketing communication will move even further into the online world. For businesses, this means the need to properly coordinate offline activities with digital ones. The world of the Internet opens up many unexplored possibilities, creating space for creativity. Such marketing communication is also suitable for the presentation of eco-innovations in order to strengthen environmental awareness. The presented scientific contribution briefly characterizes the concept of SoLoMo marketing concept in relation to current global statistics. Digital media platforms significantly support the interactive communication of a business entity with the customer – whether current or potential, which is happening through mobile devices that support embedded geolocation services. A specific example of the use of this concept can be found in the third chapter of this paper – it is a mobile application of IKEA, which uses augmented reality. The main goal of the contribution is to point out and approach the application of the SoLoMo marketing concept in a selected business entity, to characterize an example of good practice.

KEY WORDS:

augmented reality, eco-innovations, environmental awareness, IKEA place, location based services, mobile applications, mobile devices, online marketing, social media, SoLomo marketing

1 Introduction

With the advent of the new decade, digital, mobile and social media have become an integral part of the daily lives of people around the world.¹ More than 4.54 billion people currently use the Internet. Almost 60 % of the world's population is already online, and the latest trends show that more than half of the world's population will use social media by the middle of this year. We can consider social media as the most widespread and accessible type of digital media today. In the last 12 months, almost 300 million people have joined online for the first time, mostly in developing countries. In 2019, globally, the average time spent during the day on the Internet was 6 hours and 43 minutes – of which 3 hours and 22 minutes on a mobile device. During 2020, people will spend an incredible 1.25 billion years on the Internet together.² Even such results from global surveys make me reflect that there is currently no greater public space to share educational or even entertaining information, such as the Internet. It is essential to adapt and explore all available online channels to interact with the consumer, especially when it comes to educating on such sensitive topics as environmental protection.

2 SoLoMo Marketing as an Integral Part of the Online World

The SoLoMo approach in marketing communication integrates three essential elements – social media (Social), geolocation services (Local) and mobile devices (Mobile).³ The emergence and development of this concept has been supported by irreversible technological

¹ HLADÍKOVÁ, V.: Reflection of digital media and Internet influence on selected cognitive functions of students in educational proces. In MADZIK, P. (ed.): *Proceedings of 2nd International Scientific Conference of the Poprad Economic and Management Forum*. Ružomberok : VERBUM, 2019, p. 227.

² *Digital in 2020*. [online]. [2020-05-15]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/digital-2020>>.

³ *SoLoMo or Social, Local, Mobile – The new experiential mindset*. [online]. [2020-05-15]. Available at: <<https://connectthedot.com/%20internet-of-things/solomo/>>.

progress, the growing popularity of smartphones and the rapid expansion of the mobile Internet. The SoLoMo marketing concept was presented by the well-known French businessman and blogger Loïc Le Meur at the LeWeb11 conference.⁴ It is not a completely new concept, but with the constant development of information and communication technologies, its importance and use in practice is changing and improving, adapting to the use of increasingly advanced technologies. Its unchanging essence is the integration of the most important components of digital marketing. The SoLoMo principle represents the convergence of technologies that are based on collaboration and localization, connecting online marketing with an offline world in which it delivers a personalized message to the customer at a specific time and place. Mobile applications using this principle can reach customers in geographical proximity by advertising. The use of this concept is conditioned by the presence of a mobile device (for instance, it can be a smartphone, tablet, e-book reader, or even a game console). SoLoMo marketing is a concept that allows smartphone users to access local offers via mobile search.⁵ Relevant search results are specific to taking into account the user's current location. The concept also provides closer social interactions.⁶



Figure 1: SoLoMo concept: social, local, mobile

Source: *How can smaller hotels improve guest loyalty through SoLoMo marketing?* [online]. [2020-05-25]. Available at: <<https://www.hotelogix.com/blog/2014/12/15/how-can-smaller-hotels-improve-guest-loyalty-through-solomo-marketing/>>.

According to the latest survey from 2020⁷, the average user spends one minute more per day on the Internet than in 2019, which is 6 hours and 43 minutes (that represents up to 40 % of our waking life). It is therefore a logical step to capture the attention of these consumers, who are constantly connected. These are consumers of different ages, interests or preferences, but their common feature is "being connected" – often referred to as the Generation C (Connected).⁸ SoLoMo marketing is a common way of life for them. Businesses can try to reach them with the help of innovations in the digital space and draw their attention to serious social problems with the help of innovative tools of online marketing communication. And it is among such tools that one can also advise the SoLoMo marketing concept or the use of

⁴ ŠLOSÁR, R.: *Digitálny marketing dnešnej doby*. [online]. [2020-05-15]. Available at: <<https://peterstetka.wordpress.com/2016/12/16/digitalny-marketing-dnesnej-doby/>>.

⁵ VRONTIS, D., THRASSOU, A.: *Inovative Business Practices*. Newcastle : Cambridge Scholars, 2013, p. 360.

⁶ QIONGWEI, Y., BAOJUN, M.: *Internet and electronic business in China*. Bingley : Emerald, 2018, p. 22-24.

⁷ *Digital in 2020*. [online]. [2020-04-16]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/digital-2020/>>.

⁸ *Zaspívate so smartfónom a internetom? Patríte do Generácie C*. [online]. [2020-05-15]. Available at: <<https://style.hnonline.sk/tech/548638-zaspivate-so-smartfonom-a-internetom-patríte-do-generácie-c>>.

augmented reality as a marketing platform. Figure 2 presents an infographic that highlights what happens in one minute in the online world – therefore it talks about the importance of communication in the digital environment.



Figure 2: What happens on the Internet in 60 seconds?

Source: DESJARDINS, J.: *What Happens in an Internet Minute in 2019?*. [online]. [2020-05-25]. Available at: <<https://www.visualcapitalist.com/what-happens-in-an-internet-minute-in-2019/?fbclid=IwAR33kzb-TqSyiEgYNR2QOTdRUR8bEf0W97WVtFOB-2GPTbjt9AN-V5LM-rk>>.

The objective of the businesses, as well as marketers, is to empathize with the target customer as faithfully as possible, find out how he or she lives, what he or she thinks, what pleases him/her, what discourages him/her, and thus personalize the communication. The business entity should not strive to reach everyone. A typical representative of the target group should be an ideal customer who can and is interested in buying the product, or accept and master the information offered, but also takes into account his or hers shortcomings or negative behaviour. The data required for such an analysis are relatively easily accessible in the online environment, e.g. when using various databases of analytical tools that collect large amounts of various data on user activity, whether on the website, social networking sites, etc. Various analytical tools are offered, for example, by Google (Google Analytics, Google Trends, or Google Shopping Insights), Facebook (FB Business Manager) or Microsoft. The obtained data can then be segmented e.g. based on geographical location, mobile device used, operating system, age, gender, preferred topics, hobbies, etc. Also on the basis of such a specific analysis of the target group, it is possible in the future to better maintain and strengthen the relationship with it. Defining a target group facilitates effective targeting of activities and tools to selected customer groups. It enables companies to spend resources efficiently, offer goods or services, set pricing policies, distribution and prepare promotions

tailored to the needs and behaviour of people from a specific target group.⁹ According to the survey¹⁰, we can rank among the most used categories of mobile applications as follow:

- chat platforms (89 %);
- applications of social networking sites (89 %);
- purchases (66 %);
- entertainment or video content (65 %);
- maps (65 %);
- music (52 %);
- games (47 %);
- banking services (35 %);
- health and fitness (26 %).

These survey results also clearly indicate the modern trend of online communication, mainly through social networking and chat platforms, whether among relatives, acquaintances but also with brands. There is a growing interest in purchasing products and services through the digital interface of mobile devices, which people otherwise performed offline. The survey also shows a high search rate for the most popular content format – video and entertainment. To the same extent, the use of localization comes to the fore, which greatly facilitates the user experience with the presented message. Mobile devices facilitate access to information on the Internet. Using the results of this survey, there is a noticeable shift in consumer behaviour towards the digitization of a large number of his or hers daily activities. Users have already understood, despite some disadvantages, that the digital world can make their daily routine incomparably more efficient. Users most often learn about new brands through search engines, TV ads, recommendations from acquaintances, ads on social media, brand or product websites, ads on websites, series or movies, recommendations or comments on social networking sites, or ads on mobile applications.¹¹ According to the January 2020 report,¹² the key to success will be building trust in the brand (including through employees and their connections to the outside world), emotional content mediated through public company profiles, building deeper relationships through private channels, and facilitating user access to information that they require. It is also very important for businesses to know the online activities and the type of content that users most often search on the Internet. Business entities that are sustainable and implement environmental management activities should take this shift in user behaviour into account and draw attention to them through green marketing in an online environment.

3 IKEA Place: Augmented Reality Furnishing

The Swedish giant IKEA joined the activities to save our planet in 2018, committing itself to using only renewable and recycled materials in production by 2030. Already, 60 % of IKEA products are based on renewable materials, with almost 10 % containing recycled materials. Inter IKEA CEO Torbjorn Loof says that through their size and reach, they have the

⁹ SOUČEK, M.: *Ako urobiť prieskum trhu a analýzu konkurencie*. [online]. [2020-05-05]. Available at: <https://www.ecommercebridge.sk/ako-urobit-prieskum-trhu-a-analyzu-konkurencie/#Cielova_skupina_zakaznikov>.

¹⁰ *Digital in 2020*. [online]. [2020-05-15]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/digital-2020>>.

¹¹ Ibidem.

¹² Compare to: ČÁBYOVÁ, E.: Environmentálny marketing a jeho význam pre spoločnosť. In ZAUŠKOVÁ, A., MADLEŇÁK, A. (eds.): *Manažment environmentálnych inovácií prostredníctvom phygitalových nástrojov*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2017, p. 8; KRAJČOVIČ, P.: Use of media to raise awareness of eco-innovations. In *Communication Today*, 2019, Vol. 10, No. 2, p. 120-131.

opportunity to inspire and enable more than one billion people to live better lives within the limits of the planet. This is how he comments on their corporate strategy. IKEA has therefore joined the growing list of global companies striving to improve their stores from an environmental point of view. They have set goals based on scientific knowledge to reduce the climate impact of their stores and other spaces by 80 % by 2030 compared to 2016. This year, they will remove all disposable plastic products from their assortment and from restaurants in their stores. IKEA stores will expand sales of domestic solar equipment to 29 markets by 2025.¹³ IKEA makes it easier for its current and future customers to buy their favourite furniture and other home decorations in a creative way. It has developed an innovative mobile application whose ambition is to change the way consumers buy furniture. The IKEA Place mobile application supports ideas for creating a better life at home and is also available in Slovakia. The application allows users to virtually place 3D models in real scale in their own space. The mobile application thus combines the latest augmented reality technologies and smart home solutions. The customer can first be inspired by the comfort of home via the camera in a smartphone, while always finding new special product collections in the application. IKEA brings new solutions for home furnishing through the use of a mobile device and augmented reality in a mobile application.

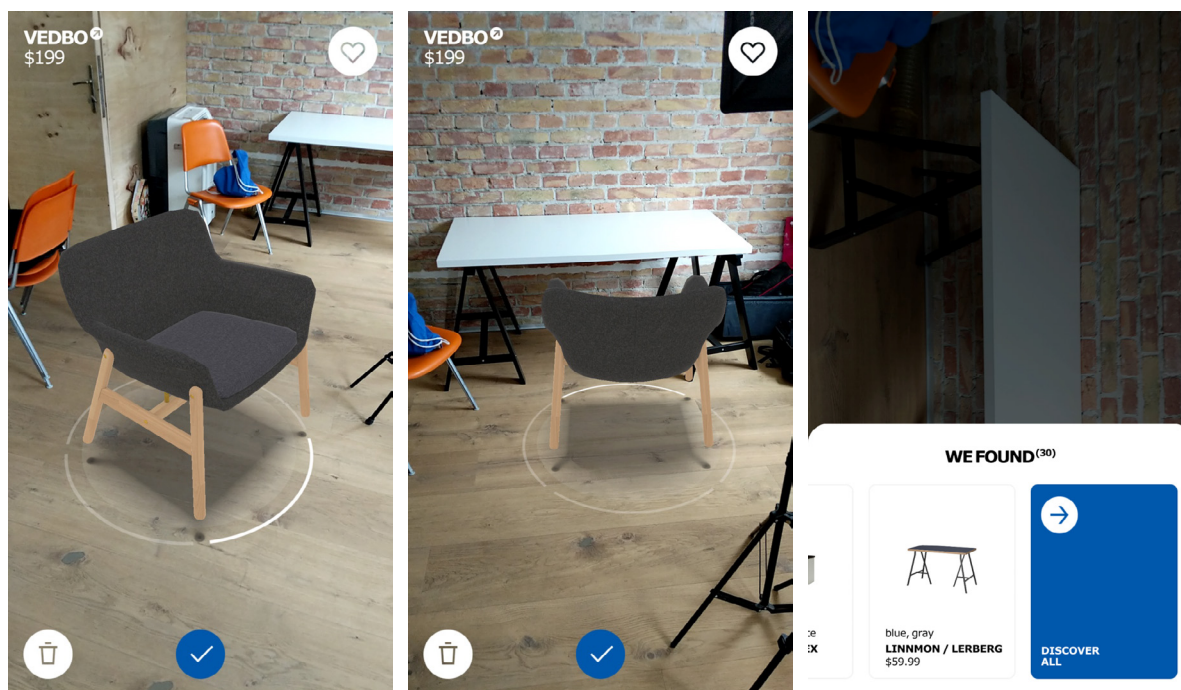


Figure 3: Preview of IKEA Place mobile application usage

Source: KAPUSTA, M.: *IKEA Place: Aplikácia s rozšírenou realitou uľahčí nakupovanie nábytku*. [online]. [2020-05-25]. Available at: <<https://www.mojandroid.sk/ikea-place-rozsirena-realita-arcore-aplikacia/>>.

Augmented reality technology places virtual elements into the physical environment via a smartphone screen.¹⁴ It captures the desired room, which must be well lit, and then just look at the display, choose furniture from about 2,500 items in the catalogue and point the phone where the customer would imagine a piece of furniture. The mobile application can work with several surfaces at the same time, while then displaying a 3D model of the selected piece of

¹³ *IKEA zachraňuje planétu. Používať bude len obnoviteľné a recyklované materiály a celkom sa zbaví plastov*. [online]. [2020-05-25]. Available at: <<https://www.interez.sk/ikea-bude-pouzivat-len-obnovitelne-materialy-a-celkom-zakaze-plasty/>>.

¹⁴ ŠVEC, M., MADLEŇÁK, A.: Legal frameworks for the phygital concept. In *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2017, Vol. 13, No. 6, p. 210.

furniture in real size on the display of the device, in the correct scale and with excellent alignment. In addition, customers can use the recognition function of the application, which uses a photo of their own furniture to search for similar pieces in the catalogue. Using the mobile application from IKEA is very simple and can be handled by the average user. The furniture can be rotated and moved on the floor, while it is possible to add several items at once and try out the complete equipment for the whole room. At the same time, the user can turn around the room and the furniture stays in place. User is not limited by the field of view of the camera on the smartphone. A useful feature is the ability to add products to favourites – in the catalogue, the user can browse, for example, at work and after coming home he or she can try the setting of products that he or she previously found in the application.¹⁵ A significant merit of the application is the localization into Czech. There is also the option to select a search filter by price and furniture category.¹⁶ Apple's ARKit technology, which IKEA uses, comes from the latest version of the iOS operating system, and in 2018 it was also introduced on the Android operating system using ARCore technology. The customer can thus more easily estimate not only whether the new furniture fits into the room, but also how much space it will take up. It is a really handy helper that can dramatically change the way we buy furniture, but also various other products. It is quite possible that this is the future that will soon be implemented in other creative solutions for mobile applications. In terms of the SoLoMo marketing concept, it is a very innovative solution and connection of a mobile device using a mobile application and a built-in gyroscope. A gyroscope is a device that measures the position of a smartphone in space using special sensors. Changes in the position of the device activate sensors that transmit information to the application and trigger the corresponding effect. Outputs from this application can be shared on social media to acquaintances and friends, as well as IKEA itself uses social media to communicate about this innovation. Such eco-innovation saves customers time so they don't have to go to the store right away, which, as we know, is currently only in Bratislava. The furniture can then be ordered directly to their home, or picked up at the collection point (which has recently been added in Košice).

Conclusion

The concept of SoLoMo marketing is an increasingly common approach within the communication strategy abroad, but its use is still only evolving in Slovakia. However, we can talk about the undeniable trend of digitization of the way of life, as well as simple everyday activities. Consumers are spending more and more time on smartphones trying to make their lives easier. Businesses should understand this trend and use it as their competitive advantage.¹⁷ This also applies to socially responsible business entities and their efforts to educate the general public. Consumers as well as businesses are increasingly starting to think ecologically and sustainably. They try to contribute to the improvement of the environment, which can often be helped by the simple use of a mobile application. The scientific contribution presented a selected example of good practice in the use of SoLoMo marketing in the presentation of eco-innovations that are implemented in our daily lives. An integral part

¹⁵ KAPUSTA, M.: *IKEA Place: Aplikácia s rozšírenou realitou uľahčí nakupovanie nábytku*. [online]. [2020-05-25]. Available at: <<https://www.mojandroid.sk/ikea-place-rozsirena-realita-arcove-aplikacia/>>.

¹⁶ *Ako by vyzeral IKEA nábytok u vás doma?*. [online]. [2020-05-25]. Available at: <<https://stiahnut.sk/mobilne-nastroje/ikea-place-mobilni#prehlad>>.

¹⁷ MIKLEŇČOVÁ, 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 : University of Žilina, 2016, p. 1386.

of IKEA's communication with the customer is a mobile application that uses augmented reality technology, geolocation services and then reports its progress to social media. The presented scientific contribution described the connection of three essential elements of the SoLoMo marketing concept – social media, geolocation services and mobile devices, through which it is possible to personally and creatively address specific target groups.

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INTRODUCTION TO AGILE WAY OF WORKING

Jarmila Šalgovičová – Silvia Klinčeková

ABSTRACT:

The paper deals with agile as a new way of working and its principles and benefits. It further describes agile manifesto as a set of values and best practices. In the introduction, we present agile and agile marketing. We provide with its definitions and basic overview and understanding. It further describes reason for adopting the new way of working and what are their benefits which are the following: transparency, client engagement and continuous improvement. We also describe framework called Scrum. It is one of the most popular agile methodologies. In a conclusion we connect topic of servant leadership where we highlight the profile of servant leader. The objective of this paper is to present the importance of this field and highlight its actuality. It is necessity to understand the concept of agile and its necessary mindset.

KEY WORDS:

agile, agile marketing, scrum, servant leadership

1 Introduction

We all face the challenge of winning on the market that is constantly changing. We are living in a fast-pace age where our long-term planning does not work. What will help to handle this pressure? The answer is simple: Agile way of working 3.0. This article will bring you high level overview and understanding of the topic.

1.1 Agile

Agile is the most powerful methodology. Many companies have accepted the challenge of transformation to an Agile environment. The word Agile is very popular, however, in many cases it is not well understood. Agile or Agility is the way how we will react to the changing environment, in other words agile is about adaptiveness. „*Agility is the ability to adopt and respond to change... agile organization view change is an opportunity, not a threat.*“¹ Agile can be understood as an iterative development methodology which values human communication and feedback. It is adapting to changes, and producing working results. In one word agile can be described as an adaptiveness.

Manifesto for Agile Software Development

- Individuals and interactions over processes and tools.
- Working software over comprehensive documentation.
- Customer collaboration over contract negotiation.
- Responding to change over following a plan.²

1.2 Agile Marketing

„*It is a tactical marketing approach in which teams identify and focus their collective efforts on high value projects.*“³ It is a modern approach to marketing that uses agile principles.

¹ For more information, see: HIGHSMITH, J.: *Agile Project Management*. Boston : Addison-Wesley Professional, 2004.

² *Manifesto for Agile Software Development*. [online]. [2020-23-03]. Available at: <<https://agilemanifesto.org/>>.

Agile marketing provides an ability to deliver high value of products to the customer. Team works in a short cycle called sprint (time-box for 1 – 4 weeks) to complete marketing activities cooperatively. Agile marketing might embrace failure as long as it will come with lessons learnt for future change and potential improvements. The concept is known as **Wisdom of Crowds** show that human beings working in a larger group might bring better results and solutions than on their own. According to this, more ideas, solutions, suggestions and thoughts can be generated. It is because there is a diversity of opinion and perspective. This will help you to provide with enriching improvement.⁴ Agile team or squad should have a power of wisdom of the crowd granted by diversity of each team member. To better understand the way how agile works, let's have a closer look at the following values which is known as **Agile Marketing Manifesto**:

- Validated learning over opinions and conventions.
- Customer focused collaboration over silos and hierarchy.
- Adaptive and iterative campaigns over Big-Bang campaigns.
- The process of customer discovery over static prediction.
- Flexible vs. rigid planning.
- Responding to change over following a plan.
- Many small experiments over a few large bets.⁵

Agile marketing is connected with a rule called **70:20:10**. It is typical for agile marketing. What does this rule mean?

- 70% of what you do should be low risk, marketing as usual.
- 20% should innovate off what works.
- 10% should be high risk ideas, real-time marketing.

Agile principles:

- Customer satisfaction and continuous delivery.
- Welcome changing.
- Deliver frequently.
- Close, daily cooperation.
- Motivated individuals, who trust each other.
- Face-to-face conversation.
- Measure of progress
- Sustainable development.
- Continuous attention.
- Simplicity.
- Self-organizing teams.
- The team reflects on how to become more effective.⁶

³ See also: FRYREAR, A.: *Death of a Marketer – Modern Marketing's Troubled Past and a New Approach to Change the Future*. Longmont : Corsac Publishing, 2017.

⁴ For more information, see: SUROWIECKI, J.: *The Wisdom of Crowds*. Hamburg : Anchor, 2005.

⁵ *Agile Marketing Manifesto*. [online]. [2020-23-03]. Available at: <<https://agilemarketingmanifesto.org/>>.

⁶ BECK, K. et al: *Principles behind the Agile Manifesto*. 2011. [online]. [2020-23-03]. Available at: <<http://agilemanifesto.org/>>.

1.3 Benefits

According to recent research done by COLLABNET VERSIONONE in 2018. 75% respondents confirmed that Agile offers rapid software delivery, 64% said that the main reason is ability to manage changing priorities. For 55% is increasing of productivity.

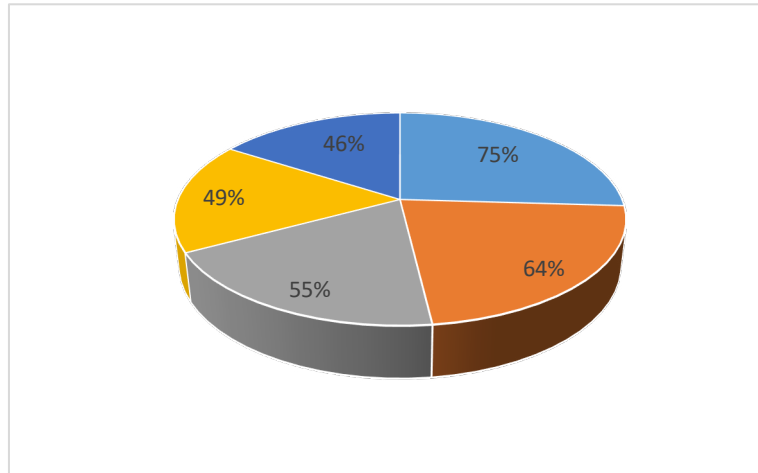


Chart 1: Reason for Adopting Agile

Source: *CollabNet VersionOne Announces the 12th Annual State of Agile Report*. [online]. [2020-23-03]. Available at: <<https://www.collab.net/news/press/collabnet-versionone-announces-12th-annual-state-agile-report/>>.

Here is a summary of other benefits by using Agile:

- **Transparency:** physical or virtual boards will bring transparency and visibility in communication.
- **Allows for change:** Agile is welcoming changes. To see changes as an opportunity and challenge to learn.
- **Focuses on users:** there is highly focus on customer. The product is developed based on client's needs, taste and preferences.
- **Client engagement:** high level of client collaboration and with fully understanding of vision.
- **Early and predictable delivery:** it is based on effective deliverables which is done via regular planning, reviewing and collecting feedback from customer.
- **Improves quality:** tasks are broken down into smaller and manageable units. It helps to focus on high-quality.
- **Continuous improvement:** team is focused on continuous improvement and innovative approach. They learn from sprint and improve for the next one.

1.4 Scrum

It is an iterative framework, is one of the most popular agile methodologies. It is defined by flexibility and holistic perspective. The team works as a single unit achieving a common goal. Scrum uses an empirical approach to quickly deliver and respond to new customer requests. Development in IT (or creation in marketing field) is focused on delivering value and not on a specific plan. Scrum implements agile values and principles. The methodology is designed to provide significant value quickly. It ensures transparency in communication, creates a collective responsibility environment and ensures continuous progress. The key feature is to use cross-functional, self-organized teams whose work is divided into short, concentrated

work cycles called sprints. How to proceed with the introduction of the scrum? Firstly, we need to identify the key roles and responsibilities. In this case, it is a product owner, scrum master and team itself. Product owner represents the voice of the customer. This person continuously builds and manages the all activities and tasks that need to be delivered. Voice of the customer makes sure that the team is on the right path towards the vision and goals. Typical requirements for this kind of person are: business value driven, vision keeper and decision maker. Scrum master is a person who is a facilitator (moderator) and is people oriented. Daily responsibility of this person is to remove impediments. Scrum master helps the team to reach delivery excellence. On the other hand must maximize agile and scrum adoption. Production team performs the work, figures out how to do the work. They identify blockers and commit to team success. The basic attributes of this team are: self-organizing, cross-functional and fully accountable.

1.5 Servant Leadership

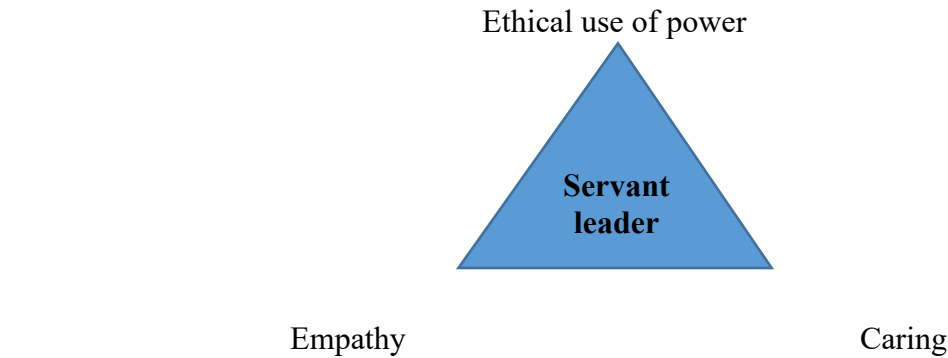
Agile is closely connected with leadership approach which is called **servant leadership**. Robert K. Greenleaf was the founder of the modern Servant leadership movement. In 1970 he published his first essay with title: „*The Servant As Leader*“, which introduced the term servant leadership. He got inspired by a novel in which a group of people decreases its performance once a member was missed. The name of the novel is *Journey to the East*. This theory is shifting the leaders from managing results to designing environment that create results. Servant leadership is not a leadership style as such or even technique. It's an approach and a certain attitude. The role of a servant leader is to motivate, challenge and inspire people. This person is focused on people and their needs. „*The servant-leader is servant first... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first.*“⁷ **Servant leader** is a person who values everyone's way of thinking and highlights diversity in opinions. That person is constantly seeking out opinions. The real essence of a servant leader is to encourage people and the whole team. „*Good leaders must first become good servants*“⁸

Profile of servant leader:

- Listening.
- Awareness.
- Empathy.
- Commitment to the growth of people.
- Thinks you, not me.

⁷ See also: GREENLEAF, R. K.: *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power & Greatness*. Mahwah, NJ : Paulist Press, 2002.

⁸ Ibidem.



Picture 1: Attitude & Approach of Servant leader

Source: own processing

- **Ethical use of power:** Make decision when needed. Supportive and helpful.
- **Empathy:** Guide and steer the team. Hold the team and individuals accountable. Inspiring and encouraging.
- **Caring:** Carry water and move boulders. Removing impediments.

Conclusion

Agile is an effective process which can be implemented to any business venture not only to IT development. However, it can be very useful for marketing and creative environment. The companies that apply agile marketing and its practices find out that they will be able to adapt faster to the changes. One of the great advantage is the ability to reactively adapt its operations, change focus and re-evaluate the direction of the marketing strategy in real time. When we compare it with traditional marketing which rely on quarterly or half-yearly reports, new way of working with agile mindset bring efficiency, drive innovation and regular experiences in marketing environment.

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THE LIMITS OF CONTENT MARKETING AND NATIVE ADVERTISING IN THE CONTEXT OF ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOUR

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ABSTRACT:

Any creation of the content to be published within marketing communication should be a main pillar of the communication strategy stimulating interest and interactivity in the target audience. Despite the fact that content marketing or native advertising were described as mainstream back in 2018 or as an ordinary element of marketing communication in 2019 – still in 2020 we are observing insufficient awareness of businesses regarding various marketing forms, hence the possibilities how they would attract their potential customers more effectively and in a broader context. The authors of this paper are presenting the results of their marketing research focusing on the rate of use of content marketing and native advertising by businesses in order to name or identify present limits of these digital marketing tools.

KEY WORDS:

content marketing, environment, environmental behaviour, native advertising, social media

1 Introduction

In the last few years, not only the time we spend online, but also the number of particular online users have reported a growing tendency. Therefore, it is necessary for businesses in the market environment to use all available tools of digital marketing effectively and properly while reacting to all trends reflecting the needs of the modern market as well as end customers and online users. F. Kuna presents the results of the research *medialne.trend.sk*¹ and points out that in average each fourth Slovak tends to block advertising content. Hence, it is crucial for business or any other business entities to catch those marketing communication tools that in their principle focus more on quality than quantity. *“As each new thing, also content marketing and native advertising have to find their own way how to become generally acceptable and widely used channels. Marketers have to learn what it refers to, how to create content that users will find attractive, whether it is appropriate to add native in the communication mix.”*² Consequently, it is essential to reach for those tools and channels of marketing communication that, by enhancing environmental awareness or reflecting changes in environmental behaviour, may help activate the public and accept green topics or activities positively and with a common objective – not to taboo environmental issues and at the same time, render their online solutions much more effective.

2 Effective Elements of Digital Marketing

When theoretically defining digital marketing, we should agree with the opinions of Mr P. Kotler according to whom the main role of digital marketing is not to replace the traditional marketing. The key role of traditional marketing is generating attraction and interest whereas the key goal of digital marketing should be the subsequent matching of both interests as well as

¹ *Vyše štvrtina Slovákov priznáva, že softvérom blokuje reklamu na webe.* [online]. [2020-03-15]. Available at: <<https://medialne.trend.sk/internet/vyse-stvrtina-slovakov-priznava-softverom-blokuje-reklamu-webe>>.

² KUNA, F. et al.: *Príručka natívnej reklamy.* [online]. [2020-03-15]. Available at: <https://prirucka.iabslovakia.sk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/prirucka_nativnej_reklamy.pdf>.

objectives of the target audience.³ When determining the notion of digital marketing, the main role is played by the theoretical basis of the academics and specialists in the field of marketing and marketing communication. “*Digital marketing can be understood as use of digital tools in the digital environment that ensure reaching the predefined communication goals by means of interactive communication with the target audience.*”⁴ In the field of traditional literary sources, J. Kita is completed by P. Frey who assumes that digital marketing does not entail only online communication but any communication whatsoever that is being distributed to its recipients through various digital technologies.⁵ Based upon these conclusions, we can therefore speak about communication that takes place through smart phones, computers or any other digital screens. In this paper, its authors are consequently referring to digital marketing and its most effective elements drawing from the conclusions of P. Šebo, CEO of the digital agency *PS: Digital*. The most effective elements of digital marketing are:

- video,
- *Facebook* and chatbots,
- content marketing and native advertising,
- Instagram,
- Influencers,
- and many others.⁶

“*The most frequently used elements of digital marketing are Video, Facebook, banners and Instagram. Everybody uses them. However, it is interesting to point out that video and Facebook are currently considered as ones of the most effective tools whereas not even a half of marketers find banners equally effective. But everybody uses them indeed!*”⁷ The Association of digital marketing agencies ADMA agrees with the opinions of P. Hapák and P. Šebo. They see a video as one of the most popular formats when it comes to communication on social sites.⁸ They are joined by the authors of the paper *Online marketing* who back in 2014 emphasised four basic positive impacts of a video on marketing communication. At first, there is an increase in organic searching, conversions, brand awareness as well as higher website traffic. “*In contrast to a text, a video can not be just merely watched. As it derives from the combination of a text and audio-visual elements, it enables us to communicate a myriad of concentrated information within a rather short time period that is likely to create a direct emotional bond with its spectators.*”⁹ The Agency *Digitalpartner* offers one important opinion that clarifies why Facebook and chatbots are considered as ones of the most effective elements of digital marketing. According to the experts from this Agency, it is *Messenger* on the *Facebook* platform that has become something similar to e-mail marketing – it is a guarantee how to stay in permanent touch with customers.¹⁰ We can agree with these statements which are simultaneously confirmed by the statistics from *socialmediatoday.com*¹¹, which points to the application *Messenger* on *Facebook* and refers to it as the most downloaded application on the

³ KOTLER, P., KARTAJAYA, H., SETIAWAN, I.: *Marketing 4.0 Moving from Traditional to Digital*. Canada : Wiley, 2017, p. 53.

⁴ KITA, J. et al.: *Marketing*. Bratislava : Wolters Kluwer, 2017, p. 356.

⁵ FREY, P.: *Marketingová komunikace: to nejlepší z nových trendů*. Prague : Management Press, 2008, p. 53.

⁶ ŠEBO, P.: *Efektivně složky digitálního marketingu*. Paper presented at the biggest Slovak conference about digital marketing Digital Rulezz 2019. Bratislava, presented on 26th November 2019.

⁷ HAPÁK, P.: Digital na Slovensku: Rastieme, rastiete, rastú, alebo na čo je dobrý Reality Check v digitálnom marketingu. In *Digital agencies*. Bratislava : Digital Agencies, 2019, p. 3.

⁸ *Asociácia digitálnych marketingových agentúr: Video marketing*. Bratislava : ADMA, 2017, p. 2.

⁹ *Online marketing – Současné trendy očima předních expertů*. Brno : Computer Press, 2014, p. 174-175.

¹⁰ *Hlavné trendy v sociálnych sieťach v roku 2019*. [online]. [2020-03-25]. Available at: <<https://digitalpartner.sk/hlavne-trendy-v-socialnych-sietach-v-roku-2019/>>.

¹¹ *Social media today*. [online]. [2020-03-25]. Available at: <<https://www.socialmediatoday.com/about/>>.

iOS operation system. This can be confirmed by more than 1.3 billion of monthly users who send one another more than 20 billion messages per month.¹² According to M. Young, however, the digital sphere as well as anything mentioned above is not that free, simple and effective as one may think. In the paper *Ogilvy about advertising in the digital age* he emphasises that digital marketing and virtual reality can not be seen as something better. In addition, he is trying to avoid connecting the elements of traditional and digital tools of marketing communication. In his opinion, the rhetoric in digital marketing is not based upon any philosophy, but its primary goal is to get a profit from advertising.¹³ Specific parts of digital marketing will be dealt with in another part of this paper where we will focus on educational functions of these specific elements with the main goal of not only obtaining a mere profit or any other earnings, but rather promoting and communicating views and standpoints that can not only form a public opinion in the long term, but also activate the society or businesses towards some kind of ecological conduct.

2.1 Social Media and Social Sites

At the beginning of this chapter, we will need to theoretically define and unify terminology on the given topic. In principle, we have to agree with categorising of social media in this case, which is offered by A. Mayfield. In his opinion, social media include social sites, blogs, wiki, podcasts, chat forums, content communities and micro blogs.¹⁴ What is more, we must say that thanks to the rate of technological development we are currently facing, there have been lots of different possibilities open for marketing experts thanks to which businesses as well as brands and entities are able to promote their communication towards a client in the framework of any marketing strategy. G. Brown adds that the abovementioned social media and social sites can be seen as the most used and dynamic media. We agree with his opinion because we also assume that the success rate of these marketing communication tools directly equals to success of traditional media. G. Brown presumes that this is due to integration of both technologies and social media in the symbiosis with various types of texts and media pictures.¹⁵ J. Clement is also engaged in promotion of social media and social sites as he finds this type of communication free of any limitations, in contrast to traditional media channels.¹⁶ A. Hutchinson considers social media and social sites as key elements within any kind of an interactive process. He believes that at present it is highly important for those people using these tools for any marketing communication to register their target group and simultaneously, to properly apply various trends that can be unique and specific to each single audience.¹⁷ Moreover, we think that a brand or a business entity should properly identify the platforms that are likely to attract their current as well as prospective customers. It is essential not only to be somewhere when all users of the Internet, social media or social sites gather, but at the same time, on the place with the highest change of addressing our target audience.

¹² Facebook Messenger by the numbers 2019. [online]. [2020-03-25]. Available at: <<https://www.socialmediatoday.com/news/facebook-messenger-by-the-numbers-2019-infographic/553809/>>.

¹³ YOUNG, M.: *Ogilvy o reklamě v digitálním věku*. Prague : Svojtka&Co., p. 18.

¹⁴ MAYFIELD, A.: *What is Social Media?* [online]. [2020-03-30]. Available at: <https://www.slideshare.net/iCrossingDe/what-is-social-media-i-crossing-ebook?qid=4ff027a2-3b13-4ae3-8004-33140395d6d9&v=endb=endfrom_search=2>.

¹⁵ 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.

¹⁶ CLEMENT, J.: *Most popular social networks worldwide as of January 2020, ranked by number of active users*. [online]. [2020-03-15]. Available at: <<https://www.statista.com/statistics/272014/global-social-networks-ranked-by-number-of-users/>>.

¹⁷ HUTCHINSON, A.: *Social Media Across Generations*. [online]. [2020-03-25]. Available at: <<https://www.socialmediatoday.com/news/social-media-across-generations-infographic/566232/>>.

“Social sites are places where people meet to create the circle of their friends or join a certain community sharing common interests. Social media are sometimes referred to as social or just simply legal communities.”¹⁸ We can agree with the thoughts of V. Janouch while adding that in this case further evolution depends heavily on various forms of marketing communication, e.g. content marketing or native advertising in order to properly define and categorise the selected social sites. V. Janouch categories these elements into personal, professional and specific ones.¹⁹ The authors of this paper believe that complex understanding of social sites is also influenced by detailed terminological specification. Therefore, they tend to prefer the categorisation promoted by the web portal *Digizen*²⁰ mainly designed for pedagogues and the young in order to help them build a professional citizenship. Thus, social sites should be categorised in those focusing primarily on a user’s profile, secondly on the content and community social sites, mobile social sites, micro blogging and virtual that enable their users to interact with avatars of other users.²¹ The following part of this paper theoretically defines the given terms such as content marketing and native advertising that, within any possible marketing strategy, can function as supporting forms and promote a brand, awareness and image. M. Floreková from the Agency *Visibility* joins these declarations by saying that it is high-quality and natural content by means of which businesses are able to attract new fans as well as address new potential customers in a rather simple and effective way.²²

2.2 Content Marketing and Native Advertising

Based upon the practice and evaluation of current market needs of marketing communication, let us refer to both content marketing and native advertising not only as trends, but as a kind of obligation when setting any form of an effective marketing strategy. Our opinion is also supported by J. Přikrylová with other authors who, as stated by the *Forbes Magazine*, matches content marketing with other current trends in marketing communication. She adds that it is highly important to reflect on new challenges of marketing communication in order to keep attention and satisfy current needs of our customers.²³ J. Steimle from *Forbes* also points out to one key word within content marketing – a value. He assumes that whereas general marketing describes any form of advertising, a value is a thing that helps us define content marketing.²⁴ S. Godin also agrees and in his paper named *Tohle je marketing!*, he places emphasis on using current trends in marketing communication including the abovementioned content marketing. “This is a chance how to change our culture for the better.”²⁵ J. Přikrylová with other authors in their paper *Moderní marketingové komunikace* deal with four quadrants of the content marketing matrix:

- **fun** – the emphasis is placed on creation of emotional reactions in order to boost product or brand awareness;
- **inspiration** – the main objective is to use celebrities, discussion forums or users’ reviews and recommendations;

¹⁸ JANOUCH, V.: *Interentový marketing: prosadte se na webu a sociálních sítích*. Brno : Computer Press, 2010, p. 223.

¹⁹ JANOUCH, V.: *Internetový marketing*. 2nd Edition. Brno : Computer Press, 2014, p. 302.

²⁰ *Digizen*. [online]. [2020-04-01]. Available at: <<https://www.digizen.org/about.aspx>>.

²¹ *Young people and social network services*. [online]. [2020-04-21] Available at: <<https://www.digizen.org/socialnetworking/sn.aspx>>.

²² FLOREKOVÁ, M.: *Ako efektívne využiť sociálne siete na budovanie značky*. [online]. [2020-04-23]. Available at: <<https://visibility.sk/blog/ako-efektivne-vyuzit-socialne-siete-na-budovanie-znacky/>>.

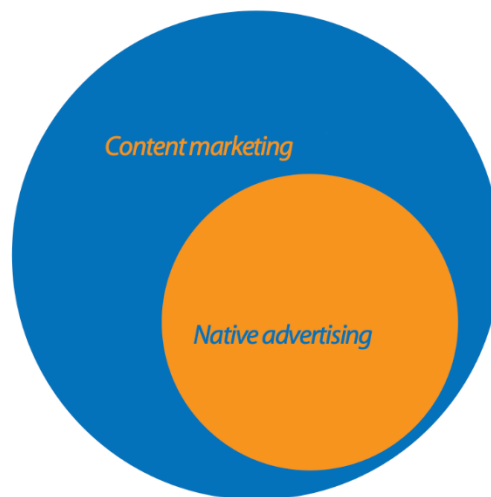
²³ PŘIKRYLOVÁ, J. et al.: *Moderní marketingová komunikace*. Prague : Grada Publishing, 2019, p. 269-281.

²⁴ *What is content marketing*. [online]. [2020-04-20]. Available at: <<https://www.forbes.com/sites/joshsteimle/2014/09/19/what-is-content-marketing/>>.

²⁵ GODIN, S.: *Tohle je marketing!*. Prague : Grada Publishing a.s., 2020, p. 16.

- **education** – referred to as one of the most important matrices as it highlights rational thinking about a brand or products;
- **persuasion** – supported by high-quality case studies.²⁶

When creating content marketing for their clients, the professional content marketing full-service agency *Contentfruiter* draws mainly from the conclusions of J. Pulizzi, *Content Marketing Strategist*²⁷ in *Content Marketing Institute*²⁸, who defines content marketing as “a marketing and business process of creation and distribution of the content performed in the manner that can generate interest and trigger an activity of the clearly defined target audience with the purpose of a profitable customer offer.”²⁹ Marketers at *Contentfruiter* add, however, that it is not possible to create good content marketing without loyal audience. For this reason, when creating any kind of content, one has to consider the philosophy and the strategy by means of which particular users will be motivated to stop by and observe a specific impact of marketing communication.³⁰ J. Přikrylová and the agency *Contentfruiter* are completed by G. Boros, who in his profession primarily deals with native advertising and content marketing as the Manager of the portal *Refresher* which is known for its successful author content and cooperation with many famous brands and influencers. “It often happens that a customer does not really know what they want. Sometimes they say A, do B, but in fact, they want C. Less is sometimes more. The best marketing does not look like marketing at all.”³¹ He focuses on content marketing and native advertising because this type of advertising accounts for the largest proportion from *Refresher*’s earnings.



Picture 1: Content marketing and native advertising

Source: *Průručka nativní reklamy*. [online]. [2020-04-20]. Available at: <<https://prirucka.iabslovakia.sk/>>.

As shown in the Picture 1, there is a clear difference between content marketing and native advertising. According to the Association for internet advertising, content marketing in a broader sense involves a set of various tools within any marketing communication that are

²⁶ PŘIKRYLOVÁ, J. et al.: *Moderní marketingová komunikace*. Prague : Grada Publishing, 2019, p. 282.

²⁷ Joe Pulizzi. [online]. [2020-04-20]. Available at: <<https://www.joepulizzi.com/about/>>.

²⁸ Content marketing institute. [online]. [2020-04-20]. Available at: <<https://contentmarketinginstitute.com/about/>>.

²⁹ Čo hovorí Joe Pulizzi o content marketingu. [online]. [2020-04-20]. Available at: <<http://contentfruiter.sk/obsahovy-marketing/co-hovori-joe-pulizzi-o-content-marketingu/>>.

³⁰ Ibidem.

³¹ BOROS, G.: Funkčný obsah vie zarobiť. In AUJESKÝ, K. (ed.): *Ako vyrásť v kreatívnom biznise*. Bratislava : SLOVART, s.r.o. and Milk Studio, s.r.o., 2019, p. 116.

closely linked with creation and distribution of the content which is not only distributed to target groups, but also analysed and its success rate is professionally assessed. “*Native advertising is one of the ways how the content is being distributed to those users it has been designed for. Therefore, it is an important part of content marketing.*”³² G. Boros stresses that it is necessary to know where the target audience of a particular brand, a business or a company is located – however, it is rather difficult to place standard advertising into smartphones while users tend to block advertising content on their desktop computers. Therefore, native advertising is regarded as an effective solution of proper marketing communication. J. Přikrylová adds that it is crucial to observe what will happen to trend forms of marketing communication in the post-digital era while assuming that “*integrated marketing communication will obviously be replaced with an omni-channel approach, when a tweet on a particular product will be accompanied with a viral video, when marketing offers will be simultaneously placed in both the physical and virtual environment and when online and offline channels of marketing communication will be innovatively and synergically interlinked.*”³³ We have to agree with the abovementioned prognosis and therefore, we think it is highly important to focus on all effective elements of digital marketing that, when properly interlinked, can certainly fulfil any expectations and requirements placed upon digital marketing.

3 Ecological Innovations and Environmental Behaviour

Substantial development of industry and business and corresponding over-exploitation of non-renewable resources directly result in extreme environmental solution. For this reason, it is necessary to focus on a desirable change of businesses’ environmental behaviour. Growing popularity and effectivity of use of eco-innovations has generated a certain ecological change that is likely to boost economic performance on the one hand, but on the other one, it can also help us find effective solutions for environmental problems.³⁴ The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defines ecological innovations as “*implementation of new or substantially improved products (goods or services), production processes, marketing or organisational methods representing a positive benefit for the environment*”.³⁵ Nevertheless, the European Commission believes that an ecological innovation is any innovation thanks to which we can observe any progress in the field of sustainable development combined with a reduced environmental impact.³⁶ Definitions of ecological innovations are complemented by *Eco-Innovation Observatory* which assumes that an ecological innovation is any innovation that entails not only launching of new and environmentally-friendly products, but also focuses on improving marketing processes in the field of non-renewable resources.³⁷ Production and subsequent implementation of ecological innovations is closely connected with environmental behaviour as such. Environmental behaviour can be defined as a type of behaviour with a long-term positive impact on the nature and environmental protection in general. J. Wright believes that environmental behaviour may include, for instance, voluntary and charity events when people are called to collect waste in the nature or make products from recycling materials. At

³² KUNA, F. et al.: *Príručka natívnej reklamy*. [online]. [2020-03-15]. Available at: <https://prirucka.iabslovakia.sk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/prirucka_nativnej_reklamy.pdf>.

³³ PŘIKRYLOVÁ, J. et al.: *Moderní marketingová komunikace*. Prague : Grada Publishing, 2019, p. 291-292.

³⁴ CARRILLO-HERMOSILLA, J., DEL GONZÁLEZ, P. R., KÖNNÖLÄ, T.: What is eco-innovation? In CARRILLO-HERMOSILLA, J., DEL GONZÁLEZ, P. R., KÖNNÖLÄ, T. (eds.): *Eco-Innovation*. London : Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, p. 6.

³⁵ *The future of eco-innovation : The Role of Business Models in Green Transformation*. [online]. [2020-04-27]. Available at: <<http://www.oecd.org/innovation/inno/49537036.pdf>>.

³⁶ *Európska komisia*. [online]. [2020-04-20]. Available at: <<https://ec.europa.eu/commission/indexsk>>.

³⁷ *Eco-Innovation Observatory*. [online]. [2020-04-20]. Available at: <<http://www.eco-innovation.eu/>>.

the same time, he adds that individual engagement can easily transform into employees' ecological behaviour. J. Wright defines this type of behaviour as an activity which is linked to environmental sustainability. J. Krajhanzl joins these declarations by defining the following factors of environmental behaviour:

- personal factors – individual's mental health and mood based upon their individual approach to the environment;
- external factors – these factors influence the given behaviour from the external environment and include various cultural, economic or social factors;
- a person's relationship towards the nature – J. Krajhanzl refers to those experience and knowledge that, on the one hand, are connected with the environment and on the other one, with certain knowledge explicitly linked to the environment as well.³⁸

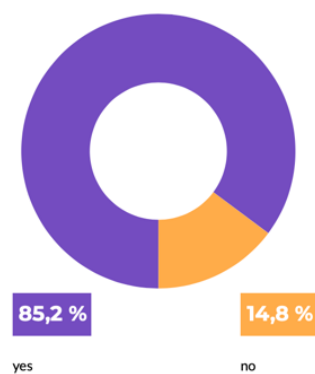
Because of all the above mentioned ecological innovations and the subsequent change of our environmental behaviour, it is necessary for businesses to have not only a proper overview of all the effective possibilities existing within marketing communication, but also to be able to apply them properly. Based upon the practice, we may state that in case businesses keep a systematic and responsible approach to their marketing strategy and focus especially on content marketing and native advertising, they can easily overcome a certain degree of public disinterest in environmental issues and what is more, to be successful in motivating the wide public in eco-friendly activities.

4 Limitations of Content Marketing and Native Advertising

F. Kuna and the authors in their paper named *Obsah, ktorý ľudia milujú* specify particular goals of content marketing and native advertising, e.g. enhancing interest in and awareness of products and services or good will.³⁹ For this reason, native advertising and content marketing are defined as unique tools of marketing communication which, if properly selected and applied, may tend to increase interest in eco-friendly activities of businesses with the aim of changing user's environmental behaviour. The authors of this paper have carried out and assessed the marketing research focusing on businesses in the market environment and consequently, have identified the limitations of content marketing and native advertising. 301 businesses from various segments took part in the research – the basic determinant was to find out whether a particular business belongs to the production segment, which helped us to filtrate those businesses providing services and many others which did not meet our basis requirements for the marketing research. At first, we wanted to know whether the respondents / businesses are following the philosophy of corporate social responsibility. As shown in the Graph 1, the majority of respondents (82.5%) answered “yes” to this question while the remaining 14.8% answered “no”, which means that the respondents were a relevant sample for studying their environmental behaviour.

³⁸ See also: KRAJHANZL, J.: Environmental and proenvironmental behaviour. In ŘEHULKA, E. (ed.): *School and Health 21*. Brno : Masarykova univerzita, 2010, p. 251-274.

³⁹ KUNA, F. et al.: *Príručka natívnej reklamy*. [online]. [2020-03-15]. Available at: <https://prirucka.iabslovakia.sk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/prirucka_nativnej_reklamy.pdf>.

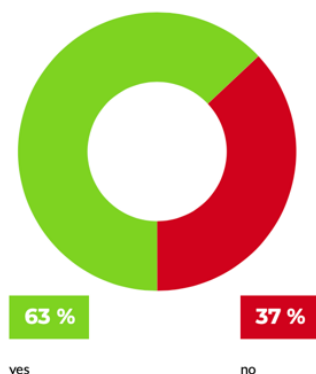


Graph 1: Philosophy of environmental responsibility within a company

Sources: own processing

The authors of this research also studied whether the businesses are directly implementing any ecological innovations within their companies. As shown in the Graph 2, 63% of the respondents answered “yes” to this question while the remaining 37% answered “no”. In the additional question, we were trying to find out what ecological innovations are being implemented within a business. The most common answers were:

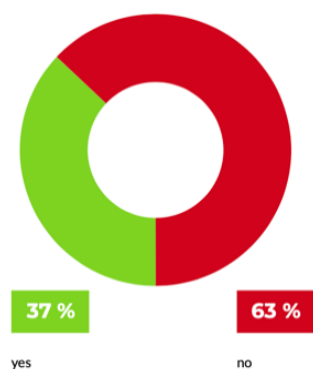
- e-invoicing,
- waste sorting and recycling,
- ecological hygienic and cleaning products,
- bio heating.



Graph 2: Implementation of ecological innovations within a company

Sources: own processing

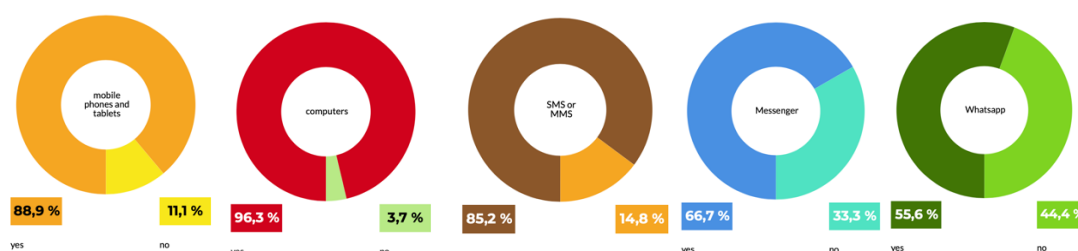
The fundamental question was to find out whether the respondents are implementing any environmentally friendly activities towards the external environment. Unfortunately, up to 63% of businesses answered “no” to this question whereas 37% answered “yes”. As shown by previous graphs, we may assume that despite the fact that the respondents declared to have the philosophy of environmental corporate responsibility, they do not include there all the activities they really carry out. However, the coherence between the Graph 2 and Graph 3 is rather positive – up to 63% of respondents are currently implementing ecological friendly activities directly within a company and therefore, it is possible to say that the data from the Graph 3 may have a growing tendency in the long term. The additional question asked what environmental activities the respondents carry out towards the external environment where 37% from the Graph 3 included recycling of packaging material, education and enhancing environmental awareness or production of compostable and biodegradable dinnerware.



Graph 3: Implementation of environmental activities towards the external environment

Source: own processing

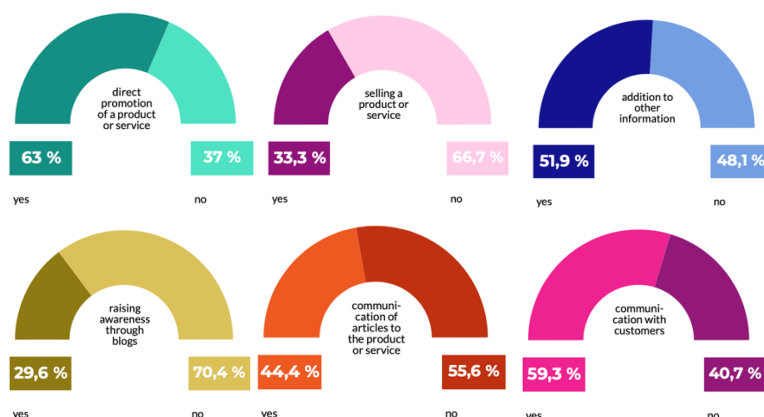
The key objective of the authors of this paper is to point to digital literacy of the businesses in the context of use of various platforms of social media both in the internal as well as external communication. As shown in the Graph 4, we may assume that in the field of internal communication, the respondents tend to use computers (96.3%), followed with mobile phones and tablets (88.9%) while up to 85.2% of the businesses also communicate via SMS or MMS messages or Messenger application (66.7%) with more than a half of them communicating through Whatsapp (55.6%). The additional question stated other applications such as Microsoft Teams primarily used for video calls or Skype with the same use.



Graph 4: Use of social media for internal communication within a company

Sources: own processing

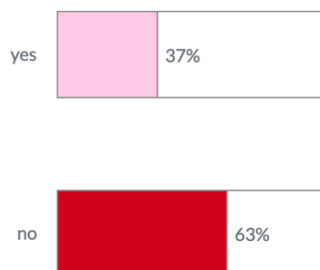
The main question was to define the objectives of use of social media and social sites for marketing communication of the respondents. The businesses we questioned were asked to answer “yes” or “no” to the following possibilities: direct promotion of products and services, sale of products or services, complementing other information, increasing awareness through a blog, communication of articles about a product or a service or communication with customers. As shown in the Graph 5, 63% of businesses said they used social media and social sites for direct promotion of products and services with their customers (59.3%); 51.9% complete them with other information; 44.4% communicate various articles about their products and services through social media and social sites; followed with the sale of products and services (33.3%) and the fewest respondents are trying to enhance customers’ awareness through blogs (29.6%). Based upon the aforementioned we may speak about a certain limitation of content marketing and native advertising. Due to the fact that only a half of businesses use social media and social sites for their marketing communication, there is no way how the terms such as content marketing and native advertising can be effectively used, which is further specified in the Graphs 6 and 7.



Graph 5: Use of social media and social sites for marketing communication of a business

Source: own processing

Even though there is a little higher awareness of these terms among the businesses, we may still say that the basic limitation of content marketing and native advertising is their terminological definition and knowledgeability in the context of their implementation by businesses within their marketing communication. Despite the fact the 37% of the respondents answered “yes” to the question: “Do you know content marketing?”, the answer to the additional question: “If you do, could you briefly describe what content marketing refers to?” suggests the opposite. The most frequent answers included: education of clients about the product, the attractive content on Facebook and Instagram, presentation of things that are interesting and entertaining. Based upon their answers we may deduce one important thing: not only 63% of the respondents declare not to know content marketing, but the remaining 37% of the respondents who answered “yes” to the question understand this term incorrectly. “Content marketing is a technique focusing on creation, publishing and distribution of content. The key purpose is to sell a product or a service.”⁴⁰



Graph 6: Awareness of content marketing

Sources: own processing

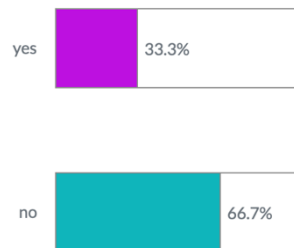
Similar results as in the Graph 6 are also shown in the Graph 7 where the authors of this paper present the results to the question whether the respondents sufficiently understand the theoretical definition of native advertising. Despite the fact that 33.3% of the respondents answered “yes”, the additional question asking them to briefly characterise this notion suggested that the businesses were not able to properly define this term. The brief characteristics included the answers such as:

- flyers, banners,
- the form of advertising, not the content,

⁴⁰ KUNA, F. et al.: *Príručka natívnej reklamy*. [online]. [2020-03-15]. Available at: <https://prirucka.iabslovakia.sk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/prirucka_nativnej_reklamy.pdf>.

- advertising that is properly placed in the online environment,
- or indirect advertising that does not bother anyone.

*Native advertising is advertising that looks like a natural part of the place where it is situated. It integrates itself with the environment, visually, functionally or by its content. An advertiser thus uses and buys a distribution channel of a third party – media, platforms and social sites.*⁴¹ When defining native advertising, we would like to join the authors of the paper *Obsah, ktorý ľudia milujú* and therefore, we see the answer of 33.3% of the respondents as relevant. Even though the businesses answered “yes” to our question, they are not able to properly define this term, which can be considered as an exceptional limit for application of content marketing and native advertising.



Graph 7: Awareness of native advertising

Sources: own processing

Conclusion

For conclusion, the authors of this paper, taking into consideration the results of the presented marketing research, state that the fundamental limit of content marketing and native advertising in the context of their use by businesses for marketing communication is primarily linked to insufficient awareness of the abovementioned tools of digital marketing. As shown in the Graphs 6 and 7, we may deduce that 63% of the businesses are not aware of content marketing while the remaining 37% think they do and still, they are not able to define it properly even if taking into account various theoretical concepts being applied in practice. At the same time, 66.7% of the respondents do not know or have never heard of native advertising whereas the remaining 33.3% of businesses said they do and therefore, we may assume that they still do not know how to effectively use this format in the context of marketing communication. Thus, we must admit that fundamental pillars of a communication strategy within any marketing communication – content marketing and native advertising – are hardly present in any marketing strategy of the respondents and these businesses either do not implement them properly or have never encountered this term in practice. The results of the presented marketing research can still serve for further observation even though proper use of the abovementioned social media requires the respondents to cross their limits and reflect on the current or desirable state of implementation of all the effective forms of digital marketing.

⁴¹ KUNA, F. et al.: *Príručka natívnej reklamy*. [online]. [2020-03-15]. Available at: <https://prirucka.iabslovakia.sk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/prirucka_nativnej_reklamy.pdf>.

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WHEN FACIAL EXPRESSION ANALYSIS AND EXPLICIT QUESTIONNAIRE EVALUATION DO NOT MATCH. NEUROMARKETING PARADOX EXPLAINED

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ABSTRACT:

The objective of the research is to understand relations between the explicit questionnaire-based evaluation and the automated facial expressions analysis, for the case of flavored beers (lemon and grapefruit flavors / sweet sour and sweet bitter taste). The challenge is to reconcile with the measurement paradox that bitter and sour taste generate spontaneous negative emotional expressions, even if the consumer likes the product. We employed software for the facial expression analysis (by iMotion, using Affdex algorithm) and the explicit questionnaire values (I like the taste vs. I do not like the taste). Analysis was based on the non-parametric tests, correlations and three-dimensional graphs. Explicit questionnaire evaluations generate statistically significant relations with some emotional expressions, measured as video frames count (joy positively, contempt negatively). Paradoxically, positive and negative expressions co-appear in the situation of positive explicit evaluation of the product. Analysis showed that this situation occurs at the mutual co-appearance of surprise (implying the increased level of mental processing). Study results contribute to the understanding of consumer's preferences in the cases where the explicit and implicit measurements do not match directly, notably in the context of bitter or sour taste products.

KEY WORDS:

explicit vs. implicit measures, facial expression analysis, flavored beers, neuromarketing

1 Introduction

Neuromarketing or consumer neuroscience helps to understand consumer's subconscious responses to the marketing stimuli, and thus enriches the classical marketing research and may play a major role in shaping marketing practices in the days to come.^{1,2} A combination of non-invasive biometric technologies (as facial expression analysis and the measures of the autonomous nervous system reactions) with the traditional self-report tests can provide a better insight into the consumer's preferences during the product tasting.^{3,4} The objective of the research is to understand relations between the results of the computer aided facial expression analysis and the explicit questionnaire-based evaluation, in the frame of blind tasting of flavored beers (lemon and grapefruit / sweet sour and sweet bitter taste). Understanding the spontaneous authentic reaction of the consumer to the drink taste might help reveal potential market success of the product. The challenge of this research is to reconcile with the paradox, that bitter and sour taste spontaneously generate negative emotional expression, even if the consumer likes the product.

¹ For more information, see: SUOMALA, J. et al.: Neuromarketing: Understanding customers' subconscious responses to marketing. In *Technology Innovation Management Review*, 2012, Vol. 6, No. 12, p. 12-21.

² AGARWAL, S., DUTTA, T.: Neuromarketing and consumer neuroscience: current understanding and the way forward. In *Decision*, 2015, Vol. 42, No. 4, p. 458-461.

³ SAMANT, S. S., SEO, H.-S.: Using both emotional responses and sensory attribute intensities to predict consumer liking and preference toward vegetable juice products. In *Food Quality and Preference*, 2019, Vol. 73, No. 1, p. 76-84.

⁴ CRIST, C. A. et al.: Automated facial expression analysis for emotional responsivity using an aqueous bitter model. In *Food Quality and Preference*, 2018, Vol. 68, No. 1, p. 350-358.

1.1 Emotional Facial Expression

Outer expressions of internal emotional states was described by Charles Darwin in his 1871⁵. Hundreds year later a Swedish anatomist Carl-Herman Hjortsjö created a system of the facial expression taxonomy, based on the particular muscle movements, named as The Facial Action Coding System (FACS) ⁶. The system was later elaborated by Paul Eckman^{7,8}, who also confirmed the thesis of the universality of the facial expressions across cultures⁹, what is a basic prerequisite for the research in this field. The systematic approach to facial expression recognition paved the road towards the fully automated system of the facial expression recognition^{10, 11}. In our research we use the facial expression decoding system based on the Affdex algorithms, provided by the company iMotion¹². The Affdex systems provides considerably good results, when compared to the electromyographic analysis (EMG)¹³. The system works well in the case of the standardized emotional states; however, it has lower efficiency when it comes to the natural facial expressions and micro-expressions¹⁴.

1.2 Measurement of Consumer's Reactions to Beers and Bitter Tastes

Viaejo et al. (2019)¹⁵ tested beers using a wider combination of non-invasive biometric tools (heart rate variability, thermal imagery of the face, facial expression analysis and EEG) in combination with a series of explicit questionnaire tools. Results showed that statistically significant results are provided mainly by the self-reported explicit and cognitive measures and partly by the EEG signal. Mojet et al. (2019)¹⁶ carried out a combination of facial expression measurements with projective emotional tests and explicit test on product evaluation, reporting that the product tasting significantly changes the emotional states, however there might not be a direct connection with the overall liking. Garcia-Burgos & Zamora (2013, 2015) combined facial expressions analysis with explicit measurements for bitter tastes, aiming to understand differences in preference of bitters in relation to different personal-related aspects. Their results showed that people with high BMI have stronger tendency to manifest negative facial

⁵ See also: DARWIN, Ch.: *The expression of the emotions in man and animals*. London : John Murray Albemarle Street, 1872.

⁶ For more information, see: HJORTSJÖ, C.-H.: *Man's face and mimic language*. Lund : Studenlitteratur, 1969.

⁷ EKMAN, P., FRIESEN, W. V.; TOMKINS, S. S. Facial affect scoring technique: A first validity study. In *Semiotica*, 1971, Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 36-57.

⁸ See also: EKMAN, P., FRIESEN, W. V.: *The facial action coding system (FACS)*. Palo Alto : Psychologists Press, 1978.

⁹ EKMAN, P.: Cross-cultural studies of facial expression. In ECKMAN, P. (ed.): *Darwin and facial expression: A century of research in review*. New York :Academic Press, 1973, p. 170-219.

¹⁰ BARTLETT, M. S. et al.: Classifying facial action. In TOURETZKY, D. S., MOZER, M. C., HASSELMO, M. E. (eds.): *Advances in neural information processing systems*. Cambridge, MA : The MIT Press, 1996, p. 824-828.

¹¹ LIEN, J. et al.: Automated facial expression recognition based on FACS action units. In STORMS, P. (ed.): *Proceedings Third IEEE International Conference on Automatic Face and Gesture Recognition*. Los Alamitos, CA : Computer Society, 1998, p. 391-394.

¹² KROSSCHEL, K.: *Facial Expression Analysis: The Complete Pocket Guide*. Released on 10th March 2020. [online]. [2020-04-04]. Available at: <<https://imotions.com/blog/facial-expression-analysis>>.

¹³ KULKE, L., FEYERABEND, D., SCHACHT, A.: A comparison of the Affectiva iMotions Facial Expression Analysis Software with EMG for identifying facial expressions of emotion. In *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2020, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 2-8.

¹⁴ STÖCKLI, S. et al.: Facial expression analysis with AFFDEX and FACET: A validation study. In *Behavior Research Methods*, 2017, Vol. 50, No. 4, p. 1447-1459.

¹⁵ VIEJO, C. G. et al.: Integration of non-invasive biometrics with sensory analysis techniques to assess acceptability of beer by consumers. In *Physiology & Behavior*, 2019, Vol. 200, No. 1, p. 140-146.

¹⁶ MOJET, J. et al.: Are implicit emotion measurements evoked by food unrelated to liking?. In *Food Research International*, 2015, Vol. 76, No. 2, p. 225-231.

expression when compared to lower BMI, during the tasting of bitter taste.¹⁷ Rejection of bitter taste can be influenced by situational factors as stress or hunger.¹⁸ It is important to note that people with higher tendency to perceive and experience disgust do not differ in rating the bitter taste with the people with low tendency.¹⁹ The most relevant research to ours is the one carried out by Crist et al. (2019)²⁰ who measured consumers' reactions to the bitter solutions (caffeine based), with four different intensity levels and compared them to the facial expressions (neutral, scared, angry, sad, happy). Results showed that disgust and surprise correlated with level of bitterness, however in the opposite directions. And the hedonic liking correlated (negatively) with the intensity of bitter taste. This research suggest that there is a "triangular relation" between liking the product (explicitly measured by questionnaire), emotional expressions (spontaneous emotional reaction: contempt, disgust) and the aspects of mental processing (which can be expressed by a variety of mental states, especially by surprise). Hence, we formulate the research question as follows:

- RQ: What is the relation between negative facial expressions (disgust, contempt), mental states of processing (expressed e.g. by surprise) and by the positive consumers' attitude (expressed in the explicit questionnaire).

2 Methodology

2.1 Sample and Procedure

We analyzed combination of measures: emotional facial decoding software (based on Affdex algorithm) and explicit computer-based continuous questionnaires (I like the taste, I do not like the taste, response time). We used software platform by iMotion Copenhagen which integrates several technological platforms for the bio-signal measurement and relevant analytical tools. For tasting we opted for flavored beers (two with lemon taste, two with grapefruit, four in total). Participants were students of the faculty of business N = 18 (5 males, 13 females), aged 20 to 22, hence we obtained 72 tasting samples in total. We employed non-parametrical test, correlations and three-dimensional graphs to analyze data and illustrate results.

2.2 Variables Used

In our research the following variables were measured:

- *Explicit questionnaire-based variables:*
 - I like the taste of the drink, continuous scale, min. 1, max. 7.
 - I do not like the taste, continuous scale, min. 1, max. 7.
 - Difference between the values: I like the taste of the drink and I do not like the taste (scale range min. -6, max 6).
- *Emotional facial expressions analysis*

¹⁷ GARCIA-BURGOS, D., ZAMORA, M. C.: Facial affective reactions to bitter-tasting foods and body mass index in adults. In *Appetite*, 2013, Vol. 71, No. 1, p. 179-185.

¹⁸ GARCIA-BURGOS, D.; ZAMORA, M. C.: Exploring the hedonic and incentive properties in preferences for bitter foods via self-reports, facial expressions and instrumental behaviors. In *Food Quality and Preference*, 2015, Vol. 39, No. 1, p. 74-80.

¹⁹ SCHIENLE, A., ARENDASY, M., SCHWAB, D.: Disgust responses to bitter compounds: The role of disgust sensitivity. In *Chemosensory Perception*, 2015, Vol. 8, No. 4, p. 168-172.

²⁰ CRIST, C. A. et al.: Automated facial expression analysis for emotional responsivity using an aqueous bitter model. In *Food Quality and Preference*, 2018, Vol. 68, No. 1, p. 350-358.

- Facial expressions of emotions (joy, disgust, contempt, surprise) were measured by the facereading software iMotion, using the Affdex algorithm (sampling rate 30 fps). Faces were recorded with a Logitech HD webcam. Time of face recording was first 5 seconds, immediately after the consumption. Expressions were measured at the threshold of 50 %.

Following table (tab. 1) presents the overview of variables used in the research (number of valid observations, mean, min. and max. value, std. deviation).

Table 1: Review of variables used in the research

	N valid	Mean	Min.	Max.	Std. dev.
Questionnaire values (explicit measure)					
Questionnaire value: I like	72	5,13	1,00	7,00	1,67
Questionnaire value: I don't like	72	2,84	1,00	7,00	1,83
Questionnaire measures: difference between the values "I like" vs. "I don't like"	72	2,31	-6	6	3,4
Emotion recognition - basic emotions (count frames), divided by 10					
Joy Count Frames	72	2,73	0	20	4,60
Disgust Count Frames	72	0,72	0	8	1,47
Contempt Count Frames	72	1,74	0	17	3,48
Surprise Count Frames	72	0,57	0	8	1,24

Source: own processing

2.3 Analytical Semantic Quadrants

In order to better understand relations between the variables we introduce “analytical semantic quadrants” (tab. 2). The quadrants are based on the explicit questionnaire values: (1) the scale „I like the taste“ was divided by two halves (value of 4, having the scale range from 1 to 7), as we suppose consumer is able to clearly distinguish between positive and negative attitudes; (2) and the scale „I don't like the taste“ was divided by the median (value 2,24), as the majority of the explicit answers was cumulated in the first half of the scale (between 1 and 4, implying disagreement with the statement „I don't like the taste“). Hence, we obtain the distribution of participants as shown in the following table (tab. 2). We remind that the questionnaire scale was fully continuous (measurement tools integrated in the iMotion software platform).

Table 2: Analytical semantic quadrants: I like the taste vs. I don't like the taste

		I like the taste (based on the half-split of the scale)	
		Low	High
I don't like the taste (divided by median)	High	21 %	29 %
	Low	0 %	50 %

Source: own processing

3 Results

3.1 Analysis by Means of Semantic Quadrants

Initial section of this chapter provides analysis based on the semantic quadrants. Following chart (chart 1) presents box plots of the means, StdDev and 1,96xStdDev, for the following

variables: explicit questionnaire value (top left) and expressed emotions, measured as the video frame counts: joy (top right), disgust (bottom left) and contempt (bottom right).

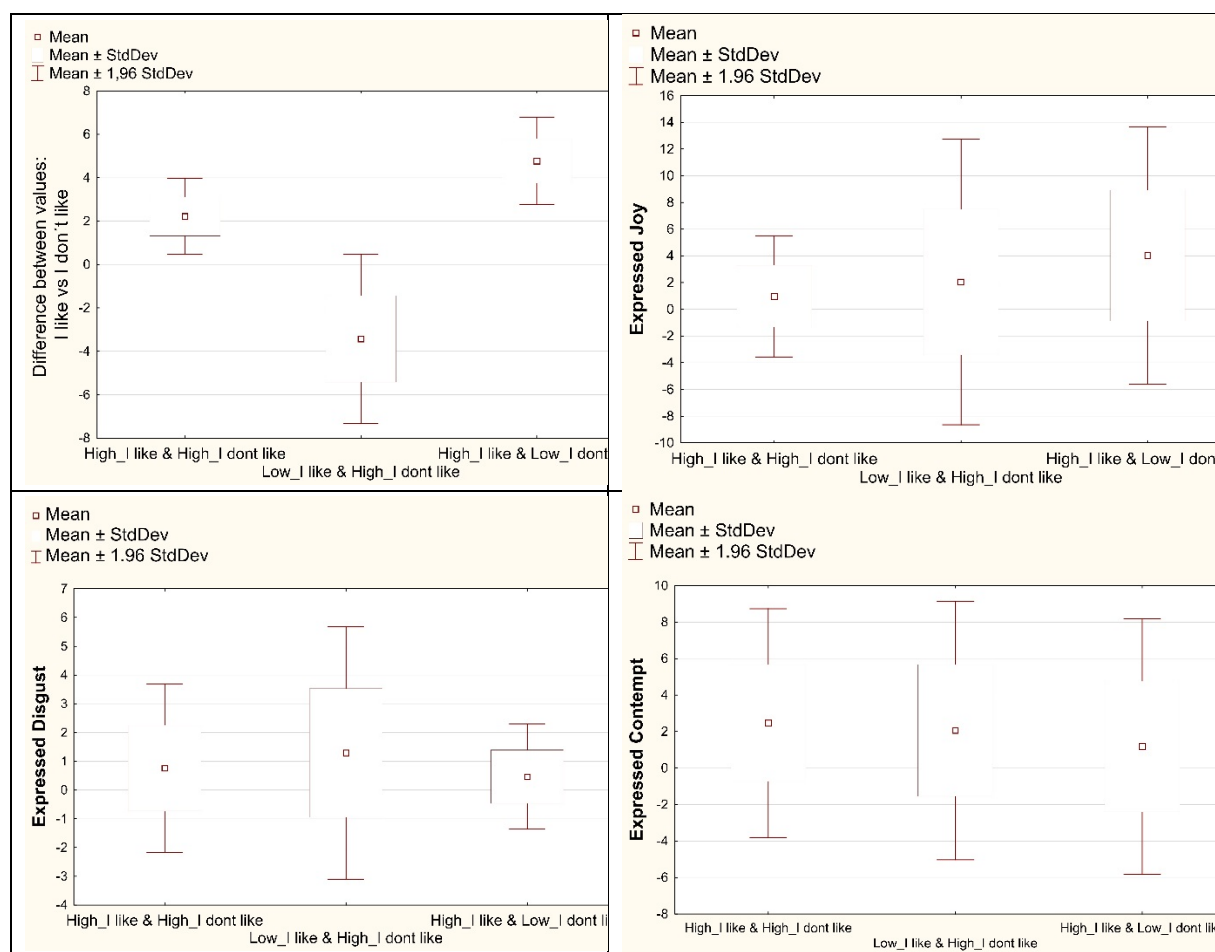


Chart 1: Box plots, analysis in the frame of semantic quadrant (explicit questionnaire value and expressed joy, disgust and contempt)

Source: own processing

Kruskal-Wallis test revealed following significant differences in the frame of semantic quadrants (I like the taste / I don't like the taste vs. High / Low), at the level of significance $p < 0,1$:

- **Explicit questionnaire values (diff. between I like vs. I don't like)**

There is a statistically significant difference among all the three quadrants. $H(2, N=72) = 59,66$ $p < ,001$.

- **Facial expression of joy**

Value in the quadrant "High like & Low don't like" is significantly higher than the two other quadrants "Low like & High don't like" ($Z = 2,37$ $p = 0,06$) and "High like & High don't like" ($Z = 2,71$ $p = 0,02$). $H(2, N=72) = 11,86$ $p = 0,003$.

- **Facial expression of contempt**

Value in the quadrant "High like & Low don't like" is significantly smaller than in the quadrant "High like & High don't like" ($Z = 2,13$ $p = 0,01$). $H(2, N=72) = 5,25$ $p = ,07$.

Facial expressions of disgust and surprise do not manifest significant differences in the values among the semantic quadrants.

3.2 Analysis Based on the Correlations and Three-Dimensional Graphs

This section presents analysis of the co-appearance of positive and negative facial expressions, facial expression relied with the mental processing (surprise) and explicit questionnaire evaluation. Following table (tab. 3) presents correlational analysis (using the Spearman coefficients) of the variables in question.

Table 3: Correlational analysis, relations between the facial expressions, measured as frame counts (joy, surprise, contempt and disgust) and the explicit questionnaire evaluation, * $p < 0,05$ ** $p < 0,1$

	Joy	Disgust	Contempt	Surprise	Q. diff. I like vs I don't like
Joy		0,07	-0,03	0,34*	0,37*
Disgust	0,07		0,25*	0,07	-0,09
Contempt	-0,03	0,25*		0,20**	-0,19**
Surprise	0,34*	0,07	0,20**		0,03
Questionnaire: diff. I like vs I don't like	0,37*	-0,09	-0,19**	0,03	

Source: own processing

Correlation analysis brings results as follows: Joy generates statistically significant correlation with surprise ($r = 0,34$) and with the questionnaire evaluation ($r = 0,37$), at the level of statistical significance $p < 0,05$. Disgust and contempt correlate mutually ($r = 0,25$). And contempt generates correlations with surprise ($r = 0,2$) and the questionnaire value ($r = -0,19$), at the level of statistical significance $p < 0,1$. Following section presents the three-dimensional graphical analysis (method for surface calculation: the least square method of weighted distances). 3D graphical analysis (chart 2) adds the plasticity to the previous analysis. We see that the maximal level of expressed joy (chart 2, left) and the max. positive value of the questionnaire evaluation (chart 2, right) occurs at the point of max. expressed surprise and max. expressed disgust (at both images).

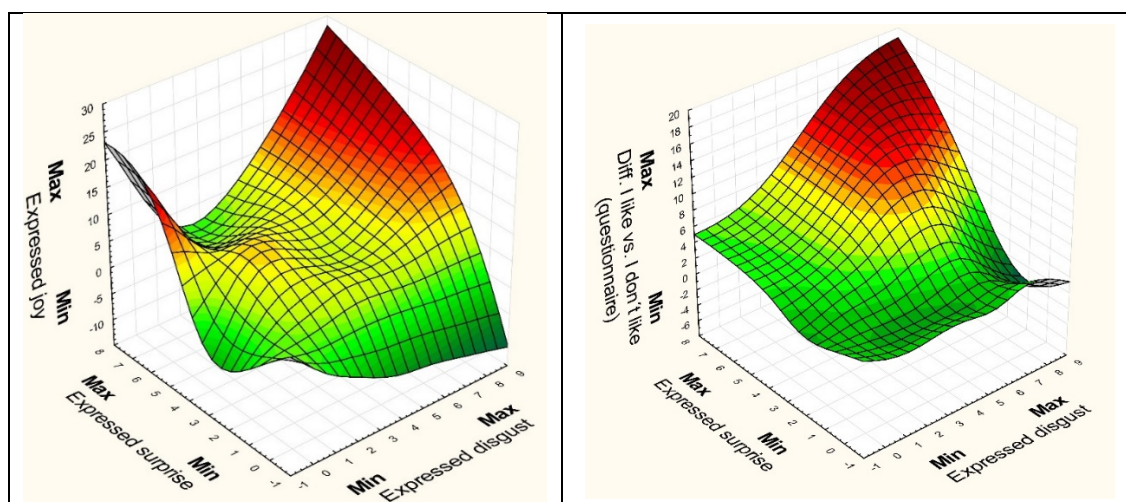


Chart 2: Three-dimensional graphs, maximal expressed joy (left) and max. positive questionnaire evaluation (right) appears at the point of combination of max. expressed disgust combined with the max. expressed surprise (implies mental processing). Method of the surface fitting: least square method of weighted distances.

Source: own processing

As comes out from the analysis, maximum of the positive expressions and max. positive evaluation appears in the situation when the consumer is surprised by the somewhat negative tastes, but finally the consumer likes the product. Hence, we imply that the surprise (representing the level of mental processing) acts as mediating variable and complements the triangular relationship.

Discussion and Conclusion

Our study outlined a more complex relations among the spontaneous facial expressions and explicit questionnaire evaluation, when tasting products conveying bitter taste. Mojet et al. (2015)²¹ reports no relations between explicit product evaluation and emotional states during consumption (measured explicitly). In our research we found significant relation between the spontaneous emotional expressions and explicit liking of the product. Similarly, Viejo et al. (2019)²² analyzed consumers' beer preferences and found no significant responses in emotional and physiological reactions, however significant differences were found in the frame of the explicit self-report and cognitive measures. Our research showed statistically significant relations between the implicit and explicit measures as well as the efficiency of measures by the self-reporting tools. Beyts et al. (2017)²³ using the EMG techniques showed significant differences in activation of the muscle *Corrugator supercilii* (involved in frowning) in relation to various beer aromas and also in the comparison beer vs. water. On the other hand, there were no significant changes in activation of the muscle *Zygomatic major* (involved in smiling). In our research we found that the facial expression of joy (smile is part of the joyful expression) significantly correlates with the liking of the product. We also confirmed that negative facial expressions (especially contempt) coincide with the less positive questionnaire evaluations.

The major finding of our research stems from the research coined in by Crist et al. (2019)²⁴ who found, in the frame of facereading analyses, it was disgust and surprise that correlated with the hedonic liking and intensity of the bitter taste. Our results bring more plasticity to these relations, among the explicit and implicit variables. Maximum values of negative expressions (disgust and contempt) achieves maximum in two cases: when consumer likes the product as well when the consumer does not like the product. Answer to this paradoxical finding consists in the act of inserting a mediating variable to the relation (i.e. surprise, which implies mental processing). As a result, maximum positive explicit evaluation or max. expressed joy appears at the point of combination of max. expressed surprise and max. expressed disgust. What implies, that if consumer naturally react to the bitter taste with negative facial expressions, but finally likes the product there is a significant amount of mental processing that appears (represented e.g. by the facial expression of surprise). Our findings shed the light on the perplexity of measuring likeness of tastes of the product conveying bitter or acid taste, when using computer aided facial expression analysis. However, there are some limitations. This research is based on a relatively small sample, a more robust sample might provide a more reliable insight. The tasting procedure might undergo some improvements, regarding e.g. a

²¹ MOJET, J. et al.: Are implicit emotion measurements evoked by food unrelated to liking?. In *Food Research International*, 2015, Vol. 76, No. 2, p. 225-231.

²² VIEJO, C. G. et al.: Integration of non-invasive biometrics with sensory analysis techniques to assess acceptability of beer by consumers. In *Physiology & Behavior*, 2019, Vol. 200, No. 1, p. 140-146.

²³ BEYTS, C. et al.: A comparison of self-reported emotional and implicit responses to aromas in beer. In *Food Quality and Preference*, 2017, Vol. 59, No. 1, p. 69-79.

²⁴ CRIST, C. A. et al.: Automated facial expression analysis for emotional responsivity using an aqueous bitter model. In *Food Quality and Preference*, 2018, Vol. 68, No. 1, p. 350-358.

more rigorous formal protocol during the product tasting, assuring that the research participants would move in the same way during the measurement. It would be interesting to include a wider spectrum of explicit cognitive and emotional measures to refine the results and procure better insights into the consumer decision-making and preferences. Nevertheless, the hereby presented findings are meaningful and merit further investigation.

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MEDIA CULTURE, ART AND CREATIVITY

**MEGATRENDS
AND MEDIA**

ON THE EDGE

A DEAD LETTER IS A GOOD START: A STUDY ON LITERARY GENEALOGY OF EMERGING GENRES IN NEW MEDIA

Snježana Barić-Šelmić – Hrvoje Mesić

ABSTRACT:

The development path, starting with the first handprints and cave drawings of Lascaux or Altamira, which denote that someone was occupying the space, to the development and use of the new media, which range from 3D video mapping and levitating displays to holographic screenings of films, sport events, or music, serves the purpose of creating a culture. The mass use of technology has affected the educational purpose of connecting different cultures; furthermore, virtual and augmented reality, media consumerism and production serve as symbols of the so-called 'culture power' and they also act as proof of its transformation into the 'Culture of Power'. This novel, virtual reality has undoubtedly captivated the interest and attention of the general public and integrated itself into interpersonal relationships. It should be noted, however, that this interest does not derive solely from the fact that this dimension represents something new but also from the human need to escape the mundane reality and seek fun, excitement, or simply to satisfy a habit, according to Inglis. The development and use of the new media have affected today's society immensely; moreover, this can be observed in the example of constant paradigmatic changes, as well as the reach the technology has when it comes to wide and diverse audiences. The Internet, being the most influential technological innovation, has introduced the society to a new world, a new space called cyberspace. McLuhan has heralded the rise of the 'Global Village' that will come as a result of technological and media innovations. Today's existence is not exclusively limited to the real world since the virtual realm has become essential to the entire humanity. To illustrate, numerous literary works have been created in cyberspace of the Global Village; furthermore, these works, which are bound to become part of the literary canon, should be genealogically classified, described to the fullest extent, as well as regulated.

KEY WORDS:

cyberspace, genre, internet, literary canon, new media, virtuality

1 Introduction: Emerging Social Realities

A number of researchers, theoreticians and scientists believe that four cognitive revolutions occurred in the history of human communication: speech, invention of writing, invention of printing, and information technology. Others, like Fang¹, talk about six phases of revolution: writing, printing, mass media, use of media for entertainment purposes, conversion of the home into the communication toolshed, and the information highway. Some authors identify the following four phases: the invention of writing, the invention of the alphabet, the invention of printing, and the invention of information technology. In any case, the emergence and the development of human communication, means of communication and the media have significantly and recognisably defined not only the lives of individuals, but also the society and humanity as a whole. Prominent scientist and media theoretician Harold Innis² analyses the impact of the media on individuals and on the society through history, maintaining that the use of new communication media changes the spreading, dissemination and distribution of information in the society, and consequently also its social structure. The development of writing made societies more hierarchical, since writing was a skill, especially in the early stages, that only persons of power possessed and had access to. Manuel Castells elaborates: "Power is the most fundamental process in society, since society is defined around values and institutions, and what is valued and institutionalized is defined by power relationships."³ Eminent

¹ FANG, I.: *A history of mass communication: six information revolutions*. Boston, Oxford, Johannesburg, Melbourne, New Delhi, Singapore : FocalPress, 1997, p. 1.

² INNIS, H.: *The Bias of Communication*. Toronto : University of Toronto Press, 1971, p. 9, 34, 139.

³ CASTELLS, M.: *Communication Power*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2009, p. 6.

anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss⁴ likewise notes that the first uses of writing were largely associated with power and government: writing was used for internal lists, catalogues, censuses, laws and instructions. Lévi-Strauss' work *The Savage Mind* is a typical example of fascination with the subjects of speech and writing. Lévi-Strauss builds a new perspective of writing and re-evaluates the traditional non-literate or spoken cultures, defining speech as the medium of natural human communication and authenticity, and writing as unnatural and violent alienation of the voice. In the interpretation of modern communication media, a convergence process recognisably augments the communication capacities and effects of modern media, and information-communication-digital technology, in terms of space and time.

The modern society changes at breakneck speed right in front of our eyes. We are witnessing new social realities, such as online communities, and diverse methods of communication, such as smartphone communication. In effect, this marks the beginning of a new period in the history of human communication. The revolution of electronic text, hypertext and multimedia has led to a revolution in reading. Reading on the screen is not the same as reading the codex, or reading from the codex and from the printed book. "The electronic representation of texts completely changes the text's status; for the materiality of the book, it substitutes the immateriality of texts without a unique location; against the relations of contiguity established in the print objects, it opposes the free composition of infinitely manipulable fragments; in place of the immediate apprehension of the whole work, made visible by the object that embodies it, it introduces a lengthy navigation in textual archipelagos that have neither shores nor borders", clarifies Roger Chartier.⁵ All major changes that have introduced something new, ending what came before and beginning what came after, are termed revolutions. Inglis interprets this revolution by the concepts of writing – printing – screen. These three concepts are the perfect representations of the development path of the information medium and the relationship between the information and its beneficiary. All communications devices originated around 1900 and were all interdependent. "The definition of culture as stories we tell ourselves about ourselves is a reminder that media theory, or study of public communications, is simply the study of how culture develops."⁶ Castells underlines that the culture of real virtuality, related to the electronically integrated multimedia system, contributes to the transformation of time in our society: through simultaneousness and through timelessness.⁷ In the modern virtual world, such interdependence grows, hybridizes and forms new genres. As poetics change, so do genre systems. The emergence of new genres helps us at least "build and argument our own historical vision of these changes and these causes."⁸

The lines between reality and virtual reality are changing, along with the lines between media. The changes could be described as "cultural industry". The lines between "high" and "low" culture, subculture and popular culture, have been blurring for decades. Inglis will conclude that much of popular culture "brings pleasure simply by not educating. The success of some of the most disgusting quizzes and game-shows televised, the most revolting horrors offered by video production, is largely explainable by the fact that they purposefully twist the standards of good taste and consideration for the individual's body and mind, the very thing that official education rightfully supports."⁹ Modern culture is commercial: form is what changes in the new

⁴ LÉVI-STRAUSS, C.: *Divlja misao*. Zagreb : Golden marketing, 2001, p. 121-151.

⁵ BHASKAR, M.: *The Content Machine. Towards a Theory of Publishing from the Printing Press to the Digital Network*. London, New York, Delhi : Anthem Press, 2013, p. 48.

⁶ INGLIS, F.: *Teorija medija*. Zagreb : Barbat, AGM, 1997, p. 174.

⁷ CASTELLS, M.: *Uspion umreženog društva*. Zagreb : Golden marketing, 2000, p. 485.

⁸ PAVLIČIĆ, P.: *Književna genologija*. Zagreb : SNL, 1983, p. 95.

⁹ INGLIS, F.: *Teorija medija*. Zagreb : Barbat, AGM, 1997, p. 154.

and what has been found in “the popular”, whereas content is neglected because it is related to interpretation and ideologically coded as the real truth and the real picture of events, while interpretation is related to personal opinion. In *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, Walter Benjamin stresses that people have always been able to reproduce or imitate (*mimesis*) certain works of art, but that they did it in different ways. Benjamin therefore introduces the concept of *aura*, which he defines as the essence of works of art. Or, in other words, it “represents nothing but the formulation of the cult value of the work of art in categories of space and time perception. Distance is the opposite of closeness. The essentially distant object is the unapproachable one.”¹⁰ Distance is instrumental to its authenticity and demonstrates the “here-and-now” (*Jetztzeit*). However, Benjamin wishes to underline that incessant reproduction of works of art is not a bad thing. This change occurs not only in art, but can also be understood as cultural and social change of everyday life (he refers to this change as a symptomatic process). The loss of the *aura* and the emergence of mass culture are, according to Benjamin, interlinked. The process is mutual: every work of art should be viewed in the context of its “here-and-now”, but also in the context of living, and not static, tradition.¹¹ This leads to the creation of new genres that will be available always and everywhere in the form we choose.

2 On Other Life Experiences

Media theoretician Marshall McLuhan interprets our technologies as extensions of our beings.¹² In fact, he elucidates that all media forms (speech, writing, phone, radio, television etc) provide for the extension of the human being as well as human capacities, increasing the speed and the proportions of communication, and extending the reach of human boundaries. McLuhan maintains that the content of any medium is always another medium. Speech is the content of writing, print is the content of the telegraph, and thought process the content of speech. A painting is a direct manifestation of creative thought processes as they might appear in computer designs.¹³ Every media form incorporates the message it conveys, and the media themselves have a considerable impact on the way the message is interpreted. If the literary canon aims to be representative and inclusive, it should embrace products from new realities and (virtual) communities.¹⁴ This means that they have to include new forms of literature resulting from the use of new media, as well as new forms of society that is changing due to these media. This should in fact also imply redefining the real meaning of literature, seriously rethinking the formulation that literature is primarily the written word, in order to save it from a slow and premature death. More than ever, the society is exposed to paradigmatic changes, mainly resulting from the rise of technological innovations and the development and use of new media reaching a broad and diverse audience.¹⁵ This makes the society diverse and complex, which is also an enriching experience. It seems that the room for individualism expands. The postmodern man of the 21st century is dependent on infrastructure rather than on family. The most influential technological innovation – the internet – has given the multiform and diverse society a new world, a new space – the cyberspace. Even though this new world has not been physically discovered like the other “New Worlds”, it is populated by almost all residents of the old world.

¹⁰ BENJAMIN, W.: *Eseji*. Belgrade : Nolita, 1974, p. 122.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 121.

¹² McLUHAN, M.: *Razumijevanje medija*. Zagreb : Golden Marketing, Tehnička knjiga, 2008, p. 10-11.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 13-14.

¹⁴ VAN DER VEER, R.: *Rethinking Literature in a Digital Age: exploring a redefinition of literature and the updating of the canon-composition*. Liteva : Literary Texts in a Visual Age, 2005, p. 1-3.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

M. McLuhan¹⁶ anticipated the rise of the “Global Village” that will emerge alongside technological and media innovations. All technological changes, which become the norm, are contained in the digital galaxy, making cyberspace the only place where people gather to interact socially and intellectually. People have gotten used to formatting all their texts in accordance with the features of software programmes. Digitally produced texts can include animations and sounds, and space is much less limited. Immediate communication is possible with a multitude of recipients at the same time. According to Marcel Danesi, such cyberspace becomes the new medieval square or the new ancient *agora*.¹⁷ The term cyberspace was coined by the science fiction author William Gibson, who first used it in his novel *Neuromancer* (1984). Gibson describes cyberspace as “the matrix (...), bright lattices of logic unfolding across that colorless void”¹⁸, and as “consensual hallucination experienced daily by billions of legitimate operators, in every nation, by children being taught mathematical concepts... A graphic 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.”¹⁹ Cyberspace is also defined as “new and distinctive social environment (often dubbed “cyberspace,” in contrast to “real space”) with its own ontological and epistemological structures, interactional forms, roles and rules, limits and possibilities.”²⁰ It is an imaginary virtual space separated from the physical components and composed of the global sum of computer networks and information. Dan Thu Nguyen and Jon Alexander believe that cyberspace should not be confined to space alone and should include time as well. They use the concept of cyberspacetime as a dimension larger than the internet and other networks: “Do we not enter cyberspacetime whenever we plan a holiday, buy a package tour or book an airline flight? Many mundane activities are engagements in cyberspacetime. One goes there by visiting an automatic teller machine, buying by credit card, or paying bills via touch-tone phone. The simple act of calling overseas hurls one into cyberspacetime. Now we can also watch simulated virtual reality (VR) and its first cousin telepresence (TP) on TV.”²¹ Interestingly, Baudrillard gives the following description of virtuality as a degraded copy: “It is in the Virtual that we have the ultimate predator and plunderer of reality, secreted by reality itself as a kind of self-destructive viral agent. Reality has fallen prey to Virtual Reality (...).”²²

The virtual world creates its own reality until the reality it has created starts to push the “real” one out of the centre, thus entering everyone’s lives, homes and everyday lives through a different door: “As Marshall McLuhan taught, any new medium forms an environment that casts deep cultural shadows. Major technologies qualify as media if they provide extensions of biological abilities. Radar, sonar and aircraft extend animal capabilities. Clothes and houses extend the skin. Wheels extend the legs, radio the voice and ears, cameras the eye, tape records and computers the brain. Money stores human energy. Because such technologies do what bodies once did, they produce cultural mutation. A culture is partly an order of sensory practices and preferences.”²³ Pavle Schramadei believes the internet and culture complement one another. The internet is offered as an ideal experimental tool for finding ideas that can become

¹⁶ McLUHAN, M.: *Razumijevanje medija*. Zagreb : Golden Marketing, Tehnička knjiga, 2008, p. 319-326.

¹⁷ DANESI, M.: *Understanding Media Semiotics*. London : Arnold Publishers, 2002, p. 210.

¹⁸ GIBSON, W.: *Neuromancer*. New York : Berkley Publishing Group, 1984, p. 8.

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 37.

²⁰ YAR, M.: The Novelty of 'Cybercrime' An Assessment in Light of Routine Activity Theory. In *European Journal of Criminology*, 2005, Vol. 2, No. 4, p. 408.

²¹ NGUYEN, D. T., ALEXANDER, J.: Dolazak kiberprostovremena i kraj političkog poretka. In SHIELDS, R. (ed.): *Kulture interneta*. Zagreb : Naklada Jesenski i Turk, Croatian Sociological Association, 2001, p. 150.

²² BAUDRILLARD, J.: *Inteligencija zla ili pakt lucidnosti*. Zagreb : Naklada Ljevak, 2006, p. 6.

²³ NGUYEN, D. T., ALEXANDER, J.: Dolazak kiberprostovremena i kraj političkog poretka. In SHIELDS, R. (ed.): *Kulture interneta*. Zagreb : Naklada Jesenski i Turk, Croatian Sociological Association, 2001, p. 151.

triggers and bases for long-term development of all culture segments, provided that it is prevented from “sliding off” into consumerism. New technologies should lay an emphasis on the avoidance and destruction of all sorts of stereotypes, on openness to new ideas, on interactive communication, and on the creation and implementation of a good cultural policy.²⁴ The application of new technologies makes literature available online (desktop publishing). The virtual has fused with the real, giving birth to hyperreality. The general connectedness of the world has become a fact of everyday life. Even though Pavle Schramadei’s essay discusses a virtually available medium rather than a virtual genre, attention must be drawn to the services and the capacities of the virtual space through which books (of different genres) reach us, and we use certain devices to read them (including digital readers such as the Kindle).

3 Virtual Genres Are Incomparable (as Are Literary Canons)

What is happening with literature at the time of dominant virtual culture? Does virtual reality diminish the reality of the literary piece, or does it merely serve as an underpinning for its transformation into modern forms? Can the application of the rigid principle of formation of literary canons influence the fluid matter of virtual literary production? Ken Hillis underlines that the concept of virtual reality is often confused with the concept of cyberspace. The virtual space is a part of the physical space, with the physical space providing the basis to build the virtual space on. The cyberspace is specific in that, even though the entire infrastructure it uses is provided by the physical space (computers, mobile devices etc), it is essentially and functionally completely virtual, with the virtual or the latent as its only connection to the physical space. According to Hillis’ interpretation, virtual space is the technical means of accessing this parallel, incorporeal and increasingly networked visual space, called the cyberspace. The user feels present in this cyberspace environment, but things do not have a physical form there. Instead, they are composed of fragments of electronic data and particles of light. As early as in the 1930s, in the science fiction short story *Pygmalion’s Spectacles*²⁵, author Stanley G. Weinbaum described a game involving glasses that allow players to see holographs of virtual stories, including the senses of smell and touch. The first attempt on record, which bears remarkable similarities with modern devices, was built in 1956 by Morton Heiling, who called his invention the *Sensorama*. The *Sensorama* was a motorcycle simulator that provided a broad array of stimuli even by modern standards: image was simulated using video projections, and it also included simulations of vibrations and the smell of overheated tyres, using audio recordings to simulate sound. However, Ivan Sutherland is today considered the true pioneer of virtual reality and computer graphics in general. He built the first functional prototypes of HMD devices that showed virtual data over the image of the real world in one of the first forms of augmented reality. On virtual reality, Hillis says the following: “a machine to realize such desires for transcendence is not intended to promote any particular metaphysics, though I do believe that many current materialist analyses of the technology miss the mark in failing to address the importance of metaphysics to virtual consumers.”²⁶ Virtuality, however, has also brought interactivity. Interactivity is the property of expression of social interaction. Hillis emphasises: “Mid-1950s Hollywood features such as Alfred Hitchcock’s *Dial M for Murder* required viewers to don special glasses to perceive the hallucinatory effects. In the film, the scissors that Ray Milland uses to menace Grace Kelly seem to fly forward from the screen

²⁴ For more information, see: SCHRAMADEI, P.: Internet i kultura – sinonimi ili antipodi? In SHIELDS, R. (ed.): *Kulture interneta*. Zagreb : Naklada Jesenski i Turk, Croatian Sociological Association, 2001, p. 7-22.

²⁵ See also: WEINBAUM, S. G.: *Pygmalion’s Spectacles*. Whitefish, Montana : Kessinger Publishing, 2004.

²⁶ HILLIS, K.: Geografija oka: Tehnologije virtualne stvarnosti. In SHIELDS, R. (ed.): *Kulture interneta*. Zagreb : Naklada Jesenski i Turk, Croatian Sociological Association, 2001, p. 103-104.

to threaten the audience too, disrupting the ‘traditional’ spatio-emotional remove that informs the relationship between viewer and screen.”²⁷ In other words, consumers were given the opportunity to enter the material through a combination of visual form and virtual technology. Jensen argues that this is the “measure of a medium’s potential ability to let the user exert an influence on the content/or form of the mediated communication.”²⁸

Even though the virtual world does not have its “tangible” reality, no type of digital device will ever be able to replicate the relationship between the book and its reader. In *From Gutenberg to the Global Information Infrastructure. Access to Information in the Networked World*, Christine Borgman presents possible scenarios of societal development in the new information age. “The extremes include science-fiction-like scenarios in which technology controls all aspects of daily life, resulting in a police state where every activity is monitored, and survivalist scenarios in which some catastrophe destroys all technology, with the result that new societies are reinvented without it. The science fiction and survivalist scenarios are easily discounted because checks and balances are in place to prevent them. Choosing between the revolutionary, discontinuity scenario and the evolutionary, continuity scenario described above is more problematic. Each has merit and each is the subject of scholarly inquiry and informed public debate.”²⁹ Borgman further states that “the most likely future scenario lies somewhere between the discontinuity and continuity scenarios. Information technology makes possible all sorts of new activities and new ways of doing old activities. But people do not discard all their old habits and practices with the advent of each new technology. Nor are new technologies created without some expectations of how they will be employed. The probable scenario is neither revolution nor evolution, but co-evolution of information technology, human behaviour, and organizations. People select and implement technologies that are available and that suit their practices and goals. As they use them, they adapt them to suit their needs, often in ways not anticipated by their designers.”³⁰ Hence, we live in a digital age, when the users of virtual genres have adopted new technologies while still hanging on to old patterns of behaviour and finding the information they need.

The availability of everything at all times has shaped new concepts that are discussed by Henry Jenkins in *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. These concepts including the *zappers*, the *casuals* and the *loyals*. *Zappers* are media consumers with irregular and unreliable consumer habits. They switch frequently between TV channels, often in the middle of a program. *Zappers* are one of the most difficult groups for television advertisers to access and, therefore, they must use innovative techniques in order get their message across. *Casuals* are consumers who tend to return to certain for example TV shows, yet without definite regularity. Often, they do not plan to watch a certain show but just “end up” doing so. They are also more likely to engage in casual viewing where watching the television is only one of the multiple tasks they engage in at once. *Loyals* are reliable consumers who are committed to watching a particular TV show. *Loyals* watch less hours of television a week than the average viewer because they have chosen specific shows to which they are loyal. *Loyals* are the ones using their DVRs to record shows in case they happen to miss their screening time. They are more likely to engage in cross-media interaction related to the show than *zappers* or *casuals*.

²⁷ HILLIS, K.: Geografija oka: Tehnologije virtualne stvarnosti. In SHIELDS, R. (ed.): *Kulture interneta*. Zagreb : Naklada Jesenski i Turk, Croatian Sociological Association, 2001, p. 113.

²⁸ LABAŠ, D.: Meduljudska komunikacija, novi mediji i etika. In LABAŠ, D. (ed.): *Novi mediji – nove tehnologije – novi moral*. Zagreb : University Centre for Croatian Studies, University of Zagreb, 2009, p. 17.

²⁹ BORGMAN, C. L.: *From Gutenberg to the Global Information Infrastructure. Access to Information in the Networked World*. Cambridge, London : The MIT Press, 2002, p. 3.

³⁰ Ibidem, p. 3-4.

They are also more likely to pay attention to advertisements and to remember brands names, thus the television industries values loyals more than the members of the other two categories.³¹ This focus in this paper is on the concept of *zapping*, which refers to the hyper-individualisation of the modern society. The critical mass of users has been reached, and we are able to turn things off by ourselves, or switch to something else, by the click of a mouse or by pressing a button on the remote control. When advertisers buy time or advertising space, they essentially pay for the opportunity to make their message seen or heard. Potential recipients of their communications have at the same time devised various strategies for “avoiding” exposure to advertising content. Switching channels or *zapping*, focusing attention on other things, conversing with other people, or leaving the room at the moment when the commercials come on are just some of the defence “strategies” for dealing with ads. The term *zapping* has lately been used to describe all methods for avoiding exposure to advertising messages.³²

The extinction of the book as a medium is often foretold, but literature, as the situational picture of the world at a certain time, can never become extinct, because it keeps up with the times and always looks for new expressions. Today, when the emphasis of expression is most often reduced to image, to the extent that visual expressions such as stickers, memes, emojis and gifs replace storytelling, literature manages to find its place even in such a space, infiltrating the virtual worlds and creating new genres. The development of technology impacts the development of literary genres by making modern technology their main medium. The use of virtual reality is most clearly expressed in the pages of science fiction (SF) works. According to Ken Hillis’ interpretation, science fiction has always been “an ideological narrative or ‘discourse’. Its visions and overt use of spatial metaphors in describing power relationships offer compelling glimpses into the popular ‘geographic imagination’ and are part of the apparatus facilitating actual technology’s social acceptance.”³³ “By constructing ‘a space of accommodation to an intensely technological existence’, SF addresses how virtual technologies inflect our being in the world.”³⁴ Hills mentions the holodeck on the starship *Enterprise* in the TV show *Star Trek: The Next Generation* as an example of so-called cultural technology, and takes the view that “technology might now offer humanity a wraparound alternative space to our present embodied existence.”³⁵

A new genre that first appeared in Japan in the 1990s owes its appearance to the development of new technologies, or, more precisely, mobile phones. Cellphone novels were developed mostly by young women, writing about love and relationships, romantic fiction, rape, love triangles and pregnancy. Instead of being issued in printed form, the text was sent to the readers directly by email, text message, online publication or online content sharing, one chapter at a time, with the authors’ identities not being disclosed. Cellphone novel was thus defined as a genre. They can be described as a genre because they mostly use short and simple sentences and are plot-focused, written in the first person, without in-depth characterisation of protagonists, and usually written in slang, including jargonisms and vulgarisms. The authors use emoticons and symbols in their writing. Another important feature is that the novels are written on cellphones rather than on computers. The first cellphone novel was written and published in Japan in 2003. It was called *Deep Love* and written by Yoshi, a man in his mid-

³¹ JENKINS, H. *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York, London : New York University Press, 2006, p. 74-79.

³² BAKARIĆ, D.: *Perceptivna istaknutost i pamćenje reklamnih poruka: utjecaj pozadinske tišine kao izvedbene karakteristike radijskog propagandnog spota*. [Diploma thesis]. Zagreb : Faculty of Philosophy, 2005, p. 5.

³³ HILLIS, K.: Geografija oka: Tehnologije virtualne stvarnosti. In SHIELDS, R. (ed.): *Kulture interneta*. Zagreb : Naklada Jesenski i Turk, Croatian Sociological Association, 2001, p. 129.

³⁴ Ibidem.

³⁵ Ibidem.

thirties. *Deep Love* sold more than 2.6 million copies and was adapted for television soaps and films. The first cellphone novel in English, *Secondhand Memories* by Takatsu, was published in the US and viewed more than 60,000 times. It was published in book form in 2015. A number of authors continued to write cellphone novels. A notable example is Behrouz Boochani, who wrote *No Friend But the Mountains: Writing from Manus Prison* on his cellphone during his imprisonment in Papua New Guinea. Boochani, an Irani refugee, wrote his debut novel in Persian, his mother tongue, and sent it to his translator Omid Tofighian in Australia on WhatsApp. *Kontax*, a cellphone novel about a group of friends who share a passion for graffiti, was also very popular among teenagers. The plan was to release one chapter of 400 words every day for 21 days with the objective of encouraging teenagers to read more and helping them get used to literature. Peter Brett, an American who wrote his first fantasy novel on his cellphone while taking the metro from Brooklyn to Times Square in New York, is making it into a film trilogy. His first novel, *The Painted Man*, is about demons that come out of the planet's core at night to feed on humans. After the first novel became a big hit, Brett wrote a sequel, *The Desert Spear*. Peter Brett's first novel sold 100,000 copies in 17 countries. It is worth mentioning that data charges were a big problem for cellphone novels when they first appeared. Mobile operators eventually realised that the use of their services would increase if the data charges were lowered, which was exactly what happened. Reading cellphone novels can encourage young people to use new technologies and aid in their mental development, as well as lead to the development of new virtual genres. In the article *Will Cell Phones Save Books?*, Mike Elgan states: "I'm convinced that young people are reading more than any other generation in history... in the form of IMs, text messages, blogs, social networking messages... it's participatory... They're reading as a part of a dialog that involves writing... Literacy isn't about passively reading, it's about reading and writing. If we want to increase the reading of books, we'll need to figure out how to increase the writing of books, especially novels. Can we emulate Japan? Yes. But the secret to getting young people excited about books isn't about taking our existing published books and formatting them for cell phones. Instead, we need to figure out how to let readers publish their own books in a way that can reach a mass audience – not just on obscure blogs, but on all media: print, online, audio and yes, even on cell phones."³⁶

Having become a widespread medium of online communication, blogs are now considered a genre in their own right. A blog, or a weblog, is an online publication containing periodical articles in a reverse time sequence, with the latest articles on top.³⁷ Some blogs are in textual format, while others only use sketches or photos. Blogs have the advantage of allowing visitors to leave comments and engage in discussion, which gives feedback both to the readers and to the author of the blog. When the first blogs appeared, they were widely believed to be full of falsities. In time, however, the number of professional bloggers who make a living by writing blogs has increased. With the development of new media technology, their use in everyday life facilitated "new forms using the features of interactivity and easier distribution of content, and the establishment of foundations for the development of new social relations among the users."³⁸ Katarina Peović Vuković underlines that the blog is the true avantgarde that has taken hold in art and literature. She describes it as an avantgarde monster, capable of devouring everything offered to it, an ever-changing, living organism that eludes precise definition. Blog is usually defined as an online journal that has realised its considerable potentials with the

³⁶ WILSON, K. S.: *Blovels, Twovels and Cell Phone Novels: Bridges to Literature or Roads to Nowhere?*. [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <https://www.academia.edu/40458897/BLOVELS_TWOVELS_AND_CELL_PHONE_NOVELS_Bridges_to_Literature_or_Roads_to_Nowhere>.

³⁷ BRAUTOVIĆ, M.: *Online novinarstvo*. Zagreb : Školska knjiga, 2012, p. 45.

³⁸ PERUŠKO, Z.: *Uvod u medije*. Zagreb : Jesenski i Turk, 2011, p. 37.

advent and the use of hypertext, defined by form rather than content, since the latest entry is on top. Therefore, “the reverse chronological structure of the blog forces the reader to ‘explore the author’, discovering from one fragment to the next who is addressing them, why and where from, whether in geographical, mental, political or any other sense. However, reader activity (characteristic of all cyber texts) includes participating in the creation of the text as well. The blog is defined by the practice of quoting and commenting, reading and writing.”³⁹ Blog posts are written in different styles, formal or casual, but grammatical correctness is a must. Brautović elaborates how posts are written: they have to be short, simple and entertaining. Blog posts open with an introduction (*lead*), describing the author’s motive for writing the post, and containing a link to the source of the story. The lead is followed by two paragraphs containing the relevant quotations, followed by two paragraphs containing the author’s commentary, and are concluded with links to other people’s comments about the same topic. The post needs a good title to attract readers.⁴⁰ The question of blog authorship is not new, but has merely been reawakened with the appearance of hypertext and the development of new technology. According to Katarina Peović Vuković’s interpretation, virtual text fused the author and the reader, but it is not a new phenomenon. “The author of the Chinese text *I Ching or the Book of Changes* waived full authorship of the Book as early as in 1122–770 BC. *I Ching* consists of 64 symbols or hexagrams, organised in binary order in six units or fragmented lines. Oulipo author Raymond Queneau created *Cent Mille Milliards de Poèmes* (1961), one of the first ergodic texts, ‘a sonnet machine’ producing up to 10⁷⁴ sonnets. (According to Queneau’s calculations, a reader who reads one sonnet per minute for eight hours a day, two hundred days a year, ... will need more than a million centuries to finish the text.)”⁴¹

The blog as such has still not been accepted as a literary genre. However, in the essay *The Labyrinth Unbound*, Steve Himmer proposes that every weblog can be considered literary inasmuch as it calls attention not only to the object of reading, but also to the reader’s unique way of reading it... “Calling a weblog ‘literary’ does not require content that is about literature or even content that aims to be literature. It is not an attempt at categorizing one weblog and its author as more worthwhile in a canonical sense than any other. To the contrary, I propose that every weblog can be considered literary in the sense that it calls attention not only to what we read, but also to the unique way we read it. The weblog is (to paraphrase Colin MacCabe) the performed result of a code of particular techniques, and this paper is an attempt to highlight the primary features of that code. The weblog collapses many of the common assumptions made about texts, as it complicates the distinction between author and audience through the multivocality of both direct commenting, and the reader’s ability to reorder the narrative in myriad ways. Owing to its ongoing creation over an undefined period of time, the weblog becomes a text that constantly expands through the input of both readers and writers. This absence of a discrete, ‘completed’ product makes the weblog as a form resistant to the commoditization either of itself, or of any one particular interpretation.”⁴² In other words, the blog will never be finished because it includes the dimension of time. It flows and has no conclusion; it offers the possibility of playing the game or engaging with the text, with every comment or every new text moving the old, forcing both the author and the readers to navigate the labyrinth. The time game in the blog hence allows the presence of what Walter Benjamin

³⁹ PEOVIĆ VUKOVIĆ, K.: *Blog je prava avangarda*. [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <<http://www.zarez.hr/clanci/blog-je-prava-avangarda>>.

⁴⁰ BRAUTOVIĆ, M.: *Online novinarstvo*. Zagreb : Školska knjiga, 2012, p. 45.

⁴¹ PEOVIĆ VUKOVIĆ, K.: *Blog je prava avangarda*. [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <<http://www.zarez.hr/clanci/blog-je-prava-avangarda>>.

⁴² HIMMER, S.: *Oslobodeni labirint*. [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <<http://www.zarez.hr/clanci/oslobodeni-labirint>>.

calls the *aura*, relating to the work of art and its presence in space and time, its unique existence in the space it occupies. Himmler concludes that this unique existence of the work of art was defined by the history it was subordinated to for the duration of its existence, whereas the blog, in the form it existed in before the latest addition or change, is impossible to reproduce, as it is inextricably linked with the moment of its production, which is lost as soon as it has been replaced by another moment.⁴³

Maja Hrgović notes this problem with the so-called blogger literature in Croatia, and states: “Furthermore, it is becoming increasingly common for authors of literary blogs to resort to paper. Dario Rukavina, who blogs as *Porto*, Zrinka Pavlič (*Zrinsko pismo*), Igor Kokoruš (*Leb*), Damir Markulj (*NoisyD*) and Vlado Bulić (*Denis Lalić*) have all published their prose in book form at the end of last year. The latter has even been presented with Jutarnji list’s award for the best novel. The infiltration of bookstores and libraries by bloggers partly occurs through short story collection contests. The fact that short stories by bloggers will be included in Profil’s anthology *Najbolje hrvatske priče* [The Best Croatian Short Stories] could be considered a test of their quality.”⁴⁴ Even though the blog has still not been recognised as a relevant segment of the literary culture in Croatia, cyberspace has given many Croatian authors a medium to “come out of the shadows”, rise to popularity, reach their broader audience, and eventually become their own publishers. Dario Rukavina, one of the leading Croatian bloggers, who posts on the blog *Buddha u supermarketu* [Buddha in the Supermarket], offers the following answer to the question “blog or book”: “Both. I believe the (adverse) circumstances that characterized our literary scene before the emergence of the blog are behind us now. A young man with ambitions to write feels the need to reflect on the reality and receive some form of feedback from the world around him. He simply refuses to accept the fact that his poetry or prose has to spend months lying in an editor’s folder, waiting for a contest to be announced, and then waiting for the jury’s decision and possible publication. And don’t even get me started on printing. It’s a process that takes time, a veritable Mexican soap opera, you wouldn’t believe it, and my fellow bloggers and I have no desire to play a supporting role in it.”⁴⁵

The hypertext was born out of the need to solve the issue of information overload and all the resulting ideas associated with the theory that copied and existing works are used too often. Hypertext therefore provides for complete change of the medium on which information is stored. The term hypertext was first introduced in the 1960s to denote non-linearly organised text > WWW. It is believed to have been coined by Vannevar Bush, who wrote an essay in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1945, offering a solution that combined science and technology, and presenting his idea for a new method of data storage and linking. He designed the *Memex*, a device connected to a large archive of microfilms, texts, documents and books, with “associative indexing” search allowing data to link to one another and to choose one another. This would give the reader a more active role in producing meaning, as well as in intertextual linking and text networking. Katarina Peović Vuković believes that the incorporeal hypertext has embodied the plural space of designability in place of the text as a fixed, finished, complete object that can occupy physical space. Hence, “hyperliteracy rests on communication practice models where the positions of the author and the reader keep changing, and none of the

⁴³ HIMMER, S.: *Oslobođeni labirint*. [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <<http://www.zarez.hr/clanci/oslobodeni-labirint>>.

⁴⁴ HRGOVIĆ, M.: *Festival blog književnosti*. [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <http://www.zarez.hr/204/z_info.htm>.

⁴⁵ HRGOVIĆ, M.: *Tko se izgubi u šumi blogova nije je ni dostojan. Razgovor s Dariom Rukavinom*. [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <<http://www.zarez.hr/arhiva/176>>.

communication participants have full control of the text.”⁴⁶ Hypertext reading does not involve reading in the classic, linear sense, from the beginning to the end. According to Marina Gržinić’s study, hypertext knows no linearity or text boundaries. Its structure is multilinear, offering the recipient interactivity in navigating the content entered in the electronic database. The structure of the hypertext, in addition to the text, can include other media, such as sound, video, picture... Unlike the traditional, printed, analogue text, hypertext has no unique reading sequence. Rather, the reading sequence is defined dynamically by the reader as he reads it. For this reason, the traditional/printed text is described as sequential, and hypertext as nonsequential. As its name suggests (“hyper” is Greek for “above, beyond”), hypertext transcends the ordinary linear text. Hypertext is modular, or, in a sense, never complete, because new modules can always be added, and they do not even have to be textual. This is how multimedia is created. When faced with hypertext, the reader assumes the role of the text’s maker, as the process of reading is at the same time a form of writing new text. By focusing on the active function of the reader as the creator and modifier, who arbitrarily forms links between textual units by immersing himself in it, the hypertext asserts itself as the space of liberating power. Hypertext also makes it possible to erase the differences between reading and writing, at the same time relativizing the relationship between the author and the reader.⁴⁷

Peović Vuković argues: “Hypertext means reducing the possibility of changing the text, and the joy of reading hypertext is the joy of exploring a space whose topography is linked to the narrations creating this space.”⁴⁸ Robert Coover’s experiment from the early 1990s, called *Hypertext Hotel*, was the first hypertext with literary tendencies, open to students to read and write in. Culture theoretician Jay David Bolter believes hypertext to be the embodiment of the semiotic view of language and communication.⁴⁹ According to Theodore Nelson’s definition⁵⁰, hypertext refers to a branching text that offers the reader the possibility of choice and is best read on an interactive screen. Interestingly, the most famous productions of hypertextual character rose to popularity in their printed editions, which synthesizes very well the main issue of hypertextual literature: the readers are still conservative in their approach to literary production and anything that is generally considered serious literature implies printed form.⁵¹ Hypertext is therefore understood not as a work of literature or as a networked corpus of texts, but as a principle of organisation. Artist Mark Amerika agrees with a such a view in *Hypertextual Consciousness*. Paraphrasing the English translation of Descartes’ phrase *Cogito, ergo sum* (I think therefore I am), Amerika coined the phrase *I Link, therefore I am*, capturing the entire essence of hypertext’s nature, as the lexis *Link* also contains a link to the second paragraph of the text.⁵² Links, or hyperlinks, offering the reader a choice to follow and a way to organise their reading, give hypertext a special advantage. In *Hypertext and the Changing Roles of Readers*, Patterson differentiates between three types of hypertext readers depending on their level of involvement. The first type is the *browser*, who has no plan and no motivation for reading, and is merely looking for information to occupy his attention. The second type is

⁴⁶ PEOVIĆ VUKOVIĆ, K.: Povratak u budućnost. Hipertekstualnost. Pismenost elektrosfere ili prastara žudnja teksta. In *Književna smotra: časopis za svjetsku književnost*, 2006, Vol. 38, No. 140-2, p. 3.

⁴⁷ GRŽINIĆ, M.: *U redu za virtualni kruh*. Zagreb : Meandar, 1998, p. 101-106.

⁴⁸ PEOVIĆ VUKOVIĆ, K.: *Medijska analiza i književni tekst*. [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <https://katepe.jottit.com/medijska_analiza_i_knji%C5%BEevni_tekst>.

⁴⁹ Ibidem.

⁵⁰ For more information, see: MOULTHROP, S.: U sjeni informanda: retorički eksperiment u hipertekstu. In *Književna smotra: časopis za svjetsku književnost*, 2006, Vol. 38, No. 140-2, p. 65-76.

⁵¹ PEOVIĆ VUKOVIĆ, K.: *Hipertekst(ualna) svijest. Književnost (?) na novim medijima*. [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <<http://knjizevnostikonji.blogspot.com/2011/05/hipertekstualna-svijest-knjizevnost-na.html>>.

⁵² PEOVIĆ VUKOVIĆ, K.: *Medijska analiza i književni tekst*. [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <https://katepe.jottit.com/medijska_analiza_i_knji%C5%BEevni_tekst>.

the *user*, who is looking for specific information and is using hypertext to find it. The third type is the *co-author*, who adds content to the hypertext, entering his own text in the electronic discourse. This is the most active type of reader.⁵³

Hypertextual literature is uncoordinated in terms of genre. It is worth noting that some theoreticians disagree with the terms digital or electronic literature, and propose the term ergodic⁵⁴ literature instead. Sorel and Janković-Paus accept the genre classification of theoretician Katherine Hayles, who includes locative narratives, network fiction, hypertext fiction, interactive fiction, codework, installation pieces, interactive online drama, generative art and the Flash poem into hypertext works.⁵⁵ Even though it remained marginalised in terms of genre, Peović Vuković argues that network communication practice takes the credit for the fast development of hypertext. The first novels in the hypertext fiction genre were published on the World Wide Web using the software *Storyspace* and *Hypercard*, with Michael Joyce and Judy Malloy as the pioneers. Douglas Cooper (*Delirium*, 1994), Bobby Rabyd (*Sunshine 69*, 1996), Mark Amerika (*Grammatron*, 1997), Adrienne Eisen (*Six Sex Scenes*, 1995), Caitlin Fisher (*These Waves of Girls*, 2001), Stephen Marche (*LucyHardin's Missing Period*, 2010), and Paul La Farge (*Luminous Airplanes*, 2011) have also published hypertext works. One of the best known examples of the hypertextual novel is *Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture* by Douglas Coupland, where the traditional footnotes, as digressions explaining certain terms or scenes, become an integral part of the novel, messages communicating the state of mind and the world of the novel's characters, reflected through cloud photos at the beginning of every chapter, graffiti and slogans, graphic novel images and the Generation X glossary. We would also like to mention Croatian authors and experimenters from the 1960s and 1970s assembled around the Quorum magazine and the collaborative online project *Mixal, Wenders i ja često se družimo u samoposluživanju* [Mixal, Wenders and I Often Hang Out at the Supermarket], launched at the initiative of the *Liber* magazine in 2000.

4 Instruction Manual: In Lieu of a Conclusion

The human communication world is ever-expanding, from the first drawings and handprints in the caves of Lascaux and Altamira, to modern technological achievements of the virtual world. Entire humanity seems to be living in a giant global hypertext, where the symbolic and the pragmatic are intermixed and mutually formative, bringing real virtuality to life. According to McLuhan, the general connectedness of the world has become a fact of everyday life.⁵⁶ This has driven many to stop reading, but many others have adapted to the postmodern world and used digital readers to restore their concentration on the text, for example. Umberto Eco maintains that we are nevertheless returning to Gutenberg, because, to be able to do something on our computers, we first have to learn and master it. The task consists of programming, content layout and form. In other words, we are doing everything the printers and publishers are doing, just like Gutenberg. On 12 November 1996, Umberto Eco opened his lecture at the Italian Academy for Advanced Studies in America, *From Internet to Gutenberg*, with the following words: "According to Plato (in Phaedrus) when Hermes, the alleged inventor of

⁵³ PATTERSON, N. G.: Hypertext and the Changing Roles of Readers. In *The English Journal*, 2000, Vol. 90, No. 2, p. 79.

⁵⁴ See also: AARSETH, E.: Ergodička književnost. Knjiga i labirint. In *Književna smotra: časopis za svjetsku književnost*, 2006, Vol. 38, No. 140-2, p. 109-114.

⁵⁵ SOREL, S., JANKOVIĆ-PAUS, S.: *Nestanak linearnosti?*. Rijeka : Faculty of Philosophy in Rijeka, 2012, p. 69.

⁵⁶ HORROCKS, M.: *Marshall McLuhan i virtualnost*. Zagreb : Naklada Jesenski i Turk, 2001, p. 7-12.

writing, presented his invention to the Pharaoh Thamus, he praised his new technique that was supposed to allow human beings to remember what they would otherwise forget. But the Pharaoh was not so satisfied. ‘My skilful Theut’, he said, ‘memory is a great gift that ought to be kept alive by training it continuously. With your invention people will not be obliged any longer to train memory. They will remember things not because of an internal effort, but by mere virtue of an external device.’⁵⁷ Further in his lecture, Eco recalled an episode from *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* by Victor Hugo, where Frolo, the priest, points his finger first at a book, and then at the Cathedral, stating: “This will kill that!” The ornate cathedral, with its paintings and grandiose sculptures, shaped people’s worldview at the time. Frolo was concerned about too much literacy, whereas in the 21st century we fear an extinction of literacy. But let us return to Umberto Eco’s lecture, in which he also addresses the relationship between image and word. An image is more suggestive and more imprecise, incapable of conveying the idea of something not existing, but it is manipulated more easily. The invention and development of new technologies has led to equal use of images and words, with a quick mental capacity for receiving and processing information. The introduction of the notion of hypertext raises the question of survival of the classic book. Eco solves this problem by asking and answering two questions: one, is the content of the book going to change with the appearance of hypertext? His reply is that a text, not being an encyclopaedic system, provides a finite number of possibilities and thus makes a closed universe. The only infinite open system is the alphabet, which has been in use for more than two thousand years. And two, can an e-medium replace the classic book? Eco prefers the classic book because sitting in front of the screen is uncomfortable (which no longer applies, as technology has found a way to adapt to this problem too, 20 years since Eco’s lecture). However, Eco concludes his lecture in a conciliatory tone: “This means that in the history of culture it has never happened that something has simply killed something else. Something has profoundly changed something else.”⁵⁸ The penetration of literature into the virtual space has led to the development of new genres, such as cellphone novels, blogs/weblogs, hypertexts, and others, which we have described in this paper, and whose future seems clear: they will continue to evolve and function as new forms of creativity, and some will appear in printed form. Virtual genres from the “periphery” (peripherality is not viewed as a condition marked by absence of development or geographic distance from the core, but as a modality of specific inclusion in the system⁵⁹) exert a certain influence on the modern cultural space, completely ignoring receptive culture (canon) in the process.

In other words, if the literary canon wishes to mirror the society as a whole, it has to strive for maximum inclusivity, and give thought to the fact that modern society is not confined just to the real world, and the virtual world has also become tremendously important to the whole of mankind. All literary innovations (virtual genres) created in this other world, the cyberspace of the Global Village, which are also eligible to become a part of the canon, must be taken into consideration as well and genealogically classified, described and regulated as much as possible, because genre is a category that always has to be defined anew. To paraphrase Pavao Pavličić, it would mean differentiating between the essential and necessary terminological diversity and mere neglect and misunderstanding.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ ECO, U.: *Od interneta do Gutenberga*. [online]. [2020-04-15]. Available at: <<https://www.scribd.com/doc/77925832/Od-Interneta-Do-Gutenberg-A>>.

⁵⁸ Ibidem.

⁵⁹ BEECROFT, A.: *An Ecology of World Literature: From Antiquity to the Present Day*. London, New York : Verso, 2015, p. 123.

⁶⁰ PAVLIČIĆ, P.: *Književna genologija*. Zagreb : FocalPress, 1983, p. 31.

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CONSERVATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE TRNAVA SELF-GOVERNING REGION

Dušan Blahút

ABSTRACT:

This paper deals with the restoration of historical monuments within the competence of the Trnava self-governing region in Slovakia and its use in further communication towards the visitor. Reconstructed monuments with built infrastructure have great potential to arouse the interest of domestic and foreign tourists if they are properly and effectively communicated. That is why we focus on marketing, which is an important tool in the development of tourism.

KEY WORDS:

cultural heritage, marketing, monument, region, tourism, Trnava region

1 Introduction

The Trnava region is one of eight regions that divide the Slovak Republic into smaller territorial units. The regions were created by decentralization of public administration and thus gained competences at the expense of the state, which should ensure better accessibility and efficiency of management. This also brought the culture to the region. The responsibility of the self-governing region is cultural development, care for cultural monuments and institutions on its territory. From the geopolitical point of view, the Trnava region has in the past been positively influenced by its borders, which it shares with the Czech Republic, Hungary and Austria. It draws on this to this day, when it actively uses cross-border cooperation also through Interreg projects supported by European Union sources. Standard types of such cooperation are devoted to education, infrastructure, but also offer an opportunity to promote cultural heritage. Thanks to such investments, it is possible to save or improve the status of cultural monuments or to provide access to them and thus significantly help in enhancing the cultural heritage and its popularization. Within the framework of successful programs, the region is able to finance the revitalization of cultural monuments, but also to provide infrastructure and attractively complete the infrastructure (cycling, walking and boating).

2 Consumer of Historical Heritage

Trnava self-governing region (TTSK) has in its founding powers 8 museums and galleries, which manage almost 470,000 collection objects. Through the project digitization of cultural heritage of departmental and non-departmental memory and fund institutions TTSK seeks to increase the cultural and historical value of funds and to provide better access and accessibility for professionals and the general public. It thus enables one of the institutions' main tasks to be fulfilled, which is, according to one of the definitions: „the primary mission of museums and galleries is to collect, preserve research and exhibit exhibits, and fulfill an educational function towards the public.“¹ Accompanying positive results are more friendly handling of collection items thanks to the use of modern devices and the internet. This step can also contribute to extending the life of collections, their presentations to the lay public (museum and gallery visitors) and the professional community, the digital preservation of

¹ JOHNOVÁ, R.: *Marketing kulturního dědictví a umění*. Prague : Grada Publishing, 2008, p. 40.

objects that cannot otherwise be preserved for future generations. However, if we look at this issue from a different angle, from the perspective of the consumer of historical heritage, the basic product is the experience that the visitor gets. Its form can range from inner spiritual fulfillment to a feeling of relaxation and fun at the moment of visiting a museum or monument object, but it can also lead to acquiring new information, knowledge or skills, it can be fixed in the form of memories and associations in his memory.² Therefore, it is important to think about this when presenting the cultural heritage to visitors. It is a trend that is neither foreign nor to galleries. Augmented reality is one of the newest tools to stimulate the experience of a visitor or consumer of an exhibit or monument. The presentation of cultural heritage is still a novelty, but the constant increase in its popularity suggests that museums are gradually beginning to understand the potential of augmented reality and its effectiveness in creating interest in monuments and creating more interesting ways of presenting monuments. Augmented reality enriches the real object with additional information, can bring down the ruined parts of the monument, set a building or exhibit in its original environment, or just provide further information about the origin, author or use. Presenting cultural heritage is still a new one, steady increase in its popularity suggests that museums gradually begin to understand the potential of augmented reality and its effectiveness in creating interest in monuments and creating more engaging ways of presenting monuments.³

3 Cultural Heritage in the Trnava Region

The uniqueness of Trnava self-governing region is conditioned by its diversity. Its uniqueness lies in the fact that it consists of three distinctive areas. In the northwest it is Záhorie, which borders with Moravia, in the south the area of Žitný ostrov is influenced by Hungary and in the middle is the Trnava region. All parts of the region are characterized by peculiar settlements, traditions and a rich past. The region has in its administration almost 900 real estate and more than 2000 movable monuments, thanks to which it has a very good potential for the development of tourism. The strongest area is Trnava, which has developed infrastructure and thanks to strong marketing by the tourist organization Trnava Turism is able to increase the number of visitors. However, this organization is bound only to the city of Trnava and its surroundings. The potential of the region and its sale to visitors is in the hands of the Trnava self-governing region, which is primarily trying to make the whole site more attractive. Therefore, it has recently taken steps to ensure the restoration of its monuments, to build the surrounding infrastructure, even in the peripheral parts of its territory. In 2019, two projects were successfully completed, which contributed to the restoration of monuments and the creation of infrastructure. The cultural-historical significance of the restored monuments ranks them among the unique evidence of the rich history of this area.

3.1 Church in Kopčany

Thanks to the re-Christianization of the central Danube region from the end of the 10th and the beginning of the 11th century, new churches began to be established in this area. In a few cases, the new constructions were connected to the older Great Moravian constructions, either in terms of construction or only by the same localization.⁴ The solitary position of the church

² KESNER, L.: *Marketing a managment muzeí a památek*. Prague : Grada Publishing, 2005, p. 161.

³ For more information, see: BLAHÚT, D.: Augmented Reality and its Application in Tourism Marketing. In MADZÍK, P. (ed.): *The Poprad economic and marketing forum 2019*. Ružomberok : Verbum, 2019, p. 312-318.

⁴ ŠEDIVÝ, J.: *Historické nápisy a ich nosiče*. Bratislava : Vydavateľstvo Univerzity Komenského, 2018, p. 222.

near the arm of the Morava River in Kopčany was considered to be a Gothic building until the 1990s. Recent measurements of the C14 wooden beam from the eastern gable safely dated the building to the 9th century. The church (fig. 1) with the overall dimensions of 11,9x5,21m consists of a rectangular nave, an eastern quadratic presbytery and a western anteroom. Early medieval brickwork of the ship and the presbytery have been preserved.⁵ The project „Footbridge across the Morava River, including the access road in the archaeological park Mikulčice – Kopčany“ is the result of cross-border cooperation between the Trnava self-governing region and the South Moravian region. In September 2018, both regions started to build a footbridge over the Morava River with a length of 143 meters. From the Czech side, the funds covered the construction of a cycling route that connected the Slavonic fort in Mikulčice with the existing network of forest roads leading to the footbridge. The other side built a brand new infrastructure connecting the area along the river with the village of Kopčany – a cycling route and a walkway of more than two kilometers. The main benefit of the project is the interconnection of two rare archaeological sites. The Archaeological Park Mikulčice – Kopčany is considered to be a unique site formed by the monuments of the Slovak fortified settlement of Great Moravia connected with the beginnings of Christianity and the mission of St. Cyril and Methodius. It has the status of a national cultural monument and is planned to be included in the UNESCO list of monuments. The first exhibition at the Slavic fort in Mikulčice was opened to the public in 1960. Today, Mikulčice boasts a modern exhibition with a visitor center. So far, the Slovak side is only working on making monuments available in Kopčany. The project also financed archaeological research in this area.

3.2 Water Mill Jelka

Another supported project within the cross-border cooperation of Slovakia and Hungary, which was implemented in the territorial self-governing region of Trnava, is the reconstruction of the Water Mill in Jelka. This mill belongs to a specific typological group of coastal wheel mills. This type of mill was concentrated in the Czech Republic on the Little Danube, especially in connection with the ban on the operation of the ship's mill on the Danube in the 19th century. They are a regional peculiarity, they do not even occur in neighbouring countries, as they have disappeared in large European cities on the rivers at the end of the Middle Ages.⁶ The mill was rebuilt from the original boat mill to a wheeled mill in 1905 and operated until 1951. It is a technical monument and is a Central European rarity that attracts thousands of visitors. The extensive reconstruction completed in May 2019 included works such as static securing of the building, cleaning and preservation of wooden parts of the building, reconstruction of the mill mechanism assembly and electrical installation work. In addition, a revitalization of the open-air museum near the Water Mill was carried out and new premises for the open-air museum exhibits were created.

4 Communication and Promotion

To successfully preserve and promote the cultural heritage, we propose to apply solutions that at first sight are not identified as primary for this area. And, as Trommsdorff and Steinhoff claim, an important point in finding ideas for innovation is, in addition to focusing on existing problem solving, also the use of knowledge and experience from other fields - the familiar insight beyond the industry horizon. As well as the inspiration of biotics, a scientific

⁵ POMFYOVÁ, B.: *Stredoveký kostol*. Bratislava : FO ART, 2015, p. 104.

⁶ MLYNKA, L.: *Mlyny na Slovensku, typológia a historicko-etnografická charakteristika*. In DANTEROVÁ, I. (ed.): *Mlyny a mlynárske remeslo*. Galanta : Vlastivedné múzeum Galanta, 2006, p. 7-18.

discipline based on the heuristic principle of analogy creation, finding similarly structured problems and solving them based on experience in other areas. The individual steps are clearly shown in the table.⁷

Table 1: Creative techniques subject to heuristic principles

1	Systematic decomposition of structures
2	Combinations and Variations
3	Abstraction of the state of things
4	Analog transmission
5	Mutual associations

Source: TROMMSDORFF, V., STEINHOFF, F.: *Marketing inovací*. Prague : C.H.Beck, 2009, p. 168.

Certainly we can also agree to apply the principles of the media field, such as how to convey information to the recipient and change the „established way of communication through long text fields, which is slowly disappearing and visual storytelling comes to the forefront. It is about giving information and conveying the message based on visual perception and observation.“⁸ Not only the use and monitoring of new trends, but also the effort to apply them and implant them in their communication activities. As an example we can mention the augmented reality, which started to be applied in the historical and cultural context a decade ago, such as in the Art Museum of Estonia in Tallinn, where the artifacts were replaced by markers and only after decoding by technical means and the application is displayed on a smartphone or tablet a concrete image.⁹ We also fully accept the opinion of S. Gálik „what is the nature of digital media and how do they differ from such kinds of media as spoken word and written word? Digital media are typical in the way they spread our communication – through modern technology. This technology is based on digital code, integration and interactivity, it shift communication to a completely new level when compared to communication via spoken or written word.“¹⁰ Equally important is the question of the effectiveness of marketing communication in a specific segment of cultural heritage and its presentation. It is also important to realise that the effectiveness of marketing communication related to monumental objects is influenced by various factors. Therefore, in the first step of the proposed model, it is necessary to:

1. Identify a set of factors – this set can affect the ability of responsible employees to work with new technologies in marketing communication, the structure of the communication mix and the finances allocated to marketing communication.
2. Perform factor selection – this category includes: *external factors* – we can characterise them as unpredictable – weather, competitive events in the region, legislative measures of the founder of the museum, etc., *internal factors* – e.g. the amount of money spent on museum marketing, the level of marketing communication, the quality of staff, the target audiences. Basics of this data can become the annual museum reports.

⁷ TROMMSDORFF, V. F., STEINHOFF, F.: *Marketing inovací*. Prague : C.H.Beck, 2009, p. 168.

⁸ See also: PRONER, J.: Vizualizácia dát a infografika. In BUČKOVÁ, Z., RUSŇÁKOVÁ, L., RYBANSKÝ, R., SOLÍK, M. (eds.): *Megatrendy a média 2018: Realita a mediálne bubliny*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2018, p. 173-188.

⁹ For more information, see: SZEGEDY-MASZÁK, Z., FERNEZELYI, M.: A [Futhure] Study on the Genere of Painting. In HELME, S., KELOMEES, R., HIMMELSBACH, S., EPPENEDER, R. (eds.): *Gateways: Art and Networked Culture*. Berlin : Hajte Canz, 2011, p. 162-165.

¹⁰ See also: GÁLIK, S.: Influence of digital media on religion: possibilities and limitations. In MAGÁL, S., MENDELOVÁ, D., PETRANOVÁ, D., APOSTOLESCU, N. (eds.): *ESRARC 2018*. Torino : KERMES, 2018, p. 187-190.

3. Conduct an analysis of factors – analysis of visitors' satisfaction, analysis of strengths and weaknesses of communication.¹¹

Conclusions

In order to preserve the cultural heritage, it must not only be preserved but also visible. The importance of cultural heritage and its preservation has a value only if it is perceived by generations. That is why marketing plays an important role in this process. The Trnava self-governing region is working intensively to make its cultural heritage more attractive, and renewal projects create a breeding ground for growth in attendance. However, the role of the region is also to make these areas more visible to domestic and foreign tourists and to develop marketing to peripheral regions. Kopčany and Jelka are bright examples, whose potential has increased and now it is important to use it also in the field of tourism.



Picture 1: Church in Kopčany

Source: *Reportáž o kostolíku v Kopčanoch*. [online]. [2020-03-21]. Available at: <<https://www.zahorskemuzeum.sk/reportaz-o-kostoliku-v-kopcanoch/>>.

¹¹ See also: LUKÁČ, M., MIHÁLIK, J.: Data envelopment analysis – a key to the museums secret chamber of marketing?. In *Communication Today*, 2018, Vol. 9, No. 2, p. 106-117.



Picture 2: Water mill in Jelka

Source: *Vodný kolový mlyn Jelka*. [online]. [2020-03-21]. Available at: <<https://www.muzeum.sk/vodny-kolovy-mlyn-jelka.html#fgallery--52412-3>>.

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THE IMPACT OF „CORONA CRISIS“ ON SLOVAK RADIO BROADCASTING

Andrej Brník

ABSTRACT:

The lives of all people, not only in Slovakia but also in the whole world, have changed from day to day. Many regulations have come into rules that temporarily restrict the movement of persons or restrict the business of many small or large companies. The world has changed and the consequences will be felt for a very long time. The spread of the coronavirus and COVID-19 disease to the size of the global pandemic has affected all sectors of our daily lives. And it also hit the media. On the one hand, they are more read, listened and watched, but on the other hand, they are drastically decreasing the volume of advertisers and thus the advertising revenue. The corona crisis is also threatening the radio market. First, small local and regional radios may be affected by all measures and the associated drop in advertising. The contribution will show the reader the current situation on the Slovak Radio market and possible prognosis for the future.

KEY WORDS:

coronavirus, crisis, media, radio broadcast

Introduction

The coronavirus has changed the lives of all of us. It entered every sphere of life. And it did not avoid radio broadcasting around the world. This paper aims to map the consequences for radio broadcasting in Slovakia and at the end it will also offer the reader prognosis of the development of the radio market affected by the coronavirus.

1 Slovak Radio Ether

First of all we have to realize how big is the Slovak radio ether and its power. MEDIAN SK regularly examines radio listening in Slovakia. In the summer, in 2019, they conducted a survey¹ where 86.4% of respondents responded positively to the „*listened to last week*“ parameter, representing nearly 3.9 million listeners aged 14-79 years. On the contrary, every day the radio listens to just over 60% of the population, representing 2.7 million people. On average, radio listeners listen it approximately 50 minutes a day.² The radio market leader is *Rádio Expres* for couple of years. But the big players from the commercial sphere also include *Fun Rádio* and *Radio Services* (associates *Jemné*, *Európa 2*, *Rádio Vlna* and *Anténa Rock rádio*). We should also mention *Rádio Slovensko*, the most listened program of public service broadcaster. In addition to large multiregional or nationwide radios, regional and local radios were operating in Slovakia at the beginning of March 2020.³ The Broadcasting and Retransmission Council licensed 37 terrestrial radio broadcasts across Slovakia (including 11 local, 18 regional, 9 multiregional radio), including a public service broadcaster legally broadcasting 9 different stations on the frequency:

¹ Remark by the author: The company Median.sk conducted the survey on a sample of 3,157 respondents aged 14-79 years.

² *Slováci počúvajú rádiá, denne majú takmer 2,7 milióna poslucháčov*. [online]. [2020-03-30]. Available at: <<https://strategie.hnonline.sk/media/2004975-slovaci-pocuvaju-radia-denne-maju-takmer-2-7-miliona-posluchacov>>.

³ *Zákon č. 308/2000 Z. z. Zákon o vysielaní a retransmisii a o zmene zákona č. 195/2000 Z. z. o telekomunikáciách*. [online]. [2020-03-30]. Available at: <<https://www.epi.sk/zz/2000-308>>.

- **Local** – *Rádio Aetter, Rádio Liptov, Rádio Mária, Rádio Modra, Rádio Piešťany, Rádio Plus, Rádio Portus, Rádio Roma, Rádio SITY, SKY Rádio, Rádio The End.*
- **Regional** – *Rádio Beta, Rádio Frontinus, Rádio Goldies, Rádio 7, Kiss Rádio, Rádio Košice, Rádio Muzika, Rádio ONE, Rádio ONE Rock, Rádio Rebeca, Rádio Širava, Trnavské Rádio, Rádio Viva, Rádio WOW, Rádio YES, Záhorácke rádio, Rádio WOW Nitra.*
- **Multiregional** – *Rádio Anténa Rock, Best FM, Európa 2, Rádio Expres, Fun Rádio, Rádio Jazz, rádio Jemné, Rádio Lumen, Vlna rádio.*
- **Public** – *Rádio Devín, Rádio FM, Rádio Patria, Rádio Regina, Rádio Regina – Západ (West), Rádio Regina – Stred (Central), Rádio Regina – Východ (East), Rádio Slovensko, Rádio Slovakia International.*⁴

All these radio stations form the Slovak radio media market. Until the coronary outbreak, the market was relatively stable. Great radios thrived, but also small ones. But what happened after the world was forced to stay in home quarantine? UNO⁵ estimates that 3.4 billion people around the world are forced to stay at home, nearly 50% of the world's population.⁶ At first glance, these numbers may mean increased demand for media such as television, streaming services and, of course, radio. MML-TGI data is not yet available for this quarter, so we searched at the web radia.sk, which also lists listening statistics within their website and mobile application, which is used by many people in Slovakia. During weekdays from 30th March to 3rd April 2020 listened to an average of 23,000 listeners using their website or Slovak Radio application. In early February, before the crisis corona broke out in the working week from 3rd February to 7th February 2020, these numbers were even larger and on average listened to 24,000 listeners of Slovak radio. However, this is data taken within the app and the web. The web and application can be useful at the time of normal computing. Therefore, it is possible that listening through ordinary radio receivers has increased. According to another MEDIAN SK survey, on average six and a half hours before the implementation of individual rules, the time with media between mediatypes increased to more than seven hours a day. And so, the radio, which remarked a 25% increase in March.⁷ We are not talking about the growth of new listeners, but about the increase of time spent with favorite stations. More than radios, television has begun to be watched, which, according to several sites, breaks records, as well as websites in the number of visits. The miracle in the growth of the audience during this period is therefore not happening.

⁴ *List of terrestrial radios.* [online]. [2020-04-01]. Available at: <<https://www.radia.sk/radia>>.

⁵ Remark by the author: United Nations Organisation.

⁶ *Pandémia prinútila zostať doma takmer 3,4 miliardy ľudí.* [2020-04-01]. Available at: <<https://spravy.pravda.sk/domace/clanok/547072-online-v-najhorsom-scenari-moze-virus-v-usa-zabit-200-tisic-ludi/>>.

⁷ *adMeter a koronavírus – zmeny v mediálnej konzumácii Slovákov.* [2020-03-30]. Available at: <https://www.median.sk/pdf/OSTATNE/MEDIAN_SK_adMeter_koronavirus_media_20200330_22_v014.pdf>.

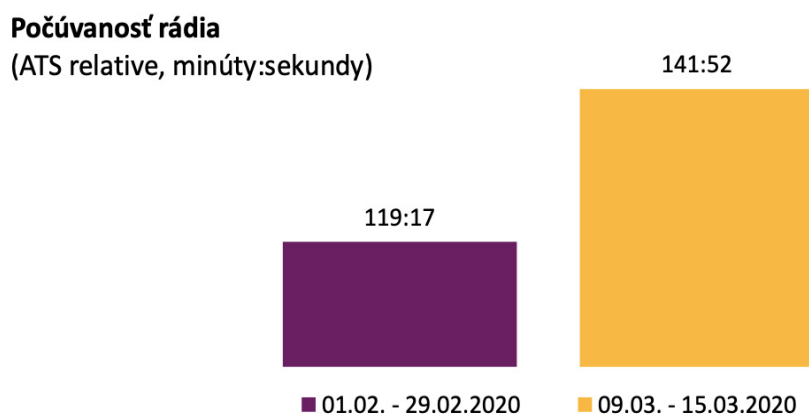


Figure 1: Listening of the radio – Listening ATS relative (minutes:seconds) in February compared to March
Source: *adMeter a koronavírus – zmeny v mediálnej konzumácii Slovákov*. [2020-03-30]. Available at: <https://www.median.sk/pdf/OSTATNE/MEDIAN_SK_adMeter_koronavirus_media_20200330_22_v014.pdf>.

2 Loss of Revenue from Ads = End of Small Radios

Although the media is „consumed“ more than ever, it does not automatically mean increased advertising revenue. In the context of the economic situation and the consequences of the strict rules of the Slovak Government, some parts of the economy were completely subdued. People have limited shopping opportunities. Businesses are forced to cut back, and the first part are marketing costs. In the meantime, some businesses have moved their campaigns to a later date and many campaigns had to be changed or completely redone.⁸ This has a direct impact on the revenue of all media included radios. Small regional or local radios are the first to respond. They are at the very end of the advertising business and large agencies that buy space for their clients tend to bypass them. They rely on regional, smaller companies that are willing to advertise in their area. Most of these are travel agencies, pubs, restaurants, pizzerias, street food, taxis, florists, pharmacies, department stores, building materials, services, etc. However, here too, abnormal measures have caused the vast majority of operations to be closed, currently unnecessary advertising spend. The first victims are already known. It is *Rádio Jazz*, which ended, although it planned to transfer its frequencies to *Rádio Mária*, which broadcasts in 71 countries around the world without advertising and is funded solely by donations.⁹ However, the Broadcasting Council did not support this idea, and so, for economic reasons, *Jazz Rádio* was silent on 27 March for economic reasons. Another radio that has openly raised concerns about its existence is the *Rádio VIVA*, which operates in Bratislava region. Their advertising revenues dropped significantly so that they threatened the operation of the radio. „*Once the radio ends, it's no longer possible to start it,*“¹⁰ radio owners said in a press release at the end of March. Therefore, the moderators decided to broadcast for free in April, with no claim to salary. However, on its website and in broadcasting, the radio asks its listeners for „*first aid*“ in the form of financial donations (€ 5, € 10 or € 20). A detailed announcement which was posted for their listeners can be found in Figure 2.

⁸ *Médiá sledujeme vo väčšom, nakupujeme menej. Kampane sa rušia alebo posúvajú*. [online]. [2020-04-01]. Available at: <<https://medialne.etrend.sk/marketing/media-sledujeme-vo-vacsom-nakupujeme-menej-kampane-sa-rusia-alebo-posuvaju.html>>.

⁹ *Rádio Jazz ukončilo vysielanie, licenčná rada neumožnila v čase korona krízy zmenu na Rádio Mária*. [online]. [2020-03-29]. Available at: <https://www.radio.sk/spravy/4176_radio-jazz-ukoncilo-vysielanie-licencna-rada-v-case-koronakrizy-neumoznila-zmenu-na-radio-maria>.

¹⁰ *Rádiu Viva hrozí zánik*. [online]. [2020-03-30]. Available at: <https://www.radio.sk/spravy/4179_radiu-viva-hrozi-zanik>.

RÁDIO VIVA – VOLANIE O POMOC

Milí naši verní poslucháči, RÁDIO VIVA vás prosí o pomoc.
Celý marec sme boli s Vami a Vašími deťmi doma. Prinášali sme do Vašich domovov informácie a zábavu v ťažkých časoch. Žiaľ, stratili sme jediný príjem v rádiu. Reklamu. Naši klienti majú ťažkosti a my to chápeme.

Opatrenia, ktoré štát zaviedol ako „Prvú pomoc“ sa RÁDIA VIVA žiaľbohu netýkajú.

My, moderátori, redaktori, technici RÁDIA VIVA, sme sa preto rozhodli, že v mesiaci apríl budeme vysielat' bez nároku na honorár.

Aby mohlo RÁDIO VIVA vysielat' v najbližších mesiacoch, potrebuje prvú pomoc formou Vami poskytnutého finančného daru*. **Na webovej stránke radioviva.sk sú uvedené QR kódy v hodnotách 5,- EUR, 10,- EUR a 20,- EUR ako aj číslo IBAN účtu, špeciálne zriadeného na POMOC RÁDIU VIVA.**

Všetky vyzbierané peniaze budú použité výhradne na úhradu nákladov vysielania RÁDIA VIVA, pričom informácie o výške vyzbieranej sumy, budú uvedené na webovej stránke radioviva.sk.

Milí naši poslucháči, pomôžte nám prosím, prežiť krízu a odvrátiť zánik jediného regionálneho rádia na Západe.

RÁDIO VIVA Vám z celého srdca ďakuje.

Pravidlá ochrany osobných údajov GDPR

*Vami poskytnutý finančný dar je v súlade s ust. § 628 a nasl. zak. č. 40/1964 Zb. Občianskeho zákonníka v platnom znení.

Figure 2: Call for help posted on the *Rádio VIVA* website

Source: *Rádio Viva*. [online]. [2020-03-30]. Available at: <<https://www.radioviva.sk>>.

Other smaller radios also report problems. The radia.sk portal published an interview with Dušan Vančo, Regional Radio Manager, on 26th March. He said that „... *the situation is getting serious, most of the clients are shifting or canceling the campaign. Advertising revenue is drastically reduced. In our case, advertising is the only source of revenue.*“¹¹ This regional radio also registers a fall in advertising. „*Currently around 85% and we expect an even greater decline. However, this cannot be said exactly because some clients have moved their campaigns so far. For example, clients running recruitment campaigns are waiting. Currently there are very few services that can be opened, and the others do not logically advertise because they do not earn.*“¹² To be able to transmit, every radio needs technology that is not cheap, in addition, it needs to run its own transmitter, pay fees to collective rights managers and software licenses. If the radio only wants to play music, it costs hundreds of euros per a month. Including the rental of premises, salaries of technicians, moderators and reporters, it is a relatively expensive business and it does not matter whether you are a small city radio or large one with coverage of the whole Slovakia. Some radios are responding to an ad slump and want to attract advertisers to various promotions. *Fun Rádio*, for example, on its website, where it sells ad space of radiogroup.sk, offers a special 1 + 1 offer where advertisers get another free ad for each spot or announcement and even get it recorded by one of their top moderators.¹³ The poster attracts with the title: *You can handle that with us*. Also, it shows the most popular radio personalities as you can see in Figure 3.

¹¹ *Rádio v čase vírusovej krízy*. [online]. [2020-03-26]. Available at: <https://www.radia.sk/citaren/rozhovory/4173_rozhovor-radio-v-case-virusovej-krizy>.

¹² *Ibidem*.

¹³ *RadioGroup*. [online]. [2020-04-03]. Available at: <<https://radiogroup.sk>>.



Figure 3: Fun rádio campaign for advertisers during the crisis

Source: RadioGroup. [online]. [2020-04-03]. Available at: <<https://radiogroup.sk>>.

Or the most listened *rádio Expres* gives a 25% discount on the sponsorship of traffic service and weather. In addition, it has an offer called 10 + 6, which they launched on March 17th, and is valid until further notice. For every 10 paid spots or announcements, the client will receive 6 more.¹⁴ As you can see in Figure 4, they offer packages: premium, standard or basic for one or two weeks with various prices and amount of announcements.

Sponzoring Dopravného servisu PREMIUM		Sponzoring Dopravného servisu STANDARD		Sponzoring Dopravného servisu BASIC	
1 týždeň a 146 odkazov	11 000 € 8 250 € (mediálna hodnota 34 770 €)	1 týždeň a 82 odkazov	7 150 € 5 363 € (mediálna hodnota 20 295 €)	1 týždeň a 34 odkazov	1 800 € 1 350 € (mediálna hodnota 5 780 €)
2 týždne a 410 (340 odkazov / 70 upútáviek) odkazov	22 000 € 16 500 € (mediálna hodnota 123 492 €)	2 týždne a 192 odkazov	14 300 € 10 725 € (mediálna hodnota 47 860 €)	2 týždne a 76 odkazov	3 600 € 2 700 € (mediálna hodnota 12 880 €)
Sponzoring Počasía PREMIUM		Sponzoring Počasía STANDARD		Sponzoring Počasía BASIC	
1 týždeň a 90 odkazov	7 750 € 5 813 € (mediálna hodnota 22 775 €)	1 týždeň a 56 odkazov	5 000 € 3 750 € (mediálna hodnota 13 860 €)	1 týždeň a 30 odkazov	1 700 € 1 275 € (mediálna hodnota 5 375 €)
2 týždne a 280 (220 odkazov / 60 upútáviek) odkazov	15 500 € 11 625 € (mediálna hodnota 90 500 €)	2 týždne a 132 odkazov	10 000 € 7 500 € (mediálna hodnota 32 670 €)	2 týždne a 68 odkazov	3 400 € 2 550 € (mediálna hodnota 12 410 €)

Figure 4: Rádio EXPRES campaign for advertisers during the crisis

Source: Rádio Expres. [online]. [2020-04-03]. Available at: <<https://www.expres.sk/reklama/mimoriadna-ponuka-106/>>.

¹⁴ Rádio Expres. [online]. [2020-04-03]. Available at: <<https://www.expres.sk/reklama/mimoriadna-ponuka-106/>>.

And *Radio Services* has also joined, bringing together 4 other multi-regional radios out of the top 10 listened. With their action 4 for the price of 1 ad spot or announcement.¹⁵ *Európa 2*, *Jemné*, *Vlna*, *Anténa Rock* belong to *Radio Services* group as they mention in Figure 5 with their special offer.



Figure 5: Radio Services (*Európa 2*, *Jemné*, *Vlna*, *Anténa Rock*) campaign for advertisers during the crisis
Source: *RadioServices*. [online]. [2020-04-03]. Available at: <<https://radioservices.sk>>.

3 Reaction of the Broadcasting and Retransmission Council

The state regulator, the Council for Broadcasting and Retransmission, has already responded to the situation. It stated on its website that it would respond flexibly to the needs of entities under its jurisdiction within its legal capacity. It wants to work with all authorities and other relevant subjects to enable the media market to work and, in particular, to fulfill its key information function in the current challenging situation. It has therefore provisionally taken the following measures:

- In the administrative field, the Council will only enforce the necessary obligations related to property transfers and to avoid using frequencies unlawfully.
- All temporary broadcast changes, imposed by the current situation, can be easily reported by e-mail and do not need to change the license terms.
- If broadcasters are forced to stop broadcasting temporarily, it is sufficient to report this fact with its time limit and this will be considered as an objective obstacle not affecting the use of the license in the future.
- In the content area, the Council will confine itself to pursuing the most fundamental rules with particular emphasis on the objectivity of the information related to the spread of the coronavirus.
- While the current situation has necessitated changes in the organization of the Councils activities, our staff is ready to respond promptly and flexibly to the needs of regulatory subjects and answer their questions.¹⁶

4 Radios React to the Situation in the Context of Programming Structure

When we are forced to voluntarily stay at home, we naturally have a great demand for information. Therefore, some radios bring more news. In practice, this does not necessarily mean new news programs but classic news with longer footage. They get more information. Some radios even launch various programs for children as part of the nationwide

¹⁵ *RadioServices*. [online]. [2020-04-03]. Available at: <<https://radioservices.sk>>.

¹⁶ *Press release about the situation truth the corona crisis*. [online]. [2020-03-27]. Available at: <<http://www.rvr.sk/aktualita-vyhlasenie-rady-k-situacii-v-elektronickych-mediach-sposobenej-koronavirusom>>.

#ostavamdoma campaign. For example, *Trnavské Rádio* has a „*Večerníček s Braňom Jobusom*“, where Braňo Jobus reads to children fairytales in the Trnava dialect.¹⁷ *Rádio Košice* from Košice invites listeners to „... themselves or somebody play an encouraging song, today, tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, anytime ... Feel free to write us and you can take a picture of your „homeoffice.“ Give us and other listeners tips on what this „time“ is like, because we inspire each other. You can also record a voicemail via Whatsapp and we'll be happy to connect with you on our broadcast.“¹⁸ *Fun rádio* in cooperation with the Martinus bookstore introduced an audiobook where some of it is broadcast every day after 6 pm. The goal is for people to sit at home and listen to the story of a famous detective story of Sherlock Holmes.¹⁹

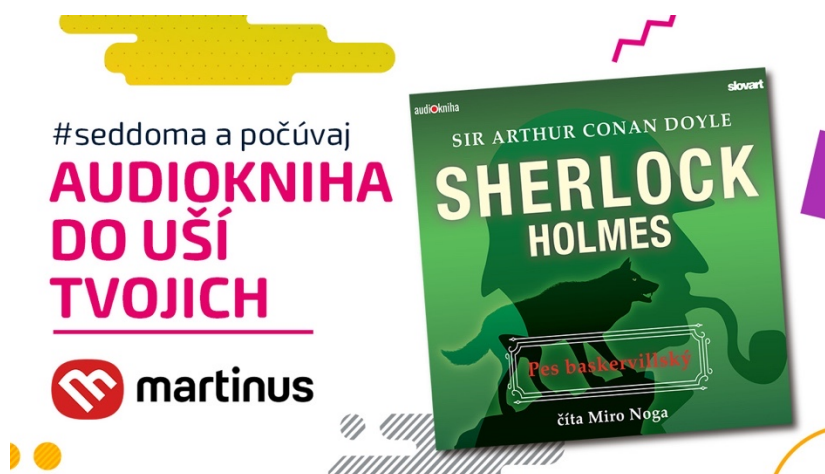


Figure 6: Advertisement of including audiobooks on Fun rádio ether

Source: *Sed' doma a počúvaj: Fun rádio uvádza audioknihu do uší tvojich*. [online]. [2020-03-27]. Available at: <https://www.radia.sk/spravy/4174_sed-doma-a-pocuvaj-fun-radio-uvadza-audioknihu-do-usi-tvojich>.

4.1 Changes in RTVS Program Structure

A completely different situation is with the public service broadcaster. This is paid from concessions and is therefore much more demanded in particular in such situations than commercial radios. Therefore, it had to change its broadcast on all its programs significantly enough to include:

- Educational program for children who do not go to school - according to Radio Program Director Michal Dzurjanin „*Slovak Radio has been creating family silver for years, which is also accessible on our website and which has no other radio in Slovakia. Our reporters, in collaboration with renowned experts and artists, have created various educational cycles that have received positive responses not only from the audience, but also from the professional public.*“²⁰ This program is included especially in the morning.
- An evangelistic program for people who cannot attend churches – a half-hour broadcast for Catholic believers is broadcast on *Rádio Regina*, Monday to Thursday from 5:30 pm on Fridays for Greek Catholics and Orthodox. The radio mediates these services directly from its studios: „*This decision resulted from our efforts to eliminate the contact of employees*

¹⁷ *Večerníček s Braňom Jobusom v Trnavskom rádiu*. [online]. [2020-03-27]. Available at: <https://www.radia.sk/spravy/4170_vecernicek-s-branom-jobusom-v-trnavskom-radiu>.

¹⁸ *Ostávam doma s Rádiom Košice a spoločne s nami aj hudobníci*. [online]. [2020-03-27]. Available at: <https://www.radia.sk/spravy/4164_ostavamdoma-s-radiom-košice-a-spolocne-s-nami-aj-hudobnici>.

¹⁹ *Sed' doma a počúvaj: Fun rádio uvádza audioknihu do uší tvojich*. [online]. [2020-03-27]. Available at: <https://www.radia.sk/spravy/4174_sed-doma-a-pocuvaj-fun-radio-uvadza-audioknihu-do-usi-tvojich>.

²⁰ *Bohatá rozhlasová ponuka na vzdelávanie aj príjemné trávenie času*. [online]. [2020-03-27]. Available at: <https://www.radia.sk/spravy/4169_bohata-rozhlasova-ponuka-na-vzdelavanie-aj-prijemne-travenie-casu>.

with the external environment as much as possible. We are very grateful to the clergy with whom we have agreed to cooperate.”²¹ notes Michal Dzurjanin.

- Increased information requirements in news and current affairs.
- A classic program for working people who want the radio to make time for work or other activities more enjoyable.

5 Prognosis on the Radio Market

- **Less advertising, more music** – The volume of advertising has decreased as the market transforms, it will take some time, so there is a time when we will hear less advertising on the radio, which means more music for us.
- **Strengthening radio news in times of crisis** – In times of crisis, listeners are eager for news and information. Therefore, not only on television but also on radio will be added time devoted to news and current affairs - journalism. This will increase the pressure on reporters and editorial offices, which many, especially in commercial radio, have so far been distracted to a minimum.
- **New listeners will not come, only time of listening will increase** – Recent surveys have made it clear that this crisis does not support the influx of new listeners, although social isolation can make a big difference. Both radio playlists and the program were made based on surveys of how many people listen to the radio daily and when. These times will now change and we can also expect a change in the broadcast structure (summer) on many radios.
- **Cheap radio advertising or larger benefits** – Those who were affected by the crisis least (food chains, mobile operators, banks) will buy cheap advertising space. So we can expect an increase in advertising from these segments. The radio will continue to try to reach as many advertisers as possible, so the prices of the ad will continue to fall, with various benefits and loyalty packages added for „free.“
- **Extinction of several local and regional radio stations** – The current situation will divert the market especially of local and regional media. Some radios are subsidized by the city or region, but they may survive, but purely commercial projects may first switch to a complete shutdown of the moderated broadcasting, saving on wages and later may lead to the complete silence of the radio and the withdrawal of the license, which de facto means extinction.
- **Functional redundancies and their accumulation** – If this crisis lasts more than 2 or 3 months, large radios will also start saving and looking for opportunities in staffing. This may result in the cancellation of positions and the accumulation of functions in all radios.
- **Getting rid of weak acquisitions** – The big radios that have been doing well in recent years have also invested money in a business other than radio: e-shops, website acquisitions, newspapers, and more. Many will now rethink their acquisitions in other markets and start disposing of them. For example, *Fun Rádio* got rid of all of its websites that it bought in 2016: *hockey.sk*, *profutbal.sk*, *F1.sk*, *infospráv.sk*, *beauty.sk*, *mobil.sk* and *auto.sk*.²²
- **Delay of the start of new radios** – In the autumn selection procedure for the Broadcasting and Retransmission Councils (2019), two new radios joined the radio family. *Rádio Goldies* and *Rádio Aetter*. Both radios are still waiting for start. There are also up to 34 free frequencies in the spring tender (2020). However, the current situation will cause that new

²¹ RTVS rozširuje vysielanie bohoslužieb. [online]. [2020-03-28]. Available at: <https://www.radia.sk/spravy/4181_rtvs-rozsiruje-vysielanie-bohosluzieb>.

²² Fun rádio končí s prevádzkovaním tematických webov pre ekonomické dôvody. [online]. [2020-03-26]. Available at: <https://www.radia.sk/spravy/4180_fun-radio-konci-s-prevadzkovanim-tematickych-webov-pre-ekonomicke-dovody>.

radios will reconsider their time to enter the market and others will not be motivated to enter it at all.

Conclusion

All the media are going through really hard times. They have limited means of production due to limitations and must follow strict hygiene measures. The radios themselves are fighting the possibility of infection. They also minimized guest invitations. Some part of work is done from home. In editorial offices there are always a minimum of reporters or speakers. Each moderator has her or his own microphone foam, which is regularly disinfected. Of course, newsrooms and studios are also regularly disinfected. We will see in a few months how this will turn out and which radios will survive the crisis. However, it is already clear that the media business will also change.

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THE HISTORY OF THEATRE ADVERTISING IN REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

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ABSTRACT:

The aim of this paper is to present the theoretical framework of advertising history in the 19th century in Republic of Croatia, and critical review of posters that were the dominant advertising tool of theatrical life at that time, and also through which information about theater performances was transmitted. The paper presents characteristic posters that certainly depicted the cultural moment of the time. The mentioned posters were found in State Archive in City of Osijek and in of the national museum in City of Zagreb.

KEY WORDS:

advertising, history, marketing in culture, theatre, theatre marketing

1 Introduction

Almost all sectors of the creative industry sectors come together in theatre events and performances. According to Horvat et al¹, creative industry contributes to the development of economy as a whole, has an export potential, and is based on innovation and talent development, among other things. Innovation is the key component that theatre marketing professionals have increasingly been relying on. In 1974, the Ford Foundation developed a new approach to potential theatregoers that has been referred to by different names in literature, including “unconventional marketing” and “unconventional promotional activities”. This paper contributes to the theoretical explanation of theatre marketing and previous studies, as well as the critical overview theatres posters as advertising tool. In order to better understand the papaer, this section will first explain the terms advertising and theater. According to the Economic Lexicon², advertising is “a paid, impersonal form of sending messages to consumers and the rest of the public about products or services through mass media or by mail to inform or sell. Advertising can create and maintain a positive image of a product or service in the long run, or interest the consumer in the short term.” Advertising is an important part of every business entity that wants to position themselves as well as possible on the market and among consumers, but already at the end of the 19th century and early in the 20th century, advertising became an important part of culture so that the environment could have information, that is, to be better informed about cultural events. Historical sources, evidence of the existence of performing practices literally go as deep as history as traces of human presence on the planet. The notorious saying is that theater is as old as man.³ The author of this paper agrees with this statement because since time immemorial, humanity has had the capacity and need to show or display whether emotions, cultures or, for example, games and dances. Therefore, it is obvious that theater is as old as mankind.

¹ HORVAT, J., MIJOČ, J., ZRNIĆ, A.: *Ars Andizetum, Andizet – Riznica projekta kreativne industrije Institura Andizet*. Osijek : Andizet, 2018, p. 13.

² *Economic Lexicon*. Zagreb : Masmedia, 2011, p. 609.

³ LUKIĆ, D.: *Produkcija i marketing scenskih umjetnosti*. Zagreb : ITI, 2010, p. 31.

Also, when it comes to the history, according to Sandram and Virendra⁴ “theatre has been part of human beings from very early era for entertainment and to spread social messages” and according to according to Petranović⁵ first writings about theatre history in Croatia started in 19th century. According to the teatrologist Batušić⁶, the following terms are included in the content of the word theater:

- Any kind of building, that is, a specially marked place for performing the performing arts (drama, opera, operetta, ballet, events, etc.). Accordingly, the theater space becomes any locality that is activated as a stage by the simultaneous participation of performers and spectators, i.e. the audience in it (street, square, garden, church, feudal castle, civic house, etc.);
- The eponymous and for the end result of a theatrical existence, for a play. It almost always refers to participation in the performance of a stage and theatrical act, rather than a specific space or a socio-cultural-historical or civilizational notion;
- An institution, body or artistic organization that, regardless of social, legal, educational or financial status, prepares, organizes and performs theater performances;
- According to all the above characteristics, it can be established that theater has a great sociological and cultural significance in society because as an institution or building it gives space for artistic expression, and as a stylistic period gives historical significance.

Also according to Antolović⁷, “theaters are institutions that publicly perform dramatic, opera, operetta, ballet, puppetry and other scenes of work. Theaters are established and operate as: national, county, city, municipal and private.” Acting, opera, operettas and other cultural points mentioned by the author are important for the transfer of history and culture to one community and society itself. The purpose of this paper is to contribute to the theoretical clarification and understanding of the theatre marketing, and also to explore the history of theatre advertising, specially in 19th century in Croatia (posters from Croatian cities Zagreb and Osijek because the main advertising tool in mentioned era were poster – posters have been a big part of theatre and also advertising history). Also, nowadays, with new technologies, poster still remain one of the most important tools of advertising. Also, the objective of the paper is to contribute to the identification and understanding of the factors that influence the audience in mentioned period. The paper comprises four chapters. Chapter 1 is the introduction, followed by a description of theatre marketing, including its definition and past studies, in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 gives a description of the poster (i.e. analysis and research) from 19th century and Chapter 4 focuses on conclusion.

2 Theatre Marketing – Definition and Previous Studies

This section will explain theatre marketing and authors’ comments on the following. One of the first marketing studies, conducted by the Ford Foundation to establish the impact of ticket prices and other factors (such as visitors’ incomes) on theatre attendance and audience, dates back to 1974. Other authors explored the same topic in the 1980s and 1990s. Withers⁸, Levy-Garboua

⁴ SANDRAM, S., VIRENDRA, K.: The Development of Theatre Posters. In *Journal Academic Discourse*, 2020, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 95.

⁵ PETRANOVIĆ, M.: Kazališna histografija i nacionalni identitet. In *Journal for philological research Fluminensia*, 2014, Vol. 26, No. 1, p. 151.

⁶ BATUŠIĆ, N.: *Uvod u teatrologiju*. Zagreb : Grafički zavod hrvatske, 1991, p. 25.

⁷ ANTOLOVIĆ, J.: *Organizacija i kultura*. Zagreb : Hadrian, 2010, p. 135.

⁸ WITHERS, G.: Unbalanced Growth and the Demand for the Performing Arts: An Econometric Analysis. In *Southern Economic Journal*, 1980, Vol. 46, No. 3, p. 736.

and Montmarguette⁹ and Gapinski¹⁰ looked into ways into way how leisure substitutions such as reading, cinema, and recreation affects the arrival of audience on performance in the theatres. On the other hand, Bonato¹¹ investigated the impact of visitors' education on theatre attendance. Felton¹² studied the effects of ticket prices on theatre subscribers and non-subscribers, and Thorsby¹³ analysed the impact of the quality of theatre plays on attendance. More recently, Walmsley¹⁴ looked into the motivation that attracts visitors to theatres, Leko Šimić and Biloš¹⁵ explored the use of websites to attract the young target audience to the theatre, and Besana et al.¹⁶ investigated the impact of social media promotion on theatre attendance. Raduški¹⁷ believes that the main concept of marketing in the theatre is defined by the management, depending on theatre type (national, regional, urban, music, children's, etc.) and management principles (administrative, managerial, project or entrepreneur). The type of theatre has no significant impact on creativity in marketing, merely setting certain frameworks and target groups, while the management principle is of crucial importance in this respect. On the other hand, marketing can and should have a positive impact on the theatre's business and help the management build the principles of organization and management, production, overall business, and the general image of the theatre, define the sales and marketing programmes, the public relations concept and advertising campaign, create repertoire politics, visiting programs, tours and participation at festivals, and define the course of the theatre's research and development.

According to Kerrigan et al¹⁸, business tactic is the essence of marketing in theatres. This implies the tactic of successful selection of marketing tools and the manner of communication with the environment. According to Lukić¹⁹, marketing in theatres is the procedure of selling tickets or services to the viewer (the consumer). The same author asserts that marketing in theatres uses tools like promotion, advertising, public relations and audience relations. Regarding theatre marketing, Lukić²⁰ states that research and planning are the main functions of marketing in the theatre. Research identifies the real needs of the specific environment for which the product is intended. There are no universal approaches and unique models; research is conducted specifically for each individual case, project and environment, with only general principles applying to the marketing of cultural products. Planning allows theatres to make a good marketing plan, but before they start working on the plan, they need to answer the

⁹ LEVY-GARBOUA, L., MONTMARQUETTE, C: An Econometric Study of the Theatre Demand on Individual Data. In *Journal of Cultural Economics*, 1993, Vol. 20, No. 1, p. 31.

¹⁰ GAPINSKI, J. H.: The Living Arts as Substitutes for the Lively Arts. In *American Economic Review*, 1986, Vol. 74, No. 3, p. 21.

¹¹ BONATO, L., GAGLIARDI, F., GORELLI, S.: The Demand for Live Performing Arts in Italy. In *Journal of Cultural Economics*, 1990, Vol. 14, No. 2, p. 45.

¹² FELTON, M. V.: Major Influences on the Demand for Opera Tickets. In *Journal of Cultural Economics*, 1989, Vol. 13, No. 1, p. 121.

¹³ THORSBY, C. D.: *Perception of Quality in Demand for the Theatre, Economics of Cultural Decisions*. Cambridge : Abt Books, 1983, p. 57.

¹⁴ WALMSLEY, B. A.: Why People Go to the Theatre: A Qualitative Study of Audience Motivation. In *Journal of Customer Behaviour*, 2012, Vol. 10, No. 4, p. 337.

¹⁵ LEKO ŠIMIĆ, M., BILOŠ, A.: Theatre Marketing: Using Web – Sites to Attract Young Target Audience. In *Irish Business Journal*, 2017, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 35.

¹⁶ BESANA, A., BAGNASCO, A. M., ESPOSITO, A., CALZOLARI, A.: It's a Matter of Attention: The Marketing of Theatres in the Age of Social Media. In *International Journal of Arts Management*, 2018, Vol. 20, No. 3, p. 25.

¹⁷ RADUŠKI, D.: Kulturni menadžment i marketing kao faktori razvoja pozorišne delatnosti u Beogradu. In *Megatrend revija*, 2013, Vol. 10, No. 2, p. 79.

¹⁸ KERRIGAN, F., FRASER, P., OZBILGIN, M.: *Arts Marketing*. Oxford : Butterworth Heinemann, 2004, p. 63.

¹⁹ LUKIĆ, D.: *Produkcija i marketing scenskih umjetnosti*. Zagreb : ITI, 2010, p. 45.

²⁰ LUKIĆ, D.: *Produkcija i marketing scenskih umjetnosti*. Zagreb : ITI, 2010, p. 45.

following questions: Do we need a marketing plan at all?; What is our business and what are we doing at this moment?; What do we want to accomplish in the next five years?; What are our products?; Who do we produce them for?; What is the value for our consumers?; What would they actually want to buy?; What do we actually sell them?; What limitations is product sales faced with?; What do we know about our market and how?; How much information do we have about our competition?; Do we know the advantages of the market compared to the competition?; Do we differ from the competition and if so, how?; Do we have any marketing plans anyway?; What are our marketing priorities?; What do we want to say about ourselves?; Who do we want to communicate with?; What will we use the available marketing resources for?; How do we get to the buyer?; Do we have an idea of what we really want from our advertising?; What will we focus on in advertising?; How do we communicate with the media?; What can we learn from the competition? In order to have a successful marketing plan, every person who works in marketing in the theatre needs to have precise answers to the questions above. These answers can raise awareness of the state of marketing in the theatre and provide better guidelines for future marketing activities and the future marketing plan.

3 Analysis and Research

In order to become more familiar with advertising theater life in Croatia during the 19th century, the author decided to visit the State Archive in city of Osijek (which has a rich archive of theater posters of the aforementioned time) and one of the national museums in City of Zagreb. While researching advertising of theater life, the author concluded that at that time not only the posters (which had their place all over the mentioned cities) were present for the purpose of advertising, but also oral presentation was present (a type of marketing that is nowadays called „word of mouth“ marketing) to inform the audience about the theater play. Furthermore, four of the many selected posters of theatrical performances from the State Archives in city of Osijek and of the national museums in City of Zagreb will be shown and commented on.



Picutre 1: Poster for theatre play „Mного vike ni za što“²¹
Source: one of the national museums in Zagreb

²¹ Remark by the author: English translation: Much shouting for nothing.

Picture no. 1 shows a poster for the theater play "Mного vike ni za što" (play under the number 55 – what is the meaning of the number it is not quite clear, it can maybe be number of the play in the season), which took place on December 30, 1893 at the People's National Theater in City of Zagreb. It shows all information written in Croatian language: venue and time (beginning and the end time) of the performance, names of the actors (and their roles), directors name and ticket price. On the poster it can also be found a information which will be the next play.



Picture 2: Poster for the theatre play “Hamlet”
Source: one of the national museums in Zagreb

Picture no. 2 shows a poster for the theater play under the name "Hamlet" (ordinal number of the play is 83), which took place on Februar 30, 1893 at the People's National Theater in City of Zagreb. It shows all information written in Croatian language: venue and time (beginning and the end time) of the performance, names of the actors (and their roles), directors name and ticket price. As also, on the previous poster, it can also be found a information which will be the next play (in this case it will be two plays).



Picture 3: Poster for the theatre play „Gräfin Fritzi“²²
Source: State Archive in city of Osijek

Picture no. 3 shows a poster for the theater play "Gräfin Fritzi", which took place on October 1, 1896 at the Theater of the Free Royal City of Osijek²³. It shows all information written in German language: venue and time of the performance, ticket price. It is interesting to note that the poster says two informations: one of the information is, that the building will have the heating on, to make it more enjoyable for visitors to watch the theatre play and other information is that, how this thatre play was in the past successfully performed in Berlin.



Picture 4: Poster for the theatre play „Eine Nacht im Orient“²⁴
Source: State Archive in city of Osijek

²² Remark by the author: English translation: Countess Fritzi.

²³ Remark by the author: In mentioned time it was the name of the City of Osijek.

²⁴ Remark by the author: English translation: One night in Orient.

Picture no. 4 shows a poster for the theater play „Eine Nacht im Orient“, which took place on Februar 21, 1897 at the Theater of the Free Royal City of Osijek. It is one of the few posters that has a picture. The picture on the poster shows a masked man and withal it can be found an information that the theatre play will be viewed under masks. The poster is also written in German language and has all the necessary information for visitors. It is interesting that the poster says that the most beautiful mask will be rewarded with a gold watch and that women or ladies have the advantage in the competition for the best mask. During the research and analysis of shown theater posters, the author noticed that the posters were written in detail with information for citizens of the then Free Royal City of Osijek and City of Zagreb, such as the history of the theater work, where the play was played before, in what major cities of Europe, which will be next play, whether the interior would be heated for the time of the show and how it is advisable for visitors to be trained in a certain way if they decide to visit the play, etc. The difference between the poster, are that the posters for theatre plays in City of Osijek were written in German language (the reason for that can be the influence and the ruling of the Austro – Hungarian Empire in City of Osijek and the official language during the ruling of the mentioned Empire was the German language) and for City of Zagreb were written in Croatian language.

Conclusion

Advertising is as old as humanity, and it is used to attract attention and information about a product or service. Advertising for cultural institutions and cultural programs must be:

- a) *Precise* – any information about an institution, play or other cultural event must contain accurate information. Looking at the posters, they all contain those informations. However, this raises the question for a new debate: "Are such posters full of detailed information unsuitable for today because we live in a time overflowing with information and with less time?";
- b) *Focused* – advertising must be precisely focused on the target audience but also on the time and place of advertising. Advertising will not be productive and successful if the focus is lost sight of;
- c) *Dynamic* – any information that wants to be shared with the environment about the institution or product of the cultural institution (performance, exhibition, etc.) must be timely.

Advertising must be complete with given guidelines. Looking further at the Croatian cultural history and development, it can be concluded that it not only has a rich cultural but also a theatrical history, which is a good basis for further exploration of advertising and confrontation of archival writings. The importance of advertising in the theater industry, for example, gives us a rich source of theater posters owned by the State Archives in Osijek, which gives us proof that theater have made great efforts in communicating with their surroundings in order to make the performances as popular as possible. It can also be asked whether good advertising is the reason for attending the performance or whether the quality of the performance. All further research can be devoted to answering this question. Although it can be found previous researches of critical theatre poster analysis in mentioned era in the world from authors Lau²⁵,

²⁵ *Inquiry@Queen's Undergraduate Research Conference Proceedings*. [online]. [2020-02-21]. Available at: <<https://ojs.library.queensu.ca/index.php/inquiryatqueens/article/view/6227>>.

Nikolić and Nedeljković²⁶, Wu²⁷ and historical review from Victoria and Albert Museum²⁸, but it can not be found previous similar researchers for Croatian theatre posters, which is also an obvious limitation of the research. For further research it can be recommended, the world theatre poster comparison in same era or theatre poster comparison in the world and in Croatia (same or different era).

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²⁶ NIKOLIĆ, J., NEDELJKOVIĆ, U.: Semiological analysis of Polish theater posters. In *Issues in ethnology and anthropology*, 2015, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 115.

²⁷ WU, P.: *A Critical analysis of theatre posters*. [online]. [2020-03-23]. Available at: <<https://scholarworks.rit.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=5753&context=theses>>.

²⁸ *Historical review from Victoria and Albert Museum*. [online]. [2020-03-25]. Available at: <<https://www.vam.ac.uk/articles/theatre-posters-an-illustrated-history>>.

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EXPERIMENTAL IMAGE CREATION THROUGH IMAGINATION

Martin Engler – Andrej Trnka

ABSTRACT:

The paper focuses on visual ideation in the creative process of visual development, i.e. concept art. It describes the process of idea formation and its transposition into visual information. The text analyses ideation approaches in the process of creating game and movie content. Explains context through history and art. The authors also describe experimental methods dedicated to usage and control of imagination. The paper thus tends to describe a part of art creation which is notably absent in the education processes in art schools and which is equally important.

KEY WORDS:

artistic experimentation, concept art, digital game and movie, imagination, visual ideation

1 Introduction

Imagine that we could all see the way one perceives reality. A thoughtful process with image and sound. Complete, with emotional and informational value. Pure and true. This has been happening throughout history. People with their imaginative gift interpreted their talents in various media. The process has developed simultaneously with the growth of our civilization, science and technology. We may use a convenient quotation of M. C. Bateson: “*What would it be like to have not only colour vision but culture vision, the ability to see the multiple worlds of others?*” The complexity of one’s fictions, interpreted in all kinds of media, is traceable in the continuity of ancestral heritage. This is the way of forgetting the hard reality as well as encoding information through time.¹ The basic dictionary definition of the term “imagination” could give us a significant insight here: the ability to form pictures in the mind; something that you think exists or is true, although in fact it is not real or true; the ability to think of new ideas.² As these definitions suggest, it is a mental process accessible by anyone, but the real challenge is the usage and control of imagination in the process of creation. Especially in such an environment as visual development, because all of the information put in visual work must be true to its nature, visualized to perfection in order to construct a perfect illusion. In 1923, Pablo Picasso stated in a letter to M. de Zayas that “*We all know that Art is not truth. Art is a lie that makes us realize truth*”. This is the part where we must clarify the position of imagination and its role visualized through art. Imagination goes hand in hand with fantasy or fiction. It is a process of creating an alien thought, that takes shape in the real world, simply by believing in its existence, born from one’s knowledge. Albert Einstein said in a 1929 interview: “*Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited, whereas imagination embraces the entire world, stimulating progress, giving birth to evolution.*” Despite the fact that imagination may not be real, it fills a special space in the memory of its inventor. Fiction is usually also very tempting due to the fact that it is something entirely new and it thrives out of one’s curiosity until it is completed. Therefore, it contributes to the invention or story to be understood and to live its own life in their imagination. This is a very fascinating part, because it is not only a demonstration of human tendency to create such fictions of possibilities, that leads to creating ideas of art, religions, ideologies, utopias, mechanisms and

¹ EGAN, K.: *A Very Short History of Imagination*. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<http://ierg.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/History-of-Imagination.pdf>>.

² *Imagination*. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/imagination>>.

constructs. It also leads to their materialization in the physical world.³ This is the point, where big concepts of fictional worlds, visualized in movies, digital games, literature, comics, etc. are being formed.

Consequently, the focus of this paper is to analyse the process of creating visual imaginary for such media. In order for imagination to work out it is vital form; a creator learns and challenges themselves to acquire and use information as well as encourages unconscious processes of the human mind. Dissociating information consciously and unconsciously plays a huge role in its further association into a new construct. Imagination is therefore different in all of us, because it simply depends on the actual neural network of connections created by these processes. Connections strengthen and spread with each connection we make. Strengthened connections are faster and the growth of a network help us see much more possibilities.⁴ This is the part where we can actually see the difference in creativity of people. Disney's creative strategy could serve us here as a good example of how unconsciousness and consciousness could work together to create relevant and strong content. It is called "The Dreamer, The Realist and The Critic". It refers to Walt Disney's embodiment in these three different roles, that helped him carry out ideas, form them and later make them work in the real world.⁵

2 Potential of Evolving Imagination

Imagination undoubtedly plays a huge role in our life. It is our spark, that allow us to grow our character and future and this is why it is important to develop it from the early childhood.⁶ The process of imagination plays a very big part in learning and in the intellectual growth of any child. It's proved by many sources, primarily by the field of Psychology. Imagination, intuition and creativity are present in everyday life of each child. It is very fascinating to study an infant's behaviour; due to the fact it learns so many complex and difficult abilities in a very short term. Mostly by dissociation of information, absorbing behaviour of parents or their influence on surroundings, all disguised in a child's play.⁷ However, imagination can be developed or 'killed' in the process. It is apathy, bad critique, ambiguity, bad environment or wrong education that crucially take all the fascination of the child away, creating unhappy and unfocused adult. It is not easy to follow intuition and our dreams; however, we must encourage it not only as parents, but also as teachers, employers, but especially ourselves. Imagination is a function that all of us have; we all are creative, but the use of creativity broadens its own significance. Therefore, we can say that imagination can be used as a skill as any other, even though its impact is huge. We easily acknowledge and recognise the role of

³ See also: CUSACK, C.: *Invented Religions Imagination, Fiction and Faith*. London : Routledge, 2010. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at:

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/289968682_Invented_religions_imagination_fiction_and_faith>.

⁴ AGNATI, L. et al.: The Neurobiology of Imagination: Possible Role of Interaction-dominant Dynamics and Default Mode Network. In *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2013, Vol. 4, No. 296, p. 1-14. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2013.00296/full>>.

⁵ ELMANSY, R.: *Disney's Creative Strategy: The Dreamer, The Realist and The Critic*. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<https://www.designorate.com/disneys-creative-strategy/>>.

⁶ TSAI, M-Y.: The Relationships among Imagination, Future Imagination Tendency, and Future Time Perspective of Junior High School Students. In *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 2015, Vol. 3, No. 3, p. 230-235. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1056075.pdf>>.

⁷ VYGOTSKY, L. S.: Imagination and Creativity in Childhood. In *Journal of Russian and East European Psychology*, 2004, Vol. 42, No. 1, p. 11. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <http://lchc.ucsd.edu/MCA/Mail/xmcamail.2007_08.dir/att-0149/LSV__1967_2004_.Imagination_and_creativity_in_childhood.pdf>.

creativity in the accomplishments of great inventors, scientists or artists (Tesla, Hawking, Da Vinci), but imagination is not a sole privilege of a few incredibly talented geniuses. We may form a hypothesis that it plays a huge part in the individual growth of everyone, forming information and creating possibilities simply by imagining them and thus creating steps to achieve them afterwards. The level of dissociating information as well as its recreation can be improved by practising in different forms and in different circumstances.⁸

3 Brief Story of Artistic Imagination

In the contemporary era, imagination helps create complex stories in complex environments, mostly for the purposes of gaming or movie industry. These stories are called “concept art”. The process of creating concept art includes many skills and thorough knowledge of subjects and yet it motivates and attracts loads of young people. This kind of art creates complex fictional reality by the rules of our world. This creative potential leads to several questions: What is the true potential of a human mind? Why are we teaching people to memorise theory, instead of teaching them to understand the core, therefore to create shapes from chaos? Can we increase potential of human mind by using imagination? Throughout history, we have witnessed numerous times that imagination has its special part in building civilizations. Those using their imagination are people with a gift of seeing the truth, future, untouchable entities. Witnesses of their own ‘celestial’ imaginations were worshipped and followed. Such people memorize powerful fictions that take shape not only in the mental sphere but also in various scriptures that influence viewers (worshippers) of the respective religions.⁹ Gifted people were once believed to be touched by gods or even seen as gods themselves, simply because it filled other people with satisfaction and a unique feeling of fulfilling transcendence.¹⁰ This is where powerful thoughts manifested in stories, religions, ideologies presented by art, are starting to mix together. We can witness such course of events in any civilization with any religion: from caves like Altamira to first civilizations, ancient Egypt, Mayans, Christians, even in ideologies in which we can find a strong relation of understanding and using powerful ideas through art.¹¹ Artists maintained positions of gifted people, who can solely see divine unimaginable things and the things they created became the closest reference to this fiction. Perfection in interpretation and aesthetics became valued as proof and truth compared to truth in newspapers. Its power is so obvious that we can clearly see it as iconoclastic events in history, destroying creations of art dedicated to religion.¹²

For instance, we may follow life and art of great renaissance artists like Albrecht Dürer or Leonardo Da Vinci who were considered to be amongst the greatest artists in the world in those times. They lived their lives during the ages of a very strong Christian religion

⁸ SASSON, R.: *The Power of Imagination*. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<https://www.successconsciousness.com/blog/concentration-mind-power/power-of-imagination/>>.

⁹ COGHLAN, A.: *Religion: A Figment of Human Imagination*. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<https://www.newscientist.com/article/dn13782-religion-a-figment-of-human-imagination/>>.

¹⁰ BRISCH, N.: *Religion and Power: Divine Kingship in the Ancient World and Beyond*. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<https://oi.uchicago.edu/research/symposia/religion-and-power-divine-kingship-ancient-world-and-beyond-0>>.

¹¹ *Art and Religion*. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<https://www.encyclopedia.com/environment/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/art-and-religion>>.

¹² BESANCON, A.: *The Forbidden Image: An Intellectual History of Iconoclasm*. Chicago, Illinois : University of Chicago Press, 2000, p. 1-10. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <https://books.google.sk/books?hl=sk&lr=&id=wRUULBMQRtoC&oi=fnd&pg=PT8&dq=iconoclasm&ots=w1KQMg0Z2z&sig=fpHTdUMFirIXZ4Qs9R8sW7DGxkc&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=iconoclasm&f=false>.

influence, yet we can see that their artworks were worshipped as relics. There are certain texts that mention worshipping gods through their art or making talismans or protection against the plague such as “Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse” by Albrecht Dürer.¹³ We can suggest their power is mainly drawn by the fresh invention of perspective, and its perfection expressed by these masters, that made such huge significance in perceiving a piece of art. We can say that fiction perceived by senses can be very convincing when witnessing a piece of divine or fantasy like imagery, a word or a sound accomplished perfectly to please the viewer. It can be so powerful that the greatest and the worst things ever done were covered in their perfection or a constructed lie supported by the imagination of the viewer. For instance, symbols of religions, books written by dictators or propaganda-like posters calling to arms.¹⁴ This underlines the powerful and important role it plays in our life. We do not seek aesthetic satisfaction only, as referred by ancient philosophers’ theories;¹⁵ we rather crave for a way to see behind a curtain and to see the future. This is the point where the modern perception of imagination is taking place.

4 Concept Art – Building Up Visual Memory

There is yet another reason why we mentioned the great artist himself, Leonardo Da Vinci, who is by our perception, the father of the present fiction in concept art. We may notice, that where the strong imagination, brilliant artistic skills and very high intellect fuse within one person, great things are about to happen. There are many examples in his countless paintings dedicated to the Christian religion, sculptures, designs, architecture, but also in numerous devices, machines and other inventions and studies of anatomy, physics, mechanics, principles of animation, etc. that he created during his life.¹⁶ Dissociating knowledge from all sources around, creating a new way of perception for the next generations. It is very inspirational even to look into his notebooks, not to mention that he invented brilliant ways of studying reality and pushing boundaries of imagination. Here is a smooth transition to the above-mentioned concept art, which allows us to apply artistic skills, design, knowledge of the world and fictions to movies and digital games. This type of art dedicated to fiction was ‘officially’ born around 1930, when first mentions of the expression “concept art” started to appear in movies and cartoon studios (e.g. *Disney*).¹⁷ The term basically means, that the art is created on behalf of a fictional story, idea or in different type of style than realism, where visualizations of a fictional world, things and characters in it, are made all in the condition of plausibility. This type of art is a beautiful lie which tells the possibilities or visions in such a high quality environment, where the viewer can easily immerse into a fictional world and its

¹³ *The Albrecht Durer Artworks*. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<https://www.theartstory.org/artist/durer-albrecht/artworks/>>. See also: GLOGER, G.: *Ritter, Tod unter Teufel: Das Leben des Albrecht Durer*. Berlin : KinderBuch-Verlag, 1979.

¹⁴ CHAMBERS, R.: Art and Propaganda in an Age of War: The Role of Posters. In *Scientia Militaria: South African Journal of Military Studies*, 1983, Vol. 13, No. 4, p. 54-58. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<https://scientiamilitaria.journals.ac.za/pub/article/view/543>>.

¹⁵ *Ancient Aesthetics*. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<https://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/ancient-aesthetics>>.

¹⁶ JONES, J.: *A Complete Digitization of Leonardo Da Vinci's Codex Atlanticus, the Largest Existing Collection of His Drawings & Writings*. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<http://www.openculture.com/2019/05/a-complete-digitization-of-leonardo-da-vincis-codex-atlanticus.html>>.

¹⁷ *Illustration and Concept Art: What Are the Differences?* [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<https://www.nutscomputergraphics.com/en/illustration-and-concept-art-what-are-the-differences/>>.

story.¹⁸ The conclusion is not only pure amusement of unbelievable things turned to living shape by patterns taken from real life, made in perfect order and functionality. It is also a possibility to ask questions, which would never occur in everyday life. Pushing boundaries of human cognition. How does it work? How can someone just activate imagination? Is it something you must be born with, or can it be built?

The truth about natural predisposition versus hard work is somewhere in the middle. Naturally, each of us has better predispositions for something else. Artists claim that it is hard work and dedication, that takes you to the result. We must not omit the fact, that there is also a big difference between craft and art. Is art something untouchable, which is given by god? Or is it some kind of a module that is called imagination, which drives us to create something special? Connections with neurons are made perpetually by learning, creating memories, thinking, connecting and deepening our senses. It is a practice where you should try and develop, or, in other words, program your mind and create different processes and connections, that help you understand or push your mental boundaries.¹⁹ And this is where the art and especially imagination in our perception, plays a huge role. The real art is some kind of a never-ending riddle, where we analyse, learn and connect pieces together and where we can create something from chaos. That means, that we are constantly changing variables, trying to get to the conclusion, which could further result to various possibilities. It is a game with passion for knowledge and beauty of the truth, in a fiction that satisfies. We would also suggest, that to understand reality through art is very close to scientific approach. You cannot build anything without knowledge; to draw something functional means to analyse and take form in visual notes. This ultimately builds up our own visual memory, that is connected to our conscious and unconscious experience. Especially by practicing to draw from our minds, from memories, feelings, we broaden these connections, dismissing boundaries between reality and dreaming, where we can easily create anything in our minds.

5 Experimental Methods

In search for creation of these experimental methods, we used similarities taken from basic exercises commonly used to capture space, proportions, composition and information from real life, as well as exercises commonly used in design processes. These are later merged with daydreaming and dreaming processes. Three essential parts were created and developed by methods of deduction, induction, comparison and image analyses from theory and praxis. First of all, we have to understand, that there could be a significant difference in the usage of imagination. Someone could use it to imagine how a cake from their grandma would taste like. Professional artists could create a complete universe with creatures, ways of life, machines, anything they would think of. Artists of any kind in all centuries have been trying to achieve perfection in imagination all the time. It is a key to the creation. This process can be described as spontaneous, positioning the artist to a half-dreamlike state, followed by immersion of fiction. In this immersion, senses are activated to follow the fiction, even though image, sound, scent, touch or emotions are not really present in reality. Powers of these half-dreams are different for each person, but there are certain techniques, that we worked on in past years. We think, that it is a combination of three essential parts: **dream**, **construct**, **feeling** and for each, we created experimental studies on himself during our artistic study, career and teaching.

¹⁸ SILLIMAN, B.: *25 Fantasy Worlds from the Past 25 Years We'd Want to Visit*. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<https://www.syfy.com/syfywire/25-fantasy-worlds-from-the-past-25-years-wed-want-to-visit>>.

¹⁹ GOEL, V.: *Sketches of Thought*. Boston : MIT Press, 1995, p. 33.

The first one, **dream**, aims to exercise ability to imagine pictures by practising state of dreams and daydreams. Goal for this exercise is to be able to create a daydream of your own will and to shape your sleep to the tool of imagination. At first, it is a big challenge for people who do not use imagination on an hour to hour basis or never thought about practicing with dreams, due to the fact that dreams seem at start to be unable to bend to our will and they only work in subconsciousness. It is commonly active, when you dream or think about your memories, trying to relive them again. Or even while thinking about a shape of something or someone. This is also the key how to use imagination when you are not sleeping – by learning to visualize your own dreams, being half awake and lucidly changing them, or trying to store your own visual memory simply by looking at things of interest. Analyse things and draw them on a paper or you may close your eyes and try to draw them in your imagination. What helps is to imagine making simple lines at first, bending imagination and recreating it slowly into a tool. There is a thing that some artists mention from time to time and it could be called ‘the inner eye’. It is simply the ability to dream awake and visualize things that do not exist. This ability, of course, enhances with practice and it is good to visualize in different ways. In lines, in shapes and in forms. Each and every way is very important for us to push our brains to details and space. Practicing during sleep is a little bit trickier, due to the fact you should not be in the phase of deep sleep. Therefore, the best results are achieved at the beginning or at the end of sleep. The thing that helped us was to create a little pitch-black box or curtain that allowed us to put away any distractions and immerse into our first visuals. What also worked was a very high contrast in a strong light source before entering. It created patterns of light projected into our retina; focusing on them and entering mild sleep could create abstractive imagery very quickly and even animation like effect. When we put ourselves into a relaxing pose, the results of trying to absolutely disconnect muscles from equation and focusing on the visual movement and contrast of the light were projected into your eyes. Fascinating things could happen when you join in your imagination. Your consciousness and subconsciousness mix and wrestle; you sleep and are awake at the same moment and you create, but also watch the project changing by its free will. Morning dreaming in case of exercise is an opposite process. Your consciousness is slowly entering subconsciousness, it is less invasive and you happen to appear in a story that can be changed only if you discover your will to do so. As S. LaBerge and H. Rheingold say, lucid dreaming has the possibility to freely take influence on the dream content and events.²⁰ What must be said, is that sleep is a way for us to replenish ourselves and practicing can cause exhaustion and hallucinations. It is also a drug for your brain and sometimes it cannot be stopped.

Construct is about strong foundation; artists call it fundamental skills to create something strong and immersive. First of all, we have to consider perspective in the three-dimensional space, shape and line language, physics like light or movement and the desire for knowledge of things that inspire you. It is necessary to find a conclusion for every information to build a construct and ways to produce. The way of drawing should be a way of thinking and it should appear so. Why is that? It’s just the way things are; if you wanted to create something and you did not understand it completely, nobody would understand the drawing. We can try this by drawing something from our memory. When our brain reacts to a certain memory, it goes in the direction of facts you know first or simply towards what is perceived the most. That is why people without training draw inaccurately, even though they might know the subject. It is necessary to ‘melt’ the knowledge with construct into mental imagery. Once complete, it becomes far easier to recreate an image into a medium of your choice. We suggest that one of the best practises for this is to connect lines with the inner eye on the top of real objects when

²⁰ LABERGE, S., RHEINGOLD, H.: *Exploring the world of lucid dreaming*. New York : Ballantine Books, 1991, p. 277.

walking anywhere, at any time. Or winking your eyes, trying to achieve photography-like imagery in your mind, by practicing to remember the subject. Try to practise with closed eyes and make studies on paper right after, as much as you can and of anything you find interesting. Take care – if you do not analyse the problem, you cannot move forward. When you cannot imagine, draw or write something down, it means you didn't make a construction from knowledge. You do not understand it, therefore you cannot make it real. This could be both very frustrating and helpful. It can help to develop, to understand problems and methods how to deconstruct, analyse to the core and construct again. The more you know about the real world, the better you can visualize things from any angle; it deepens details and functionality.

The third thing to practise is the ability to realize and connect your memories and knowledge with **feelings** and senses. To create is to understand things completely and to understand is to feel. Feeling plays an important role here. In order to create fiction, you need to put yourself into the state where your brain feels the fiction. It is not only the method to trigger imagination, but also to achieve believability and sense of storytelling. To understand this part is to watch people, action and reaction, studying senses and emotions, feeling them on your own as deep as you can. Study situations and deduce the possibilities or outcomes. Recall them by trying to feel that situation from memory. The immersion process is a very important part for everyone and it can be used as a powerful tool for creating fiction. Or, alternatively, try to store any of your information with value by turning it to memory attached with feelings. One of the greatest pieces of advice is to try putting ourselves right into the imaginary scene we want to create, with all the feelings that would come from this scene, applying to ourselves.

Conclusion

The ultimate goal of this paper is to help aspiring artists to build their own image library, to deepen their brain functions by connecting their memories, stories, feelings, senses, dreams with additional information and context. By doing that, we can make new patterns, designs, create new stories, better understand people or nature. Our creative potential is growing hand in hand with every connection we make. This is how concept artists think; this is how innovators think, this is how to find a way for figuring out anything. And to walk towards the future, where the future can be very tempting and scary as well. With every invention, we make something possible and dramatically change lives of people. In our century, we can see that both great and crazy things are about to happen. Many entities were created only in fictions of various authors and yet now they are true. Bioengineering, nanotechnology, space vacations or AI are 'crazy' concepts created by imagination, that are going to change world, but what is necessary for us is to adapt, to reinvent our way of thinking. A human being is the most adaptable organism not because of its resistance or because it is the strongest creature on the planet. It is our imagination that led us from the light of fire to electricity. What is necessary for us in order to beat our own creation of artificial intelligence (i.e. AI) is to further develop the processes of learning and connect them with imagination to change the game. To be creative, adaptive, inventive. To fulfil the whole circle of imagination and use technologies as a tool to create. We must change the way we teach and perceive, how we implement thoughts and impact each other and how we use our energy sources and time to achieve self-realization. Imagination is our heritage; it is what has changed basic tools and ideas into what we are at present, what will remain after us and what will change the future. Experimental studies mentioned earlier are to be further developed and tested on students. They are being

slowly applied in the teaching process, even by us, and first results are coming out. However, there is still a low amount of data and thus application in the teaching process must be further developed. There is a technology called virtual reality (abbr. VR) that is being applied in the creative processes of professionals; VR's results and ways of immersing the body and mind into the process of creation look promising and they are to be used for the further development of the above-mentioned methods.

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THIN LINES BETWEEN SCIENCE AND GAMING: ON THE EDGE BETWEEN BEING A PLAYER AND A RESEARCHER

Tomáš Farkaš

ABSTRACT:

This article discusses a topic, which is not really new. There has been a debate for over 20 years whether game studies related researchers should or should not be gamers. Some theorists even claim that being an active digital games player foggs the perspective from which to look upon digital games, therefore negatively affecting the results of any research. The aim of this paper, however, is to look at this problem from a different perspective. We will argue, that if you want to truly understand digital games, you have to be a gamer - not only because otherwise you were not able to work with some of the key elements of digital games in general (such as interactivity or immersion), not be able fully to understand digital games “language”, but also because of the fact that most of the theory and books related to game studies is actually written by people, who either make games or spent considerable time of their life playing the games. Having the status of a researcher (or scientist) was always a clearly defined position. To prove our point in this article, we will also try to define this term (along with some other), showing how needless and unnecessary it was to rise this debate. We will also try to define the term *language* in the context of digital games and how non-gamers actually react to it.

KEY WORDS:

digital games, gamer, language, non-gamer, research, scientist

1 So, Who Is a Scientist Anyway?

I may seem like a strange beginning to talk about what is science. But let’s admit it: science and research are one of those terms we all think we understand, but would have a lot of trouble defining. From the most general point of view, research is (or should we say “should be”?) an activity, that is based on systematic work focused on increasing the knowledge about something specific. This “something specific” could be defined as something we don’t know a great deal about or we want to know better - it is something, that rises a questions we need to ask, then collect all the data we find, analyze it and finally and hopefully - answer those questions. Of course, this is a very simplified version of what science actually is in all its width. In his well-known book on how to write a thesis, Umberto Eco says that to be scientific, research should not be only identified with natural sciences or quantitative research, formulas, and diagrams. According to him, research should fulfill specific conditions, such as dealing with a specific object (not necessarily physical), defined so that others can identify it and say things about this object, that has not yet been said about it or revisit the things that have already been said from a different perspective. Research should also be useful to others, meaning that it presents new findings on the object, and finally, research provides the elements required to verify or disprove the hypotheses it presents, and therefore it provides the foundation for future research.¹ Also, there is one more important thing that Eco writes about, and it is vital to understand our arguments in this article. In his discussion on the sources of scientific work, he distinguishes between primary and secondary sources.² In other words and again, in a very simplified version, when we are writing about something (or researching something), the primary source is that specific objects and secondary sources can be books other people already wrote about it.

In the context of this article, we could say that the books on digital games and game studies are secondary sources - the digital games are the primary ones. Elaborating on the short idea of

¹ ECO, U.: *How to Write a Thesis*. London : The MIT Press, 2015, p. 26-30.

² Ibidem, p. 45.

James E. McClellan III and Harold Dorn, saying that science has become a multidimensional reality rather than a culture-bound misconception³, we could literally think about game studies this way. From a certain perspective, digital games could be perceived as a multidimensional realities as well. Dorn and McClellan write about a close relationship between science and technology. From this point of view, digital games are an excellent example of this idea. So, who is a scientist anyway? Wilbur Applebaum points out very reasonably, that in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, there was no such person as “scientist”. Instead of this, they were “natural philosophers”. There was no science known as biology or chemistry and some words used today had different meanings then.⁴ This example shows us very clearly that there has always been a struggle in perception between what was considered scientific and what was not. When we look at the field of game studies, parallels can emerge, showing us that this researcher/gamer distinction might be yet another of the historical events we will probably flush down the pipeline to the place where all the pointless quarrels end up eventually. As Helena Bendová mentions, digital games started to be an object of scientific research in the 1980s and early 1990s, but the prevailing point of view was focused on their supposedly negative effects. One of the reasons for this was also the fact that most of the research was conducted by people, who actually never played digital games, didn't know them well, and had tendencies to look upon them with a great deal of disbelief.⁵ Later in the 90s, as game studies started to gather more attention in humanitarian disciplines, a group of scholars appeared, who described themselves as gamers as well.⁶ One would guess that after nearly 30 years now, we are still somewhere in this transition of perception of digital games.

One of the most important things to bear in mind, however, is the bare fact, that many of the modern digital games researchers are relatively young people, who simply grew up with digital games. When we think about it, it makes perfect sense. Even though the history of digital games reaches down to half of the 20th century, games itself needed some time for evolution to the point of being interesting and popular enough to be an object of scientific research. But as usual, as it always goes, they first attracted the attention of non-gamers and critical thinkers and researchers, just like every other new thing or technology that was ever created by mankind. Now, the gamers finally got to the point of being the scientists, namely because not only they have the same degrees as scientists in “traditional” sense have, but because they understand the *language* of digital games.

2 So, What Is This Language of Digital Games Anyway?

It would probably take thousands of pages to define the term language on its own. Just the mere fact that language has been here for tens of thousands of years in any of its evolutionary forms explains why there are so many theories and different approaches to it. For the sake of this article, we will avoid all of these and again use a simplified point of view. In *The Story of Human Language*, John McWhorter says that language is more than words, it is actually how the words are put together and how grammar that we use to put it together produces utterances

³ McCLELLAN, J. E., DORN, H.: *Science and Technology in World History*. Baltimore : The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006, p. 2.

⁴ APPLEBAUM, W.: *The Scientific Revolution and the Foundation of Modern Science*. London : Greenwood Press, 2005, p. 16.

⁵ BENDO VÁ, H.: *Co je nového v počítačových hrách*. Prague : Nová Beseda, 2019, p. 11.

⁶ Ibidem, p. 15.

that reflect our impressions of our lives, experiences, and environment.⁷ In his notion of Noam Chomsky, he discusses his argument that the ability to use language is innately specified in the human brain and that humans are specifically programmed for language, down to a level of detail that includes a distinction between parts of speech and the ways that parts of speech relate to one another.⁸ Steven Pinker writes about the principle underlying grammar as about something unusual in the natural world. According to him, grammar is an example of a “discrete combinatorial system” where a finite number of discrete elements (words) are sampled, combined, and permuted to create larger structures (sentences) with properties that are quite distinct from those of their elements.⁹ The way language works then, he continues, is that each person’s brain contains a lexicon of words and the concepts they stand for (a mental dictionary) and a set of rules that combine the words to convey relationships among concepts (a mental grammar).¹⁰ These and many others were definitions from the general perspective. But probably one of the most interesting ideas (in the context of our article) that refers to language in digital games was written by Astrid Ensslin in the introduction of her book *The Language of Gaming*. She says that very little has been done in an examination of language as used in and about videogames - an area commonly considered part of new media yet too large and idiosyncratic in its social, economic, and cultural practices to pass under this broad and increasingly *elusive* label.¹¹ There is a purpose why we highlighted the word “elusive”. The language, as we mentioned before, has been with us for thousands of years. But when we think of the language of digital games, we are talking about a phenomenon, that started its journey not even a hundred years ago. Nevertheless, throughout these years it created a considerably complex and even complicated system of communication with the most important partner in the conversation - the player.

So, what is the language of digital games anyway? It all comes to basics and the simple fact: whether or not has a specific person spent a specific amount of time actually playing digital games. Like most of the other languages, we usually learn them best when we simply live in an environment where the specific language is spoken. This could relate to languages of other countries but also more special languages like programming (for example in the context of spending time as a student of information technologies). So again, very simply put, when we say “red”, we immediately imagine red color or something red that comes into our mind. But what would happen if we asked a non-gamer about a “red bar” in digital games? The gamer would probably promptly point out that a red bar is usually associated with “health bar” in games - that part of UI or HUD (user interface or heads-up display) which is representing the remaining health (or life) of our gaming character (or enemies). The exact experiment could be replicated with the color blue. Most of the gamers would assume we are talking about “mana”, which is generally understood and attributed to player’s character magical abilities - and we are not even mentioning the complex set of information linked to the specific genres and what players expect to find in them (like role-playing games, or survival horror games) and other things that most of the players recognize, all the while non-gamers have virtually no reason to even know about these things exist.

⁷ McWHORTER, J.: *The Story of Human Language, Part 1..* Chantilly, VA : The Teaching Company Limited, 2004, p. 3.

⁸ Ibidem, p. 8.

⁹ PINKER, S.: *The Language Instinct. The New Science of Language and Mind.* London : Penguin Books, 1995, p. 84.

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 85.

¹¹ ENSSLIN, A.: *The Language of Gaming.* London : Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, p. 5.

On 28th of September 2019 Youtuber with the name of Razbuten uploaded a video called “What Games Are Like For Someone Who Doesn’t Play Games”¹². Due to its great success (nearly 7 million views and tens of thousands of constructive comments), he followed with other videos - “What Breath Of The Wild Is Like For Someone Who Doesn’t Play Games”¹³ (uploaded on 22. 11. 2019), “What Minecraft Is Like For Someone Who Doesn’t Play Games”¹⁴ (uploaded on 6. 1. 2020) and “What Online Multiplayer Is Like For Someone Who Doesn’t Play Games”¹⁵ (uploaded on 19. 3. 2020). In this - what he called “an informal experiment”, he made his wife (a non-gamer) play different digital games and observed how she interacted with those, focusing on how the games communicated things needed to be understood to be played how they were intended to be played. This experiment quickly turned into far more interesting observation - that of game language. Put into the context of what we wrote earlier in this chapter, it seems that he cleverly discovered the exact problem with the language of digital games when it comes to people who don’t play them: the so-called words and grammar of the language of games has been developing its own relationships and connections for years, making them nearly invisible to non-gamers. During these videos, he quickly found out that much more basic problems appeared for a non-gamer when presented with games from different genres. For example, when the game itself doesn’t properly explain to a beginner player how the controls work, it can all come down to a point when he doesn’t even know there is a possibility to rotate the camera with a mouse. Another example was the controls in general. During a passage in one of the videos, while Razbuten’s wife was playing a game called *Last of Us*¹⁶, she was prompted to use the „L1“ button. While most of the console players would react instantly, she didn’t know what L1 is, because simply – it was not written anywhere on the controller and she didn’t even know there is a possibility to press one of the joysticks. When we look at this from this perspective, we can immediately see why it is so important to talk about the language of digital games. Problems we set as examples are really just the basic ones, making much more complex game mechanics far too complicated to be fully understood for a non-gamer. This mechanics could be anything from navigating in a fully 3D environment, understanding how „waypoints“ usually work in games, interpreting generally well-known elements of HUD (such as health, compass, map, spells icons..), to a more intricate knowledge, skills, and familiarities like the anticipation of a stronger enemy (or a boss battle) based on the level design, looking for easter eggs, breaking the game mechanics to gain an advantage, communicating with NPC characters in a particular way or backtracking and visiting the same locations more than once to find previously hidden passages or items.

All of these things are something that gamers already know. They have it in their „vocabulary“ of gaming. There is even a tendency in the recent development of games to minimize information provided to players (like hiding a HUD completely or making it a part of a game world) to increase the level of immersion even more. From this perspective, we could probably reevaluate what „words“ and „grammar“ is in this context. Of course, the problem we are dealing with is much more complicated. It would take a deep look into how specific genres work and how they establish the communication between the game and the player, or whether they even do it – digital games as a medium evolved into an era, where a big part of the so-

¹² *What Games Are Like For Someone Who Doesn’t Play Games*. Released on 28th September 2019. [online]. [2020-05-05]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ax7f3JZJHSw>>.

¹³ *What Breath Of The Wild Is Like For Someone Who Doesn’t Play Games*. Released on 22nd November 2019. [online]. [2020-05-05]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5LdenlAKb2g>>.

¹⁴ *What Minecraft Is Like For Someone Who Doesn’t Play Games*. Released on 6th January 2020. [online]. [2020-05-05]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_76lcBpDbvw>.

¹⁵ *What Online Multiplayer Is Like For Someone Who Doesn’t Play Games*. Released on 19th March 2020. [online]. [2020-05-05]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rfDVbWgHidY>>.

¹⁶ NAUGHTY DOG: *Last of Us*. [digital game]. Santa Monica : Naughty Dog, 2013.

called vocabulary of the games is expected to be known by players and even though there are still tutorials present in games, many of these fail on many levels in a preparation of a non-gamer to what is to come in the game. The whole other problem for a non-gamers is the notion of immersion itself. Just like other media (for example cinema), digital games taught players what to expect and how to behave. The illusion of freedom that comes with one of the constituting elements of digital games – interactivity – obscures what is in fact the limitations of digital games (although some games deal with this problem better than others). For example, in real life we could walk any direction and if we wanted, we could even try to climb anywhere we want. In digital games however, this is not so much of an option. We can go only where the designers of the game allow us to go, even if the only obstacle in our way is something like a chair, blocking a passage. In this kind of a situation the non-gamer would ask the right question: „Why am I not able to pass around the chair?“ It applies to many other situations and behaviors like this. If we are not talking about a truly open-world games, where we can, for example, acquire the ability to fly, therefore allowing us to go to virtually any part of the game world (such as *Morrowind*¹⁷, where you can buy a spell or make a magic potion with alchemy, *Just Cause*¹⁸ or *Elex*¹⁹, where flying is one of the core game mechanics or MMORPGs like *Aion*²⁰, where you can get to a level where the game allows you to use customizable wings), the immersion is only so much how the game allow us or even direct us. Scripted events, pre-designed paths we can climb (although the visuals of the level design indicates there *should* be another way), all of these are parts of the game in which gamers – so to speak - „play the game with the game“. Just like with all the fiction, we can be drawn into the pretend-play and it is solely on the artistry, skill, and experience of game designers to what degree they will „fool“ us into total immersion. For non-gamers, these rules suddenly don't apply, simply because they were not taught the language of games.

3 So, What Are the Lines Between Science and Gaming Anyway?

In 2013, Frans Mäyrä, Jan Van Looy, and Thorsten Quandt wrote an article called *Disciplinary Identity of Game Scholars: An Outline*. In this article, they tried to find out how many digital games researchers identify themselves as gamers. Also, their article aimed to focus on how diverse their educational backgrounds actually are. One of the results of their research was clearly showing that most of the game researchers primary field was Communication Studies (16%), Humanities (14%), Educational Sciences (10%), Computer Sciences (9%), Psychology (9%), Media Studies (9%), Engineering (8%) and Arts (8%). Along with these, there was also the presence of Social Science, Design, and even such areas as Natural Sciences and Economics, Business and Management (all with less than 3%). Actual researchers that came with „Game studies“ background made less than 1% of all in the survey.²¹ What is even more interesting however, was their answer to a question whether they think digital game researcher should also be a „gamer“. In this survey, a clear majority, 65,6% either agreed or strongly

¹⁷ BETHESDA SOFTWAREWORKS: *The Elder Scrolls III: Morrowind*. [digital game]. Maryland : Bethesda Softworks, 2002.

¹⁸ AVALANCHE STUDIOS: *Just Cause*. [digital game]. London : Eidos Interactive, 2006.

¹⁹ PYRANHA BYTES: *Elex*. [digital game]. Vienna : THQ Nordic, 2006.

²⁰ NCSOFT: *Aion*. [digital game]. Seongnam : NCSOFT, 2008.

²¹ MÄYRÄ, F., VAN LOOY, J., QUANDT, T.: *Disciplinary Identity of Game Scholars: An Outline*. In *DiGRA '13 – Proceedings of the 2013 DiGRA International Conference: DeFragging Game Studies*. Atlanta, GA, USA : Digital Games Research Association, 2014, p. 6. [online]. [2020-05-09]. Available at: <<http://www.digra.org/digital-library/publications/disciplinary-identity-of-game-scholars-an-outline/>>.

agreed with this statement.²² Nearly the same team of researchers joined together on another research in 2015, discussing Digital Games Research in the context of an emerging field and its prevalent debates like beneficial effects or belief in the negative effects of digital games. Even in this article, they admit that although today digital games have been accepted as a popular form of interactive media entertainment, and, concomitantly, a topic for communication research, it still remains unclear whether a canon of accepted knowledge, research practices, and dissemination channels has emerged, and whether digital games research is truly accepted as an independent field.²³ One of the results of this research was again the conclusion, that the large majority of the academics in the survey consider themselves dedicated games researchers, and they typically play games themselves.²⁴

Maybe we should ask ourselves whether it is important at all to focus so much on the inquiry of being a researcher *and* a gamer, or being just one of these. From one perspective, it is indeed an interesting topic. But then again, what is this perspective? One that assumes that science works the same all the time - that when we want to study something, we must be scientists in the first place. But what if we finally started to perceive digital games as something that is not just a „new form of media“ in the context of all media there ever was? So far, this viewpoint only caused unnecessary debates leading to a point when all the games were considered nearly evil (because there are still theories going around, preaching about negative effects of digital games), most of the time neglecting the mere fact of how fast this sector is actually evolving. Digital games are a technology that is evolving much faster than our actual capacity to get a grasp of everything happening in this field, an area advancing too rapidly to be susceptible to thorough inspection, especially in the times when game studies still struggle to become a 100% respected scientific field with homogenous canon and common practices of research. Digital games has steadily penetrated most of the traditional media, as an industry that makes more than \$100 billion every year, it is a barely surprising fact. According to Microsoft, there are more than two billion gamers around the world and by 2022, experts forecast the gaming industry will produce \$196 billion in revenue.²⁵ Many theories, surveys, and researches suggest an end of negative effects era of digital games, in fact, most of the researchers, who placed digital games on the unfavorable position in the past were the ones that actually never played any games. This understandably created a domino effect which consequences are still present in today's perspective of digital games in general. But who are those writing about games?

We could go name by name, book after book, ask game theorists and researchers whether they play games or not. For example, in acknowledgments of his book *Digital games as history: How Videogames Represent the Past and Offer Access to Historical Practice*, Adam Chapman writes – without a hesitation - from the viewpoint of a gamer, identifies people who helped him to write this book as his „power-ups“ and compares writing with „difficulty all gamers know“.²⁶

²² MÄYRÄ, F., VAN LOOY, J., QUANDT, T.: Disciplinary Identity of Game Scholars: An Outline. In *DiGRA '13 – Proceedings of the 2013 DiGRA International Conference: DeFragging Game Studies*. Atlanta, GA, USA : Digital Games Research Association, 2014, p. 12. [online]. [2020-05-09]. Available at: <<http://www.digra.org/digital-library/publications/disciplinary-identity-of-game-scholars-an-outline/>>.

²³ See also: QUANDT, T., VAN LOOY, J., VOGELGESANG, J., ELSON, M., IVORY, D. J., CONSALVO, M., MÄYRÄ, F.: Digital Games Research: A Survey Study on an Emerging Field and Its Prevalent Debates. In *Journal of Communication*, 2015, Vol. 65, No. 6, p. 975-996.

²⁴ Ibidem.

²⁵ WEBB, K.: *The \$120 billion gaming industry is going through more change than it ever has before, and everyone is trying to cash in*. Released on 1st October 2019. [online]. [2020-05-09]. Available at: <<https://www.businessinsider.com/video-game-industry-120-billion-future-innovation-2019-9>>.

²⁶ For more information, see: CHAPMAN, A.: *Digital games as history: How Videogames Represent the Past and Offer Access to Historical Practice*. New York : Routledge, 2016.

Caren Collins, one of the best writers on sound and music in digital games, states in the preface of her book *Game Sound: An Introduction to the History, Theory, and Practice of Video Game Music and Sound Design*, that her book began when her uncle Tom bought her one of the early forms of Pong games around 1980 and infected her with love for video games.²⁷ Pete Etchells (a psychologist) even goes so far that in the prologue and first chapter of his book *Lost in a Good Game: Why We Play Video Games and What They Can do For Us* he writes about how digital games helped him to get over his father's death.²⁸ In the introduction of the book *What Video Games have to Teach us About Learning and Literacy*, James Paul Gee writes about how his four years old son had to teach him how to play even the kid's game and about his journey to digital games while playing *Deus Ex* and *The New Adventures of the Time Machine*. And we could go on and on. In the editorial of the famous Volume 1/Issue 1 of the *International Journal of Computer Game Research* from July 2001, Espen Aarseth himself wrote that games are both object and process; they can't be read as texts or listened to as music, they must be played. Playing is integral, not coincidental like the appreciative reader or listener. The creative involvement is a necessary ingredient in the use of games.²⁹ It is indeed a process, not just „reading“ the games, but also their neverending evolution. It was not so many years ago when we heard about first online digital games tournaments and today, there is a debate about whether digital sports should be a part of the Olympic Games. So, what are the thin lines between science and gaming anyway? It seems that in reality, sometimes there is no line at all. The only line that divides most of the scientists from being gamers is whether they play because they relax or because they are studying and examining the game while playing. In fact, digital games have quite much of an answer in their own name: they are games after all. They are *meant* to be played. There is still a whole lot yet to be answered and one of the biggest questions there are is why are digital games overcoming nearly every part of our lives so extremely fast. What is so intriguing about them so that they became a part of so many other fields, media, and technologies?

4 So What Is the Conclusion Anyway?

My daughter started to play games when she was around two years old. She started with simple puzzle games on tablet, went through a phase of interactive learning adventure games for kids, musical games, reading and writing games, and so on. Now, in the sixth year of her life, she is *the* pro queen of all chaos in the *Goat Simulator*³⁰ series and is sporting different online MMOs for children like *Animal Jam*³¹. She can break the games to exploit some of the funniest parts of it, she understands what “bugs” are and can spot them in games she plays. She is able to identify and orient herself in any new game of various genres (that includes using a menu and communicating with a user interface as well). We often talk about the graphics of digital games she plays and discuss the sound design. I even let her play many games not meant for kids – most notably the original PS2 version of *Shadow of the Colossus*³². She spent most of her time riding the horse and when she confronted the first Colossi, she decided not to kill him (later she wanted me to kill him to see what is going to happen next) – every time she returned to this

²⁷ COLLINS, K.: *Game Sound. An Introduction to the History, Theory and Practice of Video-Game Music and Sound Design*. Massachusetts : Institute of Technology, 2008, p. 1.

²⁸ ETHELLES, P.: *Lost in a Good Game*. London : Icon Books Ltd, 2019, p. 1.

²⁹ AARSETH, E.: *Computer Game Studies*, Year One. In *Games Studies*, 2001, Vol. 1, No. 1. [online]. [2020-05-09]. Available at: <<http://www.gamestudies.org/0101/editorial.html>>.

³⁰ COFFEE STAIN STUDIOS: *Goat Simulator*. [digital game]. Skövde : Coffee Stain Studios, 2014.

³¹ WILDWORKS: *Animal Jam*. [digital game]. Utah : Wildworks, 2010.

³² SCE JAPAN STUDIO, TEAM ICO: *Shadow of the Collosus*. [digital game]. Sony Game Entertainment, 2005.

game, she was fascinated by the vast open world and horse riding mechanics. She can play games on tablet, phone, PC, and most of the consoles (including Sony Playstation and XBOX). She even spent some time in virtual reality using Oculus several times. All while she is only six years old. While she is going to be the *real* digital native in her adult years, we all will be neanderthals compared to her. Her words and grammar will function on a different level, her understanding of digital games language will be far over the horizon of what we can imagine today. In fact, it is not certain there will be *any* digital games the time she will be in her 30s. Not the way we understand them today. With the emergence of the concepts of gamification in many fields of our lives, game researchers today should ask what will become of digital games in the future, not what they are now. Being a scientist and a game researcher in this field is also being a gamer. It works the other way around as well, as shown in the example of my daughter. She was not born a scientist. But being a gamer all along, she is slowly becoming one. She is able to analyze certain aspects of games she play and she can draw the consequences of these observations. She is able to work out some of the abstract levels of game narratives and she is also naturally able to perceive some digital games as artistic. Or maybe I am wrong all the way. Maybe she will slowly lose interest in digital games as she grows older. Just as most people do lose interest in games in general by “becoming adults”. And maybe that’s all to be done with digital games after all: playing them and enjoying them in the first place while they still are so captivating and enchanting for us. Because in the end, when we – the gamers – lose interest in games, we will be left only with studying them. And that is the final line between being the gamer and a researcher.

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FILM LOOK OF A DIGITAL MOVIE

Ladislav Halama – Zora Hudíková

ABSTRACT:

The theoretical study aims to provide orientation in the field of knowledge about the impact of digital technologies on production and creative processes in film. The discoveries of recent years have completely changed the chain of audiovisual content production - from the beginning (its primary record) through the processing of the content to the presentation to the recipient. These changes have led creators to completely new creative practices and beneficiaries to change their habits in the perception of media content. We will also briefly outline the origins and benefits of technological milestones, such as the development of analog film, the emergence of electronic television media, the emergence of digital photography and digital film. We will also mention the changes that the film underwent as a material record from the form of a photographic image to the form of a digital record in the form of a numerical code. An important part of the discourse on film media in its digital form is a comparison of technical and perceptual specifics resulting from the change of media: i.e. the perception of a film image captured on film (celluloid) and an image captured by a digital camera recorded in digital format. In this context, the term "film look" was used - a set of technical-optical and aesthetic parameters that bring the quality of digital film as close as possible to the appearance of the film image. We will also try to characterize what alternatives exist in contemporary film production in the context of the expectations of creators of the possibilities of developing creativity in the creation and perception of film works.

KEY WORDS:

analog film, digital film, film look, media

1 Introduction

The term "digital revolution" fully captures the historical significance of the transformation caused by the advent of computer technology in all areas of life. Its importance is comparable to innovations such as the steam engine, railways and electricity. Research and discoveries in the field of computer technology have shifted the possibilities of communication, transferred it from mechanical distribution to electronic form and accelerated it to a speed comparable to the speed of an idea. This new technical and information paradigm became universal in the second half of the 20th century and gained the ability to spread to all parts of the economic system, to renew it and to transform society in all its aspects. The environment of audiovisual production – i.e. audio-visual arts (especially film and television), but also music, fine arts, graphics, photography and architecture, have had to deal with the consequences of the beginning of the digitization process over the last half century. Digitization has brought completely new methods to each stage of film production, which aim to replace the classic production methods known for more than a century. However, in the final image form of the film, many creators find certain differences in the qualitative parameters of the reproduced digital images. Not only technologists but also creators are dealing with the elimination of these qualitative differences in order to bring digitally captured images as close as possible to those that are classically captured - while the desired goal is to achieve the so-called "film look" of a digital image. By this term, proponents and opponents of digital film refer to the technical-optical, aesthetic and psychological parameters of film image perception characteristic of the analog carrier (celluloid) compared to the intangible stream of digital data as perceived by the recipient when displayed on a screen. Ever since film became a well-known medium for image recording - that is, from about 1910 until the end of the 20th century - it has been the result of chemical-mechanical treatment on a light-exposed light-sensitive layer applied to a celluloid

strip. Until the year 2000, the cinema was almost exclusively photochemical medium.¹ The use of computer technology to record and transmit sound and images began in 1982 - the release of the first commercial CD (recording of Chopin's waltzes with conductor C. Arrau) and the first film - "Tron", in which digital technology was partly used, are considered milestones. (Director S. Lisberger inserted the digitized character of actor J. Bridges into real shots and animations)².

In the last twenty years or so, the film industry has gone through the process of digitization - that is, a change in the way reality is recorded - in the whole complex of activities, from preparation, through shooting to distribution methods. "Digitization of information consists in converting it into a numerical code. All information can be converted to a numeric code - if we assign a number to each letter of the alphabet, we can transform any text into a sequence of numbers, the image can be divided into points (pixels) and each of the points can be described by two numbers describing exact coordinates and three numbers describing the intensity of colors. components (red, blue and green in the summation synthesis). Any image or sequence of images can therefore be rewritten into a sequence of numbers"³. Numeric code can be considered as another form of language that uses only two numeric characters - 0 and 1. The language into which any object, shape, sound or representation of real motion is "translated" is called a binary code. As K. Daly concludes: "Computers and the Internet have changed the film. Film has changed from industrial art to electronic art, and teleculture is increasingly changing between art and information"⁴. The process of transforming the film medium into digital form therefore consists in the transformation of all parts of film production: filming, finishing, distribution and screening of films. Today we consider it complete. It is also called "end-to-end" - i.e. each of the production phases has its own standards of digital work and technological procedures, which have replaced previously used procedures and standards. The process of digitization was synchronous on a global scale with a gradual increase in the efficiency of computer technology, improvement of audiovisual equipment and software. Simply put, the year 1999 saw the beginning of digitization in film - when the first screenings of films were made using digital projectors and the global process of digitization of cinemas began. It ended around 2013, when the total number of digitized cinemas reached 90% of the total number of cinemas in the world.⁵ However, this process was preceded by the discovery of new technologies for filming and post-production in the digital environment. But the process of digitization is also the basis of a semiotic, aesthetic and philosophical discussion: to what extent can we talk about a film that is made with the help of digital technologies - to what extent is the name "digital" film accurate and what are the differences from "classic" film recorded on film raw material. All the more so as the image information carrier itself is only part of the whole chain, which represents only the external form of the production process used. And the development of film digitization to this day confirms that this process is not linear and in no way definitively concludes the existence of a "classic" film - that is, recording on a celluloid (analog) carrier. The discourse content related to digitization in film is very extensive. In the

¹ BORDWELL, D., THOMPSON, K., SMITH, J.: *Film Art: An Introduction*. 11th Edition. New York : McGraw-Hill Education, 2017, p. 10.

² PRESS, G.: *A Very Short History of Digitization*. [online]. [2020-04-18]. Available at: <<https://www.forbes.com/sites/gilpress/2015/12/27/a-very-short-history-of-digitization/#ca9577949ac2>>.

³ LÉVY, P.: *Kyberkultura*. Prague : Karolinum, 2001, p. 47.

⁴ For more information, see: DALY, K. M.: *How Digital and Computer Technologies are Changing Cinema*. Columbia : Columbia University, 2008. [online]. [2020-05-05]. Available at: <https://www.academia.edu/3209474/How_Digital_and_Computer_Technologies_are_Changing_Cinema>.

⁵ See also: *Emerging Markets And The Digitalization Of The Film Industry. An analysis of the 2012 UIS International Survey of Feature Film Statistics*. Montreal : UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2013. [online]. [2020-05-17]. Available at: <http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/emerging-markets-and-the-digitalization-of-the-film-industry-en_0.pdf>.

study, we will try to examine how a digitally produced film differs from a film produced on a film raw stock (celluloid) and how they react to differences renowned creators. We will be interested in what all influences the so-called the film look of digital film and the extent to which the technical parameters of digital film display are related to the viewer's optical, emotional or rational perception.

2 How Film Became Digital

The invention of photography with image recording through exposure to a light-sensitive layer took less than a century to develop into sequential motion recording (also called chronophotography) allowing the recording of up to 12 images per second. Further improvements resulted in a 35 mm nitrocellulose strip with a light-sensitive layer and exposure to a moving strip at 16 frames per second (which, incidentally, was equivalent to two crank turnings on a camera called a Kinetograph).⁶ Its inventor W. K. L. Dickson also created the Kinetoscope projector, thus enabling the creation of a patent, which they registered together with T. A. Edison. In collaboration with G. Eastman, the founder of KODAK, they determined the format of the celluloid strip to be 35 millimeters wide, as well as the number of perforation holes per film foot (footprint = 28.5 cm) at 64, and determined the size of one image on the film strip to a width of 24 mm and a height of 18 mm.⁷ These parameters did not change until the end of the silent film era. The first screenings of films for which admission was paid (Paris, 1895) also showed the power and ability of the nascent medium to make money, even to make a profit. The gradual discovery of means of expression by subsequent generations of filmmakers and the improvement of the technique of filming, editing and projection created what we called the film industry in the previous century (or art - depending on the angle of view). However, the film industry was not only built by technicians and producers, but especially by creators - directors, actors, cinematographers and with them thousands of dissatisfied innovators and creative professionals. The filmmakers learned to do the first film tricks, the silent film became sound, the black and white color. And film innovations have continued for almost exactly another 100 years since George Eastman created the KODAK brand and labeled it with the 35mm film format. The most important milestones of the innovation were: the addition of an audio track with light recording of the sound⁸ to the edge of the film strip, changing the camera drive to electric, a frequency of 24 frames per second and the use of a color negative that standardized the filming of color films (1950 - Eastman Color Negative Film)⁹. Other innovations followed (widescreen formats, multi-channel sound), etc. Their main goal was to differentiate themselves from the biggest rival that grew up in film in the 1950s - television.

⁶ *A Chronicle of the Motion Picture Industry*. [online]. [2020-04-20]. Available at: <https://www.kodak.com/uploadedfiles/motion/US_plugins_acrobat_en_motion_newsletters_filmEss_02_History.pdf>.

⁷ Ibidem.

⁸ Remark by the authors: Optical sound recording was actually a photographic image recorded with metallic silver. This trace was deposited on the edge of the film strip and had a different intensity of light transmission. The track could be reproduced by white light - a sound exciter, which could have been an ordinary light bulb. This method was used only for black and white films, because it was no longer possible to keep a trace of metallic silver when developing color films.; *Používané technologie optického záznamu zvuku*. [online]. [2020-04-20]. Available at: <<http://fyzika.jreichl.com/main.article/view/1347-pouzivane-technologie-optickeho-zaznamu-zvuku>>.

⁹ *A Chronicle of the Motion Picture Industry*. [online]. [2020-04-20]. Available at: <https://www.kodak.com/uploadedfiles/motion/US_plugins_acrobat_en_motion_newsletters_filmEss_02_History.pdf>.

Although we focus primarily on the issue of film digitization, at this point we will allow ourselves to turn to the younger medium, which became the film's biggest competitor in the middle of the last century - television. The reason is that the development of the television medium in many respects copied the development of film - the medium used special methods of audiovisual recording and reproduction of reality, used and adapted the means of expression of film, and the technological development of the two media converged at the level of production and distribution of film content through television. The relationship between film and television has always been full of paradoxes - film television "stole" viewers, but on the other hand, for decades it gave work to many filmmakers who made films for television. And after being shown in cinemas, the films were broadcast on television to often find their "second life" and millions of new viewers. With its global expansion, television needed a huge amount of content - interesting and attractive to viewers, which it could get in the film environment. That is why film producers began to cooperate with television and also calculated with a secondary evaluation of their production in television broadcasting. It often happened that only television distribution saved budgets and brought profits that could not be achieved in cinema distribution. Television has always quantitatively exceeded the number of potential viewers compared to the number of potential cinema-goers who can watch a particular film, so producers like to move their films to television distribution after being shown in cinemas. Therefore, although television originated as the primary news medium, very soon after its global expansion, it opened up a large part of its broadcasting time to film.

The main difference and television specificity was the studio multi-camera production, which enabled live production in all genres and program types. But television also tried to produce distinctive dramatic genres by its own technical means (i.e. electronic television cameras), and their specific means of expression sought to mimic film narration and visual composition. A historical breakthrough in the development of television was the invention of recording technology for television - that is, video. Although the imaging parameters of the first video recordings¹⁰ on magnetic tape (created by AMPEX in 1956) were much lower compared to film. Television magnetic recording provided low values of image resolution, black and white image and later poor quality color reproduction and limited editing options. But, two media nevertheless began to gradually converge - television did its best with its technical parameters and creative possibilities, zoom in on the movie. The technical connection between television and film was completed at a time when the technicians had mastered the design and conversion of the film image into a television signal - Telecine technology.¹¹ The first feature film broadcast on television was *The Wizard of Oz* (made in 1939). It happened on November 3, 1956 in the USA. We consider this to be a milestone in the future coexistence of film and television. In the following decades, the connection between television and film became the starting point for many creative works: the best films for television became cult works¹², but a

¹⁰ Remark by the authors: The Ampex VRX-1000 (later renamed the Mark IV) videotape recorder is introduced on April 14, 1956, at the National Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters in Chicago. This is the first practical videotape recorder and is hailed as a major technological breakthrough.; *Ampex Data Systems builds cutting-edge data management and data security solutions today, by standing on our foundation as a world leader in data recording and storage for over 75 years.* [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<https://www.ampex.com/ampex-history>>.

¹¹ *Telecine (TK)*. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<https://www.techopedia.com/definition/10903/telecine-tk>>.

¹² *Ibidem*.

¹² Remark by the authors: From the large number of such films, we will select only those that, despite being produced for television, have become world-famous: *Duel*, (1971, r. S. Spielberg), *Brian's Song* (1971, r. B. Kulik), *The Day After* (1983, r. N. Meyer), *Gia* (1998, r. M. Cristofer) etc.; *All Time Best Films Made for Television*. [online]. [2020-05-03]. Available at: <<https://www.imdb.com/list/ls000757081/>>.

number of artistically less valuable productions were also produced for television - so the two media influenced, intertwined, enriched, and competed each other. Apart from the generations of creators who developed the means of expression of television as a younger medium, the main ambition of television technologists was to bring the quality of the television image closer to the quality of the recording on the film stock. They tried to achieve a higher resolution, expand the display area of the TV, increase the color fidelity of the image on the screen and achieve the quality of the cinema screen. It can be said that television with its technical means tried to imitate the film look, ie what the audience knew from the cinema. And although this was impossible by the means and nature of the media at the time, we consider this effort to be one of the main impulses for the process that culminated in the digitization of both media.

A major step forward was the change when standard definition was replaced by high definition (HDTV).¹³ The original video cameras with video recording worked in the technical standard SD (PAL, Standard Definition, 720 x 576 pixels), but the new HD cameras already worked in a resolution of 1920 x 1080 pixels (High Definition). The quality was significantly closer to the classic film screen - especially the 16:9 display format (i.e. closer to 1.77:1; 1.85:1; 2.4:1, which were formats corresponding to the type of film shooting), but mainly by the resolution density, which increased fivefold compared to SD.¹⁴ In the 1990s, the first computer editing systems were introduced to the market, bridging the gap between film and video.¹⁵ Non-linear editing¹⁶ software (Avid, Lightworks - 1989, Final Cut Pro - 1999) enabled what was previously impossible in film: working with an image outside the original - that is, editing only a digital copy, without direct contact with the film material. Nonlinear editing has brought several benefits: the ability to create a number of versions of the cut, preserving the original negative in perfect quality, without further processing, and more. A necessary prerequisite for such procedures was the development of the so-called digital intermediate.¹⁷ They were various technical devices (again pioneered by KODAK, with Cineon technology)¹⁸, which made it

¹³ *HDTV History*. [online]. [2020-04-20]. Available at: <https://ecee.colorado.edu/~ecen4242/marko/TV_History/related%20standards/HDTV_Past.htm>.

¹⁴ *TV resolution and picture quality explained: from SD to Ultra HD, HDR and beyond*. [online]. [2020-04-20]. Available on: <<https://home.bt.com/tech-gadgets/tv/tv-resolution-and-picture-quality-terms-explained-full-hd-ultra-hd-hdr-wcg-hfr-11364289391226>>.

¹⁵ See also: KIRSNER, S.: *Inventing the Movies: Hollywood's Epic Battle Between Innovation and The Status Quo, From Thomas Edison to Steve Jobs*. Scottis Valley, California : CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2008.

¹⁶ Remark by the authors: The nonlinear video editing method is a way of random access editing, which means instant access to whatever clip you want, whenever you want it. So instead of going in a set order, you are able to work on any segment of the project at any time, in any order you want. In nonlinear video editing, the original source files are not lost or modified during editing. This is done through an edit decision list (EDL), which records the decisions of the editor and can also be interchanged with other editing tools. As such, many variations of the original source files can exit without needing to store many different copies, allowing for very flexible editing. It is also easy to change cuts and undo previous decisions simply by editing the EDL, without having to have the actual film data duplicated. Loss of video quality is also avoided due to not having to repeatedly re-encode the data when different effects are applied.; *Understanding Linear vs Non-linear Editing*. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<https://www.motionelements.com/blog/articles/understanding-linear-vs-non-linear-editing>>.

¹⁷ Remark by the authors: A digital version of a motion picture that was originally shot on film. The 35mm film is scanned and converted to digital for ease in editing or to apply special graphics effects and animation. The results are converted back to film for distribution to theaters with 35mm projectors.; *Digital Intermediate*. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<https://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia/term/digital-intermediate>>.

¹⁸ Remark by the authors: The Cineon System was one of the first computer based digital film systems, created by Kodak in the early 1990s. It was an integrated suite of components consisting a Motion picture film scanner, a film recorder and workstation hardware with software (the Cineon Digital Film Workstation) for compositing, visual effects, image restoration and color management.; *The Digital Intermediate Process*. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <http://dicomp.arri.de/digital/digital_systems/DIcompanion/ch01.html>.

possible to move visual content between electronic (i.e. tape) and classic film. The digital intermediate has been used in various processes, but in particular:

- a) Film-to-tape - in order to be able to edit offline, the shot film material was transcribed into video (actually scanned image by image), non-linear editing was performed in the video. After editing on a video carrier (omitting the technical details of using TCR and Key Code), the editing list (EDL)¹⁹ was transferred back to the analog environment – and the originally scanned negative was mechanically edited in a film lab, making a film broadcast copy. This hybrid method of editing celluloid-rolled films, which have been re-copied to celluloid and distributed classically in cinemas, was used in the 1990s and its economic argument was cost savings – it mainly saved the production of working copies (including dailies) on film raw material. However, these methods also had their artistic arguments. Increasingly powerful computers made it possible to scan 35 mm negatives to such a quality that once the image became a computer file, it was possible to adjust the color corrections not only of the entire image, but also of its cutouts, which was not possible with conventional laboratory processing. D. Bordwell states that the first such film was *Pleasantville* (1998).²⁰ The use of a digital intermediate significantly affected the work procedures of cameramen, opened up opportunities for them to finalize their work at a higher level and, of course, eliminate errors and imperfections of the originally exposed film. The special films *Pleasantville* and *O Brother where Art Thou*²¹ can be considered as milestones in the use of the digital intermediate, as their cameramen took full advantage of the stylization possibilities of the scanned film material. They were able to change the tonality, eliminate parts of the color spectrum, create a completely different atmosphere than it was during the initial shooting. However, it must be said that this type of processing was very expensive, such adjustments on one film could cost hundreds of thousands of dollars.
- b) Tape-to-Film – a technology that already accepted primary video recording – was shot with various video cameras and, after editing (and often electronic effects (SFX), the resulting video was „lit“ (exposed) to film material and the result was again a celluloid film, a 35 mm distribution copy²², otherwise the film would not reach audiences in cinemas where it was shown on classic projection equipment. In this process the motive was mostly artistic - creative reasons for the path of the digital intermediate allowed directors and cinematographers to use new techniques - especially to edit footage in the primary material that was shot on video. Thus, it was possible to use electronic or digital effects, and this stylistics introduced new means of expression into film language.

Filming on video has attracted film directors since the spread of digital video cameras (DV system) because it allowed them to shoot significantly cheaper. The fact that the reason was based on new creative principles is evidenced, for example, by the Dogme 95 movement, whose main proponents (directors T. Vinterberg and L. Von Trier) began shooting their films on

¹⁹ Remark by the authors: An edit decision list or EDL is a itemized list of video footage and associated time codes that work to either: edit a long unedited or “raw” video file into a shorter finished video piece or edit multiple videos together to create a finished video piece. The purpose of an edit decision list is when the person making the decisions for the content of a video (usually the subject matter expert/director/editor) needs to relate that information to the person (media team) who will be editing the video.; *Edit Decision List (EDL)*. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<https://onlinestudio.asu.edu/edit-decision-list>>.

²⁰ BORDWELL, D.: *Pandora's Digital Box: Films, Files, and the Future of Movies*. Madison, Wisconsin : The Irvington Way Institute Press, 2012, p. 27.

²¹ Ibidem.

²² Remark by the authors: A distribution copy is a copy of a film with the final version of the image and sound, which is made for the film's projection in cinemas. Its price in the era of classic film ranged from \$ 1,500 to \$ 2,500, depending on the length of the film. After the switch to digital distribution, the price of a DCP copy is around \$ 50.

ordinary video cameras.²³ But not only young, novice directors realized the new nature of the "video" image: Wim Wenders shot *The Buena Vista Social Club* (1999) on a video camera and was so excited about the new possibilities of the video that he declared "*Video reconstructed cinema from the ground up ... it is no longer in his past*"²⁴. Also, American independent directors in the first sequence, and after them, renowned directors, began working with video as a "film" moving image media. All the more so because in the 90's, cameras working in HD resolution were already available. The continuing penetration between television and film technology has dared creators to use digital video cameras for film projects (ie intended for cinemas). We see this as milestones in the transition to a complex (End-to-End) chain of digital production. In this sense, we understand end-to-end as the realization of a film completely shot, edited, sounded and distributed through digital processes and technologies. However, the final turning point was brought by visionary-minded creators who were attracted by technology offering the possibility of total manipulation with each individual shot, with each single prop, even by the actor, with endless possibilities of creating super-realistic compositions in a continuous sequence of successive images. It was especially the key figures in world (American) cinema who felt the opportunity to open a new chapter in film. These included the most commercially successful directors: G. Lucas, J. Cameron, R. Zemeckis - and R. Rodriguez and Mr. Jackson, who created their upcoming projects with the knowledge of the use of these new procedures.²⁵ Together with the owners of the largest distribution companies, which were ownership-linked to technology companies (SONY, Texas Instruments, Barco), they supported the Digital Cinema Initiatives in 2005 and the definitive end to the use of film raw material (celluloid) began to approach rapidly. The consortium, which aimed to carry out a comprehensive digitization of film production, published the Digital Cinema Specification, a document that formulated the technical parameters for the entire digital film chain - and this time a new way of presenting (screening) films in cinemas using digital projectors. This fundamentally changed the last part of the film production chain - film presentation - the way in which films reached the audience and how they were shown to them.

D. Bordwell says that "*distribution companies are at the core of economic power in the entire film industry, filmmakers need distributors to reach their audiences*"²⁶, the words confirm several events in the development of film technology. Many of the groundbreaking events in film technology have often been driven by strong global production companies. In the duel "celluloid vs. digital" were just mentioned celebrity directors who helped American "Majors" achieve a similar success as they did in 1953, when the booming television business threatened the audience with a colorful widescreen screen and stereo sound. At that time, behind the return of American spectators to cinemas, there was also a well-thought-out tactic of producers with the filming of new technical means. The decisive phase of digitization enabling end-to-end digital film production was a global change that took place between 2005 and 2013. We will very briefly state that in 2009 there were about 16,000 cinemas in the world digital, in 2010 – after *Avatar* – it there were already 36,000 and 2013 was the year of the triumph of digital cinema, the culmination of a far-reaching technological revolution that marked the beginning

²³ *In general to Dogme95*. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<http://www.dogme95.dk/faq>>.

²⁴ THOMPSONOVÁ, K., BORDWELL, D.: *Dějiny filmu, přehled světové kinematografie*. Prague : Akademie múzických umění a Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 2007, p. 760.

²⁵ BORDWELL, D.: *Pandora's Digital Box: Films, Files, and the Future of Movies*. Madison, Wisconsin : The Irvington Way Institute Press, 2012, p. 66.

²⁶ BORDWELL, D., THOMPSON, K., SMITH, J.: *Film Art: An Introduction*. 11th Edition. New York : McGraw-Hill Education, 2017, p. 35.

of the 21st century.²⁷ Since then, the finished film in its digital form reaches the viewer on a data carrier, usually on an encoded hard disk, stored in the DCP (Digital Cinema Package²⁸) format, which is actually several files that contain image, sound, subtitles and other service files. Projection is carried out via digital projectors, whose technology is constantly being improved. Digital film in DCP format is most often stored in the form of data on a server in the projection room and from there it can be projected even at once in several cinemas, digital key allows you to control the number of film screenings, while protecting content from misuse, copying or illegal distribution. The drivers of this technological revolution in distribution were mainly the interests of producers: protection of intellectual property – understand anti-piracy measures, then the possibility to make the global deployment of the most expensive productions much cheaper (film premiere in one day on all continents) and unified global marketing. Interestingly, several of the named innovators support the DCI initiative have set their demand for digitizing cinemas ultimately, with their subsequent projects being shot in 3D, which need digital projectors in cinemas - and preferably as soon as possible, across the United States. As the conditions for change throughout the whole chain were prepared in parallel by technology companies with their technical equipment and producers with their films, the change took place over several years - at least in the USA. All blockbusters shot between 2005 - 2010 were filmed digitally, even stereoscopically, i.e. in 3D. Among them was J. Cameron's *Avatar* – as Hollywood's most financially successful project - with a profit of \$ 2.8 billion.²⁹ Cameron was able to declare the following even before the film was shot: "*Nowadays we have a way to pull people off big TV screens and put them in a cinema seat*"³⁰. The success of his film confirmed this, and what's more, digital technology offered the opportunity to build completely new business opportunities. 3D shooting and presentation technology has brought new viewers, slightly more expensive tickets, as well as the necessary change to a complete digital chain - on a global scale.

The term "digital film" may seem contradictory, but it has been widely understood. Just as audiobooks and e-books were still called books, digital films were considered films, although their origin often had nothing to do with the celluloid exposed in the camera. Therefore, the term "digital recording" is often used instead of "digital filming". But most of those who shoot digitally are called "filmmakers"³¹. However, as a film theorist, J. Belton points out, "*Unlike the introduction of sound, color, and widescreen, the introduction of digital technology has been largely imperceptible to the average viewer*"³². Without professional or technical knowledge, audiences may not necessarily perceive whether what they are watching has been digitally filmed, or digitally edited or distributed. For this reason, and perhaps in response to some of the revolutionary statements on the effects of digital technology in the film, Belton called this a "false revolution".³³ Another theorist, P. Lunenfeld, argues that a computer-generated medium is characterized by one property: "*Unfinishedness - it defines the aesthetics*

²⁷ GALBIATI, A.: *Cinema in the Time of Workflow. The Digital Revolution and Film Criticism Ancien Régime*. [online]. [2020-05-05]. Available at: <<http://digicult.it/news/cinema-in-the-time-of-workflow-the-digital-revolution-and-film-criticisms-ancien-regime/>>.

²⁸ *What is a Digital Cinema Package or DCP format?*. [online]. [2020-05-05]. Available at: <<https://j2kconversion.com/dcp-format/>>.

²⁹ HUTCHINSON, S.: *11 Movies That Shaped the Digital Revolution*. [online]. [2020-01-05]. Available at <<https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/55429/11-movies-shaped-digital-revolution>>.

³⁰ BORDWELL, D.: *Pandora's Digital Box: Films, Files, and the Future of Movies*. Madison, Wisconsin : The Irvington Way Institute Press, 2012, p. 68.

³¹ BORDWELL, D., THOMPSON, K., SMITH, J.: *Film Art: An Introduction*. 11th Edition. New York : McGraw-Hill Education, 2017, p. 13.

³² See also: BELTON, J.: Digital Cinema: A False Revolution. In *JSTOR*, 2002, Vol. 100, No. 2, p. 98-114. [online]. [2020-05-05]. Available at: <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/779094?seq=1>>.

³³ Ibidem.

of digital media"³⁴. The very filming on digital cameras and image processing in digital formats bring the most fundamental discourse among theorists and creators. This discourse began in the mid-1990s. The dilemmas of the new technology were named by B. Fisher, a journalist, and editor of *American Cinematographer*: "*Digital technology can prove to be the cameraman's most beautiful dream or his worst nightmare.*"³⁵ Fisher was one of the first to use a combination of the two terms. In 1993, digital photography was still a new thing and digital cameras were just a fantasy for engineers. Filming (on film stock) was the main workflow for cinema production and for production of prime-time films for television.³⁶ So-called workflow has become a deciding and defining attribute for every production: "*Digital film has become nonmaterial, its photochemical materiality has disappeared forever, and consequently all post-production processes have the highest interpolation potential imaginable just a few years ago*"³⁷. The advent of the digital age means the end of "materiality", the creation of images in terms of filming and post-production, has become editable at all times and in all aspects. Digital film is therefore very different from its analog/photographic ancestor, as it is the result of a "philosophically" different workflow. An important step in the gradual improvement of digital shooting techniques was the ability to turn a "photographic" image into a "plastic" object that can be shaped into any form. As one of the most famous theorists of the digital film L. Manovich claims: "*Digital technology has made the film only a subset of animation*"³⁸. One of the main motives for the development of digital technology, and especially digital image composition, were the needs of directors and producers in the implementation of spectacular themes (especially, but not only from the sci-fi genre). Creating digitally composed images represents a whole new step in the history of visual simulation, as it allows the creation of moving super-realistic images from non-existing worlds. Computer-generated actors move in a real country, or, conversely, real actors act and live in a completely "synthetic" environment.³⁹ Besides, these compositions contain a full-fledged depiction of space, camera movements, cuts to action from different angles, thus giving the viewer a guarantee of persuasiveness and credibility. However, the new capabilities of creating and using a virtual world in motion and watching live-action in this virtual space partially refute the argument of budgetary efficiency. For example, a 40-second shot in which the camera flies over the Titanic, populated by hundreds of characters, generated in a digital environment, took many months of production and cost more than a million dollars.⁴⁰

D. Fincher's film "The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo", 2011 can serve as an example of the already common use of new techniques. The film was shot on digital cameras with a resolution of 4.5K, resp. 5K, a total of 483 hours of raw material was recorded, of which 443 hours were used. If we converted it into a celluloid strip, it would be almost 800,000 meters of film, and with final film footage of 158 minutes, the length of the "raw" material was 168 times greater than the final footage. These numbers are staggering compared to the options that were standard

³⁴ LUNENFELD, P.: Unfinished Business. In LUNENFELD, P. (ed.): *The Digital Dialectic: New Essays on New Media*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, London.: The MIT Press, 1999, p. 7.

³⁵ FISHER, B.: Digital Cinematography: A Phrase of the Future? In *American Cinematographer*, 2003, Vol. 6, No. 4, p. 50.

³⁶ Ibidem.

³⁷ GALBIATI, A.: *Cinema in the Time of Workflow. The Digital Revolution and Film Criticism Ancien Régime*. [online]. [2020-05-05]. Available at: <<http://digicult.it/news/cinema-in-the-time-of-workflow-the-digital-revolution-and-film-criticisms-ancien-regime/>>.

³⁸ MANOVICH, L.: *What Is Digital Cinema?*. [online]. [2020-05-05]. Available at: <http://manovich.net/content/04-projects/009-what-is-digital-cinema/07_article_1995.pdf>.

³⁹ MANOVICH, L.: *The Language of New Media*. Cambridge, Massachusetts : The MIT Press, 2002, p. 143.

⁴⁰ For more information, see: PARISI, P.: Lunch on the Deck on the Titanic. In *Wired*, 1998, Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 148-159.

a few years ago – comparable productions worked with ten times less film raw material. Additional data on the digital material of this production also confirms the completely new possibilities used by the director: the high resolution of each individual image allowed him to adjust the composition of the image and other parameters of the image. Such a workflow has a fundamental impact on the aesthetics of the means of expression - each shot has been corrected to adapt to the visual rhythm and directing concept. Since each individual frame was up to 45 MB and a total of frames was almost 250,000, the main problem was the transfer of huge volumes of digital data at a given time. Although the speed of computers and storage is constantly increasing, the demands on hardware and work with digital data are already more expensive than comparable processing with classic film raw material.⁴¹ There are many details hidden in the data on the amount of digital material, which document the differences in the workflow when using classic film and digital film. E.g. when filming *Zodiac*, actor Robert Downey J. protested against digital cameras: *"I stand in front of the camera 14 hours a day, I don't have time to bounce into my trailer or go to the toilet, I'm filming nonstop!"*⁴². The reason is that digital cameras don't require a change of film cassettes, the recording is made on HDD and can go on almost continuously. Apart from the fact that the actors have no unintentional pauses caused by change the cassettes, this also brings a lot of recorded ballast material - because there is no reason to save the stock - and thus creates huge volumes of data that will burden post-production. Director E. Wright explained the feelings of many directors when he said: *"I like the discipline of making a film - I like to 'hear money burning' in the camera when the raw material runs through it. It makes me more responsible"*⁴³. Yes, shooting on film requires more preparation, discipline, balance, and patience, which the director must find in himself for the result of his work to be convincing. Director J. J. Abrams, who shot one episode of *Star Wars* saga, put it this way: *"When you look at something shot on a film, you just know it's reality - you just can't deny it"*⁴⁴. Although these data on the possibilities and growing quality of digital imaging in the last two decades have been overwhelming, some renowned professionals have long shown big sentiment towards "classic" film material. Around 2010, signs of an irreversible collapse of production onto film appeared, so with the continuing digitization, companies producing film material, cameras, and film laboratories became more and more troubled. Technicolor closed its Los Angeles laboratories in July 2011, Panasonic, Aaton and Arri announced the end of film camera production in October 2011, in November 2011 Twentieth Century Fox announced that it would stop producing 35 mm copies for cinemas, in January 2012 Kodak requested for protection against bankruptcy and in March 2013 Fuji stopped the sale of both negative and positive raw material - 35 mm film.⁴⁵

⁴¹ GALBIATI, A.: *Cinema in the Time of Workflow. The Digital Revolution and Film Criticism Ancien Régime*. [online]. [2020-05-05]. Available at: <<http://digicult.it/news/cinema-in-the-time-of-workflow-the-digital-revolution-and-film-criticisms-ancien-regime/>>.

⁴² OWEN, J.: *Film is finished – this could be its last Oscars*. [online]. [2020-05-10]. Available at: <<https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/film-is-finished-this-could-be-its-last-oscars-8508257.html>>.

⁴³ SWART, S., GIARDINA, C.: *Film Fighters, All in One Frame: J.J. Abrams, Judd Apatow, Benett Miller, Christopher Nolan and Edgar Wright*. [online]. [2020-05-10]. Available at: <<https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/film-fighters-all-one-frame-758431>>.

⁴⁴ Ibidem.

⁴⁵ BORDWELL, D.: *Pandora's Digital Box: Films, Files, and the Future of Movies*. Madison, Wisconsin : The Irvington Way Institute Press, 2012, p. 32.

Conclusion

It would seem that in the environment of film production, digitization has manifested itself mainly in the complete extinction of 35 mm film as an information carrier. But after a film stock, analog medium offering cinema experience for decades, something has been left behind. Something, that has become the "holy grail" of filmmakers, producers, and technologists in the digital film era, and it's called the "film look." That is the appearance, the look, the vibrant, slightly flickering sequence of images, in which the tangible quality of the "living grain" scattered unrepeatably in every single frame of the camera was shown. The digitally produced film displays every single image with high fidelity, high sharpness of details, currently also with a comparable value of dynamic contrast, and the typical film grain is replaced by digital noise. Although the perception of such an image can be individual, T. Corrigan describes it as "more real than real"⁴⁶ and similarly L. Manovich describes digitally captured images as too perfect and too real - he describes them as hyperreal⁴⁷. Therefore, all the technological processes by which the cinematic look of a digital image is achieved are considered to be a certain way of destroying a high-quality digital recording, which will bring the image to a more natural representation of the film material.

The film discourse on the film look of the digital image can be illustrated by the actions of the best film directors of today: J. Cameron and G. Lucas. They are so obsessed with digital technologies that allow them the most perfect special effects that they co-invested in complete computer-generated images (CGI) and left 35 mm film behind forever. On the contrary, Q. Tarantino and Ch. Nolan constantly adhere to the traditional celluloid, which is becoming an equivalent of the renaissance of vinyl recordings in the world of music.⁴⁸ The article was created in 2013 - and as then and today, when voting on the winners of the Academy Awards (Oscars) films recorded traditionally face-off digital films. In 2014, Ch. Nolan said: "*The film is tremendous! I would say - film is oak, digital is plywood. You should not swap materials. Both are useful, but for different things - you need to know what you're working with*"⁴⁹. Even at the end of 2014, a group of top film directors (Ch. Nolan, S. Spielberg, M. Scorsese) decided to gather like-minded filmmakers and approached studio heads to seek a sustainable future for film material. Director J. J. Abrams (who, by the way, shot Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens on the film stock) said: "*Film is not just a discovery that should continue - it is an aesthetically and materially important thing*"⁵⁰. And Ch. Nolan prefers the film's "unrivaled resolution" and its ability to "reproduce color as seen by the eye"⁵¹. Over time, it can be said that their efforts to save the film in its original form were not in vain. Kodak, the surviving supplier of film raw material, has resumed production of film raw material despite the collapse, and sales have been growing in recent years. What's more, the author of the article entitled "The film is over, these may be its last Oscars"⁵², journalist J. Owen, who wrote this pathetic

⁴⁶ CORRIGAN, T.: *Talk on Digital Cinema*. Pennsylvania : University of Pennsylvania, 2004, p. 7.

⁴⁷ MANOVICH, L.: *The Language of New Media*. Cambridge, Massachusetts : The MIT Press, 2002, p. 202.

⁴⁸ OWEN, J.: *Film is finished – this could be its last Oscars*. [online]. [2020-05-10]. Available at: <<https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/film-is-finished-this-could-be-its-last-oscars-8508257.html>>.

⁴⁹ SWART, S., GIARDINA, C.: *Film Fighters, All in One Frame: J.J. Abrams, Judd Apatow, Benett Miller, Christopher Nolan and Edgar Wright*. [online]. [2020-05-10]. Available at: <<https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/film-fighters-all-one-frame-758431>>.

⁵⁰ BAUMONT-THOMAS, B.: *Major film studios sign deal to keep Kodak rolling on*. [online]. [2020-05-10]. Available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2015/feb/05/film-studios-kodak-deal>>.

⁵¹ Ibidem.

⁵² OWEN, J.: *Film is finished – this could be its last Oscars*. [online]. [2020-05-10]. Available at: <<https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/film-is-finished-this-could-be-its-last-oscars-8508257.html>>.

prediction in February 2012, would probably be surprised if confronted with the results of this year's Oscars: half of the films nominated in the camera category were shot on classic film stock.

However, this happy end did not conclude the discourse on the film look of digital film and the search for the most faithful imitation of the real film image by digital means. Both sides remain in position: digital equipment and software manufacturers are advocating the excellence and benefits of the digital and of the image quality provided by the latest cameras with breathtaking resolution values. On the other hand, perceptive creators appreciate the subtlety, truthfulness, and naturalness of the film image. Digital technology is advancing unstoppably and is doing everything to perfectly simulate the film's perception. However, time probably works as a detriment to the film stock. There is a growing generation of filmmakers who do not have an experienced emotion from the perception of the classic film image, they have been moving in a digital environment since childhood. At the same time, improving technology is becoming more and more available and allows you to increase the volume of digital film production. Proponents of digital imaging say, '*as soon as digital looks as good as a film - and that time comes soon - so...*' In those three dots at the end of the sentence, there is a hidden threat to the ultimate end of the film on celluloid. Director D. Boyle argues that digital video is more in line with the 21st-century experience of receiving information.⁵³ On the other hand, M. Night Shyamalan, screenwriter, and director of *The Sixth Sense*, says in defense of the film: "*Digital is simply too smooth. You need to degrade the image to improve it and make it real. If you take a digital photo and I shoot it on film, it just can't compete with the humanity I create on the film stock*"⁵⁴

The views of both parties could be further argued. Undoubtedly, digital technology has provided filmmakers with several new filming tools. The very process of penetration of digital technology into film production is still ongoing. The possibilities of technology constantly exceed the imaginary limits of the possible. Each generation of creators' copes with this spiral of improving technologies in their own way, they are affected by objective social conditions, as well as by the subjective skills and abilities of the creator. Compared to the development of classical film, the length of the global transformation of the film medium has been reduced to a quarter of the time of the film's existence as a medium. In a very simplistic comparison of one century of the film on celluloid and about a quarter of a century of its digital form, the digital film era is a confirmation of the exponential knowledge that humanity is experiencing in all areas of science and technology. The medium of film is no exception and the discussion about its new forms will continue through new films, which will fight for the audience's interest and other technological innovations. Only time will tell how long the classic film carrier will still be a part of the film production, and whether it will not only become a relic, as the frescoes have become in the history of painting.

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⁵³ See also: FEAR, D.: In the Money: The Always Surprising Danny Boyle Cashes in His Chips to Direct Millions, an Intelligent Kid's Flick. In *MovieMaker*, 2005, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 84-86.

⁵⁴ For more information, see: DALY, K. M.: New Mode of Cinema: How Digital Technologies are Changing Aesthetic and Style. In *Kinephanos Journal*, 2009, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 1-26. [online]. [2020-05-02]. Available at: <<https://www.kinephanos.ca/NewMode.html>>.

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WHIPPING UP EMOTIONS BY MEDIA DURING CORONAVIRUS PANDEMICS

Zora Hudíková

ABSTRACT:

The media play an irreplaceable role in times of crisis. They form a basic and important communication space in which the recipient can obtain all important information. In a crisis situation, it is essential that the information got to the public in a timely manner and was truthful. This increases confidence in the crisis staff and its work and reduces feelings of fear and anxiety that can escalate into panic reactions. The Covid 19 coronavirus pandemic affected the whole world, spread very quickly, affected a large number of people, and the consequences were very tragic. After its discovery, the lives of all inhabitants in the European area have changed. The author of the presented study examines how the Slovak media, specifically television, informed about the coronavirus crisis in the first stage of the coronavirus crisis in Slovakia. It examines what space for information the television have created, how they changed their program, what type of extra programs they have presented. She evaluates these aspects in the context of the adequacy of the space provided with regard to the mental health of the population.

KEY WORDS:

coronavirus crisis, emotions, mass media, news, television

1 Introduction

The coronavirus pandemic surprised society in all areas. Although the potential threat has been intensively communicated since the beginning of the year (in the form of information on the scale and consequences of the pandemic in China), the perceived danger and protection gained strength until after the disease appeared in Europe in Italy. Reports of tens of thousands affected by the disease, thousands of deaths, increasing numbers of sick people per day, footage of crowded hospital rooms, intensive cares units and corridors full of beds, as well as the speed of the virus spread and the fact that there is no cure, it everything confirmed that the danger is very high and very close. From the beginning of human development, people have been built to sensitively perceive the threats. They respond to them instinctively in the initial phase and later rationally in the form of adaptation mechanisms and measures. Currently, the models of risk perception and risk situation on which crisis communication is based are defined and analysed with in detail. Communication during a crisis situation is a very sensitive matter and has a very important role and far-reaching consequences. Especially if this situation affects the whole country, even the world. It cannot be escaped; it is not known and explored and it affects the basis of human existence - human health and life. The mass media play a major role in such situations, especially television, which provides a comprehensive package of information - authentic footage, sound and text from the scene of the accident, as well as from meetings and statements of officials and experts. A form of obtaining information from TV is especially important for older audiences and audiences without Internet access. Dissemination of information via the Internet adds new qualities to communication, thanks to the sharing, speed and immediate impact impact of a large group of recipients, as well as the possibility for the general public to influence the perception of specific content through comments. Recipients in crisis situations are very sensitive to the content of the information provided; each word is analysed; its credibility is assessed; the competence of all narrators, the persuasiveness of their verbal and especially non-verbal behaviour is subconsciously perceived. The frequency of information provided is also very important. Lack of information creates space for the emergence and spread of gossip. However, excessive repetition of information based on negative and unclear solutions can also have a negative impact on recipients. In the presented study, the author focuses on ways of informing in a crisis situation about the global coronavirus

pandemic through the broadcasting of Slovak audiovisual media. It outlines the potential factors of perception of danger and crisis situations by recipients; what role the mass media play in it; what all this can cause to the human psyche and what effects it can have on the behaviour of recipients. The author complements her views with the results of surveys obtained during this period.

2 Crisis Situation and Perception of Danger

Mass Media communication fulfils several important functions, nowadays especially information, education and relaxation¹. The mass media bring daily basic information about current events at home and abroad, discourses on various socially and globally relevant topics, open various problems, seek and outline solutions, shape attitudes and moods in society, dictate what IN and OUT are². According to G. Burton and J. Jiráček, the media don't have competition as a source of information and entertainment. They emphasize that a characteristic feature of this communication is the repetition of information or types of formats, which results in a tendency for recipients to trust these repetitive messages and take them for granted.³ Complete information is very important in order for the recipients to form a sufficient picture of the presented event. If people do not have enough information, rumours will spread very quickly. According to S. Gálik "the news media offer an enormous amount of information of varying quality –starting with verified news and ending with mistakes and fake"⁴. S. Gáliková Tolnaiová states in this regard that "a professional journalist is obliged to inform truthfully, objectively, independently, without any bias and in a balanced manner"⁵. According to J. N. Kapferer, the rumour is the mobilized attention of a given social group. The group is trying to reconstruct the mosaic of fragmentary information that came to them. The more information is missing, the more the interpretation will be affected by the group's subconsciousness. Imagination also plays a big role.⁶ From a journalistic as well as a psychological point of view, the recipients pay particular attention to information that is of pragmatic significance to them. And the increased interest is mainly in those events that can bring sudden and significant changes in their lives or the life of society. When perceiving information, the answer to the basic question is important - does this information contain any positive or negative consequences for the recipient? The information is very closely monitored especially during crisis situations. According to Š. Vymětal, a crisis situation can be defined as a type of emergency, as a result of which a state of danger, a state of emergency, a state of threat or a state of war is declared. This situation threatens important values, interests and property of the state and its citizens. Other characteristic is that the imminent danger cannot be averted and the damage caused cannot be remedied by normal activities. In a crisis situation, crisis communication is very essential, especially risk communication. Both potential and real threats

¹ See also: ČÁBYOVÁ, E.: Špecifika marketingu a marketingovej komunikácie elektronických médií na Slovensku. In *Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis : Studia Linguistica VII*, 2012, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 86-93.

² For more information, see: PRAVDOVÁ, H.: Fenomén zábavy a úloha stereotypov v produkcii a recepcii mediálnej kultúry In *Communication Today*, 2011, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 7-24.; KVETANOVÁ, Z., RADOŠINSKÁ, J., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: To Thrive Means to Entertain: The Nature of Today's Media Industries. In *Communication Today*, 2020, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 4-21.

³ BURTON, G., JIRÁK, J.: *Úvod do studia médií*. Brno : Barrister&Principal, 2003, p. 27-30.

⁴ GÁLIK, S.: On ontological definition of media threat and the role of media. In *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2019, Vol. 15, No. 1, p. 1-2.

⁵ GÁLIKOVÁ TOLNAIOVÁ, S.: Media and Truth in the perspective of the practice and life form of the modern "Homo Medialis". In *Communication Today*, 2019, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 7.

⁶ KAPFERER, J. N.: *Fáma, nejstarší médium světa*. Prague : Vydavatelství a nakladatelství Práce, 1992, p. 28.

can affect the emotions and behaviour of individuals and groups and disrupt the functioning of society. The degree of threat is measured by the size of the possible damage and the time distance, expressed by the probability of risk.⁷

In times of crisis, the company is managed by emergency management authorities, which provide analysis and evaluation of potential threats and at the same time plan, organize, ensure the implementation and control of measures related to the elimination of impacts and resolution of the crisis situation. In a crisis situation, three aspects are evaluated - the course of the current crisis, the way the authorities work with the crisis and how they communicate it (and everything related to it) and the image of the crisis created in society as a result of historical or/and personal experiences with a similar or current crisis. Immediate response and communication, especially of PR staff, is key in resolving crisis situations. According to D. Hejlová, crisis communication is a specific area of PR, which is very complex. She adds that a very important condition is the choice of an adequate strategic approach and appropriate communication tools.⁸ Š. Vymětal defines crisis communication as the exchange of information that occurs between responsible authorities, organizations, media, individuals, groups before, during and after emergencies. Each actor has their own perception of whether the crisis exists at all, its extent, nature and impact on the individual and society.⁹ V. T. Míka adds that in crisis situations, a large part of the public usually feels a threat. Their activities, health, personal safety as well as property are endangered. The crisis communication system must take these facts into account. He, therefore, emphasizes the need to have a communication network in place in such a case. This would make possible:

- a) effective communication and coordination of all components (cooperating entities) involved in resolving the crisis,
- b) factual and credible informing of the public on the preparedness to solve the crisis, on the course of its resolution, and the measures taken to eliminate it, or to eliminate the consequences and restore the functioning of the system.¹⁰

The crisis is fuelling curiosity and interest. The perception and interpretation of risk is conditioned by the opportunity to observe the ongoing crisis, by the assessment of the level of threat, by the availability of information, by the way it is presented and by the individual's own experience with the risk. According to J. Kádárová, crisis communication is a tool of crisis management. Its main mission is to present complete, correct, reliable and convincing information in the right place, at the right time.¹¹ V. T. Míka formulates that communication aimed at informing about the course of resolving a crisis situation is important mainly because it satisfies the needs of people who expect timely, accurate and comprehensible information. Such information contributes to their physical and mental comfort and to their readiness to cope with the course of crisis situations and their consequences.¹² V. Lednický emphasizes that, while adhering to specific principles, effective communication with the public can make a

⁷ VYMĚTAL, Š.: *Krizova komunikace a komunikace rizika*. Prague :Grada Publishing, a.s., 2009, p. 13-25.

⁸ HEJLOVÁ, D.: *Public relations*. Prague : Grada Publishing, a. s., 2015, p. 146-148.

⁹ VYMĚTAL, Š.: *Krizova komunikace a komunikace rizika*. Prague :Grada Publishing, a.s., 2009, p. 11.

¹⁰ MÍKA, V. T.: Špecifiká krízovej komunikácie s verejnosťou. In LOVEČEK, T. (ed.): *Zborník z medzinárodnej vedeckej konferencie „Riešenie krízových situácií v špecifickom prostredí“*. Žilina : FŠI ŽU, 2004, p. 429-430.

¹¹ KÁDAROVÁ, J.: Komunikácia podniku v kríze. In *The 17th International Scientific Conference Trends and Innovative Approaches in Business Processes "2014"*. Košice : TU in Košice, 2014, p. 1-6. [online]. [2020-05-02]. Available at: https://www.sjf.tuke.sk/umpadi/taipvpp/2014/index.files/journal/58_Kadarova_Komunikacia%20podniku%20v%20krize.pdf.

¹² MÍKA, V. T.: Špecifiká krízovej komunikácie s verejnosťou. In LOVEČEK, T. (ed.): *Zborník z medzinárodnej vedeckej konferencie „Riešenie krízových situácií v špecifickom prostredí“*. Žilina : FŠI ŽU, 2004, p. 429-430.

significant contribution to strengthening trust in the organization or to crisis management measures¹³. Crisis communication with the public also has a strong ethical subtext. It is about the ability to perceive crisis phenomena and their consequences in connection with social responsibility for their solution and for the determination to inform the public truthfully about it. According to L. Németh, in difficult situations where there is no ideal solution to a problem, there may be a conflict between public opinion and the conscience of the manager or the person who informs about the problem¹⁴. The resulting communication also depends on his personal maturity, character and inner strength to cope the complexity of the situation. J. Horáček also conditions the success of the crisis communication strategy by being based on the principles of openness, credibility, expertise and acceptance of other opinions and ideas. He supports it this by saying that:¹⁵

- public opinions on a possible crisis situation are formed in the first hours,
- people are always more sensitive to negative news,
- the disclosure of previously concealed information has a much more negative impact,
- the media tend to listen to critics, environmental movements or people with various disabilities, so arrogance is inappropriate in such a situation, but it is necessary to argue factually, professionally, clearly and clarify the intentions to deal with the crisis situation, as well as strengthen credibility in every way.

For a successful journey of true information to the target group, it is necessary to choose the right information channel. The mass media play an integral part role in this. J. Mihok emphasizes that the perception of risk depends on the perceived level of danger, and this assessment is derived from the likelihood of injury, loss, or even death. The second factor is the level of concern associated with the moral and emotional subtext of crisis reports.¹⁶ A person's natural reaction is that in tense situations one tends to react emotionally, which can significantly affect the level of risk perception. According to the US Handbook on Crisis Communication Fundamentals, published by the Navy Environmental Health Centre, people perceive risk as less acceptable to them if they got into the situation involuntarily, if the disaster was caused by man, if major tragedy or event has tragic consequences, even if these come later. It is perceived less acceptable especially – if children have been affected by the tragedy. The level of risk acceptability also reduces if it is not possible to have control over the course of the tragic situation or if it is an elemental natural process and people have not yet experienced it, i.e. it is an unknown phenomenon. Another negative factor is suspicious activities behind closed doors. The feeling of danger is increased if people perceive the source which informs about the disaster as untrustworthy, and people do not gain any benefits in compensating for the consequences.¹⁷ R. De Vries compiled a risk perception model. It is based on the idea that observability of the phenomenon, i.e. certain transparency and openness, and awareness of the nature of the threat are important for the perception and assessment of danger.¹⁸

¹³ See also: LEDNICKÝ, V.: Krizová komunikace a její problémy. In BENIAČ, M. (ed.): *Zborník z medzinárodnej vedeckej konferencie „Riešenie krízových situácií v špecifickom prostredí“*. Žilina : FŠI ŽU, 2002, p. 265-270.

¹⁴ For more information, see: NÉMETH, L.: Mravné kvality ľudí a riešenie krízových situácií. In BENIAČ, M. (ed.): *Zborník z medzinárodnej vedeckej konferencie „Riešenie krízových situácií v špecifickom prostredí“*. Žilina : FŠI ŽU, 2003, p. 354-358.

¹⁵ See also: HORÁČEK, J.: Psychická pripravenosť krízového manažéra ako súčasť jeho kvalifikácie. In BENIAČ, M. (ed.): *Zborník z medzinárodnej vedeckej konferencie „Riešenie krízových situácií v špecifickom prostredí“*. Žilina : FŠI ŽU, 2001, p. 155.

¹⁶ MIHOK, J.: Modely krízovej komunikácie. In *The 16th International Scientific Conference Trends and Innovative Approaches in Business Processes “2013”*. Košice : TU in Košice, 2013, p. 1-7. [online]. [2020-05-02]. Available at: <https://www.sjf.tuke.sk/umpadi/taipvpp/2013/journal/2_Jozef_Mihok_MODELKY.pdf>.

¹⁷ VYMĚTAL, Š.: *Krizová komunikace*. Prague : Grada Publishing, 2009, p. 51-52.

¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 51; 53.

Table 1: De Vries's Risk perception model

	Lower level risk perception	Higher degree risk perception
Observability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • observable • known protection • chronic effect • known (old) type of risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not observable • unknown protection • chronic effects • a new type of risk • risk unknown in science
Threat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • controllable • non-terrifying • It is not globally catastrophic • The consequences are not fatal • is not unfair • individual • low risk for future generations • easily reducible • with decreasing danger • voluntary • non-invasive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unmanageable • terrifying • globally catastrophic • with fatal consequences • is not fair • mass • with high risk for future generations • is not easily reducible • with increasing danger • involuntary • invasive

Source: VYMĚTAL, Š.: *Krizová komunikace*. Prague : Grada Publishing, 2009, p. 53.

If we talk about the coronavirus pandemic, when evaluating the individual characteristics, it can be stated that up to 14 out of 16 possible factors were valid for the pandemic situation and therefore it was perceived as a high risk not only by the general public but also by governments of all countries. Emotions are an important part of a person's life, they "colour" the experience during various situations. A person is sometimes aware of them and sometimes not. However, emotions presented on a television screen or communicated topics also evoke stimuli for emotional experiences in a person. Emotions are sometimes called feelings or emotions. Each emotion consists of several components: feeling (experiencing), manifestations of behaviour, spontaneous expression, especially facial and physiological manifestations (eg redness, increased pressure, etc.). The word emotion is a broader concept than feeling or emotion. Feeling can be understood as an experiential, psychic component of emotion. Emotion expresses a long-term emotional relationship with another person, e.g. love or hate relationship. M. Czako states that, in general, it is possible to consider these notions of emotions and feelings as synonyms. Most domestic and foreign authors use the term emotion. However, when it comes to precisely defining the different types of this phenomenon, it is right to use both terms.¹⁹ As already mentioned, experiencing emotions affects a person's perception, cognition and behaviour. They also have an important adaptive and motivational function; they play a significant role especially in childhood and adolescence; the cognitive and social development of the individual depends on them. The emotional expression reflects the current state of emotion and arouses the reactions of other people. Cognition, behavior and interactions influence always different emotions in specific way.

According to P. Říčan, "every action, perception, imagination and thinking more or less significantly regulates the feelings that accompany psychic phenomena²⁰". P. Cakirpaloglu defines emotions as "a state of increased activity of the organism, which is manifested by

¹⁹ CZAKO, M., SEEMANOVÁ, M., BRATSKÁ, M.: *Emócie*. Bratislava : Slovenské pedagogické nakladateľstvo, 1982, p. 16-17.

²⁰ ŘÍČAN, P.: *Psychologie*. Prague : Portál, s. r. o., 2009, p. 103.

specific feelings (pleasantness - discomfort), physiological changes and corresponding behavior (body posture, gestures, facial expressions)"²¹. Emotions have different forms and intensities, they differentiate power, stability, time course, ambivalence, spontaneity, topicality, etc. They are evoked by various stimuli and situations and their relevance and feeling are individual. The basic feature is that "it is a subjective feeling of the relationship to something and is always accompanied by several external and internal changes in the organism"²². Some of the physiological reactions are visible (eg redness, paleness, shaking of the chin), other manifestations of physiological reactions are inaccessible (e. g., changes in blood levels, high or low pressure). Behaviors behavior is the best observable manifestation. However, for example they can be registered only by other actors in the situation, a person does not have to perceive them. If he or she is aware of them directly in the given situation, they can even regulate some of them. There are people who know their emotions and very well, and can also regulate them well (e. g. poker players, various manipulators). There are also individuals in society who have significantly reduced feeling of emotions. These people do not experience them and no manifestations of emotions can be observed (e. g., various mentally ill people). It should be emphasized that emotions have a very important evaluative, communicative and adaptive importance. Z. Milivojević claims that "emotions represent the subject's reaction to a stimulus that he considers important and that mobilizes him viscerally, motorically, motivationally and mentally to an adaptive response"²³. The state of adaptation in turn signals the achievement of a balance between the inner and outer state. According to E. Hradiska, "the subject of emotions can be various contents, closely connected with the needs, efforts and interests of man"²⁴. Adaptation are accompanied by feelings of pleasure, while failure causes negative feelings and frustration. Thus, emotions arise as a result of human activity, including mental. At the same time, however, they also influence the course of this activity, its organization and dynamics, as well as perceptual processes, information processing, memory or the level and result of cognition. Very often, the classification of emotions into positive and negative emotions is used. Decisive for inclusion in a positive or negative emotion is how it satisfies or does not satisfy the individual's current need. The positive ones include joy, love, contentment; negative emotions are sadness, hatred, fear and are associated with the dissatisfaction of need. Different emotions have different effects on the activity performed or planned. They can have an activating effect (sthenic effect) or a attenuating effect (asthenic effect). However, the reaction is individual; it depends on the personality of the individual, his or her experience and the current mental state. R. Descartes defined six basic passions (emotions) – joy, sadness, desire, astonishment, love and hate, from which he derived another 40 species. I. Kant, in turn, introduced a distinction between feelings, affect, and passion. W. Wundt brought a distinction between the opposite qualities of emotions. The dimensions of emotions: pleasant - unpleasant, excitement - calm, tension - relaxation allowed him to differentiate emotional states. He perceived that the quality of pleasant - unpleasant is in close relation to the intensity of irritation, excitement - mitigation is in close relation to quality of irritation and the quality of tension - relaxation was related to the time span of irritation.²⁵

The most common human responses to risk and crisis are fear and anxiety, which can escalate into panic reactions. This can result in various inappropriate reaction and worsening of both

²¹ CAKIRPALOGLU, P.: *Úvod do psychologie osobnosti*. Prague : Grada Publishing, a. s., 2012, p. 204.

²² CZAKO, M., SEEMANOVÁ, M., BRATSKÁ, M.: *Emócie*. Bratislava : Slovenské pedagogické nakladateľstvo, 1982, p. 17.

²³ CAKIRPALOGLU, P.: *Úvod do psychologie osobnosti*. Prague : Grada Publishing, a. s., 2012, p. 204.

²⁴ HRADISKÁ, E., BREČKA, S., VYBÍRAL, Z.: *Psychológia médií*. Bratislava : Eurokódex, s. r. o. 2009, p. 315.

²⁵ CZAKO, M., SEEMANOVÁ, M., BRATSKÁ, M.: *Emócie*. Bratislava : Slovenské pedagogické nakladateľstvo, 1982, p. 22-26.

physical and mental condition. The perception of the information provided in a given situation tends to be highly selective and can be distorted. In this case, the advantage is the audiovisual format, which can convey authentic images, thus increasing the persuasiveness and credibility of the presented content. Psychologists point to a number of feels, behavioural and physiological aspects of these two emotions, which are common. For this reason, the terms fear and anxiety are not always so strictly distinguished. These are two highly specific emotional states. Both are unpleasant and associated with a near or more distant future in which the individual expects a threat. They are often accompanied by unpleasant physical changes (eg difficulty breathing, tightness in the chest and throat, tremors and weakness in the muscles, especially in the lower limbs) and visible impairment of the activity. On the other hand, other theorists believe that fear and anxiety are two different qualities - fear is a response to the current threat and anxiety is a response to the threat expected. We are inclined to such a definition of emotions of fear and anxiety. S. Freud emphasized that in fear (objective anxiety) it is subjectively easier to find the cause of feeling than in anxiety (neurotic anxiety). However, frequent experiencing of fear leads to a predisposition to anxiety.²⁶ And consequently, anxiety makes a person more sensitive to experiencing fear in ordinary situations. If we talk about the coronary crisis and its presentation in the Slovak media, both emotions were stimulated by the broadcast information. While media broadcasted information on the incidence of the disease in China, reports could only increase anxiety in more sensitive individuals. Although the reports were very negative (rapid increase in infections, high number of deaths), the incidence in China provided hope that the danger would not be transmitted to Europe, as was the case with other serious diseases (e. g. Ebola, etc.). At the end of January, the situation changed. The first disease appeared in Italy and the disease began to spread very quickly throughout Europe. More people began to perceive fear more intensely, and to pay more attention to the reporting and action taken by our government and the governments of the surrounding states. Fear is defined as the subjective experience of extreme anxiety, the desire to escape, or as a stimulus for activity (attack) aimed at eliminating the current threat, which manifested by clear signals. It exists directly during occurrence and waiting for a dangerous, harmful or threatening stimulus. At that time, people tend to increase social contacts as they want to share common feelings. Fear is accompanied by a number of reactions in the sympathetic nervous system. At the same time, it is an important motivator and source of constructive energy, it helps a person to orientate quickly in an ever-changing environment. It is a natural and useful emotion. Coping with feelings of fear is an indicator of confidence in one's own ability to succeed and avoid its unpleasant consequences. S. Rachman (1990) emphasizes that there are three ways in which one can acquire a feeling of fear: classical conditioning (stimulus – reaction), learning by modelling (if one sees someone screaming from fear and running away, he himself acquires a feeling of fear) and receiving / not receiving information about fear-inducing objects or phenomena²⁷.

These mechanisms are very important in terms of assessing the effects of the media on recipients. During the coronavirus crisis, the second and third mechanisms in particular acted very strongly. According to D. Meichenbaum and A. T. Beck individual expectations are important in developing fear and learning to avoid fear. According to them, incorrect assessment of the situation - on the one hand, overestimation of the probability of occurrence of a threatening event and its importance, on the other hand underestimation of one's own possibilities to manage it, as well as social support - lead to inadequate fears²⁸. The likelihood

²⁶ CZAKO, M., SEEMANOVÁ, M., BRATSKÁ, M.: *Emócie*. Bratislava : Slovenské pedagogické nakladateľstvo, 1982, p. 22-26.

²⁷ Ibidem.

²⁸ Ibidem.

of an occurrence of a threatening event is overestimated if there is a lack of sufficient, true and timely information. As we have already mentioned, this creates space for the emergence of rumours and their unlimited spread. The mass media play an important role in this. A. Bandura argues that people become afraid only when they expect the terrible consequences of the situation²⁹. This was confirmed by a variety of evidence during the coronavirus pandemic (rapid spread, high death toll, serious manifestations, affliction of at-risk old people, lack of medicine or prevention). The repertoire of defenses against fear is acquired by the individual on the basis of past experience (self-efficacy) or surrogate learning, e.g., observing others, using additional information such as e.g. verbal instructions about which strategy is most advantageous. It is true that people are much more prone to experience fear when they are alone. On the other hand, in the group there is a so-called emotional infection with fear. Fear as an innate emotion is universal across cultures. Nevertheless, cultural influences shape fear management behavior, even in situations where fear is out of control. Culture thus creates a special system of models and ways of learning that influence how fear is treated in a given culture.

Anxiety arises as a permanent feeling of danger, but a person is not able to say exactly what specifically threatens him or her. There are no signals that would make it possible to predict a threat event, but the imagination plays an important role. People tend to hide one's neurotic feelings and interpretations, trying less to share them. We recognize two types of anxiety - anxiety as a condition (this is the current level of fear, or anxiety of a particular person in a particular situation - it could arise for example during the coronacrisis) and anxiety as a personality trait (for each person there exists a certain stable level of anxiety for different situations; these people's perception of this crisis is worse; their emotional experiences will be more intense and their behavior more unpredictable). Subjective uncertainty resulting from anxiety leads to uncertainty in action and may ultimately lead to an inability to act in a situation of potential threat. During a crisis situation, anxiety can also be caused by an excessive amount of information about it and the excessive frequency of their recurrence. This can evoke negative feelings and increase the feeling of anxiety even for people who can otherwise manage their own feelings of fear. As the level of emotions increases, there are also changes in cognitive processes, especially in the selection of perceived information, its evaluation and interpretation. And if such negative information is listened to for a long time by people who are anxious (they have it as a personality trait), their health may deteriorate and a mental illness may break out. A strong degree of fear can result in panic, a serious reactive form. After the panic reaction subsides, people often admit that their feelings have been exaggerated, but they did not realize it during the condition.³⁰ A panic reaction can also arise as a group reaction, a form of crowd psychosis. E.g. in crisis situations, people start buying excessive amounts of food headlong, their behaviour is more aggressive and not considering other people when buying them. If they shop wisely, everyone's needs would be met. Everyone has a certain amount of resistance to stress, so they have a greater or lesser tendency to behave in a way that can result in stress and subsequent frustration. People also differ in their level of sensitivity to stressors, their degree of tendency to react more sensitively than others, their more vulnerable and their higher ability to cope with them. Stressors (a crisis situation it also a stressor), are experienced as states of frustration. This is usually when a stressor causes internal conflict on an individual level. People in a stressful situation responds in three steps: first They mobilize their strength and activate themselves, then they resist the stressful situation (resistance) and the last stage is coping with stress or collapse if the stress is evaluated by the individual as unmanageable. Thus, the emotion of frustration is not caused by the stressful situation itself, but by how the individual accept and

²⁹ CZAKO, M., SEEMANOVÁ, M., BRATSKÁ, M.: *Emócie*. Bratislava : Slovenské pedagogické nakladateľstvo, 1982, p. 22-26.

³⁰ POGÁDY, J., GUENSBERGER, E.: *Základy psychopatológie*. Martin : Vydavateľstvo Osveta, 1987, p. 98-99.

manages it.³¹ Dangerous and threatening for mental well-being and health is the accumulation of stress factors in a short time.

3 Coronavirus Crisis and Its Presentation on Slovak Television

The coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 first appeared in December 2019 in the Chinese city of Wu-Chan, the capital of Hubei Province. Information about this serious disease appeared in reports in early January 2020. It was gradually spreading around the world. In Italy, they recorded the first case on 7 February. It was a 29-year-old scientist who returned with a group of more than 50 other people from the Chinese city of Wu-Chan. The media was also mentioned the occurrence is said to have been recorded for the first time on January 30 in an older couple of Chinese tourists. As early as February 23, Italy became the most affected country in Europe and the second most affected country in the world. The following day, Italian authorities quarantined 11 towns and villages in an effort to stop the spread of the disease. On Tuesday, 25 February 2020, the first cases appeared in Spain, Austria and Croatia. The Italian Republic became a "protected area" on 9 March. Schools and other institutions were closed, and from March 12, they were closed there all shops except groceries, pharmacies and selected drugstores. Opportunity to go out were restricted, allowed was only when serious necessary. The World Health Organization declared a pandemic on 11 March 2020. On 12 March, France, Spain and Germany reported that they have the highest numbers of infecteds in the European Union after Italy; numbers were increasing in Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden and Belgium too, Poland having its first victim of coronavirus. Gradually, the coronavirus spread throughout Europe. Individual states recorded and published the numbers of tested, infected, deceased, but also cured on a daily basis. Gradually, various more stringent and less stringent measures were taken. Life and movement in Europe has stopped. On March 13, travel from the Schengen area to the United States of America was banned. To May 21, more than 4,939,642 people had been infected in more than 180 countries or regions, and 325,003 people had died³².

Despite the fact that the disease spread very quickly in the surrounding countries, Slovakia resisted it for a very long time. This was also due to the very strict measures that have been put in place since the beginning of the coronacrisis. Already on 27 January, Slovakia took measures in connection with the new coronavirus. Key ministries such as the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs closely monitored the situation and implemented current preventive measures to protect the population. The crisis staff met and Prime Minister P. Pellegrini provided information at regular press conferences. The World Health Organization (WHO) Crisis Committee declared a state of global health emergency on Thursday, January 30, 2020, in connection with a disease caused by the new 2019-nCoV coronavirus spreading from China. Based on this, the Chief Hygienist of the Slovak Republic recommended adhering to general preventive measures, and the Ministry strengthened the telephone consultation lines from 4 February. Slovakia was still free from the disease. However, the situation was uncertain, because at the time of the significant spread of the disease in Italy, there was a spring break in Slovakia and Italy was one of the favourite ski destinations. Thus, an increased number of diseases was expected. For this reason, on 24 February the Prime Minister issued an order for increased control of all passengers arriving in Bratislava from Italy. At that time, coronavirus reports were part of regular television news. Slovakia resisted the

³¹ SMÉKAL, V.: *Pozvání do psychologie osobnosti. Člověk v zrcadle vědomí a jednání*. Brno : Barrister&Principal, 2012, p. 228-295.

³² *Koronavírus vo svete: V Peru dosiahol počet nakazených 100-tisíc*. [online]. [2020-05-10]. Available at: <<https://svet.sme.sk/c/22408910/koronavirus-vo-svete-vyvoj-pandemie-21-5-2020.html>>.

infection one month after first appearance in Europe. It was not until Friday, March 6, that the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic Peter Pellegrini and the Chief Hygienist of the Slovak Republic Ján Mikas confirmed the first case of an infection in Slovakia. They did it during an afternoon press conference on current information on coronavirus. The man lived in Western Slovakia, and did not have a travel history. He probably became infected by his son, who was at the carnival in Venice, but he showed no signs of illness. Coronavirus has been tested in Slovakia from the end of January, when the first diseases appeared in Italy. However, testing was selective and targeted; experience with the disease was only being gathered. The crisis staff has ordered a ban on flights to Italy and a ban on visits to all hospitals, social services homes, prisons and children's homes. The Ministry of Education has banned schools from all excursions and trips outside the territory of the Slovak Republic. Prime Minister Pellegrini called on all citizens to consider traveling to any country. He recommended not to attend sports and cultural events or masses. Border control for coronavirus symptoms has also been tightened; from 13 March, only permanent or temporary residents were allowed to enter the country. From 10 March 2020, all citizens returning to Slovakia from Italy, China, Iran and South Korea had to remain in compulsory home quarantine for at least 14 days, including those living in the same household, and contact their GP. Later, quarantine residence in state facilities was mandatory for all persons coming from abroad. Compliance with this measure was closely monitored. Gradually, tougher and tougher measures were taken to prevent the spread of the disease and endanger vulnerable groups, especially the elderly, because these were affected by the coronavirus with the most serious, often fatal consequences. Teaching in schools was cancelled, the so-called quarantine OČR (care of a family member) for families with children under 10 years of age (they cannot stay at home themselves by law), activities in professions where there was close contact between people, were banned, many companies introduced home office, some big companies stopped production, all public events were banned, all restaurants and recreational facilities were closed, only grocery stores, pharmacies and drugstores remained open. From 12 March, an emergency situation started in Slovakia; from 15 March, a state of emergency was declared in Slovakia, enabling the government to carry out effective measures and controls. The Slovak government also thought about an absolute "shutdown of the country", the so-called "Black out", when life in the country is completely stopped for a limited period. Medical facilities were preparing for an increased supply of patients, even in critical condition. Basic protective and disinfection aids, because they were in short supply in the country, as well as devices to save the lives of patients in serious states - lung ventilators - were sought. Other health care has been limited. Sampling for testing was first done directly at homes, and later built sampling points in front of hospitals.

Thus, since 6 March 2020, life has changed significantly throughout the country, and the media's approach to information has changed very significantly too. Information on coronavirus, its incidence, consequences and measures to prevent the intensive spread of the disease have become the main topics of media contents. As mentioned above, one of the main principles of communication in a crisis situation, such as the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic, is timely and truthful information about the situation, its course and, above all, measures taken to mitigate or eliminate its consequences and prevent its spread. It is also necessary for the whole public, which in this case was not only an observer but also a stakeholder in the crisis situation. It is in this that the mass media play a very important role. In our study, we focused on the television news of the broadcasting television Rozhlas a televízia slovenska (hereinafter RTVS), Televízie Markíza (hereinafter TV Markíza) and Televízie JOJ (hereinafter TV JOJ). We also rely on statistics provided to us by the RTVS Research and Development Department from PMT / KANTAR SLOVAKIA. We chose a particular a period of two weeks from the confirmation of the first positive case of coronavirus in Slovakia, i. e., from 6 to 20 March 2020.

As follows from the previous description of the development in Slovakia and in Europe, the situation with the coronavirus changed dramatically during that period and serious measures were taken, which caused increased public interest in information. This is confirmed by an example from the analysis of RTVS broadcasts.

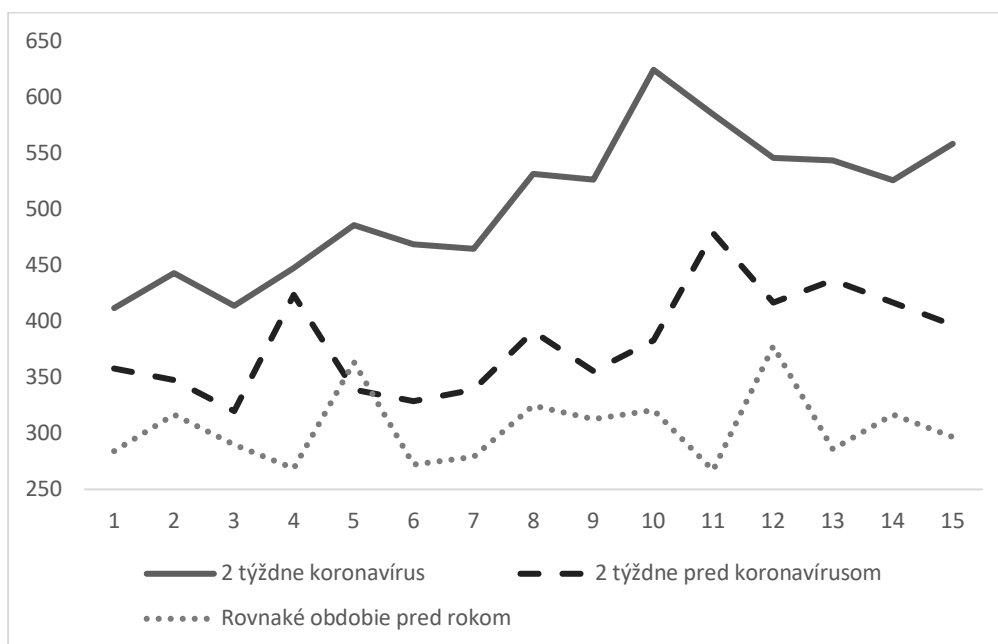


Chart 1: Comparison of viewership of RTVS News at 7pm (coronavirus, pre-coronavirus and a year ago)
Source: PMT/KANTAR SLOVAKIA, 2020.

The viewership of RTVS TV News increased significantly by 7 pm (6.3.-20.3.2020, average share 21.1%), up to 6% compared to the previous year in the same period (6.3.-20.3.2019, average share 15.2%) and about 3% compared to the previous two weeks (20.2.-5.3.2020, average share 18.1%). The peak of viewership was 15-16 March when they declared a state of emergency in the Slovak Republic.³³ It was similar in other television networks. The need to be informed in times of crisis is also confirmed by the research of the Median agency, which recorded an increased interest in television broadcasting at a critical period.

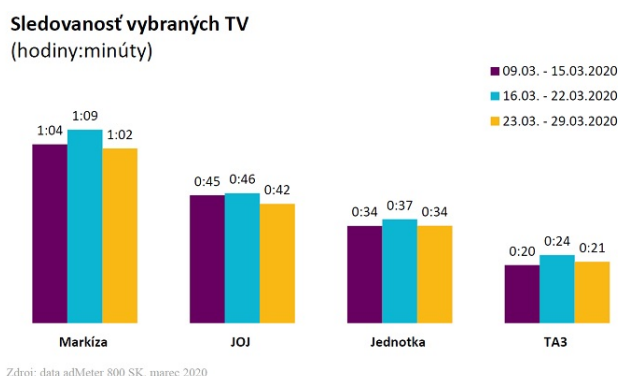


Chart 2: Audience of selected televisions during the pandemic
Source: *Slováci v době pandémie sledují média více*. [online]. [2020-04-02]. Available at: <<https://www.mediaguru.cz/clanky/2020/04/slovaci-v-dobe-pandemie-sleduji-media-vice/>>.

The number of articles devoted to the coronavirus crisis has also increased in regular news broadcasts. Between 6 March and 20 March, the television channels broadcast a total of 359

³³ Remark by the author: PMT/KANTAR SLOVAKIA.

broadcasts. Of which the most was broadcast by the public RTVS (149) and the least by TV JOJ (89). Number of coronavirus related posts e.g., in RTVS was up to 76% of the broadcast volume of one 50-minute news program, i.e. about 38 minutes of broadcasting.³⁴

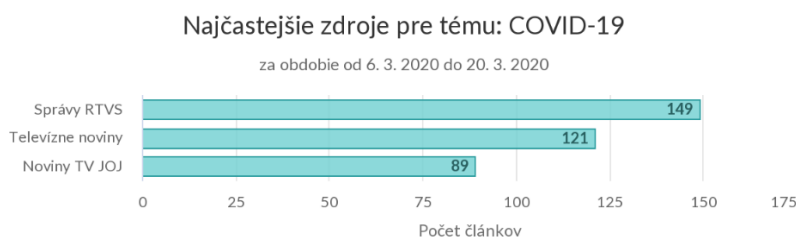


Chart 3: Number of news reports articles on individual televisions

Source: Monitora s.r.o., 2020.

As mentioned above, news and information about the coronacrisis became the most important television programs in the first weeks of the pandemic in Slovakia. In addition to regular news, television channels have also begun to introduce special programs. RTVS regularly broadcasts several news programs - RTVS Morning News (60 minutes), RTVS News at 12pm (18 minutes), 4pm (25 minutes), main news program at 7pm (50 minutes) and News and Comments, which broadcasts at 10pm (27 minutes) on Dvojka, which is a total of 3 hours of news per day. People were being informed by these regular news every day, RTVS also prepared Extra News, on working days at 10am and 2pm, and moved the News and Comments session on One. Extra news was also broadcast over the weekend. Every start was adapted to the start of press conferences and relevant events and announcements. They are often broadcast immediately after the main news program or on weekends, even in the late evening (10pm and 12am). They always got broadcast space on the unit.

Table 2: Overview of RTVS's Extra News during the monitored period

Date	Number of Extra News	Length / day
12.3.2020	1	24 min
13.3.2020	3	14 min
14.3.2020	3	17 min
15.3.2020	3	100 min
16.3.2020	5	110 min
17.3.2020	3	45 min
18.3.2020	3	136 min
19.3.2020	5	82 min
20.3.2020	3	147 min

Source: own processing

In addition, RTVS also broadcast relevant press conferences. Outside of our period under review, on 14 April, it always started broadcasting the Facts and Impulses program on Tuesdays (approximately 40 minutes), which brings interviews on topics related to coping with the coronavirus pandemic, with various government officials, representatives of professional organizations and affected companies, as well as experts. In the program, they discuss various problems and look for answers and solutions to them. Television Markíza broadcasts a short news every half hour during the morning broadcast (5 x 3 min), First Television newspaper at 5 pm (25 minutes) and Television newspaper at 7 pm (approx. 55 minutes of net broadcast

³⁴ Remark by the author: PMT/KANTAR SLOVAKIA.

time), which represents 95 minutes (approx. 1 and a half hours) of news broadcasts. TV Markíza also included extra programs in the broadcast during the corona crisis.

Table 3: An overview of the extra news of TV Markíza during the monitored period

Date	Type of Extra News	Length / day
6.3.2020	Mimoriadne správy – 5 x 2 min Extra News	10 min
12.3.2020	Mimoriadne správy (1 x) Extra News	42 min
13.3.2020	Koronavírus: Mimoriadna relácia Coronavirus: Extra program	57 min
16.3.2020	Koronavírus: Mimoriadna relácia Coronavirus: Extra program	48min
17.3.2020	Koronavírus: Mimoriadna relácia Coronavirus: Extra program	56 min
19.3.2020	Koronavírus: Mimoriadna relácia Coronavirus: Extra program	53 min

Source: own processing

On the first day of the confirmation of the first case of coronavirus in Slovakia, it broadcasted five extraordinary short 2-minute news. It broadcast them every hour from 1:30pm until the First Television News. Subsequently, TV Markíza paid attention to the crisis situation only in regular news programs, but paid more attention to them. Another Extra News was broadcasted on the day of the declaration of the emergency situation in Slovakia (March 12). It was broadcasted in prime time right after the main news and devoted a relatively large broadcast space (42 minutes) to it. Markíza Television continued its extra news with a program with the special title Koronavírus: Extra program (Friday, March 13). Subsequently, every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, they regularly invited officials and experts to the studio to inform the audience in the form of interviews with them and answer many questions related to resolving the situation of the coronavirus crisis. The program aired regularly 3 times a week until the end of April (lasted about 40-55 minutes), at the turn of April and May it changed to a weekly periodicity (always on Tuesdays). TV JOJ broadcasts news in the morning program, every half an hour short 2-3 minute information read by moderators, has a regular news program Noviny at 12pm and Noviny (at 5:30pm), as well as the main evening news Kriminoviny (at 7pm) and Noviny TV JOJ (at 7.30 pm). All their longer news lasts about 30 minutes. JOJ Television also expanded the number of articles on coronavirus crisis in the main news programs. However, it did not start broadcasting the special show until Thursday, March 19, i.e. at the end of our monitored period. The show was called News Special, during March it was broadcast in prime-time always from 8:30pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from April it was broadcast only once a week on Tuesdays. Tuesday's broadcast lasts about half an hour (it is still broadcast to today), Thursday was longer, it lasted about an hour.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the coronavirus crisis has significantly affected television broadcasting. According to research by the Median agency based on the adData research, during the coronary crisis the audience spent about 7 hours a day watching electronic media. They spent most of their time watching television, almost 3 hours a day (2:57). These figures and other submitted surveys and our analyzes confirm that people are looking for information during the crisis through the means of mass communication. At the same time, it is necessary to respect the basic rule of communication in a crisis situation. That means that for its successful management it is very important that people receive truthful information about the crisis in a timely manner and

from credible sources. The relevant information channel is therefore the mass media. Slovak Televisions performed its role professionally. The public service broadcaster RTVS, whose main role is a public service, has strengthened its coverage and broadcast news every two hours during the crucial period. Information about the coronacrisis had the predominance of its topics in news programs. The editors processed topics from various fields, brought interviews with government representatives and experts, and repeated statements from press conferences. In addition, they prepared a very interesting challenge - Stay at home, which supported the discipline of citizens to respect the measures. The challenge was broadcast during the main news program. The most watched television station TV Markíza chose a prime-time for the presentation of the coronacrisis, regularly 3 times a week after about one hour, where they presented reports and discussed with guests the topics, problems and solutions associated with the coronacrisis. Invited to the studio were not only the highest government officials, but also a number of experts who explained relevant topics related to the issue of the coronavirus crisis. Also TV JOJ dealt with the coronavirus crisis in prime time, twice a week, for an hour and a half of broadcast time, except for the main news. Based on our analysis, we can state that televisions networks devoted a lot of time to coronavirus crisis and informing citizens, commercial television channels even in prime time, because in the beginning this topic was more attractive to recipients than series and films. Overall, we can evaluate that they have fulfilled their role in this crisis situation. The viewer could even choose on which television to watch the issue. It was joined by the news television TA3, which, in addition to all-day news and live broadcasts from press conferences and briefings, changed the political discussion show The Theme of the Day to a discussion show on coronavirus. The television channels competed for the viewer; they provided the audience with a lot of information, taking advantage of its need and interest, and trying to gain its trust through interviews with attractive guests. It is certain that it is important to provide information intensively at an early stage of the crisis.

It is questionable whether the information pressure created by our media does not ultimately have a rather negative effect on the mental health and well-being. And whether the competition of television channels, who will inform more about the coronavirus crisis, does not have a negative impact on the mental health of the population. One of the principles of journalism is repetition. But repeating negative information without a positive perspective tends to have the opposite effect and multiplies feelings of fear and anxiety. More experts of neurology, psychology and psychiatry have signaled an increased number of people with anxiety and panic attacks. According to the director of the League for Mental Health, Martin Knut, "since the confirmation of the first positive cases of COVID-19 in Slovakia, the number of phone calls from people whose anxiety and panic increased. Their phone calls were also related to economic insecurity, job loss or isolation. The results of the March research also point to this. More than half of the participants showed an increased levels of anxiety. We do not deny the media the right to inform the public or to do their journalistic work professionally, it is even their duty. However, we ask ourselves whether this exaggerated effort and struggle for the viewer does not have negative consequences, and whether from the point of view of the social responsibility of the media, they should not consider also other impacts of their actions. For example, to consider the number of sessions, the length of their broadcast period, as well as the length of the sessions themselves. This point of view is also evidenced by several discussions on social networks, where its users voiced their frustration and unwillingness to no longer watch these types of TV programmes. Of course, it is possible to turn them off or switch. However, for the older generation, which was isolated at the time of the coronavirus crisis, Slovak-language television is the only contact with the world and the only social partner. And listening about the crisis has a certain fascinating flavor at an early stage that cannot be resisted. In our article, we pointed out that, on the one hand, Slovak televisions fulfilled its obligation to

inform the public, but on the other hand, their information initiative and enthusiasm were even excessive. It would also be interesting to analyze what value of the individual reports in the first periods of the coronary crisis and whether they also brought any positive perspectives. The results of these analyses could help in the ability to be more effective in media communication in other similar situations.

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NICOLAS WINDING REFN'S TOO OLD TO DIE YOUNG: VIOLENCE AND RESSURECTION

Martin Charvát

ABSTRACT:

The present chapter aims to interpret new Nicolas Winding Refn's TV Show called *Too Old to Die Young*. I focus of interconnected topics of symptomatology, violence and the role of women in TV Show. In a world, which is collapsing, where nothing make sense anymore, the women are the hope. French philosopher Gilles Deleuze adopts concept of symptomatology from Nietzsche and points up that one function of an artist consist of being "symptomatologist of a world". Then I make the distinction between "legitimate" and "illegitimate" violence based on Walter Benjamin's and Jacques Derrida thinking. The last part of the text deals with the media representation of women as "priestess" of justice in *Too Old to Die Young*.

KEY WORDS:

death, interpretation, narration, Nicolas Winding Refn, symptomatology, Too Old to Die Young, TV Show, violence

1 Symptomatology of Fractured World

The society is collapsing, social relationships are on its limit points. As Viggo, one of main characters of the Refn's new TV show called *Too Old to Die Young* from 2019, continues: "Soon our cities will be washed away by floods. Buried in sand. Burned to the ground [...] the more perfect society gets, the more psychotic we become." These sentences are not forming only the background of *Too Old to Die Young* but can be seen as ornamental for the whole of Nicolas Winding Refn's work. We live in an era of so called "late capitalism"¹, when exploitation of men labour, lives and dreams has never been present in such a manner. The social and economic differences are being widened, poor ones only barely surviving while those who control flows of capital on the global level gets richer and richer. Pollution, global risk, revolution, perversion, violence are frameworks of everyday life. There is no possibility of escaping such circumstances. Only catastrophe incoming in a sense of "becoming" but not yet "actualized"² – incoming in a form of nihilistic perception of the world. And yet, something (maybe) needs to be done: "As the world fractures someone has to be there to protect innocence." But, of course, can any kind of an innocence be found in this world? What Refn offers us, from *Pusher* series (1996, 2004, 2005), *Bronson* (2008), *Drive* (2011), *Only God Forgives* (2013) to *Too Old to Die Young*, is a specific symptomatology of the world, as we can put it through Deleuzean vocabulary. French philosopher Gilles Deleuze adopts this concept from Nietzsche and points up that one function of an artist consist of being "symptomatologist of a world". What is a world from this point of view? As Deleuze/Nietzsche remarks, world is constituted by processual movement and contraction of forces, when force is an expression of will or a tendency. Every object (from body to, for example, TV show in our case), discursively and non-discursively constructed,³ is a representational field of relationships of power.⁴ In our every act of speaking, in every gesture there is always politics, economics and non-conscious deep layers of mind of a society

¹ For more information, see: JAMESON, F.: *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham : Duke University Press, 1991.

² DELEUZE, G., GUATTARI, F.: *What is Philosophy?*. New York : Columbia University Press, 1994, p. 100.

³ FOUCAULT, M.: *Archaeology of Knowledge*. London, New York : Routledge, 2002, p. 67.; DELEUZE, G.: *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. London, New York : Continuum, 2002, p. 39-40.

⁴ DELEUZE, G.: *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. London, New York : Continuum, 2002, p. 42-50.

present. No one is innocent, because everyone is trapped inside the social assemblage which determines lines of production of affects and modes of perception of the world.

It seems, that the term “innocence” signifies just a mere phantasy. On the other hand, Refn implicitly argues that maybe “innocence” consists of simple desire to “do something”, consists of simple effort to make some things “right”. We should be aware of the fact, that “right” in this case find its position beyond “good and evil”; “right” in the “fractured world” may be more terrifying than explosions of violence, rape and destruction. Those, who protect innocence are never innocent themselves. Is the function of artist-symptomologist based only on providing descriptions of contemporary state of society? He must also “provide” a cure or some kind of a resolution. In Refn’s case, as contra-intuitive and almost non-sensical it may seem at first glance, women are the hope, even though they are objects or many acts of violence. As Refn himself said about *Too Old to Die Young*: “The whole idea is to create a show, where women were the hope and all the men were demolished.”⁵ And, as I want to show, we undoubtedly succeed in this effort.

2 Narration and Setting of the TV Show

What are the so called “nod points” of the narration? What are the moments which defines the turning of events and make the story in motion?⁶ The first one is relatively simple: A police officer is murdered, his partner (Martin, one of the main characters of the show) survives, and the attacker is running of. Of course, during the narration the reason for killing a cop is revealed; mother of the attacker was killed (or as we are convinced) by him. The opening sequence of the show thus can be called as “state of deficiency”⁷ – the state of the (fictional) world has been disrupted and order must be restored. What we do have here is a structure of noir or hard-boiled detective fiction:⁸ police work is always dangerous, the killers are originally unknown and detective’s task is to bring justice to his partner, to the world. And as Fiske and Hartley comments, and this comment is in compliance with my emphasis of the figure of symptomatology, “[w]hat the police versus criminal conflict may enact symbolically, then, is the everyday conflict of a competitive society in which efficiency is crucial”.⁹ From this point of view the murder and investigation can be seen as “effects of the real”¹⁰ producing the impression that what is represented in TV show is a world where we, as recipients of media content, live in. Further I would like to add that the theme of violence is quite more complicated than this, but for this moment let us accept Fiske and Hartley’s thesis. The first “nod point” enfolds double structure of the plot: on the one hand we follow fate of Martin, the police officer, on the other hand the journey of the attacker – Jesus Rochas. Two different lines which convergent in the near the of the story. And it is not a narrative of a representation of the duel between good and evil, not in a first place. Martin is not moral hero, but Jesus certainly is the villain.

⁵ Nicolas Winding Refn Says His New TV Show Is Not a TV Show. [online]. [2020-03-15]. Available at: <<https://variety.com/2019/tv/news/nicolas-winding-refn-says-his-new-tv-show-is-not-a-tv-show-1203219527/>>.

⁶ See also: BARTHES, R.: An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative. In *New Literary History*, 1975, Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 237-272.

⁷ BREMOND, C.: The Logic of Narrative Possibilities. In *New Literary History*, 1980, Vol. 11, No. 3, p. 388-410.

⁸ McDONELL, B.: Film Noir Style. In MAYER, G., MCDONNELL, B. (eds.): *Encyclopedia of Film Noir*. London : Greenwood Press, 2007, p. 71–82.

⁹ FISKE, J., HARTLEY, J.: *Reading Television*. London, New York : Routledge, 1994, p. 29.

¹⁰ BARTHES, R.: The Reality Effect. In BARTHES, R. (ed.): *The Rustle of Language*. Berkeley : University of California Press, 1989, p. 142-147.

In the background there is also a story of a flaw or mistake present. Killed cop wasn't the one who killed Jesus mother, it was Martin. And this mistake produces a series of violent events. But this doesn't even matter, because in a world of *Too Old to Die Young* other murders would certainly occur. Only this particular murder actualizes the virtuality of death.¹¹ Double seriality of events¹² determines the two-faced setting of the show. Jesus flees to Mexico to join the cartel. Corrupted policemen are maintaining truce with cartel boss. Prostitutes and drug business are everyday reality, but after boss dies his son takes over the territory and executes policemen. In this moment Jesus, who is considered to be a member of the family, an American "hijo" returns to America. Mexico is a specific territory: desert of death and melancholia. Common people are trapped in cartel wars, dying all the time and are get used to dying. There is no transcendence in this world. It thus makes perfect sense to worship Santa Muerte: what else can you do? And in Mexico Jesus meets one women, who was born in a dessert "out of flames". Women who is *exclu* – partially belongs to the cartel but also kills pimps and cartel members hurting women. Jesus and she got married and moved to United States. Martin stays in the city, in U.S. He is not a greatest moral example of a cop. He works for mafia, kills for mafia. And the he becomes a detective. In a short moment he recognizes that his department is led by racist and fascist boss. Boss stylizes himself in the iconography of Jesus Christ. As Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari put it: the fascism of repressive power is present everywhere, even in the police forces.¹³

During one investigation of a murder Martin meets Vigo, who is the offender. He doesn't arrest him but became a friend of him and Vigo's woman friend. Viggo and women are trying to bring justice into the "cracked up" world by killing child molesters, offenders, and sexual abusers. Martin joins them and leaves his detective work behind. Unlike Mexico the city environment is violently corrupted in a different manner: under the level of representation of well-ordered society the crime and barbarism emerges. Vigo, Martin and women can be thus seen as lone wolves, rejection official structures of power and seeking justice on their own. In Mexico, there is no justice, in a city lonely flashes of the attempt of "making things right" sometimes shine through the omnipresent darkness. *Too Old to Die Young* is from a formal point of view most coherent Refn's work. When it would it seem that *Drive* was slow, almost hallucinatory visual experience, and *Only God Forgives* with *Neon Demon* provides phantasmatical and dreamy scenes, in *Too Old to Die Young* both of these poles are present. Dreamy visual, slow camera motion, speechless characters, and music from pop to new wave construct fictional world where synthesis of time is ruptured by acts of violence. Dialectics between slowness and action is present in a car chase between Martin and two gangsters in episode 5. After fast action there is a long ride where nothing is happening and one of the gangsters puts on the radio song by Barry Manilow called "Mandy". Of course, the end of the chase culminates with one dead gangster and one hurt really bad. "Time is slow", we could say, but death is fast, incomprehensible and steady.

¹¹ For the distinction between actual and virtual, see: DELEUZE, G.: *Bergsonism*. New York : Zone books, 1991, p. 74-75.

¹² For the notion of „double seriality“, see: DELEUZE, G.: *Logic of sense*. London : Athlone Press, 1990, p. 36-41.

¹³ DELEUZE, G., GUATTARI, F.: *A Thousand Plateaus*. Minneapolis, London : University of Minnesota Press, 1987, p. 224.

3 Forms of Violence

The duality of environment determines two modes of violence. Slavoj Žižek distinguishes between “subjective” and “objective” form of violence. He stresses out that “objective” violence is “invisible, is immanent to social arrangement and produces forms of subordination and subjectivation. Clearly, this “invisible” violence finds its expression not only in fascism, but in corporate networks and in the structure of whole system.¹⁴ In our case “objective” violence stems from the setting of *Too Old to Die Young*: society of rivalry/competitive society, constant accent of “becoming better” than the others shape non-discursive and discursive possibilities of human behaviour. And, in such a state, there is no doubt that “subjective”/“visible” violence which act directly upon flesh or bodies will be present. Not only in Mexico, but also in city landscape. But there is important difference in play: whole soil in Mexico is penetrated by death, in city landscape it is a question of certain types of neighbourhood, dark alleys and clubs full of prostitutes and drugs. Does violence have any kind of positive potential or power? Is violence mere destruction, or does it sustain potential of renewal? Walter Benjamin in his famous text “Critique of Violence” differentiates between legitimate and illegitimate violence.¹⁵ Legitimate violence is the one caused by state-official in order to preserve current state and enforce law. Illegitimate violence is the one which aims at the destruction of the current state, is revolutionary. And, as Benjamin remarks, when the law is enforced in circumstances, that opposes fundamental human rights, the illegitimate violence is justifiable and even necessary.

Jacques Derrida interprets Benjamin’s essay in a following manner: legitimate violence is connected to law, to calculation of human actions, it works upon the principle of reciprocity. But this kind of violence is never just. It is a system of power. But how can a state become a state? Because of “illegitimate” violence, which is an act of foundation. Founding violence stays beyond the realm of stable representation, it is produced in order to bring something new and then is, in a setback manner, naturalized as “right”.¹⁶ *Aporia* of violence. Martin is a police officer (later a detective) and he uses violence to maintain order in society. He also kills for mafia, which is not “illegitimate” violence as founding violence but tools for stabilizing power struggle in sphere of crime.¹⁷ When he meets Vigo, situation is changed. Martin and Vigo can be characterized as warriors who stand up against official state apparatus¹⁸ and against the world of crime in order to bring “justice” and protect innocence. They want to burn this whole world of barbarian ways of behaviour to the ground, not because of single presupposition that the world will “be better”, because it is in the constant declination and degeneration, but only to stop (in a small territory) spreading of evil. Every murder they do is actualization of justice, which is always “postponed” from abstract point of view, because the evil cannot be stopped at all. But their actions have the potential to renew the society, to bring a flash of faith by dealing with those who continually erases innocence.

¹⁴ See also: ŽIŽEK, S.: *Violence*. New York : Picador, 2008.

¹⁵ BENJAMIN, W.: Critique of Violence. In BENJAMIN, W. (ed.): *Selected Writings. Volume 1*. Cambridge, London : Harvard University Press, 1996, p. 238.

¹⁶ DERRIDA, J.: Force of Law: The “Mystical Foundation of Authority“. In CORNELL, D., ROSENFELD, M., CARLSON, D. (eds.): *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice*. London, New York : Routledge, 1992, p. 31.

¹⁷ Remark by the author: In *Only God Forgives* this distinction is blurred. Police officer is a killing and torturing machine, psychotic violent killer who hunts mafia members. There is some kind of a twisted morality present: by violence extinguish violence. In *Drive* we are faced only with illegitimate violence without its founding potential.

¹⁸ DELEUZE, G., GUATTARI, F.: *A Thousand Plateaus*. Minneapolis, London : University of Minnesota Press, 1987, p. 423.

And of course, Martin and Vigo are getting more and more psychotic. After Martin dies by the hand of Jesus after long torture, Vigo is on the killing spree: “I want to kill them all [...] as many I can.” The case of Jesus is a different one. After moving to U.S he takes care of business after his deceased mother. Not only drugs and prostitution. He aims much higher: revenge and constitute his rule of the world where fear, violence and destruction penetrate every aspect of life. That’s why he kills Martin, and in the last episode of the TV Show accents to his operatives that he wants to see “more violence, more rape, more death”. Almost in Sadean manner we could say that the destruction is (from this perspective) transcendental a priori of Jesus efforts.¹⁹ Singular lives do not mean a thing, singular women and men are only flesh which needs to be disciplined and killed. And of course, this spreading of illegitimate violence is an inversion of renewal: the world will burn in fire – Jesus provides apocalyptic vision of a world full of slavery and cold-hearted killing. It is not justice, it is just a psycho-killing machine that never stops.

4 Women Are the Hope

And what about the women? Are they really the hope, as Refn said? There are three main women characters in the show. Janey Carter who met Martin during the investigation of her mother’s death, which, as Janey is convinced was really not an accident, and having a sexual relationship with him even though she is underaged. Martin, as almost every man character in Refn’s work, is submissive. He kneels before Janey and is being mastered by her. She is kind of an innocent soul and dies at Jesus order. Martin, who in one sequence violently kills Janey father because he cannot stand his insults anymore, was never able to save Janey. The only thing in the world that made sense for living his life. Janey is certainly an embodiment of hope for Martin. Diana DeYoung is a friend of Viggo. She is a psychic and marks Viggo’s targets, because in her vision the violent and evil situation occurs. Diana is the motor or priestess of justice in city environment, trying to bring justice to the victims. There is always a reason why Viggo is set on the hunt, it is not arbitrary decision to kill someone. She is the sign of faith. Maybe, all men are destined to be demolished, but power abstains. Diana as the barometer of justice, or possibility of becoming “new world”, even though she is very well aware of the fact that society is collapsing, that race wars will take place, that fascism is on the rise again, as she says in the last episode of the TV Show. But, “as the world fractures someone has to be there to protect innocence.”

And then there is Yaritza, Jesus wife, “born out of flames in the deserts”. Diana sees Yaritza as dark and dangerous counterpart of herself. Yaritza even in Mexico kills cartel members and frees prostitute. The world of men is by her actions brought to collapse, and she still remains invisible, not recognizable as killer. Prostitutes singing songs about her, she is the Priestess of Death embracing slavered women. In U.S she doesn’t stop. Tracks down hostels, even clubs and killing every man there. The end of the age of men. Jesus, who had obviously abnormal relationship with his mother, stylizes Yaritza as his mother. He is submissive in sexual behaviour, let himself being choked by Yaritza, even call Yaritza “mom”. Yaritza is like a “ghost” of Jesus’ mother, because she doesn’t have any kind of a known origin, so she become anything she really wants. Not known origin in this case determine the fact that Death is always near when Yaritza is present. She is the Death. Death as a moment of resurrection. Maybe it is the Death as a pure form of time, which enables thinking about future. All of the

¹⁹ For more information, see: KLOSSOWSKI, P.: *Sade My Neighbor*. Illinois : Northwestern University Press, 1991.

Jesus dreams will be demolished by Yaritza. Men will be buried in the ground. The women will live.

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NARRATION AS A BASIC CREATIVE AND COMMUNICATION COMPONENT OF THE MEDIUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY

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ABSTRACT:

Narration as such does not appear only in literature or spoken language; on the contrary, it is implied in all kinds of art and communication. Although, generally it is a sequence of events in time and a photograph is “only” a freezing of a single moment, it is also capable of telling stories. We can, therefore, propose a thesis that narration is one of the main creative and communication components of this medium. What is a narrative or storytelling, how is a story, narrative, and narration defined by different authors? Addressing a reflection of this topic in the Slovak science appears to be difficult from the start – it remains to be a problem that because we have not been able to find narration in connection to photography in domestic publications, we are working only with relevant foreign sources. We believe that the following pages could become a foundation for further studies.

KEY WORDS:

narration, narrative, photography, story, storytelling

1 Introduction

Since time immemorial, people have communicated stories through images. As early as the prehistory, humans expressed themselves by painting cave walls with various stories depicting certain scenes from life. This ability has not ceased to exist even during the era of speech and script; on the contrary, it had continued through paintings, sculptures, etc. Later, in the 19th century, we have started to tell stories through photography. It stems from human nature: to listen to and to tell stories that are the main instrument of thinking and learning about the world. They are being handed down from generation to generation, we are confronted with them since childhood; with them we are growing up, becoming adults, and growing old. A story, also called a narrative, represents a sequence of events and scenes that we observe in the course of time. These events have a beginning, development, and a conclusion. In the context of photography, it can be explained by a series of shots depicting a certain event.

However, even more interesting is the fact that it is possible to tell a story in just one image. The most iconic photographs remain in our minds precisely because they have impressed us with something (composition, maybe a small detail, contrast, colour, etc.), thanks to which we were able to imagine a whole story connected to the depicted reality. We can illustrate this by an example of a famous photograph by Kevin Carter depicting a starving child in Sudan, struggling to reach food, while a vulture is waiting for its death in background. An image saying everything without a single word. However, we do not have to go that far. During the occupation of Czechoslovakia by the Warsaw Pact armies in August 1968, several famous shots were made, one of those still resonating in people’s minds being “*A man with a bare chest*” by Ladislav Bielik. A plumber from Bratislava with an unbuttoned shirt standing in front of an occupying tank has become a symbol of nonviolent resistance of the Slovak citizens against injustice. It regularly appears in renowned collections of the best photographs of the 20th century. Narration is undoubtedly one of the basic creative and communication elements of the medium of photography and, therefore, we find it important to pay it due attention. The objective of the study is the reflection of the topic in the world and Slovak literature.

2 Theoretical Bases

Characterization of basic terminological apparatus is a prerequisite for a complex comprehension of a topic. The key term, forming the basis of everything, is narration and the connected terms: narrative, narratology, narrative image, and narrative code. Through the study of relevant specialized literature and the methods of logical reasoning, we want to reach satisfactory results.

2.1 Narrative, Story and Narration

To understand narration in photography, it is vital to define some terms in general, or in a way they can be understood in different kinds of art. Roland Barthes writes: “*There are countless forms of narrative in the world. First of all, there is a prodigious variety of genres, each of which branches out into a variety of media, as if all substances could be relied upon to accommodate man’s stories: among the vehicles of narrative are articulated language, whether oral or written, pictures, still or moving...*”¹ Thus, the essential element of each narrative is the way in which a story is expressed. Simultaneously, we are working on an assumption that each story (or narrative) is a text, which contains a key to its reading.² Narratological analysis of text comes from the times of Aristotle and his *Poetics*, however, it becomes a systematic method only in the 60s thanks to a literary theorist Tzvetan Todorov, who defines it as a theory of narrative. This relatively simple characteristics is later made more complicated by Gerald Prince, who explains narrative as “*the representation (as product and process, object and act, structure and structuration) of one or more real or fictive events communicated by one, two, or several narrators to one, two, or several narratees.*” And thus, the definition of narratology starts to be more problematic: it no longer contains only the story, but also the process of narrating the story.³

Perhaps we can also mention another French author, who addresses discourse and narrative analyses in his texts. Gérard Genette divides narration into three basic areas: story as a sequence of events, narrative in the sense of narrative discourse, and the event of narrative. Later, it turned out that all these three categories overlap and could be combined with oppositions, such as fabula – sujet or, in other contexts, story – discourse.⁴ Let’s however return to the aforementioned Roland Barthes. He divides narrative into three hierarchical levels: functions, actions, and narration. Functions are those parts of the text that describe characters or characterize entities; these described elements consequently come into action and become a part of narration.⁵ One of the most important reference means in current strategies of the medium of photography is the examination of creative schemes of semiosis, staging, and narration. Seymour Chatman in his book *Story and Discourse* follows up on French theoreticians, such as the aforementioned Roland Barthes or Tzvetan Todorov. He speaks of two aspects of narrative – *a what* and *a way*, while calling “*the what of narrative*” its story (content, chain of events) and “*the way of narrative*” is, according to him, its discourse (expression, symbols, the

¹ BARTHES, R.: Úvod do strukturální analýzy vyprávění. In KYLOUŠEK, P. (ed.): *Znak, struktura, vyprávění. Výbor z prací francouzského strukturalismu*. Brno : Host, 2002, p. 9.

² KUBÍČEK, T., HRABAL, J., BÍLEK, P. A.: *Naratologie: Strukturální analýza vyprávění*. Prague : Dauphin, 2013, p. 150-155.

³ SVATOŇOVÁ, K.: *Naratologie*. [online]. [2020-01-05]. Available at: <<https://adoc.tips/naratologie-kfs-ff-uk-nam-j-palacha-2-praha-1-tel-.html>>.

⁴ Ibidem.

⁵ BARTHES, R.: Úvod do strukturální analýzy vyprávění. In KYLOUŠEK, P. (ed.): *Znak, struktura, vyprávění. Výbor z prací francouzského strukturalismu*. Brno : Host, 2002, p. 9.

means through which the story is transmitted).⁶ In his extensive publication subtitled *Narrative Structure of Fiction and Film*, he orients himself mainly on these types of art, but he also provides an example of a picture narrative. He demonstrates it with the painting *Dance of Salome and the Beheading of John the Baptist* by the Italian renaissance painter Benozzo Gozzoli. He states that the simplest picture narratives represent the events in a clear sequence from left to right – on the analogy of western alphabets. But the order might also be different: in the rightmost section of the painting, Salome dances for Herod, while a later event (a soldier holding a sword over the head of John the Baptist) is in the leftmost portion of the painting. The final event occurs in the middle of the painting, where Salome gives John's head to her mother.⁷

Although, in the majority of specialized narratological texts a particular attention is paid to narration in literature, it is Chapman who is often described as one of the key personalities applying narratological analysis outside this type of art. He observes the ability to narrate not only in literature and film, but also in dance, music, or painting. He systemizes different narrative principles and procedures, searches for both the common points and differences.⁸ A photograph contains many layers of meaning and provides a lot of interpretations. It is connected to the coding and reading of the picture message and represents significant communication channels between the author and the percipient. Besides the aforementioned experts, narration in the contexts of visual art is also addressed by Jacques Aumont. We also stem from one of the most traditional explanations of photography – it is a freezing of a certain moment in time (herein lies the strength of this medium; it has the power to freeze time, it takes us back to past, reminds us of people, scenes, events, or places that may no longer be here or could have changed). Photography thus “talks” and many representatives of semiological trend say that this narrative leaves an imprint in both space and time. As a result, each narrative image (and each depiction) is influenced by narrative codes.⁹ Aumont writes that every depiction, through its observer (or, more precisely, through its observers in history), is related to ideological, cultural, or, in any case, symbolical conditions and without these, it is pointless.¹⁰ If we exchange the word “depiction” for the word “photography” in the previous sentence, it leads to the fact that also “reading the photography” is subject to the ideological, cultural, and symbolic conditions of the recipient. Narration in itself (narrating a story) is thus closely linked to semiosis, for example certain details (symbols) that could be understood differently by members of different ethnic groups.

2.2 Interpretation of an Image

Consequently, narrative codes are closely connected to interpretation of an image, because even images that are seemingly easy to read take on new meanings in different context. This is studied by semiotics. When referring to semiotics, we cannot leave out the influential writer, aesthetics and art theorist, and a semiotician Umberto Eco, or the philosopher, logician, pragmatist, and also a semiotician Charles Sanders Peirce, who, in his essay *What is the Sign?*, places emphasis mostly on the following three categories of signs:

- indeces,
- icons,
- symbols.¹¹

⁶ CHATMAN, S.: *Příběh a diskurs. Narativní struktura v literatuře a filmu*. Brno : Host, 2008, p. 9-10.

⁷ Ibidem, p. 35.

⁸ Ibidem, p. 97-98.

⁹ AUMONT, J.: *Obraz*. Prague : Nakladatelství Akademie múzických umění, 2010, p. 246.

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 247.

¹¹ PEIRCE, Ch. S.: What is a Sign? In HOUSER, N. (ed.): *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings Vol. 2*. Bloomington : Indiana University Press, 1998, p. 5-6.

Index is based on a direct causal connection to the object. As an example we can use smoke, which is a representative of fire. He also regards a photograph as an index, because it can also be interpreted on the basis of its connection with the material world. Icons are categories of signs based on the resemblance to its object, but they do not need to have a direct causal relationship (e.g. a drawing of a person, but also metaphors and analogies that are based on a certain likenesses with the object). Finally, symbols are signs without causal relations to the object; their meaning is based on conventions, rules, or habits. For a human being, these are mainly the cultural conventions. It is however, interesting, that individual categories of signs need not be mutually exclusive. For example, a photograph can be an icon as well as an index.¹² In this context, we will also add the view of Susan Sontag, who, in her book *On Photography*, has expressed her opinion on the nature of photography: “*A photograph passes for incontrovertible proof that a given thing happened. The picture may distort; but there is always a presumption that something exists, or did exist, which is like what’s in the picture. Whatever the limitations (through amateurism) or pretensions (through artistry) of the individual photographer, a photograph – any photograph – seems to have a more innocent, and therefore more accurate, relation to visible reality than do other mimetic objects.*”¹³ From this point of view, it can thus be stated that a photograph is an index, because, e.g. a picture of a person could be blurry, but it has been made on the basis of a real person, a real object.

Jacques Aumont in the connection to the interpretation of an image besides semiology also speaks of the importance of iconology, a study addressing a complex interpretation of symbolic and ideological content of visual art works. According to him, every social phenomenon has several semantic levels, or several meanings: primary (natural), secondary (conventional), and intrinsic (essential). While reading an artistic image (i.e. in the context of our paper, also while reading a photograph), the same division takes place:

- primary/natural subject – based on denotation (e.g. a photograph depicts a smiling person),
- secondary/conventional subject – can be understood in relation to the depicted elements (e.g. a group of several people grouped around one person at a table resembles Christ’s last supper),
- intrinsic meaning – we gain it through defining hidden principles exposing fundamental character of a nation, time, class, philosophical or religious beliefs.

As Aumont points out, this is the level of iconological analysis. Panofsky stresses that these intrinsic meanings are not created intentionally.¹⁴

3 Narrative in Photography

Narrative continues to fascinate theorists and critics, because it is closely linked to our identity and the way we perceive ourselves and the world. Narrative photography is based on the idea that a photographer can be used to tell a story. While some say that each photograph possesses a power of narrative, others argue that the medium of photography is strictly non-narrative for its irreducible temporality.¹⁵ Therefore, let us return to the essence of the term narrative.

¹² Ibidem.

¹³ SONTAG, S.: *O fotografii*. Prague : Paseka, 2002, p. 11-12.

¹⁴ AUMONT, J.: *Obráz*. Prague : Nakladatelství Akademie múzických umění, 2010, p. 250-251.

¹⁵ MARTINIQUE, E.: *Reading the Narrative Photography*. [online]. [2020-01-07]. Available at: <<https://www.widewalls.ch/narrative-photography/>>.

3.1 How Photography Tells a Story

As we have already mentioned in the introduction, *storytelling* and listening to stories is a part of human nature. Starting with the oral tradition in the form of myths, legends, folk tales, anecdotes, or fairytales, humans have been telling and listening to stories since they learned to talk. Through narrative, valuable knowledge and wisdom have been passed down from generation to generation. If we talk about any form of storytelling, we always come across the term narrative. In the previous chapters, we took a closer look at its definition mostly in connection with literature or film, now we are going to try to find the intersection between narrative and photography. Let's also give some more space to the term already mentioned several times above - *storytelling*. We understand it as a synonym of narration – just like narration is a recount of a storyline, so is storytelling. Simply said, it is “*the oral or written sharing of our stories with others.*”¹⁶ Is photography able to tell a story or create a narrative? A story is a sequence of events in the course of time, but a photograph is only a single moment frozen in time, seemingly taken out of time axis. In other words, it follows from the above that the medium of photography is almost incapable of creating a story. Despite this, Wendy Steiner in her essay *Pictorial Narrativity* states that although it is unusual for a single picture to tell a story, throughout the history of art, it has been common that a picture implied a certain story or reminded its viewer of another one that they already knew.¹⁷ Based on these statements, we can specify the genre of staged narrative photography, where images are staged purposefully with the idea of narrative in mind. Famous for using this approach is Gregory Crewdson, whom we will further describe in the next chapter.

Professor and political scientist David Campbell states that “*in telling visual stories about the world, photography is narrating the world,*”¹⁸ while stressing out that narrative is something far larger than photography. Despite this, narrative in photography is often linked to a context. For example, the story of a famous photograph by Dorothea Lange “*Migrant Mother*” makes much more sense when one realizes that it was created during the Great Depression in the USA. Not only Lange, but also other photographers working for a government agency established to economically support farmers (FSA – Farm Security Administration), were described by Ansel Adams as *sociologists with cameras*. “*They are the most remarkable human documents ever rendered in images,*”¹⁹ said Edward Steichen commenting on these photographers. This is one of the examples that illustrate the power of image, a photograph capturing a certain moment that tells a story.

¹⁶ CHAITIN, J.: *Narratives and Story-Telling*. [online]. [2020-01-11]. Available at: <<https://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/narratives>>.

¹⁷ STEINER, W.: *Pictorial Narrativity*. In RYAN, M.-L. (ed.): *Narrative Across Media: The Languages of Storytelling*. Lincoln : University of Nebraska Press, 2004, p. 146.

¹⁸ CAMPBELL, D.: *Photography and narrative: What is involved in telling a story?* [online]. [2020-01-08]. Available at: <<https://www.david-campbell.org/2010/11/18/photography-and-narrative/>>.

¹⁹ LITVÁKOVÁ, E.: *Slávna Migrujúca matka zachránila tisíce biednych, nie však ženu z fotografie*. [online]. [2020-01-08]. Available at: <<https://kultura.sme.sk/c/20375371/najslavnejsia-migrujuca-matka-fotografia.html>>.

3.2 The Decisive Moment

In the 18th century, Gotthold Lessing published *Laocoon: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry*, in which he argued that although a painting cannot communicate narrative in the sense of telling a story, it can imply drama by aspiring to capture “the pregnant moment”. In photography, this idea is called “decisive moment” connected to Henri Cartier-Bresson.²⁰ Bresson himself said: “*To me, photography is the simultaneous recognition, in a fraction of a second, of the significance of an event as well as of a precise organization of forms which give that event its proper expression.*”²¹ Hans Michael-Koetzle in his book *Photo Icons II* defines decisive moment by these words: “*The decisive second, revelation, identification, that moment where past, present, and future, hot memory, painful recognition, and resulting furious actions become overlapped.*”²² However, the classics of decisive moment (such as, for example, famous Cartier-Bresson’s photograph *Behind the Gare Saint-Lazare*) is nowadays more of a mystery than a story that can be read. This is often the case in documentary photography. A viewer is invited to create their own story from the image elements; to interpret it for themselves.

3.3 Collages and Photo-Sequences

Narrative without a story can be created through photographic collage. Although each shot represents an independent event, their positioning can create a narrative relationship in the viewer’s mind. Each viewer can, however, create their own story by connecting these images in their mind. These images thus have a narrative, as a certain tendency for a story exists here, although no real story is present. Although a story requires a sequence of events, narrative simply requires an implication or reference to events of a story, regardless of whether these events have actually happened.²³ David Hockney broke conventions and challenged a single freestanding image by constructing a narrative with multiple images through a collage or photo montage. He first started to create composite images of Polaroid photographs, arranged in a rectangular grid; later, he switched to regular 35-milimeter prints that he used to make photo collages. He compiled a complete photograph by using individually photographed details.²⁴ The fact that a narrative requires a sequence of events can be achieved by a sequence of photographs. Eadweard Muybridge, the 19th century British photographer, created many sequence photographs that he used to study motion creating a literal and clear narrative.²⁵

By contrast, the contemporary photographer Duane Michals has created a whole set of photographic series arranged in an order that implies notions about love, emotions, philosophy, life and death. One of his most famous works is “*Paradise Regained*”, which shows a distinguishable narrative structure of progress or development. Michals in the sequence refers to biblical connotations, to Adam and Eve in Paradise. In other works, however, he avoids using a standard narrative structure, which makes them somewhat ambiguous.²⁶ Narrative can also be

²⁰ MARTINIQUE, E.: *Reading the Narrative Photography*. [online]. [2020-01-09]. Available at: <<https://www.widewalls.ch/narrative-photography/>>.

²¹ KADLECOVÁ, J.: *Všetko má svoj rozhodující okamih*. [online]. [2020-01-09]. Available at: <<https://svet.sme.sk/c/4036265/vsetko-ma-svoj-rozhodujuci-okamih.html>>.

²² Ibidem.

²³ *Photography and narrative (part 1)*. [online]. [2020-01-10]. Available at: <<https://cphmag.com/narrative-1/>>.

²⁴ MARTINIQUE, E.: *Reading the Narrative Photography*. [online]. [2020-01-10]. Available at: <<https://www.widewalls.ch/narrative-photography/>>.

²⁵ Ibidem.

²⁶ DUANE MICHALS – *PARADISE REGAINED ANALYSIS 15/1/14*. [online]. [2020-01-10]. Available at: <<https://laurenharrisphotography.wordpress.com/2014/01/15/duane-michals-paradise-regained-analysis/>>.

constructed through photo-essays or photo-books. Although these pictures can rarely be read as narratives in the sense of an aligned sequence developing in time, photo-books express an overall concept, topic, or idea that stands behind the selection of images representing the narrative. Through editing and alignment of photographs meant for a book, the final group of pictures and the way of their presentation can clearly depict a story. The overall narrative in this case is the way in which everything is connected. An approach could differ. For example, the photographer Darcy Padilla documented life of Julie Baird in her “*The Julie Project*”. Through thousands of photographs, she has recorded difficult situation of poor Americans; Julie becoming their representative. Padilla photographed Julie until her death.²⁷

3.4 Contemporary Representatives of Narrative Photography

Many prominent authors currently address the topic of narration, i.e. storiness and semiosis (forensics) in photography. From the foreign ones, we can mention names such as Duane Michals, Gregory Crewdson, Suzanne Opton, or Jeff Wall. Duane Michals (1932) deals with visualization of stories in a unique way: through sequences comprised of several shots. Each following shot further develops the storyline of the previous one (in the preceding chapter, we have mentioned his *Paradise Regained*). Gregory Crewdson (1962), on the other hand, blurs the boundaries between fiction and reality. His surreal photographs are often melancholic, resembling movie scenes and offering ambiguous narrative suggestions. For a dramatic effect, he uses scenes of suburbia, while, to achieve his typically complex images, he works with large production teams and the resulting work is a combination of painstaking preparation, lighting, and cast.²⁸ Another contemporary author Suzanne Opton (1954) has become famous mainly through her series of photographs of young soldiers that returned from wars in Iraq or Afghanistan. These almost uncomfortably intimate portraits carry many meanings within them. Moreover, nothing in the individual images suggests that they are soldiers (no medals, uniforms, or honours). These images can be used to point out individual cultural patterns and different codes that the percipient can read. If the photograph is viewed by a woman, who had lost her twenty year old son in war, she would see it completely differently than someone untouched by war.

From the Slovak authors, we can mention the contemporary photographer Ľubo Stacho. For a long time, he has been focusing on visually artistic thinking in the medium of photography. We want to point out his series entitled *Diptychy (Diptychs)*, in which – through meeting of two paintings – he is able to yield new suspense, new content, and also a strong aesthetic charge. Stacho, in his photo-tour of Slovakia, speaks about an encounter of various symbols, cults, ideologies; about confrontation of different worlds.²⁹ Contrarily, the centre of attention across the whole work of Jana Hojstričová (1972) is the body that she contrasts to the growing influence of consumer society. In the cycle *Unavená domácnosť (Tired Household)*, she reflects various changes and processes taking place in a family; her main focus being the abandoned women and their perfect households. Through a static image, she “talks” about a long-term process of a relationship breakdown. Her whole artistic work is about a symbolic narration of a story and finding what is important in life.³⁰ Petra Cepková (1979) uses semiosis and narration

²⁷ O'HAGAN, S.: *Darcy Padilla's Julie Project: when photography becomes humanitarian*. [online]. [2020-01-10]. Available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2011/jan/25/photography-humanitarian-darcy-padilla-julie-baird>>.

²⁸ *Gregory Crewdson*. [online]. [2020-01-11]. Available at: <<http://www.artnet.com/artists/gregory-crewdson/>>.

²⁹ *Ľubo Stacho: Diptychy*. [online]. [2020-01-11]. Available at: <<https://www.gjk.sk/sk/vystavy/archiv-vystav/2008/lubostacho-diptychy/>>.

³⁰ *Jana Hojstričová*. [online]. [2020-01-11]. Available at: <<http://www.hojstricova.sk/texts.html>>.

throughout her whole artwork. Her work can be characterized by the topics of family, identity, gender, or human relationships. For example, her cycle *Analgetikon* subtitled *Ríša bezbolestna, ríša bezpohlavna* (*The Land of Painlessness, the Land of Sexlessness*) addresses gender issues through retouching genital organs. Storiness is more visible in the series *13. komnata* (*13. Chamber*), where Cepková joined families and “has told” stories which are usually kept behind closed doors. “*Many of the shots are not about big topics; they are often just banal still-lives or hints of a touch. I found this form to be the most suitable for the purposes of narration, because I didn’t want to tire the viewer, but invite them to wander these secret rooms in ourselves.*”³¹ The cycle *Sú miesta, a miesta* (*There are Places, and Places*) is full of symbols and hidden meanings of seemingly common places, where many interpretational levels can be observed.

As regards the semiotics of an image, which we have outlined before, besides Roland Barthes, Umberto Eco, or Charles Peirce, whose triadic division of signs we have mentioned above, it was studied on a philosophical level also by Josef Zvěřina, Czech priest, theologian, philosopher, and art historian. Narration in the context of visual arts and philosophy is also addressed by Seymour Chatman, film and literary critic, as well as the French Jacques Aumont. In our region, this topic is tackled by the Czech philosopher Miroslav Petříček, who analyses relations between philosophy and art. He is fascinated by differences, boundaries, crossings, where pointers are missing, where meaning disappears, but where maybe a new meaning is being born – i.e. postmodernism.

4 Objectives and Methodology of the Paper

The objective of the submitted study is to reflect the topic of narration in the medium of photography on the basis of an analysis of theoretical knowledge, comparison of key terms definitions from several authors, as well as photographic artwork of prominent world and domestic authors. We attempt to bring a comprehensive overview of narrative photography reflecting present theoretical approaches, as well as trends in this area of photography. This way, we would like to contribute to improving literacy and helping not only photography students, but also general public circles that deal with an image, its meaning and ability to tell stories in contemporary postmodern times. In doing so, we assume that, because we are surrounded by images, studying their meanings and the resulting stories is the alpha and omega of art, as well as media studies as a whole. In our paper, we apply general cognitive research methods such as induction, deduction, generalization, analysis, synthesis, or comparison.³² These are the methods used in logical research process. Through these, we will analyse the structure of the phenomenon and connection between different elements; we will also look for causal dependencies. We will thus proceed to analyse individual key terms of the examined issue, deduce and generalize conclusions, also using comparison in, for example, definition of individual authors, etc.

Trampota and Vojtěchovská in their book *Metody výzkumu médií* (*Methods of Media Research*) define several analyses, the most relevant for our study being the narrative analysis. They write that it is also closely connected to the theory of genres – a genre can generally be perceived as a category of a type of narrative, which helps a reader/viewer/listener to orient themselves in how to read the message of a narrative. Furthermore, they explain that each media narrative contains clear genre indicators, which, in electronic media, appear at the beginning of the story

³¹ LANČARIČ, P.: *Skryté za fotografiou*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2019, p. 43.

³² POLÁKOVÁ, E., SPÁLOVÁ, L.: *Vybrané problémy metodologie masmediálních studií*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2009, p. 40.

and in printed media, they provide a clear graphic signal that guides us to either see the content as serious or entertaining.³³ They also clarify that narrative analysis offers several methods that are dependant on what we want to analyse in “media narratives”; for example, in film narration we must note the codes and conventions that the film language comprises and the elements it is constituted of. In analysing narration, the emphasis is thus being placed on what signs are used and what meaning they are supposed to transmit.³⁴ Besides this, our study is also based on a semiotic-structural analysis that, according to Sedláková, “*attempts to understand social usage of signs and creation of meanings from their mutual relations within the sign system.*”³⁵ In the previous chapters, we have briefly mentioned semiotics in relation to narration, as, without signs or symbols, a photograph cannot be “read”. Therefore, semiotic-structural analysis (according to some authors only semiotic) is, in our case, very relevant.

5 Results and Discussion

Narrative, text, and language are frequently discussed terms addressed by experts in relation to many scientific disciplines. Narratives are studied by narratology, a discipline that has been established in the 60s of the 20th century. While French scholars analysed narrative mostly in literature, over time, narrative started to be discussed also by wider circles. Narratology has been developing parallel to semiology. In studying narratives, it is thus important to take into account the fact that the way a story (narrative) is told is related to signs or symbols, as well as to certain conventions of a recipient. How is it then possible that in the 21st century, narrative in photography receives so little attention? We are literally overwhelmed by images; this period is called visual for a reason. Everything is being illustrated, newspapers try to attract us with a catchy front page photograph, billboards with images surround almost all roads, and in the online space we are capable of finding and visualizing almost everything. Advertising of services and products can captivate us (or, on the contrary, discourage us) by its visuality. The power of image is currently really great. Undoubtedly, medium of photography has an irreplaceable role in the society. And the influence it has on us is the decisive factor. A photograph is also able to tell a story. It could become a driving force of society – throughout history it has happened many times that e.g. social photography (and stories it has told) contributed to some change (e.g. photographs from the time of the Great Depression in the USA, which became an impulse for helping farmers through the Farm Security Administration). We have come to a conclusion that scientific study of storytelling or narrative in the medium of photography should follow up on the already available knowledge and expand narratological research to include this area.

Conclusion

Not only newspapers, television, radio, or internet can communicate certain messages to people. This function can be performed also by photography, which is currently very powerful. A cover photograph in a printed newspaper decides whether the potential reader buys it, in the online journalism, it determines whether we click on an article or not. This is usually decided within a few seconds. What we find attractive about a photograph is subjective: while one person can be attracted by a detail, other can notice an interesting contrast or association with a certain situation that fundamentally affects them. Each of us interprets an image (photograph)

³³ TRAMPOTA, T., VOJTĚCHOVSKÁ, M.: *Metody výzkumu médií*. Prague : Portál, 2010, p. 141-142.

³⁴ TRAMPOTA, T., VOJTĚCHOVSKÁ, M.: *Metody výzkumu médií*. Prague : Portál, 2010, p. 145.

³⁵ SEDLÁKOVÁ, R.: *Výzkum médií*. Prague : Grada, 2015, p. 329.

differently. However, it is also true that an author should know what they want us to see as attractive, what they want to tell through the photograph. Through such a statement, they tell us various stories. Interestingly, although the term narrative represents a sequence of events happening across time, such “narrative” can be captured by a single static image – a photograph, a moment frozen in time. While a story can be assembled through a number of photographs lined up in a time sequence, a narrative can be found in just one single shot. We find the most explicit examples in the war or documentary photography that bring us visually narrated stories about, for example, a situation at the other side of the world. Narratives can, however, also be created by staged photography, where the author premeditates individual elements and their meanings in the image. On one hand, there are Todorov, Chatman, Aumont, Genett, or Barthes, on the other Crewdson, Michals, or Padilla. Renowned narratologists versus the most famous representatives of narrative photography. Although storytelling is a popular part of visual arts in the world, similar scientific publications have thus far been absent in the Slovak science. We believe that our outline of the problem could be a basis for further research.

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THE RETURN OF MEDIA – PARTY PARALLELISM

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ABSTRACT:

In the theoretical introduction, the paper presents political parallelism in the media as a key concept when studying media and political actors/systems, it lists its forms and identifies four ways/areas for its manifestation/identification. Using this lens, it looks back at the individual stages of modern Czech political communication and its media-scientific reflection, in which it identifies determining themes and typical methods/studies. The main part of the essay consists of a content analysis of the periodical Forum 24 (forum24.cz) and evidences its party-parallelistic relationship with regards to the ODS. These findings are finally interpreted as an indicator of the onset of a new stage and there is a brief discussion of the hypothesised changes in the Czech media system, respectively, in the nature of the public sphere.

KEY WORDS:

Czech media system, media ownership, media parallelism, quantitative media analysis

1 Parallelisms in Media Studies Theory

The relationship between the media and political actors (especially political parties) is a constantly present and intensively discussed topic in the framework of political and media sciences (or political communication studies at their intersection), both at the most general level (the theory of democracy, the nature of the public sphere, external versus internal pluralism) and at the most specific level (political journalism and objectivity/balance versus bias). One of the key concepts that permeate the different levels and thus maintains the coherence of the topic (awareness of the whole whilst paying attention to detail... and vice versa) is the term **parallelism** introduced into media studies in 1974 by Seymour-Ure. In its original concept, it was “party-press parallelism”, i.e. the relationship between political parties and the printed media, and it was noted, as concerns the origin and direction of the relationship, that “the same social forces that find expression in the party or parties of a political system tend to find expression also through the press”.¹ Thirty years later, in their media studies bestseller Hallin and Mancini², made parallelism one of the key dimensions of their system typology. Their systemic-analytical “**political parallelism**” is more general than the original historicising “party-press parallelism”. It is not bound to just one type of media (it is thus usable as a property of other types of media as well as the whole media landscape), instead of one direction and relationship (a social link expressed institutionally), it assumes a whole range of intensity, beginning with such subtle types of relationship as “proximity” or “preference”. This dualism of parallelism (party-press and media-political) complements pairs of contexts/purposes in which parallelism is worked with as a key parameter. Firstly, it is a normative consideration about the media – in the place where the public sphere assumes an external pluralism of the media landscape, parallelism is expected if not desirable in the media, and for internally pluralistic media this is precisely the opposite. Secondly, it is a systemic-analytical consideration about the media, where parallelism serves as an indicator, as a tool leading to a generalisation about the nature of the medium and then of the entire system. In conclusion the duality of parallelisms and their use will be completed in the four ways by which, according to

¹ SEYMOUR-URE, C.: *The Political Impact of Mass Media*. Beverly Hills : Sage Publications, 1974, p. 159.

² See also: HALLIN, D. C., MANCINI, P.: *Comparing media systems: three models of media and politics*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Van Kempen³, they can be exhibited or retrospectively ascertained - first in the field of **journalism**, second in the **public**, third in media **ownership** and fourth in the **contents** themselves. The term parallelism, to which a multitude of levels, fields and contexts are thus bound, is therefore an extremely suitable guide/indicator to the history and current changes in the Czech media system, consideration of this system and the normative expectations associated with it.

2 The Nineties, Soft Parallelism, Journalism and the Public

At the beginning of the 1990s the Czech Republic (or Czechoslovakia) saw a large wave of de-nationalisation/de-etatisation and privatisation during which the party press more or less disappeared; a new one had not taken hold and the new West European-type legislation excluded a party radio or television station. Ownership of the (printed) media soon passed into the hands of foreign owners⁴ with no ties to domestic political actors. The primary value for political journalism was “independence” (this word supplanted the word “mouthpiece” in the subtitle of the most influential dailies). Logically, at the time the professional reflection of the relationship between the media and political actors focused on the “soft” forms of parallelism (typically described by the terms “preference” or “proximity”), that were more personalised rather than institutionalised. Media research in the 1990s and the turn of the decade had thus developed in the first two areas of ascertaining parallelism: firstly as an observance through the political preference of journalists, and secondly in the public’s preferences. The first case illustrates the research by Volek and Jirák on a basic set of 2585 journalists from 109 editorial boards (or a selected set of 406 journalists) “with a distinct proportion of the media producing the relevant news and current affairs for the general public”. The variable political alignment, as measured by the self-classification of **journalism**, was on a left-right axis. This resulted in 56% of those polled claiming to be purely right, with another 12% of journalists to the right of centre. On the other hand, less than one fifth (17%) declared a left of centre alignment and 15% a purely left-wing orientation⁵. After a few years, this research was repeated by Kašparová⁶, this time on the studentship of journalism and media studies (mostly born after 1989). In the author’s concluding interpretation, “most respondents rank themselves to the centre of the right-wing half of the scale (34.5%); in all 73 % of all those that corresponded to the question ranked themselves as on the right. Twelve percent of respondents thought left-wing. A total of fifteen percent of respondents put themselves at the centre of the political spectrum ... If a somewhat more even and, probably, fairer classification were to be chosen with the responses divided into three groups, it would be found that four percent of respondents were on the left and more than a majority (57%) incline to right-wing values ... Thus, the trend of alignment to right-wing values continues among Czech journalists, which should probably even increase due to the accentuation of these values among students of journalism.”

³ For more information, see: VAN KEMPEN, H.: Media-Party Parallelism and Its Effects: A Cross- National Comparative Study. In *Political Communication*, 2007, Vol. 24, No. 3, p. 303-320.

⁴ See also: BENDA, J.: *Vlastnictví periodického tisku v ČR v letech 1989-2006*. Prague : Karolinum, 2007.; WASCHKOVÁ ČISAŘOVÁ, L., METYKOVÁ, M.: Challenges of media concentration: The case of regional press ownership in the Czech Republic. In CHARLES, A. (ed.): *Media in the enlarged Europe. Politics, policy and industry*. Bristol : Intellect, 2009, p. 168-176.

For an exhaustive overview see e.g. Benda 2007 or Waschková Čisařová and Metyková 2009.

⁵ VOLEK, J., JIRÁK, J.: Vybrané atributy profesního sebepojetí českých novinářů. In *Mediální studia*, 2006, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 22-37.

⁶ See also: KAŠPAROVÁ, L.: *Představy studentů žurnalistiky o novinářské profesi (komparativní analýza)*. Brno : FSS MU, 2001.

Several years later, Volek and Urbániková⁷ brought the reverberation from this series of investigations, when, in the framework of the Czech Journalist 2015 project, they found that 44.7% of Czech journalists placed themselves to the political right, 41.4% of journalists to the centre, and only 13.9% to the left, for journalists in managerial positions the results were even more skewed to the right. Jiráček and Trampota⁸ focused on an identification of Czech political parallelism with the aid of the **public** in the preface to the Czech edition of Hallin and Mancini - according to the MMI-TGI CR survey from 2005 that they cited, it was found that, in accordance with their readership structure, the daily newspapers Mladá fronta Dnes and Lidové noviny ranked the most to the right (more than 42% of the readers declared a right of centre outlook), in contrast, according to the readership structure at the time, Právo took up a centre-left position (“more than 40% of its readers declared a centrist alignment and over 39% took a left of centre position). The results of the same research after several years of right-wing governments are more interesting for reflections on political-science - in 2012 the readers of right-wing titles who declared they sympathised with the right had dropped to a third (MFD), or a quarter (LN). On the other hand, Právo's share of centre and left-wing sympathisers increased from 80 to 90%.

3 A New Millennium, Ownership Changes and the Hardening of Parallelism

The other two methods/areas for determining the degree of media parallelism assume more intense media-political institutional links. Thirdly, it concerns media **ownership** (the owners' political profile), a topic that has received intense attention in the Czech milieu in the second half of the 2000's when foreign media began to leave the Czech media landscape and a new class of local owners/moguls/oligarchs took the helm. In 2006, Zdeněk Bakala (primarily doing business in coal mining, finance and the real estate market) purchased Respekt Publishing (the weekly Respekt) and two years later the publishing house Economia (Hospodářské noviny, Ekonom, Marketing&Media, aktualne.cz, atlas.cz), he was followed by a number of others⁹ after the acceleration of ownership changes triggered by the economic crisis. In the context of the entry of these industrial moguls, who did business in other areas before their media acquisitions, there is talk of the instrumentalisation of the media, that is, using the power arising from media ownership to use it to achieve particular economic and/or political goals. Typical for gaining political influence at this stage of development in the ownership of the Czech media is the characteristic “getting closer to the political parties” (or individual politicians). The ambitions of the media/industrial moguls themselves are not clear, but it is possible to observe it more as support for other actors¹⁰, often fickle and not particularly made public. A typically

⁷ See also: VOLEK, J., URBÁNIKOVÁ, M.: *Čeští novináři v komparativní perspektivě: Hybridní, virtuální a mizející žurnalisté v post-transformační fázi*. Prague : Academia, Brno: MU, 2017.

⁸ JIRÁK, J., TRAMPOTA, T.: O vztahu médií a politiky v komparativní perspektivě. In HALLIN, D. C., MANCINI, P. (eds.): *Systémy médií v postmoderním světě*. Prague : Portál, 2008, p. 10-22.

⁹ Remark by the author: As calculated by Štětka *ibid*: Petr Kellner (insurance, power supply, real estate, retail sale) bought the publishing house Euronews (Euro weekly), Karel Komárek (oil and gas extraction, tourism, lottery industry) controlled the publishing house Stanford (Profit, Czech Business Weekly), Sebastian Pawlowski (real estate market) gained control of mediacop (Týden, Instinkt) at the time, then we can also consider Jaroslav Soukup (advertising industry, security services) as the owner of Empresa Media (TV Barrandov, Sedmička, later also Týden, Instinkt) and František Savov (engineering, finance), controlling the publishing house Mladá fronta (E15, Euro, Strategie).

¹⁰ Remark by the author: Bakala: ex. President Havel, the Green Party, presidential candidate Švejnar, TOP 09 and presidential candidate Karel Schwarzenberg; Kellner: ex-president Václav Klaus, Soukup: Democratic Party of the Greens, ČSSD; Pawlowski: Prague Mayors Kasl and Bém.... (*ibid*.)

synoptic study of that time is from Štětka¹¹, the conclusion of which inadvertently anticipates the approaching onset of a new era in the ownership of Czech media: “On the one hand, the presence of foreign, often multinational owners persists. They dominate in the most important media sectors and the fact that they expand horizontally and diagonally contributes to the conglomeration process and further market concentration (as the MAFRA example clearly illustrates)...”

4 June 2013 and Expectations of Party Parallelism

In June 2013, Štětka's concluding example turned into its very opposite - the acquisition of the MAFRA publishing house by the Agrofert holding (owned by Andrej Babiš) started a new phase in which the conditions for the emergence of fully-fledged media-party parallelism were personified in the person of its owner and, at the same time, the founder/chairman of a major political party. However, the unique and unprecedented concentration of economic, political and media power gave rise to a wave of negative reactions in the public discourse, likewise unique in its scope and intensity. A number of journalists left the editorial boards of the important daily newspapers MF Dnes and Lidové noviny. They were subsequently behind the creation of a number of new media¹². Although the Czech media legislation does not limit the degree of political parallelism in the printed media, the blatant case of Babiš-Agrofert-ANO-MAFRA also led to a change in the legislation¹³. It seems that the ideal of a non-partisan, internally pluralistic press is still very much alive/esteemed/strong in Czech society. Both the professional and general public closely follow cases such as Příbil¹⁴ or Lékárničky¹⁵ and intuitively look for evidence of growing (and generally perceived as implicitly negative) party parallelism. Unfortunately, Czech media studies still owe a comprehensive **content analysis** of MF Dnes and Lidové noviny, which would come up with a varied arsenal of indicators of their possible bias to ANO and apply them for the entire period since 2013. There are only a few diploma theses¹⁶ and partial studies¹⁷ available, which seem ambiguous or fail to directly bring fundamental evidence of the transformation of these dailies into a partisan press – roughly in the style of the Czechoslovak First Republic (1918 - 1938). Which, for that matter, would correspond to the anticipated and proclaimed expectations of both sides of the (anti) Babiš

¹¹ ŠTĚTKA, V.: Between a Rock and a Hard Place? Market Concentration, Local Ownership and Media Autonomy in the Czech Republic. In *International Journal of Communication*, 2010, Vol. 4, No. 1, p. 866-884.

¹² Remark by the author: E.g. the magazine Reporter led by former editor-in-chief of MF Dnes Robert Časenský or the Echo24 news server led by former editor-in-chief of Lidové noviny Dalibor Balšínek. See also: JETMAR, J.: *Jak postbabišovská média přežila svou první pětiletku*. [online]. [2020-03-03]. Available at: <<https://www.mediar.cz/jak-postbabisovska-media-prezila-svou-prvni-petiletku/>>.

¹³ Remark by the author: In spite of the presidential veto, an amendment to the Act on Conflicts of Interest (Act No. 159/2006 Coll.) was approved in 2016, which prevents government officials from, among other things, direct ownership of print and broadcast media.

¹⁴ Remark by the author: In May 2017, secretly recorded recordings were leaked/released onto the Internet, where an MF Dnes journalist, Marek Příbil, offers Andrej Babiš compromising materials on ministers Ludvík and Chovanec (both ČSSD).

¹⁵ Remark by the author: Whilst on Wednesday 7 March 2018 all the other dailies gave front page reports on the demonstration on Wenceslas Square (partly directed against Andrej Babiš and ANO), the daily MF Dnes did not, the front page opened with the headline Car First Aid Kits Useless in an Accident.

¹⁶ For more information, see: BRADÁVKOVÁ, J.: *Analýza mediálního obsahu v kontextu působení ANO 2011 v politickém systému ČR*. Brno : FSS MUNI, 2015.; HAVLOVÁ, L.: *Aktivita holdingu Agrofert perspektivou Mladé fronty Dnes a Lidových novin před a po jejich převzetí Andrejem Babišem*. Prague : FSV UK, 2017.

¹⁷ KŘEČEK, J.: Buying a Gun not to Use it? A Study of the Change in Czech Media Ownership and its Political Instrumentalisation. In *World of Media: Journal of Russian Media and Journalism Studies*, 2017, Vol. 6, No. 1, p. 76-97.; See also: TRAMPOTA, T., NEČAS, V.: *Analýza tištěných a online médií v předvolebním období krajských a senátních voleb 2016*. Prague : Open Society Fund, 2016.

fission - that the ideal of an impartial, internally pluralistic press is alive in the editorial boards of both media (or that there is simply a skilful pretence of it in their journalistic performance). However, the following case study is based on the hypothesis/belief that the ownership changes in 2013 still opened the field for the emergence and subsequent analysis of pure media-party parallelism. Instead of the “Babiš” media, it is only necessary to focus attention on the media subsequently created, “post-Babiš” or directly “anti-Babiš” (a current overview and summary of their five years of existence see by Jetmar¹⁸). That is, media that could have arisen primarily as a negative definition, nonetheless, over time, they have become activistic, as such, seeking an ally and perhaps ultimately becoming parallelistic for existing political parties.

5 Analysis of Forum24

Forum24.cz is a specific medium founded and proclaiming to work simply because of the political and media activities of Andrej Babiš. The first part (first graph) looks at the dominant amount of attention “his” party/movement ANO 2011 receives compared to the vestigial attention paid to all other political parties, albeit briefly, since it doesn’t really concern parallelism (as defined as a sympathising and supportive relationship). In contrast, the second, key part of the research heads in this direction. It analyses the image all the other political parties (except ANO 2011) have in the contents of Forum24.cz, in particular the frequency and extent of their assessment. The quantitative content analysis method is used predominantly in each part, both in its frequency and valency form (especially in the second part). The analysed set of texts were all 239 articles (129,131 words incl. identifiers) that were published on the server a month before the regional and senate elections (8 September - 5 October 2018) and in which at least one of the parliamentary parties. (or its chairperson) ¹⁹ was mentioned. Subsequently, 249 evaluation statements were found in these and used for the valence part of the quantitative analysis. A full-text search was primarily made in the Newton Media archive²⁰, secondly in the Forum24.cz archive. The results were manually cleaned of irrelevant articles, duplicates and quasi-duplicates in the pre-analytical phase and further coded by four researchers²¹. The subsequent qualitative additions were made by the author, as described in the introduction to the relevant subchapters, and the results were then generalised into a new hypothesis. The analysed medium, Forum24.cz, represents a relatively specific case in the Czech media landscape. Although several new titles have recently been created in response to Andrej Babiš’s media acquisitions, it can be said that Forum24.cz holds a primacy in seeing the political and media activities of Andrej Babiš and “his” party ANO 2011 as a fundamental threat to the post-1989 arrangement of the state/power/socioeconomic order, which is reflected in the thematic composition and style of its entire content. This basic set up is clearly reflected

¹⁸ JETMAR, J.: *Jak postbabišovská média přežila svou první pětiletku*. [online]. [2020-03-03]. Available at: <<https://www.mediar.cz/jak-postbabisovska-media-prezila-svou-prvni-petiletku/>>.

¹⁹ Remark by the author: Found using the search algorithm “ANO OR Babiš OR ODS OR Fiala OR Piráti OR Bartoš OR SPD OR Okamura OR KSCM OR Filip OR ČSSD OR Hamáček OR KDU-ČSL OR Bělobrádek OR TOP 09 OR Pospíšil OR STAN OR Gazdík OR volby”.

²⁰ Remark by the author: Monitoring Forum24.cz since 1. 7. 2018.

²¹ Remark by the author: To ensure the maximum possible reliability in the case of the intersubjectively demanding valence analysis, a seemingly redundant procedure was chosen; in this four experienced CEMES analysts collected data independently of each other, that being from the entire (2x) or a sample (2x) set, then it was weighted and transferred to the whole, then the proportions in the total number and scope of evaluation statements were averaged (and correlated) for each political party. This model proved to be robust both with regards to the subjectivity of individual coders and to fluctuations in valence measurements caused by the difference in the number and length of evaluation statements.

in the first step/phase of the analysis, i.e. in measuring the attention given to individual political parties.

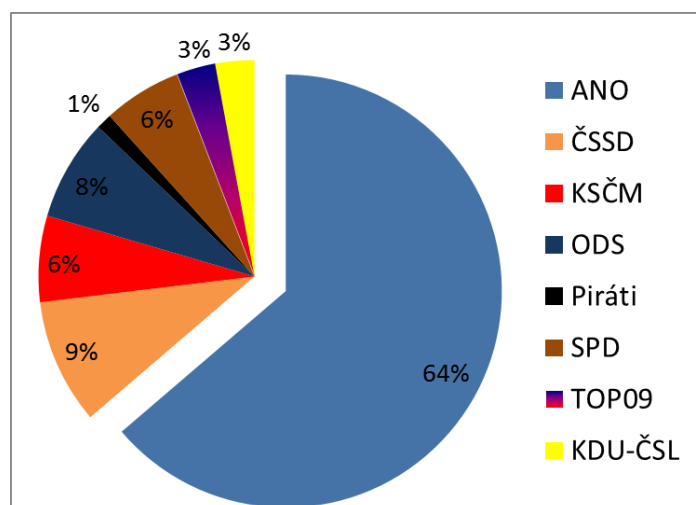


Chart 1 Political party as the main theme of the article (N =239)

Source: own processing

In order to investigate/search for party parallelism, the second step of analysis logically focused on assessing the other political parties (i.e. apart from ANO, where a party-parallelistic relationship is *a priori* excluded). In this part the analysis works with a total of 249 evaluation (negative or positive) statements with regards to all political parties except ANO, i.e. with a total range of 56,084 characters. In this whole, ČSSD was the party most frequently evaluated (37.5% of the total number of mentions), followed by the SPD (19.5%), followed by the ODS (14%) and the KSČM (12.4%). Only then were they followed by the Pirates (8%) and TOP 09 (3%), with a single-digit result. The remaining 5.6% summarises the evaluation of all other parties, in particular KDU-ČSL and STAN, but there was also an evaluation of the non-parliamentary formations (Svobodní, DSSS, SPO, Jauner2018...). From the first step of the analysis it can be seen that the dominant topic of Forum24 is Babiš/ANO - the sentiment directed towards it is *a priori* negative (a preanalytical determination). However, negative sentiment was also found in the overall evaluation of all other parties (88% x 12%), as shown in Chart 2. The resulting charts 3 and 4 break down the positive and negative sentiments according to the individual parties evaluated. Half of the positive sentiment is directed to the ODS, almost a quarter (24%) to the TOP 09. There is then a small remnant of what was already a relatively small positive sentiment (compared to the negative) for the Pirates (10%), Other (9%) and ČSSD (7%). The KSČM and SPD parties were not positively evaluated at all. In contrast, the target of the negative sentiment is mostly ČSSD (41%), followed by SPD (22%) and KSČM (13%). Single-digit result this time for the ODS (9%), Pirates (9%) and others (6%). The share TOP 09 has in the total negativity is a negligible 1%.

Chart 2 The distribution of positive and negative valences (249 evaluation statements)

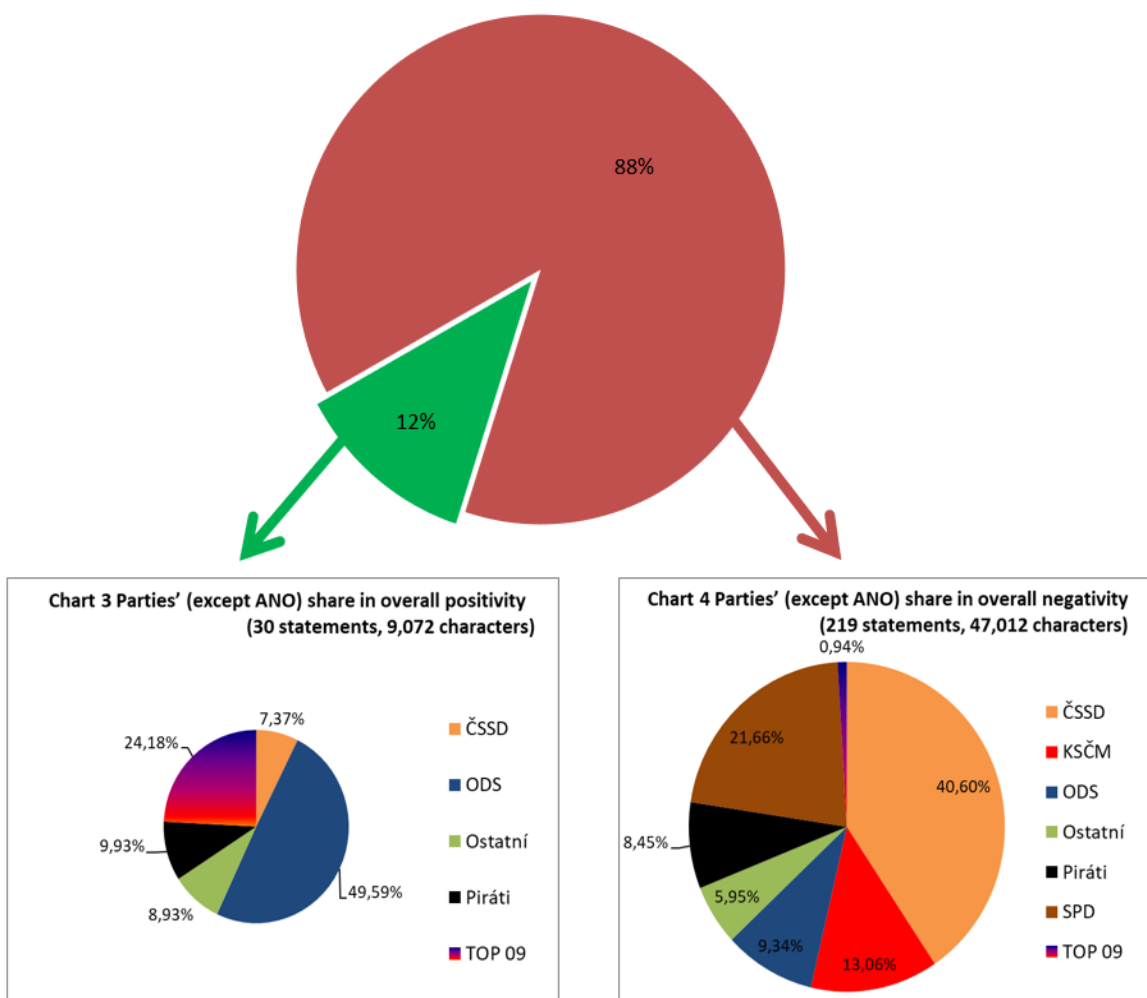


Chart 2: The distribution of positive and negative valences (249 evaluation statements)

Source: own processing

The afore-mentioned dominant negativity not only towards ANO, but also towards other political parties as a whole proved to be a significantly limiting factor in determining the goal and level of party parallelism by quantitative content analysis alone (although half of all positive valency with regards to ODS is a good guide). Therefore, it was supplemented with a small qualitative addition – albeit not very sophisticated. Basically, it concerned selecting potentially significant text sections (quotations) and labelling them with qualitative codes (In-vivo and open coding) during the data collection for quantitative analysis (and their subsequent rough grouping). The interpretive coding of the evaluation statements directed at the ODS thus quite easily and clearly revealed that while the whole party or its current leadership is positively evaluated, the negativity is directed at specific party members - the current party opposition (Jan Skopeček, Václav Klaus Jr., Zuzana Majerová Zahradníková) or persons otherwise connected with the ODS, often from the past (Tomáš Kňourek as the ODS nominee to the Council for Czech Radio, similarly former ODS member Petr Štěpánek as the ANO nominee to RRTV) and their divergent attitudes (EU, Merkel, immigration), further examples of a negative evaluation include the former connection of ODS with lobbyist Roman Janoušek and with privatisation scandals. In addition to the distribution of the attention that the Forum24.cz devotes to individual parties in its articles, political profiling/parallelism is also indicated by

another grouping of codes referring to “before the texts”, i.e. to interpreted editorial practices whilst creating and publishing other content (categorised after the first step of qualitative analysis). Firstly, **interviews** conducted by the interviewer in a sympathetic manner that testify to Forum24.cz’s positive attitude towards the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) represented by the interviewee, secondly, publishing **speeches** in the Chamber of Deputies or similar **statements** in the same form as in the editorials. The pure manifestation of media-party parallelism is then achieved by the fact that the Pravý břeh (Right Bank, think-tank of ODS chairman Petr Fiala) has its **own section** in the structure of the Forum24.cz.

Conclusion

Even before the analysis, it was clear that Forum 24 has no ambition to be another impartial / independent medium, a forum for all the relevant political actors to exchange views, an internally pluralistic medium. On the contrary, it represents a typical example of a medium from the environment of external pluralism, that is, a partisan medium that is engaged, for which it is no problem to recognise the distasteful political actors (who establish the very meaning of the medium’s existence). At the moment, however, it can be said that the analysis has also proven the existence of a parallelistic actor, one whom the medium is, on the whole, avowedly helping to achieve its political goals. Thus, it has confirmed the initial hypothesis of the quantitative research. The subsequent qualitative part, in contrast, leads to a new hypothesis - namely that the example of Forum24 as a party-parallelistic medium is perhaps the most glaring, but certainly not unique. It may indicate another direction in the relationship between the media and political actors, perhaps it’s possible to talk about another turning point/stage of Czech political communication within the deepening/intensifying politicisation of Central European systems, as, for instance, Ostrowska²² discusses. Forum 24 is no longer a marginal medium resembling a blog, whose editor-in-chief can stop their activities one day and take them up again the next day after sobering up²³. Today, it already has a well-established editorial board and, with its monthly magazine, it has established itself in the traditional print media sector. The hypothesis seems to be confirmed by two other facts that occurred after the analysis was completed. On June 1, an article under the grossly misleading title *The Russian Duma will adopt a law on the legitimacy of the 1968 occupation of Czechoslovakia*²⁴ was published. Its content was subsequently reproduced by a number of serious media and even gave rise to several declarations by Czech and Slovak officials. It thus graphically illustrated its ability to put topics on the table, i.e. to be an agenda-making medium in the Czech media landscape.

²² OSTROWSKA, B.: How the Media Systems Work in Central and Eastern Europe. In POŁOŃSKA, E., BECKETT, C. (eds.): *Public Service Broadcasting and Media Systems in Troubled European Democracies*. London : Palgrave Macmillan, 2019, p. 261-276.

²³ Remark by the author: In the early afternoon of 13.8. 2015, an article by Pavel Šafr – Farewell - was published in the monitored media (then still called Svobodné forum (Free Forum)), in which the editor-in-chief announced the end of public activity, stating that he is “experiencing deep sadness from the state of Czech society”... the zenith of this absolute bankruptcy is the destruction of the free media, as organised by Andrej Babiš. I am deeply disgusted that the Czechs do not want public control of power... ". As the Mediář server soon stated, “He probably did not consult the editorial staff of the Free Forum about his intention in advance, nor did he inform them in advance. “I had no idea and Mr. Šafr is not here,” Linda Bartáková, editorial assistant, told the Media. (<https://www.mediar.cz/safr-oznamil-odchod-z-verejneho-zivota/>)... However, within about an hour the article had disappeared from the server, and the next day Pavel Šafr’s Apology was published, in which one of the things he stated was: “We will rearrange the organisational side of our work at the Free Forum so that we do not surprise you nor each other in this manner in the future.” (<https://www.forum24.cz/omluva-pavla-safra/>).

²⁴ ŠAFR, P.: *Ruská дума přijme zákon o oprávněnosti okupace Československa v roce 1968*. [online]. [2020-05-01]. Available at: <<https://www.forum24.cz/ruska-duma-prijme-zakon-o-opravnosti-okupace-ceskoslovenska-v-roce-1968/>>.

The same month he published a text that can be contrasted with the “wonder years” of the Czech media landscape mentioned in the introduction, in which the mass of right-wing journalists spilled over between proclamatory independent and objective editorial boards. An article with the title “*Let's give Babiš's people a chance to return to decent society. It must begin with an apology*”²⁵ follows - in terms of diction, style/composition, appellation, the declaration of a historical turning point and the return to normality - to the best tradition of Czech journalistic self-regulation, the document Slovo do vlastních řad (A Word for Our Ranks)²⁶. Currently the hypothesis being put forward is that a new phase of Czech political communication is upon us, i.e. the return (after more than half a century) of fully-fledged media-party parallelism. Which is neither good nor bad – to the point that the legislation on the printed media (much less the Internet) and on party parallelism does not forbid it (of which Haló noviny, as the exception proving the rule throughout the period of this historical review, is testimony) - unlike the broadcasting sector (where TV Barrandov in the service of tycoon Soukup, who proclaims political ambitions, is a foreign element). It “only” changes the nature of the public sphere (and the associated normative expectations), however it can only be matched with traditional and Internet media (except the social network sites). Instead of the hitherto, hegemonic public sphere (with the media as forums), this is one of the first manifestations of the public marketplace (with the media as stalls or shops, or better yet: grandstands). It is endearing that this new phase is also accompanied by nomenclatural confusion. While MF Dnes or Právo have strived throughout their existence to exude the image of an independent, internally pluralistic press (forum), but their past leaves them a name referring to a tribune, here a new medium has emerged as a tribune, but it has been called exactly the opposite.

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²⁵ ŠAFR, P.: *Dejme Babišovým lidem šanci vrátit se do slušné společnosti. Musí začít omluvou*. [online]. [2020-05-19]. Available at: <<https://www.forum24.cz/dejme-babisovym-lidem-sanci-vratit-se-do-slusne-spolecnosti-musi-zacit-omluvou/>>.

²⁶ Remark by the author: The declaration A Word for Our Own Ranks was published on 17.5.1969 in the daily Rudé právo and began with the words: “We, the undersigned, address all our fellow journalists and Czechoslovak workers in the press, radio, television and news film... Unfortunately, we have so far not seen a single case in which the spokespersons of journalists' associations - much less the journalists and editors of television and radio whom the criticism concerns directly - have claimed responsibility... “ Its signatories critically assessed the role of the media during the Prague Spring and called on their fellow journalists to reflect upon it and sign. The document can thus be seen as a symbolic turning point between the liberalisation period of the Prague Spring and the “normalisation” of the media.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE (ALLEGED) MUTUAL IMPACT OF GAMES AND SOCIOCULTURAL FACTORS

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ABSTRACT:

With the raising need of perceiving videogames as serious medium, one of the point of view is to see into games in terms of seeing them as a receivers and reflections of various influences from the culture, media, political or social situation. Paper deals in these structures, it places emphasis on positive reflections and it results in raising question if this relationship of impact works counteractively; if games have the power of “regular” media, how they shift the debate, how much influence do they have and why do we hear mostly just about their impact on the individual.

KEY WORDS:

Blizzkong, gaming, videogames controversy

1 Introduction: Current Happenings on Gaming Scene

In the fall of 2019, a relatively small thing happened, which resulted in a major event on the game scene. The political statement of Hong Kong professional Heartstone player Blitzchung (Ng Wai Chung) in a live streaming of Heartstone game interrupted the tournament and inicialized a Blitzchung ban, ending the contract with his two casters (streamers), and especially sparked the huge backlash of the gaming community, a boycott of Blizzard and planned disruption of the blizzcon (Blizzard’s annual festival). Blizzkong, as these events have been called, is a telling event in many ways. It draws attention to the importance of the Chinese video game market (sports in China are an officially recognized sport and their markets are growing exponentially¹) and the economic background. We know about the long-term strategic connection between Blizzard and the Chinese giant Tencent, which is, among other things, the largest gaming publisher in terms of annual revenue. We have less data on how important the Chinese market is to Blizzard in terms of revenue, as according to Blizzard's annual reports, Asia and the Pacific account for a relatively small percentage. (The audience that appears to be the largest in this area seems to be the most important factor in this)². But the financial factor is only part of this event, which seems to be a manifestation of the conflict between "Western" democratic culture and autocratic regimes. Through similar lenses we can look at the very current discussion that is taking place (mostly) in the Czech Republic in May 2020 between the author of Kingdom Come: Deliverance, Daniel Vávra, and the Czech Academy, represented in this conflict by Dr. Klára Hübner. from Masaryk University. The conflict is mainly due to Hübner's lecture on stereotypes in this particular game, which in 2018 was part of a larger series of lectures by various experts from the Institute of History, Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University. The head developer of the game, Vávra, commented on the video from the lecture in 2020, taking the ill-argued criticism as an attack on his game.

¹ LEVY, J.: *Chinese esports market to hit US\$3bn by 2020, says CTTV report*. [online]. [2020-04-25]. Available at: <<https://www.sportspromedia.com/news/china-esports-market-us3bn-2020-cctv-ldg-gaming>>.

² PERSON, R.: *Report: Tencent Owns 5% of Activision Blizzard, Company Profits from China Less Than 13%*. [online]. [2020-05-05]. Available at: <<https://nichegamer.com/2019/10/19/report-tencent-owns-5-of-activision-blizzard-company-profits-from-china-less-than-13-hearthstone-tournament-viewership-30/>>.

2 Under the Surface of These Events

As well as the controversy over Blizzkong, this dispute has several levels. The first is the most important topic in terms of history; the credibility of the depiction of the Middle Ages in one particular game and the relevance of the sources from which to draw in creating such a virtual world. In addition, the dispute has an ideological level, which draws the discussion into a black-and-white world, especially on web, in which Hübner (and the university in general) presents the liberal feminist multicultural lobby against which Vávra must defend himself in position of symbol of national awareness and resistance to foreign ideology. From an academic point of view, in this dispute, it is important to open the discussion and the academic community's interest in the video game genre. The attention of experts should, as with other media, be enriching and clarifying. Most of the lectures in this particular course were received positively, and this particular example is unfortunate mainly because it presents the view of video games as something worthy of criticism, but not of sincere interest and willingness to do detailed research. Hübner herself says at the beginning: *"I don't play computer games. I only know that a little bit from the scientific side, from what one sometimes reads about them in diaries, newspapers, and so on."*³ Of course, this is not a happy beginning of the lecture, nor of the general approach to the subject; after all, the scientific side would mean that even though she does not play games (which is a legitimate option), she would prepare the lecture on the basis of a close observation of the various gameplays that are available and so on.

The whole conflict is, naturally, unnecessarily harsh and counterproductive, despite the fact that we can also hear objective observers among academics, journalists or the public. Criticism of some of the practices in the game or Vávra's statements (resp. his inconsistency in some of the related statements) does not immediately mean believing the correctness of Hübner's lecture and vice versa, nor does anyone question that Kingdom Come: Deliverance is -simply put- a successful and game with high quality. Unfortunately, the way most participants lead the discussion tends to polarize the participants into two camps, and on the players' side we see one of the other negative phenomena, which is already the notorious - the toxicity of what we can call the gaming community. Thus, legitimate criticism gradually becomes Hübner's public lynching with a call for her dismissal (and worse). The mindset of this kind of gamers is manifested in aggressive language and hate speech against liberal and humanitarian views (which Hübner represents in this case) and it can be (without exaggeration) compared to the behaviour of "gamers" in the 2014 Gamergate case (GamerGate being a scandal mostly consisting of misogynistic harassment and violent threats against female gamers, developers and critics. Funny enough, Vávra himself had been very vocal in this subject as well). Doctor Hübner certainly made a grave mistake, but it is questionable whether the same lynch would be torn off even if she was not, well, she. *"Anonymity and norms of online communication have led to a situation where being outspoken and a woman, or sometimes just being a woman, on the internet will lead to death threats and persistent harassment."*⁴

³ Kingdom Come – přednáška II – Stereotypy – Dr. phil. Klára Hübnerová. [online]. [2020-05-10]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8fHHkTCMsoA&t=1560s>>.

⁴ PAUL, Ch. A.: *The Toxic Meritocracy of Video Games: Why Gaming Culture Is the Worst*. Minneapolis, Minnesota : University of Minnesota Press, 2018, p. 14.

3 Reflection of Social Factors in Games

These two events are mentioned in the introduction for several reasons. First of all, these are not some obscure, marginal happening. Activision Blizzard is one of the largest development companies, and the controversy over the Blitzchung ban was one of the most significant events on the scene in 2019. As for Kingdom Come: Deliverance, Vávra's Warhorse Studios has sold more than two million copies of the game, which is a proven success for the first game of the Czech publishing house. What is perhaps even more important from the point of view of this article is that the discussion around the Masaryk University course is a concrete example of the need to abandon ideas in which games are a second-class medium that is not worthy of academic research or professional / and public debate. But video games deserve our attention, although the process of classifying them as "classic" media is still ongoing. These are pieces that are created under certain conditions, have their context and and this process does not end with the release of the game. It is a pity that from the discussion that is taking place around them especially the most tabloid and catchy ones are the ones that get most of the attention, as in the case of Kingdom Come: Deliverance. *"Significantly, although the academic world has paid sincere attention to the game, the most visible has been the reaction, which reveals a benevolent view of product trash culture."*⁵

3.1 Minorities Shown and Perceived

It is equally as telling, that public debate (web forums mostly), that concerned about historical accuracy of the medieval world, mostly discussed presence of people in color especially, respectively, the lack of it. (We heard similar critics during the debate of why there are no people of colour in Witcher 3: The Wild Hunt developed and published by polish CD Projekt Red in 2015). Debates and discussions like this are nevertheless regular part of feedback got. Also, it seems that this subject (whether game contains people of color and whether it should in terms of historical accuracy- which is maybe more relevant in Kingdom Come than in Witcher, which is set in fantasy world, even if inspired by Slavic regions), is far less important than more crucial parts of the debate, as we explain later. In the game Rust from Facepunch Studios, in 2016 the creators tried an interesting experiment. Rust is a survival online game in which originally everyone played for a bald white man. That changed with two game updates; the creators also added women and other skin colors to the game. Here comes the catch: they did it without making the choice possible. They randomly assigned gender and skin color to new and existing players; that means people logged into the game to find out there have been "assigned" female gender or different type of skin colour.

The reaction of the players was quite extreme and thanks to the developers we know where the specific objections come from (for example, players from Russia had the biggest problem with "assigned" dark skin, transgender gamers where bothered with assigned gender and so on). The lead developer of the game, Garry Newman, disagrees with accusations of this move being a "political statement" or "forced feminist ideals", he claims that *"the decision to randomize race and gender is all about better gameplay, not imposing ideology"* and he also has some good points about social aspect of it as well. *"It's maybe understandable why some male gamers wouldn't want to play as women,"* says Newman. *"They're just not used to being forced to. You could probably count on your fingers the number of major, big-budget games where you have no choice but to play as a woman, never mind having no choice but to play as*

⁵ WAGNER, D. F.: *"Ve sporu o hru Kingdom Come prohrává paranoidní vývojář i arogantní akademici"*. [online]. [2020-05-13]. Available at: <<https://www.heroine.cz/kultura/2364-ve-sporu-o-hru-kingdom-come-prohrava-paranoidni-vyvojar-i-arogantni-akademici?>>>.

a black woman. Female gamers are obviously more forgiving - they've been playing games as men for most of their lives. "⁶ We mention this since it should be a part of discussion that is supposed to surround video games as well. For example, for various research; we know that "embodiment of light-skinned participants in a dark-skinned VB significantly reduced implicit racial bias against dark-skinned people, in contrast to embodiment in light-skinned, purple-skinned or with no VB." (VB being an abbreviation for virtual body).⁷ Similar studies are being done around the world, and although some key parts are still being verified (such as the duration of such influence), we consider this further evidence why we should take games seriously, and why it is a real shame that racial or gender issues very loud and negative reactions. To some extent, however, this is understandable, as not only we do not live in a post-racial world where race does not exist as a topic, but even nowadays, is strongly linked to the functioning of other parts of society (just remember as "Angry white man" was the driving force in the US presidential election⁸).

3.2 Other Issues Portrayed

Reflections on the issues that are currently resonating in the world are inherent in games. So far we have mentioned mostly minorities, but there are many more examples. For example, we can mention the reflection of the humanitarian crisis, which was portrayed in its gameplay by the game *This War of Mine* made by the Polish 11 Bit Studios. *This War of Mine* is a game that is considered one of the most distinctive games of the new genre of so-called *empathy games*. It is basically a war game loosely inspired by the siege of Sarajevo and it does not focus on soldiers rather than on ordinary civilians trapped in the war zone. The player's task is to take care of the group of survivors in the ruin they occupy, secure it from attacks, scavenger food and medical supplies at night. The strongest part of the game are the decisions player have to make in order for the characters to survive. *This War of Mine* is a beautifully crafted, complicated game that cannot be won in regular meaning of that world; the characters can just survive until the end of the siege. In 2016, a special Anniversary Edition was released, which added-among other things- a new area, so-called Port, with the non-playable character Karel. Karel was a human smuggler; the player could pay him a large sum and Karel promised to smuggle the survivors out of town. At the same time, the player is not sure whether this promise is true or not and whether a trip on a small boat is really a better choice than staying in the destroyed city. The creators of the game thus directly mentioned the possibility that was supposed to reflect the refugee crisis and thus evoke a certain form of understanding for people who flee the war conflict under risky conditions. We consider this a good example of what we are trying to illustrate, because it differs from some development decisions that contain maybe a political statement (such as the hidden political statements in the Taiwanese game *Devotion*, which was eventually withdrawn from Steam for reasons similar to Blizzkong's events), although similar aspects can also be considered as a reflection of the social situation in the game content.

⁶ NEWMAN, G.: *Why my videogame chooses your character's race and gender for you*. [online]. [2020-05-05]. Available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/apr/13/videogame-chooses-character-race-gender-rust>>.

⁷ See also: AGLIOTI, S. M., PECK, T. C., SEINFELD, S., SLATER, M.: Putting yourself in the skin of a black avatar reduces implicit racial bias. In *Consciousness and Cognition*, 2013, Vol. 22, No. 3, p. 779-787. [online]. [2020-04-29]. Available at: <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1053810013000597?via%3Dihub>>.

⁸ CONROY, J. O.: *Angry white men': the sociologist who studied Trump's base before Trump*. [online]. [2020-05-10]. Available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/feb/27/michael-kimmel-masculinity-far-right-angry-white-men>>.

Conclusion: Impact of Games

Generally, when impact or influence of consumption of the games is mentioned, the effect on one individual is discussed most. Most prominent debate of course revolves around connection of video games and violence, even when it was many times established, that the relations between two is not as direct and strong as predicted. However, we do not know much about impact of games on society on a large scale. Currently, there are some predictions about gaming community. Some are more positive and optimistic, some thread more on a sceptical side. Even when huge event such as Blizzkong happens, it seems that collective energy of the gaming community tends to cool down over time even without desired accomplishment. Even with boycott of Blizzard, few months later we see that boycott was mostly over-hyper, and even with some economical aspect to be considered⁹, the results were rather disappointing. But from what we are able to see, it seems that it may be too soon to search for great events and statements that have instant impact on people opinions or even behaviour. As far as we know, those games that aspire to do so (directly or indirectly) have a potential to stir a debate, shift it in different directions and most important of all, since we talk about medium that is evolving so quickly and given the right technology, we may expect much more.

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⁹ SUN, L.: *Should Investors Worry About Tencents Stake in Activision Blizzard?*. [online]. [2020-05-10]. <<https://www.fool.com/investing/2019/10/15/should-investors-worry-tencent-stake-activision.aspx>>.

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FLEETING GLANCE AT A PORTRAIT

Peter Lančarič – Eva Jonisová

ABSTRACT:

Portraiture has a long and extensive history. It has been developing across various different stages of civilization. Portraiture as a specific genre has always conformed to the social, religious or artistic conventions. Functions and roles of this genre have progressed along the ever-changing human experience and technological transformation of society. The submitted study does not represent a lengthy excursus on the history of art; on the contrary, it presents a fleeting glance at interesting cultural roles of a portrait, social phenomena and functions that are related to this form of depicting a human being.

KEY WORDS:

art, history of portraiture, portrait, portraiture, representation

1 Introduction

Oxford English Dictionary defines the term “*portraiture*” as a representation of a person, their portrayal made mainly by drawing, painting, photographing, engraving, etc. We usually encounter this term in connection to various types of art. A portrait is present in visual arts, literature, film and dramatic art, as well as in music. However, it is most typical for visual arts, specifically for photography, painting, drawing, and sculpture. Looking more closely at the semantic roots, this term is principally connected to the idea of likeness. This simple definition is misleading, because it denies the complicated, multiplex, and complex character of portraiture. Portraits are not only about the external resemblance, but are also works of art that address complex notions of identity. From the psychological point of view, personal identity is based on perception of one’s selfsameness and continuity in time and the simultaneous perception of the fact that others recognize one’s sameness and continuity¹. The term identity is examined on three levels. On the intrapersonal level, identity represents the core of personality. It is self-realization of one’s authenticity and stability towards internalized values and norms. On the interpersonal level, identity is defined by social roles. Naming the roles can answer the question of who I am. On the level of social self-definition, identity is derived on the basis of individual’s identification with particular social groups.² Portraits are not able to express these aspects of identity in a literal way. However, they often give an impression of speaking about the identity of the portrayed subject. This narration is certainly not complex. Rather, it represents certain half-clear contours of a character, personality, uniqueness. The concept saying that a portrait should depict also something about a psychological state, the so-called “*inner world*” of the portrayed subject, had been evolving gradually. According to the art historian Shearer West, it became common in the 19th century: “*Romanticism fuelled the idea of a personality cult, that is, a fascination with particular qualities, idiosyncrasies, and actions of a celebrated individual.*”³ Portraiture has significantly contributed to the formation and articulation of modern individualism. Social anthropologist Melinda Hinkson says that portraiture represents “*a primary genre through which the culture of western modernity has been animated and reinforced.*”⁴ It is also demonstrated by the extensive history of European

¹ ERIKSEN, E. H.: *Identity and the Life Cycle*. New York : W. W. Norton & Company, 1994, p. 22.

² BAČOVÁ, V., KUSÁ, Z.: *Identity v meniacej sa spoločnosti*. Bratislava : Spoločenskovedný ústav SAV, 1997, p. 223-225.

³ WEST, P.: *Portraiture*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 29.

⁴ HINKSON, M.: *Imaging Identity: Media, memory and portraiture in the digital age*, Canberra : The Australian National University, 2016, p. 3-4.

art. However, portraiture is not an exhausted genre even today. With the changing human experience and technological transformation of society, boundaries of this genre are also moving forward. The role of portraiture and a portrait is being rearticulated and recontextualised. This enables the genre to be more free and, to a certain extent, liberated from its own history.

Portrait as a visual projection of character features of a subject, its unique individuality and essence, is no longer its sole function. It is, however, a fact that, in many cases, a portrait still primarily represents the external features of an individual. In most cases, we are still able to identify gender and race and estimate the age of an individual from a portrait. A portrait further reveals height, weight, physical strength, and other physical characteristics. An individual as a basic unit of society should be considered also from the point of view of their gender, race, age, and other visually capturable elements of an identity. According to the sociologists Michael Emmison and Philip Smith, “*the body, unlike the soul or the self, is inherently and ineluctably visual and as such constitutes a rich source of data.*”⁵ However, external features of an individual also comprise clothes, haircut, body language, facial expressions, poses, and gestures. Sociologist Ervin Goffman describes these identity-reflecting visual elements by a general term “*front*” of an individual.⁶ It is the outer appearance of the portrayed subject – observable visual facts that also reveal a part of their psychological identity. We do not rule out the possibility that a portrait can also depict the core of a personality, but it can be stated with certainty that, based on visual elements of a subject, we are able to estimate, if not define, their social role or social group that they belong to.⁷ Portraiture has always conformed to social, educational or artistic conventions. A portrait can also represent an intersection of a specific likeness and its generalization. In such case, a portrait depicts specific aspects of the portrayed individual as well as generalized information about their social environment. It draws on reality that is formed as a unique historical presence of the subject. A portrait is thus also a representation of time, era, and society. Therefore, to a certain extent, portraits are capable of conveying the character and values of human history. They can provide a starting point for reflections on the hierarchy of society and also can help us understand the perception of individual social classes in different periods in history. That is why many portraits are considered historical documents.

2 Portraiture

Despite trends in artistic production comprising styles, techniques, and media preferred in a particular period of time, this art form retains some of its significant features. It is an extensive art category. We consider portraiture an extremely suitable subject of examination, because it differs from other art genres by the method of production, nature of what it represents, but also by various functions it acquires as a material object. There is also a specific person present during the creation of a portrait or, at least, the creator is working with a picture of this person or any other form of a model. However, exemptions do exist and there are more and more of

⁵ EMMISON, M., SMITH, P. D.: *Researching the visual*. London : SAGE Publications Ltd, 2012, p. 19.

⁶ GOFFMAN, E.: *The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life*. Edinburgh : University of Edinburgh, 1956, p. 14-15.

⁷ Remark by the authors: Naturally, it also depends on the photographer’s approach and intentions, or what kind of portrait we are looking at. During the history of photography, some authors have used also strategies that intentionally suppressed the identity of the portrayed person, the portrait thus showing nothing but basic physical features. An example of this could be the portraits by Thomas Ruff that he started creating in 1981.

them in the 21st century.⁸ However, referring to the history of art, a creation of a portrait usually involved a meeting of an artist and portrayed subject. Nowadays, this form of direct contact is most common in photography. To a certain extent, it is still present in painting, where, for example during courses of figurative painting, a real person poses as a model. However, sketches and photographs used as references are more usual.⁹ Direct contact is also present in a literary and film portrait, assuming it is not a portrait of a fictitious person. Roland Barthes considers the portrait-photograph a closed field of forces: *“Four image-repertoires intersect here, oppose and distort each other. In front of the lens, I am at the same time: the one I think I am, the one I want others to think I am, the one the photographer thinks I am, and the one he makes use of to exhibit his art.”*¹⁰ We find these four Barthes’s moments that are present within the process of creating a portrait photograph a basis of portraiture in general. A portrait thus does not have to be a visual representation of a person, but rather their visual interpretation.

2.1 Role and Transformation of a Portrait over Time

Portrait is a very interesting subject of examination not least because of the diversity of forms it occurs in and functions it can offer. It would be hard to find another art genre that would be present in so many media. Portraits occur in form of paintings, sculptures, drawings, engravings, photographs, coins, medals. They can be a part of mosaics, ceramics, tapestries or banknotes, newspapers, and magazines. They can depict individuals or groups in many ways, whether as a whole, a section, a bust or only as a silhouette. We encounter portraits in many places and this puts their meaning in a wide scale of contexts. We have them at home, they are displayed in galleries, we can hold them, put them into our pockets (coins), wear as talismans (medallions), we encounter them in the form of garden decorations, as well as monuments in public places. The significance a portrait achieves is influenced by its form, intent, and location. Therefore, portraits are not only interpretations of a person, but also material objects. Many portraits are present in public places, such as squares and state or religious institutions. Others are intended for mass distribution in the form of coins or press. Photographic portraits take material form on glossy pages of magazines. Interestingly, even family portraits, which by their character and intent refer mostly to a private function, are not intended to be seen by only one person. We show them to our friends and acquaintances. We share them on the internet. It is as if these portraits were created with a purpose of becoming a public domain. Portraiture, more than any other art genre, attracts attention by its material form, which extends the possibilities of usage of this genre.

Variety of physical forms implies the aesthetical, political, and social functions of this genre. These functions are amplified by a portrait’s ability to cross the boundaries of time. It magically freezes time and artificially prolongs existence of a person. A portrait can be also perceived as

⁸ Remark by the authors: Example of an exception could be the very topical digital art, mostly the way the illustrators create complex characters for animated movies, computer games, animations, comic books, and other media. Even in this case, the designer can be influenced by real people whose physical or character traits they are paraphrasing. However, more often such a character is created with a certain intention or as a part of specific digital environment. Many times, identity of this character is constructed as a collective work. It is common that main characters of animated movies or games are unique subjects with emotions, characteristic face expressions, goals, dreams, and a certain form of background story that legitimizes these traits.

⁹ Remark by the authors: Before the invention of photography, the Renaissance masters used general sketches of basic poses, which allowed them to concentrate more on the face of the portrayed individual. They had thus reduced the number of time-consuming and physically tiring sittings that the portrayed person had to partake. In large and prospering artist workshops, masters used their apprentices to paint most of the painting and they only painted in the face, which was a symbol of their virtuosity.

¹⁰ BARTHES, R.: *Světla komora*. Prague : Fra, 1994, p. 20.

a specific resistance of individuals against time and space. It thus evokes something that lasts longer. The tension between the transient and the perpetual uncovers the essence of not only this genre. It is the fear, but also the desire of a human being. It is as if portraiture preserved life of those who are dead and youth of those who are old. Portraits, just like other kinds of memories, represent a stimulus of the memory. They are a slice of time and space. At the same time, they are also a relic and a form of “a souvenir” that reminds us of our mortality. Barthes in *Camera Lucida* deems portrait photography to be the means through which our society accepts death. He finds anthropological associations between this medium and death. Photographic image produces death while trying to preserve life.¹¹ However, this applies to a portrait in general. Relationship between portraits and rituals connected to death or burials is natural. West states that portraits were primarily invented to serve as symbolic objects for funeral rituals.¹² Nowadays, when religion is in decline and rituals are mostly a part of mythology, it is the portraiture that can be described as human ritual, through which death enters our modern society.



Figure 1: Skull with restored features, 7000 – 6000 B.C.

Source: *Skull with restored features*. [online]. [2020-04-12]. Available at: <<https://www.ashmoleanprintp.com/image/380466/jericho-skull-with-restored-features>>.

Portraiture has a long and extensive history. It has developed across various stages of civilization, while an important role has been played by technological capabilities and the reasons for creating portraits. We would like to avoid a lengthy excursus on the history of art, but we will mention at least a few interesting facts related to the functions of a portrait. A portrait was principally a purposive depiction. Its primary function was mythological. City of Jericho situated on the west bank of Jordan is considered one of the oldest continuously inhabited places in the world. That is why we can describe it as a microcosm of human history. Around the year 6000 B.C., three thousand people lived behind the city walls. Women ground

¹¹ BARTHES, R.: *Svĕtlá komora*. Prague : Fra, 1994, p. 88-90.

¹² WEST, P.: *Portraiture*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 63.

wheat with heavy stones. Men shaped and moulded clay. They were making one of the oldest building-bricks. In this period of time, completely new relationships to the deceased appeared. Inhabitants of Jericho started to preserve skulls separated from bodies of deceased relatives under floors of their homes. Skulls from Jericho are so far the oldest form of sculptural portraits.¹³ It is because the shape of skull is intentionally covered with plaster and packed with soil. Soil prevented damage to the skull caused by the weight of the plaster. Portraits were decorated with shells representing eyes (Figure 1). The Egyptians, for example, believed that if both the likeness and body of a king is preserved, it is twice as likely that he will live forever. According to the art historian Ernst Hans Gombrich, the Egyptian term for sculptor meant “*he who keeps alive*”.¹⁴ A portrait symbolically served as a substitute for physical body that the deceased can live in afterwards. In Ancient Rome, it was common to remove death masks from the deceased to later use them for a portrait. Likeness of the dead person was thus sustained for family members and the descendants. In Ancient Greece, Olympic Games belonged to the most popular sports events. In this period of time, they were much more linked with religious beliefs and rituals. People worshiped a winner of these games as a person that gods had endowed with invincible power. These winners often ordered statues of themselves¹⁵ from the most famous artists with an aim to celebrate divine grace and secure it for the future.¹⁶ Another interesting form of a portrait is the sculpture that is a part of a tomb. The deceased is always idealized, portrayed in the best age and shape, proudly towering over their final resting place. In the 14th century, characteristic facial features in a deceased’s portrait appear rarely. The deceased person is identified by name and dates of their birth and death. Since the 15th century, such sculpture had regularly represented both the physical features of the deceased and their social status through insignia and heraldic symbols. Depictions of animals, such as dogs, lions, dragons or snakes, of an uncertain meaning can also be found on tombs. Their placement close to the feet of the dead person can refer to their victory over the devil or reveal the person’s character.¹⁷

Political function of a portrait also has its roots in Ancient Greece. Symbolic function was extended by a pragmatic use of this art form. Idealized depictions of leaders were struck on coins and medallions, memorials and monuments were built for them. Even an uneducated slave could have recognized a stylized portrayal of Alexander the Great on a coin.¹⁸ The ruler’s portrait represented strong currency, money, and power. On the basis of a political or power motive, a portrait became a tool that allowed an individual or a group to make a desired impression. Ancient portraits often depicted the portrayed subject larger than it really was, invoking feelings of respect and admiration. A suitable example of such representation would be the Colossus of the Roman emperor Constantine, who was a patron of architecture and Christianity. Constantine is depicted with eyes that are too big. This was supposed to accentuate his wisdom and visionariness. However, this need not be regarded as propaganda, because the primary function of a portrait was to express specific social status and naturally strengthen the authority of the ruler. It is, however, a different situation, if a leader attempts to manipulate others through an image in order to gain power. A portrait in its essence is not propagandistic, but can easily become such. Mass-disseminated copies of such a portrait do not just remind of the appearance of the depicted person, but might also seemingly give them an ability of

¹³ BRONOWSKI, J.: *Vzestup člověka*. Prague : Odeon, 1985, p. 60-62.

¹⁴ GOMBRICH, E. H.: *Príbeh umenia*. Bratislava : Ikar, 2017, p. 58.

¹⁵ Remark by the authors: Such sculptures were made on the basis of general knowledge of facial features. It is more than likely that there was no resemblance, as we understand it now, between the statue and the person ordering it. Sculptors did not produce a real shape of nose, forehead wrinkles or an individual expression. An example of this could be the statue of Charioteer from around 475 B.C.

¹⁶ GOMBRICH, E. H.: *Príbeh umenia*. Bratislava : Ikar, 2017, p. 89.

¹⁷ JOHN, M.: *Routledge Revivals: Medieval Germany*. London : Routledge, 2017, p. 288.

¹⁸ WEST, P.: *Portraiture*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 14.

omnipresence. German priest and reformer Martin Luther mass-distributed his likeness shortly after his theological arguments became famous across Europe. He included his portrait in texts disputing Catholic doctrine, reinforcing the reformation ideas.¹⁹ Despite the fact that portraits have also been used to communicate ideologies, only very few people throughout the history had systematically abused them for such purposes. Perhaps the only exception to this rule would be the leaders of totalitarian regimes. Adolf Hitler entrusted several academic artists with a task to create his idealized likeness. In Germany, portraits of Hitler were supposed to evoke patriotic and chauvinistic feelings. Simultaneously, they were meant to encourage the people to worship the dictator and Aryan supremacy. Such portraits were distributed across “the Reich” by the Ministry of Propaganda led by Joseph Goebbels.

One of the most frequently used political-ideological symbols in totalitarian regimes was and still is the face of a dictator. People in unfree countries are thus constantly subjected to the *Big brother*. A portrait then becomes a source of the leader’s pathological omnipresence. In Europe, the propagandistic instruments became especially developed in the Soviet Union, where they wanted children to conform to the state educational apparatus and, therefore, they established uniform Lenin corners that were a political shrine and a depiction of the great leader. It was similar with Stalin. In the socialist Yugoslavia during the second half of the 20th century, portraits of Marshal Tito hung besides the portraits of the fathers of the Soviet Union in each classroom and in all public institutions. Here, in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, this applied to the portraits of Gustáv Husák, the president responsible for normalization. The emphasis the leaders placed on dissemination of their portraits signals that they considered this activity to be politically beneficial. Interesting situations used to occur in the ancient and medieval world. In case of an emperor’s death or deposition, it was common to destroy or store their portraits. The new ruler’s likeness was then installed in the place of honour. In a sense, such an exchange of portraits was an indicator of political changes. Acts of symbolic destruction of portraits persist until this day. An example of this could be the toppling of a Saddam Hussein statue by Iraqi civilians and American soldiers in Bagdad in April 2003. Destruction of the iconic portrait of the dictator was the symbolic end of his regime. Such a desire to destroy or manipulate confirms the political power of portraiture. Another kind of power is held by one of the best-known photographic portraits in the world. It is a photograph of a doctor and Marxist revolutionary Ernesto “Che” Guevara, created by Alberto Korda in 1960. This historic photograph was taken in Cuba during the Cold War and is titled *Guerrillero Heroico (Heroic Guerrilla Fighter)*.²⁰ It is not a stylized portrait, but a section of a reportage photograph (Figure 2). Thus, the intention of this portrait was not to create a propagandistic cult of personality. After his murder in 1968, it has, nonetheless, become a cultural symbol of revolution and revolutionary romanticism. Even in the 21st century, portraits of Che Guevara appear almost everywhere around the world, where the oppressed revolt, where a minority rises against the majority.

¹⁹ WEST, P.: *Portraiture*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 68.

²⁰ CASPARI, P.: *Global Perception of Che Guevara*. [online]. [2020-03-23]. Available at: <<https://pulitzercenter.org/education/global-perception-che-guevara>>.



Figure 2: Guerrillero Heroico

Source: KORDA, A.: *Guerrillero Heroico*. [online]. [2020-04-12]. Available at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guerrillero_Heroico#/media/File:CheHigh.jpg>.

As an illustration of this, we can use photographs from the Arab Spring, which showed protesters waving flags with Che Guevara's portrait. For people who are deeply frustrated because of their life conditions, this portrait represents the power to influence history and drives their revolutionary determination. On the other hand, Che Guevara becomes an empty symbol that can mean anything we want it to mean. Artistic interpretation of this portrait appears on paintings, posters, embroidery, tattoos, sculptures, as well as commonly sold objects such as T-shirts, mugs, watches, etc. Rich opportunities for applying Che Guevara's portrait on diverse objects that are commonly described as promotional items and the modern cult of Frida Kahlo have led us to reflect the commodification of a portrait. Frida Kahlo, and especially her face, has become a global brand. Portraits of this Mexican painter can nowadays be found on packaging of nail polishes, lipsticks, and lip glosses (Figure 3), there are thematic cafes and restaurants situated in various places around the world, wall paintings, a set of emoticons for iPhone users, and many other things. On all of these, we can observe the significant features of this artist: black braided hair, a flower crown, a thick unibrow, and a look full of defiance.



Figure 3: Republic Cosmetics, Frida Kahlo Premium

Source: Republic Cosmetics, *Frida Kahlo Premium*. [online]. [2020-04-12]. Available at: <<https://republiccosmeticsusa.com/collections/frida-kahlo-us>>.

After her death in 1954, Kahlo has become a global symbol of resistance to patriarchal oppression, a feminist icon, a key personality in the queer community, and a strong opponent of the politics of the USA. Perception of this personality within the pop-culture is greatly reduced, as it is more than likely that a nail polish of Kahlo brand is not a gateway to political awakening. Her face and work have been swallowed up by the very social mechanism that she fought against. The symbolic level of a portrait, a work of art, and actions of a personality are being reduced to a colourful veneer that promotes sales of a product. Due to the usage of cult portraits (but also other works of art) for commercial purposes, their dissemination across the whole society occurs. Because of their ubiquity and availability, they are losing value and meaning. These portraits are thus devoid of an opinion and are living their own life. A different perception of a portrait occurs when it depicts someone close, someone we know well. Portraits were used as gifts or amulets in the past and still are today. A painting of a close person was inaccurate, expensive, and unavailable to most of the people, until the invention of photography made this magic available throughout the social classes. A likeness seemingly compensates for an absence of a close person. It is as if the loved one spoke to us from a portrait. We start to feel something, recall the loved one from memory and mind, remember. This is what we consider the universal magic of a portrait's ability to affect us. *Camera Lucida* by Roland Barthes is not only the essential text on the theory of photography, but also a lyrical meditation for a lost mother. The author rediscovers her through her portraits. Through a portrait, we are finding ourselves, our loved ones. We carry a part of the past into the present. It is the most fundamental and the most personal essence of portraiture.

Conclusion

The diversity of the forms of portraiture implies the wide scale of its functions. Primarily, portrait is a work of art characterized by its **artistic and aesthetic function**. We are able to

appraise its qualities, the way it is made, its originality, how it depicts or expresses the portrayed individual, and its aesthetic value. Portrait can also be a historical artefact, a visual representation of a person; it evokes a place and time of its creation. It has a character of a documentary, which is connected to its **informational function**. We often see a portrait as a person, not as information. **Emotional function** is linked to the perception of a portrait as a remembrance or a memory of someone; it becomes a stimulus for memory and emotions. Portrait can also serve to intentionally construct an impression about individuals or groups. Some use a picture to enforce their authority; this is what we call a **propagandistic function**. Presently, we would rather be talking about an **opinion-forming function** of a portrait. The functions are not mutually exclusive and a portrait as a part of communication can have several functions at the same time. Functions of a portrait do not depend only on the intents with which it has been made, but mostly on the recipient and their interpretation. With a significant change in ontological status of an individual in the 21st century, an individual's visual representation also changes. From the portrait production point of view, old conventions of portraiture are being transformed towards a new type of audience.

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MARKETING COMMUNICATION AS CO-CREATOR OF NATIONAL CULTURE

Dušan Pavlů

ABSTRACT:

Analytical and synthesizing view of the contemporary advertising production and reflection of opinions on the role of advertising in a broader, cultural-historical, economic and social context can only result in the overall opinion of advertising as an integral part of the material and spiritual culture of that time. We examine these relationships, links and connections on an example of advertising theory and advertising practice developments in the first half of the 20th century. The penetration of advertising – marketing - communication into the life of society in the third and fourth decade of the Czechoslovak Republic proves its significant role in contributing to the creation of culture of that time especially in the dimension of advertising communicates as products of human action, creator of socio-cultural regulatives, contributor to the creation of cognitive systems and phenomenon creating institutions for organization of human behaviour in the economic area as well as in the sphere creating lifestyle.

KEY WORDS:

advertising, advertising and language, advertising means and tools, art and advertising, culture, lifestyle

1 Introduction

At the end of the 19th century advertising was seen as a purely purpose-oriented communication tool to as effectively as possible convey purposefully created commercial information between the advertiser and the selected target group with the only goal: motivate recipients of that communication to buy the offered goods. But, as early as in the first decade of the 20th century, the contemporary scientific literature shows authors' thoughts moving on from the initially just utilitarian – commercial - form of advertising communication and considering its function in a broader, socio-cultural context resulting primarily from a necessity to better segment target groups, i.e., use the sociological and psychological findings. At the same time, new media emerging in the beginning of the century and the existing media provide a better and better quality of communication services – better print, a more true depiction of reality and sound, etc. Together with the development of industry and trade, dynamic of competitive relationships in the market B2C and B2B, gradually increasing standard of living, education and general cultural development it means that a purely utilitarian, news and informative function of advertising does not suffice. More involvement of creative professions into the creation of advertising message and entire advertising campaigns gradually makes advertising become an inseparable, integral part of the contemporary culture.

2 Concept of Culture

To be able to review the role of advertising in the creation of culture, we need to work with such its definition to accentuate the socio-cultural pillars of the phenomenon, preferably, its sociological, global anthropological concept - definition of culture: „*class of metabiological (extrasomatic, superorganic) means and mechanisms for specific human adaptation to external environment. It represents a plastic and multiple meaning non-genetic program of actions executed by individuals and social groups which is fixed by socio-cultural self-regulation and cultural stereotypes transformed by social activity and transmitted by the means of cultural heritage. Culture performs in the form of: a) **products of human action** (artefacts), b) **socio-cultural regulatives** (norms, values, and cultural patterns), c) **ideas** (cognitive systems), d)*

institutions organizing human behaviour. *The necessary prerequisite for the existence of cultural elements and cultural complexes is their objectification (exteriorization) and following adoption (interiorization) by an individual or social group.* “¹ Let us examine to what extent these four basic definition sets of culture identifiers are present in the contemporary reality and scientific literature. On a general level, we can say that not only the current advertising means and activities (promotion, marketing communication) but also the historical manifestations of advertising activity fully meet this sociological definition of culture.

Advertising and creations of human actions – the advertising communicate is developed as the outcome of a creative process of managerial and creative – artistic nature. It is materialized in the form of a tangible advertising means – brand, trademark, advertisement, poster, three-dimensional eye-catchers, architectural solution for the selling space, demonstration events, fair expositions, production of an event, TV and radio spot, banner, advertising letter, advertising tag, offer talk, tasting session, etc. Advertising means in a variety of forms accompany people all their life, in all environments and settings they move, actively come into contact with them and subconsciously or consciously and purposefully work with them in common, everyday situations. „*Relatively many advertising artefacts – particularly, of graphical nature – enter the official culture and become collectible objects (photos, posters, packages, etc.). It is justifiable to say that materialized outcomes of advertising activities become, right from the commencement of advertising as an organized form of communication, from the moments advertising symbolic becomes part of the clearly defined and generally recognized characteristics of quality, lifestyle and also an integral part of human tangible culture.*“²

Advertising and socio-cultural regulatives – over the years, advertising (marketing communication, promotion) has become part of the structure of social values, norms and cultural patterns that form the ways of conduct and behaviour in society. Through the content of advertising means they present sets of norms and values to recipients, desirable cultural patterns of behaviour which are inseparably interlinked with everyday life and consumption in the material and spiritual sense. These regulatives are typically presented through a staged story, with a certain level of exaggeration copying a real life situation and so drawing the recipient into the story with a clear intention. Both commercial communication and social advertising, as well as state promotion, provide us with a lot of information containing value-forming facts and calls or appeals aiming to engage us for their benefit. The outcome of an effective communication process in this area is active behaviour in the spirit of the advertising message: the recipient is encouraged to do something or to refrain from certain behaviour. Some advertising activities (primarily, in social advertising) have embodied in themselves significant ethical value standards of human society.

Advertising and ideas – from the beginning of its existence, advertising has been developing as a sum of rational, factual information with a relatively immediately added set of emotional signals aiming to bring the object of communication activity to the desired forms of behaviour. The factual pieces of information primarily communicate facts about the useful value of the offered product or service, and so are actually communication – cognitive systems making it easier for recipients to get to know the local, outside world in the area of food, home appliances, automobiles, household equipment and furnishing and later discover the more distant world, its technology, industry, lifestyle, etc. Together with improving methods of reproduction of the outside world (print, photography, radio, film, television, etc.) the symbiosis between the

¹ MAŘIKOVÁ, H., PETRUSEK, M., VODÁKOVÁ, A. et al.: *Velký sociologický slovník I. + II.* Prague : Karolinum, 1996, p. 548-549.

² For more information, see: PAVLŮ, D.: *Reklamní klub 1927 – 1948.* Prague : Professional Publishing, 2017.

factual and emotional appeal of the communicate deepens. On the material, factual level it fulfils the function of an indirect educator: In the phase of introductory promotion for a product - service launched to the market, the advertising communicate brings new, original information of various characteristics: of physical, chemical, biological, safety, medical, public education, etc., nature. They have a common feature – contribute to getting to know the outside world and come to our cultural value orientation as indirect educational stimuli.

Advertising and institutions organizing human behaviour – advertising as a social communication activity had, at first, developed in a non-organized, spontaneous way but with the achievements of the 2nd industrial revolution (electric drive of production machines, assembly belt) and so with the mass-scale production that required mass consumers it was necessary to move on from random advertising activities to a systematic, qualified, managerially controlled form of information service provision to the market and to the creation of mass consumer. Manufacturers and traders became more and more aware of the actual selling effectiveness of a skilfully prepared and aired advertising on the one hand, and on the other hand, of a fragmentary, not systematic, random character of advertising efforts. But in fact, the reality of the B2C and B2B market functioning clearly proved that advertising was able to efficiently organize behaviour of large groups of people in time and in space. The creators of advertising themselves start to set up communication industry institutions of a new type – advertising agencies in many respects drawing their organizational–managerial and production procedures and methods of operation from their media predecessors – editors of periodical press. In our circumstances, the first documented advertising agencies are set up at the turn of the 19th and 20th century. Independently operating advertising creators and newly set up agencies strongly felt the necessity to associate to be able to stand up for their interests in the competitive market, promptly exchange professional findings of the theoretical as well as practical nature, sought the sources they used to improve their professional qualification, perceived the need to present advertising as a reliable help when making decisions in the wide public, etc. Therefore, in 1927, they decided to found the Czechoslovak Advertising Club – The Reklub³ as a professional society which would meet their needs and desires to the full. The Reklub associated advertising agencies, advertising advisors/consultants and major advertisers in the industry and trade. Advertising agencies and the Czechoslovak Advertising Club represent the new, modern advertising institutions able to contribute to the organization of the public life in the sphere of satisfying both the material and spiritual needs of the public in many areas of the then life.

3 Advertising as a Culture-Forming Tool in Opinions of Authors of the First Half of the 20th Century

Contemporary scientific literature about advertising does not represent, with the exception of the key theoretical work published by Jan Brabec in 1927⁴, a comprehensive system of individual titles effectively mapping individual advertising means, advertising activities, strategies, functions, etc. It is about – according to a personal professional focus of individual authors – a surprisingly varied (undoubtedly interesting and inspiring) mix of reviews and evaluations of contemporary advertising activities and efforts to work out, at least, partially comprehensive theories of the analyzed phenomena. Therefore, our review of the culture-forming role of advertising will be a certain mosaic of individual opinions.

³ See also: PAVLŮ, D.: *Reklamní klub 1927 – 1948*. Prague : Professional Publishing, 2017.

⁴ For more information, see: BRABEC, J.: *Zásady výnosné obchodní reklamy – na základě amerických studií a zkušeností*. Prague : SFINX, 1927.

Advertising and creations of human actions: Characterizing this part of culture we should emphasize that advertising means, as the manifestation of materialization of an advertising communication (message), gradually, in their form involve artistic forms of expression, because shortly after the development of the mass market at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, it becomes evident that, in a competitive environment, a mere listing of facts about the useful value of a product cannot be a sufficient driver for consumer behaviour in the desired direction. Zdenko Šindler, the author of the first more comprehensive publication about advertising at the beginning of the century, wrote: „*With the growing requirements of the public the production was growing too and, so was, hand in hand, competition. More and more traders and manufacturers emerged, consumption didn't catch up with production and so it was necessary to look for new selling areas, for new markets. Human taste has become more refined and so has invention of marketers. Rough, awkward posters and colourless announcements in the newspapers were not enough anymore, new and new ways of advertising devised, pursuit of effects in many a time led to bizarre outcomes, when, finally, art came down from its unrivalled heights and took up service to the industry, and so after many changes and transformations crystallized into what we call modern advertising. From this time we can see a new era in history of advertising and it is a very profitable, pleasing era.*“⁵ Besides other things, his book is highly valued for bringing an overview of key advertising means actively used at the beginning of the 20th century:⁶

- Posters;
- Advertising newsletters (print adverts, articles, entrefilets);
- Flyers, brochures and leaflets;
- Pricelists and recommendations on letters and postal cards;
- Offers and samples;
- Mobile advertising: on a moving vehicle, walking, flying, by air;
- Shopping windows;
- Names of goods;
- Labels, packages.

20 years later, Jan Brabec analyses an obviously broader range of advertising means, print advert, advertising magazine, advertising calendar, advertising publications, poster, adverts painted on building, illuminated advertising, shopping windows, advertising on means of transport and in their interior, advertising in public spaces, advertising in the railway, use of advertising slide and film, advertising letters, stickers and labels, brochures, catalogues, factory magazines, samples, leaflets and radio adverts.⁷ Jindra Vichnar in his publication *TYPOADVERTISING*⁸ reviews the advertising means used in the 40s one by one – print advert, leaflet, flyer, advertising letter, poster, photography, photomontage, occasional means, brands. More and more authors pay attention to the formal aspect of the advertising communication materialized in an advertising means; e.g., in 1933, A. Grassauer writes: „*Growth and development in advertising go hand in hand with an effort to discover more newer and newer forms to be able to express your own advertisement in a way distinguished from other advertisements to catch attention and stand out among them.*“⁹ The efforts to refine the urban environment in Prague in the 40s prove a more and more intense involvement of artistic

⁵ ŠINDLER, Z.: *Moderní reklama*. Prague : Nákladem F. Šimáčka v Praze, 1906, p. 7.

⁶ Ibidem, p. 9.

⁷ See also: BRABEC, J.: *Zásady výnosné obchodní reklamy – na základě amerických studií a zkušeností*. Prague : SFINX, 1927.

⁸ VICHNAR, J.: *Typoreklama*. Prague : Typografia, 1934, p. 5.

⁹ GASSAUER, A.: Co mě také napadá. In SOLAR, J. (ed.): *Reklama na soudu praktiků: ročenka Noviny 1933*. Prague : Propagační oddělení NPO, 1933, p. 63-64.

forms of communication. The authors of publication *Neon and Lights of Advertisements*¹⁰ write: „*Illuminated advertising was not only the carrier of a commercial communication but also an experimental visual means.*“ Hotel Juliš (1933) on Wenceslas Square at the turn of the 20s and 30s of the 20th century was an example of an integrally designed illuminated advertising used as the part of the visual-spatial solution of a functionalistic building. It has become a work of art of its kind (likewise another interesting building of that era – 1929 – the Baťa store). The company Křížik – Chaudoir, which produced the neon advertising show, wrote. „*We have greatest admiration for the new architectural design of the Juliš department store not only from the artistic point of view but also in that of the illuminated advertising.*“ Another important person in the Czech visual art scene – Ladislav Sutnar – paid attention to advertising communications. His neon message on the Koruna Palace building in Prague/Wenceslas Square – was an excellent work of applied art communicating the main refreshment services provided by the vending machine.

A relatively high frequency of works produced by advertising practitioners, performing artists on the topic: advertising and art indicates that the visual art elite of that time felt a need to discuss the aesthetic level of advertising communication. Oldřich Menhart's comments on the topic: „*To make our advertising artistically more proficient and closer to the level of western countries we need two things: primarily, our artists need to get more fruitfully involved in this rewarding line of work and correctly appreciate the usefulness and effectiveness of art in advertising. Then our industrialists and merchants alone would try to achieve a higher level of advertising and more often than until now seek advice and cooperation of artists.*“¹¹ The close connection between the world of art and that of advertising supports the appeal published in 1906 in Šindler's book *Modern advertising to advertisers* not to hesitate contacting visual artists for „*commercial artistic posters*“ (*affiches*)“.¹² The listing of the recommended creators include names of some famous visual artists who today represent the recognized artistic values like Antonín Hudeček, Adolf Kašpar, Alfons Mucha, Otakar Nejedlý, Jan Preissler, Vojtěch Preissig, Antonín Slavíček, Victor Stretti, Max Švabinský, Josef Wenig and others.

Advertising and socio-cultural regulatives: There is no doubt that advertising gradually makes a complex, very structured and variously oriented frame of positive and negative systems of social values, norms, perception patterns, evaluation and cultural patterns of conduct in many areas of social life – in consumption, interpersonal relations, culture of clothing, spending free time, relationship to other nations, etc. Jiří Solar, a distinctive and important advertising professional in the 1st Republic, active advertising strategist and copy-writer, owner of an advertising agency, says: „*Advertising teaches people to think, have requirements. Advertising forms for people their needs, tells them what they need to feel more comfortable, to live a more joyful life..... Advertising teaches the humankind to live more comfortably, teaches the humankind to use all the values brought to them by the enterprising manufacturer and enterprising merchant – these builders of a better future for us all.*“¹³ Jan Brabec in an attempt to pertinently describe the meaning of advertising for consumers formulates 4 key characteristics of advertising representing its certain socio-regulative function:

- „*First and foremost, informs the wide public what to buy.*“

¹⁰ BENDOVIÁ, E., HÁJEK, V.: *Neony a světla reklam*. Prague : Paseka, 2018, p. 42.

¹¹ MENHART, O.: Umělci a obchodníci. In *Umění do reklamy: ročenka Noviny 1938*. Prague : Propagační oddělení NPO, 1938, p. 20.

¹² ŠINDLER, Z.: *Moderní reklama*. Prague : Nákladem F. Šimáčka v Praze, 1906, p. 61.

¹³ SLABÝ, J.: *Kurs obchodní reklama s četnými ilustracemi*. Prague : Masarykův lidovýchovný ústav – Orbis, 1929, p. 8-10.

- **Educates public taste** and make life of people better and easier by making them use effective and efficient products, which applies to tools as well as sofas.
- **Advertising also teaches the public to buy.**
- Advertising directly leads to study products from the point of view of consumers to meet their functions as best as possible. ¹⁴

J. Fürst's characteristic of the underlying function of advertising in our society is fairly straightforward: „*In essence, promotion is nothing else but education.*“¹⁵ The publications on the sale of cultural goods perceived a higher mission of advertising than only its selling function and appreciated the greater cultural value it brings to the world of advertising: „*The goal of advertising is not only material interest, it has a higher mission, too. It performs its task in the field of **cultural development** of the humankind, determining and turning the interest of the humankind in the set direction.*“¹⁶

Advertising and ideas: Advertising is part of methods and forms of getting to know the outside world in many levels of human life. It definitely brings a huge sum of information, rational and emotional stimuli that to a various level contribute to people's socialization, sadly, sometimes also to their degradation – hyper-consumption, promotion for unhealthy living habits, etc. The 1st Republic advertising public paid attention to these issues as well, as we can see, e.g., in the article by S. Kubík: „*Let's speak first about the most general field where we can see an economic activity in magazines: it is gaining the atmosphere, recruiting the interest of the public in a certain area of consumption of goods. This type of promotion is more important for economic enterprise because in that type of promotion there is no need yet to overcome obstacles leading to the decision and final goal - the purchase of a product or work. Here we use rational reasons, compare previous facts with new options, make connections to the heart of consumers which eventually result in their desire for the products of the promoted enterprise and in the belief of their usefulness, beauty or another advantage that seems desirable to us.*“¹⁷ Reviewing himself, J. Solar described the relationship between rationality and emotionality in the advertising communication aiming to get as compelling effect on the recipient of that advertising communicate as possible: „*J. Solar combined a cool, realistic mind of the technician with a passionate heart of the poet and dynamics of the good salesperson. He can appreciate facts and figures and is able to assess them and deliver a great idea in a poetic manner, in new, warm words, in an enthusiastic idea.*“¹⁸ Jan Brabec paid attention to the growing volume of information any advertising should reflect to be effective: „*If the recently extraordinary pace of development towards a better economic life has accelerated, it is to a large extent thanks to advertising. It managed to introduce a new and better thing to millions of people with a remarkable speed and so these millions felt desire for it and bought it. Also, it is not by accident that the countries with the most advanced advertising are also the countries with the highest living standard and vice versa.*“¹⁹

¹⁴ BRABEC, J.: *Zásady výnosné obchodní reklamy – na základě amerických studií a zkušeností*. Prague : SFINX, 1927, p. 52-53.

¹⁵ FÜRST, J. VL.: Cestou širokou či úzkou?. In SOLAR, J. (ed.): *Reklama na soudu praktiků: ročenka Noviny 1933*. Prague : Propagační oddělení NPO, 1933, p. 58.

¹⁶ KUBÍČEK, J.: *Knihkupecké reklamy – stručné popsání reklamních způsobů v knižním odvětví zároveň s úvodem do celkového pojmu reklamy*. Prague : Nákladem Grémia knihkupcův a nakladatelů, 1932, p. 8.

¹⁷ KUBÍK, S.: Propagace v časopisech. In *Ukazovatelé cesty: ročenka Noviny 1941*. Prague : Propagační oddělení NPO, 1933, p. 46.

¹⁸ SOLAR, J.: *Reklamní příručka*. Prague : Reklamní poradna Ing. J. Solar, 1938, p. 62.

¹⁹ BRABEC, J.: Co je reklama a proč ji dělat. In POŠTOLKA, V. (ed.): *Knihka o reklamě: čili jak dělat reklamu, aby se vyplácela*. Prague : Reklamní klub, 1940, p. 7.

In the same publication, another author, A. Roštlapil, commented on the current complexity of advertising work: „*Modern advertising and promotion is an extensive system of many scientific and artistic fields no one can deal with at one time.*“²⁰ Collective advertising started to provide great opportunities for the cognitive function of advertising – it was the type of communication when more subjects joined forces in a major advertising campaign they prepared and executed together. This effort to associate to achieve a common goal, though with partially differentiated interests, appeared to a greater extent in the 30s and 40s. The contemporary literature described it, e.g., like that: „*So, it is not only rationalization as such, but also social motives that play a role here and often are the sole reason for a common activity. Abroad, and in many cases in our country as well, it is directly the state (or from its initiation appointed or supported institution, corporation, group) that runs extensive common activities – mainly, activities in the public interest: public health, increase in population, boost to incoming tourism, etc. There are collective activities on the world-scale: economic initiatives (e.g., international week of savings), humanitarian initiatives (Red Cross), religious, social, cultural initiatives, etc. Who monitors the methods, extent and outcomes of these wide forms of promotion knows, how much power such collective pressure or, the other way round, the pressure on the collective has, how intensely it influences people in the very core of their habits and opinions. Alcoholism has been reduced as well as prostitution, and the morals and hygiene improved, and people are more interested in physical education now, and the sports movement is booming and many and many other things have been managed.*“²¹ Besides a definitely more intensive effect, collective advertising activities were good for the individual participants as they saved their money. The contemporary literature does not reveal much data on the costs of advertising; nevertheless, at least two indicative figures give a realistic picture of the available financial means at the time these advertising activities were brought to life. In 1930, the Reklub’s official, ing. F. Munk, estimated the costs of all types of commercial advertising in Czechoslovakia amounted to up to CZK 1.5 billion, and growth of advertising costs was predicted at 10 – 20%.²² In the project for a systematic and long-term state promotion prepared by the Reklub at the time of the onset of fascism and irredentist movements in the Czechoslovak borderlands on the rise in 1934, one of the authors predicted the costs of state promotion at the full output would be about CZK 50 million per annum.²³

Advertising and institutions organizing human behaviour: At the very start advertising is always a one man show: the person that is much more capable than others for that field of activity and the one with the required competences – managerial and creative. Advertising begins to institutionalize in the second half of the 19th century – the original departments of advertisement character set up to assist the publishers of periodical press for which they arrange the sale of print space for print adverts in due time turn into more and more specialized independent business units offering more complex services than just the sale of advertising space. They provide advertisers – manufacturers and merchants - with copy-writing services, work of graphic artists and, over time, also planning for advertising activities, preparation for activation forms of sale – tasting sessions, distribution of samples, collection of market

²⁰ ROŠTLAPIL, A.: Jakou reklamu má kdo dělat?. In POŠTOLKA, V. (ed.): *Kniha o reklamě: čili jak dělat reklamu, aby se vyplácela*. Prague : Reklamní klub, 1940, p. 16.

²¹ KOŠÁK, B.: Kolektivní reklama. In POŠTOLKA, V. (ed.): *Kniha o reklamě: čili jak dělat reklamu, aby se vyplácela*. Prague : Reklamní klub, 1940, p. 83.

²² *O dobrou reklamu – Cyklus veřejných přednášek o reklamě, pořádaných Reklamním klubem československým, Ústavem pro vědeckou organizaci obchodu při M. A. P. a Obchodní a živnostenskou komorou v Praze*. Prague : M. A. P. s podporou ministerstva školství a osvěty, 1930, p. 3.

²³ SOLAR, S., PRÁGER, V.: *Potřebuje demokracie soustavné propagandy?*. Prague : Přehled rozhlasu, 1934, p. 33.

information, etc.²⁴ One of the oldest advertising agency in our country is Modern Advertising owned by Zdenko Šindlera described by Jiří Solar in these words: „*To the best of my knowledge, the first professional and independent advertising advisor and pioneer of advertising in our country was Zdenko Šindler, the writer of the first Czech book on advertising - „Modern Advertising“ (published in 1906) and the boss of „Modern Advertising“ – a company based in Prague, Na Moráni Street 360 from about the year of 1908. He was a copywriter and graphic artist in one person, and, at his time, a real genius.... Interestingly, he also worked for the companies that are today in the leading positions in our market and industry: Baťa, Ander in Olomouc, Rudolf Štěpán in Pilsen, Maggi, Laurin & Klement, Pilnáček, Kocian in Humpoleci, Zátka Brothers in České Budějovice, Foto – Albrecht, Spa Luhačovice, etc.*“²⁵ Jiří Solar, the above-mentioned professional, set up his Advertising Consulting company on 1st April 1928. The office provided full-service services, employed many specialist external professions and worked for tens of major companies active in the then Czechoslovakia. In addition to these contracting agencies many businesses used to have their own advertising-promotion departments. These units would be massive - like the ones in large companies – Baťa, Škoda or more modest like those in firms producing consumption goods.

THE CZECHOSLOVAK ADVERTISING CLUB – The Reklub played an umbrella function for the entire advertising industry of the 1st Republic from 1927 to 1949. The Club had many functions – stand up for and lobby for the interests of its members, initiate national solutions for some complications in the public sphere, provide professional education and organize social life for its members. It also encouraged publishing of scientific literature and contributed to the professional journal TYP, etc. All these business subjects (advertising agency, advertising consulting, advertising company and other specialist advertising entities – sign painting, window dressing, printing firms, etc.) gradually create our advertising industry. The Czech reality in the first decades of the 20th century was lagging behind the advanced industrial world – USA and England: the first advertising agencies – as specialist communication institutions – appear in USA in 1842 – VOLNEY B. PALMER – Philadelphia, 1869 – N. W. AYER & SON – Philadelphia, 1906 – D’ARCY – Saint Louis. And in Europe, in 1880 – A. DE LA MAR – Amsterdam, 1892 – LONDON PRESS EXCHANGE – London, etc.

Advertising agencies are naturally set up in the world where they have the most advanced industry and trade, their manufacturing and consumer industry develop at a fast pace and have very innovative products and economically strong consumer public. The emerging advertising agencies with an effort to rationalize and activate demand attracted highly creative and managerial professions. In the European conditions, it is the Leipzig businessman Rudolf Mosse having set up a prosperous network of advertising offices in the 70^s of the 19th century, who contributed to developments and advances in this area. These forerunners of advertising agencies were also present in Prague – and published the Journalistic Catalogue of the advertising office: Advertising for 1897. Unfortunately, archival sources don’t show many specialized documents on the topic of advertising agencies in our country. Therefore, we need to work with secondary sources recording the existence of these agencies and their activity. E.g., our literature informs about the advertising agency BIOADVERTISING Urbánek in

²⁴ For more information, see: POLÁČEK, J.: *Propagační agentury a jiné specializované propagační podniky*. Prague : SPN, FŽ UK, 1983.; PINCAS, S., LOISEAU, M.: *Dějiny reklamy*. Prague : Slovart, Taschen, 2009.; PAVLŮ, D.: Počátky organizace a institucionalizace reklamy v české společnosti na přelomu 19. a 20. století. In BAČUVČÍK, R. et al (ed.): *Teorie a praxe v marketingové komunikaci*. Zlín : VeRBuM, 2015, p. 13-50.; BRABEC, J.: *Zásady výnosné obchodní reklamy – na základě amerických studií a zkušeností*. Prague : SFINX, 1927.; PAVLŮ, D.: Vznik reklamního průmyslu v českých zemích. 2013. In *Communication Today*, 2013, Vol. 4, No. 1, p. 53.

²⁵ See also: SOLAR, J.: *Reklamní příručka*. Prague : Reklamní poradna Ing. J. Solar, 1938.

Prague in the 40s having a monopoly on the biggest Prague cinemas, producing and presenting advertising slides, advertising films, film posters and film advertisements. PROPAGFILM was a specialized agency producing cultural, advertising and promotional films from the year of 1919. Company expositions on fairs and exhibitions were delivered by the studio Ateliér CP – of the architects Cubr and Pokorný, Elektro Neon produced illuminated signs, neon banners, plastic illuminated letters for interiors and exteriors of shops. The studio - Ateliér Illek and Paul delivered professional photos for all kinds of advertising use. The studio - Ateliér Matějček – master of colours produced large-area advertising paintings on the walls of buildings. The studio Ateliér Jedlička – advertising advisors, copy-writers, graphic artists. The advertising consulting Systemic Promotion of Václav Poštolka – was a specialist in print promotional means. And the Radio Vácha delivered advertising radio spots.

Conclusion

The second industrial revolution resulted in a major boom for industrial production and following developments in the manufacturing industry. From the moment, when in the second half of the 19th century, mass production is used, it is necessary to form and create mass consumer. For this process we can see certain creative and managerial professions to gradually specialize, which from small organizational and creative units make independent communication institutions – national and international advertising agencies. Analyzing their activity, impact of the advertising communication created and disseminated by them on the culture of our society, we inevitably come to a conclusion that advertising produces materialized advertising means that become a real part of the material world. Advertising presents socio-cultural regulatives, values, norms, cultural patterns and examples forming the ways individuals and target groups behave in society. Advertising indirectly contributes to education of society in many areas – conveys specific sets of cognitive findings which help in getting to know the outside world. Advertising also constitutes its own specific institutions – advertising and other companies which through their activity participate in organizing life of people in time and space. Therefore, advertising is the active co-creator of the national culture.

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COVID 19 AND THE THREAT OF PERIODICAL PRESS MORTALITY

Hana Pravdová

ABSTRACT:

The study focuses on the current situation of periodicals resulting from the COVID 19 pandemic. Many newspapers and magazines are disappearing and many publishers are reducing employees' wages or laying off employees. The author claims that the media must constantly re-evaluate their production and marketing strategies. This can motivate them to survive in the media market. According to her, however, the current pandemic may not lead to the destruction of media homes. It can also lead to their restart. The way in which periodicals will develop depends on various factors. As publishers, among other things, they will be able to adapt to the new situation. They will also need to offer what other media platforms cannot quite satisfy. The author of the study sees the solution to the situation in increasing the quality of the content of periodicals, preferring analytical articles and their greater focus on the information needs of target groups.

KEY WORDS

COVID 19, economic crisis, mortality, pandemic, periodicals, publishing, restart

1 Instead of an Introduction: Periodicals Beyond the Horizon of Dominance

The COVID 19 virus pandemic broke out unexpectedly and spread very quickly around the world. As a result were closed various business companies, schools, restaurants, shopping centers, smaller shops, etc. It is clear that the viral infection has significantly affected human lives. Slovakia, like other countries, has closed itself in voluntary but necessary isolation. Its consequence is a drastic slowdown in the economy, an increase in the rate of inflation, unemployment, a thinning of the state budget, an increase in state debt, etc. A secondary consequence of the negative development is the loss of social contacts, the increase in psychopathological phenomena, as well as the crisis in the cultural sector. The publication of periodicals has become a particular problem during the pandemic. It is clear that the existence of the press has never been as is threatened as today. This is despite the fact that from the end of the 17th century to the present, the publication of journalistic texts has been affected by various situations. They arose as a result of the economic crisis, competition and state censorship. Some authors agree that the first existential threat to periodicals was the emergence of a new medium - radio. The golden age of periodicals in the 19th century was replaced by the golden age of radio in the first half of the 20th century. In the second half of the 20th century, television became the dominant medium. The golden age of television meant a constant, albeit slight, decline in periodical and radio revenue. However, the advent of digital communication on the Internet has significantly reduced sales of newspapers and magazines. Of course, to their detriment. At present it is clear that Internet communication is the fastest growing media industry. In this environment, a number of media entities are created and at the same time traditional media are sublimated into digital multimedia platforms.¹

¹ For more information, see: VOJTEK, J., JENČA, I., HOLEŠŤIAK, P., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: *Dejiny svetových novinárstiev*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2010.; TILLEY, E.: *The periodical Press in Nineteenth-Century Ireland*. London : Palgrave Macmillan, 2020.; DRAXLER, V.: *Príspevky k dejinám rozhlasu*. Bratislava : Odbor mediálneho výskumu SRo, 2001.; VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: *Aktuálne otázky teórie a praxe žurnalistiky v ére internetu*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2015.; RADOŠINSKÁ, J., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: Transformation of Publik Sphere in the Era of Digital Media. In *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2016, Vol. 12, No. 5, p. 85-96.; CONBOY, M.: *Journalism: A Critical History*. London : Sage Publication, 2004.; PRAVDOVÁ, H., RADOŠINSKÁ, J., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: *Koncepty a praktiky multiplatformovej žurnalistiky*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2017.; RADOŠINSKÁ, J., KVETANOVÁ, Z., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: To Thrive Means to Entertain: The

The significant impact of digital technologies on the creation of a new communication and media discourse is currently unquestionable.² Web and online media, including cross-media journalism, have become the dominant media for journalistic production and adoption. D. J. Botler and R. Grusino argue that online media have a comparable advantage over traditional media because they are more attractive to recipients.³ The position of traditional media in the media market is thus weakened. The multimedia journalism platform is based on a mixture of the read word with sound and image. In addition, it allows the users to verify the facts through hyperlinks to deepen their knowledge. Online communication also allows immediate feedback on published articles. The speed of information dissemination is one of the biggest advantages of this communication. The popularity of the multimedia digital platform has also caused a relatively massive transfer of advertising to the online environment. This is, of course, at the expense of traditional media, especially periodicals.⁴ These facts lead us to pessimistic reflections on the future of periodicals. On the other hand, we also agree with another, more optimistic view. According to this view, the dominant position of multiplatform journalism does not yet mean the death of previous classical media. Mr McNair therefore calls for caution in pessimistic fatal predictions. According to him, magazines have a guaranteed place in the digital world of the 21st century. Newspapers do things that websites cannot recognize. In addition, the habit of shopping and reading newspapers will not disappear. However, periodicals will have to be modernized – services, content and appearance.⁵ B. McNair points to changes in the production of classical media. The classical media left a dominant position, choosing an effective survival strategy in the competitive struggle for the recipient. In general, it can be argued that periodicals focus more on sensational information, radio on popular music genres and talkshows, and television on all kinds of entertainment and ways to attract viewers' attention.⁶

In recent years, in addition to the strong convergence of the media and the dynamic development of multimedia platforms in the Internet environment, another interesting phenomenon can be observed. TV shows are still watched a lot. Despite the strengthening of

Nature of Today's Media Industries. In *Communication Today*, 2020, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 4-21.; VRABEC, N.: Digitálni domorodci na Slovensku: komunikácia a nová identita mládeže v on-line prostredí. In *Communication Today*, 2010, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 83-92.

² Remark by the author: S. Gálik and S. Gáliková Tolnaiová point out this fact. According to them, "each new media is accompanied by a new cultural paradigm that then retrospectively impacts on the preceding media. Print was followed by the electronic media, especially the Internet, which revolutionized human thinking and knowledge"; GÁLIK, S, GÁLIKOVÁ TOLNAIOVÁ, S.: The Gutenberg Galaxy and its "Twilight" in the Context of Contemporary Electronic Media. In *Human Affairs: Postdisciplinary Journal for Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2014, Vol. 24, No. 4, p. 468.

³ Remark by the author: We label periodicals, radio and television as classic media in the study. We based it on the semantic determination of the term used. It points to something that is proven, traditional or common, to something that is in opposition to the present, with the current state. In our opinion, the term classical media is historically established. However, they are out of date with the current dominant media discourse.; See also: BOTLER, J. D., GRUSIN, R.: *Remediation: Understanding New Media*. London, Cambridge : MIT Press, 1999.

⁴ Remark by the author: Based on the flows of financial advertising, M. Žatkuliak from IAB talks about strengthening this trend. He expects more and more brands to shift most of their budgets from traditional media to online advertising.; POLÁŠ, M.: *Výdavky do internetovej reklamy vlani rástli, najprudšie od roku 2012*. [online]. [2020-03-27]. Available at: <<https://medialne.etrend.sk/internet/vydavky-do-internetovej-reklamy-vlani-rastli-najprudsie-od-roku-2012>>.

⁵ McNAIR, B.: *Sociologie žurnalistiky*. Prague : Portál, 2004, p. 142.

⁶ Remark by the author: Entertainment has become an organic part of television culture. However, N. Postman does not see the problem in the fact that television offers entertaining themes. He sees the problem in the fact that it turns any topics, even tragic, catastrophic, political, etc., into fun. It offers people trivia and draws them into the cycle of endless entertainment.; POSTMAN, N.: *Ubavit se k smrti. Veřejná komunikace ve věku zábavy*. Prague : Mladá fronta, 1999, p. 95.

the position of Internet media in the media market. This means that the golden age of classic television reception persists. Although its multiplatform communication capabilities may expand much more in the future. In our opinion, the way periodicals are published depends on various factors. Among other things, it is the ability of publishers to adapt to the new situation and offer what other media platforms cannot use quite well. In any case, the Internet environment is currently cheaper and more cost-effective than the costly process of producing and distributing newspapers.⁷ Computers, tablets, mobile phones, connections, services and applications have become cheaper and are an integral part of the lives of individuals of a whole generation. Generations Z and N in particular are largely socialized through digital technologies.⁸ Reading newspapers and magazines has undeniable advantages. For example, comfort, clarity, support of everyday customs and rituals. They are usually associated with reading in a comfortable chair with a cup in hand or even less comfortably in a vehicle or with food at a table, etc. For many readers the emotional relationship to this way of reading periodicals is much stronger than surfing on the Internet. However, it is clear that periodicals have a difficult period. In this context J. Višňovský points to economic indicators. He presents data indicating a drastic decline in regular readers of periodicals which decline in advertising revenue. Višňovský also draws attention to secondary phenomena. He points to the growing competition between publishers of periodicals for readers, the reduction of costs for newspapers and magazines, the reduction of advertising revenues, as well as the changing information needs of print readers.⁹ The pressure of information in the current media market and changes in the level of information needs have consequences. The media must constantly review their production and marketing strategies. However, we think that the current viral pandemic may not only lead to the destruction of media entities. It can also lead to their restart.

2 Fighting COVID 19 in the Media Fields

The need to rethink production and marketing strategies means fighting for survival. This fight became much more urgent after the outbreak of the COVID 19 pandemic in December 2019 in the Chinese city of Wuhan. The world was quarantined. The economy and trade around the world, including Slovakia, have frozen. The business model of most periodicals, as well as other types of private media, has proven its weaknesses. The economic dependence on the sale of advertising space in the periodical questioned the market business model. Is it necessary to replace it with another financial model or to radically change the philosophy and strategy of creating periodicals? That is the question of the present. It is quite possible that the

⁷ Remark by the author: J. Višňovský, J. Radošinská and A. Predmerská point to the economic aspect of digital media. They emphasize that media convergence and economic issues related to the existence of the press, especially the context of production expenditure and advertising profit, contribute to the continual rationalization of specific production phases. "In other words, to reduction of costs in the sphere of human resources and thus merging of different journalistic professions"; VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J., RADOŠINSKÁ, J., PREDMERSKÁ, A.: Digital Journalism: Rethinking Journalistic Practice in the Era of Digital Media. In *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2015, Vol. 11, No. 6, p. 57.

⁸ Remark by the author: These generations will be deciding on the future of media platforms. It is already visible today how digital space creates the profile behavior of the user of Internet communication. According to Z. Hudíková such a contemporary wants to receive, process and sort a lot of information every day. These are important for his/her work and personal life. At the same time, this need increases the complexity of journalistic processing.; HUDÍKOVÁ, Z.: Emotions as Key Element of News Reporting. In KUNOVÁ, V., DOLINSKÝ, M. (eds.): *Current Issues of Science and Research in the Global World*. Leiden : CRC Press, 2014, p. 161.

⁹ VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: *Aktuálne otázky teórie a praxe žurnalistiky v ére internetu*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2015, p. 214.

viral pandemic has posed a real threat of mortality in many periodicals on the world and Slovak media markets. The isolation and its consequences caused by the viral pandemic did not allow readers to buy periodicals. Most people in Slovakia were in domestic isolation. There is no doubt that this situation has triggered trends in the development of the media market. Periodicals recorded the largest financial losses of all types of media. Two factors that have influenced this situation need to be taken into account. First, it is a marketing policy of companies based on reducing the financial costs of advertising. In the latter case, most readers could not buy their favorite print. F. Vitek emphasizes that the financial crisis in the media is the result of the failure of a business model based on people's daily rituals. As an example, he first cites daily print sales, which depend on people traveling for work. Common rituals involve the inseparable purchase of a particular newspaper title.¹⁰ In the second case, it is a clear financial calculation of companies in a period of stagnation of production and sales. It is well known that the business model of most private media depends on the sale of advertising packages. Of course, if the demand for the service is subdued, the offer will not be noticed. The head of the media agency B. Polák in this context characterizes the behavior of advertisers for the web magazine Trend. They are starting to think within the limits of austerity measures. This appreciation of financial expenditures is reflected in a significant reduction in interest in advertising in publishing houses. The reason is simple - a drastic decline in their own sales. Businesses began to reduce marketing and advertising costs. It is the money from which periodicals, web media or commercial broadcasters live. Due to the failure of the business model in the private media, there was a change in personnel and financial policy. Some have started laying off employees, others have cut salaries at all levels. Some media houses have reduced the frequency of printing, others are asking readers for support. They encourage their loyal readers to pay by subscription. Some employers have laid off employees, others have reduced their salaries. Other entities openly ask people for financial support.¹¹

Eva Pauliaková, Executive Director of the Association of Print and Digital Media also confirmed the dramatic decline in sales of periodicals in Slovakia. She noted a 40 percent drop in sales and a huge drop in advertising.¹² However, it is necessary to differentiate advertising flows among periodicals, television and digital media. The fact is that television and the web media show the highest viewership during the preventive quarantine.¹³ People were particularly interested in the development of the pandemic, the number of new confirmed cases the preventive measures introduced, the mortality due to the disease, the spread of the virus around the world. The fear of the disease and the possible fatal consequences made them addicted to any new information. The pandemic has become a cross-border story. People are interested in how the disease develops at home, in neighborhoods, in the city, across borders, all over the world. They are interested in how many people die from the disease and what is the success or failure of the treatment of the viral infection. The need to address the situation, fear for life, poverty, job loss, etc. This forced people to starve for information. Of course, television news and news sites were mostly viewed in isolation by the whole family. R. Juriš states that during the first month of

¹⁰ VÍTEK, F.: *NÁKUPY počas KORONY – VÍŤAZI a PORAZENÍ*. [online]. [2020-03-31]. Available at: <<https://mocnedata.sk/utopi-korona-aj-mna/>>.

¹¹ POLÁŠ, M.: *Pandémia zasiahla aj médiá. Menších hráčov môže kríza zničiť*. [online]. [2020-04-12]. Available at: <<https://www.etrend.sk/trend-archiv/rok-2020/cislo-14/mensie-media-moze-kriza-znicit.html>>.

¹² *Ministerstvo kultúry chce pomôcť médiám, zriadilo pracovnú skupinu*. [online]. [2020-04-06]. Available at: <<https://www.24hod.sk/ministerstvo-kultury-chce-pomocť-mediám-zriadilo-pracovnu-skupinu-cl735364.htm/>>.

¹³ Remark by the author: This fact is related to a certain degree of people's dependence on available information. The television set, computer and mobile phone became the most watched media during the quarantine period because they are in almost every household.

the pandemic, several news servers reached a historic peak in viewership. For example, Aktuality.sk and Sme.sk reached three million users a month for the first time. Dennikn.sk also recorded a 50% increase and the Dnes24.sk website grew by almost 33%. However, not all web media have been so successful. For example, some of the sites belonging to the Fun Media Group had to be closed. Other websites have moved their content to the Spravy.sk website. As a result of the demise of these media, the editors were fired.¹⁴ The crisis has provoked various media reactions. Some asked the government for help, others asked readers, others sought solutions according to their own abilities and financial resources. Paradoxically, although web media usage has increased tremendously, ad volumes have dropped dramatically. It is against the logic of the business model, against the principles of functioning of market relations in the field of commercial media. However, this paradox is not just a phenomenon of the Slovak media scene. It has become a worldwide phenomenon. The business model that led to a smooth flow of money to the media has stopped working. According to P. Abernathy from the University of North Carolina, the decline in media advertising after the outbreak of the pandemic was not gradual. For some media it was immediate, drastic and liquidating. P. Abernathy claims that it is very likely that many media will fail or stop publishing in a very short time. In the case of several American newspapers and websites this has already happened, others have reduced their activities or laid off some employees.¹⁵

The Guardian indicates alarming numbers. In Louisiana, for example, which is most affected by the pandemic, 10% of the in newsroom staff were immediately laid off. Florida's largest newspaper, the Tampa Bay Times, has reduced the frequency of publishing to twice a week. The reason was a \$ 1 million reduction in advertising. Alden Global Capital owns more than 50 newspapers. Before the outbreak of the pandemic, it had the optimal number of employees. Everything changed after the outbreak of the virus infection, when the number of employees began to decline drastically. Lee Enterprises, which owns newspapers in 25 states, has announced a flat-rate reduction in employee wages. Despite dramatic developments, there are optimistic views on future developments. For example, the director of Times P. Tash believes that the editorial office will soon return to its original state. A. Gabbatt presents the opinion of media analyst P. Abernath in The Guardian. He is not as optimistic as P. Tash. He predicts that many media media will end their activities. He points out that even before the outbreak of the pandemic, many national and municipal newspapers were in a bad financial situation and many of them went bankrupt. Between 2004 and 2018, up to 1,800 newspapers ceased to exist. During this period of the explosive advent of digital media, the number of readers of the classic periodical decreased rapidly. However, online news media did not bypass the crisis. Google and Facebook absorbed the largest volumes of digital advertising.¹⁶ In 2016, the publicist T. Schmidt presents the results of the research of the well-known American media expert K. Doctor in his article. He argues that in the United States, the economic gap between large multinational news companies and regional or local media groups is widening.¹⁷

¹⁴ JURIŠ, R.: *Kríza v médiách. Ako zareagovali médiá na koronakrízu?*. [online]. [2020-04-27]. Available at: <<https://www.finreport.sk/financie/kriza-v-mediach-ako-zareagovali-media-na-koronakrizu/>>.

¹⁵ *Pre mnohé médiá sa koronakríza stane osudnou. Napriek stúpajúcej čítanosti ich príjem rapidne klesá.* [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://www.noviny.sk/zaujímavosti/524505-pre-mnohe-media-sa-koronakriza-stane-osudnou-napriek-stupajucej-citanosti-ich-prijem-rapidne-klesa/>>.

¹⁶ GABBAT, A.: *US newspapers face extinction-level crisis as Covid-19 hits hard.* [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/media/2020/apr/09/coronavirus-us-newspapers-impact/>>.

¹⁷ SCHMIDT, T.: *Ken Doctor: How Newspapers Can Stop Losing Readers And Money.* [online]. [2015-04-16]. Available at: <<https://en.ejo.ch/media-economics/business-models/ken-doctor-how-newspapers-can-stop-losing-readers-and-money/>>.

The above-mentioned information suggests that the COVID 19 pandemic is not the only cause of financial poverty in media entities. It is known that the declining trend in reading periodicals has been here for several decades. Nothing dramatic has happened yet, although digital media is more lucrative for advertising agencies.¹⁸ The spillover of financial flows into large digital media companies has reduced the number of newspapers and magazines, as well as smaller web news media. However, the current model of media financing is fair in terms of the liberal business model. Its logic is simple: the more readers / users, the more paid advertising. On the other hand, smaller regional or local media or subcultural media also have their own groups of recipients / readers. They also have a place in the media market because they provide special information and communication needs that do not reflect larger media conglomerates. In the event of the disappearance of smaller media and periodicals, it is necessary to ask a question. If they are liquidated, is there no risk of an information monopoly of strong corporate media? Is there no danger of unilateral information? After all, the basic premise of democratic ideals is free choice of the media, extensive public debate, and the right of editors and readers to see and judge what is happening. In addition, today's society is characterized by a large number of viewers with different interests and information needs. Until recently, their needs were a reflection of a rich network of various periodicals and news websites. Today, however, the deadly threat to many media is a reality. Not only because of their long-term financial malnutrition, but also because of the COVID 19 pandemic. In our opinion, such a possibility exists. However, only if publishers – smaller or larger – change their attitude towards the usual business model and adjust their production strategy.

3 Instead of a Conclusion: Morality Versus Restart

Based on the above facts, it can be argued that several media in Slovakia were looking for a solution to the crisis situation. Among other things, they also asked the Ministry of Culture for help. It immediately set up a working group. Its task was to propose measures to mitigate the economic consequences of the pandemic for culture. The ministry declared that media representatives would also be represented in the working group. Eva Pauliaková the director of the Association of Print and Digital Media proposed specific solutions. According to her, a reduction in taxes on magazines and e-subscriptions from 20% to 10% could help the media. Excluding newspapers and magazines from payments to the recycling fund could also solve the situation. At the same time, she proposed the creation of a fund to support journalism, which would ensure the maintenance of jobs for journalists.¹⁹ There is no doubt that such solutions are needed. However, it is questionable whether they can work in the long run and solve the crisis situation in the media. We believe that they will not bring the desired effect in the long run. In this context, we also underline that the system of state support for commercial periodicals calls into question the functioning of market forces and free competition. So is the current business model functional in the media sphere? Yes, it is functional, but it is not fair.

¹⁸ Remark by the author: J. Višňovský and J. Radošinská state this fact in their research. They claim the predictions by many media professionals claiming that ‘the digital turn’ would result in decreasing readership of the press, or even in ‘total extinction’ of the print newspapers, have appeared repeatedly. „It is therefore no surprise that publishers have been forced to take various steps leading to preservation of their then-existing readership bases.; VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J., RADOŠINSKÁ, J.: Online Journalism: Current Trends and Challenges. In PEŇA ACUÑA, B. (ed.): *The Evolution of Media Communication*. Rijeka : InTech, 2017, p. 3.

¹⁹ *Ministerstvo kultúry chce pomôcť médiám, zriadilo pracovnú skupinu*. [online]. [2020-04-05]. Available at: <<https://denniks.sk/34415/ministerstvo-kultury-zriadilo-pracovnu-skupinu-ktora-ma-pomocet-mediam-prekonat-krizu-sposobenou-pandemiou/>>.

Only the biggest and strongest win. On the one hand, media pluralism is being eliminated.²⁰ It is also true that a good financial condition of the media is a basic precondition for their trouble-free and quality operation. It is also possible to agree with such a setting of conditions that would guarantee that the tax system, levies and all fees were not liquidating for the media. On the other hand, financial flows from advertising will continue to depend on the number of readers and the popularity of specific newspapers and magazines in the media market. It can also be assumed that after the recovery of the economy and the return of people lives to work, schools, etc., newspapers and magazines will start to be bought again. Although to a much lesser extent, because the economic implications for family budgets will not be good. However, the question remains unanswered: So what can fully restart readers' interest in periodicals? It turns out that finding a way to restart periodicals is very important at the moment but also challenging. It is naive to think that the current business model of commercial media will change radically. F. R. Fidler offered an interesting suggestion when considering the optimal method of restarting periodicals. In the late 1990s, he argued that the press must change in form and content. Journalists must very systematically look for a vacancy in the media market.²¹ Almost twenty years later, K. Doktor agrees. It calls on media creators to rethink their thinking. It is important to find the right answer to what readers really want. If they get what they want, they are willing to pay for the information. He sees a problem in investing money. Media entities give marketing more money than journalists. Readers' hunger for information is not satisfied. According to K. Doctor, it is therefore necessary to understand what readers want. He advises: Offer quality instead of quantity. In other words, restore a strong relationship with readers. The condition for success is the satisfaction of the recipients with quality texts. However, this is only possible if high-quality analytical genres are published in newspapers and magazines. Web media in particular provide up-to-date information. Traditional print media should focus on what the target groups are most interested in. Building relationships with target groups who are willing to pay for articles should also be done physically. It is important to organize meetings with the reading community, invent events, communicate, develop dialogue.²² The topic of improving the quality of the content of periodicals is nothing new. These steps are very topical, especially in the current crisis of publishing houses due to the viral pandemic. We believe that if the publishers of periodicals manage to implement them, it can lead to their restart. The huge mortality of newspapers and magazines may not be a reality, but only a threat.

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²⁰ Remark by the author: Being the biggest means having the benefits of huge media corporations. In times of crisis, they are able to financially retain their subjects, because they have the opportunity to pour advertising and finance through them in various ways.; PROKOP, D.: *Boj o media. Dějiny nového kritického myšlení médiích*. Prague : Karolinum, 2005, p. 248.; Remark by the author: To be the strongest, it means to have a large number, ie. a large target group of recipients and a large volume of advertising packages in the media market. In this context, L. Čáby emphasizes that "the consumer and advertising markets are interdependent - declining newspaper sales may reduce advertisers' interest in advertising space".; ČÁBYOVÁ, L.: *Marketing a marketingová komunikácia v médiách*. Łódź : Księży Młyn Dom Wydawniczy Michał Koliński, 2012, p. 22.; Remark by the author: We emphasize that preserving the plurality of media opinion platforms, which reflect the diversity of the media audience, is a basic precondition for the functioning of a democratic society.

²¹ FIDLER, R. F.: *Mediamorphosis: Understanding New Media*. London, New Delhi : Pine Forge Press, 1997, p. 69.

²² SCHMIDT, T.: *Ken Doctor: How Newspapers Can Stop Losing Readers And Money*. [online]. [2015-04-16]. Available at: < <https://en.ejo.ch/media-economics/business-models/ken-doctor-how-newspapers-can-stop-losing-readers-and-money/> >.

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LITERARY CRITICISM – FROM HERO TO ZERO?

Mária Stanková

ABSTRACT:

The paper focuses on relatively new features of literary criticism these days. Literary criticism in 21st century was affected by some significant changes and this paper tries to describe the important ones. It is focused on the marketing and educational function of current literary criticism connected also with its presence on social media. Another topic is the presence of critical thinking, evaluation and arguments (or lack thereof) in current critical texts which are strongly related to the author. The aim of this paper is to find an answer to the question whether literary criticism is now “zero”, not “hero”, in the context of its high position in literary science some decades ago.

KEY WORDS:

author, critic, education, literary criticism, marketing, reader

1 Introduction

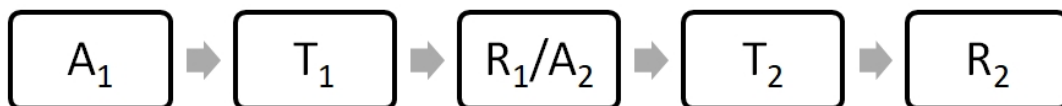
Literary criticism is an inseparable part of every culture and also an important part of our lives – whether we realize it or not. Critical texts can shape our literary taste and also influence the book market in general. In the last sentence, we can clearly see two the strongest tendencies within current literary criticism – literary taste and book market. These tendencies can be seen as two opposites and their balance shapes the look of literary criticism. Current situation is connected with these two tendencies and they are also reasons of quite common statements about degradation of literary criticism in past few years (or decades). In spite of this, we can say that literary criticism still plays a significant role in our culture, also in the time of internet, e-books and social networks. Literary criticism adapted to the new media and social media, new idols in culture and society (for example influencers as idols), also to the new conditions on a book market. These days, literary criticism has a new look – it exists not only in addition to magazines, radio or television text made by literary critics, it also exists as comments on Facebook, Instagram’s feeds or stories, as blogs, vlogs, podcasts, but we can also find it in the form of short annotations (PR-texts) – and all of these in various media. In other words, also literary criticism has been hit by the wave of dejournalism¹, a term by Anna Sámelová, which means “generally attended de-professionalism of journalism skills (text, sound and picture) in media on the base of the internet. It is a state of thing with practically unconditional accessibility to publish own amateur articles, audio-records, pictures or videos”². It is understandable that all these facts are creating new version of literary criticism. The one which is more pragmatic, more operative, more open, quicker, simpler, easier to achieve, but also easier to understand. On the other hand, it means that contemporary literary criticism is less academic, less critical, less logical and uses fewer arguments. In this text, we want to outline some aspects of current situation of literary criticism, with an emphasis placed on marketing and educational aspect of it.

¹ For more information about relationship between dejournalism and literary criticism, see: SÁMELOVÁ, A., STANKOVÁ, M.: Dedziennikarstwo i jego wpływ na język mediów. In *Acta Universitatis Lodzianensis : Folia Linguistica*, 2019, Vol. 53, No. 1, p. 113-122.

² SÁMELOVÁ, A.: *Moc a pravda v podmienkach Rozhlasu a televízie Slovenska*. Bratislava : Univerzita Komenského v Bratislave, 2018, p. 27.; Remark by the author: Original version of definition: „označenie všeobecne prítomnej de-profesionalizácie žurnalistických remesiel (textových, zvukových aj obrazových) v médiách na báze internetu. Ide o stav prakticky neobmedzenej dostupnosti zverejňovania vlastných amatérskych článkov, audionahrávok, fotografií či videí.“

2 Literary Criticism

Literary criticism is a part of literary theory that provides contemporary interpretation, commenting, evaluation and appraisal of current literature pieces. It can be also defined as “the reasoned discussion of literary works, an activity which may include some or all of the following procedures, in varying proportions: the defence of literature against moralists and censors, classification of a work according to its genre, interpretation of its meaning, analysis of its structure and style, judgement of its worth by comparison with other works, estimation of its likely effect on readers, and the establishment of general principles by which literary works (individually, in categories, or as a whole) can be evaluated and understood”³. But it is also necessary – especially in the days of new media and new understanding of communication – to think about how much these definitions really define ideal status of literary criticism and to what extent they reflect reality. What is, at the same time, undeniable, is the important role of literary criticism in literary communication. Literary criticism means to create new text (metatext: critique, for example review, T₂) about analready existing text (prototext: book, T₁). Literary critic has special position in the classic model of literary communication (author → text → recipient), because he is both recipient (reader of prototext, R₁) and author (of metatext), A₂, at the same time.



Picture 1: The scheme of literary criticism within the literary communication

Source: own processing

As we mentioned earlier, these days the point lies in the third step of this scheme – the moment when recipient becomes an author of metatext (critical text) – because it is not rule anymore that literary critic should have a proper education and a proper set of qualities (to be able to critically comment, evaluate, interpret, analyse and also write at a proper level), which we can call “literary-critical” competency. These days, however, nearly anyone can become a literary critic, as we mentioned before. This is caused mainly by the rise of importance of the marketing aspect of literary criticism and this fact also influences its educational aspect.

3 To Sell or to Educate?

“Contrary to the everyday sense of criticism as 'fault-finding', much of modern criticism (particularly of the academic kind) assumes that the works it discusses are valuable; the functions of judgement and analysis having to some extent become divided between the market (where reviewers ask 'Is this worth buying?') and the educational world (where academics ask 'Why is this so good?').”⁴ In other words, on one hand literary criticism can influence book market, on the other hand literary criticism should educate its readers. It seems like market and education stand on opposing sides. We need to realize that literary criticism in

³ BALDICK, C.: *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. New York : Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 54.

⁴ Ibidem.

21st century is more intertwined with marketing than ever. These days, other main functions of literary criticism – cognitive, educational, evaluative and aesthetic – are strongly affected by its marketing dimension. Because in our context, after 1989 we can say that the book market uses reviews and critics to achieve higher profit. Ansgar Nünning states that “after 1989 can be seen slow decay of literary criticism prestige, its functions are replaced by advertising, short annotation and there is emerging new phenomenon: so called ‘PR-review’”⁵. Similarly to literature, also literary criticism is influenced and shaped by non-literary situations, in our context it means concrete political-social changes in 1989. The functions of literary criticism, mentioned above, were defined by Polish literary critic Janusz Sławinski in his study “*Funkcje krytyki literackiej*”. Slovak literary criticism knows this paper from translation by Pavol Winczer, published in literary magazine *Romboid* in 1968. Sławinski has postulated four functions of literary criticism: cognitive-evaluative function, postulative, operative and metacritical⁶. Marketing function can be considered as a part of operative function, Sławinski depicted the lowest level of critical activity as advertising as he was pointing to the reviews in newspapers⁷. Five decades ago, obviously, journalists were writing short texts about new books considered as opposite to academic, interpretative criticism. In 1981, Slovak literary theorist Albín Bagin postulated six kinds of literary-critic texts: book advertising; criticism in dailies; criticism in literary magazines, annual articles, ‘free’ critical publicism and essayism, criticism as a part of literary texts.⁸ So, it can be noted, both of literary theorists consider also marketing aspect of literary criticism.

As it was already mentioned, marketing aspect of literary criticism has a strong influence on literature. Publishers (and authors also) usually have one simple goal – to sell as much as they can. With this fact there is an extensive production of various forms of texts – texts that do not look like critical texts, but they meet one of the most important criteria – they are advertising. For example – publisher-commissioned reviews, texts, critiques blogs, vlogs, Facebook or Instagram posts from critic, journalist, blogger, vlogger, youtuber, influencer etc. It is quite logical that this sort of “sponsored” texts should be more advertising, promotional than critical, theoretical, educational. These days, when literature is taken as goods on a market, it is quite normal that this “goods” needs its promotion. Whether literary criticism can fulfil this demand, that is another question. On the other hand, what is for sure, when literary criticism is focused on promotion, it means that the text fails to guide the reader, to influence his taste in literature, to show the reader the objective aesthetic value of a certain literary work. Marketing function of literary criticism limits the educational function. The second one is – in Sławinski’s theory – the part of cognitive-evaluative and postulative functions.

4 Educational Function of Literary Criticism

From our point of view, is important, that educational function of literary criticism has two directions:

1. to influence readers with metatext and
2. to affect authors of the prototext.

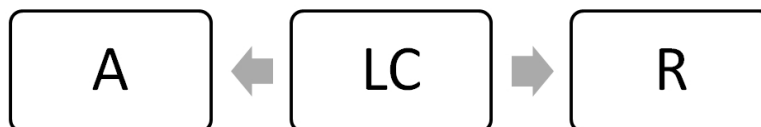
⁵ NÜNNING, A.: *Lexikon teorie literatury a kultury: koncepcie, osobnosti, základní pojmy*. Brno : Host, 2006, p. 457.

⁶ See also: SŁAWINSKI, J.: *Funkcie literárnej kritiky*. In *Romboid*, 1968, Vol. 3, No. 5-6, p. 120-129.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 122.

⁸ BAGIN, A.: *O rozličných typoch kritiky*. In BAGIN, A. et al.: *Funkcie umeleckej kritiky*. Bratislava : Tatran, 1981, p. 100-101.

This ambivalence of literary criticism is helping with building of “public literary opinion”⁹ and with building of taste in literature. Indeed, both of these aspects sound very pretentious, but its importance is undeniable – literary criticism can improve reader’s literary, interpretative, language and also communication competencies.



Picture 2: The scheme of relationship between literary critic and author and readers

Source: own processing

The educational function can be understood – unison with Pavel Plutko – as critics trying to show “the reader objective aesthetic value of literary piece and with the help of analysis of its ideological, ethical and social aspects, readily draw the attention towards its direct connection with real life, thus hinting at the aesthetic and ethical ideal of an art piece”¹⁰. Problematical part of this sentence stems from expression “objective aesthetic value” which is not important for today post-postmodern literature and which is not important for critic to look for. We can see that more of aspects mentioned by Plutko are not very up to date. Maybe the criteria about connection with life can be considered as relatively often fulfilled by today’s critics – because connection to reader’s life is a shortcut to stimulate their interest. Educational function of literary criticism can be aimed at the author of the criticised book (writer, poet) or on the reader. If we think about all the new forms of literary criticism (mainly online texts), we can say that majority of them is not focused on the writer. The operative aspect of literary criticism is so strong that it becomes a tool to persuade the recipient to read or to buy a book – whether author gets something from critique is not so important. In general, educational function of literary criticism towards the reader can be conceived in three main domains:

- a) domain of values and ideas;
- b) domain of interpretation and approach to text;
- c) domain of linguistic culture.¹¹

The domain of values and ideas and domain of interpretation and approach to text help with forming reader’s taste in literature. These domains can also develop critical thinking, cultivate the reader’s perception and give readers chance to practice reading with comprehension. On the other hand, the domain of linguistic culture represents education in literary language. This domain requires the authors of the literary criticism to be knowledgeable in the current literary language. It is also connected with developing the culture of language and also forming the language of its readers. Currently, it can be said that educational function of literary criticism on one hand is open and dynamic, caused by democracy in our society – freedom of speech means also the possibility to express your opinion on actual status of national and translated literature no matter the education or language competency. Various kinds of people can affect literary communication and with their metatexts they can also influence taste in literature or – primarily – sales of the book. Another important aspect is

⁹ MIKO, F.: Literárna kritika ako slovesná tvorba. In BAGIN, A. et al.: *Funkcie umeleckej kritiky*. Bratislava : Tatran, 1981, p. 125.

¹⁰ PLUTKO, P.: Esteticko-výchovná funkcia kritiky. In *Romboid*, 1982, Vol. 17, No. 1, p. 4.

¹¹ See also: STANKOVÁ, M.: Vzdelávacia funkcia literárnej kritiky v 21. storočí. In *Výchova a vzdelávanie k demokratickému občianstvu v Slovenskej republike*. Trenčín : Trenčianska univerzita Alexandra Dubčeka v Trenčíne, 2019, p. 180-191.

connected with linguistic culture in the meaning of aspiration to cultivate the language. Authors of texts considered as a part of literary criticism affect linguistic culture of their readers. It is obvious that literature needs more educated or experienced critics – and these critics on the other hand need more appropriate space to publish. This is the only way how the educational function of literary criticism can be fulfilled. Literary criticism should educate its readers. Because recipient of literary criticism can be both the reader of critical text (person interested in new books) and also the writer (author of the book)¹², there are also two aspects of educational function of literary criticism. On the one hand there is a situation when literary review means feedback, critical appreciation for the writer – in this case educational function means using critical thinking and arguments to express opinion, to point out the highs and lows of the text. On the other hand – when recipient of literary criticism is “average” reader – we can think about development of interpretive competence (on a lower level it could be considered reading literacy) and also about cultivation of the language¹³. The problem with language aspect of education function lies in that new forms of literary criticism (on social media) – in these cases texts – are based on emotion, not arguments. Evaluation of literature works with simple sentences based on “I like” and “I don’t like” or “This is good/nice” and “This is not good/nice”. These kinds of sentences are not critical, don’t use arguments, but most of them are based on emotions – the aim to convince recipient to read (or buy) a book that is good for him because it is good enough for influencer (author). In this case literary criticism works with idolizing, not with argument and critical thinking. It is quite common for example – before Christmas, when publishers work with influencers. We can consider this a side effect of social media and “being online”¹⁴ – less arguments means more emotions and that means more sold books (and also less educational effect of literary criticism.)

Instead of a Conclusion

Before 1989, Slovak academics considered journalistic literary criticism the lowest level of this phenomenon – reviews and short texts in magazines or newspapers were taken as advertising texts and the “high” academic criticism was connected with monographs or literature, culture and academic magazines. In 2020, we can clearly see that journalistic literary criticism has been replaced by critiques on new and social media with new forms, new functions and new aims. Academic criticism is slowly becoming an endangered species. But it’s still alive and we can see it’s quite flexuous – some of academic critics publish online and also use social media. But the question whether this kind of flexibility is a solution, is too complex to answer. In this point we can state that all of mentioned facts form a brand new type of literary criticism – focused on selling, working with persuasion and advertising. The critical thinking, creating opinions on literature, learning from reading, using arguments to explain critic’s point are far behind the marketing function of literary criticism. These days, the majority of critical texts are marketing, not educative. What the future brings remains yet to be seen.

¹² Remark by the author: This relationship can be see on the Picture 2.

¹³ For more information about language educational aspect of literary criticism, see: STANKOVÁ, M.: Jazyk literárnej kritiky v 21. storočí. In *MMK 2019*. Hradec Králové : Magnanimitas akademické sdružení, 2019, p. 763-768. [online]. [2020-04-28]. Available at: <https://www.vedeckekonference.cz/library/proceedings/mmk_2019.pdf>

¹⁴ For more information see: SÁMELOVÁ, A.: Online človek ako produkt (d)evolúcie médiami sprostredkovanej komunikácie. In BUČKOVÁ, Z., KAČINCOVÁ PREDMERSKÁ, A., RUSŇÁKOVÁ, L. (eds.): *Megatrendy a médiá 2019: Digital Universe*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2019, p. 366-381.

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ON THE EDGE OF WAKANDA

Marek Šimončič

ABSTRACT:

The paper deals with the Hollywood blockbuster film *Black Panther* and its perception by the professional public, as it represents a certain milestone in the genre of films based on comics also with African American approach. It also deals with the concept of Afrofuturism, which has reappeared in professional articles thanks to this movie.

KEY WORDS:

afrofuturism, *Black Panther*, Hollywood, movie industry, Wakanda

1 *Black Panther* Movie

It is possible to call the film *Black Panther* a cultural artefact and a cultural commodity, produced and distributed within an industrial capitalist system. It is a property of The Walt Disney Company and represents the characteristic of a commodity. The film generates multiple revenue streams across numerous platforms for the company. It has been transformed by Disney into a product with a high exchange value in the entertainment marketplace for consumers. The movie has not only made an impact on Disney's revenues but established precedents and facts that was the biggest debut by an African American director and co-writer Ryan Coogler and it was a first Disney film with a significant representation of African American writers, musicians and artists in its production crew. The origin of this superhero film is in his comic book with authors Stan Lee and Jack Kirby. The creation of *Black Panther* was a response to the raising voice of the Civil Rights Movement in the early 60s.¹ Comic books contain problematic narratives of race and colonialism in global capitalism.

Black Panther focuses on the African polity of Wakanda – a fictitious state in real life, a place with vibrant traditions and artistry and surprisingly extraordinary scientific and technological sophistication. By avoiding contact with the outside world, it has remained anchored to its own distinct past. It possesses resources and knowledge that humanity needs. Wakanda is an African American dream of Africa and as such represents the promise of a world where things are as they should be. The primary plot focuses on the main character T'Challa and his ability to become the leader of the Wakanda. Most of reviewers noted the highly gendered position of power in that although he is the leader and women run the army. It is possible for viewers that while Wakanda may seem to display the traits of an intersectional uncolonized African reality, there is no active disruption of some of the traditional perceptions around gender and patriarchy. We can notice in this film that Wakandans stand in for Africans, but they also do not. Because Wakanda had never been colonized. Director Ryan Coogler portrays the heroes of the fictional African kingdom as godlike. They possess surreal sophistication by grace of their blackness. In contrast to established tendencies in mainstream movie industry. The superhero the *Black Panther* – King T'Challa, learns to stand in solidarity with the oppressed, even those in whose oppression he has unwittingly become complicit, such as the children of the African diaspora.

¹ BHAYROO, S.: *Wakanda rising: Black Panther and commodity production in the Disney universe*. [online]. [2020-03-15]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336098709_Wakanda_rising_Black_Panther_and_commodity_production_in_the_Disney_universe>.

1.1 Opinions and Interpretations

The Black Panther has generated millions of dollars in revenues, giving it a significantly higher exchange value than the comic book. The film has also generated a high level of use value an extension of the critiques. There are many opinions and interpretations about perception on this film. For example *Mexicana*² interprets similarity with Mexican history. Mexico's indigenous people have from the time of the Spanish conquest inhabited a world that would not leave them alone, like Wakandans. They also had to choose from possible responses, deciding often under stress when and how to mix the outside world. Like villain Killmonger, they have often felt divided, forced to endure a liminal identity, not knowing whether colonizers tricks against them or to instead turn their backs. At times, they were able to remain true to their pasts without being limited or static. The best known Western tradition that Native Mexicans adapted as a reinforce aspects of their local identities is Catholicism. Also, native people have also become literate in Spanish so as to better defend their rights. L. Zwissler, who has investigated ways that marginalized people may use their religions as tools to sustain images of themselves as valuable and as agents within an everyday world of social structures that discount and demean them says, that Black Panther is offering an ideal of sovereign, unconquered African nation, populated with proud leaders of both genders.³ The film offers a model of another world in which people are respected, recognized as whole and given opportunities to do great things. The movie struggles with a just way to acknowledge that the historical experience of enslavement and oppression has left deep traumas within communities of colour around the world without implying that those traumas are so irrecoverably damaging that they make members of the communities that experience them dangerous. It is possible see ways that film deconstructs racism, positioning African Americans as a to broken to fulfil their inherited potential. But this opening up of mainstream representation to include people of colour and women also matters deeply.

Like any work of art, Black Panther exists on the least three levels says S. Washington.⁴ The poetic or level of authorial intent, the textual level or what is actually there and the reception level, which represents the social and semiotic interaction with the film's audience and social world. The skilful and innovative use of sources like African American writing or Afrofuturism, has resulted in an important film that represents many of the defining characteristics of African American storytelling. Black audiences in the USA and in Africa received the film as a negotiated position, at times accepting the celebratory messages of the beauty of African cultures and peoples, the traditional strength of black woman and the inherent potential for greatness of Africans, while remaining critical of encoded messages as the status of villain Killmonger. While he is the putative antagonist of the plot, his political perspective and militancy mark him as the potential hero in the film's social reception. Black Panther is a direct answer to the views expressed about black people by the works of philosophers like Voltaire, Kant. They held equally vicious views on the cultural and intellectual potential of Africans. Wakanda, as a definitively African country, has entered political and economic maturity without western cultural imperialism. F. Qurashi⁵ says that the

² ROSEMBLATT, K. A.: *Wakanda Mexicana*. [online]. [2020-05-08]. Available at: <<https://uncpressblog.com/2018/05/08/karin-alejandra-roseblatt-wakanda-mexicana>>.

³ ZWISSLER, L.: Black Panther as Spirit Trip. In *Journal fo Religion & Film*, 2018, Vol. 22, No. 1, p. 1-5. [online]. [2020-03-30]. Available at: <<https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/jrf/vol22/iss1/41>>.

⁴ WASHINGTON, S.: *You act like a throwed away child: Black Panther, Killmonger and Pan-Africanist African American identity*. [online]. [2020-03-26]. Available at: <<https://www.salimwashington.com/musings/you-act-like-a-thowed-away-child>>.

⁵ QUARASHI, F.: *Black Panther: The same old Western politics with a black face*. [online]. [2020-02-02]. Available at:

film is telling black people how to be successful and accepted on the world stage as black people – to be moderate, to operate within the confines of the neoliberal, neo-colonial world order. If you want to make change and help people, do it gradually. In the end, the problematic politics of the Black Panther undermine any value the film may have. If this is what representation means, then it may be time to rethink the value of representation. The movie speaks to and trust from western elites in the rich powerful neoliberal black elites around the world. It signals the arrival of this elite onto world stage and into the mainstream and reminds them how to be proud of their colour. That is possibility that it doesn't have much to say for the mass of African American people around the world.

G. Faithful⁶ informs that superhero films in this case can be such art as a result, that film can function as catalyst for reflection on the part of viewers in terms of how they might perceive more clearly the complexity, variety and ambiguity represented by blackness. Whether other's or their own and how they might identify with the other. In these types of films there is a place for their social function, they can even play the role of the mythology. As shared narratives, they can convey ethical norms and social values. They encourage reflection on who one is and who one ought to be. Depending on the disposition of the viewer, he can take action. The act of viewing itself can be a transformative experience of the transcendent. He also said that, Black Panther stories told by black people for black people, as well as for others, are different kind of stories.⁷ The persona of T'Challa represents a radical break from typical stereotypes. He is a complex leader, but imperfect in the manner of a well-developed character. Even baring the transformation he does, he would still have possessed significance as a step forward to greater realism in Hollywood's descriptions of black men. Black Panther offers vivid public representations of what diversity can look like but it is imperfect in contribution to contemporary culture. The movie challenges the prevailing norms of shallow representations of blackness by depicting black people as unique, multifaceted and ambiguous in their proud blackness, rather than as part of monolithic community.

1.2 Afrofuturism

Afrofuturism is a complex term which is used to describe kinds of science fiction films with black futurist sensibilities, at their core a genre of its own.⁸ Author and critic Mark Dery came with this name in his essay Black to the Future in 1994.⁹ In this essay, he interrogates the discourse of cyberculture and address numerous aspects of the deliberate erasure and relegation of African Americans to the subaltern position in science fiction literature. He also wrote about it as the merging of African American-Black cosmologies, technologies and histories in literature and artistic expression in order to re-imagine possibilities for Black

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323387449_Black_Panther_The_same_old_Western_politics_with_a_black_face>.

⁶ FAITHFUL, G.: *Dark of the world, Shine on us: The Redemption of Blackness in Ryan Coogler's Black Panther*. [online]. [2020-03-10]. Available at:

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328150485_Dark_of_the_World_Shine_on_Us_The_Redemption_of_Blackness_in_Ryan_Coogler's_Black_Panther>.

⁷ Ibidem.

⁸ MARCO, D.: *Vibing with blackness: Critical considerations of Black Panther and exceptional black positionings*. [online]. [2020-03-21]. Available at:

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329136390_Vibing_with_Blackness_Critical_Considerations_of_Black_Panther_and_Exceptional_Black_Positionings>.

⁹ BHAYROO, S.: *Wakanda rising: Black Panther and commodity production in the Disney universe*. [online]. [2020-03-15]. Available at:

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336098709_Wakanda_rising_Black_Panther_and_commodity_production_in_the_Disney_universe>.

emancipation. Afrofuturism is interdisciplinary and encompasses a host of different positions and conceptual threads. It has evolved into coherent mode not only aesthetically but also in terms of its political mission.¹⁰ It is possible to say, that Afrofuturism is an extension of the historical recovery, which intellectuals have engaged in for well over 200 years. M. Dery clarifies the significance of Afrofuturism in contemporary America as it offers a mythology of the future present, an explanatory narrative that recovers the lost data of historical memory, confronts the dystopian reality of black life in America, demands a place for people among the monorails and insists, that our vision of things to come live up to our pieties about racial equality and social justice.¹¹ The alternative science fiction view of Africa presented in *Black Panther* represents this image of this term. The main protagonist is black and also superhero and he has all-female army. This movie is celebrated as exceptional for its representations of these characters, women and superheroes and that way in which a fictional black nation exists and enacts power in a dystopian future. This film widely commoditized Afrofuturistic films and it essentially made this genre recognized and also popular in this way of imagination, not only in discourses of those who engage with the genre. The hiring of Ryan Coogler as a director and scriptwriter with Joe Robert Cole as a co-scriptwriter, marks the first significant shift of the film look of Afrofuturism, from white to African American. This change represents the potential of the new way of re-appropriating science fiction genre and Afrofuturistic stories. It might be a beginning of reclaiming control of historical narratives which African American have been discard. The importance and impact of this Afrofuturistic narratives in *Black Panther* are not lost on the many millions of fans around the globe. Afrofuturism and its reclamation of an imagined past and future firmly in the imaginations of fans new stuff and old stuff. *Black Panther's* success however, can be read and questioned in a lot of ways. The critics posits the perspective of blackness within science fiction as a genre, which re-articulates the genre itself. Also, they says, that *Black Panther* is less of an Afrofuturist work than a neatly commoditized Marvel comic which rides on the coattail of popular black culture, and popular ability to perform being cool, more generally.¹² While the themes and representations of Afrofuturism in *Black Panther* fall short of an political and economic utopia in which advanced technologies serve basic human needs. The many critiques and arguments that have ensued in response to the film's representations of this possibilities. The images of tomorrow – a place of racial equality and equal justice for all, a place where all lives do matter.

Conclusion

The interaction and reception of the film by not only black audience around the world adds the to the meaning of this film and has elevated the screenings to a cultural event. *Black Panther* is a superhero film centred on a romanticised African nation and culture. The film is

¹⁰ MARCO, D.: *Vibing with blackness: Critical considerations of Black Panther and exceptional black positionings*. [online]. [2020-03-21]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329136390_Vibing_with_Blackness_Critical_Considerations_of_Black_Panther_and_Exceptional_Black_Positionings>.<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329136390_Vibing_with_Blackness_Critical_Considerations_of_Black_Panther_and_Exceptional_Black_Positionings>.

¹¹ DERY, M.: *Afrofuturism reloaded: 15 theses in 15 minutes*. [online]. [2020-02-02]. Available at:<<https://www.fabrikzeitung.ch/afrofuturism-reloaded-15-theses-in-15-minutes/#/>>.

¹² MARCO, D.: *Vibing with blackness: Critical considerations of Black Panther and exceptional black positionings*. [online]. [2020-03-21]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329136390_Vibing_with_Blackness_Critical_Considerations_of_Black_Panther_and_Exceptional_Black_Positionings>.<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329136390_Vibing_with_Blackness_Critical_Considerations_of_Black_Panther_and_Exceptional_Black_Positionings>.

rooted in a history and it holds universal lessons. For Native and African descended people, it is a history that driven contradictions and choices along with innovation. In the world of Hollywood, Black Panther may seem radical and progressive. It is part of this process of new era and it delivers an important anti-racist worldview for we can agree. The movie, within the strictures of its genre expectations, tries to give a nod of various dilemmas. Even if its solution was the worst one possible and here is where the reception of an artistic work is so valuable. In the context of the movie, this exploitation of affectivity is portrayed through the seemingly positive representations of black people, as was also the case with the Blaxploitation era of films. The director and creators turns to interesting tools of science fiction by departing from strict adherence to realism. This film genre permits world-building, social experimentation and limitless resources appropriated to the powerless. We can say that movie is cult now, but it is possible that potential for redemptive myth-building is similarly limitless.

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