



Media Literacy *and* Academic Research

Vol. 4 || No. 1 || April 2021

Editorial Board

Editor-In-Chief

Norbert Vrabec

Deputy Managing Editor

Monika Prostináková Hossová

Indexing Process

Marija Hekelj

Technical Editor and Distribution

Lubica Bôtošová, Vladimíra Hladíková, Diana Bulganová

Proofreading Team and English Editor

Michal Valek,

Photo Editors

Kristián Pribila

Grafic Production Coordinator

Martin Graca

Web Editor

Andrej Brník

Editorial Team

Norbert Vrabec, Ludmila Čábyová, Viera Kačínová, Slavomír Gálik,
Martin Solík, Oľga Škvareninová, Denisa Jánošová

Advisory Board

Piermarco Aroldi (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milano, Italy)
Alexander Fedorov (Russian Association for Film and Media Education, Russia)
Jan Jiráček (Metropolitan University Prague, Czech Republic)
Igor Kanižaj (University of Zagreb, Croatia)
Anastasia Levitskaya (Taganrog Management and Economics Institute, Russia)
Miguel Vicente Mariño (University of Valladolid, Spain)
Radek Mezulánik (Jan Amos Komenský University in Prague, Czech Republic)
Stefan Michael Newerkla (University of Vienna, Austria)
Shahreen Mat Nayan (University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)
Gabriel Paľa (University of Prešov, Slovak Republic)
Veronika Pelle (Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary)
Hana Pravdová (University of SS. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovak Republic)
Charo Sádaba (University of Navarra in Pamplona, Spain)
Lucia Spálová (Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia)
Anna Stolińska (Pedagogical University of Kraków, Poland)
Zbigniew Widera (University of Economics in Katowice, Poland)
Markéta Supa (Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic)
Yao Zheng (Zhejiang University of Media and Communications, China)

About the Journal

Media Literacy and Academic Research is a scientific journal focused on the academic reflection of media and information literacy issues, media education, critical thinking, digital media and new trends in related areas of media and communication studies. The journal is devoted to addressing contemporary issues and future developments related to the interdisciplinary academic discussion, the results of empirical research and the mutual interaction of expertise in media and information studies, media education as well as their sociological, psychological, political, linguistic and technological aspects.

Media Literacy and Academic Research is a double-blind peer-reviewed journal published twice a year. The journal is international and interdisciplinary, inviting contributions from across the globe and from various academic disciplines of social sciences. It focuses on theoretical and empirical studies, research results, as well as papers related to the new trends, practices and other academic research areas. Also encouraged are literature reviews, innovative initiatives, best practices in online teaching, institutional policies, standards and assessment. The Journal welcomes the submission of manuscripts that meet the general criteria of significance and scientific excellence.

The members of the journal's Editorial Board are members of the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA), UNESCO-UNAOC UNITWIN Network for Media and Information Literacy, European Association for Viewers Interests (EAVI), The Slovak EU Kids Online Team, Media Literacy Expert Group and International Association for Media Education.

The journal is now indexed in these databases: Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI) – Web of Science Core Collection, ERIH Plus, Ulrich's Periodical Directory, CEEOL, CEJSH and Index Copernicus.

The complete version of Media Literacy and Academic Research's Editorial Policy is available online at www.mlar.sk.

Media Literacy and Academic Research

Vol. 4, No. 1, April 2021, price 5€

ISSN: 2585-8726 (print version), ISSN: 2585-9188 (online version)

EV 4956 / 14

Publisher

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

Námestie Jozefa Herdu 2, 917 01 Trnava

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

<https://fmk.sk/en/>, www.mlar.sk

IČO 36 078 913





We are one year into the COVID-19 pandemic. The educational process in many countries, involving both pupils and teachers, has also had to adapt to the pandemic situation. The move to distance forms of education has necessitated a prompt response from both schools and teachers, places demands on their technical skills and has in many cases also revealed an insufficient existing level of media competency or digital literacy. In addition, the way pupils learn, as well as the way children and young people spend their free time, has changed significantly.

In addition to the challenges associated with education in this period, humanity also faces an old-fashioned challenge - the fight against the misinformation and hoaxes associated with a global pandemic. Disinformation seems to be spreading even faster today than ever before, attributable to fear caused by endless isolation or to frustration with the slowly improving situation. As in education, the need for advanced media literacy and critical thinking seems to be a real necessity. It is therefore more than certain that our work in raising media literacy absolutely makes sense and that more attention than ever needs to be paid to this area.

The editors of Media Literacy and Academic Research appreciate the interest of authors from all over the world in publishing their scientific and research findings and are happy to provide texts that move the fields of media and communication studies forward. This current issue of our magazine once more deals with interesting topics, many of which reflect life during the pandemic. You will find studies on media literacy in times of pandemic, distance education, but also on media literacy in connection with children and advertising and a study on the role of the media in a post-war country. The studies also cover topics of gender inequality, new trends in journalism, the phenomenon of social networks and the protection of privacy on the Internet. We hope that as you read this issue, you too will be able to broaden your horizons and gain inspiration for your scientific research activities.

Pleasant reading,

Monika Prostináková Hossová
Deputy Managing Editor

Studies

Transnational TV Series Adaptations: What Artificial Intelligence Can Tell US About Gender Inequality in France and the Us	6
<i>Landry Digeon, Anjal Amin</i>	
Explanatory Journalism – A New Way How to Communicate in Digital Era	24
<i>Pavel Bielik, Ján Višňovský</i>	
A Qualitative Study on People's Experiences of Covid-19 Media Literacy	38
<i>Hanieh Jormand, Saeed Bashirian, Majid Barati, Salman Khazaei, Ensiyeh Jenabi, Sepideh Zareian</i>	
Security Risks of Sharing Content Based on Minors by Their Family Members On Social Media In Times Of Technology Interference.....	53
<i>Zuzana Bezáčková, Adam Madleňák, Marek Švec</i>	
The Slogan Effect: The Power of Brand Discourse in Liking and Purchasing Behaviour	70
<i>Emre Ş. Aslan, Çağatay Demirel</i>	
Asynchronous and Synchronous Distance Learning of English as a Foreign Language	89
<i>František Rigo, Ján Mikuš</i>	
Media Development in Post-Conflict Societies (Kosovo Case)	107
<i>Avdyl Gashi</i>	
On Perspectives of Teacher Training and Understanding of Their Digital Competencies as Determinants of Digital Education	118
<i>Sabína Gáliková Tolnaiová</i>	
Self-Government Activity on Social Media as an Information Source to Cover Local Issues: Slovak And Ukrainian Journalists' Views.....	134
<i>Olha Harmatij, Peter Kravčák</i>	
Media Literacy and Mobilizing Children: The Image of Child in Automobile Ads	145
<i>Nilüfer Pembecioğlu, Uğur Gündüz</i>	
„Media Invasion“ Against Islam in the Context of the Slovak Republic.....	165
<i>Hedviga Tkáčová, Eva Al-Absiová, Marwan Al-Absi, Martina Pavlíková</i>	
Privacy on the Internet Concerning Generation Z in Bosnia and Herzegovina.....	180
<i>Dragana Trninic, Anđela Kupresanin Vukelic</i>	

Landry Digeon, Anjal Amin

Transnational TV Series Adaptations: What Artificial Intelligence Can Tell Us About Gender Inequality In France And The US

ABSTRACT

The present research analyzes the inequality of gender representation in transnational TV series. For this purpose, a content analysis was carried out on 18 episodes of the US crime show *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* and its French adaptation *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles*. To conduct this research, we used the artificial intelligence toolkit the Möbius Trip, which is equipped with a gender and emotion recognition feature and relies on big data. The main findings indicate that male characters overwhelmingly dominate the onscreen time equally in both the US and the French versions. The data also show that male characters are more emotionally expressive and that women tend to display a wider range of emotions. The French characters are slightly more emotionally expressive than their American counterparts. The data also suggest that male characters tend to display violent behavior and that female characters tend to be portrayed as a victim in both versions of the show. The emotions-related results show a trend, but the difference of emotions between male and female characters and between the French and American cultures remain fairly narrow.

KEY WORDS

Transnational TV series. Artificial intelligence. Big data. Gender inequality.

1. Introduction

In this paper, we present our provisional results on gender representation in transnational TV series adaptations in France and the US. Based on the American crime show *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* and its French adaptation *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles*, we explore the features of our artificial intelligence (AI) movie detection toolkit, the Möbius Trip. This study showcases collection, correlation, and analysis of data through the the Möbius Trip on gender and emotions. We compare the screen-time between male and female characters in both the French and the US versions of the TV series. We also compare emotion display between countries and gender in both cultures. This quantitative research relies on big data, as we are seeking to uncover patterns of gender representation.

This study is a work in progress, and our results are still preliminary. Our goal is to create an all-inclusive toolkit that is able to reverse-engineer the shows to measure, analyze, and compare their constituting elements. We seek to manage big data to uncover cultural trends in transnational TV series representation in order to study the broader culture in which the shows are embedded. Gender representation is thus one element of a more comprehensive approach. It is the first step towards changing the way we analyze transnational TV series.

2. Literature Review

Transnational TV series

In the context of *glocalization*, which consists of adapting globalized content models or patterns to local cultures,¹ the recent trend of remaking the hit TV series first created in other countries has become a worldwide phenomenon. TV scholar Albert Moran argues that one of the goals of TV series adaptations lies in transferring the success of ratings from one country to another.² He notes that adapting a show lowers commercial failure risk because of its well-tried format. Transnational adaptations should capitalize on the popularity of the original show. TV series adaptations are relevant to this inquiry because they are established forms of cultural representation that mobilize billions of dollars every year in the global entertainment industry complex. Unfortunately, reality often contradicts Moran's statement, and numerous shows fail to connect with their audience.³ Whether successful or not, transnational TV series adaptations reflect the need for cultural proximity, a multidimensional concept that assumes that an audience appreciates media products that are proximate to their own cultural backgrounds.⁴ This proximity is defined by history, ethnicity, religion, language, and geography.⁵ The change of elements includes language, as well as dress, ethnic types, gestures, body language, humor, music, religion, gender image, lifestyle, personal experiences, education, family, and organizational affiliation.^{6,7}

¹ STRAUBHAAR, J. D.: (Re)Asserting National Television and National Identity Against the Global, Regional, and Local Levels of World Television. In DURHAM, M. G., KELLNER, D. M.: *Media and Cultural Studies: Keywords*. Malden : Blackwell Publishing, 2006, p. 681-702.

² MORAN, A.: *TV Formats Worldwide: Localizing Global Programs*. United Kingdom : Intellect Books, 2009, p. 82.

³ CARTER, B.: *Why Studios Keep Cranking Out TV Remakes, Despite the Flops*. [online]. [2021-03-21]. Available at: <www.nytimes.com/2009/12/28/business/media/28remakes.html>.

⁴ STRAUBHAAR, J. D.: Beyond media imperialism: Asymmetrical interdependence and cultural proximity. In *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 1991, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 261-78.

⁵ LU, J., LIU, X., CHENG, Y.: Cultural Proximity and Genre Proximity: How Do Chinese Viewers Enjoy American and Korean TV Dramas? In *SAGE Open*, 2019, Vol. 9, No. 1, p. 2.

⁶ KSIAZEK, T. B., WEBSTER, T. B.: Cultural Proximity and Audience Behavior: The Role of Language in Patterns of Polarization and Multicultural Fluency. In *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 2008, Vol. 52, No. 3, p. 485-503.

⁷ LA PASATINA, A. C., STRAUBHAAR, J. D.: Multiple Proximities between Television Genres and Audiences: The Schism between Telenovelas' Global Distribution and Local Consumption. In *Gazette (Leiden, Netherlands)*, 2005, Vol. 67, No. 3, 2005, p. 271-288.

Indeed, TV series exhibit real-world features and traditions to reflect the culture it is embedded in. As Buonanno explains, „*stories narrated by television have important cultural significance, however unoriginal, banal and repetitive they may seem (and sometimes indeed are)*.“⁸ In other words, TV series mirror contemporary behaviors, social practices, or world views of the societies in which they are embedded. Therefore, they are relevant to study cultures. Russian philosopher Mikael Bakhtin explains: „*In the realm of culture, outsidership is a most powerful factor in understanding. It is only in the eyes of another culture that foreign culture reveals itself fully and profoundly.*“⁹ Bakhtin’s argument makes the study of transnational TV series an arena to study cultural representation differences in adaptations because they offer an ideal platform to study the complexities of cultural representation and production in the context of globalization.

To conduct our research, we use the popular American TV crime show: *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* and its French adaptation *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles*. The American version of *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* was very successful in the US. The show, created by Dick Wolfe, boasts 195 episodes in the course of ten seasons. The French version, *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles*, did not meet the expectations in terms of the audience in France. As a consequence, it was discontinued after only 20 episodes and lasted only three seasons. Whether successful or not, the French adaptation of the show offers an excellent showcase of how a transnational TV series is adapted. Michelle Hilmes explains that the adapted series was „*overseen by obsessive care by its creator.*“¹⁰ Robertson added that the guideline for the French version is about 1000 pages long. With such a detailed outline, Barnes claims, „*absolutely nothing was left to interpretation.*“¹¹ The adaptors have to follow strict guidelines imposed by the original writer of the show. Because of the drastic constraints imposed by Wolfe, we can assume that any change of element necessarily reflects the French culture. *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles* director Frank Ollivier explains that the cultural adaptation of a show implies conscious and unconscious processes.¹² Some changes are done naturally. In other instances, Ollivier intentionally modified some elements of the adapted version to *Frenchify* the show. These elements range from the most superficial level to the most rooted features of the cultural fabric. The end product is an original French TV series, which abides by the French norms and conventions, and mirrors the French audience.

How Technology Reveals Gender Inequality Onscreen

Traditionally, film analysis has been done by hand,^{13,14} and several methodologies based on handmade annotation systems have been developed.^{15,16} Computer scientist Lev Manovich states that nowadays, „*computerization turns media into computer data.*“¹⁷ Manovich heralds that the emergence of digital tools transforms how media scholars study moving images. While still based on handmade annotation systems, these new technologies have largely contributed to new approaches, new methods, and unprecedented ways to gather and manage data. Scholars

⁸ BUONANNO, M.: *The Age of Television: Experiences and Theories*. Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 2008, p. 72.

⁹ BAKHTIN, M. M.: *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*. Texas : University of Texas Press, 2014, p. 1.

¹⁰ HILMES, M.: *Network nations: a transnational history of British and American broadcasting*. New York : Routledge, 2012, p. 305.

¹¹ ROBERTSON, R.: *European glocalization in global context*. Hampshire : Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, p. 89.

¹² DIGEON, L.: *Personal interview with French Director Franck Ollivier* on Skype, February 21th, 2019.

¹³ HALL, E. T.: *The Hidden Dimension*. USA : Doubleday, 1969.

¹⁴ BIRDWHISTELL, R. L.: *Kinesics and Context: Essays on Body Motion Communication*. Philadelphia : University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990.

¹⁵ EKMAN, P., WALLACE, V. F.: *The Repertoire of Nonverbal Behavior: Categories, Origins, Usage, and Coding*. In *Semiotica*, 1969, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 1-51. ISSN 1613-3692.

¹⁶ HALL, E. T.: *A System for the Notation of Proxemic Behavior*. In *American Anthropologist*, 1963, Vol. 65, No. 5, p. 1003-1026.

¹⁷ MANOVICH, L.: *The Language of New Media*. Cambridge : MIT Press, 2001, p. 45.

from different fields agree that Computer-Assisted Media Analysis is essential to study moving images. For instance, Larkey et al. have explored the use of various software such as Atlas.ti, the Multimodal Software Analysis, and Cinemetrics to compare transnational TV series.¹⁸ They proposed an innovative approach based on reverse-engineering and measuring cinematographic and cultural elements. However, they were constrained by time consumption, a limited corpus of study, human error, and a lack of precision. The limited amount of data extracted was not enough to bring to light cultural trends.

The advent of artificial intelligence technologies offers new venues in the ways we collect and analyze data. Thanks to these technologies, we can now envision and develop new methodologies for film and TV series analysis. Relying on artificial intelligence software, the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media has paved the way to a groundbreaking approach to studying women in films. Its goal is to uncover unconscious biases on gender (and other parameters such as age and race) to raise awareness of the imbalance in terms of representation on screen. Its quantitative approach relies on content analysis. For instance, the software is able to measure the time women appear on the screen, as well as the time they speak and can be heard. With its first-ever international study on gender images in global films and its unprecedented data, the Geena Davis Institute startled Hollywood and the cinema industry worldwide. Geena Davis revealed, „*while women represent half of the world's population, less than one-third of all speaking characters in film are female. Less than a quarter of the fictional onscreen workforce is comprised of women (22,5%)*.“¹⁹ Such data demonstrate the blatant inequality between genders in the cinema and TV series industry at the global level. It objectively proves that the film industry perpetuates discrimination against women by suppressing their presence on screen and by literally not being heard.

First, the Geena Davis Institute's findings are objective because they rely on quantitative data. Most importantly, they are groundbreaking because they draw on big data. As of today, the Geena Davis Institute has collected the largest body of research on gender prevalence in movies (family entertainment) over a span of 28 years.²⁰ Big data generate unmatched volume, speed, and variety of primary data, which reveals trends that would otherwise be invisible. It gives the big picture of women's representation. It provides strong evidence to the film and television industry with great accuracy. Such an approach would be unconceivable without AI and the ability to manage big data.

While women are underrepresented in cinema and TV series at a worldwide level, it seems that the trend varies from country to country. In France, the Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel (CSA), which is the equivalent of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in the US, also uses big data to uncover televisual trends. In a comparative study on gender representation between French and American TV series, the CSA analyzed 26 audiovisual French and American TV shows. According to the report, French TV series showcase 52% male characters and 48% female (Figure 1). In comparison, American TV series exhibit 62% male characters and 38% female characters.²¹ The domination of the screen by male characters is significantly higher in the American TV series than in the French ones. This gap in representation also reflects the reality of both the US and French societies. The Gender Gap report integrates the latest statistics from international organizations and a survey of executives. The Global Gender Gap

¹⁸ LARKEY, E., DIGEON, L., ER, I.: Measuring Transnationalism. In *TV Formats and Format Research*, 2016, Vol. 5, No. 9, p. 72-92.

¹⁹ *Press Release: Global Film Industry Perpetuates Discrimination against Women*. [online]. [2021-03-20]. Available at: <www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/9/geena-davis-study-press-release>.

²⁰ *Research Informs & Empowers*. [online]. [2021-03-21]. Available at: <seejane.org/research-informs-empowers/?itm_term=home>.

²¹ *La Place Des Femmes Dans Les Oeuvres Audiovisuelles (Fictions TV)*. [online]. [2021-03-19]. Available at: <www.csa.fr/Informer/Collections-du-CSA/Thema-Toutes-les-etudes-realisees-ou-co-realisees-par-le-CSA-sur-des-themes-specifiques/Les-etudes-du-CSA/La-place-des-femmes-dans-les-oeuvres-audiovisuelles-fictions-TV-2013>.

Index 2020 places France in the 7th rank, and the US holds the 53rd position.²² The real-world data converges with the representation onscreen. Because TV shows reflect the society in which they are embedded,²³ analyzing TV series with AI software capable of managing big data highlights cultural elements of that society.

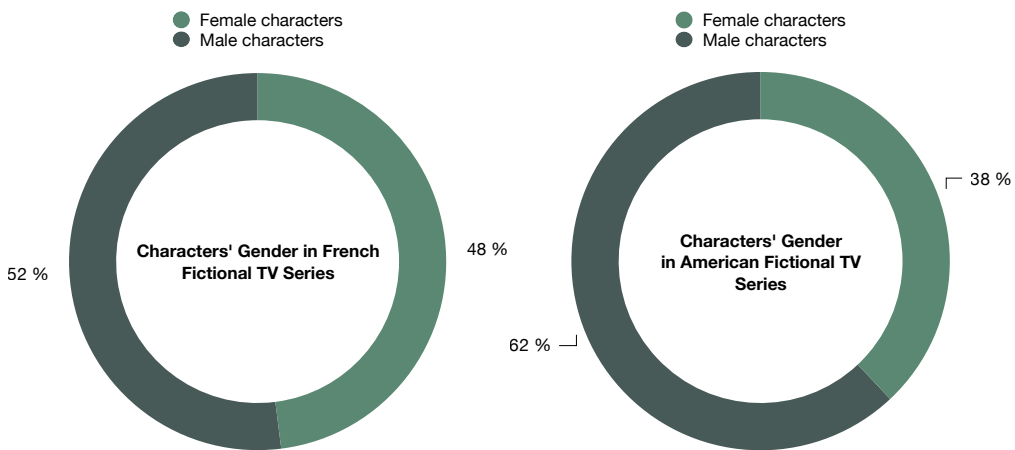


FIGURE 1: Comparisons of gender in French Series and American series in 2013

Source: own processing, 2021

The Influence of Gender and Culture on Emotions

In addition to focusing on gender and screen-time, our current research looks at characters' displays of emotion. Characters' emotions display is an essential component because it informs us further on relation dynamics (e.g., power relationship) and gender representation. In this paper, we use the term *emotion* to relate the characters' facial expressions. Elspeth Probyn states, „A basic distinction is that emotion refers to cultural and social expression, whereas effects are of a biological and physiological nature.“²⁴ Emotions provide cues on characters' personality, social, cultural, and situational contexts they are in. They are essential to understanding relationship dynamics in a cultural context. Leslie Brody and Judith Hall warn us, „Since males and females are often socialized to have different motives and goals—depending on their ages, cultural backgrounds, and socialization histories—gender differences should occur in emotional processes, but should also fail to generalize broadly, instead of varying as a function of these same factors.“²⁵ Because there are multiple variables, analyzing emotions can indeed be a real challenge.

There is a common assumption regarding women being more emotionally expressive than men.²⁶ As Probyn argues in her work on affect and emotions, „Women have been associated with the emotions is so prevalent a notion in our culture that it can go unqualified.“²⁷ This claim has been supported by the results of many academic research papers indicating that

²² Global Gender Gap Report 2020. [online]. [2021-03-21]. Available at: <http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2020.pdf>.

²³ BATAILLE, S., HATCHUEL, S.: *Préface. Les Séries Télévisées Dans Le Monde : Échanges, Déplacements Et Transpositions*. [online]. [2021-03-21]. Available at: <<https://journals.openedition.org/tvseries/1351>>.

²⁴ PROBYN, E.: *Blush: Faces of Shame*. Minnesota : University of Minnesota Press, 2005, p. 11.

²⁵ BRODY, L. R., HALL, J. A.: Gender and Emotion in Context. In LEWIS, M., HAVILAND-JONES, J. M. (eds.): *Handbook of Emotions*, New York : Guilford Press, 2010, p. 395.

²⁶ PARKINS, R.: *Gender and Emotional Expressiveness: An Analysis of Prosodic Features in Emotional Expression*. [online]. [2021-03-21]. Available at: <https://www.griffith.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0026/363680/Paper-6-Parkins-Gender-and-Emotional-Expressiveness_final.pdf>.

²⁷ PROBYN, E.: *Blush: Faces of Shame*. Minnesota : University of Minnesota Press, 2005, p. 81.

women are indeed the more emotionally expressive of the genders.^{28,29,30} It has also been found that the emotions of happiness, sadness, and fear are believed to be more characteristic of women, whereas men are believed to be more characteristically angry. This idea is backed up by a recent study from the Geena Davis Institute that claims, „*Male characters are more likely to be shown as violent (16,2% compared with 12,8%) and twice as likely to be depicted as criminal (6,0% compared with 3,2%) than female characters.*“³¹ These stereotypes have provided a basis for society to deem what is and is not socially acceptable for males and females in displaying emotions.³²

While emotion is highly contingent on gender, it is equally the case across cultures. Rooted in the field of intercultural communication, Edward T. Hall discusses the way context is used differently to communicate. He defines two categories: high context and low context cultures. Toomey and Chung explain: „*In low-context communication, the emphasis is on how intention or meaning is expressed through explicit messages. In high context cultures, the emphasis is on how intention or meaning can be best conveyed through the embedded contexts (e.g., social roles or positions, relationship types, intergroup history) and the nonverbal channels (e.g., pauses, silence, tone of the voice) of the verbal message.*“³³ High context means that „*most of the information is either in the physical context or initialized in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message.*“³⁴ In contrast, low-context communication occurs when „*the mass of information is vested in the explicit code.*“³⁵ Based on the framework proposed by Hall, we can analyze and predict cultural differences in communication styles between France and the US. France is perceived as a high-context culture, which means that French people focus more on personal relations; they tend to communicate more intensively with their in-groups keeping them up-to-date while preferring face-to-face communication. The French emphasize formalized and stylized interaction rituals, which are a type of nonverbal behavior.³⁶ In high-context cultures, facial expressions and gestures take on greater importance in conveying and understanding a message. In contrast, Americans tend not to make such a strong distinction when interacting with their in-groups and out-groups. Hence „*the verbal content of communication in low-context cultures carry very specific, literal information.*“³⁷ Americans tend to communicate information indirect, explicit, and precise ways. They do not use facial expressions and body language as much as the French. Besides, emotional expressions are likely to vary depending on the individualistic/collectivistic nature of the culture. Both France and the US are considered to be individualistic cultures, but their degree of individualism vary. Social psychologist Geert Hofstede proposed a dimensions model of national culture in which he evaluates nations' characteristics. According to his scale, the US is considered more individualistic than France. France is considered to be an individualistic country with a score

²⁸ ASHMORE, R. D., DEL BOCA, F. K.: Sex Stereotypes and Implicit Personality Theory: Toward a Cognitive-Social Psychological Conceptualization. In *Sex Roles*, 1979, Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 219-248.

²⁹ BRODY, L. R., HALL, J. A.: Gender and Emotion in Context. In LEWIS, M., HAVILAND-JONES, J. M. (eds.): *Handbook of Emotions*. New York : Guilford Press, 2010, p. 395-408.

³⁰ JOHNSON, J. T., SHULMAN, G. A.: More Alike than Meets the Eye: Perceived Gender Differences in Subjective Experience and Its Display. In *Sex Roles*, 1998, Vol. 19, No. 1-2, p. 67-79.

³¹ *Research Informs & Empowers*. [online]. [2021-03-12]. Available at: <seejane.org/research-informs-empowers/?itm_term=home>.

³² PARKINS, R.: *Gender and Emotional Expressiveness: An Analysis of Prosodic Features in Emotional Expression*. [online]. [2021-03-21]. Available at: <https://www.griffith.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0026/363680/Paper-6-Parkins-Gender-and-Emotional-Expressiveness_final.pdf>.

³³ TING-TOOMEY, S., CHUNG, L. C.: *Understanding Intercultural Communication*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2012, p. 123.

³⁴ HALL, E. T.: *Beyond Culture*. New York : Anchor Books, 1976, p. 79.

³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 70.

³⁶ NOVINGER, T.: *Intercultural communication: a practical guide*. Austin : University of Texas Press, 2001, p. 58.

³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 58.

of 71 out of 100. The US scores extremely high, with a score of 91 out of 100.³⁸ According to this reasoning, Americans are less likely to be more emotionally expressive.

Emotion display is therefore determined by both gender and culture. Based on an intercultural approach on emotions, Brody and Judith Hall explain: „Across 37 countries, women report more intense emotions that last longer and are expressed more overtly than do men (Fischer & Manstead, 2000). In other cross-cultural studies, females express more nonverbal emotional reactions – including facial reactions, vocal reactions, body movements, laughing, and smiling – when expressing joy, sadness, fear, and anger than males do (Scherer et al. 1986).“³⁹

Multicultural trends corroborate that women are more expressive than men. Fischer and Manstead postulate that the male members in individualistic cultures tend to minimize emotional expressions.⁴⁰ They believe the expressing of emotions might threaten the control that is critical to their status.⁴¹ As might be expected, these behavioral traits are conveyed on screen. For instance, French TV series give room for a greater variety of emotions display for female characters. The CSA reports that the portrayal of their emotions is inflated due to the essence of French TV series that often links the plot to the traditional place of intimacy and private life that features home moments.⁴² These moments associated with family and friends typically emphasize the emotion of female characters. In sum, the study of transnational TV series is an ideal platform to study characters' emotions within a cultural context. Through our analysis of *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* and *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles*, we will confirm or challenge the data on gender and emotions, as well as the cultural theories we are using for our analysis.

3. Hypotheses

Based on the contributions and gaps in the theoretical corpus reviewed above, five hypotheses related to the narrative level of *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* and its French adaptation *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles* were proposed:

H1: There will be an underrepresentation of female characters compared to male characters in both *Law & Order* and *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles*.

H2: There will be a higher representation of women in *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles* than in *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*.

H3: Female characters will be more emotionally expressive and show a wider range of emotions than male characters in both versions.

H4: French characters will be more emotionally expressive and show a wider range of emotions than American characters.

H5: Male characters will display more violent behavior than female characters, who are more likely to be portrayed as victims.

³⁸ *Compare Countries*. [online]. [2021-03-12]. Available at: <www.hofstede-insights.com/product/compare-countries/>.

³⁹ BRODY, L. R., HALL, J. A.: Gender and Emotion in Context. In LEWIS, M., HAVILAND-JONES, J. M. (eds.): *Handbook of Emotions*. New York : Guilford Press, 2010, p. 401.

⁴⁰ FISCHER, T., MANSTEAD, A. S. R.: The Relation between Gender and Emotion in Different Cultures. In *Gender and Emotion: Social Psychological Perspectives*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 71-98.

⁴¹ BRODY, L. R., HALL, J. A.: Gender and Emotion in Context. In LEWIS, M., HAVILAND-JONES, J. M. (eds.): *Handbook of Emotions*. New York : Guilford Press, 2010, p. 395-408.

⁴² *La Place Des Femmes Dans Les Oeuvres Audiovisuelles (Fictions TV)*. [online]. [2021-03-19]. Available at: <www.csa.fr/Informer/Collections-du-CSA/Thema-Toutes-les-etudes-realisees-ou-co-realisees-par-le-CSA-sur-des-themes-specifiques/Les-etudes-du-CSA/La-place-des-femmes-dans-les-oeuvres-audiovisuelles-fictions-TV-2013>.

4. Methodology

Our Toolkit: The Möbius Trip

In this paper, we present the AI state-of-the-art software we nicknamed the Möbius Trip, born out of a collaboration between humanities scholar Landry Digeon, Ph.D., and artificial intelligence software engineer Anjal Amin. The Möbius Trip is a deep learning software. According to Hans-Dieter Wehle, „*Machine learning refers to any type of computer program that can „learn“ by itself without having to be explicitly programmed by a human.*“⁴³ Hence software that runs on deep learning does not need supervision, for it can figure out the learning process by itself. In addition, it does not need human intervention to analyze systematically and automatically our sample of TV series episodes. Because of time consumption and human error, this present study would not be possible by hand. The Möbius Trip is fast and becoming more accurate during data analysis of large amounts of data.

Our research relies on empirical content analysis as we aim to quantify and measure cultural elements. The Möbius Trip enables us to efficiently reverse-engineer the episodes of *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* and *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles*. It automatically identifies and extracts the elements constituting the episodes (i.e., gender and emotions). It calculates the number of male and female characters in each frame. One frame might feature multiple characters, including leads as well as supporting roles and background actors. Each of these characters is automatically assigned with an emotion. Next, the Möbius Trip's output allows us to compile and compare the elements with the equivalent elements of the other version of the show instantly. The Möbius Trip generates graphs showing trends and patterns in terms of gender and emotion in transnational TV series.

Sampling

In order to conduct this research, we are using a convenience sample due to the rare availability of the data. In fact, *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* was the only American TV series that has been imported and adapted for a French audience until recently.⁴⁴ *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles* lasted only three seasons and 20 episodes, which is entirely sufficient. The corpus for comparison for this study consists of ten episodes of *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles* and the ten corresponding episodes of *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*. As Mangelo, Franzini, and Jordan observe, „*Although researchers generally use a sampling procedure to identify programs for analysis, there is currently no gold standard for the number of episodes needed to establish a valid, representative sample.*“⁴⁵ However, Manganello et al. still recommend at least a sample of seven episodes.⁴⁶

We chose the episodes randomly because *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* is an anthological series, each episode is self-contained, and there is no overarching narrative strategy. Hence the shuffling of the shows has no impact on the data collected. We used the following episodes of *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* and their equivalents in *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles* (Table 1).

⁴³ WEHLE, H. D.: *Machine Learning, Deep Learning, and AI: What's the Difference*. [online]. [2021-03-12]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/318900216_Machine_Learning_Deep_Learning_and_AI_What's_the_Difference>.

⁴⁴ FOURNIER, A.: « *En Thérapie* », « *Euphoria* », « *Your Honor* », « *Je Te Promets* » : *remakes en série(s)*. [online]. [2021-03-12]. Available at: <www.lemonde.fr/televvisions-radio/article/2021/01/25/en-therapie-euphoria-your-honor-je-te-promets-remakes-en-serie-s_6067580_1655027.html>.

⁴⁵ MANGANELLO, J. A., FRANZINI, A., JORDAN, A.: Sampling Television Programs for Content Analysis of Sex on TV: How Many Episodes Are Enough? In *Journal of Sex Research*, 2008, Vol. 45, No. 1, p. 9.

⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 9.

Law & Order episodes	Paris Enquêtes Criminelles episodes
1. S01E16 One	1. S01E01 Fantôme
2. S01E04 The Faithful	2. S01E02 Requiem Pour un Assassin
4. S01E03 Smothered	4. S01E04 Addiction
5. S01E09 The Good Doctor	5. S01E5 Scalpel
6. S01E07 Poison	6. S01E6 Ange de la Mort
7. S01E06 The Extra Man	7. S01E7 Un Homme de Trop
8. S01E11 The Third Horseman	8. S01E8 Le Justicier de l'Ombre
9. S02E11 Baggage	9. S03E06 Trafics
10. S02E13 See Me	10. S02E06 Visions

TABLE 1: List of Episodes sample: Law & Order: Criminal Intent and Paris Enquêtes Criminelles

Source: own processing, 2021

Emotions

Relying on its facial recognition feature, the Möbius Trip is able to identify these universal expressions and deduces the characters' emotions. Just like humans, who have the innate ability to recognize and distinguish between faces, the Möbius Trip has the same ability with more accuracy, great speed, and without any biases or human errors. It calculates every character visible in a frame and informs on both their gender and emotion. Because our research is transcultural, we rely on the „universal language of emotion“. Studying literate and preliterate cultures, Ekman and Izard proved the existence of six universal expressions: anger, disgust, fear, happiness, sadness, and surprise.^{47,48} We added the neutral expression, which describes the resting face (Figure 2). In our research, we make the distinction between being *emotionally expressive* and *displaying a wider range of emotions*. The former refers to the display of one emotion. The latter refers to the scope of the eight emotions being performed by a character.

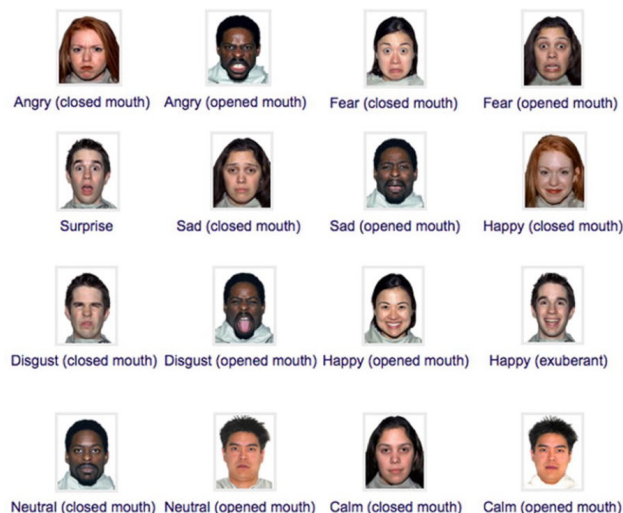


FIGURE 2: Example of Facial expression by actors

Source: TOTTENHAM, N., TANAKA, J. W., LEON, A. C. (eds.): The NimStim Set of Facial Expressions: Judgments from Untrained Research Participants. In *Psychiatry Research*, 2009, Vol. 168, No. 3, p. 242-249.

⁴⁷ EKMAN, P.: Universals and Cultural Differences in Facial Expressions of Emotion. In *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation*. San Francisco : University of Nebraska Press, 1971, p. 207-282.

⁴⁸ EKMAN, P., FRIESEN, W. V.: Constants across Cultures in the Face and Emotion. In *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1971, Vol. 17, No. 2, p. 124-129.

5. Results and Discussion

H1: There will be an underrepresentation of female characters compared to male characters in both *Law & Order* and *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles*.

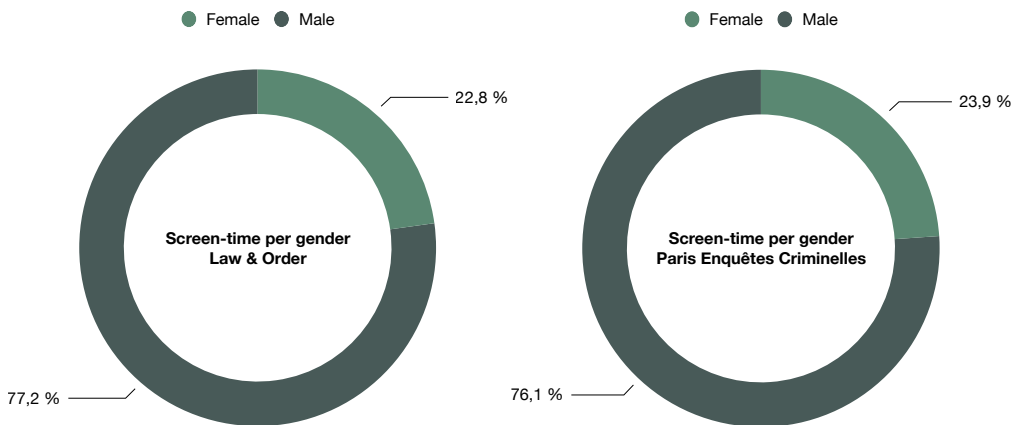


FIGURE 3: Screen-time per gender in *Law & Order* and *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles*

Source: own processing, 2021

The data show that both series exhibit overwhelming domination of male characters in terms of screen time (Figure 3). In *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*, male characters make up for 77,2% of the gender displayed onscreen, while female characters only represent 22,8%. In *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles*, male characters make up for 76,1% of the gender displayed onscreen while female characters only represent 23,9%.

The overwhelming domination of men confirms Geena Davis' statement that for every female character, there are three male characters onscreen.⁴⁹ Our findings could be explained by the fact that both *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* and *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles* rely on a male leading actor and that the female protagonist is merely a supporting role. Besides, our data indicate that there are 44,150 frames containing at least one character in *Law & Order*. In contrast, the French version only contains 20,972 frames showing a character. This difference means that there are 2,1 times more characters displayed in *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* than in *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles*. We have calculated the average of cast members, which is available on IMDB.com. The average for *Law & Order* is 34,5 actors per episode, while it is 23 actors per episode for *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles*. We can speculate that such a difference in the cast could be due to the number of supporting actors that act in the police station or in the streets in *Law & Order*. These supporting actors are mostly males. This finding is consistent with Geena Davis' claim that 17% of the characters in crowded scenes are males.⁵⁰

The screen time differential between men and women is certainly the most striking information provided by the Möbius Trip. As we expected, there is high inequality of representation between men and women, and men take the lion's share in terms of screen time. The findings confirm the overwhelming domination of men over women on screen that the Geena Davis Institute's data had heralded. Therefore, hypothesis 1 is confirmed since male characters significantly outnumber female characters in both versions of the series. Television series is overwhelmingly a man's world.

⁴⁹ Learn All about the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media. [online]. [2021-03-12]. Available at: <www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=173&v=mcgcJlJpysA&feature=emb_title>.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

H2: There will be a higher representation of women in *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles* than in *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*.

Both *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* and *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles* exhibit an overrepresentation of men and subsequently an underrepresentation of women. In the American version, female characters represent 22,8% of the time; in the French version, they amount to 23,9% of the time (Table 4). They display perceptibly the same amount of screen time. The French female characters are slightly more visible (+ 1,1%). This narrow gap is unexpected. Based on the trend revealed by the CSA, the average gap between men and women in US fictional TV series consists of 62% male characters and 38% female characters (Table 1). Our results show that *Law & Order* scores significantly higher than the CSA average in terms of male screen time. The CSA also corroborated that the average gap between men and women in French fictional TV series was 52% male and 48% female (Table1). Therefore, we had anticipated that the gap between male and female characters in *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles* was going to be narrower than in the American version. This is not the case.

Our misled prediction was reinforced by the preliminary results we presented at the IEEM 2020.⁵¹ Our early research suggested that there was a higher female character screen time representation in *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles*. When comparing a couple of episodes, our results show a slight underrepresentation of female characters. These results mirrored those presented in the CSA report. However, after improving the accuracy of the gender detection feature on the Möbius Trip and working on a bigger sample, we found that our results have changed, and the gap between male/female characters in the French version had significantly widened.

We had also believed there was going to be a higher representation of females in *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles* since French Director and show adaptor Franck Ollivier indicated that he intentionally tried to include more women in the show. He had sensed that the original *Law & Order* was „too masculine“⁵² and wanted to make the French version „more feminine“⁵³ in order to appeal to a broader audience. While Ollivier consciously intended to add more women to the cast, he also admits that he might have been influenced by the original show, which focuses essentially on the male protagonist. In *Law & Order*, as well as in *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles*, women are the supporting role. Eames is the partner of Goren, the real hero of the series, in the same way that Savigny is Revel's partner. These female characters remain behind the protagonist but whose presence goes beyond a simple figuration. The outcome is that both the French and the US versions display equally an overwhelming domination of the screen time by male characters. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 has not been verified by our results.

H3: Female characters will be more emotionally expressive and show a wider range of emotions than male characters in both versions.

	Male characters (US + FR)		Female characters (US + FR)	
	Frames	Percentage	Frames	Percentage
Neutral	24245	48%	7610	50%
Sad	15318	31%	4583	30%
Angry	6351	13%	1391	9%
Happy	3242	6%	1172	8%
Fear	657	1%	234	2%
Disgust	24	0%	3	0%

⁵¹ DIGEON, L., AMIN, A.: TV Series Adaptations: An AI Toolkit for Success. In *IEEE International Conference on Industrial Engineering and Engineering Management (IEEM)*. [online]. [2021-03-12]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/348917106_Transnational_TV_Series_Adaptations_An_AI_Tool_for_Success>.

⁵² DIGEON, L.: *Personal interview with French Director Franck Ollivier* on Skype, February 21th, 2019.

⁵³ Ibid.

Surprise	173	0%	119	1%
TOTAL	50010	100%	15112	100%

TABLE 2: Characters' emotions per gender

Source: own processing, 2021

The display of characters' emotional expressivity and range of emotions between male and female characters (both cultures combined) follow a similar pattern (Table 2). Yet, the findings reveal that the female characters are portrayed as more neutral (+2%) than male characters. Subsequently, female characters show less sadness (-1%) less anger (-4%). Hence, they are slightly less emotionally expressive than their male counterparts. Nonetheless, female characters display a wider range of emotions than male characters. They are happier (+2%), more surprised (+1%), and more scared (+1%) than male characters. Meanwhile, male characters in both the US and French versions display more anger (+4%) and more sadness (+1%) than female characters. This fact might be related to screen time, and the importance of the role played. Because there are significantly more male characters than females on screen, males get more acting time and have more opportunities to be more emotionally expressive. Male characters should also be solicited to show a wider range of emotions in comparison to the supporting roles, but it is not the case. Despite their minor roles in the shows, female characters still overperform male characters in terms of range of emotions. Hence, the findings only partially validate hypothesis 3. On the one hand, they confirm that female characters display a slightly wider range of emotions than male characters. On the other hand, male characters appear to be slightly more emotionally expressive.

H4: French characters will be more emotionally expressive and show a wider range of emotions than American characters.

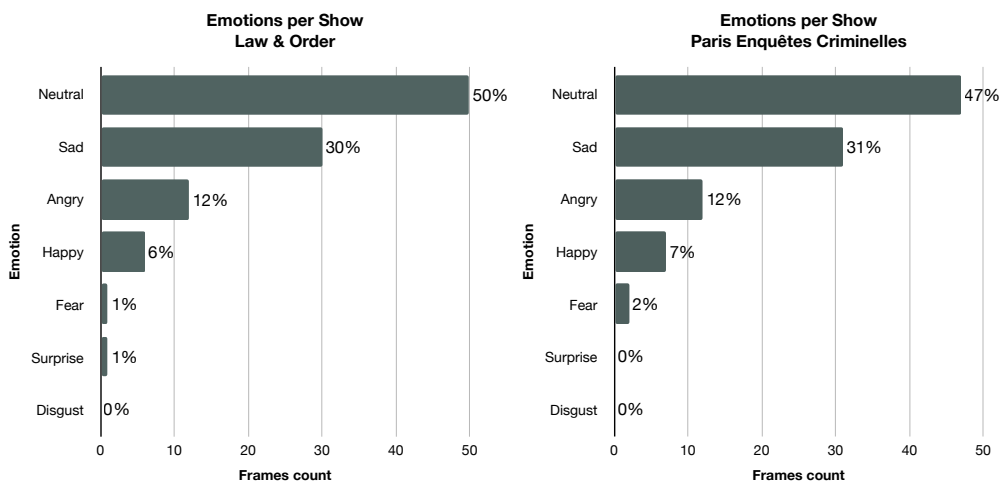


FIGURE 4: Emotions per shows

Source: own processing, 2021

The display of characters' emotional expressivity and range of emotions between the French and the Americans characters (both genders combined) follow a similar pattern (Figure 4). However, the findings reveal that the French are slightly more emotionally expressive than their American counterparts. The French characters are less neutral (-3%) than their American counterparts. They are sadder (+1%), happier (+1%), and more scared (+2%). Though the difference is subtle, the data confirms the idea that the French characters display more emotions.

This argument confirms the argument made by Fischer and Manstead that individualistic cultures, such as the US, exhibit less emotional expressions. Likewise, Hall's argument contends that high context cultures, like the French culture, are more likely to rely on facial expression when communicating. However, the American characters seem to have a slightly wider range of emotions since they display surprise (+1%), whereas the French do not. This result is unexpected and challenges the intercultural theories on context and individualism.

	Paris Enquêtes Criminelles		Law & Order	
	French Male Character	French Female Character	American Male Character	American Female Character
Neutral	46%	48%	49%	51%
Sad	32%	31%	30%	30%
Angry	13%	10%	12%	9%
Happy	7%	8%	6%	7%
Fear	2%	2%	1%	1%
Surprise	0%	1%	0%	1%
Disgust	0%	0%	0%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

TABLE 3: Emotions per shows per gender

Source: own processing, 2021

However, when broken down per gender, the analysis provides us with a more nuanced perspective which changes the proportions (Table 3). French male characters are portrayed as more emotionally expressive than their American counterpart. They are less neutral (-3%) and display more fear (+1%), more happiness (+1%), more anger (+1%), and more sadness (+1%). The French male characters also show more expressivity than the American female characters since they are less neutral (-5%) and display more sadness (+1%), more anger (+3%), more fear (+1%). Nonetheless, the American female characters display a wider range of emotions because they show surprise (+1%). In comparison, French female characters display more emotional expressivity than their American counterpart. French female characters are less neutral (-3%), and they show more anger (+1%), more fear (+1%), more happiness (+1%), and more sadness (+1%) than American female characters. French female characters and American ones share the same range of emotions. They display as many emotions as one another, but the French female character shows more emotional expressivity. These findings confirm the CSA's report suggesting that French women are portrayed as more emotional due to a higher amount of intimate scenes in the French version.

Out of all the characters combined, we would expect American male characters to be the least emotionally expressive. Novinger explains that a male exhibiting such an open emotional display loses face in a North American environment. According to studies based on content analysis carried out in the US, „*The North American male is culturally trained to be stoic and undemonstrative.*“ Novinger adds that in the United States, it is more acceptable for women to display more emotions. However, our findings show a more nuanced outcome. American women are the group that is least emotionally expressive since they are more neutral than American men (+2%), French men (+5%), and French women (+3%).

In sum, when comparing Americans and French at the gender level, the French are slightly more emotionally expressive and display more emotions than their American counterparts. Though the gap is extremely narrow, there is a trend that confirms hypothesis 3.

H5: Male characters will display a more violent behavior than female characters, who are more likely to be portrayed as victims.

The data (Table 8) confirm that both in *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* and *Paris Enquêtes, Criminelles* male characters display more anger (+4%) than female characters (Table 6). Male characters are also sadder (+1%) than their female counterparts. In comparison, female characters are more scared (+1%), happier (+2%), more surprised (+1%) than male characters.

These findings are consistent with those of the Geena Davis Institute's research that presaged that men would display a higher degree of anger. Anger is associated with violent attitudes and behavior. In TV series, men are often depicted as angry and violent and play the role of the perpetrator of the crime. Conspicuously, male characters are mostly portrayed as sad (31%). This figure is odd since men typically show „expressions of anger“ and have been associated with lower experience and expression of anxiety and sadness. Such a high degree of sadness might signal that they are depicted as both aggressors as well as victims in both *Law & Order* and *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles*.

Crime victims typically experience a variety of emotions such as anger, sadness, anxiety, and fear). Female characters, though at a slightly lesser degree than male characters, also display a fairly high amount of sadness (30%) and anger (9%). Besides, they are also slightly more fearful (+1%) than male characters. Chaplin explains, „*fearful face conveys submissiveness*.“ The combination of these emotions suggests that female characters are portrayed as submissive and, therefore, as victims. Victimization was predicted as being mostly found in female representations. Though the difference in emotional expressivity is narrow, male characters are portrayed as violent and female characters as victims. We can consider that hypothesis 5 is validated.

6. Limitation

Our study provides us with significant and unprecedented data. However, because our Möbius Trip is still at a developing stage, we lack features that could enable us to have a complete depiction of gender representation. For instance, the Möbius Trip does not yet measure the male and female characters' speaking time to have more accurate screen time data. It also needs to be equipped with character tracking. Such a feature would enable us to label the characters and have an indication of their age, social status, and race. It would add a qualitative component to our quantitative approach.

The behavioral characteristics of the characters are difficult to quantify because, on the one hand, their encoding is based on a subjective perception of the viewer and that, on the other hand, these characteristics may change and evolve during the series (CSA). Dezheng and O'Halloran explain, „*To fully understand the communication of emotion, we need to take into consideration all variables, such as the situational context and the multimodal expression of emotion*.“ We agree with O'Halloran. We believe that combining facial expressions, vocal and bodily cues, together with camera work, music, and mise-en-scene, could better predict emotions than the single modalities could and confirm the need for multimodal analysis than the single modalities on their own.

7. Conclusion

In this paper, we have introduced our artificial intelligence software, the Möbius Trip, and we have presented our current results on gender representation in transnational TV series adaptations in France and in the US. According to the above results, both *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* and *Paris Enquêtes Criminelles* tend to show a negative characterization of females based on underrepresentation. Male characters overwhelmingly dominate the show. We also proved that

the lack of representation of female characters is fairly similar in both versions of the show. We demonstrated that emotion is contingent on gender and that female characters show a wider range of emotions, but that male characters are more emotionally expressive. We also demonstrated that the French characters are more emotionally expressive and show a wider range of emotions than their American counterparts. Lastly, we have shown that male characters tend to display violent behavior and that female characters tend to be portrayed as victims. The emotions-related results showed a trend, but the difference of emotions between male and female characters and between the French and American cultures were fairly narrow. We will continue investigating other French and American TV series in order to confirm the trend we have revealed in this study.

To conclude, the Möbius Trip can be a potent tool to raise awareness of women's discrimination in transnational TV series adaptation. In the future, we hope the Möbius Trip will help TV series directors check and balance their subjective opinions to make a more accurate decision based on real and objective data. We encourage TV series directors and broadcasters to define quantified progress objectives to improve the presence of women on their channels for more gender representation equity. In this way, our study could contribute to more awareness, social justice, and better cinematographic decisions.

Bibliography and sources

ASHMORE, R. D., DEL BOCA, F. K.: Sex Stereotypes and Implicit Personality Theory: Toward a Cognitive-Social Psychological Conceptualization. In *Sex Roles*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 1979, p. 219-248. ISSN 1573-2762.

BAKHTIN, M. M.: *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*. Texas : University of Texas Press, 2014.

BATAILLE, S., HATCHUEL, S.: *Préface. Les Séries Télévisées Dans Le Monde : Échanges, Déplacements Et Transpositions*. [online]. [2021-03-21]. Available at: <<https://journals.openedition.org/tvseries/1351>>.

BIRDWHISTELL, R. L.: *Kinesics and Context: Essays on Body Motion Communication*. Philadelphia : University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990.

BRODY, L. R., HALL, J. A.: Gender and Emotion in Context. In LEWIS, M., HAVILAND-JONES, J. M.: *Handbook of Emotions*. New York : Guilford Press, 2010, p. 395-408.

BUONANNO, M.: *The Age of Television: Experiences and Theories*. Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 2008.

CARTER, B.: *Why Studios Keep Cranking Out TV Remakes, Despite the Flops*. [online]. [2021-03-21]. Available at: <www.nytimes.com/2009/12/28/business/media/28remakes.html>.

CHAPLIN, T. M., COLE, P. M.: The role of emotion regulation in the development of psychopathology. In HANKIN, B. L., ABELA, J. R. Z. (eds.): *Development of psychopathology: A vulnerability-stress perspective*. California : Sage Publication, 2005, p. 49-74.

CHAPLIN, T. M., HONG, K. BERGQUIST, K., SINHA, R.: *Gender differences in response to emotional stress: An assessment across subjective, behavioral, and physiological domains and relations to alcohol craving. Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*. [online]. [2021-03-20]. Available at: <<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2575018/>>.

Compare Countries. [online]. [2021-03-12]. Available at: <www.hofstede-insights.com/product/compare-countries/>.

DIGEON, L., AMIN, A.: TV Series Adaptations: An AI Toolkit for Success. In *IEEE International Conference on Industrial Engineering and Engineering Management (IEEM)*. [online]. [2021-03-12]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/348917106_Transnational_TV_Series_Adaptations_An_AI_Tool_for_Success>.

DIGEON, L.: *Personal interview with French Director Franck Ollivier* on Skype, February 21th, 2019.

- EKMAN, P., FRIESEN, W. V.: Constants across Cultures in the Face and Emotion. In *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1971, Vol. 17, No. 2, p. 124-129. ISSN 0022-3514.
- EKMAN, P., WALLACE, V. F.: The Repertoire of Nonverbal Behavior: Categories, Origins, Usage, and Coding. In *Semiotica*, 1969, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1969. p. 1-51. ISSN 1613-3692.
- EKMAN, P.: Universals and Cultural Differences in Facial Expressions of Emotion. In *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation*. San Francisco : University of Nebraska Press, 1971, p. 207-282.
- FENG, W. D., KAY, O.: The Multimodal Representation of Emotion in Film: Integrating Cognitive and Semiotic Approaches. In *Semiotica*, 2013, Vol. 2013, No. 197, p. 79-100. ISSN 1613-3692.
- FISCHER, T., MANSTEAD, A. S. R.: The Relation between Gender and Emotion in Different Cultures. In *Gender and Emotion: Social Psychological Perspectives*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 71-94.
- FOURNIER, A.: « En Thérapie », « Euphoria », « Your Honor », « Je Te Promets » : remakes en série(s). [online]. [2021-03-12]. Available at: <www.lemonde.fr/television-radio/article/2021/01/25/en-therapie-euphoria-your-honor-je-te-promets-remakes-en-serie-s_6067580_1655027.html>.
- FRIEZE, I. H., GREENBERG, M. S.: Describing the Crime Victim: Psychological Reactions to Victimization. In *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 1987, Vol. 18, No. 4, p. 299-315. ISSN 0735-7028.
- Global Gender Gap Report 2020*. [online]. [2021-03-21]. Available at: <http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2020.pdf>.
- HALL, E. T.: A System for the Notation of Proxemic Behavior. In *American Anthropologist*, 1963, Vol. 65, No. 5, p. 1003-1026. ISSN 1548-1433.
- HALL, E. T.: *Beyond Culture*. New York : Anchor Books, 1976.
- HALL, E. T.: *The Hidden Dimension*. USA : Doubleday, 1969.
- HILMES, M.: *Network nations: a transnational history of British and American broadcasting*. New York : Routledge, 2012.
- JOHNSON, J. T., SHULMAN, G. A.: More Alike than Meets the Eye: Perceived Gender Differences in Subjective Experience and Its Display. In *Sex Roles*, 1998, Vol. 19, No. 1-2, p. 67-79. ISSN 1573-2762.
- KSIAZEK, T. B., WEBSTER, T. B.: Cultural Proximity and Audience Behavior: The Role of Language in Patterns of Polarization and Multicultural Fluency. In *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 2008, Vol. 52, No. 3, p. 485-503. ISSN 0883-8151.
- LA PASATINA, A. C., STRAUBHAAR, J. D.: Multiple Proximities between Television Genres and Audiences: The Schism between Telenovelas' Global Distribution and Local Consumption. In *Gazette (Leiden, Netherlands)*, 2005, Vol. 67, No. 3, p. 271-288. ISSN 0016-5492.
- La Place Des Femmes Dans Les Oeuvres Audiovisuelles (Fictions TV)*. [online]. [2021-03-19]. Available at: <www.csa.fr/Informer/Collections-du-CSA/Thema-Toutes-les-etudes-realisees-ou-co-realisees-par-le-CSA-sur-des-themes-specifiques/Les-etudes-du-CSA/La-place-des-femmes-dans-les-oeuvres-audiovisuelles-fictions-TV-2013>.
- LARKEY, E., DIGEON, L., ER, I.: Measuring Transnationalism. In *TV Formats and Format Research*, 2016, Vol. 5, No. 9, p. 72-92. Without ISSN.
- Learn All about the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media*. [online]. [2021-03-12]. Available at: <www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=173&v=mcgcJlJpysA&feature=emb_title>.
- LU, J., LIU, X., CHENG, Y.: Cultural Proximity and Genre Proximity: How Do Chinese Viewers Enjoy American and Korean TV Dramas? In *SAGE Open*, 2019 Vol. 9, No. 1, p. 1-10. ISSN 2158-2440.
- MANGANELLO, J. A., FRANZINI, A., JORDAN, A.: Sampling Television Programs for Content Analysis of Sex on TV: How Many Episodes Are Enough? In *Journal of Sex Research*, 2008, Vol. 45, No. 1, p. 9-16. ISSN 0022-4499.
- MANOVICH, L.: *The Language of New Media*. Cambridge : MIT Press, 2001.
- MORAN, A.: *TV Formats Worldwide: Localizing Global Programs*. United Kingdom : Intellect Books, 2009.

NOVINGER, T.: *Intercultural communication: a practical guide*. Austin : University of Texas Press, 2001.

PARKINS, R.: *Gender and Emotional Expressiveness: An Analysis of Prosodic Features in Emotional Expression*. [online]. [2021-03-21]. Available at: <https://www.griffith.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0026/363680/Paper-6-Parkins-Gender-and-Emotional-Expressiveness_final.pdf>.

Press Release: Global Film Industry Perpetuates Discrimination against Women. [online]. [2021-03-20]. Available at: <www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/9/geena-davis-study-press-release>.

PROBYN, E.: *Blush: Faces of Shame*. Minnesota : University of Minnesota Press, 2005.

Research Informs & Empowers. [online]. [2021-03-21]. Available at: <seejane.org/research-informs-empowers/?itm_term=home>.

ROBERTSON, R.: *European glocalization in global context*. Hampshire : Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

SCARPA, A., RAINE, A.: Violence Associated with Anger and Impulsivity. In BOROD, J. C. (ed.): *Series in affective science. The Neuropsychology of Emotion*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 320-332.

STRABHAAR, J. D.: Beyond media imperialism: Asymmetrical interdependence and cultural proximity. In *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 1991, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 261-78. ISSN 1529-5036.

STRAUBHAAR, J. D.: (Re)Asserting National Television and National Identity Against the Global, Regional, and Local Levels of World Television. In DURHAM, M. G., KELLNER, D. M.: *Media and Cultural Studies: Keywords*. Malden : Blackwell Publishing, 2006, p. 681-702.

The Reel Truth: Women Aren't Seen or Heard. [online]. [2021-03-12]. Available at: <seejane.org/research-informs-empowers/data/>.

TING-TOOMEY, S., CHUNG, L. C.: *Understanding Intercultural Communication*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2012.

TOTTENHAM, N., TANAKA, J. W., LEON, A. C. (eds.): The NimStim Set of Facial Expressions: Judgments from Untrained Research Participants. In *Psychiatry Research*, 2009, Vol. 168, No. 3, p. 242-249. ISSN 0022-3956.

WEHLE, H.-D.: Machine Learning, Deep Learning, and AI: What's the Difference. [online]. [2021-03-12]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/318900216_Machine_Learning_Deep_Learning_and_AI_What's_the_Difference>.

WINGENBACH, T. S., ASHWIN, CH., BROSNAN, M.: Sex Differences in Facial Emotion Recognition across Varying Expression Intensity Levels from Videos. In *PLOS ONE*, 2018, Vol. 13, No. 1, p. 1-18. ISSN 1932-6203.

Authors



Landry Digeon, Ph.D.

Visiting lecturer and coordinator for French instruction
University of Maryland, Baltimore County
1000 Hilltop Circle
Baltimore, MD 21250
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
ldigeon@umbc.edu

Landry Digeon, Ph.D., is currently a French visiting lecturer and coordinator for French instruction at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC). He comes from France and has spent the last decade in the US. He earned his master's degree from the Intercultural Communication (INCC) program at UMBC. He graduated with a Ph.D. from the Language Literacy and Culture (LLC) at UMBC in 2020. He focuses on transnational TV series adaptation, and he aims to reverse-engineer TV shows to measure cultural elements through big data. His research is embedded in the field of intercultural communication, multimodality, digital humanities, and artificial intelligence.

Anjal Amin

701 E. Pratt Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
anjal.amin@me.com



Anjal Amin develops complex software solutions for media and financial agencies in the field of artificial intelligence and natural language processing. He has contributed technical expertise to the Central Intelligence Agency and NASA Goddard Space Flight Center. The majority of his work is focused on research of natural language and media models for applications in various industries.

Pavel Bielik, Ján Višňovský

Explanatory Journalism – A New Way How To Communicate In Digital Era

ABSTRACT

The paper addresses the issue of explanatory journalism, which is becoming an increasingly popular and important form of communication in times flooded by verified information as well as misinformation and hoaxes. The study is of a theoretical character and critically evaluates knowledge from this area, placing emphasis on digitalization of journalism that has brought new communication instruments and platforms, thus increasing demands on information literacy and media education of a recipient. This phenomenon resulted in the establishment of several media projects aimed mainly at explaining complex terms or phenomena in a simple and comprehensive way or at interconnecting high-ranking state officials with influential businessmen. In the text, the authors address the role and status of explanatory journalism, its potential in relation to investigative journalism and data journalism - areas and topics that are urgent and beneficial for our society but are often difficult to comprehend for a reader due to their technicality and complexity.

KEY WORDS

Explanatory journalism. Investigative Journalism. Data Journalism. Digitization. Media Education. Information Literacy.

1. Introduction

Communication is a broad concept with a wide range of uses. It occurs across various scientific disciplines, but is most often associated with the use of a specific language.¹ The need for people to communicate, i.e. to transfer information, from one place to another, in the shortest possible time and of the best possible quality, has grown in society. Therefore, in the history of communication, the search for an adequate method to multiply the already existing set of information, ie to provide a larger number of copies, represents an important area.² Over the years, communication has been constantly evolving, transforming and adapting in relation to the author (journalist / presenter) and recipient (reader / listener) with the advent of modern technologies, the Internet and online platforms. Therefore, their needs have also changed.

What the percipient in the media space understood twelve years ago has changed, which may result in a difference in the level of media literacy. Media literacy³ represents some of the key characteristics of an individual, which include preparation for effective self-realization in today's dynamic society from the point of view of information mediation.⁴ We can understand it as knowledge, understanding and experience with various forms of media, but also as a competence in the use of various media, or the ability to think critically about them. Last but not least, it represents a certain level of skill and competence in the use of media devices.⁵

There are dozens of different definitions in relation to media literacy, which define in particular the perception of media literacy as the ability to receive, analyze, evaluate, but also critically use and create a variety of media content. However, these competencies should be complemented by a certain level of ability to shape media products and to understand the processes of their creation, to understand the nature, functioning and influence of mass media.⁶ As stated by several authors, the pedagogical non-specificity of the term requires its understanding in the context of media education, in the so-called media pedagogy, which includes media didactics, media education,⁷ media teaching and media research.⁸

The concept of media literacy is related to education itself, i.e. media education, which also appears in literature as mass media education.⁹ S. Brečka understands it as a wide range of educational, developmental, promotional and practical activities in order to connect various groups of the public with the functioning of the media, the meaning of media content and the possible consequences of their impact on the life of the individual or society.¹⁰ J. Průcha, E. Walterová and J. Mareš characterize media education in the Pedagogical Dictionary as education towards orientation in the mass media, their use and their critical evaluation.¹¹

¹ ŠKVARENINOVÁ, O.: *Rečová komunikácia*. Trnava : FMK UCM v Trnave, 2014, p. 15-18.

² JIRÁK, J., KOPLOVÁ, B.: *Média a spoločnosť*. Praha : Portál, 2003, p. 13.

³ See, for example: BIELIK, P., OPRALA, B.: The Most Important Thing Is to Find a Way How to Teach Media Education in an Appropriate Way. Interview with Jan Jiráček. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2018, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 87-97.

⁴ RADOŠINSKÁ, J., KVETANOVÁ, Z., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: To Thrive Means to Entertain: The Nature of Today's Media Industries. In *Communication Today*, 2018, Vol. 9, No. 1, p. 39.

⁵ *Definition of medial literacy*. [online]. [2021-01-20]. Available at: <<https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100146592>>.

⁶ MORAVČÍKOVÁ, M.: Magazín o životnom štýle. In PRAVDOVÁ, H., RADOŠINSKÁ, J., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J. (eds.): *Slovník vybraných pojmov z mediálnych štúdií*. Trnava : FMK UCM v Trnave, 2016, p. 123.

⁷ See, for example: VRABEC, N., BŔTOŠOVÁ, L.: The Concept of Learning-by-Doing in the Context of Media Education and School Quality Assessment. In *Communication Today*, 2020, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 140-149.

⁸ MORAVČÍKOVÁ, M.: Magazín o životnom štýle. In PRAVDOVÁ, H., RADOŠINSKÁ, J., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J. (eds.): *Slovník vybraných pojmov z mediálnych štúdií*. Trnava : FMK UCM v Trnave, 2016, p. 123.

⁹ OLEKŠÁK, P.: O potrebe mediálnej výchovy. In *Otázky žurnalistiky*, 2007, Vol. 50, No. 3, p. 24.

¹⁰ BREČKA, S.: Východiská, koncepcie a ciele mediálnej výchovy. In MAGÁL, S., PLENCNER, A. (eds.): *Kolokvium 1 – 2 Katedry masmediálnej komunikácie : Zborník príspevkov z jarného a jesenného kolokvia Katedry masmediálnej komunikácie FMK UCM*. Trnava : FMK UCM v Trnave, 2004, p. 84.

¹¹ PRŮCHA, J., WALTEROVÁ, E., MAREŠ, J.: *Pedagogický slovník*. Praha : Portál, 2008, p. 119.

If we transfer the individual definitions to the current media environment, where the problem of the web dominates, we can, according to P. Garaj, talk about useful websites, where meaningful functioning in online spaces requires skilled users – those who have mastered the relevant principles and thinking. Future users must be careful about how the media directs their attention. Therefore, media literacy will be mainly about the ability to understand the media environment in which we create our image of the world.¹²

The media, as a means of mass communication, transmit information in various forms and for various purposes related to the fulfillment of the basic functions of the media in society, as defined by several experts in the field of mass media studies, and which are also the starting points for pedagogy in this area. In addition to the basic functions, such as entertainment, information or culture, the mission of the media is also to educate in what we call an educational function.¹³ From the pedagogical point of view, the media can therefore be perceived as an important means of education, acculturation and socialization of the individual.¹⁴ Within the fulfillment of information, according to V. Kačínová, the media function thus becomes a means of providing various information.¹⁵

2. Digitalization of Journalism: A Revolution in Public Communication

We live today in a media space where everyone can publish, and the means to present their own content are available on the web, either through social networks or in blogs. According to P. Garaj, the result of such an opportunity to publish and engage in the media space is, above all, a huge amount of content, which, however, lacks quality and value. In addition, journalists must learn to deal with those who are not real journalists. According to him, the originally celebrated and positively perceived democratization of content publishing required a social order in the form of online media education for schools. Pupils and students would thus be able to more effectively identify misinformation and false information in the process of digitizing media content using explanatory tools and teaching methods. The problem is that we first have to wait for the changes that the Internet brings, and then we learn how to respond to the changes.¹⁶

The most dominant characteristic of digitization is the transition from a physical form of media product to an electronic one.¹⁷ According to M. Švecová, digitization in the technological concept of media is the process of changing the production of media content, its storage, distribution and dissemination to audiences from analogue to digital.¹⁸ While in 1964 up to 80% of Americans read newspapers regularly, in 1994 it was 20% less and during 2006 the numbers fell to below 50%.¹⁹

The ontology of journalism has also changed. New formats and methods have changed the daily work practices of journalists, which must be handled by both novice professional and more experienced reporters. These innovations are accompanied by various challenges, including a wealth of quick and concise information provided online and more easily reaching audiences

¹² GARAJ, P.: Spamujte menej, dozviete sa viac. In *Ako fungujú médiá*. [online]. [2021-01-16]. Available at: <<https://a-static.projektn.sk/2018/04/n-magazin-media.pdf>>.

¹³ KAČINOVÁ, V.: *Teória a prax mediálnej výchovy*. Trnava : FMK UCM v Trnave, 2015, p. 11.

¹⁴ PRŮCHA, J., WALTEROVÁ, E., MAREŠ, J.: *Pedagogický slovník*. Praha : Portál, 2008, p. 119.

¹⁵ KAČINOVÁ, V.: *Teória a prax mediálnej výchovy*. Trnava : FMK UCM v Trnave, 2015, p. 12.

¹⁶ GARAJ, P.: Spamujte menej, dozviete sa viac. In *Ako fungujú médiá*. [online]. [2021-01-16]. Available at: <<https://a-static.projektn.sk/2018/04/n-magazin-media.pdf>>.

¹⁷ See, for example: MINÁRIKOVÁ, J., BLAHÚT, D., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: Hi-Tech and Eye-Catching Alike: Information in the Multiplatform Era. In *European Journal of Media, Art and Photography*, 2020, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 118-126.

¹⁸ ŠVECOVÁ, M.: *Webová žurnalistika*. Trnava : FMK UCM v Trnave, 2017, p. 10.

¹⁹ ČERMÁK, M.: Nová média. Úvod a stručná historie. In OSVALDOVÁ, B., TEJKALOVÁ, A. (eds.): *Žurnalistika v informační společnosti: digitalizace a internetizace žurnalistiky*. Praha : Univerzita Karlova v Praze, 2009, p. 8.

on social networks, but they are insufficiently communicated,²⁰ which constantly exacerbates the problem of media and information literacy and thus puts us in a difficult situation, when we need to not only convey information to the audience, but also to explain its meaning.

The authors' statements are confirmed by the following numbers. According to statistics from the ABC SR portal, which archives the results of both printed and sold copies, the number of daily copies of *Nový čas* sold (for the period November 2015 to January 2020) decreased from 99,819 pieces to 65,507 copies, which is a decrease in sales of almost 34% during four years.²¹ For comparison – the number of daily copies of the *SME* daily sold (for the period from April 2015 to January 2020) fell from 33,563 copies to 21,230 copies, which is a decrease in sales of more than 36% over four years.²²

The sale of printed matter has been regularly declining and for the Slovak media environment brings risks not only in terms of financial risks, but also challenges inclined towards positive changes. One of them is the widespread digitization of the media and the rise of the Internet, which represent fundamental changes in content management systems, higher demands on journalist's multimedia skills or overall access to and knowledge of information and data that transform online journalism. Digitization has brought about changes in the evaluation and overall definition of what is considered a success. While in the traditional print media there were already several indicators with which we were able to recognize whether the work of a particular medium is profitable, in the online space, success is measured primarily by web traffic.²³

Although most media outlets feared the advent of the Internet, as there was not yet a functioning payment / funding mechanism for such platforms, by the end of 1995 there were already more than a thousand such titles on the web.²⁴ The rapid growth of the Internet in human society, and the associated downloading of media on the Web, took everyone by surprise. Among those surprised by the rapid change were not only older journalists, but also academics, educators, media theorists and scientists.²⁵

The evolution of the internet subsequently created an ideal environment for the application of online journalism in the internet environment.²⁶ L. Manovich even calls the transformation of traditional media into Internet form a revolution.²⁷ However, in order for journalistic work to provide a living for journalists today, it must generate profit, but we are still far from fully understanding the political, economic and institutional boundaries of media production in all their complexity.²⁸

Therefore, today's media are in the situation where they have to constantly make their content and web design more attractive and search for more and more entertaining forms of storytelling and information provision, which will be at the same time undemanding on the time and attention of the recipient. There are several commercial models that use the media. These include the sale of advertising space and advertising interaction, sales, publishing PR content and charging content to recipients, i.e. the monetization of content.²⁹ In terms of success

²⁰ HAHN, O., STALPH, F.: *Digital investigative journalism: Data, Visual Analytics and Innovative Methodologies in International Reporting*. Passau : Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, p. 2.

²¹ ABC SR – results. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<http://www.abcsr.sk/aktualne-vysledky/archiv-vysledkov/>>.

²² Ibid.

²³ BEDNÁŘ, V.: *Internetová publicistika*. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2011, p. 27.

²⁴ ČERMÁK, M.: *Nová média. Úvod a stručná historie*. In OSVALDOVÁ, B., TEJKALOVÁ, A. (eds.): *Žurnalistika v informační společnosti: digitalizace a internetizace žurnalistiky*. Praha : Univerzita Karlova v Praze, 2009, p. 22.

²⁵ BEDNÁŘ, V.: *Internetová publicistika*. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2011, p. 9.

²⁶ VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: *Aktuálne otázky teórie a praxe žurnalistiky v ére internetu*. Trnava : FMK UCM v Trnave, 2015, p. 47.

²⁷ MANOVICH, L.: *The Language of New Media*. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<http://www.manovich.net/LNM/Manovich.pdf>>.

²⁸ RADOŠINSKÁ, J., KVETANOVÁ, Z., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: *To Thrive Means to Entertain: The Nature of Today's Media Industries*. In *Communication Today*, 2020, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 15.

²⁹ BEDNÁŘ, V.: *Internetová publicistika*. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2011, p. 61.

in terms of quality of content, one of the traditional aspects is citation. The mentioned criterion has been given a completely new form of referencing in the environment of the web, the basic tool of which is hypertext. The journalistic speech, to which other authors and other media refer, is becoming successful. It should be added that this new form of citation is an important criterion for success in the media space,³⁰ as the recipient using a portable mobile device finds themselves in a place full of diverse information for which they need an explanation, which hypertext has partially solved.

Twenty years ago, J. O. Green argued that by the end of the first decade of the 21st century, people would carry a small, inconspicuous object with them and join in everything and with everyone. An intelligent „agent“ will gather information from around the world, as well as materials that interest people.³¹ The advent of smartphones and tablets has significantly affected the work of online journalists, as well as the structure of media outputs themselves, if we consider the current definition of a smartphone to be one that describes having an operating system capable of installing new applications.³² V. Bednář says that Internet publication is the youngest branch of journalistic work, yet one of the most influential, and has gained this attribute over its gradual historical development – first media, through initial online services, the Internet and the Web to smart devices.³³

According to J. Višňovský, the beginnings of online journalism can be dated back to the first half of the 1990s, when the Internet was available mainly for commercial use.³⁴ However, the beginnings of the Internet date back to the late 1960s, and the global network we know today can be traced back to the 1980s, while the birth of serious web journalism dates back to 2000.³⁵ After the transition of journalism from print to electronic media, methods of journalism were adapted to the given medium, and so it was with the advent of the Internet. The media world has changed with digitization and this conditioned the emergence of new types of journalism.³⁶ The change after the transition to online media of Aktuality.sk was noticed, for example, by the investigative journalist M. Vagovič, who sees the changes mainly in the form of feedback, the reach of the journalistic speech and in the comments coming from readers.³⁷ Similar words can be heard from the former presenter of the Czech internet television channel DTV, F. Horký, who said that he only has seven seconds on the web to attract viewers, otherwise they will leave. In order to not anger or drive them away, he believes he needs adopt a tabloid appearance.³⁸ Journalists in the new media environment are currently facing challenges from the Internet and social media. They need to work on different platforms that previously didn't exist, and also work with the audience more than ever before.³⁹

³⁰ BEDNÁŘ, V.: *Internetová publicistika*. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2011, p. 29

³¹ GREEN, J. O.: *Nowa era komunikacji*. Warszawa : Prószyński i S-ka, 1999. In JAKUBOWICZ, K.: *Nová ekologie médií*. Zlín : Verbum, 2013, p. 18-19.

³² *The Difference Between a Smartphone and Tablet*. [online]. [2021-01-16]. Available at: <<https://www.fony.sk/clanky/7709-aky-je-rozdiel-medzi-smartfonom-a-beznym-telefonom>>.

³³ BEDNÁŘ, V.: *Internetová publicistika*. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2011, p. 9.

³⁴ VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: *Aktuálne otázky teórie a praxe žurnalistiky v ére internetu*. Trnava : FMK UCM v Trnave, 2015, p. 53.

³⁵ BEDNÁŘ, V.: *Internetová publicistika*. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2011, p. 13.

³⁶ PRONER, J.: Vývoj a predpoklady pre vznik dátovej žurnalistiky. In: GÁLIKOVÁ TOLNIAIOVÁ, S., GREGUŠ, L., PRONER, J. (eds.): *Quo vadis massmedia & marketing*. Trnava : FMK UCM v Trnave, 2019, p. 101.

³⁷ JANOČKO, J.: *Marek Vagovič: Naši čitatelia oceňujú, že vieme vysvetliť zložité kauzy jednoduchým spôsobom*. [online]. [2021-01-16]. Available at: <<https://gaudeo.sk/marek-vagovic/>>.

³⁸ GEHREROVÁ, R.: *Ako môže vyzeráť televízia budúcnosti*. In *Ako fungujú médiá*. [online]. [2021-01-16]. Available at: <<https://a-static.projektn.sk/2018/04/n-magazin-media.pdf>>.

³⁹ PICARD, R. G.: *Journalists' Perceptions of the Future of Journalistic Work*. Oxford : Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, 2015. [online]. [2021-10-16]. Available at: <<https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2017-11/Journalists%27%20Perceptions%20of%20the%20Future%20of%20Journalistic%20Work.pdf>>.

We believe that a journalist who works on investigative speeches or works in the field must master several online platforms and tools that appeal to today's audience – newsrooms even record a number of regular podcasts, to which advertisers respond positively. The mentioned phenomena confirm the impact of digitization in all areas of the media environment; they influence journalistic expression, the relationship between the authors of media expression, but also the media literacy of the percipient who must constantly develop their understanding of the media environment.⁴⁰ They must adapt to the conditions of the new media in order to ultimately bring benefit to the media. Another factor is the continuing fragmentation of media content, where on the one hand media companies distort their content in the context of stakeholders, while on the other hand they fragment the type of content they offer to consumers – online or printed forms of newspapers, videos, podcasts, infographics, even posts on social networks coming from official media accounts on social media platforms. This expansion of content production is a consequence of digitization, which, according to K. Jakubowicz, is a major factor in media convergence. All of this is causing the media to dematerialize as the media slowly departs from its original platforms.⁴¹

New trends in the media are constantly bringing phenomena that need to be addressed, and in some cases it is possible to reap the maximum benefits from them. News comes in an increasingly diverse form and stories are created in innovative ways to adapt to the habits and attract the attention of recipients in the digital world.⁴²

The whole process associated with the progress of computers has other consequences. With the advent of the Internet, new distribution channels have opened up, faster and more accessible than anything we have known before. Digital visual technologies have significantly expanded the scope of human vision. The whole era of digitization is thus considered another stage of evolution in the system of depiction and understanding of the world, which in the context of postmodern society has contributed to the disintegration of the real, optically perceptible world.⁴³ In addition, the new media is associated with the feeling that Western society is on the threshold of a world that has no borders, where everyone can communicate with everyone, anytime, anywhere, and above all about anything. We already perceive the Internet as an open medium, an environment where the boundary between the recipient and the content is blurred.⁴⁴

It is explanatory journalism that represents a new form of creating journalistic expression, which is a manifestation of the popularity of Internet journalism. The Web has become a medium that, shortly after its advent, and in a combination of circumstances, has dramatically changed the way Western society understands the work and nature of journalism.⁴⁵ Another phenomenon is, for example, the hybridization of genres – they are created by combining two or more genres, and thus a text is created that contains various genre elements. B. Osvaldová sees the reason for the hybridization of genres as a complicated classification and sees a problem with the definition of genres according to their attributes; therefore hybridization is associated with new media.⁴⁶

⁴⁰ See, for example: VRABEC, N.: *Výskum úrovne mediálnej gramotnosti: prehľad výskumných stratégií*. Trnava : FMK UCM v Trnave, 2015.

⁴¹ JAKUBOWICZ, K.: *Nová ekologie médií: Konvergence a mediamorfóza*. Zlín : Verbum, 2013, p. 16-17.

⁴² See, for example: HOSSOVÁ, M.: Fake News and Disinformation: Phenomenons of Post-Factual Society. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2018, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 27-35.

⁴³ LÁB, F., LÁBOVÁ, A.: *Obraz v digitálním věku*. In OSVALDOVÁ, B., TEJKALOVÁ, A. (eds.): *Žurnalistika v informační společnosti: digitalizace a internetizace žurnalistiky*. Praha : Karolinum, 2009, p. 121-122.

⁴⁴ RADOŠINKÁ, J., KVETANOVÁ, Z., RUSNÁKOVÁ, L.: *Globalizovaný filmový priemysel*. Praha : Wolters Kluwer, 2020, p. 34-36.

⁴⁵ BEDNÁŘ, V.: *Internetová publicistika*. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2011, p. 13.

⁴⁶ OSVALDOVÁ, B.: Změnil internet žurnalistické standardy a žánry? In OSVALDOVÁ, B., TEJKALOVÁ, A. (eds.): *Žurnalistika v informační společnosti: digitalizace a internetizace žurnalistiky*. Praha : Karolinum, 2009, p. 110.

3. The Importance of Explanatory journalism in the Media Space

According to F. Struhárik, the form of the Internet and online journalism has for more than ten years been largely determined by social media. From sites that initially only connected friends and acquaintances, today there are large companies that set the trends in the media environment.⁴⁷ The audience is the primary reason for the existence of the medium and maintaining the audience's attention is its basic premise.⁴⁸ Journalism must therefore devote its primary resources to explanatory journalism, which deals in depth with political issues, trials, institutions in a democratic society and, through thorough explanation, also questions myths and concerns about surrounding issues such as immigration, terrorism and other issues that perpetuate the audience's attention.⁴⁹ According to the Pulitzer Prize website, this is journalism, in which we clarify significant and complex phenomena through clear text and presentation of content, using the available journalistic tools.⁵⁰

Today, data journalism can be considered embedded and respected in prestigious media editorial structures such as The Guardian or The New York Times. However, even at the local and regional level, we see more and more small teams dealing with data journalism. This phenomenon can be observed due to the very existence of explanatory and analytical data journalism sites, which are based mainly on working with data. These include Vox, FiveThirtyEight or Quartz. In addition, thanks to the inclusion of data journalism in journalism education and the growing interest of the scientific community, data journalism is no longer on the fringes of interest. This is a recognized journalistic phenomenon.⁵¹

Quartz was launched in 2012.⁵² For example, the New York Times did not begin to take a more thorough approach to explanatory journalism until April 2014, when it founded The Upshot. In the field of data explanation and interpretation, The Upshot can be considered more comprehensive, but it focuses less on prediction than the similar project FiveThirtyEight (also known as 538).⁵³ FiveThirtyEight was founded by journalist N. Silver in March 2008, has been owned by ESPN since July 2013 and was relaunched in March 2014. N. Silver became famous for his approach to explanatory journalism through the policy-oriented 538 blog, which soon became operational as a proprietary and respected online medium. Assuming that FiveThirtyEight is based largely on data from which it makes full-fledged predictions, Vox is a contrasting type of media in this regard. It was established in April 2014 as part of the larger Vox Media organization, which was itself a start-up company in the media environment. This is a popular website for journalist E. Klein, who, along with several other colleagues, left the Wonkblog project founded by the American daily The Washington Post. It was Wonkblog that E. Klein established as a political and economic platform within The Washington Post based on the same principles.⁵⁴

⁴⁷ STRUHÁRIK, F.: Sociálne médiá. In *Ako fungujú médiá*. [online]. [2021-01-16]. Available at: <<https://a-static.projektn.sk/2018/04/n-magazin-media.pdf>>.

⁴⁸ See, for example: PRAVDOVÁ, H., HUDÍKOVÁ, Z., PANASENKO, N.: Homo corporalis as the communicated muse and centrepiece of commercialized culture. In *European Journal of Media, Art & Photography*, 2020, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 68-81.

⁴⁹ WARD, S. J. A.: *Ethical Journalism In a Populist Age*. London : Rowman & Littlefield, 2019, p. 99.

⁵⁰ *The Pulitzer Prize for Explanatory reporting*. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.pulitzer.org/prize-winners-by-category/207>>.

⁵¹ HAHN, O., STALPH, F.: *Digital investigative journalism: Data, Visual Analytics and Innovative Methodologies in International Reporting*. Passau : Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, p. 15.

⁵² *An inside look: How cloud computing transformed the Quartz business model*. [online]. [2021-01-16]. Available at: <<https://qz.com/1897845/an-inside-look-how-cloud-computing-transformed-the-quartz-business-model/>>.

⁵³ HAHN, O., STALPH, F.: *Digital investigative journalism: Data, Visual Analytics and Innovative Methodologies in International Reporting*. Passau : Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, p. 54.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 55.

Bloomberg launched a similar project called QuickTake in October 2013. According to its editor J. Landman, QuickTake has published more than 70 press releases in just a few months. BuzzFeed also publishes a large amount of explanatory material on a daily basis, while Slate uses a distinctive name for its project The Explainer.⁵⁵ All the aforementioned platforms based on the pillars of explanatory journalism bear similar features. Moreover, looking at their year of foundation, we can see an increase in the popularity of explanatory journalism in the second decade of the 21st century, modern and progressive ways of mediating content that are constantly evolving and looking for increasingly attractive and accessible forms of attention – after all, they help to develop the media literacy of the population in an accessible form. For example, if we feel that the US electoral system is too complicated, we only need to use keywords to find explanatory content on a specific page, or on a Youtube channel where Vox is active. Their 8-minute explanatory video on the US election reached more than six million views.⁵⁶ FiveThirtyEight's Youtube account provided a similar, this time longer than 30-minute video – a larger interview that reached about 40,000 views.⁵⁷

Keywords like „explain“ are becoming more and more popular and sought after. This is confirmed, for example, by Quartz's slogan, which says: „*Global news and insights for a new generation of business leaders.*“⁵⁸ Vox again came up with the slogan „understand the news,“⁵⁹ and chose a similar strategy with the title of the podcast – Today, Explained, which has been competing with the New York Times podcast, The New York Times, in US and global media markets. Today, Explained is a daily explanatory podcast accompanied by a presenter, S. Rameswaram, which covers the most important topics of the day. Until January 27, 2021, we counted 741 episodes with a length of approximately 25-30 minutes for the Today, Explained podcast,⁶⁰ and the slightly older and more popular podcast The Daily, accompanied by presenter M. Barbara, was founded in 2017 and had, by January 27, 2021, produced 1126 episodes.⁶¹ The primary difference in relation to reaching the audience is the time of publishing of new episodes. While the The Daily podcast produces a new episode every morning, the Vox podcast releases its episodes later in the day.⁶² FiveThirtyEight runs several podcasts, one of which is the Politics Podcast, which analyzes political events and is released on Tuesdays and Thursdays.⁶³

Another important milestone in explanatory journalism is the television series Explained. The explanatory American documentary television series premiered on the Netflix streaming service on May 23, 2018.⁶⁴ The show, produced by Vox Media, released new episodes every week. The Explained series is based on the previous popular video series from Vox, which is in a similar format and comes with new regular YouTube explanatory videos.⁶⁵ The Institute for Nonprofit News, which represents non-profit organizations working on investigative topics, is

⁵⁵ MCDERMOTT, J.: *Explaining what's behind the sudden allure of explanatory journalism.* [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://digiday.com/media/explainer-rise-explanatory-journalism/>>.

⁵⁶ *The Electoral College, explained.* [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ajavsMbCapY>>.

⁵⁷ *Model Talk: How The 2020 Presidential Forecast Works | FiveThirtyEight Politics Podcast.* [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4FJErcJJXNQ>>.

⁵⁸ *Quartz/about.* [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://qz.com/about/>>.

⁵⁹ MCDERMOTT, J.: *Explaining what's behind the sudden allure of explanatory journalism.* [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://digiday.com/media/explainer-rise-explanatory-journalism/>>.

⁶⁰ *Today, explained.* [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.vox.com/today-explained>>.

⁶¹ *The Daily.* [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-daily/id1200361736>>.

⁶² *“Today, Explained”: An Edgy New Vox Podcast to Compete with “The Daily.”* [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.newyorker.com/culture/podcast-dept/today-explained-an-edgy-new-vox-podcast-to-compete-with-the-daily>>.

⁶³ *Politics Podcast.* [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/politics-podcast-the-lawmakers-who-will-determine-what-gets-through-congress/>>.

⁶⁴ *Explained on Netflix.* [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.netflix.com/sk/title/80216752>>.

⁶⁵ *Vox on YouTube.* [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/c/Vox/videos>>.

also important in the environment of expanding journalism. The organization was formed under the name Investigative News Network by journalists from twenty-seven non-profit investigative news centers in 2009, at a time of media crisis. In 2015, the organization changed its name to the Institute for Nonprofit News and expanded its membership to include organizations dedicated to journalism in the public interest. Today, 40% of its members focus on investigative journalism, with the rest preparing explanatory or analytical reports.⁶⁶

TheUpshot



FiveThirtyEight

Vox



QuickTake
by Bloomberg

PICTURE 1: Websites based on explanatory journalism

Source: own processing, 2021

When deciding which approaches to journalism deserve our attention, we should rethink what the democratic public needs and expects from its journalists at all. The public needs more types of information and more ways of communication than just direct factual messages.⁶⁷ So let's take a look at some examples of the Pulitzer Prize for Explanatory Reporting, which has held this category since 1985. The story of the Panama Papers case is interesting, as journalists have won many prestigious awards around the world, including the Pulitzer Prize for Explanatory Reporting in the United States. The Pulitzer Prize Committee praised the Panama Papers team for the unprecedented collaboration of hundreds of journalists on six continents, and for uncovering the hidden infrastructure and global scale of tax havens.⁶⁸ Panama Papers from 2016 is the result of quality data journalism and the largest international cooperation project of its kind in history (400 journalists from 80 countries), thanks to 11.5 million secret documents from the Panamanian company Mossack Fonseca. It specialized in corporate clients. The documents also contained detailed information on more than 214,000 offshore companies and their ownership structure, approximately 2.6 terabytes. It was not even a fraction of the data generated in one day. More than one hundred participating media organizations published approximately 4,700 press releases in a few months.⁶⁹

In 2016, the Marshall Project and ProPublica won the Pulitzer Prize for explanatory reporting for an extensive (12,000 words) story about the rape of a woman whom the police did not believe.⁷⁰ An important milestone in explanatory journalism was certainly the Safeway project, which in 1991 won the Pulitzer Prize for explanatory reporting. To this day, it is considered in the media environment to be one of the greatest stories about the economic environment

⁶⁶ BIRNBAUER, B.: *The Rise of Nonprofit Investigative Journalism in the United States*. New York : Routledge, 2019, p. 73.

⁶⁷ WARD, S. J. A.: *Ethical Journalism In a Populist Age*. London : Rowman & Littlefield, 2019, p. 121.

⁶⁸ *Pulitzer Prize winner in Explanatory Reporting*. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<http://www.pulitzer.org/winners/>>.

⁶⁹ HAHN, O., STALPH. F.: *Digital investigative journalism: Data, Visual Analytics and Innovative Methodologies in International Reporting*. Passau : Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, p. 56.

⁷⁰ BIRNBAUER, B.: *The Rise of Nonprofit Investigative Journalism in the United States*. New York : Routledge, 2019, p. 168.

of American journalism. The project examined important phenomena that changed the American economic environment.⁷¹

In 2018, the USA Today Network and The Arizona Republic received the Pulitzer Prize for current news, which masterfully combined text, video, podcasts, and virtual reality to explore the difficulties and consequences of then-President D. Trump's decision to build a wall along the US border with Mexico.⁷²

In 2019, The New York Times received the award, presented for its explanatory coverage of D. Trumba's finances and tax evasion,⁷³ and in 2020 The Washington Post claimed the prize for material dealing with the environmental consequences of extreme temperatures.⁷⁴

4. Conclusion

Given the progress of the Internet in the 21st century, the media has been constantly evolving. However, not only the media but also the ways of their perception have changed. Vox Media is one of the online media that has helped identify emerging trends. They do not focus on the classical form of journalism, but on explanatory journalism. Through graphs, animation or infographics, it presents the audience with challenging topics in an accessible, clear and simple way. Vox does not focus on reporting events, but on explaining them in politics, technology and sports. The explanatory journalism presented by Vox and other similar platforms is a form of news or journalism that attempts to approach complex events in a more accessible way. Many important news events – for example, E. Snowden and his declassification of US governments, or the long-running armed conflict between Ukraine and Russia. Journalism about the latest gradual developments in such a situation can therefore be crucial for readers who have not been following the issue from the beginning. This means that the goal of explanatory journalism is to make complex topics accessible by providing important information in a clear context.⁷⁵

Explanatory journalism is popular, but we are certainly not talking about a phenomenon that is completely new. Magazines and newspapers have long used photographs, sidebars, charts, infographics, and other tools to help you understand otherwise complex topics. The category for explanatory journalism was part of the Pulitzer Prize from 1985 to 1997. Since 1998, the Pulitzer Prize has been awarded annually for outstanding results in the field of explanatory reporting. Therefore, the media now use these techniques and tools to communicate topics on the web, which can be considered one of the latest trends in the maturation of digital media.⁷⁶

Similar to data journalism, the concept of explanatory journalism has existed for decades. Its principles were briefly described by R. P. Clark in a 1984 essay: it is important to write for a wide audience and to use graphics and analogies. This new phenomenon remained mostly untapped for years, until the sudden arrival of the modern information age forced media content authors to re-examine it and find effective communication tools. It was an excellent opportunity for data journalism, which therefore pioneered new styles in the media space.⁷⁷

⁷¹ STARKMAN, D.: *The Watchdog That Didn't Bark*. New York : Columbia University Press, 2014, p. 150.

⁷² RYMAN, A.: *The Arizona Republic and USA TODAY NETWORK win Pulitzer Prize for border wall project*. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://eu.azcentral.com/story/news/arizona-republic/2018/04/16/arizona-republic-and-usa-today-network-win-pulitzer-prize-border-wall-project/521740002/>>.

⁷³ *The New York Times Wins Two 2019 Pulitzer Prizes, for Explanatory Reporting and Editorial Writing, Bringing Total to 127*. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/pr/2020/05/04/read-the-washington-post-stories-that-won-2020-pulitzer-prize/?arc404=true>>.

⁷⁴ *Read The Washington Post stories that won the 2020 Pulitzer Prize*. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.nytc.com/press/the-new-york-times-wins-two-pulitzers-bringing-its-total-wins-to-127/>>.

⁷⁵ MCDERMOTT, J.: *Explaining what's behind the sudden allure of explanatory journalism*. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://digiday.com/media/explainer-rise-explanatory-journalism/>>.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ HAHN, O., STALPH, F.: *Digital investigative journalism: Data, Visual Analytics and Innovative Methodologies in International Reporting*. Passau : Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, p. 51.

The media, which provides explanatory journalism, is aware of how the media has been transformed and the way in which it is consumed. Extensive texts lacking visual or audiovisual material are not attractive for millennials. Millennials spend an average of three hours a day on their mobile devices,⁷⁸ communicating primarily through social media and spending as much time using their mobile devices as older generations spent watching television.⁷⁹

The advent of modern data and explanatory journalism was thus a combination of new requirements for simple and accurate coverage of complicated and information-intensive content. This trend has also been reinforced by the use of new effective interactive tools.⁸⁰ The aim of explanatory journalism is to reach less frequent consumers of news. The topics are intended for people who have heard of Bitcoin, for example, but to whom the name S. Nakamoto might seem foreign. This type of journalism can therefore appeal to experts, but also to the general public, who can show interest in complex topics.⁸¹ And while many of us have heard of the growing popularity of explanatory journalism in the digital space, it is also important to consider whether journalism itself is not explanatory in nature.

Acknowledgement: The study was elaborated within a national research project supported by the Grant Agency of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic and the Slovak Academy of Sciences (VEGA) No. 1/0283/20, titled „Synergy of the Media Industry Segments in the Context of Critical Political Economy of Media.“

Bibliography and sources

ABC SR – results. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<http://www.abcsr.sk/aktualne-vysledky/archiv-vysledkov/>>.

Ako fungujú médiá. [online]. [2021-01-16]. Available at: <<https://a-static.projektn.sk/2018/04/n-magazin-media.pdf>>.

An inside look: How cloud computing transformed the Quartz business model. [online]. [2021-01-16]. Available at: <<https://qz.com/1897845/an-inside-look-how-cloud-computing-transformed-the-quartz-business-model/>>.

BIELIK, P., OPRALA, B.: The Most Important Thing Is to Find a Way How to Teach Media Education in an Appropriate Way. Interview with Jan Jiráček. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2018, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 87-97. ISSN 2585-9188.

Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z Explained. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.kasasa.com/articles/generations/gen-x-gen-y-gen-z>>.

BIRNBAUER, B.: *The Rise of Nonprofit Investigative Journalism in the United States*. New York : Routledge, 2019.

BREČKA, S.: Východiská, koncepcie a ciele mediálnej výchovy. In Magál, S., Plencner, A. (eds.): *Kolokvium 1 – 2 Katedry masmediálnej komunikácie : Zborník príspevkov z jarného a jesenného kolokvia Katedry masmediálnej komunikácie FMK UCM*. Trnava : FMK UCM v Trnave, 2004, p. 83-90.

BURG, N.: *A Brief History of Explanatory Journalism.* [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://contently.com/2014/04/23/a-brief-history-of-explanatory-journalism/>>.

⁷⁸ *Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z Explained.* [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.kasasa.com/articles/generations/gen-x-gen-y-gen-z>>.

⁷⁹ *Generation Z News Latest Characteristics, Research, and Facts.* [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.businessinsider.com/generation-z>>.

⁸⁰ HAHN, O., STALPH, F.: *Digital investigative journalism: Data, Visual Analytics and Innovative Methodologies in International Reporting*. Passau : Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, p. 52.

⁸¹ MCDERMOTT, J.: *Explaining what's behind the sudden allure of explanatory journalism.* [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://digiday.com/media/explainer-rise-explanatory-journalism/>>.

ČERMÁK, M.: Nová média. Úvod a stručná historie. In OSVALDOVÁ, B., TEJKALOVÁ, A. (eds.): *Žurnalistika v informační společnosti: digitalizace a internetizace žurnalistiky*. Praha : Univerzita Karlova v Praze, 2009.

Definition of media literacy. [online]. [2021-01-20]. Available at: <<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/media-literacy>>.

Definition of medial literacy. [online]. [2021-01-20]. Available at: <<https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100146592>>.

Explained on Netflix. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.netflix.com/sk/title/80216752>>.

Generation Z News Latest Characteristics, Research, and Facts. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.businessinsider.com/generation-z>>.

GARAJ, P.: Spamujte menej, dozviete sa viac. In *Ako fungujú médiá*. [online]. [2021-01-16]. Available at: <<https://a-static.projektn.sk/2018/04/n-magazin-media.pdf>>.

GREEN, J. O.: Nowa era komunikacji. Varšava : Prószyński i S-ka, 1999. In JAKUBOWICZ, K.: *Nová ekologie médií*. Zlín : Verbum, 2013.

HAHN, O., STALPH, F.: *Digital investigative journalism: Data, Visual Analytics and Innovative Methodologies in International Reporting*. Passau : Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

HOSSOVÁ, M.: Fake News and Disinformation: Phenomenons of Post-Factual Society. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2018, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 27-35. ISSN 2585-8726.

JAKUBOWICZ, K.: *Nová ekologie médií: Konvergence a mediámorfóza*. Zlín : Verbum, 2013.

HUDSON, M.: *Panama Papers wins Pulitzer Prize*. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.icij.org/investigations/panama-papers/panama-papers-wins-pulitzer-prize/>>.

JIRÁK, J., KOPPOVÁ, B.: *Média a společnost*. Praha : Portál, 2003.

KAČINOVÁ, V.: *Teória a prax mediálnej výchovy*. Trnava : FMK UCM v Trnave, 2015.

LÁB, F., LÁBOVÁ, A.: Obraz v digitálnom veku. In OSVALDOVÁ, B., TEJKALOVÁ, A. (eds.): *Žurnalistika v informační společnosti: digitalizace a internetizace žurnalistiky*. Praha : Karolinum, 2009.

MCDERMOTT, J.: *Explaining what's behind the sudden allure of explanatory journalism*. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://digiday.com/media/explainer-rise-explanatory-journalism/>>.

MINÁRIKOVÁ, J., BLAHÚT, D., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: Hi-Tech and Eye-Catching Alike: Information in the Multiplatform Era. In *European Journal of Media, Art and Photography*, 2020, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 118-126. ISSN 1339-4940.

Model Talk: How The 2020 Presidential Forecast Works I FiveThirtyEight Politics Podcast. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4FJErCJJXNQ>>.

MORAVČÍKOVÁ, M.: Magazín o životnom štýle. In PRAVDOVÁ, H., RADOŠINSKÁ, J., OLEKŠÁK, P.: O potrebe mediálnej výchovy. In *Otázky žurnalistiky*, 2007, Vol. 50, No. 3, p. 24-27. ISSN 0322-7049.

OSVALDOVÁ, B.: Změnil internet žurnalistické standardy a žánry? In OSVALDOVÁ, B., TEJKALOVÁ, A. (eds.): *Žurnalistika v informační společnosti: digitalizace a internetizace žurnalistiky*. Praha : Karolinum, 2009.

PICARD, R. G.: *Journalists' Perceptions of the Future of Journalistic Work*. Oxford : Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, 2015. [online]. [2021-10-16]. Available at: <<https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2017-11/Journalists%27%20Perceptions%20of%20the%20Future%20of%20Journalistic%20Work.pdf>>.

Politics Podcast. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/politics-podcast-the-lawmakers-who-will-determine-what-gets-through-congress/>>.

PRAVDOVÁ, H., HUDÍKOVÁ, Z., PANASENKO, N.: Homo corporalis as the communicated muse and centrepiece of commercialized culture. In *European Journal of Media, Art & Photography*, 2020, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 68-81. ISSN 1339-4940.

PRONER, J.: Vývoj a predpoklady pre vznik dátovej žurnalisiky. In GÁLIKOVÁ TOLNAIOVÁ, S., GREGUŠ, L., PRONER, J. (eds.): *Quo vadis massmedia & marketing*. Trnava : FMK UCM v Trnave, 2019, p. 98-106.

PRŮCHA, J., WALTEROVÁ, E., MAREŠ, J.: *Pedagogický slovník*. Praha : Portál, 2008.

Read The Washington Post stories that won the 2020 Pulitzer Prize. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.nytc.com/press/the-new-york-times-wins-two-pulitzers-bringing-its-total-wins-to-127/>>.

RADOŠINKÁ, J., KVETANOVÁ, Z., RUSŇÁKOVÁ, L.: *Globalizovaný filmový priemysel*. Praha : Wolters Kluwer, 2020.

RADOŠINKÁ, J., KVETANOVÁ, Z., 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. ISSN 1338-130.

RYMAN, A.: *The Arizona Republic and USA TODAY NETWORK win Pulitzer Prize for border wall project*. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://eu.azcentral.com/story/news/arizona-republic/2018/04/16/arizona-republic-and-usa-today-network-win-pulitzer-prize-border-wall-project/521740002/>>.

STARKMAN, D.: *The Watchdog That Didn't Bark*. New York : Columbia University Press, 2014.

STRUHÁRIK, F.: Sociálne médiá. In *Ako fungujú médiá*. [online]. [2021-01-16]. Available at: <<https://a-static.projektn.sk/2018/04/n-magazin-media.pdf>>.

ŠKVARENINOVÁ, O.: *Rečová komunikácia*. Trnava : FMK UCM v Trnave, 2014.

ŠVECOVÁ, M.: *Webová žurnalistika*. Trnava: FMK UCM v Trnave, 2017.

Today, explained. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.vox.com/today-explained>>.

"Today, Explained": An Edgy New Vox Podcast to Compete with "The Daily." [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.newyorker.com/culture/podcast-dept/today-explained-an-edgy-new-vox-podcast-to-compete-with-the-daily>>.

The Daily. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-daily/id1200361736>>.

The Electoral College, explained. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ajavsMbCapY>>.

The Pulitzer Prize winner in Explanatory Reporting. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<http://www.pulitzer.org/winners/>>.

The Pulitzer Prize for Explanatory reporting. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.pulitzer.org/prize-winners-by-category/207>>.

The New York Times Wins Two 2019 Pulitzer Prizes, for Explanatory Reporting and Editorial Writing, Bringing Total to 127. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.nytc.com/press/the-new-york-times-wins-two-pulitzers-bringing-its-total-wins-to-127/>>.

Quartz/about. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://qz.com/about/>>.

VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: *Aktuálne otázky teórie a praxe žurnalistiky v ére internetu*. Trnava : FMK UCM v Trnave, 2015.

Vox on YouTube. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/c/Vox/videos>>.

VRABEC, N.: *Výskum úrovne mediálnej gramotnosti: prehľad výskumných stratégií*. Trnava : FMK UCM v Trnave, 2015.

VRABEC, N., BŔTOŠOVÁ, L.: The Concept of Learning-by-Doing in the Context of Media Education and School Quality Assessment. In *Communication Today*, 2020, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 140-149. ISSN 1338-130X.

WARD, S. J. A.: *Ethical Journalism In a Populist Age*. London : Rowman & Littlefield, 2019.

Authors



Mgr. Pavel Bielik

Faculty of Mass Media Communication
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava
Nám. J. Herdu 2
91701 Trnava
SLOVAK REPUBLIC
pavel.bielik@fmk.sk

Pavel Bielik is a student at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication, University of SS. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava as PhD. candidate. He is currently studying the second year of his study the field of media studies. The activities he carries out as part of his work at the faculty are divided into academic, publishing and scientific activities. In his scientific work, he deals with investigative journalism, data journalism and methods and tools of journalistic work.

Assoc. Prof. PhDr. Ján Višňovský, PhD.

Faculty of Mass Media Communication
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava
Nám. J. Herdu 2
91701 Trnava
SLOVAK REPUBLIC
jan.visnovsky@ucm.sk



Ján Višňovský is Associate Professor at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication UCM in Trnava and Head of the Department of Mass Media Communication. He is particularly interested in problems and questions of journalism in context of the development of information and communication technologies. His key works are the monographs *Life and Work of Dominik Tatarka* (2009) and *Current Questions of Theory and Practice of Journalism in the Internet Era* (2015). He has published over eighty scholarly articles and conference papers. Out of them, twenty-five are indexed in Web of Science or Scopus.

*Hanieh Jormand, Saeed Bashirian, Majid Barati, Salman Khazaei, Ensiyeh Jenabi,
Sepideh Zareian*

A Qualitative Study On People's Experiences Of Covid-19 Media Literacy

ABSTRACT

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak has been associated with many psychological and social effects, followed by a rise of fake news and false information about the condition. This study's main aim was to deeply understand people's experiences and precise opinions about social media information on COVID-19. This qualitative study was conducted to examine the COVID-19 social media literacy using the content analysis. Participants in the study were 20 people from Hamadan Province, Iran. Data were analyzed using the MAXQDA software version 2010. Considering the results for the volume of social media literature about COVID-19, 21 subcategories and five categories were obtained. The five categories included purpose with three subcategories such as „sales for economic gain“, constructedness with five subcategories such as profiteering „advertising companies“, audience with one subcategory such as „all people“, format with five subcategories such as „highlighting the disease consequences“, and lifestyles with seven subcategories such as „drinking alcohol“. Familiarity with individuals' views based on culture and context for designing and planning educational literacy programs for media skills and competence in the new media age for distinguishing between fake and credible COVID-19 media messages and critically evaluating media content for all people is essential especially in the new media infodemic ecosystem. The themes obtained in the study can be used for designing educational interventions and appropriate assessment tools as well as promoting health media literacy in the field.

KEY WORDS

Media Literacy. Social Media. Health. Coronavirus. Self-care. Content Analysis.

1. Introduction

Similar to other countries in the world, access to the Internet has increased in Iran in 2020. Presently, 69 % of Iran's population have access to the Internet,¹ and there is a wide range of social media messages and the tendency to use the media among Iranians. Our understanding of social media danger and probable harm is critical in acquiring media literacy and gaining skills to analyze media messages and posts.² Media literacy skills refer to one's abilities to manage their media activities and consciously expose themselves to the media.^{3,4} Examining studies' results on the effect of education programs on media literacy to prevent high-risk behaviors^{5,6} revealed the need to implement health interventions to enhance media literacy.

In Iran, individual efforts were made to turn social media threats into valuable opportunities. Coronavirus disease was announced as an international public health concern from January 30, 2020. The disease is suggested to have a zoonotic source. Since April 29, 2020, 213 countries around the world have reported 3,023,788 COVID-19 mortality cases and 208,112 COVID-19 confirmed deaths.⁷ As a result, the healthcare monitoring and care system in Iran expanded its diagnostic activities. In general, people in Iran are either banned or restricted from many activities based on the protocols and programs of the National Taskforce for Combating the COVID-19.⁸

All the society's industries were forced to lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The spread of fake news, untrustworthy media messages, and infodemic related to COVID-19 in cyberspace misled the audience. Researchers believe that a wide variety of information disseminated in cyberspace is closely related to the new „infodemia“ ecosystems of the 21st century characterized by social media and has significant potential to harm users.^{9,10,11,12}

¹ *Internet User and Penetration Worldwide 2014-2020*. [online]. [2020-09-23]. Available at: <<https://www.emarketer.com/chart/187880/internet-users-penetration-worldwide-2014-2020-billions-of-population-change>>.

² KESLER, T. et al.: What's Our Position? A Critical Media Literacy Study of Popular Culture Websites with Eighth-Grade Special Education Students. In *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, 2016, Vol. 32, No. 1, p. 1. [online]. [2020-09-23]. Available at: <<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10573569.2013.857976>>.

³ LUNT, P., LIVINGSTONE, S.: *Media regulation: Governance and the interests of citizens and consumers*. California : Sage, 2011, p. 33.

⁴ SOLHI, M. et al.: Application of media literacy education for changing attitudes about self-medication of slimming supplements. In *Medical Journal of the Islamic Republic of Iran*, 2017, Vol. 31, No.1, p. 792. [online]. [2020-08-8]. Available at: <<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6014786/>>.

⁵ VAHEDI, Z. et al.: Are media literacy interventions effective at changing attitudes and intentions towards risky health behaviors in adolescents? A meta-analytic review. In *Journal of adolescence*, 2018, Vol. 67, p. 140. [online]. [2020-08-20]. Available at: <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0140197118301003>>.

⁶ XIE, X. et al.: A meta-analysis of media literacy interventions for deviant behaviors. In *Computers & Education*, 2019, Vol. 139, p. 146. [online]. [2020-07-20]. Available at: <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S036013151930123X>>.

⁷ *Novel-coronavirus-2019*. [online]. [2020-07-29]. Available at: <<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>>.

⁸ *Daily Situation Report on Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Iran*. [online]. [2020-07-29]. Available at: <<http://corona.behdasht.gov.ir/>>.

⁹ CINELLI, M. et al.: The covid-19 social media infodemic. In *Scientific Reports*, 2020, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 1. [online]. [2020-07-20]. Available at: <<https://arxiv.org/pdf/2003.05004.pdf>>.

¹⁰ PENNYCOOK, G. et al.: Fighting COVID-19 misinformation on social media: Experimental evidence for a scalable accuracy nudge intervention. In *Psychological Science*, 2020, Vol. 31, No. 7, p. 770. [online]. [2020-07-27]. Available at: <<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0956797620939054>>.

¹¹ ALLAHVERDIPOUR, H.: Global Challenge of Health Communication: Infodemia in the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic. In *Journal of Education and Community Health*, 2020, Vol. 7, No. 2, p. 65. [online]. [2020-07-27]. Available at: <http://jech.umsha.ac.ir/browse.php?a_id=1000&sid=1&slc_lang=en>.

¹² DEPOUX, A. et al.: The pandemic of social media panic travels faster than the COVID-19 outbreak. In *Journal of Travel Medicine*, 2020, Vol. 27, No. 3, p. 1. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <<https://academic.oup.com/jtm/article/27/3/taaa031/5775501>>.



PICTURE 1: Example of Lifestyles, values, and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, Covid-19 Media Messages. (Credible messages about Covid-19 for safe shopping in corona crisis).

Source: Umsha. [online]. [2021-02-06]. Available at: <<http://webda.umsha.ac.ir/index.aspx?siteid=10&pageid=39284>>.

Traditional media are more trusted than social networks. Radio (70 %), television (66 %), and printed newspapers and news magazines (63 %) are more trusted than social networks and messaging applications (36 %).¹³ Moreover, there are limited studies on this new global issue, especially when we keep receiving a lot of COVID-19 news and media messages. The requirement for clear and factual information in the form of critical thinking and media literacy will reduce misinformation about COVID-19 and negative impacts on individuals. Therefore, this study's main aim was to profoundly understand people's experiences and opinions about COVID-19 media literacy.

2. Methodology

This study was conducted from April, 2020, to June, 2020, among people in Hamadan Province, Western Iran.

The researchers selected the participants using purposive sampling with maximum diversity in terms of age and occupation and the amount of media use to achieve various opinions. This sampling strategy was applied to increase data comprehensiveness and richness and the transferability of the study. As recommended in qualitative studies, sampling needs to be continued as long as new information is received by entering new people to the study.^{14,15}

¹³ HOSSOVÁ, M.: Fake News and Disinformation: Phenomenons of Post-Factual Society. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2018, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 27. [online]. [2020-02-01]. Available at: <https://www.mlar.sk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/MLAR_2018_2_3_Fake-News-and-Disinformation-Phenomenons-of-Post-Factual-Society.pdf>.

¹⁴ STREUBERT, H. J., CARPENTER, D. R.: *Qualitative research in nursing: Advancing the humanistic imperative*. Philadelphia : Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2011, p. 33.

¹⁵ BENGTTSSON, M.: How to plan and perform a qualitative study using content analysis. In *Nursing plus Open*, 2016, Vol. 2, p. 8. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352900816000029>>.

The data saturation was reached after 20 interviews, and therefore, the total number of the study participants was 20.

All participants submitted their written informed consent after being assured of the voluntary nature of their participation, their right to withdraw from the study at any time and stage, and the confidentiality of all their information. It should be noted that each participant took a pseudonym for privacy purposes.

The inclusion criteria were as follows: resident in Hamadan Province, willingness to participate in the study, ability to respond and participate in the study, and access to social networks and the Internet. The exclusion criteria were the participants' non-cooperation in conducting full interviews for qualitative research and their absence in the specified place for two follow-up interviews.

As mentioned above, after explaining the research objectives to the participants, written informed consent was obtained. To collect the data, the semi-structured interview method was applied through an interview guide. Interviews were initiated using several open-ended questions based on the interview guide, followed by exploratory questions to reach more clarity. A Ph.D. student majoring in health education and promotion conducted all interviews individually and face-to-face. Before the interviews, the interviewer acquired sufficient skills to interview the participants equally and appropriately. All interviews were recorded with two digital recorders. Examples of the interview questions are as follows:

What do you think about the purpose of producing COVID-19 media messages, and why are these messages created? In your opinion, who are the creators of COVID-19 media messages? In your opinion, what factors affect selecting the audience for COVID-19 media messages? In your opinion, what lifestyles, values, and points of view are represented in or omitted from COVID-19 media messages? In your opinion, what format and technique are used to attract the audience's attention to COVID-19 media messages? How are COVID-19 media messages different in local and social media networks compared to other media?

Each interview lasted from 30 to 40 min. The interviewer audio-recorded the interviews and later transcribed them verbatim. It is essential to note that the questions and the interview guidelines were designed based on CML's educational framework (Media Literacy Training Center of the American).¹⁶ Data collection in the present study was based on planning and performing qualitative research using content analysis.¹⁷ Note-taking and memoing were used to record more detailed information. Before audio recording each interview, the participants were asked to read and sign an informed consent form. The interviewees could ask any question during the interviews. The interviewer would pause recording during the interview if the interviewees wanted to comment on the record. The participants were asked for their consent to use direct quotes from the interviews in any reports or presentations without mentioning their names. The Ethics Committee of the Hamadan University of Medical Sciences, Iran, approved the study (approval identification code no. IR.UMSHA.REC. 1399.229).

Data analysis was performed using repeated reading and constant comparisons based on the approach developed by Graneheim and Lundman (2004) using MAXQDA software version 2010 (VERBI GmbH Company, Berlin, Germany).

Accordingly, after verbatim transcription of all recorded interviews, words, sentences, and paragraphs concerning the research objectives were considered and coded. At this stage, some attempts were made to identify the maximum possible codes proportional to the data. Two investigators performed the analysis separately to increase the validity and then discussed their

¹⁶ THOMAN, E., JOLLS, T.: *Literacy for the 21st century: An overview and orientation guide to media literacy education*. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <http://www.medialit.org/sites/default/files/01_MLKorientation.pdf>.

¹⁷ BENGTTSSON, M.: How to plan and perform a qualitative study using content analysis. In *Nursing plus Open*, 2016, Vol. 2 , p. 8. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352900816000029>>.

results and reached consensus. The analysis moved back and forth in collaborative meetings and through the authors' discussions to reach final codes. Based on qualitative methods, data collection was terminated after reaching the data saturation.

After reading out the codes repeatedly and eliminating repetitive ones, similar codes were merged along with data classification. Then, main subcategories and categories were obtained considering media literacy.

Guba and Lincoln's (1994) method was used to increase the data's accuracy and strength in the present study. The researcher also attempted to 1) select eligible participants carefully, 2) have close, continuous, and long-term contact with them, 3) engage participants in the data interpretation process (reviewed by member checking), and 4) use faculty members' and participants' opinions in various stages of the study, especially while extracting codes, conducting final reviews (peer checking), and determining reliability. Moreover, the researcher attempted to increase the study's credibility as far as possible by maintaining documentation at all research stages and making it possible to examine other processes by clarifying methodological decisions. The researcher also attempted to provide dependability analysis with a detailed and complete description of the research process. The researcher provided a context for others' judgments and evaluations concerning transferability using a comprehensive and full description of the study setting, conditions, participants, and data analysis method.

3. Results

Interviews were conducted with 20 people from Hamadan Province with an average age of 35 to 45 years (± 10.17), of whom 55 % were female. In this study, of the individuals, almost 40 % were married, 40 % had a B.S degree, 40 % were employees, and 45 % were residents in Hamadan City. Also, among the individuals, 70 % had a high computer access history, and 65 % had a high Internet access history. 60 % regularly used the Internet (active Internet users), and 50 % used social networks for socializing, passing time, having fun, and obtaining information. Considering the results of dimensions and factors related to COVID-19 media literacy in this study, eventually, 43 subcategories and five categories emerged from the data analysis (Table 1 and Fig. 1).

Main categories	Categories	Subcategories	Samples of Codes		
Cognitive and emotional	Purpose of Covid-19 Media Messages being created	Increased awareness and health literacy about coronavirus	Increase information and knowledge about the new disease, create awareness and sensitivity to follow the protocols, create fear and panic, marketing, reduce social cohesion, raise followers, and visit social media.		
		Maintaining or improve community health			
		Economic, political, and personal purposes			
	Constructedness of Covid-19 Media Messages	World health organization		The Ministry of Health, experienced specialists in the field of infectious diseases, public health organizations, medical sciences universities, advertising Companies, shareholders and marketers of sanitary ware and disinfectants products, political gaining to harm.	
		Organization and administration of health Community Services			
		Beneficiary profiteers			
		Sanitary ware, industrial and domestic disinfectants			
	Political Profiteers				
		The audience of Covid-19 Media Messages		The general public with any level of awareness, information, and income	The needs and demands of individuals to increase awareness and information, people concerned about health, curiosity, sensation-seekers, and people with easy and uncomplicated ways of influencing and attracting, people with more time on hobbies and engaging with cyberspace, naive people.
				Format and technique are used to attract the audience's attention to Covid-19 Media Messages	Highlighting the consequences of the disease
Persuasion methods and techniques					
Education non-complex prevention activities					
Trust-Building					
Facilitate communication					
Lifestyles, values, and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, Covid-19 Media Messages	Healthy lifestyle	The effectiveness of using microwave or hairdryer to kill the virus, alcohol consumption to prevent the disease, claiming traditional and herbs ingredients to be useful for disease prevention such as drinking ginger and cinnamon tea, transmission food or bites, the commonality of the disease including the common cold, people are helping each other for prevention of disease, creating weakening of the virus over time, the effectiveness of drugs such as chloroquine and dexamethasone, mixing several types of surface disinfectants to eliminate viruses such as baking soda and Alcohol with Bleach, fasting to prevent infection.			
	Risky lifestyle				
	Environmental Factors role				
	Inevitable lethality				
	Herd immunity				
	The weakening of the virus				
	Social cohesion				

TABLE 1: *Identifying people's views on Covid-19 Media Literacy*

Source: Author collected from individuals' views on Covid-19 Media Literacy, 2020.

Cognitive and emotional: The cognition purpose for sending COVID-19 messages in social media, constructedness, and the audience of COVID-19 media messages were considered based on cognitive and emotional dimensions of media literacy.

The first category: the purpose for sending COVID-19 messages in social media

During the interviews, many of the participants thought that the purpose of producing and sending credible COVID-19 messages in social media was to increase the awareness, health literacy, health self-care, economic, political and personal goals: „Familiarity with corona disease and raising awareness and information about coronavirus, moreover awareness in people to follow health protocols and health regulation.“ (Participant No. 1)

The participants also argued that the reason for producing fake COVID-19 media messages was to gain economic benefits: „I think their goal is some kind of marketing.“ (Participant No. 3) Moreover, the interviewees' beliefs about media misinformation was:

- creating chaos and disruption in the society;
- ignoring illness and health protocols by the community members;
- raising political issues, reducing social unity, and obtaining followers in social network platforms.

Raising political issues was mentioned as the main objective for producing fake COVID-19 media messages: „Sometimes this unscientific content was produced to intimidate and confuse the community, for example, a fake video of crying coronavirus nurse who posted on Instagram, saying that everyone is dying of COVID-19 and we don't have the facilities.“ (Participant No. 1)

The participants also argued that the reason for producing fake COVID-19 media messages was to gain personal benefits: „In my opinion, to increase the number of visitors and their followers on social network channels they want to show that we are well informed.“ (Participant No. 4) Another participant stated: „Sometimes celebrities want to be seen.“ (Participant No. 9)

The second category: the constructedness of COVID-19 media messages

Another essential factor in COVID-19 media literacy was the constructedness of COVID-19 media messages. Some of the participants stated that the World Health Organization (WHO), and the administration of health community services, experienced infectious disease specialists, and active health associations were among the producers of credible COVID-19 messages: „Well, I mostly followed social network w university of medical sciences.“ (Participant No. 5) Another participant expressed: „The creators of scientific and credible content are people who are researchers or affiliated with the ministry of health and medical universities or related to medical associations.“ (Participant No. 6)

Most of the participants stated that fake COVID-19 media messages were made by beneficiaries such as sanitary ware producers, industrial and domestic disinfectant makers, and political profiteers: „There are contents in media which claims that if you consume these disinfectants or washing detergent, you will avoid virus infection.“ (Participant No. 8) Another participant mentioned: „Channels for marketing and the sale of disinfectants, drugs, vitamins, and herbal medicines are responsible for virus misinformation in social media.“ (Participant No. 9) The same participants also considered advertising companies to be among the makers of fake COVID-19 media messages.

The third category: the audience of COVID-19 media messages

Another vital aspect of COVID-19 media literacy was the audience. The participants believed that the general public with any level of awareness, information, and income and according to their needs and demands were the audience of credible COVID-19 media messages. In this regard, one of the participants stated: „Because Coronavirus is a new issue and involves all individuals and sections of society, no one is safe from this disease, and it is changing how we live our daily lives.“ (Participant No. 11)

Cognitive and emotional: The diagnosis format and technique used to attract the audience's attention in COVID-19 media messages as well as lifestyles and values represented in or omitted from these messages were considered based on aesthetic and moral dimensions of media literacy.

The fourth category: the format and technique used to attract the audience's attention in COVID-19 messages

One of the critical characteristics of COVID-19 media literacy is to convince and attract the target audience, using techniques and methods mentioned below.

Highlighting the disease consequences: it was a technique to encourage the audience to target COVID-19 media messages. „*Bolding the consequences of the disease, such as country's industries are being shut down and several thousand people have been infected in worldwide, encouraged people to follow the content of messages.*“ (Participant No. 6) they managed to persuade the audience to target media content.

Using persuasion methods such as using actors and techniques to cause fear and anxiety, repeating the content in a variety of media and social media channels, and using humour and animation in creating COVID-19 media messages. One of the participants said: „*I think these persuasive techniques employed to produce content that encourages people to use this media content, for example, techniques such as this content has repeatedly broadcasted in a different medias such as Television, radio, social networks, Instagram, etc.*“ (Participant No. 8) Another participant stated: „*For example, I saw a horrible atmosphere about COVID-19, and they paid a lot of attention to the number of deaths and mortality.*“ (Participant No. 1)

Teaching simple preventive instructions and guidelines for public health „*such as using frequent hands washed with ordinary soap and water, wearing a mask, avoiding leaving the house, etc.*“ (Participant No. 2)

Building trust: „*For example, I had seen credible content that said, 'If you think this content is not true, visit this university site or health organization, and they would generally publish the content with the source and reference.*“ (Participant No. 5)

Facilitating communication using available, popular, and easy-to-use social network media for the general public, such as Instagram, Telegram, WhatsApp, or TV and radio: „*I think the sources of this content, whether credible or fake sources about COVID-19 media Messages, are important, for example, using Instagram or Telegram; „Because they are so popular, they have so many users, and they are so much more accessible.*“ (Participant No. 3)

The fifth category: lifestyles, values, and opinions represented in or omitted from COVID-19 media messages

Another aspect of COVID-19 media messages was lifestyles, values, and opinions represented in or omitted from COVID-19 media messages. In this regard, the participants became familiar with a healthy lifestyle, effects of drinking alcohol, the use of traditional and herbal ingredients, herd immunity, and gradual weakening of the virus through guidelines about lifestyles, values, and opinions which were represented in or omitted from COVID-19 media messages:

„*For example, some media messages have suggested that hair dryers can kill the coronavirus or that eating garlic can prevent infection with the coronavirus.*“ (Participant No. 19)

One of the participants said: „*I have seen some media messages that say antibiotics and certain medications can be effective in preventing or curing COVID-19, and alcoholic beverages help to prevent coronavirus infection.*“ (Participant No. 20)

4. Discussion

This study aimed to deeply understand people's experiences and precise opinions about COVID-19 media literacy. Our findings indicated the dimensions of media literacy concerning COVID-19, including purpose, constructedness, audience, format, technique, and represented lifestyles. Similarly, some other studies have also achieved these dimensions and media literacy

items.^{18,19,20,21} Furthermore, scholars have focused their attention on one of the four media literacy dimensions: cognitive, emotional, aesthetic, and moral. Each of these dimensions was thought to be independent of the others.²²

This study's findings demonstrated that increased awareness in individuals played an essential role in producing credible COVID-19 media messages. In this regard, Latif et al. highlighted the role of social media as a powerful tool for social interaction, teaching, and learning.²³ Today, media and social networks are extensively used as an effective and efficient tool for fast information transfer, and also as online technologies for enhancing interaction and communication, sharing information, and providing feedbacks among individuals. Therefore, modern teaching methods based on social networks and web-based education are recommended to promote health education and disease prevention.

Besides, the purposes of producing fake COVID-19 media messages (mainly for economic gain) were mentioned in the present study. In this regard, Picard's book²⁴ attempts to enhance people's ability to understand and evaluate media companies' content and educate them about economic goals in such companies. It is significant to understand that companies create media using economic theories, various management tools, and media activities as an essential element to survive and gain benefits. Therefore, designing intervention methods to promote media literacy and individuals' ability to think critically appears to be necessary.

Another critical factor in COVID-19 media literacy is makers of COVID-19 media messages. Based on the present study's findings, the WHO and the organization of health community services are makers of credible COVID-19 media messages, aiming to ensure health promotion and well-being of people of all ages.^{25,26}

In line with our results in Picard's book²⁷, advertising companies are among the circulators of fake COVID-19 media messages. Also, Marinescu et al. in their book underlined the role of media, media companies, and healthcare companies as circulators of media messages related to human health.²⁸ It is important to note that it is nowadays essential to pay attention to the role of media on health and also to the effect of public health level on optimal functioning of individuals, especially the healthy media consumption. Therefore, it is necessary to develop health-promoting media literacy education with the use of health-oriented media messages.

¹⁸ KARADUMAN, S.: The role of critical media literacy in further development of consciousness of citizenship. In *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2015, Vol. 174, p. 3039. [online]. [2020-09-20]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277651825_The_Role_of_Critical_Media_Literacy_in_Further_Development_of_Consciousness_of_Citizenship>.

¹⁹ PRIMACK, B. A. et al.: Adolescents' impressions of antismoking media literacy education: qualitative results from a randomized controlled trial. In *Health Education Research*, 2009, Vol. 24, No. 4, p. 608. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <<https://academic.oup.com/her/article/24/4/608/567504>>.

²⁰ HOBBS, R., FROST, R.: Measuring the acquisition of media-literacy skills. In *Reading research quarterly*, 2003, Vol. 38, No. 3, p. 330. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <<https://ila.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1598/rrq.38.3.2>>.

²¹ THOMAN, E., JOLLS, T.: Literacy for the 21st century: An overview and orientation guide to media literacy education. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <http://www.medialit.org/sites/default/files/01_MLKorientation.pdf>.

²² POTTER, W. J.: *Seven Skills of Media Literacy*. California : Sage Publications, 2019, p. 70.

²³ LATIF, M. Z. et al.: Use of Smart Phones and Social Media in Medical Education: Trends, Advantages, Challenges and Barriers. In *Acta informatica medica*, Vol. 27, No. 2, p. 133. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6688444/pdf/AIM-27-133.pdf>>.

²⁴ PICARD, R. G.: *The economics and financing of media companies*. New York : Fordham University Press, 2011, p. 170.

²⁵ National protocols for COVID-19 prevention and control. [online]. [2020-07-06]. Available at: <<http://ird.behdasht.gov.ir/index.aspx?fkeyid=&siteid=419&pageid=62433&siteid=419>>.

²⁶ Novel-coronavirus-2019. [online]. [2020-07-29]. Available at: <<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>>.

²⁷ PICARD, R. G.: *The economics and financing of media companies*. New York : Fordham University Press, 2011, p. 170.

²⁸ MARINESCU, V.: *Media Coverage of Health and Illness in Romania. Health and the Media: Essays on the Effects of Mass Communication*. North Carolina : McFarland, 2016, p. 171.

Another vital factor in COVID-19 media literacy is the audience of COVID-19 media messages. Based on the present study's findings, individuals' needs and demands and media consumption were determining factors in the use of such media messages. In line with our results, Strömbäck et al. mentioned that media consumption referred to a situation in which a person was exposed to media for a certain period and used the media content according to their needs and demands.^{29,30}

According to the present study's findings, other audiences of COVID-19 media messages were curious people. Zuckerman's book points out that the vital aspect of curiosity is the focus, and communication and learning will not occur without sufficient mental focus. Also, people's interest is related to their use of media and media activities.³¹ Therefore, it appears necessary to develop health-promoting media literacy education with the focus on the consumption of health-oriented media messages.

Based on the findings, media techniques and persuasion highlight the disease consequences, teach non-complex prevention activities and strategies for the public and health community, build trust in the composition of COVID-19 media messages to attract and persuade the audience to pursue the media content. Jadayel et al. underlined that the media might sometimes use hazardous techniques to convince individuals about a particular product or idea.³²

Also, other studies mentioned the use of popular and available media such as Instagram, Telegram, and YouTube to attract the audience to use media content, which is in line with the present study's findings.^{33,34,35}

In general, companies use active methods of absorption and persuasion, such as marketing strategies and superb techniques, magical visual effects, and moments that bring excitement and competition into the virtual world, to attract new customers and audiences.³⁶

Hence, designing and implementing new and promoted interventions along with producing creative health-oriented content are essential as a purposive and effective strategy for disease prevention and health promotion.

Drinking alcohol, consuming traditional and herbal ingredients, having healthy lifestyles, observing herd immunity, and using effective drugs for COVID-19 prevention and detection were among the viewpoints presented in or omitted from COVID-19 media messages. In line with these findings, the WHO recommended guidelines about the rational use of personal

²⁹ KOLTAY, T.: The media and the literacies: Media literacy, information literacy, digital literacy. In *Media, culture & society*, 2011, Vol. 33, No. 2, p. 211.

³⁰ STRÖMBÄCK, J. et al.: The Dynamics of Political Interest and News Media Consumption: A Longitudinal Perspective. In *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 2012, Vol. 25, No. 4, p. 414. [online]. [2020-09-10]. Available at: <<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/c15b/06ba0c112d097f2b3840c1f9bd756eff00d1.pdf>>.

³¹ ZUCKERMAN, M.: *Behavior and biology: Research on sensation seeking and reactions to the media. Communication, social cognition, and affect (PLE: Emotion)*. New York : Psychology Press, 2015, p. 189.

³² JADAYEL, R. et al.: Mental Disorders: A Glamorous Attraction On Social Media? In *Journal of Teaching and Education*, 2017, Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 465. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <<http://www.universitypublications.net/jte/0701/pdf/V7NA374.pdf>>.

³³ ANDIH, D. C.: Peran Media Sosial (Facebook, Instagram, Youtube) Dalam Menarik Wisatawan Mengunjungi Objek Wisata Tetempangan Hill Kab. Minahasal Prov. Sulawest Utara. In *Journal Ekonomi dan Pariwisata*, 2018, Vol. 13, No. 1, p. 74. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <<https://jurnal.undhirabali.ac.id/index.php/pariwisata/article/view/344/312>>.

³⁴ DJAFAROVA, E., RUSHWORTH, C.: Exploring the credibility of online celebrities' Instagram profiles in influencing the purchase decisions of young female users. In *Computers in Human Behavior*, 2017, Vol. 68, p. 1. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0747563216307506>>.

³⁵ TAVOSI, M. et al.: Trust in Mass Media and Virtual Social Networks health information: a population study. In *Health Monitor Journal of the Iranian Institute for Health Sciences Research*, 2019, Vol. 18, No. 3, p. 231. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <<https://payeshjournal.ir/article-1-1083-en.html>>.

³⁶ ZWERMAN, S., OKUN, JA.: *Visual Effects Society Handbook: Workflow and Techniques*. New York, London: Focal Press, 2013, p. 50.

protective equipment for COVID-19.³⁷ Clay et al. underlined the risk of alcohol and alcohol abuse, dependence, and recurrence in individuals during the COVID-19 crisis, which are in agreement with the results of the present study.³⁸ It is important to note that the most reliable type of television journalism in media messages, referred to as „*artistic illusion addressed creatively in the minds of content producers*,“ is also found in COVID-19 media messages. In other words, what is observed is inevitably an illusion. Accordingly, an audience without media literacy skills and recognition tools may be attracted to a particular element and inevitably believe that what they see has happened in effect.³⁹ Therefore, media literacy helps people discover a concealed reality. Accordingly, designing media literacy promotion interventions will be useful in revealing hidden facts and selecting their aesthetic type.

As with other qualitative studies, this study's findings are not generalizable, which was one of the limitations of this study. Nevertheless, our results can pave the ground for practical interventions in COVID-19 media literacy.

5. Conclusion

It is essential to be familiar with individuals' views based on culture and context for designing and planning educational media literacy programs for media skills and competence in the new media age for distinguishing between fake and credible COVID-19 media messages and critically evaluating media content for all people. The themes obtained in the study can be used for designing educational interventions and appropriate assessment tools as well as promoting health media literacy in the field. Hence, future research need to discover other salient issues that informants may experience in relation to the subject. Moreover, further research should include participants with different backgrounds.

Acknowledgement: *The authors would like to acknowledge the participations of this study. The Research Ethics Committee approved this study of Hamadan University of Medical Sciences with a specific ID IR.UMSHA.REC. 1399.229 was funded by the Hamadan University of Medical Sciences (No, 9904102236) that participated in financial support of this study. This funding source had no role in the analysis and interpretation of data; in the writing of the article; nor in the decision to submit it for publication.*

Bibliography and sources

ANDIH, D. C.: Peran Media Sosial (Facebook, Instagram, Youtube) Dalam Menarik Wisatawan Mengunjungi Objek Wisata Tetempangan Hill Kab. Minahasal Prov. Sulawest Utara. In *Journal Ekonomi dan Pariwisata*, 2018, Vol. 13, No. 1, p. 74-80. ISSN 1978-6069. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <<https://jurnal.undhirabali.ac.id/index.php/pariwisata/article/view/344/312>>.

ALLAHERDIPOUR, H.: Global Challenge of Health Communication: Infodemia in the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic. In *Journal of Education and Community Health*, 2020, Vol. 7, No. 2, p. 65-67. ISSN 2383-2150. [online]. [2020-07-27]. Available at: <http://jech.umsha.ac.ir/browse.php?a_id=1000&sid=1&slc_lang=en>.

³⁷ *Rational use of personal protective equipment for coronavirus disease (COVID-19): interim guidance.* [online]. [2020-08-20]. Available at: <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331215/WHO-2019-nCov-IPCPPE_use-2020.1-eng.pdf>.

³⁸ CLAY, J. M., PARKER, M. O.: Alcohol use and misuse during the COVID-19 pandemic: a potential public health crisis? In *The Lancet Public Health*, 2020, Vol. 5, No. 5, p. 259. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <[https://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lanpub/PIIS2468-2667\(20\)30088-8.pdf](https://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lanpub/PIIS2468-2667(20)30088-8.pdf)>.

³⁹ TYRRELL, R.: *The Work of the Television Journalist*. New York : Hastings House, 1972, p. 72.

- BENGTSSON, M.: How to plan and perform a qualitative study using content analysis. In *Nursing plus open*, 2016, Vol. 2, p. 8-14. ISSN 2352-9008. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352900816000029>>.
- CINELLI, M. et al.: The covid-19 social media infodemic. In *Scientific Reports*, 2020, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 1-18. ISSN 2045-2322. [online]. [2020-07-20]. Available at: <<https://arxiv.org/pdf/2003.05004.pdf>>.
- CLAY, J. M., PARKER, M. O.: Alcohol use and misuse during the COVID-19 pandemic: a potential public health crisis? In *The Lancet Public Health*, 2020, Vol. 5, No. 5, p. 259. ISSN 2468-2667. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <[https://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lanpub/PIIS2468-2667\(20\)30088-8.pdf](https://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lanpub/PIIS2468-2667(20)30088-8.pdf)>.
- Daily Situation Report on Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Iran*. [online]. [2020-07-29]. Available at: <<http://corona.behdasht.gov.ir/>>.
- DEPOUX, A. et al.: The pandemic of social media panic travels faster than the COVID-19 outbreak. In *Journal of Travel Medicine*, 2020, Vol. 27, No. 3, p. 1-2. ISSN 1708-8305. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <<https://academic.oup.com/jtm/article/27/3/taaa031/5775501>>.
- DJAFAROVA, E., RUSHWORTH, C.: Exploring the credibility of online celebrities' Instagram profiles in influencing the purchase decisions of young female users. In *Computers in Human Behavior*, 2017, Vol. 68, p. 1-7. ISSN 0747-5632. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0747563216307506>>.
- HOBBS, R., FROST, R.: Measuring the acquisition of media-literacy skills. In *Reading research quarterly*, 2003, Vol. 38, No. 3, p. 330-335. ISSN 0034-0553. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <<https://ila.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1598/rrq.38.3.2>>.
- HOSSOVÁ, M.: Fake News and Disinformation: Phenomenons of Post-Factual Society. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2018, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 27-35. ISSN 2585-8726. [online]. [2020-02-01]. Available at: <https://www.mlar.sk/wpcontent/uploads/2019/01/MLAR_2018_2_3_Fake-News-and-Disinformation-Phenomenons-of-Post-Factual-Society.pdf>.
- Internet User and Penetration Worldwide 2014-2020*. [online]. [2020-09-23]. Available at: <<https://www.emarketer.com/chart/187880/internet-users-penetration-worldwide-2014-2020-billions-of-population-change>>.
- JADAYEL, R. et al.: Mental Disorders: A Glamorous Attraction On Social Media? In *Journal of Teaching and Education*, 2017, Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 465-476. ISSN 2165-6266. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <<http://www.universitypublications.net/jte/0701/pdf/V7NA374.pdf>>.
- KARADUMAN, S.: The role of critical media literacy in further development of consciousness of citizenship. In *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2015, Vol. 174, p. 3039-3043. ISSN 1877-0428. [online]. [2020-09-20]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277651825_The_Role_of_Critical_Media_Literacy_in_Further_Development_of_Consciousness_of_Citizenship>.
- KESLER, T. et al.: What's Our Position? A Critical Media Literacy Study of Popular Culture Websites with Eighth-Grade Special Education Students. In *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, 2016, Vol. 32, No. 1, p. 1-26. ISSN 1057-3569. [online]. [2020-09-23]. Available at: <<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10573569.2013.857976>>.
- KOLTAY, T.: The media and the literacies: Media literacy, information literacy, digital literacy. In *Media, culture & society*, 2011, Vol. 33, No. 2, p. 211-221. ISSN 0163-4437.
- LATIF, M. Z. et al.: Use of Smart Phones and Social Media in Medical Education: Trends, Advantages, Challenges and Barriers. In *Acta informatica medica*, 2019, Vol. 27, No. 2, p. 133-138. ISSN 0353-8109. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6688444/pdf/AIM-27-133.pdf>>.
- LUNT, P., LIVINGSTONE, S.: *Media regulation: Governance and the interests of citizens and consumers*. California : Sage, 2011.
- MARINESCU, V.: *Media Coverage of Health and Illness in Romania. Health and the Media: Essays on the Effects of Mass Communication*. North Carolina, USA : McFarland, 2016.

- National protocols for COVID-19 prevention and control*. [online]. [2020-07-06]. Available at: <<http://ird.behdasht.gov.ir/index.aspx?fkeyid=&siteid=419&pageid=62433&siteid=419>>.
- Novel-coronavirus-2019*. [online]. [2020-07-29]. Available at: <<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>>.
- PENNYCOOK, G. et al.: Fighting COVID-19 misinformation on social media: Experimental evidence for a scalable accuracy nudge intervention. In *Psychology Science*, 2020, Vol. 31, No. 7, p. 770-780. ISSN 0956-7976. [online]. [2020-07-27]. Available at: <<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0956797620939054>>.
- PICARD, R. G.: *The economics and financing of media companies*. New York : Fordham University Press, 2011.
- POTTER, W. J.: *Seven Skills of Media Literacy*. California : Sage Publications, 2019.
- PRIMACK, B. A. et al.: Adolescents' impressions of antismoking media literacy education: qualitative results from a randomized controlled trial. In *Health Education Research*, 2009, Vol. 24, No. 4, p. 608-621. ISSN 0268-1153. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <<https://academic.oup.com/her/article/24/4/608/567504>>.
- Rational use of personal protective equipment for coronavirus disease (COVID-19): interim guidance*. [online]. [2020-08-20]. Available at: <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331215/WHO-2019-nCov-IPCPPE_use-2020.1-eng.pdf>.
- SOLHI, M. et al.: Application of media literacy education for changing attitudes about self-medication of slimming supplements. In *Medical Journal of the Islamic Republic of Iran*, 2017, Vol. 31, No. 1, p. 792-797. ISSN 1016-1430. [online]. [2020-08-8]. Available at: <<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6014786/>>.
- STREUBERT, H. J., CARPENTER, D. R.: *Qualitative research in nursing: Advancing the humanistic imperative*. Philadelphia : Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2011.
- STRÖMBÄCK, J. et al.: The Dynamics of Political Interest and News Media Consumption: A Longitudinal Perspective. In *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 2012, Vol. 25, No. 4, p. 414-435. ISSN 0954-2892. [online]. [2020-09-10]. Available at: <<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/c15b/06ba0c112d097f2b3840c1f9bd756eff00d1.pdf>>.
- TAVOSI, M. et al.: Trust in Mass Media and Virtual Social Networks health information: a population study. In *Health Monitor Journal of the Iranian Institute for Health Sciences Research*, 2019, Vol. 18, No. 3, p. 231-240. ISSN 1680-7626. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <<https://payeshjournal.ir/article-1-1083-en.html>>.
- THOMAN, E., JOLLS, T.: *Literacy for the 21st century: An overview and orientation guide to media literacy education*. [online]. [2020-08-10]. Available at: <http://www.medialit.org/sites/default/files/01_MLKorientation.pdf>.
- TYRRELL, R.: *The Work of the Television Journalist*. New York : Hastings House, 1972.
- VAHEDI, Z. et al.: Are media literacy interventions effective at changing attitudes and intentions towards risky health behaviors in adolescents? A meta-analytic review. In *Journal of adolescence*, 2018, Vol. 67, p. 140-152. ISSN 0140-1971. [online]. [2020-08-20]. Available at: <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0140197118301003>>.
- XIE, X. et al.: A meta-analysis of media literacy interventions for deviant behaviors. In *Computers & Education*, 2019, Vol. 139, p. 146-156. ISSN 0360-1315. [online]. [2020-07-20]. Available at: <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S036013151930123X>>.
- ZWERMAN, S., OKUN, J. A.: *Visual Effects Society Handbook: Workflow and Techniques*. New York : Focal Press, 2013.
- ZUCKERMAN, M.: *Behavior and biology: Research on sensation seeking and reactions to the media. Communication, social cognition, and affect (PLE: Emotion)*. New York : Psychology Press, 2015.

Authors



Hanieh Jormand, MSc.

Department of Public Health
School of Public Health
Hamadan University of Medical Sciences
Shahid Fahmideh Street, Hamadan, 6517838736
IRAN
jormand69h@gmail.com

Hanieh Jormand, MSc. is a Ph.D. student of Health Education and Promotion, Department of Public Health of Hamadan University of Medical Sciences, Hamadan, IR Iran. Her research interests are in the concept of E-learning by application of media education and media literacy education in various fields.

Saeed Bashirian, MSc, PhD.

Department of Public Health
School of Public Health
Hamadan University of Medical Sciences
Shahid Fahmideh Street, Hamadan, 6517838736
IRAN
bashirian@umsha.ac.ir



Saeed Bashirian, Ph.D., is an associate professor in the Department of Public Health at Hamadan University of Medical Sciences. He teaches in the areas of health behaviour change and health communication and has scholarly interests in predicting and changing health behaviour.



Majid Barati, MSc, PhD.

Department of Public Health
School of Public Health
Hamadan University of Medical Sciences
Shahid Fahmideh Street, Hamadan, 6517838736
IRAN
barati@umsha.ac.ir

Majid Barati, Ph.D., is an associate professor of Health Education and Health Promotion at Hamadan University of Medical Sciences. His research interests are in psychosocial aspects related to health beliefs and behaviour, and the role of social determinants of health in influencing health and wellbeing. He collaborates on the scientific journals of education and community health.

Salman Khazaei, MSc, PhD.

Department of Public Health
School of Public Health
Hamadan University of Medical Sciences
Shahid Fahmideh Street, Hamadan, 6517838736
IRAN
salman.khazaei61@gmail.com



Salman Khazaei, Ph.D., is an epidemiologist, graduate of the Faculty of Public Health from Tehran University of Medical Sciences, and has been working as an assistant professor for two years at Hamadan University of Medical Sciences. He mainly works on infectious diseases, meta-analysis studies, and cancers. His interests Software are STATA, SPSS, AMOS, PLS, and Are view map.



Ensiyeh Jenabi, MSc, PhD.

Mother and Child Health, Autism Spectrum Disorders Research Center
Hamadan University of Medical Sciences
Shahid Fahmideh Street, Hamadan, 6517838736
IRAN
barati@umsha.ac.ir

Ensiyeh Jenabi, Ph.D., is an assistant professor of reproductive health at Hamadan University of Medical Sciences. Her research interests are meta-analysis studies, autism and reproductive health. She has been working as an assistant professor for three years at Hamadan University of Medical Sciences.

Sepideh Zareian, MSc.

Hamadan University of Medical Sciences
Shahid Fahmideh Street, Hamadan, 6517838736
IRAN
s.zareian@umsha.ac.ir



Sepideh Zareian, MSc. is an IT Engineer, graduate of the M.s of computer science and Head of Information and Communication Technology Management.



photo: Rastislav Kupšo

Zuzana Bezáková, Adam Madleňák, Marek Švec

Security Risks Of Sharing Content Based On Minors By Their Family Members On Social Media In Times Of Technology Interference

ABSTRACT

Digitization and technology interference influence the living conditions of the young generation and their perception of privacy and private identity. Social media is changing the way internet users obtain and share information and digital narratives about family members. One of the groups most affected by such actions is minors. People are not sufficiently aware of the consequences of their actions in this regard, as these might have a negative impact on the emotional, social and intellectual development of a child or young person as they do not have any control over the information being published online. The problem is even more serious as the minimum age limit for granting consent to the processing of personal data has not been set (neither the current legal system nor the GDPR has laid down such an age limit). The current legislation de facto allows legal guardians to deny minors entrusted to their care the right to privacy, thus giving rise to digital abduction, personal identity theft or cyberbullying of minors who should be enjoying legal protection against any form of harm. The paper analyses the content and type of information social media users share, in particular sensitive data, using qualitative scientific methods. In this regard, the paper researches the possibilities of implementing the existing legal framework with a view to propose legal and social mechanisms to increase the protection of a specific category of data subjects in the context of the „need to know“ principle.

KEY WORDS

Social media. Groundswell. Communication. Technology interference. Personal data. The right to privacy. GDPR.

1. Introduction

Social media development and multidirectional communication flows have prompted internet users to change from passive recipients of digital content to active content contributors. Given the content value of the published information and taking into account the expected circle of recipients, it is extremely important to join the public discussion not only on the need to protect minors on the Internet to ensure their right to private and family life, but also to prevent the possible uncontrolled dissemination of inaccurate, distorted or untrue information following other user's interpretation (secondary interpretation) of events. We are talking about the so-called groundswell and its impact on the communication process on social media platforms in combination with the inappropriate content of messages shared. Their attractiveness and interactivity give rise to an even broader social problem – the growing dependence of people on modern information and communication technologies. Omnipresent portable electronic devices and easy-to-install software applications designed to transmit information are usually the main cause of weakening social contact in the physical world. Psychologists in particular have become increasingly aware of the impact that technology interference has on the mental and emotional development of children and adults. In this regard, media education and media literacy¹ come to the fore as the only way in which society can ensure its cyber security.

Today, almost 84% of all internet users use social media at least once a month. This value represents a share of 49% of the total global population. In the conditions of the Slovak Republic, 62% of internet users or 51% of the domestic population are active on social media.² Based on the presented data, it can be concluded that the emerging new communication standard which includes virtual presentation, exchange of views and experiences, sharing and downloading of content and information through social media, has a significant impact on society as a whole. This is especially evident in young adults under 18 and adults under 45 who use electronic media regularly or on a daily basis. Some people have already been born into the digital world or have mastered technologies at some point of their lives. This group also includes the current generation of parents of minor children (the average age of the first-time mother in Europe is currently 29,3 years).³ It goes without saying that there are certain differences depending on the specific region, especially when taking into account various socio-cultural and environmental factors.⁴ These parents (or legal guardians) willingly share with other members of the internet community information not only about themselves, but also about members of their immediate family, including minors. Thus, the term „sharenting” was born. Sharenting is the overuse of social media by parents or legal guardians who share photos or various home videos of minors with the virtual community. Unfortunately, the real consequences of sharing such sensitive content on social media often come too late (ex post).

If, in the light of the above, we were to assess the relationship between the legislation on the protection of personal data represented by the GDPR and the subsequent specific national legislation and the sharenting phenomenon (the purpose of which is to define the limits to which parents or legal guardians are willing to infringe minors' privacy rights), we would dive into uncertain waters. While, on the one hand, the protection of minors has been highlighted under Article 8 of the GDPR (the aim of which is to ensure the required (not adequate) level of protection of such persons, including their right to private and family life), on the other hand,

¹ VRABEC, N., BŔTOŠOVÁ, L.: The Concept of Learning-by-doing in the Context of Media Education and School Quality Assessment. In *Communication Today*, 2020, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 142.

² *Digital in 2020: Global Digital Overview*. [online]. [2021-01-20]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/digital-2020>>; *Digital in 2020: Slovakia*. [online]. [2021-01-20]. Available at: <<https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2020-slovakia>>.

³ GEDDES, L.: Avoid Over-sharenting. In *New Scientist*, 2019, Vol. 242, No. 3224, p. 25.

⁴ KUPEC, V.: Marketing Information and its Impact on Generation Z. In PETRANOVÁ, D., MAGÁL, S. (eds.): *Megatrends and Media: Media Future*. Trnava : University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, 2017, p. 269.

the legal protection was squeezed into a relatively independent legal institute having the form of a consent which may be granted only by a person who reached the age of 16 (the provision of Article 8, par. 1, GDPR). However, the above is valid only provided that the provisions of Recital 18 GDPR do not apply, as the provisions in question exclude personal or household activity. Thus, the only protection is provided by the national legislation on the protection of privacy of natural persons, usually in the form of the Civil Code. It follows from the above that minors under 16 years of age and their rights and interests are protected only on the basis of the consent given by their parent or legal guardian. However, given the imperfections of the Slovak Republic's legislation, in particular the protection of social relations under the Civil Code (Act No. 40/1964 Coll. Civil Code, hereinafter the „Civil Code“)⁵, the seeming independence of the existing legal regulation from the elements on which the offer of information society services addressed directly to the child is based under Art. 8 par. 1 GDPR, which may include various types of services and activities, usually provided for remuneration, at a distance, electronically and at the individual request of the recipient of the service (e.g. provision of internet connection or use of various social networks or web platforms of professional, semi-professional or private nature)⁶ may pose a problem. The second negative implication of such a legal structure is the belief that with regard to the rights and interests of minors, parents or legal guardians are able to objectively assess the conditions and legal consequences of giving a consent on behalf of the minor. This, of course, presupposes that the parents or legal guardians are capable enough to understand the conditions under which the information society services offered directly to the minor will be provided.⁷

However, such a premise is contradicted by the objective fact – i.e. the exponential growth in social media use and change in the scope and nature of processed personal data, often of a special nature according to the provisions of Art. 9 of GDPR. Therefore, if we are to state a basic scientific hypothesis (which will be verified using qualitative scientific methods – critical analysis, synthesis and deduction in order to draw generally valid scientific interdisciplinary conclusions in the field of media and civil law), we must state that GDPR as a basic European legal norm addressing the protection of personal data and the Slovak legislation as such deal with the issue of protection of the rights and interests of minors only minimally, as they transferred the legal protection obligation to the holders of parental responsibility over the child without verifying whether such persons are at all eligible to give such consent or authorization in relation to information society services. At the same time, however, Recital 18 GDPR explicitly excludes the following: *„This Regulation does not apply to the processing of personal data by a natural person in the course of a purely personal or household activity and thus with no connection to a professional or commercial activity. Personal or household activities could include correspondence and the holding of addresses, or social networking and online activity undertaken within the context of such activities. However, this Regulation applies to controllers or processors which provide the means for processing personal data for such personal or household activities.“*⁸

Notwithstanding the later legal arguments pointing out the „problems“ in the approach of the European and Slovak legislators, the problem of sharenting is a showcase of failure of the legal system to protect the privacy of minors. The extent and nature of information shared

⁵ ŽULOVÁ, J., KUNDRÁT, I.: Service of Documents in the Context of Employment During Employee Quarantine. In *Central European Journal of Labour Law and Personnel Management*, 2020, Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 80.

⁶ A special legal definition of the offer of an information society service, which, however, does not in its essence meet the essential content of the offer of information society services pursuant to the provisions of Art. 8 para. 1 GDPR, is outlined in Section 2 letter. a) of Act no. 22/2004 Coll. on electronic commerce.

⁷ VALENTOVÁ, T., BIRNSTEIN, M., GOLAIS, J.: *GDPR/Všeobecné nariadenie o ochrane osobných údajov. Zákon o ochrane osobných údajov*. Bratislava : Wolters Kluwer, 2018, p. 129.

⁸ BESSANT, C.: Sharenting: Balancing the Conflicting Rights of Parents and Children. In *Communications Law*, 2018, Vol. 23, No. 1, p. 14.

about minors may be causally related to the development of emotional disorders and difficulties minors have in social interaction with other minors (feeling of shame, self-harm, grooming, minors becoming victims of sexual predators and the like).⁹

2. Methods

Based on a critical analysis of relevant legislation and the results of empirical surveys documenting sharenting and its impact on society, the aim of the paper is to identify the extent of the problem of sharing content on minors with family members on social media (sharenting), identify legal solutions to the problem and point out the importance of adequate social mechanisms (with regard to media and marketing) in order to raise awareness of the issue. To achieve the stated objective, we made use of several research methods. These, by their nature, helped us better understand the issue of protection of the rights and legally protected interests of minors on the Internet. The information sources used (sociology, psychology, cultural anthropology, management, marketing and especially legal sciences) helped us highlight the interdisciplinary nature of the issue and understand how social media facilitate information exchange. The individual parts of the paper follow up on each other. In addition to analytical-synthetic research methods, we also used induction, deduction and comparative research methods. The aim of the theoretical part of the paper was to define a key terminological apparatus on the basis of available domestic and foreign scientific literature, in particular monographs and peer-reviewed journal articles. The paper also reflects our own opinions which were based on our experience and several years of research under various scientific projects and grants in the field of digital marketing communication, including personal data protection and privacy of those using social media.

3. Results

Due to the constant growth in the number of internet users and consequently also registered users of social media platforms, the level of risk posed by sharenting parents for minors is increasing. Parents share various digital narratives about their children and other family members with other internet users through posts on social media, comments, reviews, blogs, web portals, as well as using available cloud services or e-mail, thus creating a digital record of their family and their private life. It often happens that information are posted/ shared in duplicate on several social media platforms at the same time. This multiple sharing increases the digital footprint of the minor. Often, the parent is not even aware of the pitfalls and risks of the online world.¹⁰ The failure to take into account the possible undesirable consequences of such portrayal of minors on the Internet is the result of poor media and information literacy.

With regard to poor media and information literacy and based on the analysis of available research, we have identified several reasons for the rising popularity of sharenting in today's digital society. Insecurity, isolation, negative feelings, anxiety and depression (*feelings new parents may experience*) are the most common reason parents turn to social media as the online environment helps them overcome these problems. As Fox and Hoy pointed out, many biophysical changes women go through are related to psychosocial changes associated with coping with anxiety, insecurity, and taking on a new role - being a parent. With regard to the need to cope with and eliminate negative feelings, as well as the needs for obtain information,

⁹ LIVINGSTONE, S.: Children: A Special Case for Privacy? In *Intermedia*, 2018, Vol. 46, No. 2, p. 20.

¹⁰ UNLU, D. G., MORVA, O.: Whose Information Should Be Shared with Whom? Parents' Awareness of Children's Digital Privacy in Turkey. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2020, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 111.

parents tend to share sensitive content on digital platforms.¹¹ Another reason for sharing sensitive information is the need to *archive* content. New media technologies have streamlined the process of archiving and storing family photographs and simplified the actions related to records-making, organizing and sharing visual materials. In this regard, sensitive data, such as date of birth or photos, videos or live broadcasts are disclosed and shared, thus posing a security risk to minors as well as other people living in the same household.¹² The need for self-presentation, recognition and acknowledgement also plays an important role here. Particular attention should be paid to the privacy setting in terms of access to the digital content in question. The problem here is the individual's lower sensitivity to the need to protect one's own privacy as well as the child's privacy in the online world as the online and offline world (and therefore privacy) are perceived differently.¹³ Once online, people tend to forget about the need to protect their privacy as they wish to present themselves as having perfect and happy lives to the detriment of their privacy and the rights of the child. *Using social media in leisure time* and sharing sensitive content is risky due to the possible presence of an unknown number of anonymous contributors to public forums and an unknown number of recipients of shared content.

In view of the growing number of social media users, we consider it important in this context to point out the influence the age of the child has on sharenting. Sharenting or sharing content based on third parties, especially minors, starts very early, sometimes even before a child is born - the prenatal age (digital footprint of unborn child), sometimes after the birth (born into the Internet) or during infancy. The phenomenon is more common in the USA and Canada (34% and 37%), with a lower incidence in France (13%), Italy, Japan (both 14%) and Germany (15%).¹⁴ Research on a sample of mothers in North America (USA, Canada), selected EU countries (UK, France, Germany, Italy and Spain), Australia, New Zealand and Japan also pointed to the continuous sharing of content on minors and confirmed the existence of a digital profile and a digital footprint of the minor by the age of 2 in 81% of cases. Data also showed an increased level of risk behaviour in the US (92%) compared to EU countries (73%). According to the above research, the so-called digital childbirth takes place when the minor is about 6 months old, while a third (33%) of photographs with information about children is published online within a few weeks after birth. In the United Kingdom, 37% of newborns have online lives immediately after birth, with results in Australia and New Zealand reporting as many as 41% of newborns.¹⁵ Based on a more detailed analysis, we arrived at a relatively high value of the correlation coefficient (0,84594614) in the results of both examined variables: the number of legal guardians publishing digital content on minors of neonatal age and aged two. This is a high linear interdependence, with a causal dependence of 71% ($r^2 = 0,7156$) variability in the number of parents who share photos of minors of neonatal age and aged two on social networks, thus indicating a strong trend of sharing content on minors on social media.

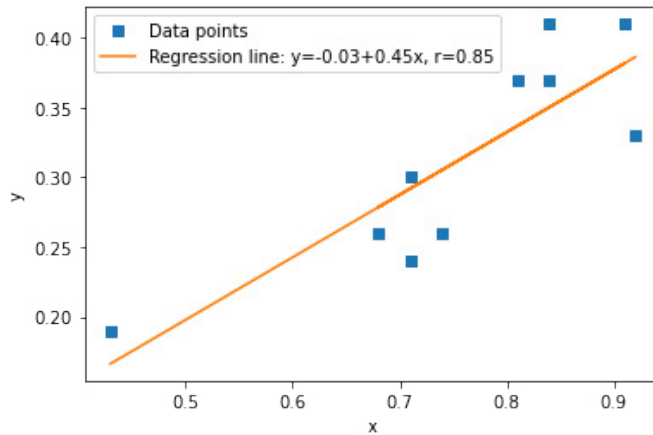
¹¹ FOX, A. K., HOY, M. G.: Smart Devices, Smart Decisions? Implications of Parents' Sharenting for Children's Online Privacy: An Investigation of Mothers. In *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 2019, Vol. 38, No. 4, p. 417.

¹² SIIBAK, A., TRAKS, K.: The Dark Sides of Sharenting. In *Catalan Journal of Communication & Cultural Studies*, 2019, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 118.

¹³ HLADÍKOVÁ, V.: Mobbing And Cybermobbing: Risk Aspects Of (Digital) Communication In The Workplace And Possibilities Of Legislative And Non-Legislative Protection Under The Conditions Of The Slovak Republic. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2020, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 92.

¹⁴ CINO, D., DEMOZZI, S., SUBRAHMANYAM, K.: Why Post More Pictures if No One is Looking at Them? Parents' Perception of the Facebook Like in Sharenting. In *The Communication Review*, 2020, Vol. 23, No. 2, p. 126-127.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 132-134.



PICTURE 1: *The scope of shared content and its dependence on the age of the minor*

Source: own processing, 2021

At the time the minor becomes self-aware at a certain age, a potential problem arises – they may disagree with the content published in the past, as well as with the ongoing activities of similar nature (possibilities of expressing their disagreement with such behaviour are listed below in the legal analysis of the issue). Minors requesting photos of them to be taken down is the issue the Family Online Safety Institute researched in great depth. They state that out of a sample of 589 legal guardians of minors aged 6-17, one-fifth of legal guardians have published content about their child which the child might consider embarrassing in the future. 13% of children were embarrassed after looking at the published content about themselves and up to 10% of children asked the published content to be taken down.¹⁶ Barnes and Potter's research in Australia on a sample of 613 legal guardians showed that parents do not usually have sufficient media skills to identify the recipients of the content they publish. Significant differences can be observed here between the ability to perceive potential risk and the digital skills regarding privacy settings on internet platforms. Media literacy and related legal skills of legal guardians of minors usually do not match the real need to protect minors in the online environment. The research also showed legal guardians are not aware of the fact that the real audience is usually wider than they think.¹⁷ Barnes and Potter also pointed to a society-wide problem of tolerance of violations of the right to privacy of minors on the Internet. In this context, Donovan defines sharenting as an activity that denies the child's right to create their own digital footprint (identity), as well as the right to autonomy and self-determination as an integral part of an independent personality.¹⁸

From the point of view of the factual nature of the published information, the most frequently shared information is content on significant milestones in the child's development, child's leisure time and information on child's health condition. Portraits of minors taken by a professional photographer and photographs documenting embarrassing moments and everyday life are common. In their research study, Marasli et al. pointed to the diversity of published content, with up to 81,4% of parents saying they shared photos or videos taken at birthday parties, family or friendly gatherings and 54,98% share photos of everyday activities and personal

¹⁶ *Parents, Privacy & Technology Use*. [online]. [2021-01-28]. Available at: <http://fosi-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/Full_Report-Web.pdf>.

¹⁷ BARNES, R., POTTER, A.: *Sharenting and Parents' Digital Literacy: An Agenda for Future Research*. [online]. [2021-02-05]. Available at: <<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/22041451.2020.1847819>>.

¹⁸ DONOVAN, S.: Sharenting: The Forgotten Children of the GDPR. In *Peace Human Rights Governance*, 2020, Vol. 4, No. 1, p. 37.

development, leisure activities including e.g. artistic activities.¹⁹ In addition, Fox and Hoy's marketing research revealed that mothers in particular share their children's personal data on request and do not hesitate to provide it to various companies upon entering competitions, challenges or bets.²⁰ Based on the analysis of social media, Haley states that „embarrassing“ photos most often show inappropriate content related to nudity, being dirty or various grimaces of the child.²¹ According to another research, up to 56% of mothers and 34% of fathers publish sensitive content based on minors on social media several times a month. The alarming thing is that more than 70% of parents, thanks to other parents, have access to information on minors which may harm these minors in the short or long term.²² The minor therefore has an online identity created to which they did not grant an express consent and about which they do not even know about due to their age. Most importantly, this online identity was created by parents without asking the minor. At the same time, some research projects show that parents active on social networks publish an average of up to 300 photos of a child's face per year. Such behaviour leads to loss of privacy and security risks due to the poor knowledge of the audience on a selected digital platform (online friends).²³

In case privacy settings are set poorly, social media may allow third parties to view sensitive information on social media. Such information is exposed to potential misuse, e.g. online sexual predators. The violation of the rights of minors in connection with the publication of sensitive content in the online environment was exposed by a comparative research carried out in the Czech Republic and Spain. The research pointed out the violation of minors' rights to privacy in 92,5% of cases.²⁴ Extensive research into the issue on the territory of the Slovak Republic has not yet been carried out. However, in 2019 the research agency 2muse implemented an interesting social project analysing behaviour of parents of minors on social media. Following the international experience with sharenting, this quantitative survey has yielded results in many respects comparable to foreign studies. The statements of more than 500 parents aged 25-45 showed that up to 62% of them repeatedly publish photos of their children on the Internet. In terms of published content, 81% of shared information relate to family events and photos of minors, with up to 99% of all published photos showing the child's face. Quite often published material includes various sensitive information of a personal character.²⁵

4. Discussion

In terms of protection of minors, the basic security issue is the violation of the privacy of minors and their private identity by their legal guardians. In the light of the above-described behaviour, we arrived at the conclusion that there is a very fine line between parental freedom

¹⁹ MARASLI, M. et al.: Parents' Shares on Social Networking Sites About their Children: Sharenting. In *The Anthropologist: International Journal of Contemporary and Applied Studies of Man*, 2016, Vol. 24, No. 2, p. 403.

²⁰ FOX, A. K., HOY, M. G.: Smart Devices, Smart Decisions? Implications of Parents' Sharenting for Children's Online Privacy: An Investigation of Mothers. In *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 2019, Vol. 38, No. 4, p. 424.

²¹ HALEY, K.: Sharenting and the (Potential) Right to Be Forgotten. In *Indiana Law Journal*, 2020, Vol. 95, No. 3, p. 1009.

²² HINOJO-LUCENA, F. J. et al.: Sharenting: Internet Addiction, Self-control and Online Photos of Underage Children. In *Comunicar*, 2020, Vol. 28, No. 64, p. 99-100.

²³ CIMKE, S., GURKAN, D. Y., POLAT, S.: Child Rights Neglect in Social Media: Sharenting. In *Guncel Pediatri – Journal of Current Pediatrics*, 2018, Vol. 16, No. 2, p. 264; RANZINI, G., NEWLANDS, G. E., LUTZ, C.: Sharenting, Peer Influence, and Privacy Concerns: A Study on the Instagram-Sharing Behaviors of Parents in the United Kingdom. In *Social Media + Society*, 2020, Vol. 6, No. 4, p. 5.

²⁴ KOPECKY, K. et al.: The Phenomenon of Sharenting and Its Risks in the Online Environment. Experiences from Czech Republic and Spain. In *Children and Youth Services Review*, 2020, Vol. 110, Art. No. 104812, p. 4.

²⁵ *Sharenting v prostredí sociálnych sietí*. [online]. [2021-02-02]. Available at: <<https://nezdielam.sk>>.

and interference with the right to privacy of a minor.²⁶ The social phenomenon of sharenting thus penetrates into the area of the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the child, as outlined in international documents and national laws. The key legal paradigm in this case is GDPR (in reciprocity with the provisions under Article 8, par. 1 of GDPR) and the Slovak Civil Code of 1964 to a lesser extent, as the latter is not prepared to deal with issues arising during the digital age. The underlying legal framework therefore appears to be the wording of Recital 18 GDPR, in relation to the subsequent exclusion of Art. 8, par. 1 of GDPR. The inconsistency in the legislation is already reflected in the hierarchy of international law by which most Member States of the European Union are bound, i.e. 1995 *Amendment to Article 43(2) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, including its Optional Protocols (hereinafter referred to as the „*Convention*“). Article 19 of the Convention states that „*States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.*”²⁷ The provisions of Art. 19 of the Convention must be interpreted in the light of General Comment No. 13, under which the term „*violence*” must be interpreted as „*all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.*”²⁸ However, for the purposes of paragraph 4 of this General Comment, the term „*violence*” must be interpreted as representing all forms of harm to children referred to in Article 19, par. 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, despite the fact that the term primarily refers to other types of harm (bodily harm, abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, torture and digital exploitation).²⁹ In this respect, however, the problem would not arise if we took into account only the wording of Recital 38 GDPR, which is based on the assumption that minors (children) are special groups of the population at risk of negative manifestations of social phenomena, including unauthorized and illegal interference with the private sphere of natural persons.³⁰ Recital 38 GDPR, as a follow-up to Art. 8 par. 1 of GDPR states that „*Children merit specific protection with regard to their personal data, as they may be less aware of the risks, consequences and safeguards concerned and their rights in relation to the processing of personal data. Such specific protection should, in particular, apply to the use of personal data of children for the purposes of marketing or creating personality or user profiles and the collection of personal data with regard to children when using services offered directly to a child.*”³¹ Both international documents thus primarily ensure the legal protection of minors, including their private identity, without distinguishing their age or the purpose of legal protection, as the wording „in particular” makes it possible to extend the legal protection to any area of possible misuse of the personal data of such minors.³²

²⁶ HITKA, M. et al.: Knowledge and Human Capital as Sustainable Competitive Advantage in Human Resource Management. In *Sustainability*, 2019, Vol. 11, No. 18:4985, p. 7.

²⁷ *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. [online]. [2021-02-04]. Available at: <<https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>>.

²⁸ *General Comment No. 13. Article 19: The Right of the Child to the Freedom from all Forms of Violence*. [online]. [2021-02-04]. Available at: <<https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/library/general-comment-no-13-article-19-right-child-freedom-all-forms-violence>>.

²⁹ Similarly, the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights in *Neulinger and Shuruk v Switzerland* (41615/07) highlights and prioritizes the best interests of the child and the obligation of states which adopted the Convention to uphold it wording at national level.

³⁰ LIŽBETINOVÁ, L. et al.: The Approach of SMEs to Using the Customer Databases and CRM: Empirical Study in the Slovak Republic. In *Sustainability*, 2020, Vol. 12, No. 1:227, p. 12.

³¹ DONOVAN, S.: Sharenting: The Forgotten Children of the GDPR. In *Peace Human Rights Governance*, 2020, Vol. 4, No. 1, p. 45.

³² A similar approach of the legislator can be found in Art. 16 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Art. 8 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, etc.

In absolute contrast with the legal protection of minors thus set, however, the Recital 18 excludes the use of GDPR when it provides for an exception in the processing of personal data of minors in the course of purely personal or household activities and thus with no connection to a professional or commercial activity. Similarly, it further states that these personal or household activities „may” include correspondence and holding of address or social networking and online activities carried out in the context of such activities. This vaguely formulated exception provides a significant opportunity to break out of the application scope of the GDPR, including a fundamental expansion of possibilities for holders of parental responsibility over the child. The scope of these „parental” rights is wide as the legislation does not in any way take into account the opinion of the minor or their right to express disagreement with conduct of their legal guardian in the position of holder of parental responsibility over the child.

Recital 18 thus incorporates two basic points which significantly impede the possibility of exercising the child’s right to protect their own privacy.³³ The legislation does not allow the child to voice their objection (does not outline another possibility for the child to protect their rights at the moment they consider that their rights are in conflict with the rights and freedoms of their legal guardian under the GDPR and Act no. 36/2005 Coll., on Family (hereinafter referred to as the „Family Act”), although by analogy to Article 3 of the Convention, the best interests of the child should always be protected: „*In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration*”³⁴; Article 5 of the Family Act “*the best interests of the minor shall be a primary consideration in all matters affecting him ... (c) the protection of the dignity as well as of the child’s mental, physical and emotional development ... (e) endangering the child’s development by interfering with his dignity and endangering the child’s development by interfering with the mental, physical and emotional integrity of a person who is a person close to the child*”³⁵ or Section 28, subs. 2 of the Family Act „*both parents are holders of parental responsibilities over the child as well as privileges. When carrying out parental responsibilities over the child and privileges, parents are obliged to protect the interests of the minor.*”³⁶ With regard to the provisions of Section 31 subs. 2 of the Family Act, the appointment of a children’s guardian for the purpose of protecting the child from manifestly harmful sharing of information of a private nature on the minor by the holder of parental responsibility over the child is impossible to enforce in the conditions of the Slovak Republic. Besides the Family Act there is no other special legal regulation in this respect that would provide minors with any other form of legal protection. The provision of Section 9 of the Civil Code states that „*minors have the capacity only for such legal acts which are by their nature appropriate to the mental maturity corresponding to their age*”³⁷, the provision of Section 11 of the Civil Code states that „*a natural person has the right to protect their life and health, as well as freedom, honour, dignity and privacy*”³⁸ and the provision of Section 13 subs. 1 of the Civil Code, states that „*a natural person has the right, in particular, to demand that unjustified interference with the right to the protection of his or her personality be waived, that the consequences of such interference be removed and that he or she be given adequate*

³³ FEDUSHKO, S. et al.: Development of Methods for the Strategic Management of Web Projects. In *Sustainability*, 2021, Vol. 13, No. 2:742, p. 10.

³⁴ *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. [online]. [2021-02-04]. Available at: <<https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>>.

³⁵ *Zákon č. 36/2005 Z. z. o rodine a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov*. [online]. [2021-02-04]. Available at: <<https://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2005/36/20170701>>.

³⁶ *Zákon č. 36/2005 Z. z. o rodine a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov*. [online]. [2021-02-04]. Available at: <<https://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2005/36/20170701>>.

³⁷ *Zákon č. 40/1964 Zb. Občiansky zákonník v znení neskorších predpisov*. [online]. [2021-02-05]. Available at: <<https://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/1964/40/20191201>>.

³⁸ *Zákon č. 40/1964 Zb. Občiansky zákonník v znení neskorších predpisov*. [online]. [2021-02-05]. Available at: <<https://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/1964/40/20191201>>.

*satisfaction*³⁹ – these provisions target the protection of a natural person, leaving minors without special protection against holders of parental responsibility over the child, who also act as their legal guardians under the provisions of Section 31 of the Family Act.⁴⁰

Yet another problem is the wording of Recital 18 – it is vague and fails to define the term „*personal or household activity and thus with no connection to a professional or commercial activity*“⁴¹. Thus, the term could include basically any activity that the holder of parental responsibility over the child wishes to be included. Trying to find the boundary between the minor’s privacy invasion and the exercise of parental rights is an impossible task. In terms of Recital 18, a two-stage test of the activities of the holder of parental responsibility over the child on social networks should be carried out to decide whether the activities in question are of domestic or commercial/ professional natures.⁴² The problem is unlikely to arise here as activities of holders of parental responsibilities are carried out in the household and could easily pass as activities of a private matter. The problem, however, is the second step of the test - are these activities linked to a professional or commercial activity? If we take into account the fact that social networks are a popular marketing tool, e.g. marketing, targeting and promotion of posts with a certain advertising message, posts promoting certain goods and services, it cannot be ruled out that information shared on social networks will be used for a commercial activity. Therefore, with regard to Recital 18 GDPR it can be stated that on social media, personal data are processed for commercial purposes (albeit in a secondary form). With regard to the proportionality test, the interest in protecting the privacy of minors clearly prevails over the right of the holder of parental responsibility over the child to share content on the minor on social networks. Yet, there is no protective mechanism neither in Slovak legislation nor EU’s legislation on the protection of personal data which could prevent the holder of parental responsibility over the child from sharing content on minors.

Unfortunately, the Recital 38 GDPR and Art. 8 par. 1 GDPR do little to help protect privacy of minors.⁴³ Although the legal protection described above applies in cases where the controller processes personal data of minors in connection with the provision of information society services (and in cases where we conclude that personal and domestic activity are linked to a professional or commercial activity) based on the consent granted by the holder of parental responsibility over the child (Article 6, par. 1, letter a) of the GDPR), this means very little for minors and their legal protection, at least not until they reach the age of 16. GDPR as such, similarly to its Recital 18, does not define the term „offer of information obligation services“. Depending on the specific situation the term may involve e-commerce, the use of online services, but also a user profile on a social network, including personal data sharing. When compared to international law, which deems a minor to be a person under 18, Recital 18 clearly defines a minor to be a person under age of 16. In accordance with the provisions of Art. 8 par. 1 of the GDPR, in relation to the offer of information society services directly to a child, processing of the personal data of a child shall be lawful where the child is at least 16 years old. If the child is less than 16 years old, such processing is legal only if consent was given by the parent

39 *Zákon č. 40/1964 Zb. Občiansky zákonník v znení neskorších predpisov.* [online]. [2021-02-05]. Available at: <<https://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/1964/40/20191201>>.

40 ŽULOVÁ, J.: Sociálne práva zamestnancov vykonávajúcich teleprácu. In BARANCOVÁ, H., OLŠOVSKÁ, A. (eds.): *Pracovné právo v digitálnej dobe*. Praha : Nakladateľství Leges, 2017, p. 93.

41 *Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Protection of Natural Persons with regard to the Processing of Personal Data and on the Free Movement of Such Data, and Repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation).* [online]. [2021-02-05]. Available at: <<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32016R0679&from=SK>>.

42 BUNN, A.: Children and the ‘Right to be Forgotten’: What the Right to Erasure Means for European Children, and Why Australian Children Should Be Afforded a Similar Right. In *Media International Australia*, 2019, Vol. 170, No. 1, p. 42.

43 ZIMMERLE, J., WALL, A.: What’s in a Policy? Evaluating the Privacy Policies of Children’s Apps and Websites. In *Computers in the Schools*, 2019, Vol. 36, No. 1, p. 40.

or the holder of parental responsibility over the child.⁴⁴ Apart from the setting the age limit in question, the GDPR influences the protection of the minors' right to privacy only minimally. The level of media literacy and digital competence of the minor's legal guardian will not change regardless of GDPR, as the consent of the holder of parental responsibility over the child is required until the minor reaches the age of 16. While according to Recital 18, the holder of parental responsibility over the child is not required by law to ask the minor for permission as they are entitled to evaluate the scope and nature of information shared, under Art. 8 par. 1 of the GDPR the holder of parental responsibility over the child gives consent on behalf of the minor on the basis of the same intellectual maturity and media literacy with the same thought process (in principle, Article 8, par. 1 of the GDPR brought the legal requirement „I hereby consent to the processing of personal data” wherever possible).

The legislator has not put in place any mechanism that would allow people to object to giving the consent to the provider of information obligation services. Although reference may be made to the cited provisions of the Civil Code⁴⁵ (in particular Section 9 and Section 11) their applicability is questionable. First of all, we must be aware that the provision of Section 9 of the Civil Code directly affects the implementation of legal acts by minors, which by their nature are adequate to the maturity corresponding to their age. Although we can discuss the nature of the consent to the processing of personal data, its implementation simply does not have the character of a legal act – taking into account the legal definition of the term „legal act” under the provisions of Section 34 of the Civil Code.⁴⁶ Granting consent to receiving promotional material does not entail creation, change or termination of the rights or obligations of the natural persons concerned and their legal status, neither does it have the power to change the scope of the rights or obligations. Under the Civil Code, minors are not eligible to legal acts. At the same time, however, we must also take into account the wording of Art. 8, par. 1 of the GDPR, which does not allow any other way of decision-making (or objection) until the age of 16 than the decision of the holder of parental responsibility over the child. Therefore, we must conclude (taking into account general legal principles) that if a natural person is incapable of consenting to the processing of their personal data in relation to the offer of an information society service directly to a child, such a person is not able to formally object to or reverse the decision to grant consent taken by the legal guardian. The provisions of Art. 8 par. 1 of the GDPR do not allow for the application of national regulations in this case, as there is clearly no reference to national legislation in the wording, except for the possibility of a Member State lowering the age limit for granting consent (the age limit for granting consent was not lowered in the Slovak Republic). Given this fact, the minor cannot seek judicial protection, as minors were not given such a right. The only option is to apply the provisions of Section 31 of the Family Act and appoint a children's guardian in cases where the legal guardian acts in a clear conflict with the legitimate interests of the minor.

Under Art. 8 of GDPR and given the available technology, the operator is obliged to make reasonable efforts to verify whether the holder of parental responsibility over the child has given their consent.⁴⁷ It is up to the operator to determine what measures are appropriate

⁴⁴ The set age limit also applies in the territory of the Slovak Republic. The set limit may be reduced to 13 years by decision of a Member State pursuant to Art. 8 par. 1 of the GDPR Regulation.

⁴⁵ See: KOCHAN, R.: *Súhlas so spracovaním osobných údajov dieťaťa*. [online]. [2021-02-12]. Available at: <<https://www.podnikajte.sk/zakonne-povinnosti-podnikatela/suhlas-so-spracovanim-osobnych-udajov-dietata>>.

⁴⁶ A legal act is an expression of the will aimed in particular at the creation, change or termination of those rights or obligations which are related to such an expression.

⁴⁷ AZURMENDI, A.: Children's Digital Rights and Big Data. The European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016 and the Children's Online Personal Data Protection Act (Coppa). In *El Profesional de la Información*, 2018, Vol. 27, No. 1, p. 30.

in a particular case.⁴⁸ The only way the legal protection of minors for the purpose of protecting their private identity and the general right to private and family life could be strengthened is to lower the age limit under Art. 8 par. 1 of GDPR (as in the Czech Republic). In this respect, however, we would propose an amendment to Section 9 of the Civil Code as well as Section 31 of the Family Act along with the introduction of a special mechanism for the protection of privacy of minors, e.g. introduce the right of the minor to object to the consent given by their legal guardian, provided that they will be able to independently decide on giving such a consent or authorization when reaching appropriate maturity (such as the lower age limit in Criminal Code – 14 years, Labour Code – 15 years and the like).

If we conclude that sharing of content „harmful” to the minor’s private identity could be prevented only through awareness campaigns aimed at the holders of parental responsibility over the child, the whole protection mechanism against sharenting would be based on the will of those involved.⁴⁹ Although we have tried to find court decisions which would at least marginally address the issue of protecting minors from content shared by their parents, in principle no relevant decisions have been taken in this regard. Thus, although court rulings have highlighted the need to protect the person’s privacy, personal integrity, even the right to decide whether or not one’s audiovisual image will be shared (those persons may be entitled to compensation for non-pecuniary damage due to the invasion of privacy – invasion of physical and mental integrity)⁵⁰, no increased legal protection for minors has been established. The reason is simple – the initiators were usually legal guardians (as holders of parental responsibilities over the child) who brought charges against third parties disclosing information about their privacy, including privacy of minors. In these cases, the legal protection of minors was included in the general legal protection of the natural person concerned (i.e. as secondary, not as primary).⁵¹ Many publications, some of which are also referred to in this paper, used these lawsuits as a referencing material when analysing the protection of minors and invasion of privacy of minors. However, in the light of the above, we do not agree with such subsuming. Sharenting means sharing sensitive content by the holders of parental responsibility over the child, and, therefore, the court decisions in question and conclusions they arrived at cannot be used in this context. Undoubtedly, these could be of great use in court proceedings on parental responsibility and control over the sharing of information on minors, but not for resolving the conflict between the parental rights and the invasion of the child’s privacy. The Weller case⁵² from the United Kingdom is worth noting, as it embodies the essence of increased legal protection of the privacy of minors. Minors cannot decide on their place of residence or place they are at a certain time because of their age and thus the invasion of their privacy is more severe due to the higher security risk they face compared to adults.

5. Conclusion

The legal conclusions we arrived at showed significant shortcomings in the legislation on the protection of privacy and private identity of minors. At the same time, they also pointed to the fact that the legal system absolutely lacks any consideration of the level of knowledge of holders of parental responsibility over the child in their decision-making on behalf of minors

⁴⁸ VALENTOVÁ, T., BIRNSTEIN, M., GOLAIS, J.: *GDPR / Všeobecné nariadenie o ochrane osobných údajov. Zákon o ochrane osobných údajov*. Bratislava : Wolters Kluwer, 2018, p. 75.

⁴⁹ GLIGORIJEVIC, J.: Children’s Privacy: The Role of Parental Control and Consent. In *Human Rights Law Review*, 2019, Vol. 19, No. 2, p. 215.

⁵⁰ Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights in Douglas (595/2005), Bogomolova (13812/2009), Von Hannover (40660/2008 a 60641/08), Mosley vs. News Group Newspapers Ltd (1777/2008), Reklos vs. Greece (1234/05).

⁵¹ Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights in Couderc v France Application (40454/07).

⁵² Weller v Associated Newspapers Ltd [2015] EWCA Civ 1176.

or when sharing content that might have a negative impact on the right to privacy of minors. Insufficient media literacy (education) and digital competence of these persons will clearly lead to a deterioration of the protection of the rights and legally protected interests of minors in the future. With regard to the above issues, a solution to improve the awareness of holders of parental responsibility over the child about their responsibility to protect the privacy of minors will therefore be of key importance. The only currently available solution appears to be self-regulation.

In an effort to find a mechanism that would contribute to reducing the negative consequences of sharenting in society, we would like to emphasize in particular the need for activities that would educate people in this regard. In this context, opinion-forming media must start a public debate on the pitfalls of the Internet, especially on the third party's right to privacy. These efforts can be complemented by the mass distribution of promotional and educational materials to teachers and parents of schoolchildren, in leisure centres, community centres and the like. The aim of the leaflets, brochures and posters in question should not only be to educate but also to provide basic legal advice on what to do if a person finds out that information on minors has been misused on the Internet. Information campaigns are a great way to disseminate information among people who might feel embarrassed talking about the topic. Many parents mistakenly believe that if they prevent the child from using social media this issue does not affect them. Unfortunately, they forget about their own actions - they exchange information with friends on social networks. By doing so, they may significantly jeopardize the healthy emotional and social development of the minor in the future. With regard to the sharing of text, visual, audio or audiovisual recordings showing the activities of children and young people, it is necessary that parents regularly check the privacy settings of the profile set up on the digital platform. The privacy settings of individual photo albums and other folders with files containing data on minors also require extra attention.

Artificial intelligence offers a great opportunity to protect the privacy of minors on social media. Thanks to the automatic face recognition, software is able to identify (relatively accurately) whether a photo or video features a child and then alert the author to consider the range of potential recipients and potential security risks. The convenient solution could be software which would be able to suggest a specific circle of persons to whom the content would be displayed based on the previous categorization of social media profiles. When sharing possibly sensitive content about children on the Internet, it is also important to avoid using different hashtags, which by default help categorize the published content and facilitate the search. This is especially undesirable when it comes to sharing of content that is perceived by others as very intimate (e.g. #bathing, #potty, etc.). At the same time, it is necessary to prevent sharing of information which would disclose the location of the minor or reveal how they spend their free time. Finally, it makes sense to warn close friends and extended family not to share or disclose information about the minor without the prior consent of the legal guardian. In addition, Internet users should regularly enter their and their child's name into an Internet search engine to find out what personal information is available to other Internet users.

The possible consequences of uncontrolled dissemination of the content through social media must also be carefully considered. In the case of theft of personal data of the minor, the problem might last much longer than it would for adults. We usually learn about the abuse of the child's identity only a few years later, when this person has already grown up and became a regular user of social media. In addition, the parent must take into account the possible mental issues the minor might develop in the future due to the personal nature of the information made available to other members of the Internet community. In no way should content shared point to the minor's vulnerabilities. Prior to sharing any material about their children on social media, if circumstances allow, parents should consult the minor, explain to them the principles of public information sharing and accept their views, especially if they express a negative attitude so that they are not denied the right to privacy. Sharing photos which do not disclose the minor's face

(and thus make identification almost impossible) seem to be a good compromise, although it might not work in every situation. It is important to realize that the practically unlimited availability of electronic information sources at any time and anywhere may influence the opinion (or decision-making process) of persons who have come into contact with the material in question by accident and might interpret it in their own way.

Acknowledgement: The research was supported by the Scientific Grant Agency of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic and the Slovak Academy of Sciences (VEGA, No. 1/0458/21) under the project entitled „Management of the „groundswell” concept by business entities in promotion of environmentally-friendly products in times of technology interference”.

Bibliography and sources

AZURMENDI, A.: Children’s Digital Rights and Big Data. The European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016 and the Children’s Online Personal Data Protection Act (Coppa). In *El Profesional de la Información*, 2018, Vol. 27, No. 1, p. 27-35. ISSN 1699-2407.

BARNES, R., POTTER, A.: *Sharenting and Parents’ Digital Literacy: An Agenda for Future Research*. [online]. [2021-02-05]. Available at: <<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/22041451.2020.1847819>>.

BESSANT, C.: Sharenting: Balancing the Conflicting Rights of Parents and Children. In *Communications Law*, 2018, Vol. 23, No. 1, p. 7-24. ISSN 1746-7616.

BUNN, A.: Children and the ‘Right to be Forgotten’ What the Right to Erasure Means for European Children, and Why Australian Children Should Be Afforded a Similar Right. In *Media International Australia*, 2019, Vol. 170, No. 1, p. 37-46. ISSN 1329-878X.

CIMKE, S., GURKAN, D. Y., POLAT, S.: Child Rights Neglect in Social Media: Sharenting. In *Guncel Pediatri – Journal of Current Pediatrics*, 2018, Vol. 16, No. 2, p. 261-267. ISSN 1304-9054.

CINO, D., DEMOZZI, S., SUBRAHMANYAM, K.: Why Post More Pictures if No One is Looking at Them? Parents’ Perception of the Facebook Like in Sharenting. In *The Communication Review*, 2020, Vol. 23, No. 2, p. 122-144. ISSN 1071-4421.

Convention on the Rights of the Child. [online]. [2021-02-04]. Available at: <<https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>>.

Digital in 2020: Global Digital Overview. [online]. [2021-01-20]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/digital-2020>>.

Digital in 2020: Slovakia. [online]. [2021-01-20]. Available at: <<https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2020-slovakia>>.

DONOVAN, S.: Sharenting: The Forgotten Children of the GDPR. In *Peace Human Rights Governance*, 2020, Vol. 4, No. 1, p. 35-59. ISSN 2532-649X.

FEDUSHKO, S. et al.: Development of Methods for the Strategic Management of Web Projects. In *Sustainability*, 2021, Vol. 13, No. 2:742, p. 1-18. ISSN 2071-1050.

FOX, A. K., HOY, M. G.: Smart Devices, Smart Decisions? Implications of Parents’ Sharenting for Children’s Online Privacy: An Investigation of Mothers. In *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 2019, Vol. 38, No. 4, p. 414-432. ISSN 0743-9156.

GEDDES, L.: Avoid Over-sharenting. In *New Scientist*, 2019, Vol. 242, No. 3224, p. 24-25. ISSN 0262-4079.

General Comment No. 13. Article 19: The Right of the Child to the Freedom from all Forms of Violence. [online]. [2021-02-04]. Available at: <<https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/library/general-comment-no-13-article-19-right-child-freedom-all-forms-violence>>.

GLIGORIJEVIC, J.: Children’s Privacy: The Role of Parental Control and Consent. In *Human Rights Law Review*, 2019, Vol. 19, No. 2, p. 201-229. ISSN 1461-7781.

- HALEY, K.: Sharenting and the (Potential) Right to Be Forgotten. In *Indiana Law Journal*, 2020, Vol. 95, No. 3, p. 1005-1020. ISSN 0019-6665.
- HINOJO-LUCENA, F. J. et al.: Sharenting: Internet Addiction, Self-control and Online Photos of Underage Children. In *Comunicar*, 2020, Vol. 28, No. 64, p. 97-108. ISSN 1134-3478.
- HITKA, M. et al.: Knowledge and Human Capital as Sustainable Competitive Advantage in Human Resource Management. In *Sustainability*, 2019, Vol. 11, No. 18:4985, p. 1-18. ISSN 2071-1050.
- HLADÍKOVÁ, V.: Mobbing And Cybermobbing: Risk Aspects Of (Digital) Communication In The Workplace And Possibilities Of Legislative And Non-Legislative Protection Under The Conditions Of The Slovak Republic. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2020, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 88-108, ISSN 2585-8726.
- KOCHAN, R.: Súhlas so spracovaním osobných údajov dieťaťa. [online]. [2021-02-12]. Available at: <<https://www.podnikajte.sk/zakonne-povinnosti-podnikatela/suhlas-so-spracovanim-osobnych-udajov-dietata>>.
- KOPECKY, K. et al.: The Phenomenon of Sharenting and Its Risks in the Online Environment. Experiences from Czech Republic and Spain. In *Children and Youth Services Review*, 2020, Vol. 110, Art. No. 104812, p. 1-6. ISSN 0190-7409.
- KUPEC, V.: Marketing Information and its Impact on Generation Z. In PETRANOVÁ, D., MAGÁL, S. (eds.): *Megatrends and Media: Media Future*. Trnava : University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, 2017, p. 264-278.
- LIVINGSTONE, S.: Children: A Special Case for Privacy? In *Intermedia*, 2018, Vol. 46, No. 2, p. 18-23. ISSN 0309-118X.
- LIŽBETINOVÁ, L. et al.: The Approach of SMEs to Using the Customer Databases and CRM: Empirical Study in the Slovak Republic. In *Sustainability*, 2020, Vol. 12, No. 1:227, p. 1-21. ISSN 2071-1050.
- MARASLI, M. et al.: Parents' Shares on Social Networking Sites About their Children: Sharenting. In *The Anthropologist: International Journal of Contemporary and Applied Studies of Man*, 2016, Vol. 24, No. 2, p. 399-406. ISSN 0972-0073.
- Parents, Privacy & Technology Use*. [online]. [2021-01-28]. Available at: <http://fosi-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/Full_Report--Web.pdf>.
- RANZINI, G., NEWLANDS, G. E., LUTZ, C.: Sharenting, Peer Influence, and Privacy Concerns: A Study on the Instagram-Sharing Behaviors of Parents in the United Kingdom. In *Social Media + Society*, 2020, Vol. 6, No. 4, p. 1-13. ISSN 2056-3051.
- Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Protection of Natural Persons with regard to the Processing of Personal Data and on the Free Movement of Such Data, and Repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation)*. [online]. [2021-02-05]. Available at: <<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32016R0679&from=SK>>.
- Sharenting v prostredí sociálnych sietí*. [online]. [2021-02-02]. Available at: <<https://nezdielam.sk>>.
- SIIBAK, A., TRAKS, K.: The Dark Sides of Sharenting. In *Catalan Journal of Communication & Cultural Studies*, 2019, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 115-121. ISSN 1757-1898.
- UNLU, D. G., MORVA, O.: Whose Information Should Be Shared with Whom? Parents' Awareness of Children's Digital Privacy in Turkey. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2020, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 109-124. ISSN 2585-8726.
- VALENTOVÁ, T., BIRNSTEIN, M., GOLAIS, J.: *GDPR / Všeobecné nariadenie o ochrane osobných údajov. Zákon o ochrane osobných údajov*. Bratislava : Wolters Kluwer, 2018.
- VRABEC, N., BŔOTOŠOVÁ, Ľ.: The Concept of Learning-by-doing in the Context of Media Education and School Quality Assessment. In *Communication Today*, 2020, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 140-148. ISSN 1338-130X.
- Zákon č. 36/2005 Z. z. o rodine a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov*. [online]. [2021-02-04]. Available at: <<https://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2005/36/20170701>>.

Zákon č. 40/1964 Zb. Občiansky zákonník v znení neskorších predpisov. [online]. [2021-02-05]. Available at: <<https://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/1964/40/20191201>>.

ZIMMERLE, J., WALL, A.: What's in a Policy? Evaluating the Privacy Policies of Children's Apps and Websites. In *Computers in the Schools*, 2019, Vol. 36, No. 1, p. 38-47. ISSN 0738-0569.

ŽULOVÁ, J.: Sociálne práva zamestnancov vykonávajúcich teleprácu. In BARANCOVÁ, H., OLŠOVSKÁ, A. (eds.): *Pracovné právo v digitálnej dobe*. Praha : Nakladateľství Leges, 2017, p. 87-102.

ŽULOVÁ, J., KUNDRÁT, I.: Service of Documents in the Context of Employment During Employee Quarantine. In *Central European Journal of Labour Law and Personnel Management*, 2020, Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 77-88. ISSN 2644-4917.

Authors



Ing. Zuzana Bezáková, PhD.

University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava
Faculty of Mass Media Communication
Námestie J. Herdu 2
917 01 Trnava
SLOVAK REPUBLIC
zuzana.bezakova@ucm.sk

Zuzana Bezáková completed her doctoral studies at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication of the University of St. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, where she now works as a lecturer. In her work, she focuses on company management and marketing, in particular eco-innovations, use of digital communication platforms in business activities as well as in other areas such as the non-profit sector, art or religion. She is a member of the editorial board of the magazine *Communication Today* and also of the Academic Senate of the Faculty of Mass Media Communication of the University of St. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava. As a member of the organizing committee, Mrs. Bezáková annually organizes the international scientific conference *Marketing Identity*.

PhDr. Adam Madleňák, PhD., MBA

University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava
Faculty of Mass Media Communication
Námestie J. Herdu 2
917 01 Trnava
SLOVAK REPUBLIC
adam.madlenak@ucm.sk



Adam Madleňák works as a lecturer at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication of the University of St. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava. In his scientific activities, he focuses mainly on the area of project and innovation management in small and medium-sized enterprises and human resources management, in particular the integration of communication tools to raise the awareness of products and services of business entities at the international level. He is a Vice President of the Occupational Safety and Health Independent Institute and Secretary of the Scientific Board of Wolters Kluwer for Marketing Communications.



Assoc. Prof. JUDr. Marek Švec, PhD., LL.M.

Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica
Faculty of Law
Komenského 20
974 01 Banská Bystrica
SLOVAK REPUBLIC
msvec@umb.sk

Marek Švec works as an associate professor at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication of the University of St. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava and the Faculty of Law of the Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica. He is the author and co-author of a large number of scientific papers in the field of labour law and personnel management, as well as personal data protection. He is a Secretary of the Scientific Board of Wolters Kluwer SR, s. r. o., for labour law. Mr. Švec is also a member of the Scientific Board of the Faculty of Law of the Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica and the Scientific Board of the Faculty of Mass Media Communication of the University of St. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava. Mr. Švec is a lawyer and also holds a position of the Secretary General of the Board of the Labour Law Association (and is also the Association's member).

Emre Ş. Aslan, Çağatay Demirel

The Slogan Effect: The Power Of Brand Discourse In Liking And Purchasing Behaviour

ABSTRACT

Discourses have been a determiner effect through human history. However, only with the development of communication technologies and globalization of trade the strategic importance of discourse has increased. Especially establishments comprehending the importance of branding have been searching for a strong discourse. The most effective and catchy of those discourses are called slogans. Slogans present the power of brand discourse while determining the superiority of the brand in commercial wars. Especially global brands are aware of the powerful effect of slogans. Based on this awareness, while they conduct their communication efforts, they endeavour to have strong slogans. When the literature is inspected it is seen that there are not enough studies regarding slogans which have a strong effect on both commercial and social life. This study is conducted both with the aim of satisfying this need and revealing the power of brand discourse in liking and purchasing behavior. Within this aim, an experimental study is applied, and it is tried to measure the effect of slogan liking to slogan purchasing behaviour, brand liking, brand purchasing behaviour, brand and slogan relationship liking and purchasing behaviour. In this study, a quantitative research method is applied, and the data is collected through questionnaires; the gathered data were analyzed in terms of frequency, regression and correlation. According to the results slogan liking greatly affects all the variables presented in the research model. Thus, it is concluded that brand discourse has a very powerful effect.

KEY WORDS

Slogan Effects. Brand Discourse. Brand Liking. Brand Purchasing Behaviour. Slogan Liking. Slogan Purchasing Behaviour.

Introduction

Even though, as in all communication activities, the purpose of brand representing advertisements is to get the products sold¹ focusing only on sales is not preferable for brand management. Brands also pursue the goal of creating image and reputation, positioning and creating awareness; and in order to reach these goals they make use of the power of discourse. However, it is not always possible to design the discourse in a way that achieves the desired results. According to David Hume² it is difficult to distinguish the factors that make a person's speech pleasant and amusing from the factors that make a person's speech uninspired and dull. A similar situation is possible for brands as well. Some brand discourses are perceived as appealing and effective while some other brands have discourses that are repellent and passive. In order to exhibit an effective discourse, brands pay millions of dollars to agencies. Especially, finding the slogan that constitutes the core of the brand discourse is seen as a crucial stage of building the brand reality. This study aims to reveal the power of brand discourse through slogans. According to the results of a regression analysis conducted with this aim slogan liking determines purchasing preference, brand liking, brand purchasing preference, brand + slogan liking and brand + slogan purchasing preference.

1. Brand discourse

Our world is in a constant „birthing state.”³ In such an eternity concept objects, images, symbols, communicational and rhetoric structures⁴ among global elements⁵ becoming a floating quality⁶ makes it possible for a „world” full of meanings to be produced/built. Hence, intangible creatures like brands⁷ can design and build the way we recognize the world with communicational and symbolic factors they include.

Even though brand is defined as, names, mark, symbol or a combination used in order to define a sellers' or a group of sellers' goods and services and to differentiate these goods and services from its competitors⁸ in fact it has the characteristics of deeper and more meaningful messages.⁹ In other words just like the greatness of the waves created by a stone thrown into the water,¹⁰ a brand can have a growing space in a person's mind and heart¹¹ and a foundation that gives pleasure makes us feel stronger¹². However, the thing we call „brand” should move people's feelings out of monotony and open their minds¹³ and should stir the most basic instincts.¹⁴

¹ WERNICK, A.: *Promosyon Kültürü: Reklam, İdeoloji ve Sembolik Anlatım*. Ankara : Science and Art Publications, 1996, p. 49.

² HUME, D.: *İnsan Doğası Üzerine Bir İnceleme*. Second Edition. Ankara : Bilgesu Publishing, 2015, p. 405.

³ BAUMAN, Z.: *Yaşam Sanatı*. İstanbul : Ayrıntı Publications, 2017a, p. 63.

⁴ GOODCHILD, P.: *Deleuze ve Guattari; Arzu Politikasına Giriş*. İstanbul : Ayrıntı Publications, 2005, p. 16.

⁵ RICEOUR, P.: *Yorum Teorisi; Söylem ve Artı Anlam*. İstanbul : Paradigma Publishing, 2007, p. 82.

⁶ BOCOCK, R.: *Tüketim*. Ankara : Dost Kitapevi Publications, 2014, p. 18.

⁷ ROLL, M.: *Asya'da Marka Stratejisi: Asya, Nasıl Güçlü Markalar Yaratır?*. İstanbul : Brandage Publications, 2011, p. 43.

⁸ DAVID, A. A.: *Managing Brand Equity*. New York : The Free Press, 1991, p. 21.; BATEY, M.: *Brand Meaning*. New York : Routledge, 2008, p. 3.; DE CHERNATONY, L., RILEY, D. F.: The chasm between managers' and consumers' views of brands: the experts' perspectives. In *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 1997, Vol. 5, p. 90.; KOTLER, P., KELLER L. K.: *Marketing Management*. New Jearsey : Pearson Education, 2006, p. 27.; KEVIN, L. K.: Conceptualizing, Measuring, and Managing Customer-Based Brand Equity. In *Journal of Marketing*, 1993, Vol. 57, p. 2.

⁹ KLEIN, N.: *No Logo: Küresel Markalar Hedef Tahtasında*. Ankara : Bilgi Publications, 2012, p. 50.

¹⁰ KRACAUER, S.: *Kitle Süsü*. İstanbul : Metis Publications, 2011, p. 114.

¹¹ TOSUN, N.: *Marka Yönetimi*. İstanbul : Beta Publishing, 2014, p. 82.

¹² BAUMAN, Z.: *Azınlığın Zenginliği Hepimizin Çıkarına Mıdır?*. İstanbul: Ayrıntı Publications, 2017b, p. 44.

¹³ BRUCE, D., DAVID, H.: *Marka Bilmecesi*. İstanbul : Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Publications, 2010, p. 72.

¹⁴ ÇEBİ, M. S.: Sembolik/Retoriksel Bir Eylem Olarak Dil'in Anlam İnşasındaki Aracılık İşlevi. In *Selçuk İletişim*, 2008, Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 194.

The age we live in is full of an eternal quality of lust and desires.¹⁵ At the dawn of such an era, based on the reality that humans are filled with „evil desires” from head to toe¹⁶ brands need strong discourses in order to reach out to customers and pin the messages they create to the customers’ minds.¹⁷ This is because a strong discourse exhibits patterns of pleasure and desire,¹⁸ reaches out to them and presents them the key to look at the world from a different perspective.¹⁹ However, a strong discourse can exist based on the language, which has a world of itself, unique power of symbolization.²⁰

Language is without a doubt a treasure of lexis and meaning.²¹ Thanks to its never-ending eloquence²² it can make the unknown known and the unseen seen. In fact, language is like a lamp that sets light to²³ the depths under surface (meaning, interpretation etc.)²⁴ with the magical power it holds.²⁵ Similarly, discourse that is based on such a power can assist in unveiling the mystery of objects and the concepts world²⁶ by making use of gaps in the language.²⁷ In other words, discourse plays a part in enlightening the picture in which our world is interbedded with meanings, messages, metaphors, images and representations.²⁸

Here in the here and world we live in wherever we look,²⁹ we witness the presence of discourses that whisper us how to live our lives, what can we do, what do we perceive and how to interpret it.³⁰ With such a power, discourse can build a message in people’s minds while saving individuals from „the prison of senses.”³¹ Hence, in an environment where our planet produces chunks-full of discourses that are independent from each other every minute and every second³², brands use discourses that are „fast like a bullet out of a gun and remarkable.”³³ This is because, based on the fact that competition is now global, differentiating products is almost impossible,³⁴ and everyday thousands of messages are potentially competing with each other,³⁵ brands can only revive minds and motivate individuals with strong discourses they create.³⁶

¹⁵ EAGLETON, T.: *Hayatın Anlamı*. İstanbul : Ayrıntı Publications, 2015, p. 75.

¹⁶ BAUMAN, Z.: *Yaşam Sanatı*. İstanbul : Ayrıntı Publications, 2017a, p. 82.

¹⁷ RIES, A., TROUT, J.: *Konumlandırma: Tüketici Zihnini Fethetme Savaşı*. İstanbul : MediaCat Publishing, 2019, p. 38.

¹⁸ FOUCAULT, M.: *Söylemin Düzeni*. İstanbul : Hil Publications, 1987, p. 24.

¹⁹ BURR, V.: *Sosyal İnşacılık*. 2nd Edition. Ankara : Nobel Book, 2012, p. 72.

²⁰ RICEOUR, P.: *Yorum Teorisi; Söylem ve Artı Anlam*. İstanbul : Paradigma Publishing, 2007, p. 105.; ZILLIOĞLU, M.: *İletişim Nedir?*. İzmir : Cem Publications, 2018, p. 113.

²¹ ÇEBİ, M. S.: Sembolik/Retoriksel Bir Eylem Olarak Dil’in Anlam İnşasındaki Aracılık İşlevi. In *Seçuk İletişim*, 2008, Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 194.

²² LEFEBVRE, H.: *Modern Dünyada Gündelik Hayat*. İstanbul : Metis Publications, 2016, p. 13.

²³ BAUMAN, Z.: *Hermenötik ve Sosyal Bilimler*. İstanbul : Ayrıntı Publications, 2017c, p. 286.

²⁴ EAGLETON, T.: *Hayatın Anlamı*. İstanbul : Ayrıntı Publications, 2015, p. 30.

²⁵ CAREY, J. W.: Harold Adams Innis and Marshall McLuhan. In *The Antioch Review*, 1967, Vol. 27, No. 1, p. 10.

²⁶ ZILLIOĞLU, M.: *İletişim Nedir?*. İzmir : Cem Yayınları, 2018, p. 113.

²⁷ LEFEBVRE, H.: *Modern Dünyada Gündelik Hayat*. İstanbul : Metis Publications, 2016, p. 15.

²⁸ BURR, V.: *Sosyal İnşacılık*. 2nd Edition. Ankara : Nobel Book, 2012, p. 64.

²⁹ SCHOPENHAUER, A.: *Hayatın Anlamı*. İstanbul : Say Publications, 2010, p. 13.

³⁰ BURR, V.: *Sosyal İnşacılık*. 2nd Edition. Ankara : Nobel Book, 2012, p. 75.

³¹ EAGLETON, T.: *Kültür Yorumları*. İstanbul : Ayrıntı Publications, 2011, p. 116.

³² BAUMAN, Z.: *İskarta Hayatlar: Modernite ve Safraları*. İstanbul : Can Publications, 2018, p. 85.

³³ BOND J., KIRSHENBAUM, R.: *Radar Altı İletişim: Günümüzün Kuşuklu Tüketicisine Ulaşma Yolları*. İstanbul : MediaCat Publishing, 2004, p. 65.

³⁴ ROLL, M.: *Asya’da Marka Stratejisi: Asya, Nasıl Güçlü Markalar Yaratır?*. İstanbul : Brandage Publications, 2011, p. 19.

³⁵ RIES, A., TROUT, J.: *Konumlandırma: Tüketici Zihnini Fethetme Savaşı*. İstanbul : MediaCat Publishing, 2019, p. 32.

³⁶ BRUCE, D., DAVID, H.: *Marka Bilmecesi*, İstanbul : Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Publication, 2010, p. 77.

As a result, the golden rule for untangling consumers' minds and leave a mark on their memories³⁷ is to create a strong brand discourse. It is only possible for today's consumers to go adrift in the magical dream of consumption who are waiting hypnotized for new and desirable things³⁸ with strong brand discourses.

2. Slogan effect

With its limit and time exceeding structure our planet has almost always been and will be a supporter of the thoughts and actions of humankind.³⁹ Our world, which is a field of meanings,⁴⁰ can provide this support by creating intention and meaning. On the other hand, meanings enable individuals to understand/make meaning of an object or situation.⁴¹ Moreover, sometimes an individual can be designated a specific lifestyle or life orbit.⁴² As you see, one of the lexical concepts that has such power and effect are without a doubt *slogans*.

Among the modern society of the modern age individuals are almost all the time bombarded with messages of advertisements.⁴³ The final aim is of course creating a „*feeling*“⁴⁴, an idea in consumers' minds and to affect their purchasing intentions and behaviour. Surely the best way to make the consumers act in such and intention or as Feyerabend⁴⁵ states „*imposing or selling them with a meaningful worldview*“ is possible with slogans. Even though the literature on slogans is limited⁴⁶ it is possible to list the ideas of the definition of „*slogan*“ with Table 1 below:

Writer(s)	Definition
Keller, 2013: 158; Gali et al., 2017: 243; Supphellen and Nygaardsvik, 2002: 386	„ <i>Slogans are short statements that give explanatory or persuasive information of the brand.</i> “ ⁴⁴⁷
Dass et al., 2014: 2504	„ <i>Slogans are short and memorable statements that often used to sign advertisements.</i> “ ⁴⁴⁸

³⁷ KEVIN, L. K.: Conceptualizing, Measuring, and Managing Customer-Based Brand Equity. In *Journal of Marketing*, 1993, Vol. 57, p. 3.

³⁸ BAUMAN, Z.: *Küreselleşme; Toplumsal Sonuçları*. İstanbul : Ayrıntı Publications, 2016, p. 97.; RITZER, G.: *Büyüsü Bozulmuş Dünyayı Büyülemek*. İstanbul : Ayrıntı Publications, 2016, p. 121.

³⁹ RIES, A., TROUT, J.: *Konumlandırma: Tüketici Zihnini Fethetme Savaşı*. İstanbul : MediaCat Publishing, 2019, p. 217.

⁴⁰ BAUMAN, Z.: *Postmodern Etik*. İstanbul : Ayrıntı Publications, 2011, p. 110.

⁴¹ SOYDAŞ, N.: *#İletişim Bence; Dumandan (#) Hastag'e İletişim*. İstanbul : İnkılâp Publications, 2018, p. 52.

⁴² BAUMAN, Z.: *Azınlığın Zenginliği Hepimizin Çıkarına Mıdır?*. İstanbul : Ayrıntı Publications, 2017b, p. 26.

⁴³ HUANG, S., LİN, L.: Awareness Effects of the Tourism Slogans of Ten Destinations in Asia. In *Journal of China Tourism Research*, 2017, Vol. 13, No. 4, p. 376.

⁴⁴ KLEIN, N.: *No Logo: Küresel Markalar Hedef Tahtasında*. Ankara : Bilgi Publications, 2012, p. 30.

⁴⁵ FEYERABEND, P.: *Akla Veda*. İstanbul : Ayrıntı Publications, 2012, p. 22.

⁴⁶ DASS, M. et al.: A study of the antecedents of slogan liking. In *Journal of Business Research*, 2014, Vol. 67, No. 12, p. 2504.

⁴⁷ KELLER L. K.: *Strategic Brand Management: Building, Measuring, and Managing Brand Equity*. 4th Edition. New Jersey : Pearson Education, 2013, p. 158.; GALİ, N. et al.: Analysing tourism slogans in top tourism destinations. In *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 2017, Vol. 6, No. 3, p. 243.; SUPPHELLEN, M., NYGAARDSVIK, I.: Testing country brand slogans: Conceptual development and empirical illustration of a simple normative model. In *Journal of Brand Management*, 2002, Vol. 9, No. 4, p. 386.

⁴⁸ DASS, M. et al.: A study of the antecedents of slogan liking. In *Journal of Business Research*, 2014, Vol. 67, No. 12, p. 2504.

Kotler and Keller, 2006: 283; Gali et al., 2017: 243; Kohli et al., 2007: 416	„Slogans are beneficial ‘hooks’ or ‘handles’ that help customers understand what the brand is and what makes it special.” ⁴⁹
Laran et al., 2011: 1000	„Slogans are a part of persuasive attractiveness that is designed to convey a good thing or remind the customer the features of a brand.” ⁵⁰

TABLE 1: Definitions of the term „slogan”

Source: own processing, 2021

Based on the definitions given above it is possible to define slogan as; short, memorable, explanatory, beneficial and persuasive messages that are designed to persuade and guide the target population, and to give information regarding the features and the promises of the brand.

Slogan can stir a person’s desires and needs⁵¹ as well as making it possible for the individual to connect with the brand.⁵² In other words, it helps the individual differentiate a familiar brand from an unfamiliar one.⁵³ For instance, many slogans like „Just Do It” by Nike, „The Ultimate Driving Machine” by BMW, „Save Money. Live Better” by Walmart,⁵⁴ „The best a man can get” by Gillette,⁵⁵ „Peace at Home Peace in the World” create mental associations and makes an individual remember that a name is a brand.⁵⁶

Today, brands spend millions of dollars on slogan development and advertising activities in order to get inside the mind of customers.⁵⁷ In an environment where brands are in brisk competition to get into minds and transfer their messages,⁵⁸ the real aim is to be in first place in people’s minds.⁵⁹ For certain a slogan cannot be created randomly. In the process of slogan finding and as a part of „message engineering”⁶⁰ planning and analyses are needed.⁶¹ Only as a result of such a process, slogans that stir individuals’ feelings and inspire them can be created.⁶² Otherwise, a slogan has no difference from a simple discourse. A slogan states the foundation of the message that the

⁴⁹ KOTLER, P., KELLER, L. K.: *Marketing Management*. New Jearsey : Pearson Education, 2006, p. 283.; GALÍ, N. et al.: Analysing tourism slogans in top tourism destinations. In *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 2017, Vol. 6, No. 3, p. 243.; KOHLI, C. et al.: Got Slogan? Guidelines For Creating Effective Slogans. In *Business Horizons*, 2007, Vol. 50, p. 416.

⁵⁰ LARAN, J. et al.: The Curious Case of Behavioral Backlash: Why Brands Produce Priming Effects and Slogans Produce Reverse Priming Effects. In *Journal of Consumer Research*, 2011, Vol. 37, No. 6, p. 1000.

⁵¹ D’ONOFRIO, P.: The language of the Advertising Slogan. In *Communicatio: South African Journal for Communication Theory and Research*, 1981, Vol. 7, No. 2, p. 11.

⁵² PIKE, S.: Destination brand positioning slogans – towards the development of a set of accountability criteria. In *Acta Turistica*, 2004, Vol. 16, No. 2, p. 116.; BRIGGS, E., JANAKIRAMAN, N.: Slogan recall effects on marketplace behaviors: The roles of external search and brand assessment. In *Journal of Business Research*, 2017, Vol. 80, p. 100.

⁵³ KEVIN, L. K.: Conceptualizing, Measuring, and Managing Customer-Based Brand Equity. In *Journal of Marketing*, 1993, Vol. 57, p. 9; ESCH, F. et al.: Brands on the brain: Do consumers use declarative information or experienced emotions to evaluate brands?. In *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 2012, Vol. 22, No. 1, p. 76. Please write in concrete cited page

⁵⁴ See also: KELLER L. K.: *Strategic Brand Management: Building, Measuring, and Managing Brand Equity*. 4th Edition. New Jersey : Pearson Education, 2013.

⁵⁵ See also: BATEY, M.: *Brand Meaning*. New York : Routledge, 2008.

⁵⁶ TOSUN, N. B.: *Marka Yönetimi*. İstanbul : Beta Publishing, 2010, p. 25.

⁵⁷ DASS, M. et al.: A study of the antecedents of slogan liking. In *Journal of Business Research*, 2014, Vol. 67, No. 12, p. 2504.

⁵⁸ GRAHAME R. D., BORIS, K.: Computer-Aided Content Analysis: What Do 240 Advertising Slogans Have in Common?. In *Marketing Letters*, 1996, Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 74.

⁵⁹ RIES, A., TROUT, J.: *Konumlandırma: Tüketici Zihnini Fethetme Savaşı*. İstanbul : MediaCat Publishing, 2019, p. 40.

⁶⁰ GRAHAME R. D., BORIS, K.: Computer-Aided Content Analysis: What Do 240 Advertising Slogans Have in Common?. In *Marketing Letters*, 1996, Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 64.

⁶¹ MOHAMMED, R. A. et al.: *Internet Marketing: Building Advantage in A Networked Economy*. 2nd Edition (International Edition). New York : McGraw-Hill Education, 2003, p. 367.

⁶² BRUCE, D., DAVID, H.: *Marka Bilmececi*. İstanbul : Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Publications, 2010, p. 83.

brand really intends to send to target population. A slogan has the power of reflecting a range of meanings with a short statement such as placing the brand and announcing its promise, reflecting personal features and creating awareness. With the discourse power it holds, a slogan can direct minds as well as recreating reality and creating new worlds of meanings. In this way it ensures that a brand is desired, a war is started or ended, and a mass movement is born or ended. The slogan of the French Revolution (liberty, equality, fraternity), the slogan for Turkey's fight for independence (armies your first goal is the Mediterranean, forward!), the slogan for Volkswagen (Think small), the slogan for Nike (Just do it) can be counted as examples that created important effects in history.

Without a doubt, slogans are an effective way of conveying the customers a good thing, stirring their minds⁶³ or suggesting an opinion.⁶⁴ Based on this reality, brands, through slogans, actually try to hold a place in minds and hearts and change behaviours, while creating an emotional bond with customers by talking to them.⁶⁵ The ultimate result of holding a place in minds and hearts is a customer purchasing a brand and taking it home with the created brand „perception.“⁶⁶ Thereby, the emotional connection that the customer bonds with the brand through slogans strengthens the belief that the brand is preferred more and bought more.⁶⁷

2.1 Studies on Slogans

Even though the literature regarding slogans is limited there are many studies in the field. Moreover, it is seen that a huge part of these studies focuses on the concept of slogans. In this study, it is believed to be beneficial for the field to explain the studies conducted on slogans with a typology. Thus, it is aimed to reveal the originality of this research. In this context the data gathered as a result of the literature review conducted is shown in the table below (Table 2).

No	Name of the study	Author(s)	Type	Publication Date	Publisher / Institution
1	A Study of The Antecedents Of Slogan Liking	Mayukh Dass, Chiranjeev Kohli, Piyush Kumar, Sunil Thomas	Article	2014	Journal of Business Research, 67(12), 2504-2511.
2	Awareness Effects of the Tourism Slogans of Ten Destinations in Asia	Shu-Chun Lucy Huang, Li-Pin Lynn Lin	Article	2017	Journal of China Tourism Research, 13(4), 375-387.
3	Slogan recall effects on marketplace behaviours: The roles of external search and brand assessment	Elten Briggs, Narayan Janakiraman	Article	2017	Journal of Business Research, 80, 98-105.
4	Got Slogan? Guidelines for Creating Effective Slogans	Chiranjeev Kohli, Lance Leuthesser, and Rajneesh Suri	Article	2007	Business Horizons, 50, 415-422.

⁶³ DIMOFTE, V. C., YALCH, F. R.: Consumer Response to Polysemous Brand Slogans. In *Journal of Consumer Research*, 2007, Vol. 33, No. 4, p. 515-522.; ROSENGREN, S., DAHLÉN, M.: Brands Affect Slogans Affect Brands? Competitive Interference, Brand Equity And The Brand-Slogan Link. In *Journal of Brand Management*, 2005, Vol. 12, No. 3, p. 264.

⁶⁴ HOFFER, E.: *Kesin İnançlılar*. İstanbul : Olvido Kitap Publishing, 2019, p. 134.

⁶⁵ CHENG, Y. et al.: Using Recognition of Emotions in Speech to Better Understand Brand Slogans. In *IEEE Workshop on Multimedia Signal Processing*, Victoria, BC : IEEE, 2006, p. 238.

⁶⁶ BOND J., KIRSHENBAUM, R.: *Radar Altı İletişim: Günümüzün Kuşkulu Tüketicisine Ulaşma Yolları*. İstanbul : MediaCat Publishing, 2004, p. 116.

⁶⁷ SMITH E. R. et al.: The Impact Of Advertising Creativity On The Hierarchy Of Effects. In *Journal of Advertising*, 2008, Vol. 37, No. 4, p. 47-48.

5	Brands Affect Slogans Affect Brands? Competitive Interference, Brand Equity and The Brand-Slogan Link	Micael Dahlén, Sara Rosengren	Article	2005	Journal of Brand Management, 12(3), 151–164.
6	Using Recognition of Emotions in Speech to Better Understand Brand Slogans	Yun-Maw Cheng, Yue-Sun Kuo, Jun-Heng Yeh, Yu-Te Chen, Tsang-Long Pao, Charles S Chien	Article	2006	IEEE Workshop on Multimedia Signal Processing, 238-242.
7	The Effect of Advertising Slogan Changes on The Market Values of Firms	Lynette L Knowles, Ike Mathur	Article	1995	Journal of Advertising Research 35(1), 59-65.
8	The Curious Case of Behavioral Backlash: Why Brands Produce Priming Effects and Slogans Produce Reverse Priming Effects	Juliano Laran, Amy N. Dalton, Eduardo B. Andrade	Article	2011	Journal of Consumer Research, 37(6), 999-1014.
9	Linguistic Choice in A Corpus of Brand Slogans: Repetition or Variation	Paloma Mustéa, Keith Stuart, Ana Botella	Article	2015	Procedia - Social and Behavioural Sciences, 198, 350–358.
10	Computer-Aided Content Analysis: What Do 240 Advertising Slogans Have in Common	Grahame R. Dowling, Boris Kabanoff	Article	1996	Marketing Letters 7(1), 63-75.

TABLE 2: *The Typology of Studies on Slogans*

Source: own processing, 2021

When the literature review was conducted 10 studies were found. All these studies are articles. Therefore, these results strengthen the belief that more studies are needed in this field.

3. Research

3.1 Aim and Importance of the Research

The effort of branding has an important place in today's capitalist system. When branding their products or services, companies mostly try to determine slogans that will enhance the communication between them and the target audience and that will state their messages to the target audience. This research aims to evaluate the brands' slogans and the effect of slogan liking. Within this frame an experimental research is conducted, and it is tried to reveal if slogan liking affects varied factors. This study is significant because of the fact that it is one of the rare studies that aims to evaluate the effect of slogan.

3.2 Target Population and Sample of the Study

When this study was planned it was necessary to determine a couple of different target populations samples. One of them is determining the slogans to be topic of the study and therefore the brands and the other one is determining the participants in the study.

Based on this necessity in the phrase of determining the slogans the brands that carry business in Turkey are selected as the population sample of the study. The samples are selected by taking the studies of „*Brand Finance*”⁶⁸ into consideration. Brand Finance annually establishes the list for the most valuable brands of the world and prepares detailed reports on a country basis. This study is limited to the most valuable brands of Turkey in 2018; the slogans of these brands were investigated and if there is no slogan found to work with those brands were excluded from the list. Moreover, the brands that change their slogans while this study was conducted and the ones whose slogans weren't clear and definite were descoped from the study by the researchers in order not to cause ambiguity. Another criterion when eliminating slogans is: the brands that were on the list of the most valuable brands in 2016 and were included in the pretest of this study were excluded from the list if they weren't on the most valuable brand list of 2018 or if they changed their slogans. Thus, the number of brands in the pretest was 84 in 2017 but it decreased to 58 in 2019. This study is conducted on 58 brands.

In this research, a convenience sampling method is used. When the participants were selected university students were determined as the population sample since the study is experimental and it will be administered on a specific population sample in different times. As they are reached easily and in order to follow the process well, Gümüşhane University students were selected as participants in this study. Among these students the ones that are older than 18 and stated that they want to willingly participate in the study were preferred. The research was conducted on 824 participants and when the faulty ones are eliminated 775 questionnaires were included in the analyses within the frame of the study.

3.3 The Method of the Study

This study aims to evaluate the effect of slogans and it was implemented between January 2019 and May 2019. This research is experimental, and the same participants performed three different questionnaire forms at three different times. Each of the questionnaire forms consist of two scales. The first of these questionnaire forms consists only of slogans and it evaluates if attitudes to slogan liking and slogans effect purchasing behaviour or purchasing preference. In the second questionnaire form there are only brands (logo & name). In the following days the questionnaire form was answered by the same people and it included two scales measuring participants' attitudes to liking and purchasing preference. In the third questionnaire form slogans and brands (logo & name) were given together and the test was reapplied as the two-scale structure remained. Thus with same structured three questionnaires participants' ((a) only slogan, (b) only brand (name & logo), (c) slogan and brand), for six different cases ((a) slogan liking attitude, (b) the effect of slogan for purchasing behaviour attitude, (c) brand liking attitude, (d) the effect of the brand on purchasing preference attitude, (e) slogans and brands being liked together attitude, (f) slogan and brands effect on purchasing preference attitude were measured at different times.

This study is conducted with Gümüşhane University students. Gümüşhane University Communication Faculty students assisted the study; these students were given questionnaire forms and were asked to apply the questionnaire to their friends. Students were trained beforehand, they performed the first scale and waited for a couple of days, and they performed the second scale and waited for a couple of days and performed the last scale. In this way it aimed at preventing participants from being under the effect of their previous answers by relating the slogans to their brands.

In total the scales were performed by 824 participants, because some of the participants didn't want to attend the later research and some scales were answered in a faulty manner, 49 questionnaires were descoped and the analyses were conducted on 775 questionnaires. The gathered data was subjected to frequency, reliability, sample efficiency test, regression and correlation analysis

⁶⁸ *Brandfinance*. [online]. [2020-12-20]. Available at: <www.brandfinance.com>.

No	Brand	Slogan	No	Brand	Slogan
1	Adel	Leave a Mark	30	İş Bankası	Turkey's Bank
2	Akbank	For You, Your Trust's Work	31	Kale Seramik	This is Ceramic
3	Aksigorta	Fortunately, I am Insured by Aksigorta	32	Karsan Otomotiv	Limitless Transportation Solutions
4	Albaraka Türk	Interest-free Profit	33	Kipa	Let's Go to Kipa
5	Anadolu Efes	The Beer Is under This Cap	34	Koçtaş	I Love My House
6	Anadolu Isuzu	Power Comes from Heart	35	Migros	Migros Will Suit You
7	Anadolu Sigorta	There is No Losing	36	Mutlu Akü	Turkey's Most Sold Accumulator
8	Anel Elektrik	Today for Tomorrow	37	Opet	Journey to Perfection
9	Arçelik	Designs Innovation with Love	38	Pegasus	Easy Way of Flying
10	Arena Bilgisayar	Turkey's Technology Provider	39	Petlas	Turkey's Tyres
11	Aselsan	Reassuring Technology	40	Pınar	Yaşam Pınarım = My Life Source (Pınar)
12	Banvit	True Taste	41	Sütaş	Natural Taste
13	Bim	Retail for Wholesale Price	42	Şekerbank	Reach Out Turkey
14	Bimeks	Technologies Heart Beats Here	43	Şişe Cam	Glass State of Aesthetics
15	Borsa İstanbul - BİST	Worth Investing	44	Tat Konserve	Real Tastes Are Under Our Protection
16	Bossa	Your Expectation is Our Job	45	Tav	Live, Smile and Fly!
17	Carrefoursa	Whatever You Need	46	Teb	My Bank My World
18	Çelebi Hava Servisi	Our Power is Our Service	47	Teknosa	Technology for Everyone
19	Dardanel	Turkey's Fish Expert	48	Trabzonspor	Everywhere is Trabzon For Us
20	DenizBank	Life is Beautiful at Deniz	49	Turkcell	Connect Life with Turkcell
21	Doğuş Otomotiv	Traffic is Life	50	Türk Hava Yolları	World is Bigger, Explore
22	Dyo	First in Paint	51	Türk Traktör	Institution Aware of Leadership
23	Ekol Lojistik	Logistics for a Better World	52	Türk Tuborg	Adam Gibi Bira=Decent Beer
24	Enka	Engineering for a Better Future	53	VakıfBank	İşimiz Halden Anlamak = Our Job is to Show Sympathy
25	Ford Otosan	İleri Gitmek = Go Futher	54	Vakko	One Love is Not Enough
26	Garanti	Başka Bir Arzunuz = Do You Have Any Other Desire	55	Vestel	Türkiye Vestelleniyor = Turkey is Being Vestelized?
27	Halkbank	People (Halk) Wants Halkbank Makes It Happen	56	Yapı Kredi	There Is No Limit To Our Services
28	Hürriyet Gazetecilik	Turkey belongs to Turks	57	Yünsa Yünlü Sanayi	The Art of Fabric
29	İndex	Turkey's Informatics Source	58	Ziraat Bankası	More Than A Bank

TABLE 3: Brand Finance Turkey 2018 Year First 100 Brands and Their Slogans

Source: own processing, 2021

Pretest

When this study was designed a pretest was determined since it is one of the first studies in the field and the pretests were conducted between 20 March 2017- 20 June 2017. Within the frame of the most valuable brands list created by *Brand Finance* annually, Turkey’s most valuable brands of 2016 were used. Among the brands in this list, 84 brands’ slogans were found, these 84 brands were taken as sample; the pretest was conducted with 105 participants, by excluding faulty forms 96 questionnaires were subjected to pretest. The results of reliability testing based on the pretest are given below.

Scale name	Cronbach’s Alpha
Slogan Liking Scale	,953
Slogan Purchasing Preference Scale	,962
Brand Liking Scale	,931
Brand Purchasing Preference Scale	,939
Slogan + Brand Liking Scale	,917
Slogan + Brand Purchasing Preference Scale	,927

TABLE 4: Pretest Reliability Level Test Results of the Scales

Source: own processing, 2021

When the gathered data is analyzed it is seen that slogan liking scale Cronbach’s Alpha is 0,953; slogan purchasing preference scale Cronbach’s Alpha is ,962; brand liking preference scale Cronbach’s Alpha 0,931; brand purchasing scale Cronbach’s Alpha is 0,939; slogan + brand liking scale Cronbach’s Alpha is 0,917 and slogan + brand purchasing scale Cronbach’s Alpha is 0,927. Thus, the reliability level of pretest results of the study is seen to be almost perfect and it was determined to start the study.

3.4 Research Model and Hypothesis

This study is designed as an experimental research and the model of the study is given below:

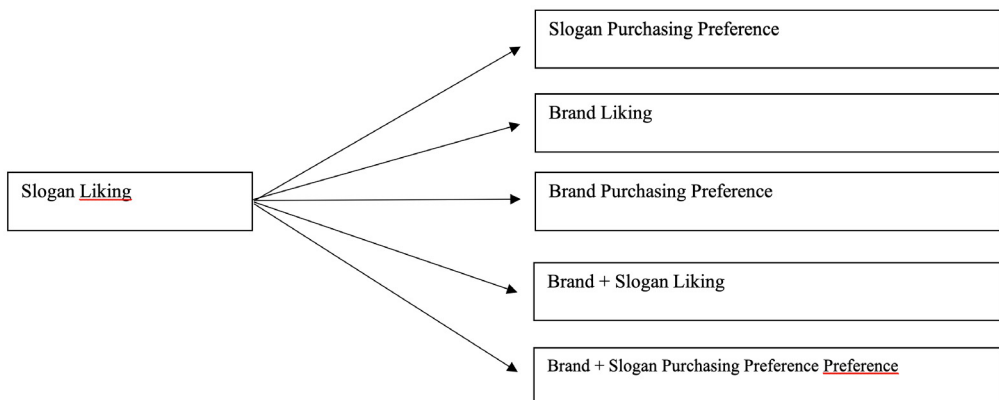


FIGURE 1: Research Model

Source: own processing, 2021

This study is aimed at measuring the effect of slogans within the frame of brand discourse power, and when the research model is considered, the hypothesis of the study is fictionalized as below (Fig. 1).

- H₁. Slogan liking affects slogan purchasing preference,
- H₂. Slogan liking affects brand liking,
- H₃. Slogan liking affects brand purchasing preference,
- H₄. Slogan liking affects the liking regarding brand and slogan relationship,
- H₅. Slogan liking affects purchasing preference regarding brand and slogan relationship.

3.5 Analysis of the Data Findings

This study is aimed at measuring the effect of slogans within the frame of brand discourse power, the purpose is to evaluate participants' the effect of slogan liking on brand and brand + slogan liking; and on brand and brand + slogan liking preference; it is possible to summarize the demographic features of the participants.

	GENDER			MARITAL STATUS	
	Frequency	Percentage		Frequency	Percentage
Female	320	41,3	Married	20	2,6
Male	433	55,9	Single	709	91,5
Missing Value	22	2,8	Missing Value	46	5,9
TOTAL	775	100	DATA	775	100

TABLE 5: Participants' Gender and Marital Status Distribution

Source: own processing, 2021

41,3 % of the participants are females and 55,9 % of males; only 2,6 % are married and the percentage of singles is 91,5 %.

	AGE			INCOME	
	Frequency	Percentage		Frequency	Percentage
18-22	624	80,5	Below 2500	660	85,2
23-27	137	17,7	2500 and higher	28	3,6
28 and Older	10	1,3	Missing Value	87	11,2
Missing Value	4	,5			
TOTAL	775	100	TOTAL	775	100

TABLE 6: Income State and Age of Participants

Source: own processing, 2021

It is seen that 80,5 % of the participants are between 18-22 years old and 17,7 % of them are between 23-27 years old. Meanwhile it is observed that since the participants are university students their income status is mostly below 2500 TL (85,2 %).

	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Freshman	135	17,4
Sophomore	181	23,4
Junior	237	30,6
Senoir	100	12,9
Missing Value	122	15,7
TOTAL	775	100

TABLE 7: University Year Distribution of Participants

Source: own processing, 2021

It was aimed at conducting the study with an equal number of participants from each level as much as possible. However, it is seen that most of the participants are juniors (30,6 %).

	Frequency	Percentage		Frequency	Percentage
Public Relations and Publicity	124	16,0	Engineering	87	11,2
Theology	73	9,4	Radio Television and Cinema	56	7,2
Finances	48	6,2	Immediate Aid and Disaster Management	38	4,9
Literature	33	4,3	Business Management	33	4,3
Health Management	32	4,1	Economics	28	3,6
History	27	3,5	Social Services	24	3,1
Human Resources Management	20	2,6	Nursing	16	2,1
Occupational Health and Safety	15	1,9	Physical Education and Sports	14	1,8
Journalism	10	1,3	Child Development	9	1,2
Healthcare Delivery	9	1,2	Nutrition and Dietetics	8	1,0
Philosophy	6	,8	Politics	6	,8
Sociology	6	,8	Dialysis	6	,8
Paramedics	5	,6	Forestry	5	,6
Therapy and Rehabilitation	4	,5	Other	12	1,5
Missing Value	21	2,7	TOTAL	775	100

TABLE 8: Department Distributions of Participants

Source: own processing, 2021

When the participants' departments are examined it is seen that most of the participants are at the Public Relations and Publicity Department (16,0 %), at the Engineering Department (%11,2), the Theology Department (9,4 %) and Radio, Television and Cinema Department (7,2 %).

3.5.1 Regression Analysis Data on Slogan Effect

It is essential to present the scale's reliability levels and sample proficiency tests before mentioning research regression analysis results.

Scale Name	Cronbach's Alpha	KMO
Slogan Liking Scale	,904	,889 ($X^2= 10937,738$ S.D=,1653 $p=,000$)
Slogan Purchasing Preference Scale	,921	,907 ($X^2= 12281,866$ S.D=,1653 $p=,000$)
Brand Liking Scale	,871	,849 ($X^2= 9016,933$ S.D=,1653 $p=,000$)
Brand purchasing Preference Scale	,893	,863 ($X^2= 10753,524$ S.D=,1653 $p=,000$)
Slogan + Brand Liking Scale	,889	,865 ($X^2= 10469,003$ S.D=,1653 $p=,000$)
Slogan + Brand purchasing Preference Scale	,922	,914 ($X^2= 11681,210$ S.D=,1653 $p=,000$)

TABLE 9: Scales Reliability Level and SAMPLE Proficiency Test Results

Source: own processing, 2021

When the reliability level of the scales is examined it is observed that all of them are perfectly reliable and sample proficiency level is also high in general, all the thesis statements have meaningful difference with the universe sample (see Table 9).

This study aims to measure the slogan effect and the analysis is on if slogan liking affects slogan purchasing preference, brand purchasing preference, slogan and brand together liking attitude and slogan and brand together affecting purchasing preference. Participants were given slogans of 58 sample brands from a list of the first hundred brands that carry business in Turkey and were asked to read carefully the statements and report whether they liked the slogans. The gathered data were subjected to statistics packages, each answer was separately collected and divided into thesis numbers. Then, the total averages were subjected to regression analysis.

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable: SLOGAN PURCHASING PREFERENCE				
	Standardized Parameters	t- statistics	p value	Standard Error	VIF
Slogan Linking	,781	34,084	,000	,32487	1,000
Regulated R ²	,609				
F	1161,703 ($p= ,000$)				

TABLE 10: Regression Analysis of Slogan Liking Effect on Slogan Purchasing Preference

Source: own processing, 2021

When the table above that measures slogan liking independent variables and slogan purchasing preference dependent variables is examined it is seen that it is meaningful to explain slogan effect variable with statistical values ($F= 1161,703$ $p= ,000$). According to this data 60,9 % of the effect on slogan purchasing preference (Regulated R) creates slogan liking. There are meaningful differences between slogan liking and purchasing preference ($p=,000$), according to these analysis results a standard deviation change in slogan liking creates a change of (β) 0,781) in slogan purchasing preference. Thus, it can be uttered that H_1 Hypothesis is confirmed, more clearly slogan liking affects slogan purchasing preference. Moreover, the fact that VIF value is below 10, reveals that there could be multicollinearity between reliability.

Dependent Variable: BRAND LIKING					
Independent Variable	Standardized Parameters	t- statistics	p value	Standard Error	VIF
	Beta				
Slogan Linking	,454	13,917	,000	,36064	1,000
Regulated R ²	,205				
F	193,691 (p= ,000)				

TABLE 11: Regression Analysis of Slogan Liking on Brand Liking Effect

Source: own processing, 2021

When the second regression analysis results that measures slogan effect is examined, it is observed that the explanation with statistical values are meaningful (F= 193,691 p= ,000). According to Table 11 there are meaningful differences between slogan liking and brand liking attitudes (p= ,000). It is understood that a standard deviation change in slogan liking that explains 20,5 % of brand liking effect (Regulated R²) creates a (β) 0,454 standard deviation change in brand liking. These results confirm H_2 , „Slogan liking affects brand liking.”

Dependent Variable: BRAND PURCHASING PREFERENCE					
Independent Variable	Standardized Parameters	t- statistics	p value	Standard Error	VIF
	Beta				
Slogan Linking	,371	10,846	,000	,41537	1,000
Regulated R ²	,136				
F	117,641 (p= ,000)				

TABLE 12: Regression Analysis on Slogan Liking Effect on Brand purchasing Preference

Source: own processing, 2021

When the third regression analysis results are examined it is seen that it is meaningful to explain the effect of slogan liking to brand purchasing preference with statistical values (F= 117,641 p= ,000). According to this analysis in which there are meaningful differences (p= ,000) between slogan liking and attitudes regarding brand purchasing preference, slogan liking attitude explains 13,6% of the effect on brand purchasing preference (Regulated R²). According to Beta value a standard deviation change of slogan liking can create a standard deviation change of (β) 0,371 on brand purchasing preference. These results reveal that „Slogan liking affects brand purchasing preference” hypothesis (H_3) is confirmed.

Dependent Variable: BRAND + SLOGAN LIKING					
Independent Variable	Standardized Parameters	t- statistics	p value	Standard Error	VIF
	Beta				
Slogan Linking	,475	14,717	,000	,39046	1,000
Regulated R ²	,225				
F	216,596 (p= ,000)				

TABLE 13: Regression Analysis on Brand + Slogan Liking of Slogan Liking

Source: own processing, 2021

In another analysis that aims to measure slogan liking effect, the focus is on participants' attitudes regarding a scale including both brand and slogan. According to gathered data, it is meaningful to explain this model that aims to measure the effect of slogan liking on brand and slogan relationship with statistical values ($F = 216,596$ $p = ,000$). This research reveals that there is a meaningful difference between dependent and independent variables; and it explains 22,5 % of (Regulated R^2) the effect of slogan liking, brand and slogan relationship liking. According to data on Table 13, a standard deviation change in slogan liking can create a value of (β) 0,475 standard deviation change in brand and slogan relationship liking. These results show that H_4 is confirmed.

Dependent Variable: BRAND + SLOGAN PURCHASING PREFERENCE					
Independent Variable	Standardized Parameters	t- statistics	p value	Standard Error	VIF
	Beta				
Slogan Linking	,398	11,759	,000	,47377	1,000
Regulated R^2	,157				
F	138,284 ($p = ,000$)				

TABLE 14: Regression Analysis on Slogan Liking Effect of Brand + Slogan Purchasing Preference

Source: own processing, 2021

In the fifth regression analysis it was tried to measure the effect of slogan liking on brand slogan relationship attitude. According to this analysis, it is meaningful to explain the designed model with statistical values ($F = 138,284$ $p = ,000$); attitudes on slogan liking explain 15,7% of (Regulated R^2) the effect of brand and slogan relationship on purchasing preference. There is a meaningful difference ($p = ,000$) between slogan liking and brand & slogan relationship attitudes. According to regression analysis results standard deviation change in slogan liking can create a (β) 0,398 value of standard deviation change in brand and slogan relationship attitude. Thus, it is understood that the hypothesis that slogan liking affects brand and slogan relationship purchasing preference (H_5) is confirmed.

VARIABLES		2	3	4	5	6
Slogan liking scale	r	,781**	,454**	,371**	,475**	,398**
	p	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000
	N	747	747	739	745	738
Slogan purchasing preference scale	r		,396**	,474**	,436**	,549**
	p	1	,000	,000	,000	,000
	N		744	737	742	736
Brand liking scale	r			,671**	,495**	,392**
	p		1	,000	,000	,000
	N			744	748	739
Brand purchasing preference scale	r				,396**	,400**
	p			1	,000	,000
	N				739	734

Slogan + Brand liking scale	r					,633**
	p				1	,000
	N					737
Slogan + Brand purchasing preference scale	r					
	p					
	N					1
** Correlation is meaningful at 0.01 level						

TABLE 15: Relationship Between Slogan Liking and Dependent Variables

Source: own processing, 2021

A correlation analysis is conducted in order to measure the relationship between slogan liking and dependent variables. According to these analysis results there is meaningful relationship between slogan liking and all the dependent variables. More clearly, there is a meaningful relationship at ,000 significance level between slogan liking and slogan purchasing preference ($r=,781$; $p=,000$), brand liking ($r=,454$; $p=,000$), brand purchasing preference ($r=,371$; $p=,000$), brand and slogan relationship liking ($r=,475$; $p=,000$) and brand and slogan relationship purchasing preference ($r=,398$; $p=,000$).

Conclusion

Slogans take hold of us from time to time, when we hear them even once it repeats in our minds, we keep on saying them and they even become topics of social environments; they become the driving force of actions and sometimes light the blue touch paper of a disaster. Especially in financial life, brands and advertisers use slogans to deliver a message and they are always seen as an effective factor. However, it is a fact that there are not many scientific studies on how much of an effect slogans have and what the level of this effect is. This study was created as a result of such a need. When the gathered data is analyzed, it is observed that the fact that the slogan is liked or not liked by people affects slogan purchasing preference, brand liking, brand purchasing preference, and the liking and purchasing preference of brand (logo + name) and slogan together, and there is significance between them.

Thus, it can be said, slogans have a strong effect on consumer behaviour and attitudes. These results reveal that when brand slogans shouldn't be determined randomly, and the messages of the slogan should be contemplated. Essentially, it is expected from an advertisement agency and the copywriter at the agency to find this suggestion/slogan. The fact that this job is not easy explains why advertisement expenses are so high. Advertisers/ copywriters don't really take on a task other than empowering the brand discourse. Planning and shaping a brand discourse is not a job for everyone. One needs perspicacity, a sharp insight and a literary language. Probably the hardest part of brand discourse is finding a slogan. The strong effect of slogan reveals the power of brand discourse. Brands shouldn't forget that when they create a discourse, they are building their reality in the meantime. The importance of brand discourse power and effect will increase with the developing technology and Covid-19 phase. Accordingly, the power of slogan effect and the power of brand discourse are among topics that should be studied specific to new communication technologies. It will contribute to this field for researchers to work on these subjects, especially in today's world where technology attempts to design peoples' thoughts.

Bibliography and sources

- BATEY, M.: *Brand Meaning*. New York : Routledge, 2008.
- BAUMAN, Z.: *Postmodern Etik*. Istanbul : Ayrıntı Publications, 2011.
- BAUMAN, Z.: *Küreselleşme; Toplumsal Sonuçları*. Istanbul : Ayrıntı Publications, 2016.
- BAUMAN, Z.: *Yaşam Sanatı*. Istanbul : Ayrıntı Publications, 2017a.
- BAUMAN, Z.: *Azinlığın Zenginliği Hepimizin Çıkarına Mıdır?*. Istanbul : Ayrıntı Publications, 2017b.
- BAUMAN, Z.: *Hermenötik ve Sosyal Bilimler*. Istanbul : Ayrıntı Publicatios, 2017c.
- BAUMAN, Z.: *İskarta Hayatlar: Modernite ve Safraları*. Istanbul : Can Publications, 2018.
- BOCOCK, R.: *Tüketim*. Ankara : Dost Kitapevi Publications, 2014.
- BOND J., KIRSHENBAUM, R.: *Radar Altı İletişim: Günümüzün Kuşuklu Tüketicisine Ulaşma Yolları*. Istanbul : MediaCat Publishing, 2004.
- Brandfinance*. [online]. [2020-12-20]. Available at: <www.brandfinance.com>.
- BRIGGS, E., JANAKIRAMAN, N.: Slogan recall effects on marketplace behaviors: The roles of external search and brand assessment. In *Journal of Business Research*, 2017, Vol. 80, p. 98-105. ISSN 0148-2963.
- BRUCE, D., DAVID, H.: *Marka Bilmecesi*. Istanbul : Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Publications, 2010.
- BURR, V.: *Sosyal İnşacılık*. 2nd Edition. Ankara : Nobel Book, 2012.
- CAREY, J. W.: Harold Adams Innis and Marshall McLuhan. In *The Antioch Review*, 1967, Vol. 27, No. 1, p. 5-39. ISSN 00035769.
- CHENG, Y. et al.: Using Recognition of Emotions in Speech to Better Understand Brand Slogans. In *IEEE Workshop on Multimedia Signal Processing*, Victoria, BC : IEEE, 2006, p. 238-242.
- ÇEBİ, M. S.: Sembolik/Retoriksel Bir Eylem Olarak Dil'in Anlam İnşasındaki Aracılık İşlevi. In *Selçuk İletişim*, 2008, Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 183-198. ISSN 1302-2865.
- DASS, M. et al.: A study of the antecedents of slogan liking. In *Journal of Business Research*, 2014, Vol. 67, No. 12, p. 2504.p. 2504–2511. ISSN 0148-2963.
- DAVID, A. A.: *Managing Brand Equity*. New York : The Free Press, 1991.
- DE CHERNATONY, L., RILEY, D. F.: The chasm between managers' and consumers' views of brands: the experts' perspectives. In *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 1997, Vol. 5, p. 89-104. ISSN 0965254X.
- DIMOFTE, V. C., YALCH, F. R.: Consumer Response to Polysemous Brand Slogans. In *Journal of Consumer Research*, 2007, Vol. 33, No. 4, p. 515-522. ISSN 00935301.
- D'ONOFRIO, P.: The language of the Advertising Slogan. In *Communicatio: South African Journal for Communication Theory and Research*, 1981, Vol. 7, No. 2, p. 10-25. ISSN 1468-2885.
- EAGLETON, T.: *Kültür Yorumları*. Istanbul : Ayrıntı Publications, 2011.
- EAGLETON, T.: *Hayatın Anlamı*. Istanbul : Ayrıntı Publications, 2015.
- ESCH, F. R., MÖLL, T., SCHMİTT, B., ELGER, E. C., NEUHAUS, C., and WEBER, B.: ESCH, F. et al.: Brands on the brain: Do consumers use declarative information or experienced emotions to evaluate brands?. In *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 2012, Vol. 22, No. 1, p.75–85. ISSN 1532-7663.
- FEYERABEND, P.: *Akla Veda*. Istanbul : Ayrıntı Publications, 2012.
- FOUCAULT, M.: *Söylemin Düzeni*. Istanbul : Hil Publications, 1987.
- GALÍ, N. et al.: Analysing tourism slogans in top tourism destinations. In *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 2017, Vol. 6, No. 3, p. 243–251. ISSN 2212-571X.
- GOODCHILD, P.: *Deleuze ve Guattari; Arzu Politikasına Giriş*. Istanbul : Ayrıntı Publications, 2005.
- GRAHAME R. D., BORIS, K.: Computer-Aided Content Analysis: What Do 240 Advertising Slogans Have in Common?. In *Marketing Letters*, 1996, Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 63-75. ISSN 0923-0645.
- HOFFER, E.: *Kesin İnançlılar*. Istanbul : Olvido Kitap Publishing, 2019.
- HUANG, S., LİN, L.: Awareness Effects of the Tourism Slogans of Ten Destinations in Asia. In *Journal of China Tourism Research*, 2017, Vol. 13, No. 4, p. 375-387. ISSN 19388160.

- HUME, D.: *İnsan Doğası Üzerine Bir İnceleme*. Second Edition. Ankara : Bilgesu Publishing, 2015.
- KELLER L. K.: *Strategic Brand Management: Building, Measuring, and Managing Brand Equity*. 4th Edition. New Jersey : Pearson Education, 2013.
- KEVIN, L. K.: Conceptualizing, Measuring, and Managing Customer-Based Brand Equity. In *Journal of Marketing*, 1993, Vol. 57, p. 1-22. ISSN 0022-2429.
- KLEIN, N.: *No Logo: Küresel Markalar Hedef Tahtasında*. Ankara : Bilgi Publications, 2012.
- KNOWLES, L. L., MATHUR, I.: The Effect of Advertising Slogan Changes on The Market Values of Firms. In *Journal of Advertising Research*, 1995, Vol. 35 No.1, p. 59-65. ISSN 0021-8499.
- ISSN 1877-0428 KOHLI, C. et al.: Got Slogan? Guidelines For Creating Effective Slogans. In *Business Horizons*, 2007, Vol. 50, p. 415-422. ISSN 0007-6813.
- KRACAUER, S.: *Kitle Süsü*. Istanbul : Metis Publications, 2011.
- LARAN, J. et al.: The Curious Case of Behavioral Backlash: Why Brands Produce Priming Effects and Slogans Produce Reverse Priming Effects. In *Journal of Consumer Research*, 2011, Vol. 37, No. 6, p. 999-1014. ISSN 00935301.
- LEFEBVRE, H.: *Modern Dünyada Gündelik Hayat*. Istanbul : Metis Publications, 2016.
- MOHAMMED, R. A. et al.: *Internet Marketing: Building Advantage in A Networked Economy*. 2nd Edition (International Edition). New York : McGraw-Hill Education, 2003.
- MUSTÉA, P., STUART, K., BOTELLA, A.: Linguistic Choice in A Corpus of Brand Slogans: Repetition or Variation. In *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2015, Vol. 198, p. 350-358. ISSN 1877-0428.
- KOTLER, P., KELLER, L. K.: *Marketing Management*. New Jearsey : Pearson Education, 2006.
- PİKE, S.: Destination brand positioning slogans – towards the development of a set of accountability criteria. In *Acta Turistica*, 2004, Vol. 16, No. 2, p.102-124. ISSN 0353-4316.
- RICEOUR, P.: Yorum Teorisi; Söylem ve Artı Anlam. Istanbul : Paradigma Publishing, 2007.
- RIES, A., TROUT, J.: *Konumlandırma: Tüketici Zihnini Fethetme Savaşı*. Istanbul : MediaCat Publishing, 2019.
- RITZER, G.: *Büyüsü Bozulmuş Dünyayı Büyülemek*. Istanbul : Ayrıntı Publications, 2016.
- ROLL, M.: *Asya'da Marka Stratejisi: Asya, Nasıl Güçlü Markalar Yaratır?*. Istanbul : Brandage Publications, 2011.
- ROSENGREN, S., DAHLÉN, M.: Brands Affect Slogans Affect Brands? Competitive İnterference, Brand Equity And The Brand-Slogan Link. In *Journal of Brand Management*, 2005, Vol. 12, No. 3, p. 151-164. ISSN 1350-231X.
- SCHOPENHAUER, A.: *Hayatın Anlamı*. Istanbul : Say Publications, 2010.
- SMITH E. R. et al.: The Impact Of Advertising Creativity On The Hierarchy Of Effects. In *Journal of Advertising*, 2008, Vol. 37, No. 4, p. 47-61. ISSN 15577805.
- SOYDAŞ, N.: *#İletişim Bence; Dumandan (#) Hashtag'e İletişim*. Istanbul : İnkılâp Publications, 2018.
- SUPPHELLEN, M., NYGAARDSVIK, I.: Testing country brand slogans: Conceptual development and empirical illustration of a simple normative model. In *Journal of Brand Management*, 2002, Vol. 9 No. 4, p. 385-395. ISSN 1350-231X.
- TOSUN, N.: *Marka Yönetimi*. Istanbul : Beta Publishing, 2014.
- WERNİCK, A.: *Promosyon Kültürü: Reklam, İdeoloji ve Sembolik Anlatım*. Ankara : Science and Art Publications, 1996.
- ZILLIOĞLU, M.: *İletişim Nedir?*. Izmir : Cem Yayınları, 2018.

Authors



Emre Ş. Aslan, Assoc. Prof.

Department of Public Relations and Advertising
Trabzon University
Fatih Kampüsü, 61335 Söğütlü, Akçaabat –Trabzon
TURKEY
emresaslan@gmail.com

Emre Ş. ASLAN (Assoc. Prof.) was born in 1980 in Gümüşhane. He completed his undergraduate education at the Faculty of Communication in 2005, and his master's degree in Social Sciences Institute in 2008 at Selcuk University. In 2014, he completed his doctoral thesis at Gazi University Social Sciences Institute. Between 2005 and 2009, he worked as a strategic planner in advertising agencies and as a corporate communications director for a large company. Between 2010 and 2020, he worked as a research assistant, assistant professor and associate professor at Gümüşhane University's, Faculty of Communication. Providing communication and brand consultancy services to public institutions and private companies Aslan is currently working as an Associate Professor at Trabzon University, Faculty of Communication. His work mostly covers the subjects of advertising, branding, brand strategies, strategic planning, agenda of brands, and social media..

Çağatay Demirel, Lecturer

Department of Journalism
Gümüşhane University
Gümüşhanevi Kampüsü, Bağlarbaşı Mah. 29100,
Gümüşhane
TURKEY
ccagataydemirel@gmail.com



Çağatay Demirel was born in 1990 in Gümüşhane and graduated from Atatürk University Journalism Department in 2013. In 2019, he completed his master's degree at Gümüşhane University, Institute of Social Sciences, Department of Public Relations and Publicity. In addition, he started his academic life at Gümüşhane University in 2019. He continues his doctorate education at Atatürk University, Institute of Social Sciences, Department of Public Relations and Publicity. His work covers public relations, advertising, brand and social media.

František Rigo, Ján Mikuš

Asynchronous And Synchronous Distance Learning Of English As A Foreign Language

ABSTRACT

The paper deals with using Edmodo (an educational social network) and Google Meet as distance learning tool and platform in teaching English within university English courses during the first and second waves of COVID-19 in Slovakia. It draws the basic difference between online learning and distance learning, as well as between asynchronous and synchronous distance learning. It briefly introduces Edmodo's and Google Meet's main features that can be utilised in the process of distance learning of university students. It presents the results of the research that was conducted with the students of Faculty of Mass Media Communication of UCM in Trnava, who participated in English courses conducted by the means of asynchronous and synchronous distance learning during the summer term of the academic year 2019/20 and the winter term of 2020/21, i. e. during both waves of the COVID-19 pandemic. Via the quantitative method of a questionnaire survey, the research participants provided feedback on both asynchronous distance learning (with Edmodo) and synchronous distance learning (combining Google Meet with Edmodo). The findings present students' perception of the educational platform and the videoconferencing tool pointing to their benefits, weaknesses and overall effectiveness as communication platforms within both forms of distance learning, asynchronous and synchronous. The paper draws comparison of the two methods and assumes conclusions regarding their effectiveness in distance learning of English.

KEY WORDS

Asynchronous distance learning. COVID-19. Distance learning. Edmodo. English. Google Meet. Students. Synchronous distance learning. Teachers.

1. Introduction

Despite the fact that the beginning of distance learning can be traced back to the middle of the 19th century,¹ and thus it not solely a phenomenon of today, never before had it gained as much worldwide attention and importance as in 2020 due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent safety measures taken by individual national governments. According to UNESCO Institute for Statistic Data, in an attempt to minimise the spread of the new corona virus, as many as 84,5 % of schools closed worldwide, including all types of educational institutions providing education in all levels, from 0 to 8, according to ISCED, in the peak of the first wave of the pandemic. The closure affected almost 1.5 billion learners worldwide. In Slovakia, the number reaches almost 1 million, with 92 454 affected learners being the students of tertiary levels of education.² Even though the worldwide impact on education during the pandemic's second wave in the autumn of the same year was not as critical as in spring, affecting about 250 million learners worldwide in November,³ in the conditions of Slovak tertiary education the situation was almost the same with the closures of the majority of universities. The transition to distance learning in the first wave of COVID-19 placed all participants of the educational process in a brand-new situation and urged them to quickly adapt and utilise communication tools to allow for distance learning, or at least, to ensure the flow of educational instruction towards learners in order to keep up with their curricula. In case of universities and their students, as they were the subject of the research presented in this paper, the transition encountered several difficulties. According to a survey carried out by Student Council for Higher Education in Slovakia reflecting on university students' perception of distance learning during the first wave of the pandemic, there were more satisfied students than the unsatisfied ones. However, it also showed that switching to distance learning was inconsistent, various tools of online teaching were used, there were big differences in the quality of tuition between individual subjects and quality transition and good information flow were to be accredited rather to individual teachers than to institutional support and the use of uniform teaching/learning and communication instruments.⁴ The findings are not surprising as no educational organisation anticipated this type of transition of face-to-face learning to distance learning on a such a big scale. However, it can be assumed that the switch from face-to-face learning to distance learning in the autumn was smoother, as all participants of education had already become familiar with communication tools used in distance learning and had created certain routines for this type of education which could and should be further perfected and fine-tuned. In case of the research presented in the paper, the refinement process was represented by switching from asynchronous distance learning relying only on the educational social networking platform of Edmodo to synchronous distance learning embracing also the videoconferencing tool of Google Meet. The presented research results reflect on the effectiveness of both distance learning methods utilising the above-mentioned communication tools in the process of teaching English as a foreign language to tertiary students.

Distance learning should not and cannot consist only of lecturing or practising formally prescribed subject matter via digital communication tools. Grombly and Anderson claim that current instruction methods focus on instruction for approaching scholarly sources for academic use and neglect guidance for media consumption in everyday life. Thus, even though students may achieve academic information literacy, they still fail to apply these same standards to

¹ DELA CRUZ, J.: *History of Distance Education*. [online]. [2020-11-5]. Available at: <https://www.academia.edu/17360954/History_of_Distance_Education>.

² *COVID – 19 Impact on Education*. [online]. [2020-11-20]. Available at: <<https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse>>.

³ Ibidem.

⁴ *Dopad COVID-19 na študentov*. [online]. [2020-10-30]. Available at: <<https://saavs.sk/dopad-covid-19-na-studentov-hlavne-zistenia-a-zavery/>>.

their own information and social media consumption.⁵ Therefore, it should be borne in mind, especially during lockdowns resulting into social isolation and largely relying only on media-communicated information, that distance learning needs to address also this learners' need by appropriate choice of distance learning forms and methods. Teaching foreign languages provides a variety of means and space to reflect the need also within distance learning.

2. Distance Learning

The notion of distance learning has shifted significantly since its very beginnings. It started as learning by correspondence, however, developments in the communication technology have allowed for new ways of implementing distance learning, which has led to the rise of terms such as distributed learning, open learning, flexible learning, web-based learning, virtual learning, online learning or e-learning.⁶ Even though both distance learning and online learning rely on learning in the online environment, the terms are not to be interchanged. Stauffer identifies three major differences between them: location, interaction and intention. In distance learning, students study at home (mostly online) and teachers assign and check work digitally, in-person interaction between them is absent (the communication takes place via a variety of communication tools) and at present it is designed as a method for delivering instruction only online. On the other hand, in online learning, or e-learning, students and their teacher can be together in the classroom and work on their tasks and assignments digitally, both the educator and the ones being educated interact together in-person on a regular basis. Other teaching methods are used in combination with the aforementioned one which only serves as a supplemental activity extending learning opportunities for students.⁷ Stauffer's distinction is clearly drawn also in the definitions of the phenomena provided by online Oxford Learner's Dictionary which defines e-learning as „a system of learning that uses electronic media, typically over the internet“⁸ and distance learning as „a system of education in which people study at home with the help of special internet sites and send or email work to their teachers.“⁹ Thus, it can be concluded that what most education participants experienced in the spring and autumn of 2020 was the transition of face-to-face learning to distance learning, which, to a great extent, relied on the methods of online learning. Based on a research conducted by Hubináková and Mikula, before the worldwide switch to distance learning caused by the coronavirus pandemic, students of media studies did not find Internet based education attractive and they did not agree it was a better, more modern and more engaging learning. The interest of surveyed students in this form of education was very little.¹⁰ Therefore, it does not come as a surprise that for all participants of education at all levels this transition was a huge challenge. However, it can be assumed that the transition of learning into virtual world was smoother and easier during the second wave of the pandemic, as both learners and instructors had already embraced the features of online learning during the spring school closures. From this point of view, being familiar with certain educational platforms and tools allows its users for a more convenient

⁵ GROMBLY, A., ANDERSON, A.: Information and Media Literacy: Integrating Literacies into Library Instruction. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2020, Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 6-7.

⁶ DAROJAT, O.: *Reviewing the Basic Themes in Distance Education*. [online]. [2020-11-5]. Available at: <https://www.academia.edu/8145537/Reviewing_the_basic_concepts_in_distance_education>.

⁷ STAUFFER, B.: *What's the Difference Between Online Learning and Distance Learning?* [online]. [2020-11-9]. Available at: <<https://www.aeseducation.com/blog/online-learning-vs-distance-learning>>.

⁸ *E-learning*. [online]. [2020-11-5]. Available at: <<https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/e-learning?q=e-learning>>.

⁹ *Distance learning*. [online]. [2020-11-5]. Available at: <<https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/distance-learning?q=distance+learning>>.

¹⁰ HUBINÁKOVÁ, H., MIKULA, M.: The Importance of the Internet the Life of Students of Media Studies. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2018, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 35 - 36.

adapting to distance learning. For example, in response to the worldwide disruption to education due to COVID-19, the educational platform of Edmodo was among the recommended distance learning tools by both UNESCO¹¹ and the European Commission.¹²

2.1 Synchronous and Asynchronous Distance Learning

Having drawn the major distinction between distance learning and online learning, it is also important to point to the differences between asynchronous and synchronous distance learning.

The major distinction between the two forms of distance learning lies in the time at which learning takes place. This factor determines the choice of used methods, communication tools, the form of study material and the intensity of interaction between education participants. It also underlies the benefits and weaknesses of each form of distance learning, which may be different for individual learners, depending on what type of learner they are and when they are able to participate in distance learning.

Synchronous learning happens in real time. This means that the participants in this form of learning interact in a specific virtual environment at a set time. Frequent methods of synchronous distance learning include video conferencing, teleconferencing, live chatting, and live-streamed lectures that have to be viewed in real time. Its main advantages are classroom engagement, dynamic learning and instructional depth.¹³ It is particularly beneficial for those learners who welcome active discussion, immediate feedback, and personal interactions with peers and instructors in the process of their learning. While it can offer much of the engagement available in a classroom, its participants can also benefit from studying in the comfort of their homes and no commute time. For fast learners, this form of learning can be an improvement over classroom learning as it allows for a more dynamic exploration of concepts, topics and ideas. Participants in synchronous distance learning interact regularly and frequently with their teachers and these interactions provide regular opportunities for face-to-face discussions, accessible, in depth instruction, individual guidance, support and mentorship. The disadvantages of this format of distance learning arise from possible unpredictable work schedule of the learners and technical difficulties like unstable internet connection, crashing hard drives, dying batteries or even the lack of technological equipment to conduct this form of distance learning.

Asynchronous learning does not happen in real time, it happens on students' schedules. While study material in various forms (texts, videos, assignments for completion, recordings) are provided by the teacher or instructor, students themselves access this material and satisfy course requirements on their own schedule, as long as they meet given deadlines. Frequent methods of asynchronous distance learning include self-guided lesson modules, lecture notes, virtual libraries, pre-recorded video or audio content, links to internet sources, and online discussion boards. Students work through the study material themselves, and only occasionally interact with instructors through social media or email. The main advantages of this form of learning are expressed by flexibility, pacing and affordability.¹⁴ Learners access freely available materials and complete them at their convenience. They set their own pace when working with the material, however, within set deadlines, and complete them based on their understanding of given concepts and topics. This may suit both quick learners as well as the ones who take longer time to absorb new knowledge. Compared to synchronous distance learning programmes, the asynchronous ones are often priced lower as they do not require

¹¹ Edmodo, *Subsidiary of NetDragon, Recommended by UNESCO for Distance learning*. [online]. [2020-11-5]. Available at: <<https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2020/03/19/2003088/0/en/Edmodo-Subsidiary-of-NetDragon-Recommended-by-UNESCO-for-Distance-Learning.html>>.

¹² *How VET stakeholders are facing the COVID-19 emergency*. [online]. [2020-11-5]. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/vocational-skills-week/sites/evsw/files/list_of_tools_v5.pdf>.

¹³ *Synchronous Learning vs. Asynchronous Learning in Online Education*. [online]. [2021-02-26]. Available at: <<https://thebestschools.org/magazine/synchronous-vs-asynchronous-education/>>.

¹⁴ Ibidem.

instructors' or administrators' regular daily attention, which may be a factor to be considered for students financing their distance learning on their own. The disadvantages of asynchronous distance learning stem from the lack of personal interaction and opportunities to discuss and network with peers. Moreover, it may be really challenging for learners to remain motivated to learn about relevant topics and concepts without the constant feedback and support from an instructor.

3. Edmodo and Google Meet

There are various communication platforms and videoconferencing tools that may be utilised in the process of distance learning, both asynchronous and synchronous. Their choice depends on several factors, including teachers'/students' preferences, technical requirements and availability of technological equipment or a decision of the educational institution to use a unified communication tool within all lessons conducted by distance learning. Therefore, it is not the aim of the paper to provide a detailed account of such tools and platforms. However, as research results presented later in this paper focus on the effectiveness of asynchronous and synchronous distance learning of English as a foreign language and the perception of such learning by tertiary students, this part focuses on a brief description of the educational platform of Edmodo¹⁵ and the videoconferencing tool of Google Meet used in the process.

Approaching a whole variety of media texts that are to be found in the virtual space requires, according to Gennaro and Miller, an interpretation of literacy that sees any and all texts as symbols which get encoded by writers and decoded by readers. The question is, how conscious are we of the processes of encoding and decoding that are happening around us, and how active are we in the translation?¹⁶ Social networking sites, particularly the educational ones, might serve as platforms enabling educators address these texts in a (virtual) classroom and attempt such conscious and supervised translation.

Edmodo is a free social networking service designed specifically for the purposes of education. It was founded in 2008 in San Mateo, California, USA with the intention to bridge the gap between how students live their lives and how they learn in school. It was created to bring education into a 21st century environment.¹⁷ In February 2020 it had over 100 million users, 400 000 of them being teachers.¹⁸ It is available in 18 language mutations, however, neither Slovak or Czech versions are provided.¹⁹ Being a social network in its core, the platform ensures the users' safety by creating a closed environment that is free from spammers and internet predators.²⁰ The learning management platform is set up like a social networking feed, similar to Facebook, into which announcements, questions, tests, assignments and other study material, such as videos, podcasts, presentations, links to external websites can be posted by teachers for students to work with, who can like these post and comment them, or even post their own contents.²¹

¹⁵ For a more detailed description of the platform and its features, see the author's previous paper on Edmodo: RIGO, F.: Edmodo as a Communication Tool in Teaching English. In SOLÍK, M., RYBANSKÝ, R. (eds.): *Megatrends and Media: Reality and Media Bubbles: Conference Proceedings from the International Scientific Conference*. Trnava : Faculty of Mass Media Communication of UCM in Trnava, 2018, p. 273-281.

¹⁶ GENNARO, S., MILLER, B.: Critical Media Literacy in the Googleburg Galaxy. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2020, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 19.

¹⁷ GARNER, G.: *Edmodo – A Platform Redefining Learning*. [online]. [2020-11-5]. Available at: <<http://www.gettingsmart.com/2015/06/edmodo-a-platform-redefining-learning/>>.

¹⁸ SMITH, C.: *10 Edmodo Fact and Statistics (2020)/By the Numbers*. [online]. [2020-11-5]. Available at: <<https://expandedramblings.com/index.php/edmodo-facts-statistics/>>.

¹⁹ Still, the absence of the mother tongue version of the platform did not represent a problem for the students participating in the research, as its scope was using Edmodo in distance learning withing an English language course.

²⁰ WANKEL, C.: *Educating Educators with Social Media*. Bingley : Emerald, 2011, p. 26.

²¹ PARDO-BUNTE, M.: *Edmodo Review*. [online]. [2021-03-01]. Available at: <<https://www.betterbuys.com/lms/reviews/edmodo/>>.

Among other benefits, the ones used most frequently with distance learning dealt with in this paper were unlimited storage, integration with Microsoft Office, access via a mobile application allowing for Edmodo's use anytime and anywhere. Being a fully functional social network, Edmodo provides its users with the feature of instant messaging, which is, however, limited only to the exchange of messages between the teacher and their students. Edmodo notifies its users, both teachers and students, about each relevant activity that takes place within a study group. A notification can be sent either as an e-mail notification, a mobile application notification or a text message. This way, the platform keeps education participants updated, while also allowing them to review past activities.²² Once its users become familiar with the features they find most relevant, Edmodo can serve not only as an effective online learning tool simplifying the management of regular face-to-face lessons and courses, it can also effectively complement and/or accommodate distance learning, as the later stated results prove.

The unprecedented switch to working from home and distance education triggered by the coronavirus lockdowns has led to the boom of videoconferencing tools, **Google Meet** being one of the major players. The virtual meeting solution reported 100 million daily users in April 2020 and was adding about 3 million new users each day.²³ Its main features include two-way and multi-way audio and video calls with a resolution of up to 720p, an accompanying chat, noise cancellation audio filter, screen sharing to present documents, presentations, spreadsheets or other browser tabs, ability to join meetings through a web browser or through Android or iOS applications, and hosts being able to monitor, deny entry and remove users during a call. Google Meet requires people to be logged in with a Google account to join or start a call and provides excellent cross-platform compatibility, and seamless integration with apps from Microsoft Office and Google. It offers high level of security due to its superior level of encryption.²⁴ Depending on the edition that is used (a free edition or the premium ones) it provides the opportunity of a video meeting for 100 – 250 participants at one time with the unlimited number of meetings. The duration of an individual group meeting is limited to up to 1 hour with the free edition²⁵ and to as many as 24 hours with the paid editions. Since April 2020, on a monthly basis, Google Meet's software writers have been regularly adding new features and enhancements to the tool, such as tiled layout for larger calls, filtering out noises in video meetings, blocking anonymous users from education meetings, casting Google Meet to television, using a whiteboard, providing attendance reports for education users, hand rising, or muting all participant for education accounts.²⁶ The constant improvements to the videoconferencing tool reflect the intention to make it as effective virtual meeting solution as possible, not only for business purposes, but also to accommodate distance learning participants' needs for a convenient and reliable virtual learning environment.

4. Research Design and Methodology

The research, whose results are presented in this paper, focused on students' perceptions of distance learning carried out synchronously and asynchronously using relevant digital tools and platforms.

²² *What Information Do Notifications Show?* [online]. [2018-04-21]. Available at: <<https://support.edmodo.com/hc/en-us/articles/205005104-What-Information-Do-Notifications-Show->>>.

²³ LERMAN, R.: *Big Tech is coming for Zoom: Google makes video chatting service Meet free.* [online]. [2021-03-01]. Available at: <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2020/04/29/google-meet-zoom-competitor/>>>.

²⁴ MARTIN, D.: *Google Meet vs. Zoom.* [online]. [2021-03-01]. Available at: <<https://www.digitaltrends.com/computing/google-meet-vs-zoom/>>>.

²⁵ Note: however, until the end of March 2021, the individual group meetings could last up to 24 hours also with the free version: *Choose a plan that works for you.* [online]. [2021-03-01]. Available at: <<https://apps.google.com/intl/en-GB/meet/pricing/>>>.

²⁶ *What's new in Google Meet.* [online]. [2021-03-02]. Available at: <https://support.google.com/meet/answer/9545619?hl=en&ref_topic=7306097#zippy=>>.

4.1 Asynchronous Distance Learning

The asynchronous method was applied in distance learning during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.²⁷ In this form of distance learning, Edmodo was used as a communication tool via which instruction was delivered and regular testing of students' progress was carried out. The instruction was delivered to students via Edmodo posts in the form of a Word document on a weekly basis. It covered the subject-matter prescribed by individual syllabi for each study group. The students were supposed to work with the delivered study material on their own and were encouraged to consult any ambiguities or individual queries by contacting the teacher via the Edmodo messaging feature and share their language production in the comment section below the respective posts. Within two to three days, each study group was assigned a test covering the subject-matter included in the previous instruction post. Tests had been created using Edmodo assessment tools with a set time limit and a specified deadline. Each lesson instruction was ensued by its respective test. The quantitative research data was obtained by the method of a *questionnaire survey* which was used to get feedback from the research sample on distance learning carried out via the above-mentioned educational platform and following the above-specified teaching/learning procedure. It is important to add that Edmodo had been used as a communication channel within English course already before school closures and the switch to distance learning, i. e. during the winter term of the academic year 2019/20, thus the participants of the research could easily adapt it when the tuition moved to online environment.

4.2 Synchronous Distance Learning

The synchronous distance learning method was applied in distance learning during the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.²⁸ In this form of distance learning, the tuition was carried out via the videoconferencing tool of Google Meet allowing for real time communication between the teacher and the students, as well as for communication between students themselves. As teaching a foreign language within the communicative approach should not be carried out solely by the means of lecturing, the participants of learning were encouraged to interact and produce language in real time, either via speaking on their microphones or using Google Meet's comment section. A variety of visual or audial inputs, such as relevant pages from the course's literature, MS Word or Excel documents, external websites, videos, etc. were made available to students via the videoconferencing tool's presentation features. However, on top of using Google Meet, Edmodo remained the communication channel via which relevant study material (comprising mostly of notes from real time online lessons, homework assignments, external links to online grammar exercises, as well as links to media contents students were supposed to work with) was shared and regular testing of students' progress was carried out in real time, during individual online lessons. The quantitative research data was obtained by the method of a *questionnaire survey* which was used to obtain feedback from the research sample on synchronous distance learning carried out via the videoconferencing tool of Google Meet in combination with Edmodo which served both as testing tool and a platform where all relevant study material was to be found. It is important to add that, similarly to asynchronous

²⁷ Note: The tuition started in the week of 11th February 2019 as regular face-to-face learning and after four weeks it switched to distance learning starting in the week of 9th March 2020, i. e. the tuition comprised of four weeks of face-to-face learning and 9 weeks of distance learning.

²⁸ Note: The tuition for the students in the 1st year of study started in the week of 23th September 2020 as regular face-to-face learning and after two weeks it switched to distance learning starting in the week of 5th October 2020, when the winter academic term started also for the students in the other years of study, i. e. all the tuition relevant for our research into distance learning during the second wave of COVID-19 was carried out online and synchronously since 5th October 2020.

distance learning within the first wave of the pandemic, the vast majority of the respondents had become familiar with Edmodo prior to the commencement of synchronous distance learning.

4.3 Research Sample

The research sample of the part of the research that focused on **asynchronous distance learning** (during the first wave of COVID-19) consisted of the students of the Faculty of Mass Media Communication of the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, both full-time and part-time, of selected study groups of the first and second year of bachelor study in the field of mass media communication in the summer term of the academic year of 2019/20. Together, 176 students took part in the course being divided into 7 study groups. All students were asked to complete the final feedback questionnaire, as it had been distributed to all 176 students. The response rate was 98% with 172 responses returned.

The research sample of the **synchronous distance learning** part of the research (during the second wave the pandemic) consisted of the full-time students of the same faculty, of selected study groups of the first and second year of bachelor study in the field of mass media communication in the winter term of the academic year of 2020/21. Together, 149 students took part in the course being feedback divided into 6 study groups. All students were asked to complete the final questionnaire, as it had been distributed to all 149 students. The response rate was 93% with 138 responses returned.

It is important to add that the sample of the asynchronous distance learning research and the sample of the synchronous distance learning research were not consistent, as English as a foreign language is an obligatory part of the selected study programmes' curricula only for two years, thus the students completing the course in the summer term of 2019/2020 did not participate in the tuition of English in the winter term of 2020/2021. However, the sample participating in the synchronous distance learning research contained 42 respondents who experienced both forms of distance learning and some relevant findings related to these participants are drawn attention to later, in the Results and Discussion chapter.

4.4 Questionnaire Surveys

The questionnaire surveys were carried out at the end of both terms, i. e. the summer term of the academic year of 2019/20 and the winter term of 2020/21. They were used in order to obtain feedback from the research participants on distance learning carried out asynchronously via Edmodo during the first wave the pandemic, as well as on distance learning carried out synchronously via the videoconferencing tool of Google Meet and the educational platform of Edmodo during the second wave of COVID-19. The first questionnaire was distributed electronically through Edmodo and the data was being collected from 22nd May to 20th June 2020. The second questionnaire was also distributed electronically through Google Meet and its completion was part of the initial course lessons. The data was collected between 15th and 18th February 2021. To create the questionnaires, a sample questionnaire from *Social Media for Educators*²⁹ was used and adapted to our research's needs and objectives. Using closed question items in both questionnaires, we were able to find out about:

- how long the participants have been using Edmodo and the subjects with which they used it,
- technical equipment they used when participating in asynchronous and synchronous distance learning,

²⁹ JOOSTEN, T.: *Social Media for Educators*. San Francisco : Jossey-Bass, 2012, p. 101-104.

- their general perception of Edmodo and Google Meet in distance learning,
- the students' time management in relation to working with each lesson instruction and other study material,
- when they worked with delivered instruction and study material,
- the reason for posting/not posting their language production on Edmodo and participating/not participating in online lessons,
- the participants' perception of online testing conducted via Edmodo,
- the students' attitude towards limiting the communication within distance learning only to Edmodo,
- the students' attitude towards the communication opportunities provided by Google Meet,
- the students' perception of the language of instruction delivered in asynchronous and synchronous distance learning,
- the participants' evaluation of the communication with the teacher via Edmodo messaging and via the videoconferencing tool of Google Meet.

Both questionnaires also included open questions providing us with an insight into the participants' evaluation of the benefits and advantages and the weaknesses and disadvantages and of both Edmodo and Google Meet. We were also interested in how effective the respondents found the combination of the above-mentioned digital learning tools. Moreover, students were also asked to compare their experience with asynchronous distance learning with the synchronous one.

5. Results and Discussion

Despite the fact that **Edmodo**, as an educational social platform, has been operating for more than twelve years and, as a restricted-environment educational network in the education span from primary to secondary, has been ranking among top such networks, its utilization in Slovak education is rather limited, as the results of our research showed in both carried out surveys. As many as 94% of the participants of asynchronous distance learning (ADL) had never heard about Edmodo and had not used it before it had been introduced to them within their university English course. The figure was similar also for the participants of synchronous distance learning (SDL) with 96% of the responses. Within each study group participating in the research in ADL, the English course was the only subject using Edmodo as a tool of communication in distance learning with 99% of responses. The same figure applies also for the participants of SDL. Thus, English courses were the only courses utilising Edmodo as a communication platform. The reason for making student use Edmodo was the fact that within learning a foreign language, especially in conditions of distance learning, it is crucial for the students to be exposed to as much authentic language input as possible, and Edmodo allowed for such exposure, enabling students to access all the material at one place and at any time. On top of that, it served as a fast and convenient evaluation platform.

During the summer term of the academic year 2019/20, ADL of English language in the selected study groups was conducted via Edmodo. However, other subjects were taught via other platforms, mostly Google Meet, where students could see teachers lecture in real time. When asked about the **lack of real-time visual contact with the teacher**, 52% of the respondents agreed with the statement that they did not miss the visual contact with their teacher and that the written instruction and explanation of the subject-matter was enough for them. 41% of the research participants said they had missed visual contact with their teacher, but the written instruction and explanation had been enough for them. Only 7% of students stated they had missed visual contact with the teacher and that written instruction had not been sufficient.

In the winter term of 2020/21, SDL was conducted with Google Meet as the videoconferencing platform used and Edmodo served as a channel through which regular testing was carried out and all relevant study material was provided to students. 79% of the SDL participants stated that Edmodo was easy to use, it had a really user-friendly interface and they got used to it rather quickly. 20% of the respondents needed some time to get used to the platform but after that it became easy to use. Only 2% found Edmodo complicated and confusing.

As Edmodo was used within SDL only as a complementary tool and most of the actual real time online learning took place on **Google Meet**, we were interested in its perception by the students. The majority of them, 91%, found it an ideal videoconferencing tool for distance learning with a user-friendly interface and they got used to it quickly. 9% of the respondents stated that once they had got used to it, it was a good tool for online learning, but they still thought there were better videoconferencing tools to be used in distance learning.

As far as **size of study groups** and **type of lesson** are concerned, 68% of the respondents agreed that Google Meet is ideal for lectures even for big groups of students consisting of more than 30 participants. 32% of students found it an effective lecturing tool, but only for groups of less than 30 people. As far as practical and interactive lessons were concerned (including online language courses) 67% of the respondents thought that Google Meet can be effective for groups of 10 – 20 people. 20% think that it could be used for practical lessons even for groups of more than 20 people and 13% of the respondents would limit the size of study groups to 10 people when using Google Meet for interactive and practical lesson. It needs to be added at this place that students realize different needs of a practical language lesson, as far as the size of group is concerned, however, not all the students did always actively participate in SDL online lessons, hence expressed their satisfaction with rather big number of students in study groups.

Within the courses of English carried out by SDL, the platform of Google Meet provided enough space for **interactivity between the teacher and the students** according to 78% of the respondents. 21% of students stated that the platform provided some space for the above-mentioned type of interactivity and only 1 student (0,7%) thought that Google Meet provided very little space for the interactivity between the teacher and the students within the conducted distance learning course. When the level of **interactivity between the students themselves** was addressed, more than half of the respondents, 52%, stated that the platform provided enough space for them to interact together, while 36% of the students said that Google Meet provided some space for the interaction between students. According to 12% of students, the platform provided very little space for students to interact with one another. Similarly to the findings presented in the previous paragraph, the figures might have been affected by the level of students' will to actively participate in online lessons, as the following figures suggest.

As far as the **opportunities and space for students to actively participate in English lessons** carried out by the means of SDL are concerned, 38% of the respondents stated that the teacher provided them with enough space for active participation in the lesson and the students used these opportunities. Most respondents, 62%, felt that they had been provided enough space for their active participation in online lessons, however, only some of the students used the opportunity. However, it is interesting to observe that 81% of the participants who experienced both forms of distance learning with their English course stated that even though they had been provided enough space for their active participation in online lessons, only some of the students used the opportunity, while only 19% of them agreed that students used the provided space sufficiently. The difference in active participation between these respondents and the ones who experienced SDL only might lead us to assume that once used to learning asynchronously, students are more prone to abstain from active participation in real time distance learning.

During SDL, in English courses we focused our attention on, the students were not required to switch on their **web cameras**. 86% of the respondents stated that switching on their web cameras would have been useless and ineffective, as the teacher used the screen to share a

lot of study material via Google Meet in real time (pdf files from textbooks, MS Word for taking notes, online grammar exercises, videos). 14% of the respondents felt that despite the amount of study material shared in real time via the videoconferencing tool of Google Meet, having to switch on their web cameras would have been useful and effective. If required to switch on their web cameras, 36% of students would have been „just ok with that,“ while 34% would have switched their web cameras on, even though they would have felt uncomfortable doing so. 17% of students would have not switched on their cameras as they would have felt uncomfortable doing so and 12% would not have used their web cameras as they did not have a working web camera. Only 2 students (1,4%) would have been really happy with having their web cameras switched on during their online English course.

As for **technical equipment** used within ADL, most respondents preferred smartphones with 39% of responses, followed by laptops with 35% of users. Desktops computers were used by 22% of the respondents. Tablets turned out to be the least popular technical equipment to be used when distance learning with Edmodo with only 4% of students. However, when the tuition was carried out synchronously, desktop computers became the most frequently used device with 46% of the responses, followed by laptops with 37%. The number of students using their smartphones in synchronous distance learning dropped significantly from 39% to only 15%, which is quite logical, as the screen and technical features of a smartphone cannot provide for such comfort of SDL as monitors of desktops computers or laptops. The use of tablets decreased, too with only 1,4% (2 respondents).

As far as the **time spent working with the delivered instruction and other study material** is concerned, we could observe that, in general, students needed less time to prepare for the lesson, i. e., to work with study material, when distance learning was conducted synchronously. The chart above presents the numbers of students, expressed in %, and the time needed for their lesson preparation.

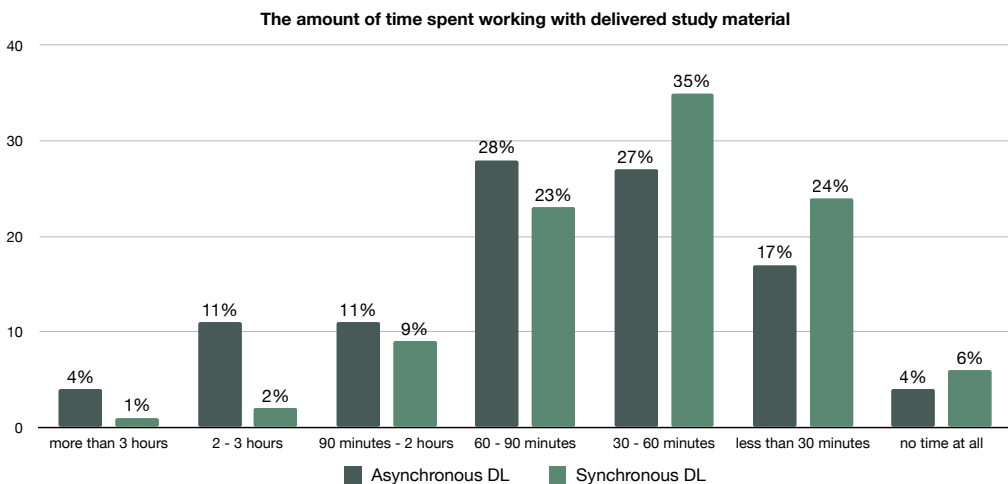


TABLE 1: *The amount of time spent working with delivered study material*

Source: own processing, 2021

When researching into the time spent working with the delivered instruction and other study material, it is interesting to observe that from among the respondents who participated in both forms of distance learning in both semesters, as many as 48% stated that they had needed only between 30 – 60 minutes to work with the study material, compared to 30% of the students who participated only in SDL and needed the same time. The figures differ also within the time category of 60 – 90 minutes, where only 10% of respondents participating in

both forms of distance learning stated they had needed that much time, compared to 28% of the respondents who only participated in SDL.³⁰

As distance learning in the courses that were in the focus of our research attention was conducted in both asynchronous and synchronous form, we were interested in **when the students devoted time to studying**. Even though the participants of ADL could decide for themselves when they wished to devote time to studying (whereas the participants of SDL were required to be present at online lessons at given times), it is interesting to observe that the figures do not show any significant differences, as seen in the chart below. This leads us to assume that the distribution of different types of learners, as far as their learning time-management is concerned, was very similar within both research samples.

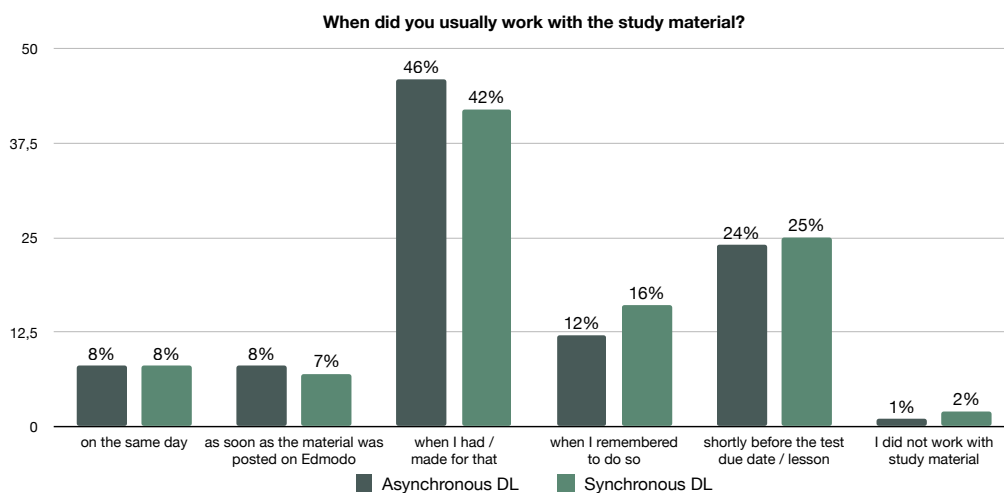


TABLE 2: *When did you usually work with the study material?*

Source: own processing, 2021

Dealing with individual study tasks included in the materials provided to students was supposed to help them prepare for **regular tests** carried out on weekly basis, either at the time students decided to take the tests in ADL or at precisely given time in SDL. These tests formed an integral part of each lesson of the course. Tests' creation (by the teacher), completion and correction were conducted within the online environment of Edmodo. Based on the results of the research, this form of testing was preferred over the pen and paper form in both forms of online learning with 79% of the ADL participants stating they would prefer online testing in the future, regardless of the form of the tuition, either face-to-face or distance learning. 21% of students would prefer writing tests on paper during the lessons. When replying to the same question, as many as 97% of the SDL participants chose online tests over the paper-based ones and only 3% would prefer the latter. In this context, it is important to state that online testing in SDL is an effective form of testing newly gained language knowledge. We conclude so on the basis of a previously conducted research that focused on the effectiveness of paper-based testing, asynchronous online testing and synchronous online testing carried out within three consecutive academic terms. The research showed that synchronous online testing is the most effective of the three forms of testing.³¹

³⁰ In this context, it is necessary to emphasize the fact that although the assumed achieved language level of both research samples was, according to Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, at least B1 – intermediate, the real language level of the research sample did not correlate with this requirement. In fact, the study groups the research was carried out with were *mixed ability groups*. This fact might explain the differences in time allocated to the completion of the instructed tasks by different students.

³¹ RIGO, F.: Effectiveness of Testing English Online in Distance Learning. In KVETANOVÁ, Z., BEZÁKOVÁ, Z., MADLEŇÁK, A. (eds.): *Marketing Identity: COVID-2.0: Conference Proceedings from the International Scientific Conference*. Trnava : Faculty of Mass Media Communication, University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, 2020, p. 547-557.

As far as preparation for the tests is concerned, the participants of both forms of distance learning were supposed to **work with** a variety of **study material** which always comprised of these three features: lesson instruction with clearly defined steps and written explanation of language phenomena dealt with (in ADL) or notes from each online lesson prepared during the tuition itself in real time by the teacher (in SDL), homework worksheet in the form of a Word document including a variety of exercises focusing at target language and an external link to a media content (most often a video) topically related to the lesson. We were interested in how students worked with these individual parts of study material. Within ADL, as many as 49% of the respondents worked with all material posted to them, compared to 37% of the SDL participants who did so. 28% of the ADL participants took the test after they had gone through the homework worksheet and watched the video, compared to 46% of the SDL participants who did so. The figures representing the students who worked with only one type of study material are almost the same for both types of distance learning with 1,7% of ADL participants and 1,4% of SDL participants who only worked with the homework worksheet and 12% of the ADL participants and 11% of the SDL participants who only worked with the video. 9% of the students in ADL did not work with the study material at all compared to 4% of the SDL students who took tests without any preparation. The figures imply that SDL engages students to working with study material more thoroughly. However, in case of lesson instruction for each lesson in ADL, this instruction was paid more attention to than lesson notes delivered to students within SDL as students participating in synchronous online lessons did not need to pay that much attention to them.

In our research, we were also interested in how students worked with study material, homework worksheets in particular, based on whether the **target language phenomena were new to them or not**. It turned out that as many as 62% of the ADL participants worked with grammar and vocabulary exercises even if the target language was not new to them. The same applied only to 48% of the SDL participants. On the other hand, 23% of the ADL participants did not pay attention to the exercises dealing with the phenomena that were not new to them, while only 15% of the SDL participants ignored such activities. 8% of students participating in ADL did not pay attention to exercises even if the dealt with language was new to them, while only 4% of students participating in SDL avoided such activities. Once again, the figures prove that SDL is a more effective method of learning a foreign language. Having participated in synchronous online lessons, students in SDL could decide for themselves which language phenomena require their further attention based on the explanation and practise opportunities provided to them in real time.

As far as students' active **written language production** is concerned, it turned out that the method of distance learning, synchronous or asynchronous, can affect such production to large extent. The written instruction regularly delivered to students each week within ADL prompted them to provide their language production (via which they would practise target language structures and vocabulary) and post it in the comment section below respective posts on Edmodo to obtain feedback from the teacher. Within SDL, the students were prompted to provide their language production in real time using the Google Meet's chat feature. When asked to post their sentences, within ADL, as many as 50% of the students did not post any sentences at all, reasoning there had been no need to do so as the topic dealt with was clear to them and they felt no need to obtain the teacher's feedback. Only 20% of the students participating in SDL abstained from providing their written language production reasoning they felt no need to do so. On the other hand, more than half of the SDL participants, 54%, did regularly post their written language production within online lessons using the Google Meet's chat feature expecting the teacher's feedback. Another reason for abstaining from the required activity was the fact that the students did not wish their peers to see their written language production, as was the case with 41% of the ADL participants, but only with 17% of the SDL participants. 9% of the SDL participants stated they had not posted any sentences as they did not wish

to actively participate in the lesson and preferred just to listen to it, which equals to 9% of the students participating in ADL who did not post any of their sentences on Edmodo as they had not done the activity and thus had created no sentences.

It needs to be added at this point that as many as 45% of the ADL participants stated they had not worked with lesson instruction at all. In SDL, this could not be the case as the lesson instruction was delivered to the students during online lessons and they had to work with it, i.e. pay attention to it, to be able to react to the teachers' questions in real time. As far as the **language of instruction** is concerned, within ADL, the instruction was provided in the written form and 60% of the respondents stated it had been clear. For 37% of students, the language of instruction was mostly clear and they struggled only sometimes, while 3% found the language of instruction complicated. On the other hand, the language of instruction within SDL, which was mostly provided orally in real time, was clear to 74% of the respondents, mostly clear to 25% and only 2 students (1,4%) found it complicated. As far as the explanation of grammar features is concerned, the synchronous distance learning proved to be a more effective method, as 82% of its participants agreed that the explanation was always clear, the given examples helped them understand new grammar, and the exercises carried out during the online lessons were sufficient. 18% of the respondents stated that the explanation was usually clear, the given examples helped them understand new grammar, but sometimes face-to-face oral explanation and practise in the classroom would be helpful. On the contrary, within ADL, the explanation was always clear and the given examples sufficient only for 46% of the participants, while 50% said that, even though the explanation was usually clear and the given examples helped them understand new grammar, sometimes face-to-face oral explanation and practise in the classroom would be helpful. 4% of the participants often had problems understanding new grammar based on the provided written explanation and they would have really needed face-to-face oral explanation and practise in the classroom.

Within both forms of distance learning, the asynchronous one in the summer term of 2019/20, and the synchronous one in the winter term of 2020/21, all students had a chance to contact the teacher using the **Edmodo's messaging feature** whenever they needed. 65% of the ADL participants did not use the messaging feature to contact the teacher because, as they stated, they did not need to do so, similarly to 67% of the SDL participants. 27% of students within ADL texted the teacher via Edmodo messaging and they saw it as a fast and effective way of communication. The same applies for 30% of the SDL participants. 5% of the ADL participants did not send a message to the teacher (even if they may have wished to contact him) because they did not feel comfortable with this way of communication, while only 0,7% of the SDL participants (1 student) did not feel comfortable with this way of communication with the teacher. Even though the figures might seem almost the same, it is important to realize that within ADL, Edmodo's messaging feature was the most frequent way of direct communication between individual students and the teacher, while in SDL students had a chance to direct any questions they needed to be answered to the teacher during regular online lessons on a weekly basis. Thus, we assume that SDL boost the intensity of communication between its participants. This assumption is supported also by the fact that the research participants who experienced both forms of the distance learning English course were far less active in using the Edmodo's messaging feature (83% did not use it) than the ones who participated only in SDL (59% did not use it).

The last closed question in the questionnaire carried out within SDL focused on students' evaluation of using Google Meet in combination with Edmodo in synchronous distant learning of English as a foreign language. The vast majority of the respondents, 98%, agreed that it was an effective combination, with Google Meet allowing for real time communication and Edmodo making it easy to access study material and take tests. 2 students (1,4%), however, stated that they had been unable to create an Edmodo account, thus could not comment on its effectiveness in SDL. Only 1 student (0,7%) found this combination ineffective and would have preferred to receive study material via email or access it from the faculty's official digital archive.

The questionnaire surveys used in the research, focusing on both ADL and SDL, included also three open questions that allowed us for a more qualitative insight into students' perceptions of Edmodo and Google Meet and their features utilizable in distance learning. When asked to express themselves in their own words on the **platforms' benefits and advantages**, the ADL participants stated that Edmodo's biggest advantage in asynchronous distance learning lies in the fact that it allows its users to self-manage their time, that it is flexible, easy to use and that the communication within the network is fast. Other frequent responses included: working from the comfort of home, the convenience of online tests, being able to find all relevant information in one place, the availability of a mobile application, receiving notifications. Some students stated that Edmodo served them better in distance learning than Google Meet or Google Forms. The participants of SDL were asked to comment on the benefits and advantages of using the combination of the two platforms in synchronous distance learning of English. The answers most frequently pointed out the ease and simplicity of the use of the platforms, followed by stressing the fact that all study material could be easily accessible in one place. Other frequent answers laid stress on how well the use of the two platforms was balanced, on the fact that Google Meet allowed for real time communication, and on the ease of taking tests via Edmodo. Students also appreciated the possibility of taking the classes from the comfort of their homes and they also positively commented on the modernity, effectiveness and speed of communication based on the combination of the two platforms in synchronous distance learning.

As far as **Edmodo's weaknesses and disadvantages** in ADL are concerned, the survey participants pointed out some technical difficulties they had encountered during its use, lack of interaction, both between the students and the teacher and between students themselves. From among other stated disadvantages (none of them reached 5% of responses) we mention minimum space for practising speaking, short time for completion of online tests, or the lack of teacher control that might have led to cheating. However, almost 40% of respondents could not think of any weaknesses, i. e. they stated „none,“ „no,“ „I don't know,“ etc. When asked about the **disadvantages and weaknesses of using Google Meet in combination with Edmodo** in SDL, 66% of the respondents could not think of any and thus stated „none,“ „nothing,“ „I don't know.“ Other frequent answers pointed out the lack of social interaction and technical problems encountered during the online classes (slow internet, initial problems with the use of the platforms).

The final open question of the survey focusing on ADL invited the participants to reflect on **Edmodo's effectiveness** in the course conducted by ADL. More than half of the students, 67%, expressed their overall satisfaction with the platform and commented on its effectiveness using attributes such as „effective,“ „good,“ „great,“ „best possible,“ „satisfied.“ Other, less frequent comments mentioned the network's clarity, smartness, the advantage of having all relevant study material in one place. Objections towards Edmodo, expressed in the answers to this final question, match the disadvantages stated in the previous paragraph. Overall perception of the educational social network and its effectiveness is positive.

In the final open question of the survey focusing on SDL, the students were asked to describe in their own words the **effectiveness of their SDL English course** in the winter term of 2020/21 **in comparison with their previous online English course** during the first wave of COVID-19, either at FMK or at their previous schools. The most frequent answers evaluated the course as „very good, effective, well-handled and organised“ (35% of the responses). 23% of the respondents stated that learning English by the means of synchronous distance learning was better than learning asynchronously and 20% considered the course to be better than their previous English course (however, did not comment on whether that one was conducted synchronously or asynchronously). Other responses (on the scale from 5% to 10%) compared SDL to regular face-to-face learning, considering it either worse than (11%), better than (6%) or the same as (6%) face-to-face learning. 9% of the responses saw no difference between their previous course and the surveyed course and 10% of the respondents could not make such comparison as they had not participated in an online English course in the previous academic year.

As some of the participants of the survey have experienced both types of distance learning dealt with in this paper, we were interested in their perception of the English course conducted by two different forms of distance learning. More than half of these participants (57%) have stated in the last open question that SDL of English was better and more effective than doing so asynchronously. However, almost one quarter of them (24%) found it challenging to get used to synchronous online learning of English once they had participated in an asynchronous distance learning English course, while nearly three quarters of them (74%) could not think of any disadvantages of using Google Meet in combination with Edmodo in asynchronous distance learning of English as a foreign language.

6. Conclusion

However thorough the presented research results are, the conclusions drawn on their basis are not to be applied generally. There are a number of variables that are to be taken into consideration with any teaching/learning process, such as the age and personality of learners, their learning styles, learner independency, size of study groups and, in case of language learning, language proficiency of group members and group homogeneity, to mention just a few. On top of that, in distance learning, other factors like available technical equipment, communication software, type of online lesson, its subject matter, regularity and length of virtual sessions, participants' previous experience with this type of learning, their self-discipline or attention span may all affect the effectiveness and outcomes of such learning. Last but not least, there is the preparedness and will of educators, not only educational institutions, but teachers in particular, to conduct and pursue this type of learning.

Both forms of distance learning dealt with in the paper have their benefits, however, as results of our survey has showed, synchronous distance learning proved to be more effective in learning a foreign language as it is more time efficient, it accommodates real time communication, provides immediate feedback, prompts learners to take a more active part in the learning process and boosts their language production, especially oral production, practice of which is crucial in language learning.

The biggest advantage of asynchronous distance learning lies in the fact that it enables learners, especially independent learners, to self-manage their learning time and, if combined with appropriate mobile applications, it can be available at all times allowing for reference to relevant study material. However, in foreign language learning its weaknesses are defined by the lack of real-time interaction and visual contact with either the teacher or peers and insufficient to none opportunities to practice oral production. It does not allow for an immediate feedback from the instructor and it faces the risk of learners' apathy.

There is a tacit agreement on the fact that education in the 21st century needs to functionally incorporate not only information and communication technology, but it should also effectively embrace media contents and social media, especially the ones serving educational purposes. Thus, using effectual tools of online learning as part or regular teaching/learning routines can serve all participant of education. The worldwide school closures resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, that forced schools to switch from face-to-face learning to distance learning, placed all people engaged in education in to a hitherto unknown situation and might have changed the face of education forever. Distance learning relying on online learning has gained on importance and so has the necessity to have reliable tools to manage and master this type of learning, regardless of whether we are talking about face-to-face or distance learning. Google Meet and Edmodo can serve as such tools. One of the biggest strengths of combining them in distance learning lies in the fact that they provide a safe, convenient and user-friendly virtual space for real time communication within synchronous distance learning, in which a variety of media texts and learning materials can be addressed and practised using a variety of features provided

by Google Meet. Other relevant study and evaluation material can be posted immediately and subsequently stored and easily accessed later on Edmodo, hence enabling home study as part of synchronous distance learning, or it may serve as a solid base for asynchronous distance learning.

Acknowledgement: *This paper was elaborated within the research project supported by the Grant Agency of the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic (KEGA No. 014UCM-4/2020) titled „Internationalisation of Education for Students of Mass media Communication.“*

Bibliography and sources

- Choose a plan that works for you.* [online]. [2021-03-01]. Available at: <<https://apps.google.com/intl/en-GB/meet/pricing/>>.
- COVID – 19 Impact on Education.* [online]. [2020-11-20]. Available at: <<https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse>>.
- DAROJAT, O.: *Reviewing the Basic Themes in Distance Education.* [online]. [2020-11-5]. Available at: <https://www.academia.edu/8145537/Reviewing_the_basic_consepts_in_distance_education>.
- DELA CRUZ, J.: *History of Distance Education.* [online]. [2020-11-5]. Available at: <https://www.academia.edu/17360954/History_of_Distance_Education>.
- Distance learning.* [online]. [2020-11-5]. Available at: <<https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/distance-learning?q=distance+learning>>.
- Dopad COVID-19 na študentov.* [online]. [2020-10-30]. Available at: <<https://saavs.sk/dopad-covid-19-na-studentov-hlavne-zistenia-a-zavery/>>.
- E-learning.* [online]. [2020-11-5]. Available at: <<https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/e-learning?q=e-learning>>.
- Edmodo, Subsidiary of NetDragon, Recommended by UNESCO for Distance learning.* [online]. [2020-11-5]. Available at: <<https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2020/03/19/2003088/0/en/Edmodo-Subsidiary-of-NetDragon-Recommended-by-UNESCO-for-Distance-Learning.html>>.
- GARNER, G.: *Edmodo – A Platform Redefining Learning.* [online]. [2020-11-5]. Available at: <<http://www.gettingsmart.com/2015/06/edmodo-a-platform-redefining-learning/>>.
- GENNARO, S., MILLER, B.: Critical Media Literacy in the Googleburg Galaxy. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2020, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 6-22. ISSN 2585-9188.
- GROMBLY, A., ANDERSON, A.: Information and Media Literacy: Integrating Literacies into Library Instruction. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2020, Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 6-17. ISSN 2585-9188.
- HUBINÁKOVÁ, H., MIKULA, M.: The Importance of the Internet the Life of Students of Media Studies. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2018, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 31-42. ISSN 2585-8726.
- How VET stakeholders are facing the COVID-19 emergency.* [online]. [2020-11-5]. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/vocational-skills-week/sites/evsw/files/list_of_tools_v5.pdf>.
- JOOSTEN, T.: *Social Media for Educators.* San Francisco : Jossey-Bass, 2012.
- LERMAN, R.: *Big Tech is coming for Zoom: Google makes video chatting service Meet free.* Released on 30th April 2020. [online]. [2021-03-01]. Available at: <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2020/04/29/google-meet-zoom-competitor/>>.
- MARTIN, D.: *Google Meet vs. Zoom.* [online]. [2021-03-01]. Available at: <<https://www.digitaltrends.com/computing/google-meet-vs-zoom/>>.
- PARDO-BUNTE, M.: *Edmodo Review.* [online]. [2021-03-01]. Available at: <<https://www.betterbuys.com/lms/reviews/edmodo/>>.

RIGO, F.: Edmodo as a Communication Tool in Teaching English. In SOLÍK, M., RYBANSKÝ, R. (eds.): *Megatrends and Media: Reality and Media Bubbles: Conference Proceedings from the International Scientific Conference*. Trnava : Faculty of Mass Media Communication, University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, 2018, p. 273-281. ISSN 2453-6474.

RIGO, F.: Effectiveness of Testing English Online in Distance Learning. In KVETANOVÁ, Z., BEZÁKOVÁ, Z., MADLEŇÁK, A. (eds.): *Marketing Identity: COVID-2.0: Conference Proceedings from the International Scientific Conference*. Trnava : Faculty of Mass Media Communication, University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, 2020, p. 547-557. ISSN 2729-7527.

SMITH, C.: *10 Edmodo Fact and Statistics (2020)/By the Numbers*. [online]. [2020-11-5]. Available at: <<https://expandedramblings.com/index.php/edmodo-facts-statistics/>>.

STAUFFER, B.: *What's the Difference Between Online Learning and Distance Learning?* [online]. [2020-11-9]. Available at: <<https://www.aeseducation.com/blog/online-learning-vs-distance-learning>>.

Synchronous Learning vs. Asynchronous Learning in Online Education. [online]. [2021-02-26]. Available at: <<https://thebestschools.org/magazine/synchronous-vs-asynchronous-education/>>.

WANKEL, C.: *Educating Educators with Social Media*. Bingley : Emerald, 2011.

What Information Do Notifications Show? [online]. [2018-04-21]. Available at: <<https://support.edmodo.com/hc/en-us/articles/205005104-What-Information-Do-Notifications-Show->>.

What's new in Google Meet. [online]. [2021-03-02]. Available at: <https://support.google.com/meet/answer/9545619?hl=en&ref_topic=7306097#zippy=>>.

Authors



Mgr. František Rigo, PhD.

Faculty of Mass Media Communication,
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava
Nám. J. Herdu 2,
917 01 Trnava
SLOVAK REPUBLIC
frantisek.rigo@ucm.sk

František Rigo works as an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication of UCM in Trnava, Slovakia. He teaches English and has experience with various types of English courses and with learners of all age groups. He focuses his research attention on the incorporation of media contents and communication tools and social networking platforms into the process of teaching / learning English within the student-centred approach.

Mgr. Ján Mikuš, MBA

Faculty of Mass Media Communication,
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava
Nám. J. Herdu 2,
917 01 Trnava
SLOVAK REPUBLIC
janimikus@gmail.com



Jan Mikuš is a graduate of media studies at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication UCM in Trnava, Slovakia. He is a doctoral student at the Department of Media Education. His research focuses on the formation of opinions in children and young people under the influence of media communication. His research activities are focused mainly on the relationship between youth and media, social impacts of media technologies and media literacy activities and platforms.



Avdyl Gashi

Media Development In Post-Conflict Societies (Kosovo Case)

ABSTRACT

It is a fact that media plays an important role in post-war reconstruction enhancing the dialogue on issues related to dealing with the past and democratic institutional building. Media continues to be challenged by financial and market dynamics, political influences, and the quest for increasing market share. Over the last two decades, Kosovo has witnessed an increasing role of the media in processes of conflict transformation and institution-building. Yet the media is grounded in the dominant national frames and political ideologies. This paper discusses the dynamics of media development and the role it has played in overcoming the conflict in post-war and post-independence Kosovo. The role of media in conflicts became all important in social research, especially in the „new wars” in Rwanda, Congo and the former Yugoslavia, in the 1990s. In addition to locally generated financial means, media development has been shaped by international donors support that frames freedom of media as one of the major pillars of democracy. Research on the role of media in conflict transformation in Kosovo is still lacking. This paper seeks to address this gap offering an analysis of the role that media has played in conflict transformation and the co-creation of shared social imaginaries as a precondition for a cohesive society in Kosovo.

KEY WORDS

Conflict. Democracy. Freedom. Media. Propaganda. Transition.

1. Introduction

This paper will address the development of the media situation in transition societies such as Kosovo. In recent decades, there has been seen a tremendous impact of the media on igniting and transforming conflict in different societies through propaganda or service of various nationalist and political ideologies.

The role of the media in the conflict has been extremely prominent throughout the two World Wars, and particularly in conflicts such as those in Rwanda, Congo, and the former Yugoslavia. When talking about the development of media and their role in conflict, we have in mind their impact both in positive and negative terms in conflicting and post-conflict societies. Media are becoming constantly a major agenda in transforming the conflict in transition societies. Various researches and analyses show that there is an increasing awareness that the media can influence the prevention, transformation and repair (rebuilding and strengthening) of emerging societies. „*The role of media in conflict settings may be too often underestimated. Indeed, the media has great potential to either incite or calm societal tensions. Consider, for example, how at the same time that some journalists take great risks to assure full coverage of controversial issues like political violence, corruption, and human rights violations, other national journalists directly assist in the commission of these egregious crimes.*“¹

Sometimes microstructural conflicts have produced macro-structural conflicts. Such an example also occurred in Kosovo. Media reports that the drowning of three children in the Iber River from Çaber village in North Mitrovica had come from their fear by Serbian armed structures there has brought up the March 2004 riots all over Kosovo. „*In recent years the concept of „post-conflict“ has been popular in discussions of international relations, political initiatives and peace research, but as much as it describes an unstable phase, it is often unclear what precisely is meant by the term. Post-conflict may interchangeably be used as a synonym for nation building, state building or peace building, and sometimes post-conflict reconstruction is considered as a part of the more general peace-building process, not as its synonym.*“²

Peacebuilding is a gradual process that is closely related to the role of media. So in post-conflictual societies it is important to build trustworthy media. „*Kosovo is one of the youngest countries in the world. In the last few decades, its history has been turbulent, stained with blood. When the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) was established back in 2008 as another optimistic effort of the international community to build sustainable peace, Kosovo Albanians, the biggest ethnic group in the country, held high expectations. This is no surprise: Kosovo Albanians have endured difficult periods of violence, particularly during the war of 1998–1999, and despite being citizens of „an independent state“ face the challenge of living in one of Europe’s poorest countries, dogged by corruption and lawlessness. Although the second biggest ethnic group in Kosovo, the Serbs, does not agree with the Kosovo Albanians on Kosovo’s future political status and oppose both its statehood and international recognition, there is widespread agreement among them: the rule of law in this corner of South East Europe urgently needs to improve.*“³ Therefore, the focus of this paper is the discussion of the media development in post-conflict dynamics, challenges, and opportunities in the transition toward peace and democracy in Kosovo.

¹ LAPLANTE, L., PHENICIE, K.: Mediating post-conflict dialogue: The media’s role in transitional justice processes. In *Marquette Law Review*, 2009, Vol. 93, No. 1, p. 251. [online]. [2019-07-01]. Available at: <<http://scholarship.law.marquette.edu/mulr/vol93/iss1/16>>.

² ORGERET, K. S.: Introduction. Conflict and Post-Conflict Journalism. Worldwide Perspectives. In TAYEEBWA, W., ORGERET, K. S. (eds.): *Journalism in Conflict and Post-Conflict Conditions – Worldwide Perspectives*. Oslo : Nordicom, 2016, p. 10-11. [online]. [2019-07-01]. Available at: <<http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:935872/FULLTEXT01.pdf>>.

³ ZUPANČIČ, R., PEJIČ, N.: *Limits to the European Union’s Normative Power in a Post-conflict Society EULEX and Peacebuilding in Kosovo*. Geneva : Springer, 2018, p. 13.

2. Methodological framework

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the development of media in post-conflict societies with a special focus on transition countries such as Kosovo. The study is a review of the literature. The main method that will be used throughout the paper will be comparative analysis. We think that the comparative method is appropriate in this case due to the fact that we will continuously focus on elements such as the role of the media in democratization, economic development, conflict transformation and the rule of law. All of these concepts raise the need to compare approaches, theories, ideas and practices.

This will of course be done by examining the pre-war, wartime and post-war media environment in Kosovo. In the introductory part we will focus on the history of the media in Kosovo, then in the second part we will focus on the post-war media transition and the ways in which international donors have supported and raised the media to transform the conflict and peacebuilding. In the third part we will describe the situation of media founding in Kosovo and the current media landscape. We will also focus on free media models, built after World War II in Europe.

The conclusion, in addition to the general summary of the paper, will also contain some recommendations such as the rule of law, the fight against corruption, the protection of journalists, sustainable funding, editorial and political independence that would create impact by not only increase the credibility of the media system but also by directly assisting in overcoming the social problems faced by societies in transition such as Kosovo.

3. Literature Review: Brief history of the Kosovo 1998-1999: War and the Media

The media have played a very unique role in all the stages, especially in the transition period that has long persisted in Kosovo. The hypotheses of this paper will lead us toward understanding of the ways of media development in Kosovo, challenges, the role and importance of post-conflict society and transition. Media propaganda is one of the main forms that characterize information during conflict periods. There is a link between building a free media system and overcoming ethnic prejudices in post-conflict societies. The paper includes various methods such as a comparative method and analysis of data from this field. Relevant literature review based on previous studies, research, statistics, and evidence from field research are also included. From a historical viewpoint, Kosovo has not inherited a pluralistic media system due to the fact that it was under the former Yugoslavia. „*What the wars in former Yugoslavia showed is that the battle for hearts and minds is as important as the battle for territory. The media arena is often where that battle is conducted.*“⁴

„*In 1998 and 1999, television images of human suffering from Kosovo shocked the Western world. At the time, the story presented in mainstream Western media seemed relatively straightforward. An ultranationalist government in Belgrade, led by Slobodan Milosevic, had used brutal force to suppress the Albanian majority in Kosovo, a rump province of the fragmenting former Yugoslavia. This perspective was supported by images of massacres that were widely displayed and condemned on television screens throughout the West. In subsequent years, speculation emerged regarding the nature of the massacres, which many saw as a potent force in galvanizing Western support against the Serbian side.*“⁵ The media system in pre-war Kosovo

⁴ PUDDEPHATT, A.: *Voices of war: Conflict and the role of the media*. Denmark : International Media Support. [online]. [2020-08-01]. Available at: <<https://www.mediasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/ims-voices-of-war-2006.pdf>>.

⁵ BAHADOR, B.: *The CNN effect in action. How the news media pushed the West toward War in Kosovo*. Basingstoke : Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p. 236.

was under the tutelage of the regime and at that time operated only one daily newspaper: „Rilindja“ and one television channel all over the country: „Radiotelevizioni i Prishtinës.“

In this way, the Milosevic regime, besides closing down these single media sources in the country, also steadily persecuted Albanian journalists. „Belgrade’s regime intensified its repressive methods, installing Serb officials in all public offices in higher education, police, judiciary, media etc., despite the fact that only around ten percent of Kosovo’s population of approximately 2 million inhabitants was of Serb ethnicity. On the other hand, the political strategy of the Albanian civil resistance rested on boycotting Belgrade, consolidating the parallel reality in Kosovo and, crucially, lobbying for assistance from the West.“⁶ The regime controlled the state and its institutions, most importantly the army, police, and other security forces. It controlled the state-owned media, industries, pensions, public housing, and employment, and it appointed judges. Nevertheless regime policies and strategy were somewhat constrained by laws, the opposition, the professionalism of its agents, and public opinion.

„Public perception of threats in a developing ethnic crisis weakened those constraints. Exaggerating the threat boosted public support for emergency measures that authorized the regime to move aggressively against opponents and ethnic adversaries.“⁷ However, in the case of Kosovo, individuals were not given the opportunity to express themselves freely and limiting their involvement in the right to information and representation of different opinions.

This period was known as a blocking period of information, where Kosovo Albanians were informed only by foreign media. The only Albanian newspaper „Rilindja“ is a channel of national information. After the closure of Pristina Radio Television in July 1990, they bought a half hour to one hour programme from Albanian Radio Television (RTSH). This programme was funded by the Albanian diaspora and another part of the broadcast was provided by RTSH for free. During the Kosovo war, Koha Ditore newspaper, which was first published in 1997, tried to be an independent daily newspaper. In December 1998, the Kosovo Liberation Army established two information institutions: „Radio Kosova e Lirë“ and the news agency „Kosova press.“

The radio station started broadcasting in January 1999 in order to inform people about the war situation. These broadcasters continue to exist even nowadays, but today the media market in Kosovo has a large number of newspapers, radio and local and national television. However, media in Kosovo face nowadays financial difficulties, political pressures, conflicts of interest affecting editorial independence and media freedom in the country. „The media landscape in Kosovo during the last decade has seen exceptional developments going from a few state sponsored media outlets to many, including private outlets and media houses run by NGOs.“⁸

„The mass media played an important role in the series of conflicts that led to the break-up of the former Socialist Yugoslavia in the 1990s. The media discourse was both an indicator of and a contributor to the crisis, highlighting deep divisions that began to open up, while at the same time helping redraw boundaries between ethnic groups in conflict and establishing legitimacy for the actions of their respective political leadership. In this sense, the media had a pivotal role in establishing the public definition of the crisis, helping to construct the playing field and the rules of the game within which the break-up of Yugoslavia took place.“⁹

⁶ BEKAJ, A. R.: *The KLA and the Kosovo War. From Intra-State Conflict to Independent Country*. Berlin : Berghof Conflict Research, 2010, p. 47. [online]. [2019-08-01]. Available at: <<https://gsdrc.org/document-library/the-kla-and-the-kosovo-war/>>.

⁷ OBERSCHALL, A.: *Conflict and peace building in divided societies. Responses to ethnic violence*. London : Routledge, 2007, p. 272. [online]. [2019-07-01]. Available at: <<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/9780203944851>>.

⁸ *The Kosovo population 2016*. [online]. [2019-07-01]. Available at: <<https://ask.rks-gov.net/media/3385/vleresimi-i-popullise-se-kosoves-2016.pdf>>.

⁹ KOLSTØ, P.: *Media Discourse and the Yugoslav Conflicts. Representations of self and other*. Farnham : Ashgate Publishing, 2009. [online]. [2019-07-01]. Available at: <<https://silopub.com/media-discourse-and-the-yugoslav-conflicts.html>>.

3.1 Media Transition in post-war Kosovo

The ongoing social changes in post-conflict Kosovo have affected the remaking of problems of the link between media and society. Transition changes in the fields of politics, economics, education and communication were crucial to the development of social life. „*The more media churn and entangle our everyday, the more compliant we appear to be, as though we are vaguely aware out of the corner of our eye of the medialization of almost all aspects of our lives, and the creep of the archive in enveloping all of the most personal the what we do with media, rather than what media does, is the critical shift here, namely a story of transition from reliance to dependency on the media of the day.*“¹⁰

Kosovo has encountered a number of difficulties in creating free and accountable media as an integral part of a democratic society. Various trainings in advancing professional journalism have been a significant part of media development in transition societies. „*While the idea of a procedural definition of post-conflict seems striking, the composed list of factors might not be complete and should be open to future research. Still, the relevance of post-conflict status as a research category remains due to the societal differences between post-conflict, conflict and non-conflict statuses. Kosovo has emerged from war and its state-owned and clandestine media of the 1990s have been transformed into Western style pluralistic media.*“¹¹

Moreover in the case of conflict-ridden countries – such as Kosovo, the influence of the international media that has a global reach has played an important role in empowering the media within the country with material and storytelling to show the actual situation in Kosovo, with a particular emphasis on drawing attention to conflict from states around the world. The international media has so far continued to present material produced during the conflict through television in the country, their importance in addition to reporting to the world has been and continues to be for those directly affected by the war through the stories shown.

UNMIK (United Nations Mission in Kosovo) initially played a major role in creating media legislation. „*More than a decade after the war there, and over three years since declaring independence, Kosovo still suffers from a lack of a long-term development strategy. There is also rising discontent in the country over the role of international organizations.*“¹²

Immediately after the conflict with Serbia the mass media in Kosovo and their reporting were notoriously lacking, again this time the international factor had a mission of reclaiming them through various organizations. As a result, the media field has undergone changes in the last two decades. Kosovo today has one (1) state television channel and over time dozens of television channels, radio frequencies, newspapers and private portals have been added. Stroehlein in a speech of Media Development and Post-Conflict Transition (2009) emphasizes that the development of media, in post-conflict societies, can generally be divided into six broad categories: a). *Support for the legal framework* – It is important to have laws and a functioning legal system to allow the work of free media in a post-conflict environment. There is a great pressure between media and within groups of media on freedom of expression in general and against hate speech. b). *Support for professional organizations of journalism* – journalist unions and professional organizations are indispensable in a healthy media environment. Such unions can help the media professionalism and their development. c). *Economical support for media* – it is an essential need for media to be financially supported after the conflict because in a

¹⁰ HOSKINS, A.: *Digital memory studies. Media pasts in transition*. New York : Routledge, 2017, p. 236. [online]. [2019-07-01]. Available at: <<https://www.rivisteweb.it/doi/10.1405/89732>>.

¹¹ JUNGBLUT, M., HOXHA, A.: *Conceptualizing journalistic self-censorship in post-conflict societies: A qualitative perspective on the journalistic perception of news production in Serbia, Kosovo and Macedonia*. California : Sage Publishing, 2016, p. 1-17.

¹² JOHNSON, H.: *Model Interventions: The Evolution of Media Development Strategies in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Macedonia from 2000 to 2007*. New York : Academic Commons, Columbia University, p. 44. [online]. [2019-06-01]. Available at: <<https://academiccommons.columbia.edu/doi/10.7916/D8WD46NR>>.

devastated terrain, it is difficult for media to act and orient themselves to keeping themselves through advertisements. This media funding through advertising and subscription has been unstable in the Balkans and has been accompanied by a variety of difficulties and problems. d). *Media training* – are an inseparable part of transition societies. Journalists' training includes everything from learning how to write an unbiased article to journalists' access to hostile territories. e). *Providing justice information* – state and ideological propaganda has been and continues to be one of the forms of influence on independence and impartial media disclosure. Post-conflict societies suffer from lack of fair information due to propaganda and pressure on the news of various governmental and nongovernmental agencies. f). *Media monitoring* – is an essential factor in preventing conflict. Encouragement for hate speech and hate speech itself often indicate that violence is almost present. Avoiding prejudices and discrimination is an important aspect of media work. Large media monitoring projects have been installed by the UN and the EU.¹³

Freedom of expression and non-inclusion of censorship and propaganda in the media, besides reflecting a healthy media system, is also closely linked to human rights and a democratic structure. Introducing propaganda in the media for certain purposes such as the dissemination of hatred or even censorship of events in favour of one side of the conflict is a practiced way of inciting tensions, whether on television or radio interference. The process of democratization in Kosovo brought a rapid increase in the number of media. About a year after the war, there were 7 daily papers and about 38 printed regularly. This number, obviously, does not mean that all these media were free, independent and professional, but it reflects a consequence of post-conflict transition. „However, solid evidence has shown that a mistaken strategy of media development can have disastrous long-term effects, and that inappropriate or bad timing in intervention can actually harm the process of democratic development by slowing down the process of consolidation and, in certain cases, even facilitating a backslide into authoritarianism or nationalist conflict.“¹⁴ Different individuals and certain groups of interest, using the transitional media terrains in the country, founded media that were mainly used to extort foreign donations in the service of personal business interests. Most of these Kosovan daily papers line up behind political parties and certain political groups without making any steps in their advancement and professionalism.

Given that Kosovo emerged from half a century of socialist regime, the mentality and attitudes of the old generation of journalists and news editors take time to adapt to democracy. Such situations often a priori influence the media to be a line with power. This is one of the common transition problems. Among the standards that Kosovan society needs to fulfil in order to be a democratic society also concern media standards. Media freedom and their professionalism are two of the key standards that these media and our democratic society must advance. Kosovo media are divided into the so-called „national“ and independent media that have not yet managed to have their original programme, and most of the programme space is filled with serials and programmes from other countries and sources outside of Kosovo. Radio Television of Kosovo (RTK), as the only public media in the country created by donations and international support, continues to refuse to be called the descendant of Radio Television of Prishtina (RTP). Its current status is determined by international staff. Only in the capital city of Kosovo – Pristina, were two journalists' associations founded in the last four years. The Association of Kosovo Journalists that existed before 1999 has continued its activity but has a small number of members. The Federation of Kosovo Journalists and the Association of Professional Journalists of Kosovo, which was mainly supported by IREX, were also established.

¹³ STROEHLEIN, A.: *An Overview of Media Development and Post-Conflict Transition*. [online]. [2019-06-01]. Available at: <<https://www.crisisgroup.org/global/overview-media-development-and-post-conflict-transition-1>>.

¹⁴ KARLOVICZ, I.: *The difficult birth of the fourth estate: media development and democracy assistance in the post-conflict Balkans*. [online]. [2019-06-01]. Available at: <http://pdc.ceu.hu/archive/00002252/01/media_5_karlowicz.pdf>.

Taking into account the threats to journalists, murdered journalists, the hindrance in performing their duties, media policy impacts, physical attacks on journalists and blackmail against the media, we can conclude that media in Kosovo are in crisis and in a hopeless situation. Therefore, in this situation it is necessary, more than ever, to have a multilateral engagement for professionally free and independent media in our country. „*In turn, those who identify major political and social transformation sometimes differ on the causes and the direction of change. Among those who witness radical shifts in the modalities of politics, three broad positions can be discerned. The first, which I will simplify as techno-progressive, credits the new, and especially digital, media with a restructuration of political spaces and identities.*“¹⁵

3.2 Funding and situation of media in Kosovo nowadays

Media funding and their development projects in transition countries tend to be short-term due to their dependence on temporary and volatile sources. The fact that the emerging countries face a weak and undeveloped economy suggests that funding and support of media in such societies largely depends on foreign donors and organizations.

Thus, media funders are also compilers of the programmes and set the agendas of these media. Agendas, therefore, depend entirely on donors, and donors have their own interests and serve a certain bureaucracy. Most financiers prefer large media projects. This is used as a way to increase the image and provide quick results. This has been shown to be an ineffective way of developing media outlets in various conflicting countries. Funding small local projects has been shown as a successful media growth and factorization strategy from local to national levels and beyond. „*Examples of other controlling entities are employee organizations, trade unions, political parties, churches, not-for-profit foundations, and business associations.*“¹⁶ Projects without visions have caused a series of troubles in transition countries, where a large number of media have been bankrupted from the lack of funding or the suspension of advertising has closed many media in Kosovo. „*If media now constitute a native scene to practically everyone, then the outlines of its landscape remain dangerously vague to most. It is difficult to deny that many of us are unaware of the implications of our media culture and of our relationship to it.*“¹⁷

Kosovan media today are characterized by a significant number of daily newspapers, with some news agencies and several online web portals that are becoming much more popular day by day and the news is several times faster than in other media outlets. Media digitalization is perhaps the most important process during the last decade for local media. Although unprofessional writing or reporting is often encountered, compared to the post-conflict period in which people in Kosovo have had to be informed through other alternative forms, specifically television channels from other countries, this country now stands much better in this area.

„*Kosovo's media landscape comprises two levels: national media with national reach, and regional/local media with partial or specific reach within a region or town. According to the Independent Media Commission's (IMC) 2018 report, Kosovo has 20 operational television stations, 83 radio stations, 41 distribution operators and 80 providers of audio-visual media services. Among these, there are 13 Albanian-language television broadcasters, including the public broadcaster, five Serbian-language television broadcasters and one that broadcasts in Turkish. Of the radio stations, 48 broadcast in Albanian, including two public radio stations, 23 in Serbian, three in the Bosnian language, three in Turkish, and two in Goran. In terms*

¹⁵ AXFORD, B., HUGGINS, R.: *New media and politics*. London : Sage Publications, 2001, p. 4.

¹⁶ DJANKOV, S., NENOVA, T., MCLIESH, C., SHILEIFER, A.: Who owns the media? In *The Journal of law and economics*, 2003, Vol. 46, No. 2, p. 341-381.

¹⁷ BARNOUW, E.: *Media lost and found*. New York : Fordham University Press, 2001, p. 9.

of regulation, the Kosovo media is regulated by the Independent Media Commission (IMC) and the Press Council of Kosovo.¹⁸

This, of course, says also much about the change in the system of values of public opinion in the transition society. People are now mostly informed by television and various online agencies/portals rather than newspapers or radios that were the main sources of information in the past. The impact of the internet is becoming ever greater due to the fact that more and more people are using the Internet daily. Since the conflict to date, however, the situation of the media in general is not at its best, their development is evident. Today, the media has an excellent opportunity to express opinions or even address social problems through them.

4. European model of media organization after war and Kosovo

„Studies of media and communication, on the other hand, are expanding. In some European countries they are already formally institutionalized; in others, they are well on their way towards formal institutionalization, albeit sometimes under different designations. What we see is a new discipline emerging, and it emerges in a period of extremely dynamic political and economic change. As is so often the case in such processes of change and institutionalization, under different conditions, different solutions have been found. This offers an excellent opportunity to discuss the state of the art and the perspectives for the future of the discipline of media and communication studies which is right now emerging from a number of already established disciplines in the humanities and the social and behavioural sciences.“¹⁹

The German system is complex, in part because Germany is a federal system, and broadcasting falls under the authority of the Lander governments, and is organized differently in each of the Lander. The federal structure of German broadcasting, which grew out of the reorganization of the German media system by the Western Allies immediately after the defeat of the Nazi regime, was intended as part of a series of guarantees of pluralism, as a barrier to the monopolization of political power by any single force. *„In a sense it introduces a degree of external pluralism into the German system, as the different Lander are governed by different political majorities, and these political differences are reflected to a degree in the different public broadcasting organizations.“²⁰*

In the mid-fifties, the government of the Federal Republic of Germany wanted to regulate media by law in order to improve quality. Serious information, respect for the private sphere and other aspects should be defined by law. The press on the other hand feared that the state's influence would be greatly enhanced. As long as, only one decade after the end of the Nazi regime, the fear of censorship was still very present. After many comings and goings on November 20, 1956, instead of a federal media law, the German Press Council was established, representing the most important German newspapers and magazines. The main purpose of this press council was freedom of the press. So it exercises free self-control so that the state does not have to control by law. The base is the so-called press code. Journalists are forced to tell the truth. Specifically, this means: not to spread lies and not to incite hatred through falsehood or to call for violence and murder. The press council constantly monitors the work of journalists in newspapers and magazines. To implement the press code the press council has

¹⁸ HOXHA, A.: *Media Landscape in Kosovo: Hate and propaganda influences*. Ljubljana : Seenpm, 2020, p. 23. [online]. [2021-02-24]. Available at: <<https://seenpm.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Resilience-research-publication-1-KOS-ENG.pdf>>.

¹⁹ ROSENGREN, E. K.: Three perspectives on media and communication studies in Europe. In SPURK-WINTERHOFF, P. (eds.): *Psychology of media in Europe. The state of the art. Perspectives for the future*. Opladen : Westdeutscher Verlag, 1995, p. 20.

²⁰ HALLIN, C. D., MANCINI, P.: *Comparing Media System - Three models of media and politics*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 167.

three pressure tools. As soon as a medium contradicts the codex, attention is drawn to good faith. If this is not the case then the newspaper or magazine is warned by the press council with disapproval. In serious violations the press council decides on official warnings. Even special people can approach the press council, the forum then examines if it will intervene or not. Since the 1980's a dual system of public and commercial broadcasting has replaced the previous public system.

Also in Kosovo, the Independent Media Commission (IMC) is the highest authority which, in addition to serving as the main regulator of the media system in the country, at the same time serves as a bridge for Kosovo media with international media organizations. The independent media commission continuously monitors the work of the media and regulates the field of communications and coherence with the objectives of European integration. Kosovo has made steps forward in the development of the media by switching to the digital system.

The role of international broadcasters such as "Radio Free Europe" and "Voice of America" in the Albanian language has had an extraordinary impact on informing and shaping democratic values and institutions. This and other developments talk about a media development that in a way has helped the development of democracy and the building of inter-ethnic relations. However, there is still time and effort to build a stable media system without political intervention.

5. Conclusion

The media system in pre-war Kosovo was underdeveloped and under the constant pressure of the Yugoslav regime. The recent war in Kosovo also destroyed that little media infrastructure that that Kosovo used to have. After the war the media Kosovo have made significant progress, but the freedom and independence of the media is still to be enhanced and strengthened. Kosovo has moved from analogue to digital broadcasting systems as a precondition for an efficient media system according to EU standards.

Most of the investments in the Kosovo media system came from international donors. Despite this it has managed to create an efficient media system to this day. A key aspect of the international effort to develop Kosovo's media was the emphasis on multi-ethnicity. The international insistence that this ideology should be a guiding principle of media development was probably mistaken. Despite the stress by international donors on multi-ethnicity and the money pumped into minority outlets, the media continues to be ethnically segregated in both production and consumption. It should have come as no surprise that multi-ethnic media can hardly succeed without a genuinely multi-ethnic public sphere, which has never existed in Kosovo. When a population is split by ethnicity, the media will be split too. In societies such as Kosovo where ethnic polarization is underscored by the existence of totally different languages, it cannot be avoided. The international emphasis on multi-ethnicity became another form of distorting political pressure on the media. Currently, the media sector needs to be liberated as much as possible from political and economic pressure. Media outlets have been criticized for offering protocol news, a defensive strategy that some outlets employ to avoid clashing with political parties, the Government and international institutions.

The issue of media freedom in Kosovo continues to be a source of public debate. Despite the stated readiness of public institutions to face the challenges related to media freedom identified in this report, best demonstrated by the zeal for the adoption of new laws, journalists continue to be threatened. While focus groups show that journalists feel the same security as other people in other professions, attacks that arise as a result of performing their profession continue to occur. The media and journalists, as a result, remain in a rather unfavourable financial position compared to what would be optimal to provide a professional working environment and independent and professional journalism. In addition, the media in Kosovo is still subject to threats and violence. Despite the reduction in reported cases by journalists or journalists'

associations of intimidation and violence, these problems persist. On the other hand, the judiciary still lags behind in its capacity to enforce media laws and legislation to protect journalists. As a result, the follow-up of cases of intimidation and intimidation of journalists remains small, leaving space for more pressure on journalists.

Kosovan media suffer from lack of freedom, financial problems, corruption, political influence, the pressures of certain interest groups, etc. The country's weak economy greatly affects the limited development of the media system in Kosovo. The prohibition of governmental advertising in the media was a very important step in recent years. The Kosovo government has already abolished VAT for media, and this decision has been welcomed by the media. It has come the time for media to make great efforts in changing their situation and make their contribution to overcoming the transition problems that Kosovo society is facing at large.

We recommend that in order to improve the media environment in Kosovo, the media and journalists should be free and independent of both editorial practices and political and financial influences and conditions. This would of course be done with the commitment of all actors to review and implement the legislation in force. Free legal protection for journalists and media that engage in the public good and denounce corruption would motivate them even more to do their job as professionally as possible. Empowering young journalists from the media would be very important to increase the efficiency of reporting. The state prosecutor's office must fight those who put pressure on the media, journalists and freedom of expression. Transparency and accountability are essential elements for building a democratic society and an independent media system.

Bibliography and sources

- AXFORD, B., HUGGINS, R.: *New media and politics*. London : Sage Publications, 2001.
- BAHADOR, B.: *The CNN effect in action. How the news media pushed the West toward War in Kosovo*. Basingstoke : Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- BARNOUW, E.: *Media lost and found*. New York : Fordham University Press, 2001.
- BEKAJ, A. R.: *The KLA and the Kosovo War. From Intra-State Conflict to Independent Country*. Berlin : Berghof Conflict Research, 2010, p. 47. [online]. [2019-08-01]. Available at: <<https://www.gsdrc.org/document-library/the-kla-and-the-kosovo-war>>.
- DJANKOV, S., NENOVA, T., MCLIESH, C., SHILEIFER, A.: Who owns the media? In *The Journal of law and economics*, 2003, Vol. 46, No. 2, p. 341-381. ISSN 1537-5285 2019.
- HALLIN, C. D., MANCINI, P.: *Comparing Media System - Three models of media and politics*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- HOSKINS, A.: *Digital memory studies. Media pasts in transition*. New York : Routledge, 2017, p. 236. [online]. [2019-07-01]. Available at: <<https://www.rivisteweb.it/doi/10.1405/89732>>.
- HOXHA, A.: *Media Landscape in Kosovo: Hate and propaganda influences*. Ljubljana : Seenpm, 2020, p. 23. [online]. [2019-06-10]. Available at: <<https://seenpm.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Resilience-research-publication-1-KOS-ENG.pdf>>.
- JOHNSON, H.: *Model Interventions: The Evolution of Media Development Strategies in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Macedonia from 2000 to 2007*. New York : Academic Commons, Columbia University, p. 44. [online]. [2019-06-01]. Available at: <<https://academiccommons.columbia.edu/doi/10.7916/D8WD46NR>>.
- JUNGBLUT, M., HOXHA, A.: *Conceptualizing journalistic self-censorship in post-conflict societies: A qualitative perspective on the journalistic perception of news production in Serbia, Kosovo and Macedonia*. California : Sage Publishing, 2016, p. 1-17.
- KARLOVICZ, I.: *The difficult birth of the fourth estate: media development and democracy assistance in the post-conflict Balkans*. [online]. [2019-06-01]. Available at: <http://pdc.ceu.hu/archive/00002252/01/media_5_karlowicz.pdf>.

- KOLSTØ, P.: *Media Discourse and the Yugoslav Conflicts. Representations of self and other*. Farnham : Ashgate Publishing, 2009. [online]. [2019-07-01]. Available at: <<https://sil0.pub/media-discourse-and-the-yugoslav-conflicts.html>>.
- LAPLANTE, L., PHENICIE, K.: Mediating post-conflict dialogue: The media's role in transitional justice processes. In *Marquette Law Review*, 2009, Vol. 93, No. 1, p. 251-283. ISSN 0025-3987. [online]. [2019-07-01]. Available at: <<http://scholarship.law.marquette.edu/mulr/vol93/iss1/16>>.
- OBERSCHALL, A.: *Conflict and peace building in divided societies. Responses to ethnic violence*. London : Routledge, 2007, p. 272. [online]. [2019-07-01]. Available at: <<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/9780203944851>>.
- ORGERET, K. S.: Introduction. Conflict and Post-Conflict Journalism. Worldwide Perspectives. In TAYEEBWA, W., ORGERET, K. S. (eds.): *Journalism in Conflict and Post-Conflict Conditions – Worldwide Perspectives*. Oslo : Nordicom, 2016, p. 10-11. [online]. [2019-07-01]. Available at: <<http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:935872/FULLTEXT01.pdf>>.
- PUDDEPHATT, A.: *Voices of war: Conflict and the role of the media*. Denmark : International Media Support. [online]. [2020-08-01]. Available at: <<https://www.mediasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/ims-voices-of-war-2006.pdf>>.
- ROSENGREN, E. K.: Three perspectives on media and communication studies in Europe. In SPURK-WINTERHOFF, P. (eds.): *Psychology of media in Europe. The state of the art. Perspectives for the future*. Opladen : Westdeutscher Verlag, 1995.
- STROEHLEIN, A.: *An Overview of Media Development and Post-Conflict Transition*. [online]. [2019-06-01]. Available at: <<https://www.crisisgroup.org/global/overview-media-development-and-post-conflict-transition-1>>.
- The Kosovo population 2016*. [online]. [2019-07-01]. Available at: <<https://ask.rks-gov.net/media/3385/vleresimi-i-popullsise-se-kosoves-2016.pdf>>.
- ZUPANČIČ, R., PEJIČ, N.: *Limits to the European Union's Normative Power in a Post-conflict Society EULEX and Peacebuilding in Kosovo*. Geneva : Springer, 2018.

Author



Avdyl Gashi, PhDc.

Department of Sociology
Faculty of Philosophy
University of Pristina
„George Bush“ Street, no. 10000,
KOSOVO
avdyl.gashi@uni-pr.edu

Avdyl Gashi is a PhD Cand in Sociology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Pristina, Kosovo. He is Teaching Assistant at the Department of Sociology and Social Work. The fields of interest of the author are media, conflict, social structure and social transformation.

Sabína Gáliková Tolnaiová

On Perspectives Of Teacher Training And Understanding Of Their Digital Competencies As Determinants Of Digital Education

ABSTRACT

Currently, in the context of an introduction of digital ICT in education, we are facing a problem of determinants in successful digital education that are compatible with the primary educational goals. Under the term significant determinants we understand digital competencies of teachers that necessarily become a subject of development. These competencies are pragmatically reflected in the frames or documents that describe the pedagogical training of future teachers. The author's intention is to outline an alternative holistic perspective of understanding pedagogical training in future teachers and their digital competencies that are based more on phenomenology and hermeneutics. This perspective reflects a psychagogic approach to education. The author believes that future student training is expressed in „ars docendi“ also in digital education and this „ars docendi“ cannot be achieved without student's self-reflection of their relationship with ICT, but especially not without self-understanding in terms of values and meaning. This self-understanding leads to moral self-awareness and responsibility. The author points out that it is necessary to accommodate the future teacher's personal self-reflection and self-projection and incorporate also those psychagogically relevant elements that would be complementary in the process of developing digital competencies. This will allow overcoming challenges of future teacher education, considering the psychagogic needs in education.

KEY WORDS

Digital information and communication technology (Digital ICT). Digital education. Teacher. Determinants of digital education. Pedagogical training. Digital competencies and literacy. Digital wellbeing. Psychagogical right. Self-reflection. „Ars docendi“.

1. Introduction

We can state that the traditional process of education is being gradually replaced by new technology – digital ICT. This includes means, tools, environment and practices used in teaching and learning, as well as collaboration, presenting, outputs and so on in the complex process of the development of children/pupils/students.¹ Implementation and usage of the new digital ICT have had a great influence on the field of education.

Digital ICT have proven to offer positive potential. For example we can see, that they „create more complex configurations that result in new multifunction devices. Image, sound and text carriers, which in the past were usually separate, are integrated into the same devices. When information is digitized (image, sound or text), no special device or special medium is needed.“² However, practical implementation also shows some accompanying risks and negatives, so they cannot automatically guarantee efficiency and success. Keeping primary educational goals in mind, we can ask what determines successful digital education. One such determinant can be seen in teachers, with their own personality, knowledge, abilities, skills and digital competence that is extremely important in the concept of digital education and therefore specifically addressed in the course of their professional training.

The approach to teacher's professional training and digital competence is certainly evolving, with dominating pragmatism prerequisites. In the following we will try to determine and analyse those aspects of professional teacher education and training that are important for digital competence, keeping in mind the holistic perspective that also incorporates the psychagogic³ aspect in the process of education. This holistic perspective can be described in terms of phenomenology and hermeneutics, rather than the pragmatic approach.

2. Digital competence and literacy as determinants of digital education and perspectives of pedagogical training of teachers

We can state that there have been a lot of expectations regarding technological development in education that promises to satisfy the new needs of society.⁴ Many universities and private companies invest a significant amount of money in developing electronic education systems. It is generally expected that incorporating ICT in study programmes will increase the quality of teaching and learning.⁵ However, it is necessary to say that along with the voices that expect

¹ Find more for example: KOSTRUB, D., SEVERINI, E., REHÚŠ, M.: *Proces výučby a digitálne technológie*. Bratislava/Martin : Alfa print, s. r. o., 2012, p. 8. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <https://www.fedu.uniba.sk/fileadmin/pdf/Sucasti/Katedry/KPPE/PRE_DOCENTA/Kostrub_2012_knizka.pdf>.

² MINÁRIKOVÁ, J., BLAHÚT, D., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: Hi-Tech And Eye-Catching Alike: Information In The Multiplatform Era. In *European Journal of Media, Art and Photography*, 2020, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 118.

³ More on this in the third part. See also more: GÁLIKOVÁ TOLNAIOVÁ, S.: *Idea psychagógie v holistickej perspektíve*. Bratislava : Iris, 2014, p. 156.

⁴ European universities are becoming third-generation universities. Their reforms are taking place in the perspective of knowledge-based economic development. The education system at university level is an important factor in the creation, development and innovation of this knowledge in every European society. See more for example in Poland: MROZOWSKA, S., RYŁKO-KURPIEWSKA, A.: Polish Media about Act 2.0 (the Constitution for Science). In *Communication Today*, 2020, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 22-34.

⁵ See and compare: GOYAL, E., PUROHIT, S., BHAGAT, M.: Factors that Affect Information and Communication Technology Usage: A Case Study in Management Education. In *Journal of Information Technology Management*, 2010, Vol. XXI, No. 4, p. 38-39. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<http://jitm.ubalt.edu/XXI-4/article4.pdf>>; BHAKTA, K., DUTTA, N.: Impact of Information Technology on Teaching-Learning Proces. In *International Research Journal of Interdisciplinary & Multidisciplinary Studies*. 2016, Vol. II, No. XI, p. 131-138. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<http://oaji.net/articles/2017/1707-1483695373.pdf>>.

ICT to improve the quality of education, we hear also sceptical voices and objections that do not approve of the increasing implementation of ICT in education.⁶ Still, we cannot deny that various kinds of ICT, especially the Internet, have encouraged certain aspects that can hardly contribute to quality education.⁷ We can identify not only positives and advantages, but also negatives and disadvantages in the implementation of ICT in education.⁸ It is also clearly visible that quite many of the realised projects that concern electronic (or digital) education have failed, not meeting the originally planned results. This all leads to the increasing number of voices questioning the quality and even viability of this form of education.⁹

We believe this depends on what determinants we see in digital education and their efficiency. Education that incorporates the implementation and usage of digital ICT has certain determinants or conditions that secure success especially from the perspective of the primary educational goal. It is obvious however that technology alone is not enough, it will not automatically increase effectiveness and ensure good school results.¹⁰ In order to efficiently use the positive aspects of ICT in education, we need to use it correctly, in a way that respects the primary educational goals.¹¹ In this perspective, it is digital literacy and competences that are important co-determinants of digital education, its effectiveness and success. It is therefore necessary to form and enhance the competent usage of ICT.

We can see that teaching with the help of digital ICT is dependent not only on the quality of technical equipment in schools, but also on computer (or digital) literacy in both teachers and students.¹² For example, Cornali and Tirocchi mention the influence of teachers' approach – this determines how they use digital technology in classes; they point out that the situation requires

⁶ SEMRÁDOVÁ, I.: Zamyšlení nad východisky profesní etiky učitele. In VLADYKOVÁ, L. (ed.): *Aplikovaná etika – kontexty a perspektivy. Acta facultatis Philosophicae Universitatis Šafarikianae* 6. Košice : UPJŠ, 2010, p. 326-327. See, for example, about the risks of the impact of ICT in education: HLADÍKOVÁ, V.: Transformation of thinking and education under the influence of internet communication. In *Ad Alta: Journal of interdisciplinary research*, 2018, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 99-103.

⁷ CORNALI, F., TIROCCHI, S.: Globalization, education, information and communication technologies: what relationships and reciprocal influences? In *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2012, Vol. 47, p. 2064. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/275541968_Globalization_Education_Information_and_Communication_Technologies_What_Relationships_and_Reciprocal_Influences>.

⁸ See and compare: BHAKTA, K., DUTTA, N.: Impact of Information Technology on Teaching-Learning Proces. In *International Research Journal of Interdisciplinary & Multidisciplinary Studies*, 2016, Vol. II, No. XI, p. 131-138. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<http://oaji.net/articles/2017/1707-1483695373.pdf>>; GOYAL, E., PUROHIT, S., BHAGAT, M.: Factors that Affect Information and Communication Technology Usage: A Case Study in Management Education. In *Journal of Information Technology Management*, 2010, Vol. XXI, No. 4, p. 38-57. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<http://jitm.ubalt.edu/XXI-4/article4.pdf>>; LEWIN, D., LUNDIE, D.: Philosophies of Digital Pedagogy. In *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 2016, Vol. 35, No. 3, p. 235–240. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://e4-0.ipn.mx/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/07-philosophies-of-digital-pedagogy.pdf>>; CORNALI, F., TIROCCHI, S.: Globalization, education, information and communication technologies: what relationships and reciprocal influences? In *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2012, Vol. 47, p. 2060-2069. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/275541968_Globalization_Education_Information_and_Communication_Technologies_What_Relationships_and_Reciprocal_Influences>.

⁹ GOYAL, E., PUROHIT, S., BHAGAT, M.: Factors that Affect Information and Communication Technology Usage: A Case Study in Management Education. In *Journal of Information Technology Management*, 2010, Vol. XXI, No. 4, p. 39. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<http://jitm.ubalt.edu/XXI-4/article4.pdf>>.

¹⁰ MISHRA, P., KOEHLER, J. M.: Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge: A Framework for Teacher Knowledge. In *Teachers College Record*, 2006, Vol. 108, No. 6, p. 1017–1018. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://www.punyamishra.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/01/mishra-koehler-tcr2006.pdf>>.

¹¹ JOHNSON, G. D.: Information Technology and the Goals of Education: Making Nails for the Hammer. In JOHNSON, G. D. et al.: *Ethical, Psychological and Societal Problems of the Application of ICTs in Education. Analytical Survey*. Moscow : UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education, 2004, p. 40. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://iite.unesco.org/pics/publications/en/files/3214629.pdf>>.

¹² SEMRÁDOVÁ, I.: Zamyšlení nad východisky profesní etiky učitele. In VLADYKOVÁ, L. (ed.): *Aplikovaná etika – kontexty a perspektivy. Acta facultatis Philosophicae Universitatis Šafarikianae* 6. Košice : UPJŠ, 2010, p. 325.

well-prepared teachers who are ready to take control.¹³ However specific competence is important not only in the case of teachers. Also for students, who use ICT the way that is defined by a set of skills and other aspects such as self-control, media literacy and parent's intervention.¹⁴

According to V. Kačínová, media education is becoming more important in schools today as it prepares students for life in a world of media that is greatly determined by digital ICT.¹⁵ We may say here that digital literacy in general is becoming a teaching tool and purpose of (media) education – the goal is to build up the ability to think and create and go beyond the limits of an exclusively intuitive (and often passive) approach to digital ICT, which is typically seen in its recreational usage.¹⁶ However, we also have to say that understanding the new (digital) literacy has called for a revision and change of the concept¹⁷ regarding the development of both digital ICT and presently also our new social practices that come with it.

As G. Faloon points out, the traditional approach has been changed¹⁸ also in the training of future teachers, so more emphasis is put on promoting „digital literacy“ in students now. Terms such as „information literacy,“ „Internet literacy,“ „media literacy“ and recently also „multimodal literacy“ are connected with the efficient usage of digital sources for teaching and learning and are meant to be a part of an inclusive view of digital literacy.¹⁹ We believe we can speak similarly of „transmedia literacy,“ which describes the approach that signals a turn towards a new concept in the view of the latest development in media ecology, triggered by a relevant move to the analysis of the practice of participative cultures and the content they create (practices, approach, content analysis and content creation, as well as Internet discourses).²⁰

¹³ CORNALI, F., TIROCCHI, S.: Globalization, education, information and communication technologies: what relationships and reciprocal influences? In *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2012, Vol. 47, p. 2064. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/275541968_Globalization_Education_Information_and_Communication_Technologies_What_Relationships_and_Reciprocal_Influences>.

¹⁴ See: REINECKE, L., OLIVER, M. B.: Media use and well-being: Status quo and open questions. In REINECKE, L., OLIVER, M. B. (eds.): *The Routledge handbook of media use and well-being: International perspectives on theory and research on positive media effects*. New York : Routledge, 2016, p. 11-18. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314205416_Media_Use_and_WellBeing_Status_Quo_and_Open_Questions>.

¹⁵ KAČINOVÁ, V.: *Teória a prax mediálnej výchovy. Mediálna výchova ako súčasť všeobecného školského vzdelávania*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2015, p. 67.; An example of a universal synthesizing model of media education see: FEDOROV, A., LEVITSKAYA, A.: Synthetic Media Education Model Used in Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). In *Media Education*, 2019, Vol. 59, No. 1, p. 30-36. [online]. [2019-01-25]. Available at: <<https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/synthetic-media-education-model-used-in-commonwealth-of-independent-states-cis>>.

¹⁶ CORNALI, F., TIROCCHI, S.: Globalization, education, information and communication technologies: what relationships and reciprocal influences? In *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2012, Vol. 47, p. 2064. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/275541968_Globalization_Education_Information_and_Communication_Technologies_What_Relationships_and_Reciprocal_Influences>.

¹⁷ On terms, concepts and characteristics see also and compare: GALLARDO-ECHENIQUE, E. E. et al.: Digital Competence in the Knowledge Society. In *MERLOT Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*, 2015, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 3-5. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <https://jolt.merlot.org/vol11no1/Gallardo-Echenique_0315.pdf>; MCGARR, O., McDONAGH, A.: Digital Competence in Teacher Education. *Output 1 of the Erasmus+ funded Developing Student Teachers' Digital Competence (DICTE) project*, 2019. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://dicte.oslomet.no/>>.

¹⁸ For example, new forms of language and social patterns of interactions on social media have created potent paradigm shift. See more: GENNARO, S., MILLER, B.: Critical Media Literacy in the Googleburg Galaxy. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2020, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 6-21.

¹⁹ FALLOON, G.: From digital literacy to digital competence: the teacher digital competency (TDC) framework. In *Education Technology Research Development*, 2020, Vol. 68, No. 5, p. 2449–2472. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11423-020-09767-4>>.

²⁰ SCOLARI, C. A., MASANET, M. J., GUERRERO PICO, M., ESTABLÉS, M. J.: Transmedia literacy in the new media ecology: Teens' transmedia skills and informal learning strategies. In *El profesional de la información*, 2018, Vol. 27, No. 4, p. 801-812. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/94f7/ac9024b82207115cd54e0e2876ebad2b9033.pdf>>.

As states J. Gómez Galán, the really authentic digital (digital and media) literacy that we need to strive for should include a correct understanding of the languages of technical media, it is impossible to restrict our attention just to the construction of a technical and instrumental process.²¹ Regarding the understanding and development of digital literacy, it is necessary to say that we are fighting with traditional and risky attitudes that actually impair the whole process. A. Gutiérrez and K. Tyner, for example, mention strategies to implement digital literacy in curricula, these are however restricted to only a technical dimension of digital ICT – in other words – to mastering the technical aspect and expertise that is necessary to utilise ICT. It simply means elementary training, primarily meant to deal with the „operating“ level. However, this way we actually worsen the situation.²²

Considering the pedagogical training of future teachers, it seems that it traditionally aims at building attitude and confidence when using digital resources in education, as well as developing a skill set useful chiefly for work with hardware and software. We can notice here that pedagogical training generally (and also formally) puts an emphasis on development of the skills that are related to the technical and practical aspect of ICT, e.g. those that instruct how to use devices and software. It is procedural skills that are important here, possibly combined with the ability to work with information technology, information and information assessment, as well as thinking that includes information (for example critical analysis, assessment) – „information literacy“. However, a growing number of research studies reveal that this approach is ineffective when we keep in mind the much-needed broader understanding of skills and knowledge that future teachers will find necessary if we speak about their personal and professional lives. This approach is criticised because it concentrates solely on the technical aspects.²³

There are several perspectives in the building of digital skills or competences in students – future teachers during their pedagogical training. We can for example mention that the TPACK model (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge) introduces a pragmatic approach. Mishra and Koehler, the authors of this model, implement the ability to combine technological, pedagogical and content knowledge that aims at using digital resources to improve knowledge about a given subject.²⁴ They present a pedagogical content framework that also uses information about technology and describes a link between knowledge of technology and stages of its efficient usage when concentrating on educational goals. This framework exceeds both disciplinary knowledge and technical knowledge. Its authors emphasise the fact that in order to use digital ICT in education efficiently, teachers shall realise and fully understand the fact that there is a connection between technology and pedagogical practice and they shall also respect any relationships here.²⁵

²¹ GOMÉZ GALÁN, J.: Media Education as Theoretical and Practical Paradigm for Digital Literacy: An Interdisciplinary Analysis. In *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2015, Vol. 11, No. 3, p. 31. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://arxiv.org/ftp/arxiv/papers/1803/1803.01677.pdf>>.

²² See and compare: GUTIÉRREZ, A., TYNER, K.: Media Education, Media Literacy and Digital Competence. In *Comunicar*, 2012, Vol. 19, No. 38, p. 31-37. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <https://www.academia.edu/9239011/Media_Education_Media_Literacy_and_Digital_Compentence>; GOMÉZ GALÁN, J.: Media Education as Theoretical and Practical Paradigm for Digital Literacy: An Interdisciplinary Analysis. In *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2015, Vol. 11, No. 3, p. 31-32. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://arxiv.org/ftp/arxiv/papers/1803/1803.01677.pdf>>.

²³ FALON, G.: From digital literacy to digital competence: the teacher digital competency (TDC) framework. In *Education Technology Research Development*, 2020, Vol. 68, No. 5, p. 2449–2472. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11423-020-09767-4>>.

²⁴ MISHRA, P., KOEHLER, J. M.: Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge: A Framework for Teacher Knowledge. In *Teachers College Record*, 2006, Vol. 108, No. 6, p. 1017–1054. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://www.punyamishra.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/01/mishra-koehler-tcr2006.pdf>>; See also and compare: FALON, G.: From digital literacy to digital competence: the teacher digital competency (TDC) framework. In *Education Technology Research Development*, 2020, Vol. 68, No. 5, p. 2449–2472. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11423-020-09767-4>>.

²⁵ MISHRA, P., KOEHLER, J. M.: Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge: A Framework for Teacher Knowledge. In *Teachers College Record*, 2006, Vol. 108, No. 6, p. 1017–1018. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://www.punyamishra.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/01/mishra-koehler-tcr2006.pdf>>.

According to Faloon, further discussion about development of models of pedagogical training that utilise digital technology signals a more frequent implementation of components such as personal „digital dispositions“ and behaviour, and consideration of the impact that digital technology has on people, society and the environment. Faloon notices that the situation in education and technology has changed dramatically since the introduction of TPACK (in 2006), reflecting especially new digital innovation and the fast-changing and often unstable social, political and economic background. Back then, there were no obvious and visible signs of circumstances that would bring changes to our lives. This exactly determines what it means to be „digitally competent“. Without doubt, digital competence (not only) in teachers probably means, or has to mean, definitely more than just the usage of technical equipment and computer software, or applications.²⁶

Faloon notes that it is necessary today to expand teachers' ability to understand the complex set of skills needed to utilise ICT and manage the information flow. We need to support digital competencies that respect constantly growing demands in students preparing for pedagogical practice. Faloon explains that it is a broad, holistic conceptual framework²⁷ of digital competence that respects the future teacher's task – to educate, help to shape young people's capacities so that they can not only exist and work safely, productively, sustainably and ethically in an environment that is influenced by digital technology, but also use the advantages that digital resources offer. We may say here that presently, there is a holistic framework that accepts the broad concept of digital competencies in teachers and states that a cautious and safe usage of ICT requires also certain knowledge and attitude that also concerns the legal and ethical aspects (for example privacy and safety). It is a holistic framework elaborated by Faloon²⁸ and called the TDC framework (Teacher Digital Competence).

As E. E. Gallardo-Echenique et al. state, proper digital competence, or digital literacy acquisition, as seen from the holistic and emancipatory perspective, is the key to active and functional participation in our modern society. A society that is based on information and knowledge emphasizes the needs of a citizen who is able to access information, process it, interpret it, but also organise and spread it further on digital platforms. It is necessary that people acquire a feeling of confidence when they deal with digital technology and services. Educators and researchers should support people in gaining skills, self-confidence and knowledge and employing ethical standards that are necessary in this field.²⁹ There is a general consensus about the need to elaborate and implement an alternative attitude in teacher preparation, an attitude that reflects a more integrated and complex approach, but the problem with better teacher preparation for effective and productive usage of digital technology in schools still remains. There is some debate as exactly what to do and which programs should be used in this preparation.³⁰

²⁶ FALOON, G.: From digital literacy to digital competence: the teacher digital competency (TDC) framework. In *Education Technology Research Development*, 2020, Vol. 68, No. 5, p. 2449–2472. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11423-020-09767-4>>.

²⁷ More on the need of holistic models of digital competence in the context of media education (competence) see also: KAČINOVÁ, V.: From a reductionist to a holistic model of digital competence and media education. In *Communication Today*, 2019, Vol. 10, No. 2, p. 17-26.

²⁸ FALOON, G.: From digital literacy to digital competence: the teacher digital competency (TDC) framework. In *Education Technology Research Development*, 2020, Vol. 68, No. 5, p. 2449–2472. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11423-020-09767-4>>.

²⁹ GALLARDO-ECHENIQUE, E. E. et al.: Digital Competence in the Knowledge Society. In *MERLOT Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*, 2015, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 12-20. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <https://jolt.merlot.org/vol11no1/Gallardo-Echenique_0315.pdf>. ; We can see, that the current situation for example in Slovak primary and secondary schools in the teaching of axiocentric media education is favourable because schools include value-oriented topics in their curriculums. BULGANOVÁ, D., KAČINOVÁ, V.: Axiocentric Teaching And Learning About Media In The Context Of School Practice. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2019, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 88.

³⁰ FALOON, G.: From digital literacy to digital competence: the teacher digital competency (TDC) framework. In *Education Technology Research Development*, 2020, Vol. 68, No. 5, p. 2449–2472. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11423-020-09767-4>>.

Faloon also speaks about our wellbeing. He notices that the existing frameworks used in teacher preparation mention neither wellbeing nor other questions that concern personal dispositions, attitudes, or safety concerns.³¹ We see discussions about digital literacy playing an important part in the relationship between media usage and wellbeing.³² When we speak about the understanding of digital and media literacy in teachers, we must especially not forget future teacher preparation, in which it is highly desirable to also implement the aspect of wellbeing in the overall context of using digital media and our life in the digital universe of cyberspace. In our opinion, we should think of wellbeing as a component of digital competence in future teachers. In view of this, we appreciate the concept of digital welfare benefit, elaborated by M. Gui, M. Fasoli and R. Carradore (in 2017), considering its implementation also in the framework of future teacher education.

We notice here that features that make ICT useful (reliability, precision, user-friendly approach and fast processing) may have a negative impact not only on our productivity and innovation, but also on our wellbeing when we use this ICT.³³ We use ICT a certain way, and this makes it a key variable that determines our wellbeing. Mutual interaction between our usage of digital technology or media, and our wellbeing, results in potential benefits, but also in risks in our life. The present theoretical approaches and empiric findings clearly show a variety of ways in which media content and media usage influence our happiness, understanding of the meaning of life,³⁴ and naturally the same also applies in both the personal and professional lives of teachers.

Gui, Fasoli and Carradore point out that we should be able to cope with various effects and impacts of digital ICT that we are facing when enjoying the many advantages that this technology brings.³⁵ We believe that the same applies also in the case of the pedagogical workers who use this technology and the virtual education platforms that they introduce. These authors also speak about the need to maintain wellbeing in the digital dimension and see it as a condition in which subjective wellbeing is kept in an environment that is characterised by a redundancy of digital communication. Individuals are able to control their usage of ICT so that it meets their needs and does not disrupt their feeling of comfort and safety... They believe each of us needs to be able to control digital stimuli, so that they can be effectively filtered and directed towards our personal and professional goals and wellbeing. Sustaining digital wellbeing is relevant for our self-realisation, or for our wellbeing in life.³⁶

As these authors mention, the complexity of today's media environment puts the problem of sustaining wellbeing within digital media above any issues with self-control, which has always been more about individual moral attitude than any form of competence. In order to secure this

³¹ FALOON, G.: From digital literacy to digital competence: the teacher digital competency (TDC) framework. In *Education Technology Research Development*, 2020, Vol. 68, No. 5, p. 2449–2472. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11423-020-09767-4>>.

³² REINECKE, L., OLIVER, M. B.: Media use and well-being: Status quo and open questions. In REINECKE, L., OLIVER, M. B. (eds.): *The Routledge handbook of media use and well-being: International perspectives on theory and research on positive media effects*. New York: Routledge, 2016, p. 11. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314205416_Media_Use_and_WellBeing_Status_Quo_and_Open_Questions>.

³³ GUI, M., FASOLI, M., CARRADORE, R.: „Digital Well-Being.” Developing a New Theoretical Tool For Media Literacy Research. In *Italian Journal of Sociology of Education*, 2017, Vol. 9, No. 1, p. 162. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <https://ijse.padovauniversitypress.it/system/files/papers/2017_1_8.pdf>.

³⁴ See about research: REINECKE, L., OLIVER, M. B.: Media use and well-being: Status quo and open questions. In REINECKE, L., OLIVER, M. B. (eds.): *The Routledge handbook of media use and well-being: International perspectives on theory and research on positive media effects*. New York: Routledge, 2016, p. 3-13. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314205416_Media_Use_and_WellBeing_Status_Quo_and_Open_Questions>.

³⁵ GUI, M., FASOLI, M., CARRADORE, R.: „Digital Well-Being.” Developing a New Theoretical Tool For Media Literacy Research. In *Italian Journal of Sociology of Education*, 2017, Vol. 9, No. 1. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <https://ijse.padovauniversitypress.it/system/files/papers/2017_1_8.pdf>.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 163 - 167.

sustaining, we need to develop a new body of knowledge, cognitive attitudes and operational skills. Strategic or metacognitive skills are those that apply to digital wellbeing; they are defined as a set of specific skills needed to cope with the side-effects of digital over-communication. These are skills that cover attention – they are useful for achieving and steering strategic attention that helps to prevent stress caused by a massive information flow and minimise the waste of time and attention by eliminating irrelevant activities in day-to-day life. We may state here that in Gui, Fasoli and Carradore's concept, these skills describe the new aspects of specific digital competence that serve to maintain wellbeing in the digital environment, thus influencing our overall wellbeing.³⁷

In our opinion, it is necessary to actively develop the frameworks that both define teacher preparation and cover those educational challenges that emphasise the importance of specific digital competence and our own (digital) wellbeing. This competence is the core of the new media literacy. However, considering the fact that teachers, in principle, are individuals who actively work in the field of psychagogy,³⁸ even in the new era of digital technology, we believe that it is necessary to think about this profession and preparation for this profession in a way that exceeds the importance of this competence and literacy and to abandon the reductionistic approach, which is – to a certain degree – a result of defining the goals merely in the context of the need of social self-realisation in individuals, which describes „effective citizens of the 21st century“.³⁹

3. Digital competence and „ars docendi“ in the context of psychagogy in digital education and preparation of teachers

As I. Semrádová states, in our effort to provide education we create „products“ that have a cognitive value and follow a certain path either towards the intended or contextual usage. These are products such as textbooks, lecture notes and presently also e-learning courses combined with information and communication technology products and virtual environment based on this technology.⁴⁰ In the view of social and cultural expectation, these human constructs or artefacts are to agree with the humanising approach, which states that in terms of axiology, the value of these products (or the general good it promotes) should correspond with usefulness. Anything that we see as useful and that satisfies our needs is valuable, or anything that has qualities which make this entity useful and desirable.

³⁷ GUI, M., FASOLI, M., CARRADORE, R.: „Digital Well-Being.“ Developing a New Theoretical Tool For Media Literacy Research. In *Italian Journal of Sociology of Education*, 2017, Vol. 9, No. 1. p. 163-166. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <https://ijse.padovauniversitypress.it/system/files/papers/2017_1_8.pdf>.

³⁸ Human being is a subject that seeks meaning and values in life. In other words – an authentic life that is in accord with its meaning and values. What is important is the quality of life – good life. In terms of axiology and ethics, it is life that is based on values and high moral standards – „good life“ or „étos“. We are speaking about „ars vivendi“. More on this: GÁLIKOVÁ TOLNAIOVÁ, S.: *Idea psychagógie v holistickej perspektíve*. Bratislava : Iris, 2014. p. 156.

³⁹ KAČINOVÁ, V.: From a reductionist to a holistic model of digital competence and media education. In *Communication Today*, 2019, Vol. 10, No. 2, p. 23.

⁴⁰ SEMRÁDOVÁ, I.: Zamyšlení nad východisky profesní etiky učitele. In VLADYKOVÁ, L. (ed.): *Aplikovaná etika – kontexty a perspektívy. Acta Facultatis Philosophicae Universitatis Šafarikianae* 6. Košice : UPJŠ, 2010, p. 323.; As B. Kosová points out, all these products have long been results of human creativity of high ethical standards and moral attitude.; KOSO VÁ, B.: Výchova ako zodpovednosť. In KUDLÁČOVÁ, B., RAJSKÝ, A. (eds.): *Kontexty filozofie výchovy v novoveku a súčasnej perspektíve*. Trnava : PeF TU v Trnave, 2014, p. 83-93.

Also M. Deuze⁴¹ states that in the view of present cultural and social expectations, we can see a tendency to prefer a practical or instrumental role of new digital information and communication media, or simply media. In this perspective, we accept the pragmatic technological vision of the practical and functional potential that digital technology and its technological environment offers. We not only expect practical usefulness of this technology that can help satisfy our needs we have when we turn towards our educational goals, but also an increase in the quality of various educational processes. The value and importance of digital technology is therefore defined by this aspect. According to Semrádová, the technical and scientific civilisation has found an optimal tool in this technology, a tool that offers the means for the effective and productive education needed for its further development.⁴²

It is, however, necessary to say and emphasise that the human being is a „psychagogic subject“,⁴³ even „homo digitalis“ (medialis, informaticus, interneticus...) in the new reality and technical rules of the digital universe. A solely pragmatic perspective does not constitute an adequate base to build up, or at worst derive, such development and education in human beings that does not aim primarily at productive cooperation, or at simply being an effective citizen. This development concentrates on the very „I“ and the way of life in which the psychagogic dimension requires us to understand its meaning and values. This can be described as „étos“. Education that follows this perspective should then have an inherent dimension that exceeds the framework of the pragmatic and utilitarian, but also practical and existential determination. It should cultivate the ability of the human mind to move freely between various discourses and update hermeneutics of human experience. It should encourage us to see various approaches to reality, distinguish the world of diversity and perceive plurality, but also exercise empathy towards the others.⁴⁴

We are confronted today with a reductionist approach to education, where educational goals are understood or defined unilaterally in the context of a need for the social self-realisation of individuals. This approach also introduces the concept of competence in an individual's professional life in the society that concentrates on performance.⁴⁵ Many philosophers, pedagogical workers and psychologists, but also authors and students of e-learning courses ask what should be taught in today's diverse world, where inherent education is replaced by education useful for a technocratic and bureaucratic civilisation – for roles that we must accept and do accept to be successful in our society.⁴⁶

Such refining of ideas for education suitable for the 21st century, education that embraces relations such as „I-you“, „you-world“ and „I-I“ refers to „I“ with relevant experience and knowledge, „I“ that is not superior and egoistic, but more oriented, cleverer and richer in feelings. It is „I“ that accepts values which are the result of responsibility, „I“ that is active and capable of self-reflection and also reflection. This „I“ is the starting point for the formulation of goals of education, or even the principal goal of education⁴⁷ that has an inherent or psychagogic dimension. Yet, what is the situation like with the potential of digital ICT that are present in education and what is the relationship to this inherent dimension, or psychagogy claim?

⁴¹ DEUZE, M.: *Media life. Život v médiích*. Praha : Karolinum, 2015, p. 151.

⁴² SEMRÁDOVÁ, I.: Zamyšlení nad východisky profesní etiky učitele. In VLADYKOVÁ, L. (ed.): *Aplikovaná etika – kontexty a perspektivy*. Acta Facultatis Philosophicae Universitatis Šafarikianae 6. Košice : UPJŠ, 2010, p. 327.

⁴³ GÁLIKOVÁ TOLNÁIOVÁ, S.: *Idea psychagógie v holistickej perspektíve*. Bratislava : Iris, 2014. p. 156.

⁴⁴ See and compare: GÁLIKOVÁ TOLNÁIOVÁ, S.: *Idea psychagógie v holistickej perspektíve*. Bratislava : Iris, 2014, p. 119.; RUSNÁK, P.: Kirké, paideia a koncept prirodzeného sveta. In KUDLÁČOVÁ, B., SZTOBRYN, S. (eds.): *Kontexty filozofie výchovy v historickej a súčasnej perspektíve*. Trnava : PeF TU, 2011, p. 220.

⁴⁵ KAČINOVÁ, V.: From a reductionist to a holistic model of digital competence and media education. In *Communication Today*, 2019, Vol. 10, No. 2, p. 23.

⁴⁶ SEMRÁDOVÁ, I.: Zamyšlení nad východisky profesní etiky učitele. In VLADYKOVÁ, L. (ed.): *Aplikovaná etika – kontexty a perspektivy*. Acta Facultatis Philosophicae Universitatis Šafarikianae 6. Košice : UPJŠ, 2010, p. 327.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 328.

As we have already pointed out, we hear opinions that take ICT and the digital or virtual dimension as an inappropriate platform to follow the primary goals of education, chiefly because of its inherent – psychagogic character. Sometimes these opinions express scepticism or objections that are based on purely neophobic attitudes. However, as Semrádová notes, ICT and the environment that comes with them do not necessarily mean an obstacle for education. This technology can help us fulfil the desired goals, as it may take account of the details that are based on values, emotions, ethics and aesthetics found in the cognitive content and thus contribute to personal development. If the ICT are incorporated into the educational process adequately, they may even assist us in the quest for the truth, good and beauty. E-learning courses offer space for explanation, but also for raising questions that concern meaning and meaningfulness. E-learning thus does not have to be merely an educational strategy, but also an important cultural phenomenon, this author points out.⁴⁸

Digital ICT do not need to have to accompany education into the future, as symbols and tools of a technocratic dictatorship.⁴⁹ It seems that the future of education is not determined by modern ICT, but primarily by what position in education we assign for them.⁵⁰ We do have to be careful here all the time. As also Johnson points out, educational goals that require mutual interaction must be preserved. The aspects that require a physical body, i.e. meeting in person, should not be abandoned or re-defined as remote meetings.⁵¹ What is, in this concept, the role of a teacher when we define cyberspace as „a place where we can learn something”?⁵² It is necessary to secure that live communication in education is not replaced by parallel monologues. We also need to stamp out those modes of thinking that may build up barriers in understanding, or misinterpretation that is the product of „instant” knowledge, as well as information and technological reductionism.⁵³ We should also modify each and every media-based application so that it is not merely something that we use, but also something that we are free to challenge.⁵⁴

We may say that the power and potential of digital ICT is exceeded only by the power and potential of humans.⁵⁵ A teacher, with his or her personality, knowledge, experience and skills, is a relevant partner and determinant in digital education. In this context, we can see that especially in terms of psychagogy, teacher training and competence that determine usage of digital ICT in education, is of great importance. What sort of preparation is therefore necessary for a future teacher? What about his or her digital literacy? How can we look at teachers’ digital competence in terms of psychagogy?

⁴⁸ SEMRÁDOVÁ, I.: Zamyšlení nad východisky profesní etiky učitele. In VLADYKOVÁ, L. (ed.): *Aplikovaná etika – kontexty a perspektívy. Acta Facultatis Philosophicae Universitatis Šafarikianae* 6. Košice : UPJŠ, 2010, p. 327-329

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 327.

⁵⁰ BHAKTA, K., DUTTA, N.: Impact of Information Technology on Teaching-Learning Proces. In *International Research Journal of Interdisciplinary & Multidisciplinary Studies*, 2016, Vol. II, No. XI, p. 137. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<http://oaji.net/articles/2017/1707-1483695373.pdf>>.

⁵¹ JOHNSON, G. D.: Information Technology and the Goals of Education: Making Nails for the Hammer. In JOHNSON, G. D. et al.: *Ethical, Psychological and Societal Problems of the Application of ICTs in Education. Analytical Survey*. Moscow : UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education, 2004, p. 40. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://iite.unesco.org/pics/publications/en/files/3214629.pdf>>.

⁵² KUKLOVÁ, J.: Kyberprostor jako prostor k výchově a poznání. In KUDLÁČOVÁ, B., SZTOBRYN, S. (eds.): *Kontexty filozofie výchovy v historickej a súčasnej perspektíve*. Trnava : PeF TU, 2011, p. 292.

⁵³ SEMRÁDOVÁ, I.: Zamyšlení nad východisky profesní etiky učitele. In VLADYKOVÁ, L. (ed.): *Aplikovaná etika – kontexty a perspektívy. Acta Facultatis Philosophicae Universitatis Šafarikianae* 6. Košice : UPJŠ, 2010, p. 324.

⁵⁴ DEUZE, M.: *Media life. Život v médiích*. Praha : Karolinum, 2015, p. 84.

⁵⁵ OLCOTT, D., CARRERA FARRAN, X., GALLARDO-ECHENIQUE, E. E., GONZÁLES MARTÍNEZ, J.: Ethics and Education in the Digital Age: Global Perspectives and Strategies for Local Transformation in Catalonia. In *RUSC. Universities and Knowledge Society Journal*, 2015, Vol. 12, No. 2, p. 68. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://rusc.uoc.edu/rusc/ca/index.php/rusc/article/view/v12n2-olcott-carrera-gallardo-gonzalez/2614.html>>.

As already stated, pedagogical training should also concentrate on specific digital competencies that are in the centre of the new digital literacy. These competencies take into account comfort in both professional and personal life and also cover digital wellbeing that also contributes to general wellbeing in both the hedonic and eudaimonic sense. The competencies that we are speaking about do not only pursue satisfaction and minimalization of the side-effects of digital technology (hedonic approach,) but also use this technology in order to realise one's own potential in life (eudaimonic approach).⁵⁶ These competencies are also relevant for the quality of personal and professional life of each and every teacher, as seen in terms of psychagogy. However, we believe that not even they can fully provide it.

People can, or even have to communicate with the whole world and may succeed in this if they are internally integrated personalities,⁵⁷ which is certainly true also for teachers in digital education (more so if we speak in terms of psychagogy). It seems, in this context, that perspective in the form of literacy that P. Aroldi describes as less technical, or less linked to technology (or languages), but oriented more towards humanism and communication. Such literacy is not neutral regarding the culture of convergence and puts every teacher back in their role and their responsibility.⁵⁸ Does digital competence in a teacher then mean the ability to use digital information and communication technology when educating is a skill that can be improved, or is it the minimum that is necessary to achieve? O. McGarr and A. McDonagh ask.⁵⁹ As we see it, in order to follow the course that is set by psychagogy, mere understanding of digital competence in teachers, as we see it now, is absolutely unsatisfactory. In fact, this approach simply means a reductionist approach – an integrated set that comprises the knowledge, skills and attitudes that individuals need to adequately use digital ICT so that they can become „effective citizens of the 21st century”.⁶⁰

However, contrary to the usual understanding of digital competence in teachers (chiefly a group of specific skills), we can take a different look, McGarra and McDonagh declare – we can see it for example as a way of life. If we understand digital competence this way, then the frameworks that distinguish the individual levels of this competence may not be useful for its improvement.⁶¹ We believe that we can speak of a way of „ars vivendi“ in the context of using digital ICT based on our self-understanding in terms of meaning and values, which can be seen as „étos“. Regarding education, we can similarly speak of „ars docendi“ in teachers who use digital ICT, or digital virtual environment. As also M. Deuze notes,⁶² similarly to our ethical life with digital ICT, or media („life in media“), which should be ethical and carry an aesthetic potential (or be a work of art), it is also the already mentioned „ars docendi“ of a teacher that needs this potential. It does not comply with the idea of unilateral and comprehensive planning and assessment that is based on pre-given professional norms or standards that also cover digital competencies, in fact, it does not comply with any formulation of professional competencies whatsoever.

⁵⁶ GUI, M., FASOLI, M., CARRADORE, R.: „Digital Well-Being.“ Developing a New Theoretical Tool For Media Literacy Research. In *Italian Journal of Sociology of Education*, 2017, Vol. 9, No. 1, p. 163-167. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <https://ijse.padovauniversitypress.it/system/files/papers/2017_1_8.pdf>.

⁵⁷ KUSIN, V.: Filozoficko-etické aspekty globalizácie výchovy. In KUDLIČKA, J. (ed.): *Čas a dejiny II. Liptovský Mikuláš : SFZ pri SAV a Vojenská akadémia*, 1999, p. 115.

⁵⁸ AROLDI, P.: *(New) challenges for a (new) media education*. In BLANCO, I., ROMER, M. (eds.): *Los niños frente a las pantallas*. Madrid : Editorial Universitas, 2007, p. 28 [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <www.cost-transforming-audiences.eu/.../%20New%20challenges>.

⁵⁹ MCGARR, O., MCDONAGH, A.: Digital Competence in Teacher Education. *Output 1 of the Erasmus+ funded Developing Student Teachers' Digital Competence (DICTE) project*, 2019, p. 40. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://dicte.oslomet.no/>>.

⁶⁰ KAČINOVÁ, V.: From a reductionist to a holistic model of digital competence and media education. In *Communication Today*, 2019, Vol. 10, No. 2, p. 23.

⁶¹ MCGARR, O., MCDONAGH, A.: Digital Competence in Teacher Education. *Output 1 of the Erasmus+ funded Developing Student Teachers' Digital Competence (DICTE) project*, 2019, p. 40. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://dicte.oslomet.no/>>.

⁶² DEUZE, M.: *Media life. Život v médiích*. Praha : Karolinum, 2015, p. 200, 236.

As Deuze states in reference to R. Rorty's reflection, modern culture now seeks instrumental rationality that prefers guidance, technology and professionalism. The approach that prevents any soul vibes and awe and fortifies immunity against romantic enthusiasm in dealing with attitudes that would sort out „life in media” lacks an impulse, hope and beauty.⁶³ This is what the majority of frameworks and documents dealing with modern teacher education are like, quite openly preferring acquisition of skills, based on a timetable, and skills that can be assessed using professional standards.⁶⁴ We can agree here with Deuze that we need to get over this unilateral praise of media, or multimedia, literacy and also overrating of the meaning of any explicitly formulated and required digital competence in teachers.⁶⁵ Teacher's self-planning is important for „ars docendi,” so it requires the needed attention in pedagogical training.

What principles, tools or methods are important in the future teacher's training in the context of psychagogy or „ars vivendi”? Basing on what has previously been said, it is obvious that it is important to overcome the purely normative principles and use those that employ the principles of playfulness, tools and abilities that Deuze also speaks about.⁶⁶ We believe it is necessary to also let in hope, dreams and ambitions, but also some scepticism towards what normally seems to be understood and indisputable. We should also admit the possibility to wonder, admire, and feel amazed and also the ability to seek the truth, good and beautiful. The opportunity also should not be taken from expressing such human qualities and experiences as slowness, waiting, silence, boredom or emptiness... These are features that oppose media, or virtual reality⁶⁷ and give us a chance to keep a healthy distance from digital ICT.

We can say that in relation to entering cyberspace as the „place where we can learn something”,⁶⁸ the teacher prepares not only the material for a given topic, but also thinks about his or her personal attitude to it. This reflection and self-reflection constitute the condition that is necessary for a serious elaboration of the hermeneutic approach in the virtual platform for students.⁶⁹ Teacher's self-knowledge regarding meaning and values is more important than anything else in the technical environment.⁷⁰ This leads to self-realisation and thus responsibility and self-control, without which „ars vivendi,” or „ars docendi” cannot be achieved. Here we should mention yet another relevant factor or component that helps in the process of future teacher training, which should come with teachers, who are also rational and creative – philosophy, as a method, but also as a discipline. Philosophy, along with the other (already mentioned) components, can serve as an element useful for shaping the very much needed rational thinking, self-reflection and self-projecting that co-create the „ars-vivendi” of a teacher.

⁶³ DEUZE, M.: *Media life. Život v médiích*. Praha : Karolinum, 2015, p. 151.

⁶⁴ More on frames, or official documents FALOON, G.: From digital literacy to digital competence: the teacher digital competency (TDC) framework, In *Education Technology Research Development*, 2020, Vol. 68, No. 5, p. 2449–2472. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11423-020-09767-4>>.

⁶⁵ DEUZE, M.: *Media life. Život v médiích*. Praha : Karolinum, 2015, p. 152.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ WELSCH, W.: *Umelé rajske záhrady? Skúmanie sveta elektronických médií a iných svetov*. Bratislava : Soros Center for Contemporary Arts, 1995, p. 7.

⁶⁸ KUKLOVÁ, J.: Kyberprostor jako prostor k výchově a poznání. In KUDLÁČOVÁ, B., SZTOBRYN, S. (eds.): *Kontexty filozofie výchovy v historickej a súčasnej perspektíve*. Trnava : PeF TU, 2011, p. 292.

⁶⁹ SEMRÁDOVÁ, I.: Zamyšlení nad východisky profesní etiky učitele. In VLADYKOVÁ, L. (ed.): *Aplikovaná etika – kontexty a perspektívy. Acta Facultatis Philosophicae Universitatis Šafarikianae 6*. Košice : UPJŠ, 2010, p. 328.

⁷⁰ KUKLOVÁ, J.: Kyberprostor jako prostor k výchově a poznání. In KUDLÁČOVÁ, B., SZTOBRYN, S. (eds.): *Kontexty filozofie výchovy v historickej a súčasnej perspektíve*. Trnava : PeF TU, 2011, p. 292-293.

4. Conclusion

Teachers, with their personalities, knowledge and skills, constitute a relevant factor, or determinant in digital education. Future teacher training is therefore relevant for digital education too. We can state that the majority of frameworks that deal with this aspect understand digital competence as operational, technical and information skills. However, along with the recent change of situation regarding the development and usage of ICT in education came a need for broader consideration. Presently, we can see more complex approaches and frameworks that employ more digital competence (not only) in teachers. This competence greatly exceeds the ability to use technical equipment.

We can state that the desired and more complex frameworks that integrate pedagogical training responding to the challenges of the modern world also incorporate an ethical, psychological and legal context that we can find in our socio-cultural communication practice. Some of these approaches reflect the importance of a teacher's wellbeing and work with it when they shape their digital competencies and literacy. We see this as a relevant psychagogic practice in terms of values, reflecting the need for a desired and meaningful professional and personal performance. It is, however, also necessary to say that there are certain limits here, considering psychagogic needs in education, which implies the need to cope with them. A perspective that is based more on phenomenological and hermeneutical opinions rather than pragmatical opinions constitutes an alternative view of future teacher training and digital competencies and respects the fact that a teacher remains to be a psychagogic subject. This holistic perspective, which does not see digital competencies solely as a means for effective performance in teachers, concentrates more on the teacher's „ars docendi“ – the „virtue of teaching“ that is understood to be the most important quality of a teacher and that has also a moral and value-based standpoint. This exceeds the solely norm-based frameworks that define the set of skills and knowledge of a teacher and that also define the usage of new ICT in education – teacher's digital competence.

From this perspective, pedagogical training should take into account elements (principles, methods or means) that help break new ground for such self-projection in teachers that are bound to self-reflection in terms of their disposition to teach or explain a topic or problem using information and communication technology. However, it should also be bound to self-understanding, in terms of meaning and values, self-understanding that leads to moral self-awareness as an undisputable determinant of „ars docendi“ in the digital learning environment. We believe that the psychagogic element in future teacher training should be an element that serves as a complement to the formation and development of digital competence, or digital literacy. Therefore, it should also be implemented into the theoretical frameworks of future teacher training. This is exactly the place where we should go beyond the limitations that are set by these frameworks now.

Acknowledgement: *This study was elaborated within the research project supported by the Grant Agency of the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic (KEGA) No. 010UCM-4/2018 titled „Material and Didactic Support of the Teaching of Media Education through the Media Training Centre at FMK UCM.“*

Bibliography and sources

AROLDI, P.: *(New) challenges for a (new) media education*. In BLANCO, I., ROMER, M. (eds.): *Los niños frente a las pantallas*. Madrid : Editorial Universitas, 2007, p. 19-30. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <www.cost-transforming-audiences.eu/.../%20New%20challenges>.

- BHAKTA, K., DUTTA, N.: Impact of Information Technology on Teaching-Learning Proces. In *International Research Journal of Interdisciplinary & Multidisciplinary Studies*, 2016, Vol. II, No. XI, p. 131-138. ISSN 2394-7950. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<http://oaji.net/articles/2017/1707-1483695373.pdf>>.
- BULGANOVÁ, D., KAČINOVÁ, V.: Axiocentric Teaching And Learning About Media In The Context Of School Practice. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2019, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 85-93. ISSN 2585-8726.
- CORNALI, F., TIROCCHI, S.: Globalization, education, information and communication technologies: what relationships and reciprocal influences? In *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2012, Vol. 47, p. 2060-2069. ISSN 1877-0428. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/275541968_Globalization_Education_Information_and_Communication_Technologies_What_Relationships_and_Reciprocal_Influences>.
- DEUZE, M.: *Media life. Život v médiích*. Praha : Karolinum, 2015.
- FALOON, G.: From digital literacy to digital competence: the teacher digital competency (TDC) framework. In *Education Technology Research Development*, 2020, Vol. 68, No. 5, p. 2449-2472. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11423-020-09767-4>>.
- FEDOROV, A., LEVITSKAYA, A.: Synthetic Media Education Model Used in Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). In *Media Education*, 2019, Vol. 59, No. 1, p. 30-36. ISSN 1994-4195. [online]. [2019-01-25]. Available at: <<https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/synthetic-media-education-model-used-in-commonwealth-of-independent-states-cis>>.
- GÁLIKOVÁ TOLNAIOVÁ, S.: *Idea psychagógie v holistickej perspektíve*. Bratislava : Iris, 2014.
- GALLARDO-ECHENIQUE, E. E. et al.: Digital Competence in the Knowledge Society. In *MERLOT Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*, 2015, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 1-16. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <https://jolt.merlot.org/vol11no1/Gallardo-Echenique_0315.pdf>.
- GENNARO, S., MILLER, B.: Critical Media Literacy in the Googleburg Galaxy. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 6-21. ISSN 2585-8726.
- GOYAL, E., PUROHIT, S., BHAGAT, M.: Factors that Affect Information and Communication Technology Usage: A Case Study in Management Education. In *Journal of Information Technology Management*, 2010, Vol. XXI, No. 4, p. 38-57. ISSN 1042-1319. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<http://jitm.ubalt.edu/XXI-4/article4.pdf>>.
- GOMÉZ GALÁN, J.: Media Education as Theoretical and Practical Paradigm for Digital Literacy: An Interdisciplinary Analysis. In *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2015, Vol. 11, No. 3, p. 31-44. ISSN 1842-8517. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://arxiv.org/ftp/arxiv/papers/1803/1803.01677.pdf>>.
- GUI, M., FASOLI, M., CARRADORE, R.: „Digital Well-Being.“ Developing a New Theoretical Tool For Media Literacy Research. In *Italian Journal of Sociology of Education*, 2017, Vol. 9, No. 1, p. 155-173. ISSN 2035-4983. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <https://ijse.padovauniversitypress.it/system/files/papers/2017_1_8.pdf>.
- GUTIÉRREZ, A., TYNER, K.: Media Education, Media Literacy and Digital Competence. In *Comunicar*, 2012, Vol. 19, No. 38, p. 31-39. ISSN 1134-3478. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <https://www.academia.edu/9239011/Media_Education_Media_Literacy_and_Digital_Competence>.
- HLADÍKOVÁ, V.: Transformation of thinking and education under the influence of internet communication. In *Ad Alta: Journal of interdisciplinary research*, 2018, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 99-103. ISSN 1804-7890.
- JOHNSON, G. D.: Information Technology and the Goals of Education: Making Nails for the Hammer. In JOHNSON, G. D. et al.: *Ethical, Psychological and Societal Problems of the Application of ICTs in Education. Analytical Survey*. Moscow : UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education, 2004, p. 34-41. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://iite.unesco.org/pics/publications/en/files/3214629.pdf>>.

JOHNSON, G. D.: Overview. In JOHNSON, G. D. et al.: *Ethical, Psychological and Societal Problems of the Application of ICTs in Education. Analytical Survey*. Moscow : UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education, 2004, p. 6-9. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://iite.unesco.org/pics/publications/en/files/3214629.pdf>>.

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

KAČINOVÁ, V.: From a reductionist to a holistic model of digital competence and media education. In *Communication Today*, 2019, Vol. 10, No. 2, p. 17-26. ISSN 1338-130X.

KOSTRUB, D., SEVERINI, E., REHÚŠ, M.: *Proces výučby a digitálne technológie*. 1. vyd. Bratislava/Martin : Alfa print, s. r. o., 2012. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <https://www.fedu.uniba.sk/fileadmin/pdf/Sucasti/Katedry/KPPE/PRE_DOCENTA/Kostrub_2012_knizka.pdf>.

KUKLOVÁ, J.: Kyberprostor jako prostor k výchově a poznání. In KUDLÁČOVÁ, B., SZTOBRYN, S. (eds.): *Kontexty filozofie výchovy v historickej a súčasnej perspektíve*. Trnava : PeF TU, 2011, p. 282-295.

KOSOVÁ, B.: Výchova ako zodpovednosť. In KUDLÁČOVÁ, B., RAJSKÝ, A. (eds.): *Kontexty filozofie výchovy v novoveku a súčasnej perspektíve*. Trnava : PeF TU v Trnave, 2014, p. 83-93.

KUSIN, V.: Filozoficko-etické aspekty globalizácie výchovy. In KUDLIČKA, J. (ed.): *Čas a dejiny II*. Liptovský Mikuláš : SFZ pri SAV a Vojenská akadémia, 1999, p. 109-116.

LEWIN, D., LUNDIE, D.: Philosophies of Digital Pedagogy. In *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 2016, Vol. 35, No. 3, p. 235-240. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://e4-0.ipn.mx/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/07-philosophies-of-digital-pedagogy.pdf>>.

McGARR, O., McDONAGH, A.: Digital Competence in Teacher Education. *Output 1 of the Erasmus+ funded Developing Student Teachers' Digital Competence (DICTE) project*, 2019. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://dicte.oslomet.no/>>.

MINÁRIKOVÁ, J., BLAHÚT, D., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: Hi-Tech And Eye-Catching Alike: Information In The Multiplatform Era. In *European Journal of Media, Art and Photography*, 2020, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 118-126. ISSN 1339-4940.

MISHRA, P., KOEHLER, J. M.: Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge: A Framework for Teacher Knowledge. In *Teachers College Record*, 2006, Vol. 108, No. 6, p. 1017-1054. ISSN 0161-468. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://www.punyamishra.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/01/mishra-koehler-tcr2006.pdf>>.

MROZOWSKA, S., RYŁKO-KURPIEWSKA, A.: Polish Media about Act 2.0 (the Constitution for Science). In *Communication Today*, 2020, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 22-34. ISSN 1338-130X.

OLCOTT, D., CARRERA FARRAN, X., GALLARDO-ECHENIQUE, E. E., GONZÁLES MARTÍNEZ, J.: Ethics and Education in the Digital Age: Global Perspectives and Strategies for Local Transformation in Catalonia. In *RUSC. Universities and Knowledge Society Journal*, 2015, Vol. 12, No. 2, p. 59-72. ISSN 1698-580X. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://rusc.uoc.edu/rusc/ca/index.php/rusc/article/view/v12n2-olcott-carrera-gallardo-gonzalez/2614.html>>.

REINECKE, L., OLIVER, M. B.: Media use and well-being: Status quo and open questions. In REINECKE, L., OLIVER, M. B. (eds.): *The Routledge handbook of media use and well-being: International perspectives on theory and research on positive media effects*. New York : Routledge, 2016, p. 3-13. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314205416_Media_Use_and_Well-Being_Status_Quo_and_Open_Questions>.

RUSNÁK, P.: Kirké, paideia a koncept prirodzeného sveta. In KUDLÁČOVÁ, B., SZTOBRYN, S. (eds.): *Kontexty filozofie výchovy v historickej a súčasnej perspektíve*. Trnava : PeF TU, 2011, p. 213-221.

SCOLARI, C. A., MASANET, M. J., GUERRERO PICO, M., ESTABLÉS, M. J.: Transmedia literacy in the new media ecology: Teens' transmedia skills and informal learning strategies. In *El profesional de la información*, 2018, Vol. 27, No. 4, p. 801-812. eISSN 1699-2407. [online]. [2020-09-30]. Available at: <<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/94f7/ac9024b82207115cd54e0e2876ebad2b9033.pdf>>.

SEMRÁDOVÁ, I.: Zamyšlení nad východisky profesní etiky učitele. In VLADYKOVÁ, Ľ. (ed.): *Aplikovaná etika – kontexty a perspektívy*. Acta Facultatis Philosophicae Universitatis Šafarikianae 6. Košice : UPJŠ, 2010, p. 321-333.

WELSCH, W.: *Umelé rajské záhrady? Skúmanie sveta elektronických médií a iných svetov*. Bratislava : Soros Center for Contemporary Arts, 1995.

Author



PhDr. Sabína Gálíková Tolnaiová, PhD.

Faculty of Mass Media Communication,
University of SS. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava
Nám. J. Herdu, 2
917 01 Trnava
SLOVAK REPUBLIC
sabina.galikova.tolnaiova@ucm.sk

The author's scientific research, publishing and pedagogical work at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava is focused to several theoretical issues. She focus on the philosophical, ethical and axiological aspects of communication and the media and their interdisciplinary recruitment, also with an overlap in the field of philosophy of education. She is the author and co-author of several national and foreign scientific monographs, studies and articles, co-founder of successful scientific projects, member of scientific societies, conference committees, member of journals.

Olha Harmatiy, Peter Kravčák

Self-Government Activity On Social Media As An Information Source To Cover Local Issues: Slovak And Ukrainian Journalists' Views

ABSTRACT

For the media, local self-government organizations are an important source of information when the public needs to know about local matters. In turn, for local self-governments, the media is one of the most useful means of communicating with residents. Citizens' understanding and awareness of local self-government and local issues are particularly important within decentralization resulting in the enhancement of local authorities' capacity. Under these conditions, local self-governments are becoming key communicators within their communities and are significant sources of information for local news reporting. It is evident that governments should use all available modern communication tools, including social media. The data from surveyed journalists from two countries – the Slovak Republic, where decentralization processes have already taken place, and Ukraine, which is still developing them – proves that local governments' social presence serves as an information source to cover local issues. The survey findings show that journalists integrate local governments' social media sourcing into their professional practices. Using local self-governments' sites on social media as journalistic sources provides journalists with important opportunities for extending their agenda, informing and updating people, and reflecting life at the local level.

KEY WORDS

Social media sourcing. Social media. Media. Local news. Government communication. Slovakia. Ukraine.

1. Introduction

Today, growing social demand for openness, transparency, and accountability of governance, on the one hand, and the development of information and communication technologies and increasing the accessibility and popularity of the Internet, on the other, strengthen the importance of online government communication. Within this framework, in the context of democratic development, modern governments apply different digital communication tools.

There is a consensus among social scientists that the Slovak Republic has made significant efforts to increase public access to government information as a result of reforms.¹ Decentralization, particularly the introduction of local (territorial) self-government, was considered an essential political and administrative task. Today, Slovakia has the most decentralized system in Central Europe.² This has enhanced the role of self-governments in both decision-making about important public affairs and acting as a platform for grassroots democracy and dialogue between citizens and the authorities. Ukraine is also currently undergoing decentralization reforms, which aims to give the real power to local self-governments, transfer powers and resources as near as possible to people and build capable communities at the local level. Such reform is considered a guarantee of the Ukraine's survival in the current situation.³

In the context of strengthening local self-government organizations by decentralization, they are becoming leading communicators in their environment and thus a significant source of local news reportage. In this regard, an important modern tool in government communication is social media, the popularity of which is rapidly growing. New digital media may help to raise the participation rates in different „forms of direct democracy which tend to be quite low, particularly in the former Eastern bloc countries.“⁴ For communities, local self-government use of these platforms is a great example of adopting online communication to increase openness, transparency, and accountability. Their potential to extend self-government services, solicit new ideas, improve decision-making and problem-solving with the ability to update and share information, opinions, and thoughts offers substantial benefits and opportunities to governments, media, and people.^{5,6,7}

Consequently, social media are weighty channels for local self-government organizations to inform, explain their policy, provide clarification on important issues, and therefore serve as a source for journalistic work. Despite the fact that modern technologies give journalists the opportunity to extend their agenda, for the audiences „it is crucial to be informed about the closest environment.“⁸ Citizens expect that the content of newspapers, online media, radio, and TV will be local to some extent as such news is part of people's lives. Otherwise, the delocalized character of the media, in general, and local media, in particular, „is likely to have an adverse effect on the democratic and political empowerment of local communities“⁹ and development of grassroots democracy.

¹ NEMEC, J.: Public Administration Reforms in Slovakia: Limited Outcomes (Why?). In *NISPAcee Journal of Public Administration and Policy*, 2018, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 121.

² KLIMOVSKÝ, D.: Slovakia as Decentralization Champion: Reality or Myth? In *Regions*, 2015, Vol. 2, No. 298, p. 14.

³ KOLIUSHKO, I.: *Fear of Losing Power and Fear of Taking It*. [online]. [2020-11-20]. Available at: <<https://zbruc.eu/node/32313>>.

⁴ VRABEC, N., ADÁMKOVÁ, P.: New Media and Their Potential in the Context of Development of Key Competences. In *SGEM 2014 International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conferences on Social Sciences and Arts*. Albena : STEF92 Technology Ltd., 2014, p. 558.

⁵ BERTOT, J. C., JAEGER, P. T., HANSEN, D.: The Impact of Policies on Government Social Media Usage: Issues, Challenges, and Recommendations. In *Government Information Quarterly*, 2012, Vol. 29, No. 1, p. 30.

⁶ HARMATIY, O. V.: Social Networks in the System of Government Communications. In *Scientific Papers*, 2016, Vol. 1, No. 52, p. 242.

⁷ SHARIF, M. H., TROSHANI, I., DAVIDSON, R.: Determinants of Social Media Impact in Local Government. In *Journal of Organizational and End User Computing*, 2016, Vol. 28, No. 3, p. 82.

⁸ STEBLYNA, N.: Uncertain Geography of the Local News and Civic Participation in New Media Era. In *Communication Today*, 2018, Vol. 9, No. 1, p. 79.

⁹ WASCHKOVÁ ČISAŘOVÁ, L.: Czech Local Press Content: When More is Actually Less. In *Communication Today*, 2016, Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 105.

2. Methodology

With the research we aim to provide an overall view about the use of social media as an information source in the context of media coverage of local issues; the study is based on data gathered from Slovak and Ukrainian journalists. In order to provide an account of this phenomenon, we draw on an online questionnaire survey. This method was identified as the most suitable for data collection due to the following factors. Firstly, convenience. Through an online survey, respondents can answer the survey questionnaire at any time when internet access is available. Secondly, it is a short and quick way of gathering a lot of data from many people. Thirdly, this method provides accurate recording of respondents' answers. It is one of the most commonly used methods in the social sciences „to gather data in a systematic way from a range of individuals, organizations, or other units of interest.“¹⁰ Moreover, online surveys are optimal in quarantine.

The survey was conducted among randomly sampled journalists based in two selected regions – Liptov (in Slovakia) and Lviv (in Ukraine) during March – May 2020. It should be noted that these regions are the subject of strong attention and focus by the media in their countries. As well as of local media, there are correspondents or correspondent offices and representations from all central media. Therefore, both local media reporters and journalists covering local news for national media were interviewed. In particular, among Slovak survey participants were those who worked for such all-Slovak media as the „Slovak Republic Press Agency“, „Slovak Radio and Television“, „Slovak News Agency“ and television channels „TV Markiza“ and „TA 3“. Among Ukrainian respondents were employees of such central media as the Public Joint Stock Company „National Public Television and Radio Company of Ukraine“, TV „24 Chanel“, the National news agency of Ukraine „Ukrinform“, the newspaper „Express“, and the online media „Glavcom“.

Thus, the sample of the study included journalists working for media outlets and covering local news at the time of the study. Invitations to take part in the survey and a link to the questionnaire presented in Google Forms were sent to the respondents' personal or corporate e-mails in both Slovak and Ukrainian languages respectively. In total, 28 people took part in the survey – 14 Slovak journalists and 14 of their Ukrainian counterparts. The participants in the survey were representatives of different media, both local and national; the media of various types, namely print, TV, radio, online; as well as various forms of ownership including private, municipal, joint-stock, and state-owned.

The survey questionnaire contains close-ended questions focusing on such categories as preferences, frequency of appeals, relevance and usefulness for respondents towards the local government communication and governments' social media use for information gathering. Participants were asked not only to answer the question but also to comment on the topic.

It is worth noting that the survey did not clarify respondents' characteristics such as gender and age. This is done for the following reasons. Firstly, gender. We suppose that these differences do not have a significant effect on the use of social media sites in professional work, neither nowadays nor in the future. Secondly, age. To date, there is already sufficient research on how age affects journalists' use of social media as a newsgathering resource, which confirms that younger journalists use social media more than older journalists.^{11,12,13,14} Therefore, the work deals with another aspect, namely the study of the use of social media as a source of information

¹⁰ GIVEN, L. M. (ed.): *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi, Singapore : Sage Publications, 2008, p. 846.

¹¹ BRUNS, A., NUERNBERGK, C.: Political Journalists and Their Social Media Audiences: New Power Relations. In *Media and Communication*, 2019, Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 200.

¹² HEDMAN, U., DJERF-PIERRE, M.: The Social Journalist: Embracing the Social Media Life or Creating a New Digital Divide? In *Digital Journalism*, 2013, Vol. 1, No. 3, p. 376.

¹³ ROGSTAD, I. D.: Political News Journalists in Social Media. In *Journalism Practice*, 2014, Vol. 8, No. 6, p. 699.

¹⁴ WU, Y.: How Age Affects Journalists' Adoption of Social Media as an Innovation. A Multi-group SEM Analysis. In *Journalism Practice*, 2019, Vol. 13, No. 5, p. 537.

by journalists from Ukraine and Slovakia. Although this is not a representative survey because the participant numbers are small for a rigorous comparative research design, it is still a better overview about the stated subject than the opinion of a single expert. In addition, this amount of respondents has been common for similar explorations of journalists' practice.^{15,16}

The survey, presented here, is part of a broader study of the topic. As social media are becoming an important part of journalistic work, their „*growing centrality in the news process warrants greater scrutiny from scholars and practitioners.*“¹⁷ Our further research involves examining the materials of local media outlets of the two countries on how they aggregate social media content and include it in their journalistic products.

3. Findings and Discussion

According to the obtained data, it is entirely believed by both Slovak and Ukrainian journalists that the general public is interested in local news media stories on local matters and local self-government. Thus, respondents stressed the public's need for local news reporting, and noted it is necessary for audiences to receive journalistic materials from traditional media.

Nevertheless, social media is often considered as a tool for bypassing mainstream media, as social media allows maintaining direct contact with audiences without the involvement of traditional intermediaries.¹⁸ However, this theory is not always true. Studies prove that the main target audiences for local officials' social media communication efforts are not citizens, but rather journalists. In fact, local politicians „*do not pursue a disintermediation strategy – they do not try to bypass journalism by directly addressing the public.*“¹⁹ Conversely, officials primarily aim at getting journalists' attention and making their positions about relevant issues accessible to them. In other words, authorities may be attempting to leverage journalists as a means of getting information into traditional media. For government officials, the possibility of their social media posts „*being replicated in traditional media, thus reaching out to an even larger audience, is very appealing.*“²⁰ Hence, using social media, authorities rely on the news media „*to gain legitimacy and popularize their content.*“²¹

According to the survey, similar unanimity is found in answers to the question about the most popular ways of government communication for journalists' regular sourcing routines. Importantly, all surveyed practitioners most appreciate personal communication with officials as well as self-government sites on social media as tools to obtain information on local matters. The use of other news sources (official websites, press conferences, briefings, official meetings, e-mails, etc.) for obtaining government information is scarce, so the data are not provided in this article. According to the survey results, both Slovak and Ukrainian journalists primarily rely on social media and personal communication to find information on local matters. Hence, they are the two main tools of government communication as sources for reporting.

¹⁵ BRANDTZAEG, P. B., CHAPARRO DOMÍNGUEZ, M. A.: A Gap in Networked Publics? A Comparison of Younger and Older Journalists' Newsgathering Practices on Social Media. In *Nordicom Review*, 2018, Vol. 39, No. 1, p. 99.

¹⁶ TANNER, A. H., FRIEDMAN, D. B., ZHENG, Y.: Influences on the Construction of Health News: The Reporting Practices of Local Television News Health Journalists. In *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 2015, Vol. 59, No. 2, p. 359.

¹⁷ MCGREGOR, S. C., MOLYNEUX, L.: Twitter's Influence on News Judgment: An Experiment Among Journalists. In *Journalism*, 2020, Vol. 21, No. 5, p. 597.

¹⁸ LEV-ON, A.: The Anti-Social Network? Framing Social Media in Wartime. In *Social Media + Society*, 2018, Vol. 4, No. 3, p. 3.

¹⁹ BERNHARD, U., DOHLE, M.: Local Politics Online: The Influence of Presumed Influence on Local Politicians' Online Communication Activities in Germany. In *Local Government Studies*, 2015, Vol. 41, No. 5, p. 755.

²⁰ BROERSMA, M., GRAHAM, T.: Twitter as a News Source. In *Journalism Practice*, 2013, Vol. 7, No. 4, p. 450.

²¹ OWEN, D.: *The New Media's Role in Politics*. [online]. [2020-09-29]. Available at: <<https://www.bbvaopenmind.com/en/articles/the-new-media-s-role-in-politics>>.

In addition, respondents pointed out the indispensability of communication through social media in times of crisis, in particular the current coronavirus pandemic. *„Without this, I would not have been able to gather any information during restriction of interpersonal communication.“* one Ukrainian counterpart wrote. At the same time, journalists listed the benefits of personal communication. One Slovak professional stated: *„I pay attention to personal communication. Personal conversation is important.“* Likewise, one Ukrainian journalist noted: *„I need to see a person.“* Thus, the survey results show the symbiotic use of traditional and new ways of sourcing practices: social media do not replace traditional journalistic newsgathering techniques such as face-to-face communication, but supplement them. Similar views prevail among researchers of the topic: social media are perceived mostly as a new tool for carrying out this traditional task.^{22,23}

There is one additional issue that can be interpreted from the survey. It should be noted that reporters from both countries are more likely to follow government pages on social media than official websites. The Slovak journalist commented: *„The official website is not flexible for a journalist's work. Municipalities, government officials and politicians have focused on social networks. They cover everything necessary there and use the official website only as a supplement. Experience shows that I learn official information from a social network, not from a website.“* Other Slovak respondents wrote: *„More information is published on social networks than on websites“*; *„It is unthinkable for me to click on all websites and look for the latest information. In my work, I need to receive information from one place, so social media are now indispensable.“* Ukrainian reporters reasoned that: *„Social media increases productivity, they are more convenient than official sites“*; *„Social networks are more important for gathering information“*; *„In my practice I prefer messages on social media to write news.“* Most likely, such responses are due to the fact that social media, unlike „faceless“ state websites, provide access to people, and leveraging these platforms offers enhanced opportunities to achieve public goals. Sometimes the information activity on the social network page is much greater than on the official site, being thus only a supplement.^{24,25}

When asked to assess the content of social media posts of local self-governments, most respondents considered it useful and relevant to professional reportage. Such views prevail among both Slovak and Ukrainian practitioners. In addition, taking into account the number of those who find local authorities' messages on social media platforms useful rather than useless, the result is that all respondents tend to find social media content valuable for professional news production. Slovak journalists commented: *„Social media websites are the beginning of work, they help create objective data for the public“*; *„They are excellent as a source of initial information“*. Likewise, Ukrainian professionals noted: *„I use posts from social networks, but I supplement them“*; *„The information from social media can be used as a starting idea for a further project.“*

Respondents are also convinced of the credibility of the information found on local government's social media. To their mind, government sites on social media provide reliable information. At the same time, participants indicated in the comments: *„I usually take the information from those profiles I constantly follow and can see that they are true“*; *„I cannot be absolutely sure that any of the accounts are not broken“*; *„I use information if I am sure the page is run by the same organization or person.“*

²² HEDMAN, U., DJERF-PIERRE, M.: The Social Journalist. Embracing the Social Media Life or Creating a New Digital Divide? In *Digital Journalism*, 2013, Vol. 1, No. 3, p. 376.

²³ SKÄRLUND, S.: The Recycling of News in Swedish Newspapers: Reused Quotations and Reports in Articles about the Crisis in the Swedish Academy in 2018. In *Nordicom Review*, 2020, Vol. 41, No. 1, p. 72.

²⁴ LANDSBERGEN, D.: Government as Part of the Revolution: Using Social Media to Achieve Public Goals. In *Electronic Journal of e-Government*, 2020, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 136.

²⁵ HARMATIY, O.: Interactivity of Government Communications: Electronic Constituent. In *Science and Education a New Dimension. Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2015, Vol. III(9), No. 53, p. 41.

To tell the truth, social media as an information source have acquired a negative image and their use for news production creates challenges for the verification process. For instance, Facebook, as the most well-known social media site, has often been criticized in this area. „*It stems from the nature of the social network and freedom of expression. Despite the fact, that Facebook is, in essence, a space for the free sharing of information, various hoaxes, misinformation and false messages are often found on the social network site.*“²⁶ However, in the case of governments, posting information on their pages is a demonstration of the position and recognition of the information as true a priori, so these institutions treat their messages with great responsibility. In this context, the use of such social media as a source for journalists is much more liberal. The danger of spreading false and fake information on government social media is minimized. Media lawyers argue that government institutions' accounts can be considered credible because „*there is a presumption of authenticity.*“²⁷ Social media are supposed to be used as a reliable source if they are checked or verified sites of government organizations or officials, which constantly and systemically post on social media.²⁸ Nonetheless, it is always good to check information obtained from social media. This can be explained by two reasons at least. First, posts can be corrected or even deleted. Second, social pages can be hacked and anything can be written there. In view of this, it is necessary to check the information of which the veracity and accuracy is questionable, for example if the messages are not typical for government organizations, they contrast with previous posts in style and content or are very resonant or sensational, etc. However, the issue of verification is not only about reliability also but about balance. As social media are also tools for self-presentation, governments communicate presentational content there. Moreover, they may post one-sided or biased information, and the media, transmitting it, may disseminate an image beneficial to the government. All of this requires that journalists take a thoughtful and balanced approach, and present different opinions and points of view, especially on controversial issues. The use of social media platforms also makes the journalist play a gatekeeping role and filter information in order to detect events, processes, and trends, which are important and meaningful for the audiences. In short, journalists must adhere to the standards of credibility, accuracy, completeness, balance, and detachment that are the basics of professional ideology and fundamental to quality journalism.

On the other hand, which can be considered very essential, is that governments' social media provide journalists with the opportunity to collect additional data. Thanks to their democratic potential, these platforms offer convenient access to a plethora of potential news sources and make it possible for more voices to be heard.^{29,30} As a result, journalists' social media sourcing enables learning about different opinions, attitudes, and views. Using social media, journalists receive starting ideas, clues and tips from citizens who read government posts, discuss them, point out advantages or disadvantages, comment and offer ideas, etc. Such information from ordinary residents helps identify issues that concern citizens, find out what people say and think, as well as plan ideas for their coverage in news stories or programs. As such, monitoring both government messages and user comments can provide journalists with insights into the public perception and mood that cannot be gotten otherwise. This allows the acquisition of new ideas for prospective news reporting.

²⁶ HOSSOVÁ, M.: Fake News and Disinformation: Phenomenons of Post-Factual Society. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2018, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 32.

²⁷ TOLOKOLNIKOVA, K.: *Social Networks Have Long Been a Source of Information. What Should the Media Do?* [online]. [2020-07-12]. Available at: <<https://detector.media/community/article/143795/2019-01-03-sotsmerezhi-davno-stali-dzherelom-informatsii-shcho-robiti-zmi>>.

²⁸ *Social Networks: New Rules of Use in Journalistic Materials. Recommendations from IMI.* [online]. [2020-08-20]. Available at: <<https://imi.org.ua/articles/sotsmerezhi-novi-pravyla-vykorystannia-v-zhurnalistskykh-materialakh-rekomendatsii-vid-imi-i71>>.

²⁹ VON NORDHEIM, G., BOCZEK, K., KOPPERS, L.: Sourcing the Sources. In *Digital Journalism*, 2018, Vol. 6, No. 7, p. 807.

³⁰ FLETCHER, R., SCHIFFERES, S., THURMAN, N.: Building the „Truthmeter“: Training Algorithms to Help Journalists Assess the Credibility of Social Media Sources. In *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 2020, Vol. 26, No. 1, p. 19.

According to the survey, journalists from Slovakia and Ukraine most often use Facebook, which is significantly ahead of the others. Slovak respondents stated: „I follow Facebook almost exclusively. I obtain information from there as an incentive to contact a specific person and check the information from the account in real life“, „To work, I need to have information available in one place. Everything is already reported mainly through Facebook.“ Ukrainian respondents noted: „Officials post on Facebook, and I take information there“, „The authorities write about everything they want to say on Facebook or Twitter.“ This can be attributed to the use of social media by local authorities. According to our monitoring, all self-governments (except for very small villages) in the Liptov and Lviv regions (the territories where our research was conducted), use Facebook. Overall, in Slovakia, the majority of local self-governments use this social platform: 44,4% of towns and villages have an official Facebook account, almost 11% use unofficial accounts. Twitter is used by 0,7% of local self-governments, 2% of municipalities have accounts on other social networks.³¹ Unfortunately, there are no similar statistics for Ukraine. However, research shows that Ukrainian local self-government units are increasingly turning to Facebook and are more active in using this social platform than others.³² Besides, it also matters which social media is most used in these countries in general. Undoubtedly, the global trend is the growth of Facebook users. As it is by far the most popular in both Slovakia and Ukraine, it also attracts most journalists from these countries.^{33,34}

Hence, the journalists involved in our study, acknowledge the contribution of self-government social media at the forefront of local affairs reporting. They utilise the information they get from these platforms as relevant for the professional context. Yet, it should not be excluded that turning to sites on social media may be caused by „journalists' reliance on easily accessible information, rather than more fundamental democratic shifts in news reporting practices.“³⁵ At the same time, it is worth noting that the appeal of Slovak and Ukrainian journalists to social media sources is in line with the general trend in other countries as well. For example, sourcing is among the most common uses of social media for Irish journalists.³⁶ 88% of surveyed Swedish journalists reported that they used these platforms for sourcing stories during a typical week. Moreover, 27% conveyed that they published a story from information found in social media sources „every day“ or „every week“. ³⁷ Social media are increasingly being used as sources in mainstream news coverage in Belgium.³⁸ The use of social media sources is also growing among South African journalists.³⁹ Generally, journalists of different countries rely on social media to stay connected to sources and real-time news.⁴⁰

³¹ KALIŇÁK, M.: *ZMOS vie, koľko samospráv pri komunikácii využíva sociálne siete*. [online]. [2021-01-21]. Available at: <<https://www.zmos.sk/zmos-vie-kolko-samosprav-pri-komunikacii-vyuziva-socialne-siete-oznam/mid/405616/.html>>.

³² SHEVCHUK, I. B.: Communicative Possibilities of Regional Authorities in Social Networks. In *Black Sea Economic Studies*, 2018, Vol. 30, No. 1, p. 175.

³³ *Social Media Stats Slovakia*. [online]. [2020-12-20]. Available at: <<https://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/slovakia>>.

³⁴ *Social Media Stats Ukraine*. [online]. [2020-12-20]. Available at: <<https://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/ukraine>>.

³⁵ WHEATLEY, D.: Victims and Voices: Journalistic Sourcing Practices and the Use of Private Citizens in Online Healthcare-system News. In *Journalism Studies*, 2020, Vol. 21, No. 8, p. 1017.

³⁶ HERAVI, B.: *Irish Journalists among World's Heaviest Social Media Users, Study Finds*. [online]. [2020-07-26]. Available at: <<https://www.irishtimes.com/business/media-and-marketing/irish-journalists-among-world-s-heaviest-social-media-users-study-finds-1.2101471>>.

³⁷ GULYAS, A.: Hybridity and social media adoption by journalists. In *Digital Journalism*, 2017, Vol. 5, No. 7, p. 892.

³⁸ PAULUSSEN, S., HARDER, R. A.: Social Media References in Newspapers. Facebook, Twitter and YouTube as sources in newspaper journalism. In *Journalism Practice*, 2014, Vol. 8, No. 5, p. 542.

³⁹ RODNY-GUMEDE, Y., HYDE-CLARKE, N.: The Use of Social Media as News Sources by South African Political Journalists. In MABWEAZARA, H. M., MUDHAI, O. F., WHITTAKER, J., THUSSU, D. (eds.): *Online Journalism in Africa*. New York : Routledge, 2014, p. 104-119.

⁴⁰ *Cision's State of the Media report 2019*. [online]. [2020-11-26]. Available at: <<https://www.cisionjobs.co.uk/article/cision-s-state-of-the-media-report-2019>>.

Moreover, representative surveys prove the high intensity and frequent usage of social networks and electronic communication by youngsters, which gives ground to conclude „that social networks and „digital life“ have a significant impact“ on the lives of young people.⁴¹ Therefore, it can be argued that the social media usage in various spheres of life including professional journalism will continue to grow.

4. Conclusion

The usage of government information has deep traditions. Journalists primarily use it to reach „elite“ sources with privileged access to events.⁴² Government institutions belong to these kinds of sources, because they occupy high positions, have power and resources, determine the development of local communities and society as a whole, and influence the shaping of news media agendas. Moreover, „given many of the temporal and resource-related newsroom pressures, the reliance on information subsidies and official or elite voices remains pervasive.“⁴³

Governments' social media sourcing is an effective and convenient way to obtain information from governments. Nowadays, journalists have incorporated social media into their regular sourcing routines. This changes the pattern of professional newsgathering practice and introduces social media into the structure of journalistic sources for their work. Local self-governments' sites are considered as appropriate platforms from which to obtain government information on local matters for media treatment.

Having conducted the survey and explored the scholarly studies we can conclude that social media is particularly important for reporters highlighting local issues due to their connectedness with the local communities and their links with local newsmakers. Indeed, the benefits of local self-governments' social media sites are their narrow approach and provision of local information. Because of the focus on local issues that is pertinent to the community, the content of self-government social sites is unique and no one else can provide it. Similarly, local news as an important means of original reporting performs such a special role that it cannot be replaced by others.

This study confirms that journalists primarily rely on self-government sites on social media as well as personal communication with officials as tools to obtain information on local matters. According to the obtained data, they are the main tools of government communication as sources for local reporting. In addition, the survey participants pointed out the indispensability of communication through social media in times of crisis (in particular, the current coronavirus pandemic). Hence, the results show the symbiotic use of traditional and new ways of information gathering practices: social media do not replace traditional journalistic news gathering techniques, but rather supplement them. Moreover, all respondents tend to find social media content valuable for professional news production. There is a prevailing opinion among both Slovak and Ukrainian journalism practitioners that content from social media sites of local self-government organizations is useful and relevant to the professional coverage of local issues. Furthermore, those surveyed are also convinced of the credibility of the information found on local self-government's social media. To their mind, local self-government's social media platforms provide reliable and credible information.

⁴¹ ODZIOMKOVÁ, J.: Social Networks as the Dominant Platform for Communication between Young People. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2018, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 76.

⁴² FLETCHER, R., SCHIFFERES, S., THURMAN, N.: Building the „Truthmeter“: Training Algorithms to Help Journalists Assess the Credibility of Social Media Sources. In *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 2020, Vol. 26, No. 1, p. 20.

⁴³ WHEATLEY, D.: Victims and Voices: Journalistic Sourcing Practices and the Use of Private Citizens in Online Healthcare-system News. In *Journalism Studies*, 2020, Vol. 21, No. 8, p. 1017.

Therefore, journalists acknowledge the contribution of self-government social media in routine media coverage of local affairs. According to the survey results, the use of social media does not depend on the country in which the journalists live; the type of media for which they work for – print, TV, radio, online; the scale of media – national or local; or the form of ownership of the media – private, municipal, joint-stock, or state-owned. This study confirms that today's journalists actively utilize social media in their professional activities. It is evident that government agencies of all levels should apply modern communication tools, including the use of social media.

To summarize, usage of local self-governments' sites on social platforms as journalistic sources provides journalists with opportunities for informing and updating citizens on local issues. This is especially important in the context of democratic development and the public demand for greater openness and transparency of governance, as well as the growing role of self-governments in local environments within the framework of decentralization. The proper exploitation of the affordances and benefits of local self-governments' social media sites in the professional context helps journalists to extend their agenda, report in a timely manner, provide substantial and diverse local information on relevant topics, and reflect local people's lives. All this together contributes to the quantity and quality of local news, and the vitality of local communities and grassroots democracy.

Bibliography and sources

BERNHARD, U., DOHLE, M.: Local Politics Online: The Influence of Presumed Influence on Local Politicians' Online Communication Activities in Germany. In *Local Government Studies*, 2015, Vol. 41, No. 5, p. 755-773. ISSN 0300-3930.

BERTOT, J. C., JAEGER, P. T., HANSEN, D.: The Impact of Polices on Government Social Media Usage: Issues, Challenges, and Recommendations. In *Government Information Quarterly*, 2012, Vol. 29, No. 1, p. 30-40. ISSN 0740-624X.

BRANDTZAEG, P. B., CHAPARRO DOMÍNGUEZ, M. A.: A Gap in Networked Publics? A Comparison of Younger and Older Journalists' Newsgathering Practices on Social Media. In *Nordicom Review*, 2018, Vol. 39, No. 1, p. 95-109. ISSN 1403-1108.

BROERSMA, M., GRAHAM, T.: Twitter as a News Source. In *Journalism Practice*, 2013, Vol. 7, No. 4, p. 446-464. ISSN 1751-2786.

BRUNS, A., NUERNBERGK, C.: Political Journalists and Their Social Media Audiences: New Power Relations. In *Media and Communication*, 2019, Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 198-212. ISSN 2183-2439. *Cision's State of the Media report 2019*. [online]. [2020-11-26]. Available at: <<https://www.cisionjobs.co.uk/article/cision-s-state-of-the-media-report-2019>>.

FLETCHER, R., SCHIFFERES, S., THURMAN, N.: Building the 'Truthmeter': Training Algorithms to Help Journalists Assess the Credibility of Social Media Sources. In *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 2020, Vol. 26, No. 1, p. 19-34. ISSN 1748-7382.

GIVEN, L. M. (ed.): *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi, Singapore : Sage Publications, 2008.

GULYAS, A.: Hybridity and Social Media Adoption by Journalists. In *Digital Journalism*, 2017, Vol. 5, No. 7, p. 884-902. ISSN 2167-0811.

HARMATIY, O.: Interactivity of Government Communications: Electronic Constituent. In *Science and Education a New Dimension. Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2015, Vol. III(9), No. 53, p. 38-42. ISSN 2308-5258.

HARMATIY, O. V.: Social Networks in the System of Government Communications. In *Scientific Papers*, 2016, Vol. 1, No. 52, p. 240-247. ISSN 1998-6912.

- HEDMAN, U., DJERF-PIERRE, M.: The Social Journalist: Embracing the Social Media Life or Creating a New Digital Divide? In *Digital Journalism*, 2013, Vol. 1, No. 3, p. 368-385. ISSN 2167-0811.
- HERAVI, B.: *Irish Journalists among World's Heaviest Social Media Users, Study Finds*. [online]. [2020-07-26]. Available at: <<https://www.irishtimes.com/business/media-and-marketing/irish-journalists-among-world-s-heaviest-social-media-users-study-finds-1.2101471>>.
- HOSSOVÁ, M.: Fake News and Disinformation: Phenomenons of Post-Factual Society. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2018, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 27-35. ISSN 2585-8726.
- KALIŇÁK, M.: *ZMOS vie, kol'ko samospráv pri komunikácii využíva sociálne siete*. [online]. [2020-12-21]. Available at: <<https://www.zmos.sk/zmos-vie-kolko-samosprav-pri-komunikacii-vyuziva-socialne-siete--oznam/mid/405616/.html>>.
- KLIMOVSKÝ, D.: Slovakia as Decentralization Champion: Reality or Myth? In *Regions*, 2015, Vol. 298, No. 1, p. 14-16. ISSN 1367-3882.
- KOLIUSHKO, I.: *Fear of Losing Power and Fear of Taking It*. [online]. [2020-06-20]. Available at: <<https://zbruc.eu/node/32313>>.
- LANDSBERGEN, D.: Government as Part of the Revolution: Using Social Media to Achieve Public Goals. In *Electronic Journal of e-Government*, 2010, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 134-146. ISSN 1479-439X. [online]. [2020-08-29]. Available at: <<https://academic-publishing.org/index.php/ejeg/article/view/532>>.
- LEV-ON, A.: The Anti-Social Network? Framing Social Media in Wartime. In *Social Media + Society*, 2018, Vol. 4, No. 3, p. 1-12. ISSN 2056-3051.
- MCGREGOR, S. C., MOLYNEUX, L.: Twitter's Influence on News Judgment: An Experiment among Journalists. In *Journalism*, 2020, Vol. 21, No. 5, p. 597-613. ISSN 1464-8849.
- NEMEC, J.: Public Administration Reforms in Slovakia: Limited Outcomes (Why?). In *NISPAcee Journal of Public Administration and Policy*, 2018, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 115-134. ISSN 1337-9038.
- ODZIOMKOVÁ, J.: Social Networks as the Dominant Platform for Communication between Young People. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2018, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 75-76. ISSN 2585-8726.
- OWEN, D.: *The New Media's Role in Politics*. [online]. [2020-09-29]. Available at: <<https://www.bbvaopenmind.com/en/articles/the-new-media-s-role-in-politics>>.
- PAULUSSEN, S., HARDER, R. A.: Social Media References in Newspapers. Facebook, Twitter and YouTube as Sources in Newspaper Journalism. In *Journalism Practice*, 2014, Vol. 8, No. 5, p. 542-551. ISSN 1751-2786.
- RODNY-GUMEDE, Y., HYDE-CLARKE, N.: The Use of Social Media as News Sources by South African Political Journalists. In MABWEAZARA, H. M., MUDHAI, O. F., WHITTAKER, J., THUSSU, D. (eds.): *Online Journalism in Africa*. New York : Routledge, 2014, p. 104-119.
- ROGSTAD, I. D.: Political News Journalists in Social Media. In *Journalism Practice*, 2014, Vol. 8, No. 6, p. 688-703. ISSN 1751-2786.
- SHARIF, M. H., TROSHANI, I., DAVIDSON, R.: Determinants of Social Media Impact in Local Government. In *Journal of Organizational and End User Computing*, 2016, Vol. 28, No. 3, p. 82-103. ISSN 1546-2234.
- SHEVCHUK, I. B.: Communicative Possibilities of Regional Authorities in Social Networks. In *Black Sea Economic Studies*, 2018, Vol. 30, No. 1, p. 173-177. ISSN 2524-0897.
- SKÄRLUND, S.: The Recycling of News in Swedish Newspapers: Reused Quotations and Reports in Articles about the Crisis in the Swedish Academy in 2018. In *Nordicom Review*, 2020, Vol. 41, No. 1, p. 69-84. ISSN 1403-1108.
- Social Media Stats Slovakia*. [online]. [2020-11-20]. Available at: <<https://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/slovakia>>.
- Social Networks: New Rules of Use in Journalistic Materials. Recommendations from IMI*. [online]. [2020-08-20]. Available at: <<https://imi.org.ua/articles/sotsmerezhi-novi-pravyla-vykorystannia-v-zhurnalists-kykh-materialakh-rekomendatsii-vid-imi-i71>>.

- STEBLYNA, N.: Uncertain Geography of the Local News and Civic Participation in New Media Era. In *Communication Today*, 2018, Vol. 9, No. 1, p. 78-92. ISSN 1338-130X.
- TANNER, A. H., FRIEDMAN, D. B., ZHENG, Y.: Influences on the Construction of Health News: The Reporting Practices of Local Television News Health Journalists. In *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 2015, Vol. 59, No. 2, p. 359-376. ISSN 0883-8151.
- TOLOKOLNIKOVA, K.: *Social Networks Have Long Been a Source of Information. What Should the Media Do?* [online]. [2020-07-12]. Available at: <<https://detector.media/community/article/143795/2019-01-03-sotsmerezhi-davno-stali-dzherelom-informatsii-shcho-robiti-zmi/>>.
- VON NORDHEIM, G., BOCZEK, K., KOPPERS, L.: Sourcing the Sources. In *Digital Journalism*, 2018, Vol. 6, No. 7, p. 807-828. ISSN 2167-0811.
- VRABEC, N., ADÁMKOVÁ, P.: New Media and Their Potential in the Context of Development of Key Competences. In *SGEM 2014 International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conferences on Social Sciences and Arts*. Albena : STEF92 Technology Ltd., 2014, p. 557-563.
- WASCHKOVÁ CÍSAŘOVÁ, L.: Czech Local Press Content: When More is Actually Less. In *Communication Today*, 2016, Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 104-117. ISSN 1338-130X.
- WHEATLEY, D.: Victims and Voices: Journalistic Sourcing Practices and the Use of Private Citizens in Online Healthcare-system News. In *Journalism Studies*, 2020, Vol. 21, No. 8, p. 1017-1036. ISSN 1461-670X.
- WU, Y.: How Age Affects Journalists' Adoption of Social Media as an Innovation. A Multi-group SEM Analysis. In *Journalism Practice*, 2019, Vol. 13, No. 5, p. 537-557. ISSN 1751-2786.

Authors



Associate Professor Olha Harmatiy, PhD.

Department of Journalism and Mass Communication
Lviv Polytechnic National University
Knyaz Roman Str. 3
79000 Lviv
UKRAINE
olha.v.harmatiy@lpnu.ua

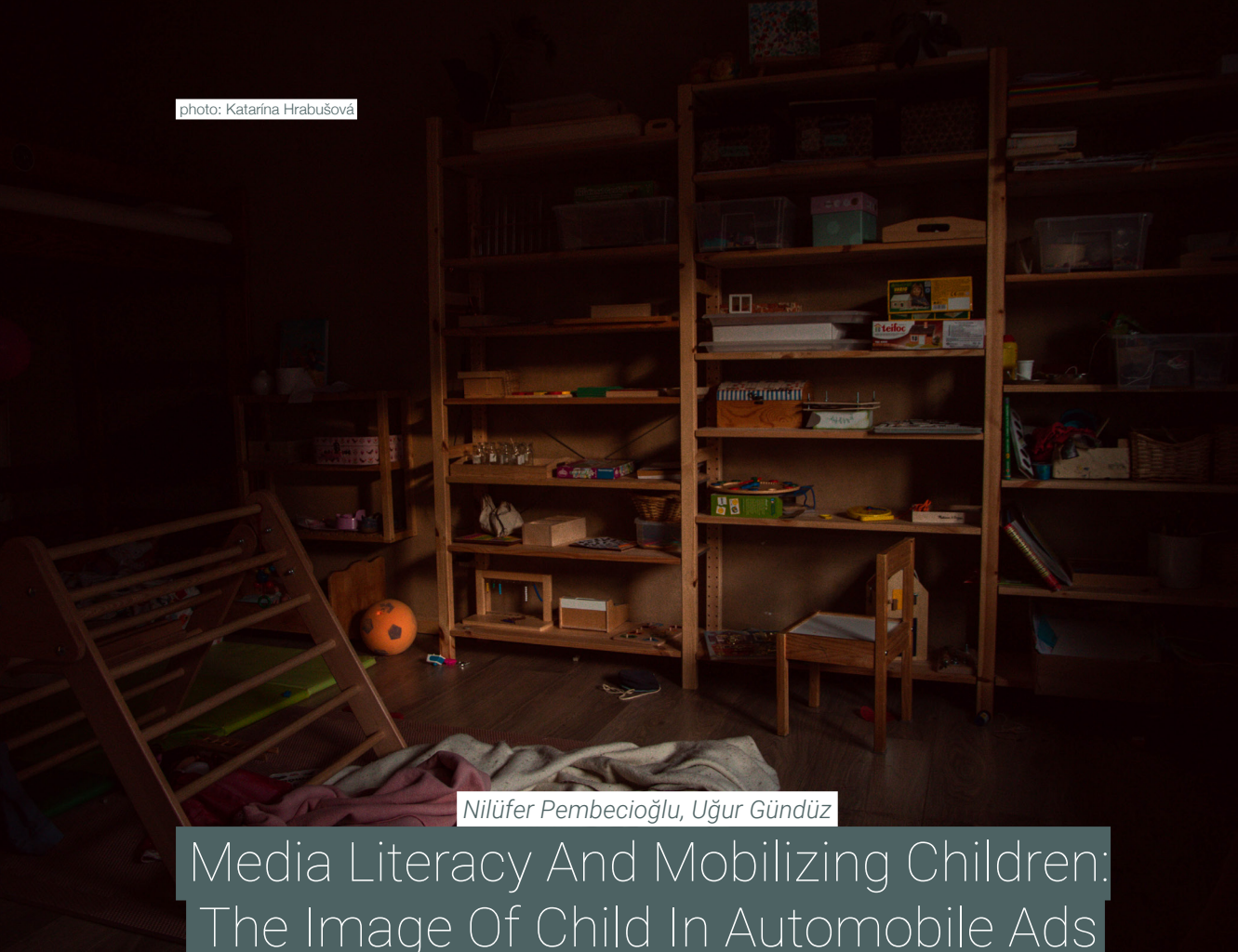
Olha Harmatiy is currently an Associate Professor at the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Lviv Polytechnic National University, Ukraine. Her research interests include issues of government communication, social media, media literacy and media education. She is also interested in science popularisation and science communication within the media discourse. She is the co-author of three scientific monographs and the author of numerous scholarly articles and conference papers.

Peter Kravčák, PhD.

Department of Journalism, Faculty of Arts and Letters
Catholic University in Ružomberok
Hrabovská cesta 1/B
034 01 Ružomberok
SLOVAK REPUBLIC
peter.kravcak@ku.sk



Peter Kravčák is currently a PhD. lecturer at the Department of Journalism at Faculty of Arts and Letters, Catholic University in Ružomberok, Slovakia. His research interests include issues of regional and local journalism, television journalism, sport journalism, media ethics, and media history. He is also interested in public relations and advertising within the media discourse. He is the co-author of scientific monographs and the author of numerous scholarly articles and conference papers.



Nilüfer Pembecioğlu, Uğur Gündüz

Media Literacy And Mobilizing Children: The Image Of Child In Automobile Ads

ABSTRACT

The image of the child raises questions that need to be analyzed and discussed, particularly in the visual messages of the advertisements. The presence or absence of children and the characteristics of their reflections in the media, specifically in the context of television commercials, put forward controversial issues. Due to the easy positioning of the child image, different narratives aim to place the child as a family member, a cute object, or a potential future user. The paper discusses how children's image is used in the frame of the automobile ads. As the main source of data, internet commercials were given priority. Also, a focus group of 20, and a sample group of 100 children were questioned regarding their reflections on ads and sample actions practiced in the ads. The findings indicate that car ads containing children's images tend to take precedence. In the ads, the concept of family is portrayed and associated with happiness, comfort, freedom, and trust, etc. While the samples provide examples from all segments of society, representations of white and blond kids in well-off families are more frequent. Childish purity and sensitivity are exhibited and emphasized in the context of car ads: their quality, performance, features, and capacity are always within the limits of the interests of children. If not real cars, the toy versions are enough to set the agenda as long as they are accessible to children to use, touch, and feel.

KEY WORDS

Media Literacy. Mobility. Child. Automobile. Image.

1. Introduction

Television and pay-TV connections bring together a broader general audience within the limits of their media ownership and viewing habits with the commercials promoting emerging or renewed products. However, the internet seems to be appealing to a more selective, and conscious audience with higher media literacy rates, reaching up to the new media platforms making it possible to expand the limits of thematic choices. The association of the child image could be seen in any context intermingling with almost all disciplines and concepts as something profitable on the side of marketing. Yet, on the other hand, the children audience feel satisfied to be reflected through the screens as competent, self-reliant, mature individuals, especially when they are offered a moment to state their opinion. Due to persuasive language and effective images, they seem to be making their own decisions when buying products like biscuits or running into a new toy, or with things that could easily be associated with childhood habits. However, the striking thing is that in the last two decades the media seems to be mobilizing the image of the children from innocence to maturity, from passive to active, from the state of an observer to the state of an actor. Enabling such a change, media seems to have aimed its presentation more towards the child, paving the way for them to make their own decisions even if it is so far in the future. In the end, the media seem to be sure that these little boys and girls of the day will become the loyal consumers of tomorrow.

Requiring different rates of media literacy, television and internet broadcasting might refer to different types of audiences as well. Ads love children and children love ads as well; they like to see themselves in the ads because they are repetitive and enjoyable. Specifically, ads related to outdoor activities, spending time with parents, and nature have a crucial impact on children. Even if they stay physically immobile in front of the screen, the intellectual mobility of the kids makes them prospective buyers. Due to the development and vitality of the industry, constantly updated car models, as well as the high economic circulation rates compared to the other sectors, the automobile industry often ends up with higher budgets for ads. It is possible to handle mobility in different forms and functions, such as inspiration, the market regime, opinion, beliefs, or values of the people.

The concept of mobility is a principal discussion point all over the world. Ranging from topics such as the mobility of the populations, refugee issues, mobility of culture, and values. The mobility in relation to the concept of childhood stands as the most important „decision-making“ aspect of the century. Regarding all the concepts and activities involved throughout the last two decades, we may easily see an increase in mobility in different examples. For example, in Turkey, appreciation for „gold“ left its place to „diamond,“¹ or the yearning for „tea“ turned to the addiction of „coffee.“²

Apart from everyday habits, the surroundings changed a lot including the skyscrapers instead of humble cottages, the smartphones replacing their traditional counterparts and even the traditional classroom settings for children, characterized by chalk and blackboard are replaced by virtual reality sessions and smart boards.

As frequent and systematic messages, ads had an important impact on the dissemination of innovations and „decision-making“ processes. Especially within the everyday usage of media, ads cover a lot of space both in traditional and new platforms. Automobile ads expressing the concept of „mobility“ reveal important findings to be analyzed regarding the image of the child. They must prioritize the concept of the child.

¹ COMAK, N., PEMBEÇIOĞLU, N., CAGLAYAN, I.: Gold vs. Diamond-Traditions vs. Modernity. In *5th International Symposium Communication in the Millennium. A Dialogue Between Turkish and American Scholars*, 2007, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2007, p. 48.

² COMAK, N., PEMBEÇIOĞLU, N.: „Changing The Values of The Past To Future.“ In *3rd Annual International Conference On Journalism & Mass Communications*, 2014, Vol. 1, p. 223.

Starting from the earliest days of history, vehicles were accepted as the representatives of modernization, mobility, and symbol of status. The word „car,“ is enough to mobilize thoughts, feelings, and actions both in children’s and adult’s world. The book „*Blink*“ by Malcolm Gladwell refers to the character Bob Golomb as a car salesman, having sales almost tripling the sales of an average car salesperson.³ This is one of the thousands of examples of how people give importance to cars and people related to cars. In his book, Gladwell explains that the people who buy cars do not only buy the car but also the hopes and feelings, sense of security, and sensibility associated with it.

Back when cars weren’t as ubiquitous, when it was almost impossible for ordinary people even to touch a car, the dream of a car was more important than the real thing. Cars and any kind of action related to them were considered to be marvelous: seeing, testing, driving, buying, or selling them have always been great experiences.

The rate of cinema films portraying old cars in their plots reaches up to 72%. The use of new cars reaches up to 28% especially when the plot is mainly structured in the future. The audience usually develops a kind of appetite for such new and futuristic designs as well, whereas the old cars might only trigger the appetite of the collectors. Becoming almost as famous as the leading actor, these automobiles had a place in the hearts of the audiences as well as the seeds of future purchases regarding Gerbner’s cultivation theory.⁴

In time, handmade cars were replaced by production lines and within the last decade through advertisements and news, the masses were smoothly convinced and prepared for autonomous cars. Today, millions of pupils are transported by their parents or school buses from home to school, and if only they could have secure transportation systems of their own what a relief it would be. This is true when the elderly are considered. If only they could drive, they would not be expecting a ride whenever they want to pay a visit to their old friends or hometown. No need to mention the regular and inevitable requirements of a hectic town life making automobiles necessary. Thus, the automobile ads expand their horizons by adding each member of the family. It could be easy to mobilize the people, and other movable objects but it would be more difficult to mobilize abstract things such as ideas and values. Usually, the elder people in society have established values that might be difficult to rationalize, mobilize, or substitute with others. In contrast, the younger generation is more easily mobilized having a differently established connection with culture, language, value, or belief system.

Using automobiles is a way out of a hundred others to mobilize things and people. It’s not only a vehicle to make the separate members of the family meet, it’s also a way of spending time or going away. Automobiles mobilize people not only physically but intellectually as well, through mobilizing the culture, venue, language, and values. Understanding of cultures requires many different perspectives focusing on values, whereas the consumption culture in its modern sense, requires more attention and research. That is why the advertisements having challenging offers and providing new and tailored identities have more impact on the audience more than ever.

Automobiles function as status symbols in society.⁵ The brand had the power to bring together the people in the fun club or similar gatherings. The car owners reflect their prestige and authority with their brand-new cars or beloved used ones. Thus, „the self“ and „the other“ meet on the same road, they should be integrated into the same community, dissolved, and melted in the same pot. The days of the spoken stories left their place in the media as the main storyteller of society. Thus, the images are provided to lead beliefs, change policies, shape prejudices, establish stereotypes or help people to overcome their fears. Even if they mention the positive effects of media, the negative impact of it seems to be severe.

³ GLADWELL, M.: *Outliers: The Story of Success. Audio-Tech Business Book Summaries*. New York : Little Brown and Company, 2017, p. 23.

⁴ GERBNER, G.: Cultivation analysis: An overview. In *Mass Communication and Society*, 1998, Vol. 1, No. 3-4, p. 176.

⁵ DAVIS, J. A.: Status symbols and the measurement of status perception. In *Sociometry*, 1956, Vol. 19, No. 3, p. 154.

Ads do not sell anything else than mere hopes and dreams. Even if it were possible to get away from the commercial in the days of the one channel television, people still seem to be staring at the screen with the hope that they would be having similar lifestyles, objects, and activities as narrated in the ads. Roberts discusses the *Great Gatsby* (1974) as the American dream.⁶ Wyatt mentions the producer Robert Evans spending \$14,5 million for rentals in vain. Yet, his assembling a product tie-scheme valued at \$6 million to create „a third level of awareness” for the film was a brilliant idea.⁷ This example and similar others prove that real and physical mobility might be a bit expensive and tiresome due to the high costs of travel and education. But instead, implanting hopes and dreams, through the images and virtual mobility, costs even more. As for the last part, it also guarantees future habits, expenses, and consumptions.

2. Methodology

The paper discusses how the child image is used and affected by the concept of mobility. It also questions how the concepts of mobility are introduced in the form of automobile commercials. Thus, focusing on worldwide different car brands, this study aims to find out more about the presence and absence of child images in these ads and whether these presences were realistic representations or not. The study focuses on mobility types in the automobile ads regarding the concept of mobility, and how the child audience is expected to be mobilized through these images. As the main source of data, the commercials taking place on YouTube were given priority because they are easily accessible to children. These commercials provide an invaluable source to see how children are depicted in the family, society, and mobility contexts, how they are interrelated with the idealized world, how much they were used as the target audience, and how much they were related with the objects advertised.

As the clusters of the study, firstly, the most advertised automobile brands were aimed. Television programs have many ads in between the episodes. The main idea behind it was to find out how many different brands were targeting children who might be watching the serials with their family members. After tracking the sum number of the year’s length of the advertisements in the traditional and social media (Dec 2018 – Dec 2019), the famous brands of the world were pointed out as Peugeot, Audi, BMW, Volvo, Mercedes, and Porsche. These were the ones to be analyzed in their usage of the child image in their ads.

To find out more about children and automobiles, firstly, a group of 20 kids between the ages of 4-16 years was established as a focus group. From time to time their opinions were checked to find out their perceptions of the ads, or real-life experiences with automobiles. During the focus group discussions, it has been found that the kids know a lot about automobiles and brands, capable of discussing them with all their features and they are fully aware of their potential as a customer. It was interesting to find out that the literacy about automobiles was not related to the gender and education level of the kids or their parents; it was not related to the family income, their urban or rural origins, or automobile ownership. The focus group members seem to be decided on their future purchases since they are already motivated to buy a car of their own. Thus, the commercials to be used as the main data are decided with the help of the focus group’s decision-making processes.

The new media possibilities provide the youngsters to create their own opportunities and thus, they do not need to wait for the commercials to come to them, they search for them and find what they want. As the second part of the data collection, a sample group is established

⁶ ROBERTS, M.: Scarface, the great Gatsby, and the American dream. In *Literature/Film Quarterly*, 2006, Vol. 34, No. 1, p. 71.

⁷ WYATT, J.: *High Concept: Movies and Marketing In Hollywood*. Texas : University of Texas Press, 1994, p. 149.

out of 100 kids. Aged between 8-16, these children had a chance to practice their media literacy skills, through questioning the ads, associating themselves with a brand, and commenting on them. After their decision-making process is finalized, the data they have collected were taken as the main text to be analyzed. Mainly using the social media platforms, they agreed upon 50 YouTube ads to be analyzed. However, between 2015-2020, 40% of the analyzed ads just vanished and only 20 ads remain today. These texts were classified in different headings such as the Theme (general umbrella term), Topic, Text (regarding the age, level, interest, and language appropriacy), Thread (Inclusion of the non-textual elements requiring intertextuality) the proposed Task (what duties were attributed to the audience), Trends & Transfers (What tendencies were promoted, valued or compared and contrasted), Transition (What changes were foreseen), Thinking (Thinking processes and progress in thoughts), Tailoring (What kind of details), Taking Risks (What kind of Threats), Technology (Enrichment vs. traditional) and Transmedia (Mobility) effects.

3. Findings

The findings of the study could be discussed in two different clusters. One part mainly discusses how the kids express their opinions about the automobile ads, and the other part of the findings mainly dwell on the textual analysis of the automobile ads reflecting child images.

Chosen as the main methodology of this paper, the 12T's approach was inspired by Stoller & Grabe's Six-T's Approach for Content-Based Instruction until 1997.⁸ In this research, each T (Namely Theme, Topic, Text, Thread, Task, Transfers & Trends, Transition, Thinking, Tailoring, Taking Risks, Technology, Transmedia) refers to a category focusing on a different perspective regarding the quality, consistency, and coherence of the text. The main goal of this type of analysis is to reach conclusions regarding the structure, content, and function of the text. These T's put forward how the social media narratives are shaped and what these clusters include.

The research is a complicated and long-termed process requiring deep questioning and analysis techniques for various purposes in two different focus groups of kids. Yet this paper is only limited to the findings and interpretation regarding the way the children were positioned in the automobile commercials in traditional and new media.

To develop a systematic approach to the data analysis, the advertisements were classified keeping in mind the 12T's Approach as a valuable text analyzing toolbox. Thus, making deductions about the implementation and function of the narrated material were possible. Most of the messages were didactic and structured for a specific purpose rather than conveying unique ideas. Regarding the automobile ads as a part of a larger scenario, the texts are seen on a complimentary basis. Thus, certain repetitions in them, including the actions, wording, or scenario helped them to be put into a certain T box.

Classifying the automobile ads in certain clusters might be a bit difficult since these ads might include more than one T in their text, through direct and indirect references. However, regarding how much weight is allocated for each T regarding the automobile ads, it might be very important to state that whereas the theme, topic, text, task, trends, and transfers were at the same bottom level of minimum within the provided data, thinking, tailoring, taking risks make up an upper level. The percentage of involving different types of thread, transitions, and technology seems to be the highest level of them all emphasized almost in all automobile commercials. That means in most ads technology is emphasized.

⁸ STOLLER, F. L., GRABE, W.: *A Six-T's approach to content-based instruction*. [online]. [2021-02-10]. Available at: <https://carla.umn.edu/cobaltt/modules/curriculum/stoller_grabe1997/6ts.pdf>.

Rate of 12T's In Automobile Ads

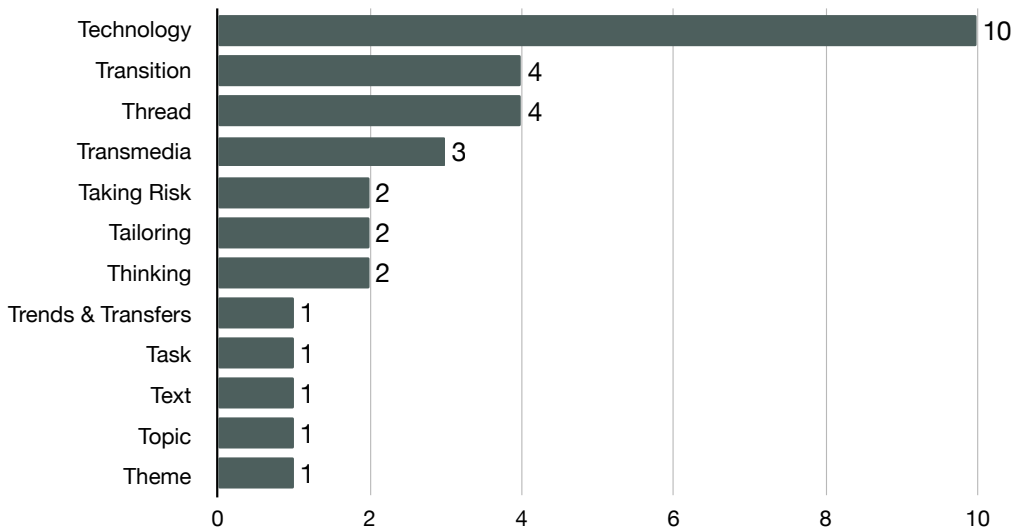


FIGURE 1: Rate of 12T's In Automobile Ads

Source: own processing

The basic concept emphasized as the „theme“ of the study, is the automobile. Even if it seems to be a general umbrella term for everyone, the meanings and values associated with the concept might be different. For most people, it is luxurious, expensive, and extraordinary and it's more than the four wheels, doors, and steering wheels.

To some, it might be easy to reach, affordable and pleasant and for many others, it's just a dream. The attributed meanings make it somewhat different than a usual and ordinary object. Some want to rent it some want to have it, some do not want to share it; to some, it's just a pleasure of being in it for a few minutes. In Turkey, people tend to rent cars during their special days such as weddings and there are thousands of companies to provide such services as dressing up the bridal cars.

In *The Impacts of Neighborhoods on Intergenerational Mobility* Chetty and Hendren⁹ found that commute time is „strongly correlated“ with upward social mobility. This marks access to transportation as one of the first and most important obstacles to achieving upward social mobility. Urban sprawl has made our society auto-dependent and therefore disenfranchises people who do not have access to an automobile.

Cars are also associated with the families and when the father dies, for example, his car is not sold since it is a kind of family heirloom and the kids generally make use of it in turns. Or when it is broken, people spend more money than what a new one would cost to mend it because it has memories. The cars are so much appreciated that their drivers are called the man of the car, such as the Mercedes man, the Volvo woman, Porche kid, etc. Thus, the car becomes the identity itself so much that people cannot bear to be away from it and need to follow it through their GPS or GSM. To Khatri, the usage of the automobile tracking device both for individual and commercial purposes is increasing.¹⁰

⁹ CHETTY, R., HENDREN, N.: The Impacts of Neighborhoods on Intergenerational Mobility I: Childhood exposure effects. In *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 2018, Vol. 133, No. 3, p. 1155-1156.

¹⁰ KHATRI CHHETRI, J. R.: *Automobile tracking system using GPS and GSM*. [online]. [2021-02-10]. Available at: <https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/340689/KhatriChhetri_Jaya.pdf?sequence=2>.

Due to the competitive nature of the market, automobile ads do not mainly concentrate on theme development through ads. Instead, they would like to nominate the winning qualities of their products and they put it into a narrative. A Mercedes advertisement¹¹ seems to be speechless focusing only on the actions throughout two minutes. These could be defined as actions that bring perfection to the lives of beloved ones. Among them stands a child, feeling a bit queer and guilty for bringing the toy rabbit to a tailor to be mended on its ear. None of the actions is related to automobiles. The advertisement has more priority on perfection. That is why the ads are classified under the „**theme**“ heading.

1	Theme	General Umbrella Term	Automobile
2	Topic	The main idea	Mobility
3	Text	Age, Level, Interest, Language	Children included
4	Thread	What other factors	Economy, class, education, adventure, pets
5	Task	What duties	Escape, involvement
6	Trends & Transfers	What tendencies	Humour, intelligence, yearn, speed, creativity
7	Transition	What changes	Upgrading, identification, class distinction, future predictions
8	Thinking	Process – Progress	Future orientation, causalities and uniqueness
9	Tailoring	What kind of details	Speed, imagination, colour, family ties, humour
10	Taking Risks	What kind of Threats	Disappointment, accidents
11	Technology	Enrichment	Followers of technology
12	Transmedia	Mobility	Mobility, obsessed, motivated, able, focused

FIGURE 2: *The findings of 12T's approach regarding the analysis of automobile commercials with the child image*
Source: own processing

When it comes to „**topic**“ in-text studies, many different issues could be brought up for discussion. For example, within the framework of the „Friendship“ concept, different topics such as the friendship of a child and a dog, the friendship of a white and a black person can be expressed and analyzed. Thus, regarding the „topic“, the main idea behind the automobile commercials seems to be the mobility concept. Even if mobility is somewhat desired and expected, the automobile needs to be where it is required. But usually, people tend to develop some habits such as parking in the same spot, using the same paths, driving through similar routes (between home and work, visiting parents, taking kids to school, etc.). The changes of the habits or patterns, for example, changing the path or changing the car, etc., are not welcomed easily. It is not a kind of rule but starting from childhood, people develop tendencies to make up their own patterns and follow them for a lifetime. That means, liking a certain automobile brand is like just becoming a fan of a football club that you cannot quit easily. Even if you are aware of the fact that the players are out of a train or they have not been able to beat their rivals for the last five years, you never give up on them and keep on supporting your team.

The children and their purposefully designed images are just the „**texts**“ of the automobile commercials. The scenarios involve them, the images perform their roles but the impact on the audience is a never-ending one. Each commercial involves a made-up text, a scenario, having partitions of audio, video, and symbolic field codes. Whereas different ads belonging to a specific brand might be assumed to be making up a larger text, different brands might also contribute to a larger text of automobiles and mobility. What is meant by the „text“ analysis in this respect involves the deciphering of codes and actions as Barthes mentioned.

¹¹ Mercedes Benz Service Close to your Heart Commercial. [online]. [2021-02-10]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bzxiM8oxl8I>>.

As far as fiction is concerned, each verbal, visual or literary text reflects codes and aspects. The analyzed text might be so close to reality itself, or it might be a kind of adaptation of another culture, language, or value system. It might have psychological, social, economic, or cultural codes, depending on the units involved and their overall importance. Thus, apart from the simple analysis of forms and structure, a deeper semiotic and discourse analysis is required. There will always be the need to find out the symbolic field codes through the representation analysis and the way the audience de-coded the message through the impact analysis. Each level of textual analysis would require different tools to decipher the meaning.

The automobile ads as „texts“ involving child images might require different types of analysis. For example, researches questioning the values and meanings attributed to childhood or the way the child concept is associated with automobiles might yield interesting outcomes. Whereas the child image is attached more and more importance in the modern world, and the social values attributed to the child, how childhood images got more importance is a bit related to the marketing dynamics. Even if living standards increase and the production systems get better and even cheaper, children got less benefit of it. As the countries in Europe have lower population increase rates, the children in the average families got better standards at home, at school and in all over the society. As a consequence, most of the children have better opportunities, better roles, and a higher status within the family and society, but on the other hand, mainly they lack the care and time the earlier generations had just a few decades ago. Even if the parents could manage to perform their roles of housekeeping in around 15 minutes for doing the dishes or washing the clothes or cleaning home, they get less skillful in parenting or sharing the dreams of their children.

Also, all the automobile ads could be classified as the ones focusing on the main idea as mobility. In a Volvo ad, for example, the automobile is presented not only as a car but also as a shelter, a space of security, including family, children, and pets. Due to the privacy rule principles and codes of media, the faces and voices of the kids should be limited, and using the child image requires obeying the many different rules. That's why in most of the commercials the „texts“ the children are depicted they are in the form of silhouettes, or the camera touches them as the ones playing in far distances, etc. In this Volvo commercial too, even if the kids faces are not shown clearly, they seem to be in their teens; that means they are old enough to appreciate the value of the things they have, such as mobility or luxury. Just like in many other ads, having two kids, a boy, and a girl, the family reflects the ideal perfectness and balance. Yet, there seems to be inequality on the side of the females regarding the number of men and women regarding the „**whole text**“ of the ads.

Analyzing a sample of 1,337 prime time commercials from 3 major networks (ABC; CBS and NBC), Ganahl et al. found out that even if women make most purchases of goods and services, they are still underrepresented as primary characters during most prime time commercials except for health and beauty products. However, in automobile commercials, most of the drivers are women and they seem to be the leading ones. Even if they still have traditional stereotypes of women, their able status is associated with the power of the brand. According to the analysis results of the study, gender inequality in automobile advertisements appears to be lessened, regarding the ratio of man and woman sitting in the driver's seat. Other details such as the texture of a passerby or city and pets also count for the desirability of the car. For example, in this commercial, a healthy Dalmatian runs to reflect the richness and harmony of the family. It is also the symbol of their love and care for the kids.

Considering the whole „text“ of automobile commercials, it might be easier to put forth that the kids in the commercials are never positioned as the customers or ultimate users but the coincidental passer-byes. However, the embedded and rather cultivated message is that they are there just because of being the potential future users. Furthermore, in such ads, children are mainly stereotyped. Even if the samples provide examples from different races and age groups, as well as all segments of society, a higher proportion of the ads mostly dwell on white and blonde ones depicted in well-off families.

Cars, their quality, performance, features, and capacity are always among the interests of children, specifically when they are brand new. Even if not the real ones, the toy versions might also be enough to set the agenda as long as they are accessible to children to use, touch and feel. Yet, the hyper-reality created in the commercials seems to be the main impact of media on society as if all automobiles are accessible to children. Apart from the reflections of having dignity, comfort, and self-confidence, the children in the ads are highly intelligent, creative, and perform adult-like behaviors.

In most cases, the „**thread**“ is the message embedded in the text, making use of the other collaborative units, referencing the possible corpus in an intrinsic way. The commercials point out social messages, references to the cultural, political or economic levels, classes, history, making use of in-text and non-textual references as well as intertextual transitions. Handling the theme as automobile and topic as mobility, what other concepts and issues could be embedded in the text? Thus, a kind of stratificational structure could be established to provide messages for each different audience type. It might also be used as a part of an integrated marketing communication strategy. For example, regarding the „**threads**“ involved within the automobile ads, Star Wars Volkswagen is a good example of providing us a supporting family, with little stirs. Accompanied with the Star Wars theme and costume, probably a boy is trying to test his power on different objects and his experiences fail up to the moment of meeting his father’s car suddenly starting to work as if he could make it with his magic. The ads present a good example of understanding the psychological needs of the child and providing opportunities for the kids to develop.

The humor factor in the ads is another effective „**thread**“ factor associating many other concepts and meanings. For example, in Michael Schumacher and Nico Rosberg’s „Decision“ commercial a couple is expected to have a very difficult decision on their way to the hospital to give birth to a baby. Rather than the brand of the car, the other information outside the main text is put forward to be more important. The car ads usually make use of cataphoric references, revealing facts at the end of the ads, yet some others are using anaphoric references as well. This commercial seems to be a unique one using an exophoric reference in the text. Here the baby is not seen but the child factor is still there and „decision making“ is been associated with the concepts like being secure, being fast, being successful, etc.

Regarding the „**trends and transfers**“, the calm and balanced personality reflected just like in the ads is becoming fashionable. For example, a Mercedes commercial brings up the inner child of a new customer speaking on behalf of him. Even if it is a bit blurred whether the image reflected is his son or if this is a dream of his own childhood, the commercial invites the adults into a dreamy world, to get away from the reality to the child inside, accepting its (childish) freedom, innocence, and creativity as well as readiness for discoveries. In this text the car is just like a bridge between the self and the outer world, helping the individual to find out more about the self and the ways of reflecting it. The Volvo S90 commercial could be analyzed as a „**text**“ depicting a family in real life and in the ads. Yet it could also be analyzed regarding the info it reflects as the modernization of the family with its „**trends and transfers.**“ The commercial claims that they make cars with a different mindset. The driver, probably the father is passing through the beautiful French views while the boy with the pair of glasses is sitting at the back and observing the beauty. Later, the camera shows us the mother in the front row right beside the drivers’ seat and lastly, the little girl at the back. In this commercial, the family members seem to be so detached from each other, reflecting and specifying that they have enough space and privacy in their wide-enough car. However, they smile in dignity as a perfect and happy family traveling together.

Regarding the „**transition**“ point of view in commercials, sometimes these are performed in the form of words and actions or sometimes it’s just the presence of a child delivering the message. For example, in its Exobaby ads, Hyundai prepares the kids for a complex, transparent future of digital literacy and the virtual world. The kid is just in the form of a design, most probably a boy yet, the race and other details were not provided.

One other advertisement including „**transition**“ in its structure does not struggle to convince the customers to „*buy*“ the product by using persuasive language. It is another Volvo commercial in which we see the early hours of the city and experience the texture of different families having different lifestyles. The implication here is that it's the brand bringing them together and covering all the different values, beliefs, languages, and races. Each one uses different vehicles ranging from bicycle to tram, from boat to private car to reach their work. The working place appears to be the automobile factory they all work for. In these series of ads, the children are just the passive elements of the story as family members. The commercial provides scenes when children are taken to school, carried, prepared for the day, transported to the school, etc.

Most of the commercials associate the privilege of the car with a unique relationship. For example, in the series of Audi ads „My dad's an alien“, the little girl narrates her own life, providing clues, and expressing her feelings to define the automobile as a spaceship and portraying her father as an alien. Here we may talk about the transition of an adult-like expression of the child in automobile ads. The transition of the father figure into an „alien“ not only implies the gender differences but also the intergenerational ones. The transition of the automobile into a spaceship could also imply promising smart automobiles. The wording of the text reflecting the child's perspective would also grasp the attention of the children audiences to become customers. Thus the ads seem to be defining the concept of the automobile through children's perspective and providing associations with the concepts such as shelter, bridge, compassion, or spaceship. So, defining and re-defining, re-positioning the automobile would be the „**task**“ of the viewer as much as the advertiser.

Unveiling the „**task**“ of these commercials, it's important to understand the dynamics of the societies to decipher who is assigning the duty, and who is taking the task. Mainly, social media users tend to perform their main task to warn others in society or to become more media literate and conscious consumers. When the text is formed involving several main and sub-texts, the receivers have it as a message inviting them into a challenge. This means that the text is deployed to the target audience, making use of a certain media in a certain way. The message, thus, positions the audience to a certain point to deliver the message, to maintain its continuity, or to make the receivers perform certain actions. Perhaps the text with its routes, pre-determined forms, language, structure, visibility, accessibility, and informativity might require to be interpreted from a certain perspective. Sometimes it possible for the same text to reach differentiated audiences to be interpreted in different ways. Reaching the target, the message uploads the audiences with different tasks. Even if the message is the same for all different clusters, performing the task would be requiring different dynamics for each different body. For example, everyone watches the same commercial but not everyone buys the car.

One other thing to be mentioned about the automobile commercials is that the automobiles are positioned as actors in most of them. This type of positioning puts the drivers in a secondary position just fulfilling the actions of the automobiles. For example, in many ads, we see the cars driving through romantic paths, accompanied with great nature views, etc. as if the cars are taking the men to rescue, etc. Rojec & Urry state that „*It is becoming ever clearer that while people tour cultures, cultures and objects themselves are in a constant state of migration.*“ The nomadic nature of men seems to be getting its motivation from the automobile. In most of the ads, the automobiles are shown as they are leading to lonely paths in the forests, lakeside, or mountains. The scenes resonate with the idea of escape from the big cities, crazy crowds, and finding the free self in nature again. This could also be regarded as the „**transition**“ of humanity, facing a slow and dignified but more meaningful future.

Even if the „**transitions**“ concentrate more on the things changing such as upgrading, identification, class distinction, or future predictions, the „**thinking**“ cluster concentrates more on the process and progress. Social media has a reversing structure that changes the top-down informational sequence. Thus, the cluster of „**thinking**“ might involve the others in the society, the elders, children, or the unable ones requiring some kind of guidance. In its „*dog-tested*“ ads,

Subaru does not give direct messages to kids to convince them to become future customers. Yet, the kids are highly affected due to the cute animals, even if the content sounds a bit more adult. In another Subaru commercial, unlike the usual families denying their cars to their children, the father, providing confidence prepares her daughter as a future driver assuming that she'll have a car in future. That might be assumed another „**task**“ to be taken from the commercials to be carried out by the parents. The ads aim to train and convince the parents to be calm, understanding parents to give a hand to their children's future prospects. On the other hand, both examples could be interpreted as examples of „**thinking**“ since the concepts of „*driving dogs*“ make the kids think. The calm, controlled and future-oriented positioning of the father is also very valuable for the kids.

Sometimes the ads exaggerate the luxury and beauty of the car and maximize the benefits. Yet, sometimes the minimal details are emphasized. This seems to be a kind of duel between the ordinary and extraordinary. The concept of „**thinking**“ could be unpacked from the actions and underlying factors only within the given text. In this respect, one of the ads could be mentioned in which two women within their cars come side by side, waiting for the lights to turn green. One of them seems to be having a fairy look with all the make-up and elegance. However, the other one seems to be just an ordinary beauty, the mom of the girls sitting at the back. The narrative makes us feel the difference between working women and moms. The mom, imitating the chick lady, looks at the mirror to check her face like her. But, she suddenly poses with the squint eyes in a crooked way as to make the two daughters laugh at her. Here comes the child factor with the humor effect. The part of thinking on the issue, comparing and contrasting the two women is left to the audience.

The actions, language, or cultural differences could be tailored into the new identities of the society. „**Tailoring**“ in this sense, seems to be very easy since the concept of the automobile is possible to be tailored into any other discipline or aspect. However, this seems to be somewhat contradictory when it comes to the play and psychology. According to Stockmann and Graf all the toys especially Lego are having an impact on children leading them to automobiles. As in the building sets (Lego 2015), the city depicted in the commercial contains several references to car-based transport in several ways: the cars themselves, a car dealership, car tires, and something that resembles a podium for a car or motorcycle race. To them in Lego commercials, the Lego series and movies, cars, and/or their drivers are portrayed as heroes. The logic and necessities for this experience, as well as the connected social „good“, are not questioned. Similarly, „The uncrushable Toy Cars“ ads of Mercedes-Benz original portray many different boys and girls playing with the toy cars. The association of toys and their fragile nature compared to real automobiles is very interesting. The fugitive nature of humanity, to break the rules (toys) and not being able to manage it when it comes to Mercedes, cultivate the concepts of security and quality. In most ads, the automobile is associated with freedom, comfort, activity, and adventure. In those, the kids are just a part of the family, seated in the back row, observing the beauties that the automobile allows and exposes them. So, it's not a direct appreciation of the automobile itself but what it bridges between the self and life. The harmony of the family is tailored and reflected in most of the ads having one, two, or more (up to six) kids, enjoying the adventure. The automobile is not only somewhat a solo thing, but also the joy of being together.

Regarding the „**Taking Risks**“ aspect, some of the advertisements are classified as improper due to the actions or messages involved and thus some of them were either abolished due to the change of the YouTuber's account or claimed to be unethical. The competition among the car manufacturers is a crucial one involving much fake news as well. 1,60% of the whole fake news seems to be about the automotive market. One other point regarding the „**Taking Risks**“ aspect is that even if auto theft is a very common act all over the world, none of the commercials mention it directly. However, the related commercials focus on the car prevention systems, alarms, or compensations through insurance. There also occur, follow-up systems provided by GSM or GSP. All these are the realities of life never mentioned in any of the ads since these are considered to be related to the side sectors.

Perhaps more importantly, the commercials themselves might even cause some problematic situations such as conflict of interests, unethical broadcasting or unfair competition, etc. Some are banned in traditional broadcasting systems. Even if it is banned in one channel, it is possible to make quick changes and continue broadcasting different versions of the commercial, on other traditional channels, or on social media. Yet, if they involve kids in them like the Mercedes one, it is still questionable. The ad shows the automobile fair visited by several customers, happily walking around the old, antique, and sports cars, reminding the good old days of the past. These cars and the visitors have nothing to do with speed limits, etc. Yet, within the parallel story, the audience is exposed to a speedy car forcing its limits, hurrying to the fair hall at the end, crushing a glass wall (traditionalism/past), and taking its place as the latest version of its type. In this text, the kids are depicted as the interested adult-like visitors of the fair, just admiring the old cars with their lollipops in the hand. According to the media law, ads do not provide examples of speed or rush, breaking the traffic rules, etc.

Although there are so many risks in driving, when the reflections of the kids were questioned, the findings prove that a car is as comfortable as home to them and they state that they feel peace and freedom in it. Yet, most of the kids (90%) know the risk of having an accident. However, fewer are aware of the potential dangers of a possible accident (54%). And even lesser (25%) are capable of behaving appropriately in an accident case. Regarding a kind of media literacy and rising awareness attempt, the videos of Transport Accident Commission Victoria, help the kids and parents to be cautious. It provides the message emphasizing that „children learn more from your behavior than you may realize.“ The commercial of 90 seconds is enough to exemplify to show that how you drive might have a great impact on children aged 5-12 years. The message reveals the fact that parental behaviors determine the type of drivers they will become in the future. Not only to sell the goods and products but also to provide some basic media literacy skills, certain brands seem to be giving extra attention to child safety and most of the scenarios are built upon that. Yet, Francis argues that National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that young children are in more danger of being backed over by a car than being hit by traffic.

According to McGwin et al. seatbelt use was depicted in 62% and 86% of individuals in television programs and commercial automobile scenes, respectively. The prevalence of motorcycle helmet use was 47% in television programs and 100% in commercials. Bicycle helmets were used in 9% of television programs and 84% of commercials. The frequency of seatbelt use in programs and commercials varied by television rating and genre but did not differ by the network, time of airing or the age of the character portrayed.

Some of the commercials make use of unfair competitive strategies and thus are panelized or uncredited. Perhaps this could be the factor to help to explain why out of 50 car ads in YouTube suddenly falls into 20 only, decreasing 40% in two years time. These ads never find a place in television channels or traditional media, appear all of a sudden, and vanish at the same speed. So, putting them into social media might also be considered as a way of „**taking risks**“. One of the Audi commercials puts it into an open competition having prejudices regarding the motives of buying a car. So the commercial emphasizes the brand as breaking the spell. This spell thing sounds well with the concept of automobiles because no one has the perfect and scientific tools to prove why his/her choice of automobiles seems to be better than the other ones. The unreasonable reasons seem to be interpreted as the spellbound people having their hearts into a certain automobile brand.

Whereas the „**technology**“ is emphasized in almost all automobile commercials, the „**transmedia**“ aspect is also very important due to the specific attributions to the concept of the automobile. The commercials themselves have a transmedia quality positioning themselves between the target audience and the product. Due to the complexity of the developing technology, in-text, and out-of-text references aim to balance between the new and old information. Due to both the slippery nature of the texts and the intricate characteristics of social media, the message

may be transferred from one media to another. Sometimes it is possible to follow the rest of the story through another media, another platform, or another perspective. That might bring a different flow or surf-like experience on the side of the audience, yet, it is difficult to know how much of the text is known to the viewer and which part is new. The quality of the transitivity turns to be a kind of slippery feature causing a patchwork rather than the systematized and chronological flow of information. Thus, the audience acquiring the story in a puzzle-like atmosphere, in complementary distribution, the old message is compatible with the new one. Sometimes this slippery feature of the message might cause the content and functions of the text to be blurred. In such cases, they might remember the qualities and even the price of the product but not the brand or vice versa. And sometimes, having a certain, motivated group in the audience, with high and effective media literacy skills, it might even be possible to create niche audiences each focused on a different media environment. However, the slippery nature of the texts might not allow all texts to be seen together in the same pot but rather in a scattered way. Thus, just like the commercials, the texts occur from time to time but never in a linear order. It is obvious that all these text messages have different messages presented in different layers of different cultural clusters.

The interesting point is that poor or rich, educated or uneducated, all children expect to have a car someday. In other words, even if they are fully aware that those cars are not accessible or affordable for them, they merely dream of it. This mainly causes „Hybridization & Cultural Hybrids“ as well as „Pidginization“ of the language and values. In so many different newspapers or TV programs, you may come across people buying old cars and spending less than you can imagine to renew them, to make their cars priceless in the end. In such success stories, no brand is mentioned, the individuals just makeup or create their cars to reach their dreams. Mostly the news emphasizes that the owners never give up their work of art even if they are offered high prices. In the USA for example, there stands a garage in almost all houses having a broken car waiting to be mended miraculously.

However, just a few kids (3%) were willing to design their automobiles, and the rest would be happy with the possible choices they could purchase. Yet, most of them (95%) highly agreed to have somewhat extraordinary qualities for their future cars such as flying, swimming, and changing colors. Even if the idea of having autonomous cars is very exciting, most of the kids (87%) still would like to be able to drive their cars. It's just like creating your avatar. In „hyper-reality,“ a virtual world is created in digital games, where young people transform themselves into avatars. Whereas American children are occupied with electronic media 5,5 hours a day, Turkish ones are not that much keen on it. However, this kind of cultivation and „media literacy“ through the games and videos make it possible for them to believe that they could easily reach an automobile or even mend a broken one. The car heroes of the cinema films such as Herby, Kit, or Bumblebee also had an important role in this hyper-reality. And 90% of the sample group children state that if they'll get a car, it should be a brand new one and they are not keen on buying second-hand cars. Especially the females tend to have greater expectations such as automatic transmission systems or parking facilities as well as IoT applications. Thus, automobiles become more like companions rather than being just a vehicle for most of the drivers.

What children expect from commercials is mainly what they see in real life. In a way, the children's tendencies seem to be consistent with the general market. According to the findings of the TEB Cetelem Observatory 2015 report, involving 14 countries and Turkey, the car parks are full of old cars in Turkey, which means no one wants to buy old cars. 37% of the automobiles are vehicles over the age of 16 and 26% of them are above the age of 20. Although steps have been taken regarding scrap incentive programs, the results seem to be insufficient. Whereas 620,937 second-hand automobiles were sold in 2018, this number decreased to 479,060 in 2019 and increased a bit during 2020 due to the pandemic. Except for China and Japan, in most countries the brand new automobiles do not sell more than the second-hand ones, thus, the used car market seems much more active than the brand new ones.

One other interesting consistency between the children's decisions and the general social tendency is that the car owners feel „someone special“. 95% of the sample group children narrate their feelings of having a car as of confidence, luxury, well off, and having a higher status in the society. By 2019, there seem to be only 170 cars per 1000 people in Turkey. Thus, rather than being an object of individual use as the symbol of escape and freedom, aesthetics, and pleasure-oriented expeditions in some other countries, the automobile is still a family member in countries like Turkey. That's why the choices would be depending upon who is going to make use of the product. In general, the world automobile market is dominated by sedans and hatchback chassis. The rulers of the world automobile market, Sedan and Hatchback seem to be the ruling ones in Turkey as well and make up 80% of automobile sales. The children have a choice for these two as well. The distinction here seems to be the gender since the girls tend to prefer hatchback automobiles (65%) more than the boys (40%). This might be interpreted as the tendency of speedy driving on the side of the boys.

Even if the real customers of the automobile market seem to be preferring diesel and hybrid ones nowadays, it is interesting to figure out that the kids in the sample group do not have enough awareness of the difference between. According to the data Turkey Statistical Institute (TSI) provided, the most preferred type of fuel in automobiles in Turkey in 2018, was 37,87% LPG. The fuel type of the other cars was recorded as 36,85% diesel, while the number of gasoline-powered cars was 24,92% only. However, the kids do not care much about the fuel type but the speed as if they have an endless power of energy.

The image of an automobile is a complex one for the child. Most of the children do not remember when they first get into a car or they do not have specific feelings and memories regarding automobiles. Just 3% of the sample group children state a great enthusiasm for cars and 12% of them state that they would like to buy one as soon as possible. 15% of the kids state that they would love to have an automobile at some point in life. 10% of the kids do not have any hope to have a car. However, in general, 80% of the sample group of children estimate to buy a car in five years on average. In general, the youngsters attempt to buy their first car as soon as they have a job, finish university, or reach the age of having a driving license. These three possibilities are also supported by the bank credits, etc. Depending upon the data provided by TEB Cetelem Observatory 2015 report a person in Germany can buy a Volkswagen Golf or equivalent car with 6 months' income. In some countries in Europe, it may go up to 6,5 months whereas in China it is 5,2 years, and in Turkey, it takes 2,3 years for someone to afford a car. And this is another point that children's instincts and choices have consistency with the real market values. Thus, the advertisers' main aim of placing children in their ads might be to convince them to buy a certain brand as soon as they are capable of buying one.

The time-lapse between the first encounter and the purchasing decision might be too long for a child as it is stated in one of the Porsche commercials. Sitting in his row at school, the boy sees a Porsche passing by and draws a picture of it. After school, driving his bicycle, the boy visits a Porsche agent and after daring to sit in the driver's seat that he was dreaming of, kindly asks for the business card of the dealer. He says he plans to visit the dealer in two decades' time as he rides back home on his bicycle. Thus, the „dedication“ and „transition“ in the eye of the child are reflected in the ads.

„This is the first generation born with a mouse in their hands and a computer screen as their window to the world...“ states Lindstrom and buying cars for kids is just a child's play. That means, their literacy level of evaluating the facts in society and their capacity of fulfilling their dreams do not match with each other. However, it might be difficult to blame the kids since the cultivation for the future generation seems to be responsible for this illusion, creating a new world of utopia for them.

With the focus group studies, it's been figured out that the children are knowledgeable regarding the traffic rules. The sample group of kids seems to be highly knowledgeable about cars, rules (they even know how to swear when something goes wrong). Even if not through the advertisements, these are also cultivated through their real-life experiences.

Regarding the colors of the automobiles, even if nothing specific is attributed to the colors in the advertisements, the data proves that the kids generally prefer three colors: Red, black and white. Interestingly, white is also the color preferred by most drivers. In 2018, 56,6% of the 310 thousand and 964 cars registered to the traffic were white vehicles in Turkey.

The other concepts associated with the children and cars in the advertisements are ranging from food, family, and friends, to traveling to other countries, picnics, and car races. Most of the boys are dreaming to have transforming cars. Some girls ask to have an extra place or caravans for their clothes, toys, friends, and parents, yet, the boys only care for their own space as a driver. Some of the kids want to have full isolation while they are driving. Thus, they call the driver seat the control cabin, cockpit, or flight deck and attribute the value of self-dignity, loneliness, and freedom to their future automobile. They state that they would like to have a glass or frosted glass between the other passengers and the driver's seat. Most of the kids would like to travel alone (87%) some others would like to have accompanying family members (15%) and friends (22%) from time to time. Most of the boys would like to travel alone (67%) and some (6%) would prefer to stroll around with their gangs, racing to defeat one another.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

Watching all these commercials, voluntarily, the kids become conscious and conscientious purchasers of the products let it be in the form of toys, accessories, or real automobiles of the future. They know what they want, they know how far they could go. Psychologically, they are ready to feel like „a member of the club,“ since they need to feel that they become a part of something, some kind of society, and this sense of belonging to a certain group, motivate them to buy whatever they are introduced in the commercials. Although people found out many other ways of spending free time and making use of their spare time, watching television is still popular and respectable in any society, and strolling around social media and internet surfing are even more respectable. Finding an interesting YouTube video and sharing it adds to the popularity of the youngsters. The values associated with the watching activity could be summed up as wealth/power or well-being, social/respectable status, education/or being skillful and communicative. The child seeing his representation in the media is easily influenced to act similarly. The subconscious behaviors at the beginning turn to be the lifestyle and made decisions up to the level of consumer loyalty in time. Most of the research in the field of children and communication concentrates on the way children are depicted in television serials or television commercials. However, the children are not much asked what they think of it or how their perception might affect their future decisions.

In this sense, each new commercial is a trial to establish a new little camp in the society. In this part of the given society, the values and the actions have a different code, and the ones watching this piece of virtual reality, specifically, children, share all these values. Thus, the made-up one, the created culture, or the culture of exception in the commercial film turns into reality throughout the time. This may be seen as a kind of flow. The idea of flow is welcomed by some social theorists. For instance, drawing on Mol & Law's work, John Urry argues that „much of what happens in a „society“ is influenced by flows or fluids.“

Another sociologist, Rob Shields, summarizes the characteristics of social flows as follows: they are spatial, temporal, and, above all, „beyond merely being processes,“ that is, having a content, they are just materials, or, as Deleuze and Guattari paraphrase it, a flow is „material in movement“. In this respect all said is somehow related with the concept of mobility and automobile as well as decision making. Deleuze stresses the seemingly separate world of reality and representation world would coalesce.

Deleuze and Guattari also claim that such actions like mobility have rhythms, intensity, and tempo, and move according to certain frequencies such as weekly, daily, every five seconds, etc. Here it should be discussed that why is everyone driving in the ads drives into the woods, in the mountains, or by the seaside or lakeside? Is this a kind of escape from the bigger cities and hectic lifestyle into a more humble and natural one? With the automobile, at least for a weekend, people would like to experience a different rhythm, a denser intensity, and perhaps a slower tempo of life.

They also seem to be having intentional, vectorial directions, but not origins or end-points, causes or purposes, or a transcendental direction. Thus they are relational, without being positional in the structuralist sense; they have viscosity, like ice-flows, and can move at different speeds and in different shapes. The cars seem to be flowing from one side of the screen to the other side, from left to right, or vice versa. We see them in action but they do not stem from any certain kind of reality or reason. They are there and just stand there, to convince us up to the moment of decision making and purchase.

To these qualities, Urry adds new forms of social inequalities proliferate; flows signal new opportunities, new desires, and at the same time new risks. Having this brand or another one is reflected as a kind of inequality throughout the ads. Yet in fact, the images of children used in adult-related commercials such as banks, automobiles, communication technologies, etc. create inequalities as well. However regarding the level of affording, it's been claimed that most the children are beyond the level of mere simple daily purchases yet, most of them could afford things only adults can. Pecora claims that in 2000 the children's pocket money reaching up to a sum of 155 billion dollars has also a rather different way of spending it because the children now are facing the media and they also have a media shaped life. The more money the children have, the more possibilities of mobility occur on the side of the child.

Roberts and Foerh state that, according to the 2001 data, 67% of the schooling children have access to the internet at home; 15-17 years youth have 83%. It is interesting to note that the media availability of the children is not affected by the criteria such as economic income, social status, being white or black or Hispanic, etc. Only, in some cities, the lower-income groups have less media availability overall in home-access, yet, they are still available and accessible to children.

Automobiles seem to be just one way of mobility yet with the IoT possibilities, life is becoming much more smart and mobile. Rahim et al., mention the evolution of IoT and applications in the automotive industry as a „next step reality.“

Those stories would certainly have an impact on the viewers as being the pieces of the same big puzzle or different puzzles to shape the non-existing world of the individual to lead him/her to build a „better“ self and a more pleasant world. Once the perception is achieved there would certainly be connotations and denotations related to it. Thus, the stories are never left behind, but rather added to each other and accommodated just like the 1001 Tales carried through a lifetime to be revised, implemented, reshaped, and remembered. The industry-oriented commercials use the human brain in the most effective way. First, television messages are classified in the form of images. Millions of nerve cells (neurons) receive and transmit messages even automatically. Once they have a large number of synapses that connect them mutually to complex circuits, they can carry billions of messages of similar types. One nerve cell can have thousands of synaptic connections which form the neural circuits in which some nerve cells can function in various circuits. Thus seeing the advertisement only twice a child could remember it for a lifetime.

That means every film, and every bit of the film (scenes, colors, characters, music, feelings, moral, etc.), would build a different layer in the world of the child. As Baudrillard pointed out, consumption is not a passive activity but a system of producing sign-values. The conflict between the purchasing or not is somewhat a good example to see how the habits and traditions are re-formulated in these newly created cultures and societies. Thus each commercial creates

a motivation for the individual and the mass audience to watch for another. Considering the Consumer Motivation Process, motivation refers to the underlying drives that contribute to our purchasing actions. These drives stem from the conscious or unconscious goal of satisfying our needs and desires.

Needs are the basic, often instinctive, human forces that motivate us to do something. Sometimes, the needs are just made up of „needs“ that we learn throughout our lifetime, specifically during childhood practicing the behavior patterns observed around us. The commercials are in a way putting the world in the orbit of a rather „emotional“ perspective rather than putting it into the „power“ based position. Similarly, the world we live in, or the world of the future either is reflected optimistically, in which everything is drawn as enjoyable, positive, mature, and respectful, or it is reflected rather pessimistically, in which there would be no place for beauty, goodness, or the individual values, yet everything is beastly bad, cruel and ugly. Watching commercials means a journey to some unknown place, culture, and identity or rather a world of fantasy where the individuals are as mobile as they could imagine.

The findings of the visual analysis, content analysis, and discourse analysis of this study prove that especially the car ads containing children images tend to appear more important than the car itself.

The findings indicate that car ads containing children's images tend to take precedence. In the ads, the concept of family is portrayed and associated with happiness, comfort, freedom, and trust, etc. While the samples provide examples from all segments of society, representations of white and blond kids in well-off families are more frequent. A childish purity and sensitivity are exhibited and emphasized in the context of car ads: their quality, performance, features, and capacity are always within the limits of the interests of children. If not real cars, the toy versions are enough to set the agenda as long as they are accessible to children to use, touch, and feel.

Acknowledgement: *This work was supported by the Scientific Research Projects Coordination Unit of Istanbul University. Project number BEK-2016-21235-Mobilizing Children: Automobile Commercials and Children-Coordinator & Researcher Prof. Dr. Nilüfer Pembecioğlu.*

Bibliography and sources

ARENS, W. F.: *Contemporary Advertising*. New York : Irwin/McGraw-Hill, 1996.

Baby – Volkswagen Jetta (Safety) Commercial. [online]. [2021-02-16]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PvHCGabqElg>>.

BARTHES, R.: *The Semiotic Challenge*. Los Angeles : University of California Press, 1994.

BAUDRILLARD, J.: *Simulacra and Simulations*. New York : Routledge, 1981.

BLOOM, F. E., LAZERSON, A., HOFSTADTER, L.: *Brain, Mind, and Behaviour*. New York : Freeman, 1985.

CHETTY, R., HENDREN, N.: The Impacts of Neighborhoods on Intergenerational Mobility I: Childhood exposure effects. In *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 2018, Vol. 133, No. 3, p. 1107-1162. ISSN 0033-5533.

COMAK, N., PEMBECIOĞLU, N.: Changing The Values of The Past To Future. In *3rd Annual International Conference On Journalism & Mass Communications*, 2014, Vol. 1, p. 219-227. ISSN 2301-3710.

COMAK, N., PEMBECIOĞLU, N., CAGLAYAN, I.: Gold vs. Diamond-Traditions vs. Modernity. In *5th International Symposium Communication in the Millennium. A Dialogue Between Turkish and American Scholars*, 2007, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2007, p. 47-61.

DAVIS, J. A.: Status symbols and the measurement of status perception. In *Sociometry*, 1956, Vol. 19, No. 3, p. 154-165. ISSN 0038-0431.

- HOLLAND, E. W., SMITH, D. W., STIVALE, C. J. (eds.): *Gilles Deleuze: Image and Text*. London : Bloomsbury Publishing, 2009.
- DELEUZE, G., GUATTARI, F.: *What is philosophy?* New York : Columbia University Press, 1994.
- First Subie Road Trip*. [online]. [2021-02-15]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PKc_hCkTqc>.
- FRANCIS, L.: *The Cultural and Structural Implications Of American Automobile Culture*. [online]. [2020-12-15]. Available at: <https://info.umkc.edu/sosland_journal/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Francis.pdf>.
- GANAHL, D. J., PRINSEN, T. J., NETZLEY, S. B.: A content analysis of prime time commercials: A contextual framework of gender representation. In *Sex Roles*, 2003, Vol. 49, No. 9-10, p. 545-551. ISSN 0360-0025.
- GERBNER, G.: Cultivation Analysis: An Overview. In *Mass Communication and Society*, 1998, Vol. 1, No. 3-4, p. 175-194. ISSN 1520-5436.
- GLADWELL, M.: *Outliers: The Story of Success. Audio-Tech Business Book Summaries*. New York : Little Brown and Company, 2017.
- GOKHAN, M.: *2019 yılında kaç adet ikinci el otomobil satıldı?* [online]. [2021-02-23]. Available at: <<https://tr.motor1.com/news/394373/2019-ikinci-el-verileri/>>.
- Honda Pilot Commercial – Extended Version ft. Ozzy Osbourne’s „Crazy Train.“* [online]. [2021-02-15]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UTA2CE8_KLk>.
- Hyundai Exobaby - Robot Baby Commercial.* [online]. [2021-02-12]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FphI7znkak0>>.
- KHATRI CHHETRI, J. R.: *Automobile tracking system using GPS and GSM*. [online]. [2021-02-10]. Available at: <https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/340689/KhatriChhetri_Jaya.pdf?sequence=2>.
- LINDSTROM, M.: *Brandchild: Remarkable Insights into The Minds of Today’s Global Kids and Their Relationship with Brands*. London : Kogan Page Publishers, 2004.
- MCGWIN, G., MODJARRAD, K., REILAND, A., TANNER, S., RUE, L. W.: Prevalence of transportation safety measures portrayed in primetime US television programs and commercials. In *Injury Prevention*, 2006, Vol. 12, No. 6, p. 400-403. ISSN 1475-5785.
- Mercedes-Benz E-Class Coupe Commercial.* [online]. [2021-0-15]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JJo4YOW2rAI>>.
- Mercedes Benz Service Close to your Heart Commercial.* [online]. [2021-02-10]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bzxiM8oxl8I>>.
- Mercedes-Benz Michael Schumacher and Nico Rosberg Commercial „Decision.“* [online]. [2021-02-12]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LJDQ41iiRmY>>.
- Mercedes Commercial: Inner Child (Director’s Cut) – Long Version.* [online]. [2021-02-12]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8NnDbNbf3Fs>>.
- Otomobilde Beyazdan Vazgeçemedik.* [online]. [2021-02-23]. Available at: <<https://www.milliyet.com.tr/ekonomi/otomobilde-beyazdan-vazgecmelik-2718225>>.
- MOL, A., LAW, J.: Regions, Networks and Fluids: Anaemia and Social Topology. In *Social Studies of Science*, 1994, Vol. 24, No. 4, p. 641-671. ISSN 1460-3659.
- PECORA, N. O.: *The business of children’s entertainment*. London : Guilford Press, 1998.
- PEMBECIOGLU, N., GUNDUZ, U., AKIN A.: Media and Information Pollution. In SEVINÇ, G. (ed.): *Medical Informatics*. Istanbul : Istanbul University Press, 2021.
- Porsche commercial (dare to dream).* [online]. [2021-02-23]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NF9nsoncn4U>>.
- RAHIM, M. A., RAHMAN, M. A., RAHMAN, M. M., ASYHARI, A. T., BHUIYAN, M. Z. A., RAMASAMY, D.: Evolution of IoT-enabled connectivity and applications in automotive industry: A review. In *Vehicular Communications*, Vol. 27, 2020, p. 1-15. ISSN 2214-2096.
- RIFKIN, J.: *The European Dream: How Europe’s Vision of the Future Is Quietly Eclipsing the American Dream*. New York : John Wiley & Sons, 2013.

- ROBERTS, D., FOERH, U.: *Kids and Media in America*. New York : Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- ROBERTS, M.: Scarface, the great Gatsby, and the American dream. In *Literature/Film Quarterly*, 2006, Vol. 34, No. 1, p. 71-78. ISSN 0090-4260.
- ROJEK, C., URRY, J.: *Touring Cultures: Transformations of Travel and Theory*. London : Routledge, 1997.
- SHIELDS, R.: Flow as a New Paradigm. In *Space and Culture*, 1997, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 1-7. ISSN 1206-3312.
- Star Wars Volkswagen part 1-2 and 3*. [online]. [2021-02-12]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZ_vvDtv8IA>.
- Subaru Commercial Father-Daughter*. [online]. [2021-02-15]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6F3-lnOdMP4>>.
- STOCKMANN, N., GRAF, A.: „Polluting our kids’ imagination?“ Exploring the power of Lego in the discourse on sustainable mobility. In *Sustainability: Science, Practice and Policy*, 2020, Vol. 16, No. 1, p. 231-246. ISSN 1548-7733.
- STOLLER, F. L., GRABE, W.: *A Six-T’s approach to content-based instruction*. [online]. [2021-02-10]. Available at: <https://carla.umn.edu/cobaltt/modules/curriculum/stoller_grabe1997/6ts.pdf>.
- The uncrashable Toy Cars – Mercedes-Benz original*. [online]. [2021-02-15]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6KgJuiXpsrM>>.
- The Volvo XC60*. [online]. [2021-02-10]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=60VkskogBC4>>.
- Volvo XC60 2013 Rearview Commercial – Volvo Cars*. [online]. [2021-02-15]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yZATtHnMfzk>>.
- The Volvo S90*. [online]. [2021-02-12]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bJl3wUbmogc>>.
- URRY, J.: *Mobilities: New Perspectives on Transport and Society*. New York : Routledge, 2016.
- Volvo Car UK – Everything We Do Starts With People*. [online]. [2021-02-15]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UkRwus90mw8>>.
- Volvo – Made by People*. [online]. [2021-02-13]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IIFGNrVe-Po>>.
- What kind of driver are you raising?*. [online]. [2021-02-16]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=opoGqpDfPAY>>.
- WYATT, J.: *High Concept: Movies and Marketing In Hollywood*. Texas : University of Texas Press, 1994.

Authors



Prof. Nilüfer Pembecioğlu, Ph.D.

Department of Radio-TV and Cinema
Faculty of Communication, Istanbul University
Kaptani Derya Ibrahim Pasa Str.
Beyazit – Istanbul
TURKEY
niluferpembecioğlu@gmail.com

Prof. Dr. Nilüfer Pembecioğlu, as the academic of Istanbul University Faculty of Communication Radio Television Cinema Department has many articles on a national and international basis regarding education, communication, journalism, peace journalism, new media, children, women and advertising fields. She took the best academic researcher award of Istanbul University six times. Specialized in Media Literacy, Social Discrimination and Exclusion, Cyber Bullying, Systemic Family Therapy, Film Therapy and Family coaching. She provides consultancies for the institutions such as TRT (Turkish Radio Television), RTUK (Turkish Radio Television Supreme Council), MEB (Republic Of Turkey Ministry of National Education), NATO. She is the director of 8 long feature documentary films, 30 short films and 8 animations. She works with disadvantaged groups such as refugees, gifted, deaf and handicapped children. She also has 2 English and 20 Turkish books, 30 book chapters, many academic papers and many EU projects and other international projects. She is the organizer of International Children and Communication Congress since 2003.

Prof. Uğur Gündüz, Ph.D.

Department of Journalism
Faculty of Communication, Istanbul University
Kaptani Derya Ibrahim Pasa Str.
Beyazit – Istanbul
TURKEY
ugunduz@gmail.com



Uğur Gündüz graduated from Marmara University (the Department of Business Administration, the Faculty of Political and Economic Sciences) in 1999. He gained his Ph.D. in Journalism at Istanbul University, for his dissertation „Westernization Concept in the Press: A Comparison of Young Turk Journalism and Present Journalism“ in 2009. His research interests are the Sociology of Communication, New Media, History of Communication and Media and Cultural Studies. He is currently a Professor of the Department of Journalism at Istanbul University, Istanbul, Turkey.



Hedviga Tkáčová, Eva Al-Absiová, Marwan Al-Absi, Martina Pavlíková

„Media Invasion“ Against Islam In The Context Of The Slovak Republic

ABSTRACT

The research of the stereotyping of Muslims and its consequences in the context of the Slovak Republic is highly topical and necessary. The complexity of this research is influenced by the fact that in Slovakia we do not yet have a proven research tradition in this field and there is also a lack of empirical research that would deal with this issue. A so-called mixed research strategy consisting of a combination of qualitative and quantitative research was used for our research purposes. In the qualitative part, we used the method of group interviews, through which we identify the most important sources of information from which respondents learn the most about Islam and topics that reflect the most about Islam in the media. In the quantitative part, an evaluation of the media presentation of Islam is carried out by means of a questionnaire, which is carried out in a research group of 110 respondents. The aim is to obtain, describe and analyse the image of Islam in contemporary media; it is exclusively a research of the media-mediated experience of respondents with Islam. The interpretation of the research puts the findings into a broader context of the issue, presents the most significant examples and consequences of the stereotyping of Muslims in the media and suggests perspectives for the greater inclusion of Muslims despite their cultural or religious differences from the majority population. The research was conducted between the months of April and September 2019.

KEY WORDS

Muslims. Slovaks. Media invasion. Minority. Research.

1. Introduction

The people of post-communist Europe are looking for answers to what values and heritage they should intensively develop in the new global-pluralistic culture. Even Slovaks, after the fall of the forty-year ideology of communism, face a new world, foreign values and mentalities, unknown traditions and religions. Seeing their „differences“ they do not know how to perceive and evaluate them; whether to understand and welcome them as guests or to condemn them forever as intruders. This human insecurity is entered by the media, which boldly, directly and loudly show new worlds, values, mentalities, traditions and religions, and as they are established in society as the creators of opinion and public opinion, they „force“ cultural diversity and its full scope and intensity not only to see, but also to have an opinion on it. At the same time, many of the media contents represent the opinions of „others“ and thus do not require any intellectual effort. They are a presentation of facts but do not force them to think about these facts. They exist for immediate consumption and therefore in attractive formats and attractive packaging.¹ All this is reflected in the current media content, which is increasingly characterized by a kind of „media cultural invasion“.² By this term we mean the phenomenon in which media content dictates to recipients what to think, how to behave and how to feel. In short, the question of evaluating „difference“ is at the same time one of the biggest problems and dilemmas of humanity. The tragedy is the cheap offerings of the media to form our opinions. By accepting this offer, the diversity of the human community and cultural diversity as a result of media presentation become the subject of false simplification, a reason for stereotyping, a cause of suspicion and of condemnation.

According to experts, the media presentation of Islam and the image of events connected with Islam in European countries have a significantly negative charge.³ The consequence of Islam portrayed in this way in the media is an unacceptable social distance among Slovaks in relation to Muslims.⁴ Despite the fact that in the context of this minority (primarily defined by ethnic cultural traditions), the culture of the majority (national Slovak culture) is at the forefront. The attention to social distance among Slovaks in relation to Muslims is also drawn by repeated opinion polls (known as Eurobarometer), which are carried out regularly within the countries

¹ See also: 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. 4-19. ISSN 1338-130X.

² An example of a cultural invasion is the American flag on a T-shirt, which is often presented in the media as an „Expression of orientation“, it may be a manifestation of sympathy with nationalism. In this example, it can be seen that the media create not only new content in our culture, but also new meanings.

³ See more: ALLEN, CH., NIELSEN, J. S.: *Summary Report on Islamophobia in the EU after 11 September 2001*. [online]. [2020-01-20]. Available at: <https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/199-Synthesis-report_en.pdf>; BECHARI, M.: *Surat al-islam fi al-icalam al-gharbi* [The image of Islam in the Western media]. Damascus : Dar al-fikr, 2004.; KRÍŽKOVÁ, M.: *Neviditelná menšina – analýza mediálního obrazu českých muslimů*. [online]. [2019-08-11]. Available at: <<https://migraceonline.cz/cz/e-knihovna/neviditelna-mensina-analyza-mediálního-obrazu-ceskych-muslimu>>.

⁴ See e.g.: MENDEL, M.: *Islám jako nepřítel?: eseje a poznámky k dějinám a současnosti islámu*. Brno : Masarykova univerzita, 2014.

of the European Union.⁵ Research into the attitude towards Islam is also represented in our country in a six-month ethnographic survey of Muslim migrants living in Bratislava. The author of the study, M. Cenker, states that the issue of Slovak Islam in the media is characterized by argumentation, which is often distorted, simplified and, above all, rejecting.⁶ Also interesting is research examining the relationship between a knowledge of Islam and the degree of anti-Islamic prejudice; the analysis confirms that the higher the level of knowledge, the more prejudices we hold against Muslims and the more our fear of Islam grows.⁷ Research has also shown the need for personal contact with Muslims, as the extent of these personal contacts has a positive effect on the perception of Islam.⁸ In this sense, it is also interesting to compare the opinions of the populations of 32 European countries, in which Slovakia placed above the European average (19,7%) on the issue of intolerance against Muslims with a value of 24,5%. They show a higher tolerance for Muslims than Slovakia, while countries in which the number of Muslims is relatively higher than in Slovakia (e.g. Czech Republic- intolerance value 15,2%, Austria 15,4%, Spain 10,8% or Portugal 7,9%).⁹ The conclusions of this part of the research indicate that Slovaks have less sympathy for Muslims and greater intolerance than other European countries.

This situation is also reflected by Slovak Muslims, who perceive the majority society as highly stereotypical. Stereotypes form the basic equipment of our identity. So what influences our hidden and obvious, unperceived and conscious stereotypical view of the „differences“ around us? According to experts, it is primarily the family, followed by the creators of public

⁵ Opposition to Muslims is still very significant in Slovak society, as only 16% of parents would accept that their child entered into a marriage with a Muslim („Vezmem si moslima.“ *Väčšina Slovákov by novinu nerozdýchala.* [online]. [2020-01-02]. Available at: <<https://www.aktuality.sk/clanok/371480/vezmem-si-moslma-vacsina-slovakov-by-novinu-nerozdychala/>>.). Králik and Máhrík point that problem might be as well the lack of critical thinking and especially the lack of interpersonal relationships between different people (KRÁLIK, R., MÁHRÍK, T.: Metaphysics as a base for improving critical thinking. In *ICERI 2019: Proceedings of the 12th International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation*. Seville : IATED Academy, 2019, p. 8901-8903.). As Tvrdón points helpful might be also raising the educational objectives focused on ethical education and religious education in the context of Slovak education system (TVRDOŇ, M.: Equal opportunities – comparison of ethical education and religious education curricula. In *Proceedings of INTED 2020 Conference*. Valencia : IATED Academy, 2020, p. 5517-5523.). Bulganová and Kačínová point that the focus of the educational process is on the formation of personality through the media. (BULGANOVÁ, D., KAČINOVÁ, V.: Axiocentric Teaching and Learning About Media in the Context of School Practice. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2019, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 85-93. See also: KAČINOVÁ, V.: The Topic of Media-Disseminated Mis-Information and Dis-Information as an Integral Part of General Education in Slovakia. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2020, Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 18-31. ISSN 2585-872.)

⁶ CENKER, M.: Muslim Migrants in Bratislava. In *Sociológia - Slovak Sociological Review*, 2010, Vol. 42, No. 3, p. 213-236.

⁷ The term „knowledge“ poses a problem. Does it mean the same as „objective“ or „real“ or „credible“ information about Islam and the daily life of Muslims? The knowledge may affect subjective attitudes, but respondents with more negative attitudes may be less open to objective knowledge, so subjective attitudes may also influence the level of knowledge (NOVOTNÝ, J., POLONSKÝ, F.: The Level of Knowledge about Islam and Perception of Islam among Czech and Slovak University Students: Does Ignorance Determine Subjective Attitudes? In *Sociológia - Slovak Sociological Review*, 2011, Vol. 43, No. 6, p. 688.). Even though Muslims have become the objects of daily news in Western countries, the vast majority of people in these countries have very little knowledge about the adherents of Islam. The reasons for this partly lie in educational curricula, which have sidelined the substantial and productive engagement that Europe had with Muslims over many centuries (THOBANI, S.: Muslims in European Education: Liberalism and Alterity. In KARIM, K., EID, M. (eds.): *Engaging the Other: Public Policy and Western-Muslim Intersections*. New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, p. 67-87.)

⁸ NOVOTNÝ, J., POLONSKÝ, F.: The Level of Knowledge about Islam and Perception of Islam among Czech and Slovak University Students: Does Ignorance Determine Subjective Attitudes? In *Sociológia - Slovak Sociological Review*, 2011, Vol. 43, No. 6, p. 685-686.

⁹ These are the findings of experts from the Institute of Sociology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Slovakia. The main coordinator of the project was Tilburg University in the Netherlands (See more: *Výskum európskeho hodnot 1999-2000. The European Values Study.* [online]. [2019-01-02]. Available at: <<http://www.sociologia.sav.sk/old/evs.html>>.).

opinion – the media.¹⁰ A. Chudžíková points out that, according to local Muslims, Slovaks associate Islam with extremism and terrorism, while Muslims blame such perceptions mainly on the media.¹¹ Evidence of cases of Islamophobia in the media can potentially be found in the available official data. These, together with unofficial information from non-governmental organizations, recall the increase in cases of media Islamophobia not only in Slovakia but also in many EU member states.¹²

The negative image of Muslims in the media (as a necessary co-creator of our idea of Islam) is countered by the personal experience of Slovaks with Muslims. As there are relatively few Muslims in the Slovak Republic, there are no systematic meetings between the majority Slovaks and members of Islam, nor a more tumultuous interfaith dialogue.¹³ Most Slovak Muslims consist of students; other groups are traders, entrepreneurs and doctors. Together with their families they live and work in Slovakia and represent a Muslim community of educated employed people with a strong economic background; however, the community is very small and therefore does not require more attention. Slovakia is the only country in the European Union in which there is still no mosque. The attempt of Muslim believers to meet the conditions for the registration of Islam among other churches in Slovakia has also been unsuccessful.¹⁴

2. Methodology

The approach of our research is characterized by an attempt to create a methodology that would determine the evaluation of the media presentation of Islam in respondents. The research will be conducted in a research group consisting of 110 respondents who have exclusively media experiences with Islam; it means that they have never met a Muslim in person, so their view of Islam and believers has been created by the media portrayal of Muslims.

Main research objective: To identify and describe the assessment of Muslims based on the media experience of respondents with Islam. In order to achieve the goal of the research, the qualitative method of group interview will bring us closer in the first part of the research, based on which we will identify individual items of the questionnaire, which will be implemented in the second quantitative part of the research.¹⁵ In the construction of the methodology, we talk about our so-called mixed

¹⁰ See e.g.: RANKOV, P.: *Súmrak televízie očami dnešných študentov: analýza postojov vysokoškolákov*. In URBAN, P. (ed.): *Súmrak médií : Problematika narácie v médiách*. Žilina : Žilinská univerzita, 2013, p. 198-211.; PORUBCOVÁ, J.: *Vplyv sociálnych sietí na formovanie postojov adolescentov*. In URBAN, P. (ed.): *Súmrak médií : Problematika narácie v médiách*. Žilina : Žilinská univerzita, 2013, p. 96-107.

¹¹ CHUDŽÍKOVÁ, A.: *Muslims In Slovakia: Search For Identity and Status In Majority Society*. In SUCHARDOVÁ, H., HUNTEROVÁ, J.: *Muslims in Visegrad*. Prague : Institute of International Relations, 2011, p. 39-56. [online]. [2020-01-02]. Available at: <<https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/librarydoc/muslims-in-visegrad>>.

¹² We mean e.g. the well-known Anti-Hate campaign, the widely represented initiatives of the Center for Public Opinion Research and the activities of the People Against Racism civic association. It is also worth mentioning the Center for Research on Ethnicity and Culture (CVEK), which belongs to the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, which regularly publishes research focused on the activities of Muslims in our territory. See also: *Hlavné témy správy EUMC „Moslimovia v Európskej únii: diskriminácia a islamofóbia“*. [online]. [2019-07-12]. <Available at: https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/1936-EUMC-highlights-SK.pdf>.

¹³ The dialogue between Christianity and Islam takes place through wider meetings organized by cultural and educational institutions, for example, the Islamic Foundation in Bratislava, which also covers the operation and activities of the Córdoba Center for Intercultural Dialogue or the Muslim Foundation in Slovakia.

¹⁴ Given that Slovak legislation has required the signatures of at least 20,000 citizens residing in Slovakia to register a new church or religious society since May 2007, this goal is still unrealistic for a small number of Muslims in Slovakia.

¹⁵ The aim of the group interview is to reach a common outcome with which all members of the group agree. The advantage of this method is that the researcher collects the data that is heard in the group during the interaction of the group members. At the same time, the researcher does not interfere with the events with his opinions or attitudes. At the end of the group interviews, the members of the group confirm the results obtained jointly (PRIEST, S. H.: *Doing Media Research: An introduction*. California : Sage Publications, 1995, p. 109.).

research strategy. „Two separate and time-phased parts of research, each with different objectives, different research methods and producing different data,“¹⁶ lead to the fulfilment of the main goal of the research and its sub-goals. The proposed approach of a mixed research strategy is considered appropriate and necessary mainly in such situations, „when qualitative data serves as material for building a theory, creating part of research or formulating working hypotheses.“¹⁷ In the second phase of research, quantitative research methods were used to obtain data.

Qualitative Research

The initial intention to conduct a group interview with a (recommended) number of eight group members failed due to the busy schedule of one group member and the health problems of another member. Nevertheless, we can say that this did not affect the results of the research and its overall benefits. The tasks assigned to the members of the research group were posed by several standardized and pre-formulated questions. The selection of group members was made on the basis of the so-called criteria selection. We consider three criteria to be important: age, gender and education. The reason for applying the three criteria in the first part of the research was the assumption of greater variability of the opinions obtained. Our goal was at the same time to obtain the greatest possible degree of representativeness of the research sample. Throughout the research part, the researcher did not interfere in the processes taking place in the group and acted strictly only as a moderator and record creator. The group worked on the tasks for almost three hours.

1st Partial objective: Identify the sources from which they most often draw information about Islam.¹⁸

2nd Partial objective: Identify the topics that the group members learn the most about Islam in the media. The obtained data will be used for us in the construction of the questionnaire in the second, quantitative part of the research. The questionnaire will allow us to obtain data on deeper processes of Islam’s evaluation in the media.

Qualitative research - main points of research	
1 st research question:	From what sources do members of the research group learn the most about Islam?
2 nd research question:	What topics about Islam do members of the research group learn the most in the media?
Research method	
The group interview	Addressed was 6 members of the group

TABLE 1: Qualitative research – main points of research

Source: own processing, 2021

¹⁶ GAVORA, P.: *Spríevodca metodológiu kvalitatívneho výskumu*. Bratislava : Univerzita Komenského, 2007, p. 168-169.

¹⁷ Ibidem.

¹⁸ The members of the group understood the term *source* as any communication channel through which information about Islam reaches them (it was not a question of searching exclusively for media sources). The members of the group suggested nine sources, from which they had to choose five sources that inform them the most about Islam. At the moderator’s instruction, they selected the five selected sources according to their importance. The members of the research group were given a similar assignment also in the case of defining such topics about Islam, which, according to them, are most heard in the media, i.e. 2nd Partial objective.

The obtained data represented a set of specific items in the questionnaire - sources and topics. We obtained the following five items defining the sources: **internet, television, press, radio, news agencies**. In addition to the five items listed, we also listed an item „others“ in the questionnaire.¹⁹ Based on a group interview, we identified a set of seven media-related topics about Islam, which were formulated into questions in a questionnaire.

Question no. 1	Please rate the extent to which you are familiar with the term „satanic verses“
Question no. 2	Please rate the extent to which you are aware of the conflict between Islam and the West over the „caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad“
Question no. 3	Please rate to what extent you know the so-called „the veil law“ (French regulation prohibiting the wearing of religious symbols)
Question no. 4	Please rate the extent to which you are aware of the incorrect media interpretation of Pope Benedict XVI's lecture. at the University of Regensburg
Question no. 5	Please assess the extent to which you are aware of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center of 11 September 2001
Question no. 6	Please rate the extent to which you are aware of reports of penalties for defamation of family honour (murder of women, acid attacks, mutilation, abduction, imprisonment, beatings)
Question no. 7	Please rate the extent to which you watch reports on demonstrations by Islamic radicals

TABLE 2: *Topics on Islam in the media: transferred to the questions in the questionnaire (i.e. evaluated by the respondents)*

Source: own processing, 2021

Let us add that the group interview is a type of qualitative method that we used not only to obtain individual items for the questionnaire. The method also served us in the correction of definitions of working hypotheses (so-called group reflection of working hypotheses), which we worked with in the second, i.e. in quantitative research.

Quantitative Research

The draft questionnaire presents a mixture of quantitative and qualitative questions, i.e. a so-called mixed questionnaire.²⁰ The questionnaire begins with several personal questions, the aim of which is to define the respondent on the basis of their age and gender. The questionnaire contains scale questions (with graduated answers), closed questions (with the possibility to answer yes - no) and open questions (all answers are possible). We decided for a quantitative approach and a research method – a questionnaire – with the intention of eliminating the subjectivity of the researcher as much as possible. However, we chose the questionnaire method mainly for its usefulness, and thus the ability not only to document the detailed state of the event but also to analyse the investigated phenomena. Since quantitative research is primarily about the attitudes, value orientation and opinions of our research group on the image

¹⁹ Semi-closed questions, which allow the researcher to include the item „other“ in the questionnaire, were placed in the questionnaire due to the potential possibility of the respondent to supplement their opinion or attitude to the phenomenon under study. Respondents rarely used this option.

²⁰ GUNTER, B.: *Media Research Methods: Measuring Audiences, Reactions and Impact*. London : SAGE Publications, 2000, p. 26.

of Islam in the Slovak media, we believe that the research results and its overall contribution do not need to take into account the representativeness of our research group.²¹

The research group will evaluate the presentation of Islam in the current media, respective to resources (contribution of the research group). It is exclusively a research of the media-mediated experience of the respondents with Islam.

3rd Partial objective: Evaluation of the presentation of Islam by respondents who have exclusively media-mediated experiences with Islam.

The questionnaire was designed in two forms. The first was an online version of the questionnaire, using Google Drive, which is provided by Google in the online space. Google Drive is a virtual data centre, respectively a virtual server (cloud computing), in which the online questionnaire was placed. In this way, we addressed 800 respondents. 125 completed questionnaires were returned. Fourteen online questionnaires were rejected due to incomplete answers. The second way of administering the questionnaire was in paper form. 150 respondents were contacted in this way; 78 completed questionnaires were returned. Thirteen questionnaires were rejected due to incomplete answers. These two ways of addressing the respondents generated 172 questionnaires.

As 62 respondents stated that they have personal experience with Muslims, for the needs of our quantitative research, focusing on respondents who have exclusively media experience with Islam, we used the final 110 questionnaires. We converted the questionnaires we had in paper form to online form to unify the form of all questionnaires and to easily process the data. Data processing took place electronically, using automatic answer collection and by transferring them to a spreadsheet editor.

Quantitative research – main points of research	
1 st research question:	What sources of information do respondents use most often?
2 nd research question:	How do those respondents who have only media-mediated experience with Islam evaluate the presentation of topics about Islam in the media?
Research method	
Questionnaire	Questionnaire 950 respondents were addressed in two forms, 203 questionnaires were returned (31 were excluded for incompleteness; 62 had a personal experience with Muslims that we needed to exclude). 110 stated that they had only media experience with Islam.

TABLE 3: *Quantitative research – main points of research*

Source: own processing, 2021

²¹ Representativeness is, in a sense, a relative quantity. This is also confirmed by the results of the census (for example, on the issue of the religious affiliation of the population), to which several warnings have been made about the question of their incompleteness; their value is indicative, it includes a number of inaccuracies and subjectivism. A similar view is expressed in empirical research on Islam in European countries, where official information on ethnic, religious or racial data is subject to a disclosure ban. In the legislation of specific states, the ban is discriminatory. The ban on publishing ethnic, religious or racial data applies, for example, in France, Italy, Germany, Austria and Sweden (See more: ŘEBŘINA, J., SYLLOVÁ, J.: *Právní úprava národnostních, etnických a jazykových menšin v Itálii, Německu, Rakousku, Švédsku a ve Velké Británii*. Praha : Parlamentní institut, 1999.).

3. Results

Our research was conducted between the months of April and September 2019. The description of the evaluation of the presentation of Islam among respondents who have only media-mediated experience with Islam provides answers to the following partial research questions:

- a) What resources do they use to find Islam-related topics?
- b) What keywords do respondents use when searching for topics related to Islam?
- c) How respondents evaluate topics about Islam in the media.
- d) How do they evaluate the media presentation of seven selected topics about Islam?
- e) Do the respondents find other topics in the media than those identified in the questionnaire?
- f) What degree of conflict do respondents attribute to topics about Islam in the media?
- g) Do respondents also find positive topics about Islam in the media? If so, which ones?

From the list of sources for obtaining information about Muslims, respondents cite the Internet as the most common source of their information. As the most common source, it is mentioned by up to 98,2% of respondents, while the Internet is mentioned as a necessary source for obtaining information by every surveyed respondent (we recorded it in 100% of respondents).²² The second most common source of information is other people and interviews with them (83,6%). The third source mentioned is television (60,1%). We see that the opinion of the research group is most often formed through the media (mostly through the Internet and television), but at the same time it cannot be overlooked that people are also an important source of new information.

When using resources in the media, the first condition in the effort to obtain information is the inclusion of keywords. That is also why we were interested in the contents of the respondents in connection with Islam and its followers. We believe that a certain tendency can also be seen in the presentation of keywords, which is followed by thinking and understanding the research set. If respondents who had only media experience with Islam needed information about Islam, most of them would seek information in the media through the keywords terrorist, war and violence. We believe that a certain tendency can be seen in the presentation of keywords, which is followed by the thinking and understanding of the research group – Muslims and topics related to Muslims are clearly associated with violence among respondents; we confirm the negative attitude of the respondents towards Islam and its followers.

As many as 89,1% of respondents evaluate the presentation of topics about Islam in the media as always negative; in the five-point rating scale, this is the most negative rating.

The second highest value is occupied by 7,3% of respondents who cannot assess the presentation of Islam in the media, respectively to review. From the choice of topics that respondents noted about Islam in the media, they are most familiar with the topic of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001 (97,3%). The topic of punishments for tarnishing family honour in Muslim countries is the second most famous topic in the media. Based on the media presentation of Islam, the respondents are also aware of the topics of veil law, and caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad. Respondents are least familiar with the topic of the misinterpretation of the words of Benedict XVI. in Regensburg, and the case of the Satanic verses.

To the supplementary question of the questionnaire about whether the respondents „saw other topics about Islam in the media than those mentioned above“, 68,4% say no. The other 31,6% most often reflected in the media, in addition to the above-mentioned topics, are the following topics: the attack on the Madrid metro, jihad, the Taliban's attacks on European capitals. The survey of respondents to addressing Islam through the media also points to a worrying fact – the question „do you find positive topics about Islam in the media?“. The entire research group answered (100%) that it does not find positive topics about Islam in the media.

²² The choice of topics is the benefit of a group interview in the qualitative part of the work.

Researched significant unit	Research set (110 respondents)	
The most frequently used sources of information	Internet	98,2 %
	Interviews with other people	83,6 %
	Television	60,1 %
Keywords characteristic of Islam in the media	Terrorist, war, violence	
General evaluation of topics about Islam in the media	Always negative	89,1%
	Cannot assess	7,3 %
Existence of positive topics about Islam in the media	Does not find	100%

TABLE 4: Interpretation of the evaluation of the most frequently used sources, keywords in the use of these sources and topics about Islam in the media

Source: own processing, 2021

4. Conclusion

In the qualitative part of this study, a six-member research group identified (1) „sources“ from which information on Islam is most frequently learned and (2) seven topics about Islam that are most common in the media. Their verification took place in the second, quantitative part of the research by means of a questionnaire.

Findings among other things confirm that the existence of Islam in the post-Christian countries of Western Europe, including Slovakia, is (1) influenced by a negative media image of Islam and Muslims and (2) almost exclusively presented in the media through negative topics with an emphasis on conflict. The strong negative media presentation of Islam and Muslims encourages mutual misunderstanding of the cultures involved, leading to a mutual sense of threat, growing hostility, and discrediting of Western culture on the one hand, and Islamophobia on the other. The stereotyping of Muslims as a consequence of the reality constructed by the media also contributes negatively to these phenomena. Although these are phenomena that never lead to good and growth, but on the contrary, to destruction and decline, they occur on a daily basis. The description and analysis of the research results, which confirmed the negative evaluation of the media presentation of Islam, are a starting point for realizing this fact and a challenge to attempts to correct it. The results of the study generate several findings that can be divided into three levels according to hypotheses:

H1 The research team's opinion on Islam is formed mainly through the media.

In research of the stereotyping of Muslims, as a necessary co-creator of the reality that the media is creating for us, we start with the fact that Slovaks are significantly less likely to have a personal experience with a Muslim due to the low number of Muslims in their territory. Based on this, we formulated the first working hypothesis, which was confirmed. Of the 172 questionnaires collected, only 62 respondents (36%) stated that they also have personal experience with a Muslim man or woman. In 87% of cases, this was an experience that was not marked by mutual conversation.

In addition, respondents cite the Internet from a list of sources for obtaining information on Muslims; up to 98% of respondents mention it as the most common source. The second most common source of information is other people and communication with them (70%). The third source mentioned is television (63%). In the context of the entire research, in addition to the media, the importance of personal interviews, which have an impact on the evaluation of Muslims and Islam, is thus shown; we also do not rule out the importance of the respondents' personal experience with followers of Islam, which also takes place through mutual conversations. Briefly, in the research file, we confirm the importance of personal experience in the process of obtaining information about Islam.

Let us return to the confirmed hypothesis about the main media influence on the respondents' opinion. As we know, the media creates their content. However, each medium determines a mixture of different media contents. They are e.g. news, reality shows, talk shows, etc. Many of these media contents represent the views of „others“ and therefore do not require any intellectual effort; they are a presentation of facts but do not force them to think about those facts; they exist for immediate consumption and are therefore offered in attractive formats. We describe the attractiveness and even the absorption of recipients into media content through the term „media invasion“; it dictates to the recipient what they should think, how they should behave and how they should feel.

The „media invasion“ directed against Islam is becoming the subject of a growing number of studies and research. Their aim is to research the media presentation of Islam in Western countries, on the basis of which warnings are raised about the effects of media presentation on the majority society, i.e. a society characterized by the culture of Western countries. The findings of the research strikingly agreed that the „media invasion“ directed against Islam has markedly negative connotations. This in turn leads to an increase in Islamophobia and social negativity towards Islam and its followers by the majority population. We think that the Slovak media fail mainly in not taking into account the differences between nations, social statuses and social roles (differences are lost, for example, between Muslims in Germany and Slovakia, although their status differs significantly, note). The image of Islam is thus characterized by a significant negative stereotyping through the dominant media channels without taking into account differences. It should be pointed out that the Islamic world is a mixture of diverse ethnicities, languages, cultural traditions, political beliefs and secular and religious orientations. Muslims are united in faith in God and in the Prophet Muhammad as his messenger, and are bound together by many religious practices, but they differ in views about many other aspects of their faith and practices acceptable in their real daily lives.

H2 Topics on Islam in the media (i.e. media presentation of Islam) are rated by respondents as rather negative.

The second working hypothesis refers to the research of the above mentioned authors. Among them, for example, M. Cenker states that there is often a distorted, simplified and rejected argument about Islam in the media. The dominant media and lack of personal experience with Muslims brings partial and certainly not positive information about Muslims among Slovaks, without a deeper context. Based on this, we formulated the second working hypothesis, which was not confirmed. As many as 70% of respondents rate the presentation of topics about Islam in the media as always negative. The survey also shows that the entire research group (100%) does not find any positive topics about Islam in the media.

The findings of the questionnaire agree with the opinion of the members of the research group in the qualitative part of the survey. According to all members of the group, the fear of Islam and the negativity of the media, which portrays Islam mainly as a violent religion, are the ones that create the most fertile breeding ground for Slovaks to create stereotypes against Muslims. In addition, members of the research group think that Slovaks, in their stereotypical view of Islam, „*make very little distinction between whether they are an educated and integrated European Muslim in society or a Muslim-foreigner.*“ The religion of Muslims, which is preceded by the negative „reputation“ of Islam in society preceded by the media, is determined. This statement is also confirmed by many studies or representative research. We agree with the conclusions of our research and agree that the identity of Muslims is created primarily by the religion of Muslims, i. e. Islam.

Of the seven topics on the subject of Islam that are most common in the media (according to the research group in the qualitative part of the research), the most well-known topic for the respondents to the questionnaire was the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York on September 11, 2001. It is necessary to point out the depth and impact of the event (i.e. the number of people directly affected by the event). We will only recall the fact that the fall of the two skyscrapers in the

heart of America is behind a definitive connection between Islam and radicalism and terrorism in the global media, which certainly has a significant impact on the perception of Slovaks.

As we state in the introduction, the media presentation of Islam in Slovakia began in 1989 with a media presentation of the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, continued with the work the Satanic Verses and resonated with the third in connection with the bestseller Not Without My Daughter. In the context of our findings, the second moment is interesting, when Islam was to enter the consciousness of Slovaks – the satirical work of S. Rushdie's Satanic Verses provoked significantly negative reactions on both sides of the conflict in 1988-1989; the media reported on the case frequently and intensively. This is one of the reasons why it is surprising that in our research group, respondents state that they are hearing about the topic for the first time; up to 68,3% respondents state this answer. Based on this, it can be stated that our research group records the negative media presentation of Islam only in connection with the events after the media case of the Satanic verses. Based on a quantitative assessment of the topics about Islam in the media, our respondents' perception of the negative presentation of Islam in the Slovak media does not begin until the event of a terrorist attack on World Trade Center in New York on September 11, 2001. Islam begins in the first year of the new millennium and continues towards a gradual but definitive shift to stereotyping Muslims and categorizing Islam as a violent religion.

Considering the negative depiction of topics about Muslims and Islam in the Slovak media, we recall another observation from the research group: „*Slovak media offer information about Islam, which takes place in large European countries.*“ Thus, it is not primarily the experience of Slovaks with Muslims, as our group has very little (or no) personal experience with Muslims; the media-mediated experience is therefore dominant. An interesting reflection of this phenomenon is that up to 100% of respondents in the questionnaire state that they do not find positive topics about Islam in the Slovak media. For Slovaks, it is, so to speak, a double-mediated experience with Islam: 1) it is experience from the media and 2) it is the experience that other European nations have. As much as this is understandable on the one hand, it is dangerous on the other. The description of this experience is characterized by an argument that is often distorted, simplified and rejected. Moreover, the negative experience of Europeans with Islam, paradoxically, also incites the danger of intolerance and ethnic tension in Slovak society. In short, the absence of positive topics about Islam in the European and domestic media, in our opinion, conditions the increase in negativism, xenophobia and Islamophobia.

It is all the more sad that the Slovak media automatically takes over negative content from the European context and portrays European Islam and Muslims, as well as Muslim immigrants, as a threat and a real threat to territorial integrity, cultural sovereignty and the dominance of the majority nation - ethnic Slovaks. We consider this to be a very unhelpful trend, both in the issue of the opinion-forming of the Slovak media and in the issue of building peace between civilizations, cultures and religions. In short, there is a lack of consideration in Slovakia of the fact that the situation with Islam in Slovakia is, and will probably be, different for a long time from the situation of large European countries; at least due to the small number of Slovak Muslims existing at present.

H3 Topics about Islam in the media (i.e. media presentation of Islam) are described by respondents as rather conflicting.

As the number of Muslims in Slovakia is low, Slovaks learn about Islam from the media in an international context. Islam is mostly associated with negative phenomena and events in the foreign media, as the studies presented above confirm; a common intelligence value associated with Muslims is conflict. Based on this fact, we formulated the third working hypothesis, which was not confirmed. The vast majority of respondents rated the topics of Islam in the media as always conflicting (74%). From the choice of topics that are heard about Islam in the media, the respondents are most familiar with the topic of the terrorist attack on World Trade Center on September 11, 2001 (78%). The other 26% reflect from the media, in addition to the topics presented, also topics informing about the attacks of Islamic radicals on European capitals, topics related to jihad and Taliban attacks.

This is a double confirmation of the hypothesis, as according to the members of the research group in the qualitative part of the research, mainly conflicting topics are presented in the media. Members talk about topics that point to cultural or religious conflicts between the Muslim minority and the post-Christian majority in European countries, while at the same time topics „with high social relevance involving several actors and with a direct (negative) impact on the public“. The increase in negative media content is due to the high selection of news. Only a report that has as many news values as possible is able to generate media attention and thus has the possibility of publication. These include, in particular, topicality, dramatization, negativity, exclusivity, novelty, elitism, story or conflict. News values thus, on the one hand, give the report credibility and timeliness, but on the other hand, they lead to a great stereotyping of the content of media products. As a result of the „media invasion“ Muslims are portrayed as foreigners locked up in their communities. In addition, the underlined difference presents them as a potential threat. If the recipient does not have personal experience with a Muslim, he or she acquaints Muslims marginally and superficially through the media; he learns partial, not very positive, information about Islam without a deeper context. The media presentation of the differences of Muslims in comparison with the majority society also has a negative effect. The difference is emphasized in the media, often recalled and without further explanation, i.e. without the possibility to understand or accept it as a manifestation of the natural variability of human society. Despite the presented negatives, we do not expect that the Slovak media will start writing about Muslims in a different way in the near future than they do today; the change probably will not occur without external pressure.

Our further findings are related to the emphasis on the conflict of Islam with other societies in the Western media. We can see that the respondents to the questionnaire associate conflict with violent events involving Islam in the media. The findings from the questionnaire again support the conclusion of the members of the research group, according to which we note in contemporary Islam mainly the interconnection of military, political and religious efforts, emphasis on personal commitment of Muslims in matters of faith, or their open demarcation against opponents or non-believers. We therefore believe that there is at least a double discrepancy between the prevailing thinking, where Islam wants to be perceived as a peaceful religion and the (hateful) statements of Muslim radicals against unbelievers (based on purposefully interpreted verses of the Qur'an), which are often presented in the media. On the one hand, it calls for the establishment of „everyday topics“ that would also reflect the everyday life of Muslim communities in the media, and on the other hand, it also calls for a deeper examination of Islamic commitment to peace and the idea of tolerance to „difference.“ According to A. Minarovič, the loss of the peaceful content of Islam as a result of its radicalization also appears to be conflicting. According to the author, the forms of contemporary Islamist movements vary from state to state, and yet they are united by the fact that „in most of these movements undemocratic attitudes and suppression of human rights and freedoms prevail, which is clearly at odds with Islam's basic vision of a peaceful, tolerant and human society.“ Thus, the media cannot be blamed to a large extent for content that reflects Islam in this way. However, this does not change the fact that the effort to truly present the lives of Muslims (not only radicals), in the media can create an alternative to a negative „media invasion“ against Muslims, and at the same time certainly contribute to greater tolerance in the context of intercultural relations.

Acknowledgement: *The study is supported through the KEPA project no. 005UCM-4/2020.*

Bibliography and sources

- ALLEN, CH., NIELSEN, J. S.: *Summary Report on Islamophobia in the EU after 11 September 2001*. [online]. [2020-01-20]. Available at: <https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/199-Synthesis-report_en.pdf>.
- BECHARI, M.: *Surat al-islam fi al-j'alam al-gharbi* (The image of Islam in the Western media). Damascus : Dar al-fikr, 2004.
- BEDNAREK, M., CAPLE, H.: *The Discourse of News Values: How News Organizations Create Newsworthiness*. Oxford : Oxford Scholarship, 2017.
- BULGANOVÁ, D., KAČINOVÁ, V.: Axiocentric Teaching and Learning About Media in the Context of School Practice. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2019, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 85-93. ISSN 2585-872.
- CENKER, M.: Muslim Migrants in Bratislava. In *Sociológia – Slovak Sociological Review*, 2010, Vol. 42, No. 3, p. 213-236. ISSN 0049-1225.
- CHUDŽÍKOVÁ, A.: Muslims In Slovakia: Search For Identity and Status In Majority Society. In SUCHARDOVÁ, H., HUNTEROVÁ, J.: *Muslims in Visegrad*. Prague : Institute of International Relations. 2011, p. 39-56. [online]. [2020-01-02]. Available at: <<https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/librarydoc/muslims-in-visegrad>>.
- 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. 4-19. ISSN 1338-130X.
- GAVORA, P.: *Sprievodca metodológiou kvalitatívneho výskumu*. Bratislava : Univerzita Komenského, 2007.
- GUNTER, B.: *Media Research Methods: Measuring Audiences, Reactions and Impact*. London : SAGE Publications, 2000.
- Hlavné témy správy EUMC „Moslimovia v Európskej únii: diskriminácia a islamofóbia“*. [online]. [2019-07-12]. <Available at: https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/1936-EUMC-highlights-SK.pdf>.
- KAČINOVÁ, V.: The Topic of Media-Disseminated Mis-Information and Dis-Information as an Integral Part of General Education in Slovakia. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2020, Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 18-31. ISSN 2585-872.
- KARIM, H. K.: Islamic, Islamist, Moderate, Extremist: Imagining the Muslim Self and the Muslim Other. In KARIM, H. K., EID, M. (eds.): *Re-Imagining the Other: Culture, Media, and Western-Muslim Intersections*. New York : Palgrave Macmillian, 2014, p. 153-174. [online]. [2020-01-02]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/304860587_Islamic_Islamist_Moderate_Extremist_Imagining_the_Muslim_Self_and_the_Muslim_Other>.
- KRÁLIK, R., LENOVSKÝ, L., PAVLIKOVÁ, M.: A Few Comments on Identity and Culture of One Ethnic Minority in Central Europe. In *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2018, Vol. 14, No. 6, p. 63-76. ISSN 18410464.
- KRÁLIK, R., MÁHRİK, T.: Metaphysics as a base for improving critical thinking. In CHOVA, L. (ed.): *ICERI 2019 Proceedings*. Seville : IATED Academy, 2019, p. 8901-8903.
- KRÍGLEROVÁ, E., KADLEČÍKOVÁ, J., LAJČÁKOVÁ, J.: *Migranti – nový pohľad na staré problémy: Multikulturalizmus a kultúrna integrácia migrantov na Slovensku*. Bratislava : Centrum pre výskum etnicity a kultúry, 2009.
- KRÍŽKOVÁ, M.: *Neviditeľná menšina – analýza mediálneho obrazu českých muslimů*. [online]. [2019-08-11]. Available at: <<https://migraceonline.cz/cz/e-knihovna/neviditelna-mensina-analyza-medialniho-obrazu-ceskych-muslimu>>.
- KROPÁČEK, L.: *Islám a Západ. Historická paměť a současná krize*. Praha : Vyšehrad, 2002.
- LETVAJOVÁ, S.: Zmiešané slovensko-moslimské manželstvá ako príklad etno-kultúrnych aspektov migrácie cudzincov na Slovensko. In *Etnologické rozpravy*, 2007, Vol. 14, No. 2, p. 25-43. ISSN 1335-5074.

- MENDEL, M.: *Islám jako nepřítel?: eseje a poznámky k dějinám a současnosti islámu*. Brno : Masarykova univerzita, 2014.
- MINAROVÍČ, A.: Niekoľko všeobecných údajov o islame. In *Medzinárodné otázky*, 2002, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 115-117. ISSN 1210-1583.
- NOVOTNÝ, J., POLONSKÝ, F.: The Level of Knowledge about Islam and Perception of Islam among Czech and Slovak University Students: Does Ignorance Determine Subjective Attitudes? In *Sociológia – Slovak Sociological Review*, 2011, Vol. 43, No. 6, p. 674-696. ISSN 0049-1225.
- PORUBCOVÁ, J.: Vplyv sociálnych sietí na formovanie postojov adolescentov. In URBAN, P. (ed.): *Súmrak médií : Problematika narácie v médiách*. Žilina : Žilinská univerzita, 2013, p. 96-107.
- PRIEST, S. H.: *Doing Media Research: An introduction*. California : Sage Publications, 1995.
- RANKOV, P.: Súmrak televízie očami dnešných študentov: analýza postojov vysokoškolákov. In URBAN, P. (ed.): *Súmrak médií: Problematika narácie v médiách*. Žilina : Žilinská univerzita, 2013, p. 198-211.
- ŘEBŘINA, J., SYLLOVÁ, J.: *Právní úprava národnostních, etnických a jazykových menšin v Itálii, Německu, Rakousku, Švédsku a ve Velké Británii*. Praha : Parlamentní institute, 1999. [online]. [2020-04-03]. Available at: <<https://www.psp.cz/sqw/text/orig2.sqw?idd=20819&pdf=1>>.
- THOBANI, S.: Muslims in European Education: Liberalism and Alterity. In KARIM, K., EID, M. (eds.): *Engaging the Other: Public Policy and Western-Muslim Intersections*. New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, p. 67-87.
- TVRDOŇ, M.: Equal opportunities – comparison of ethical education and religious education curricula. In CHOVA, L. G. (ed.): *Proceedings of INTED 2020 Conference*. Valencia : IATED Academy, 2020, p. 5517-5523.
- „Vezmem si moslima.“ *Väčšina Slovákov by novinu nerozdýchala*. [online]. [2020-01-02]. Available at: <<https://www.aktuality.sk/clanok/371480/vezmem-si-moslima-vacsina-slovakov-by-novinu-nerozdychala/>>.
- Výskum európskych hodnôt 1999-2000: The European Values Study: Názory, postoje a hodnoty obyvateľov Slovenska v európskom porovnaní*. [online]. [2020-01-02]. Available at: <<http://www.sociologia.sav.sk/old/evs.html>>.

Authors



PhDr. ThDr. Hedviga Tkáčová, PhD.

Faculty of Humanities
University of Žilina
Univerzitná 1
01026 Žilina
SLOVAK REPUBLIC
hedwiga.tkacova@gmail.com

Hedviga Tkáčová is an assistant professor at the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies. She graduated in Theology at Comenius University in Bratislava and completed her doctoral studies in Journalism at the Catholic University in Ružomberok, Slovakia. Her pedagogical and research activities focus on new media, pastorate opportunities through new media, media manipulation, academic education, interreligious dialogue, cultural diversity education and education of adults.



PhDr. Eva Al-Absiová, PhD.

Faculty of Arts
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava
Nám. J. Herdu 2
91701 Trnava
SLOVAK REPUBLIC
eabsi23@gmail.com

Eva Al-Absiová is an assistant professor at the Department of Ethnology and World Studies. After graduating in Library and Information Science at Charles University in Prague, she studied Modern Arabic at the Faculty of Human Sciences and Literature, University of Damascus in Syria. She obtained a PhD degree in Cultural Studies at Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra. Her research and pedagogical activities focus on issues of Arab culture, Arabic and the status of women, with a special focus on ethno-cultural contexts and cross-cultural discourses. She cooperates with state and local organizations working with immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

Assoc. Prof. PhDr. Marwan Al-Absi, PhD.

Faculty of Arts
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava
Nám. J. Herdu 2
91701 Trnava
SLOVAK REPUBLIC
malabsi198@gmail.com



Marwan Al-Absi is an associate professor in Cultural Studies. He works at the Department of Ethnology and World Studies. He graduated from the Faculty of Journalism and completed his doctoral studies in History of Asia and Africa at Charles University in Prague. He worked for several years at Syrian Arab Television in Damascus and later as a film consultant in Slovakia. He has been working at university institutions since 2002. He deals with the issues of the Middle East in historical, cultural and religious contexts. His main areas of research are Arab culture, Bedouin traditions, ethnic minorities in the Middle East, with a special focus on cross-cultural discourses and Arab-European cultural contacts.



PhDr. Martina Pavlíková, PhD.

Faculty of Arts
Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra
Štefánikova 67
94974 Nitra
SLOVAK REPUBLIC
mpavlikova@ukf.sk

Martina Pavlíková is an assistant professor at the Department of Journalism. She graduated in English Language and Literature from the Faculty of Education, Comenius University in Bratislava. She completed her doctoral studies in the field of Cultural Studies at Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra. She has also given several lectures and completed research stays at foreign universities. Her research is devoted to the literature of English-speaking countries, ethical behaviour in the mass media and modern trends in visual arts.

Dragana Trninic, Anđela Kupresanin Vukelic

Privacy On The Internet Concerning Generation Z In Bosnia And Herzegovina

ABSTRACT

Growing up in digital surroundings and using the Internet on a daily basis have been some of the most prominent features of the young population today. In fact, where Generation Z is concerned, this has virtually been the only *modus vivendi* they know. They find online communication natural, feeling comfortable in the digital world, spending most of their time on the Internet sharing photographs and video footage, having fun, and communicating by means of social media and various software applications. In doing so, they prove very skillful and they have no difficulty mastering new digital trends, but they are often unaware of how vulnerable they are in terms of protection of their privacy and personal data. For that reason, the paper aims at determining to what extent the members of Generation Z expose their private lives on the Internet, whether they are concerned about possible the consequences of these actions, and what steps they should take to protect their personal data. The results of the survey, conducted online, reveal that most examinees are unaware of the possible risks of providing their personal data to unknown entities on the Internet, as well as that the similar percentage of them do not take any steps towards protecting their privacy.

KEY WORDS

Generation Z. Privacy on the Internet. Protection of personal data on the Internet. Digital surrounding.

1. Introduction

Everything that determines our identity (our appearance, our interests, our friends, the way we spend our free time) is often shared by ourselves on the Internet, and it can easily be shared by our friends as well. The Internet, in turn, keeps a record of these pieces of information, with various applications and devices we use automatically collecting data on us, keeping track of our location and browsing history.¹ As technology is becoming more and more sophisticated, interconnected, and commercially sustainable, privacy on the Internet is becoming more and more endangered by new forms of data collection, thus rendering children and the young as particularly vulnerable categories. In contemporary digital surroundings, each and every activity on the Internet is recorded and transformed into data that can be saved, tracked, summarised, analysed and monetised, and this data is durable, searchable, and virtually indestructible.²

Members of Generation Z,³ that is, the Internet generation (iGen⁴), view digital surroundings as important and indispensable segments of their everyday life. In addition, this generation is labelled as the *iFace* and *iPhone* generations, respectively, as well. They are so immersed into digital technology that they fail to notice its impact on them and the way it shapes them, growing up alongside interconnected mobile devices, which provide them with constant access to information, especially in situations they are unable to overcome themselves „(...) *due to functions such as keeping people in constant connection and providing instant access to information, social media provides them with a possibility of getting social and psychological support by accessing information and recommendations when they have a problem that they cannot handle, or when they find themselves in a situation of uncertainty.*“⁵ Furthermore, they are highly digitally literate and skilled as regards using information technology, and they communicate by means of social media, since they find the virtual surrounding as important as the physical.⁶ As a result, this way of growing up means exposing one's privacy on the Internet. This paper focuses on major members of Generation Z in Bosnia and Herzegovina, that is, those born during the period 1995-2003, although this period extends, according to Twengi's classification, to the year of 2012. Yet, the authors choose to exclude minors from the survey, given the methodology used.

The protection of privacy on the Internet, along with valuing the right to privacy, especially in terms of children and the young, has become a global issue today, given the higher and higher percentage of use of mobile communication devices. The fast development of technologies and services whose business model is based upon collecting and analysing the personal data

¹ STOILOVA, M., LIVINGSTONE, S., NANDAGIRI, R.: *Children's data and privacy online: Growing up in a digital age*. Research findings. London : London School of Economics and Political Science, 2019. p. 4. [online]. [2021-01-05]. Available at: <<https://www.lse.ac.uk/my-privacy-uk/Assets/Documents/Childrens-data-and-privacy-online-report-for-web.pdf>>.

² Ibid, p. 4.

³ „*The term Generation Z applies to individuals born after the generation of the millennials. There are many studies and theories concerning the birth years and the age of members of this generation One the most significant characteristics of this generation is the fact that they were born „natives“ in the modern digital world. They have been surrounded by the world of technology since their first days and therefore, the ways they live, socialise, perceive information and make decisions completely differ from those of any other generation before.*“, ARTEMOVA, A.: *Engaging Generation Z through social media marketing Case: Hurja Media Oy*. South-Eastern Finland : University of Applied Sciences, 2018, p. 8. [online]. [2020-11-16]. Available at: <https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/142658/Artemova_Alexandra.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

⁴ IGen (I-generation) refers to people born in 1995 or later. Members of this generation have grown up using mobile phones, they had their Instagram profile created before started their high school, and they cannot recall any period without the Internet. See: TVENGI, DŽ.: *Internet generacija: dezorijentisanost dece u digitalnom dobu*. Novi Sad : Psihopolis institut, 2019, p. 12.

⁵ GÜL ÜNLÜ, D., MORVA, O.: *Whose Information Should Be Shared With Whom?: Parents' Awareness Of Children's Digital Privacy In Turkey*. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2020, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 113. [online]. [2021-01-15]. Available at: <https://www.mlar.sk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/8_Unlu_Morva.pdf>.

⁶ PARKS, P. J.: *The Digital Divide*. San Diego, CA. : Reference Point Press, 2013, p. 51.

of social media and Internet users has raised such concerns. Although it is very likely that the technology industry will find a way to cope with hacking data, it is equally likely that it will also find a way of better exploiting this very same data spanning all dimensions of the lives of Internet users.⁷ For this reason, the paper offers a detailed account of the notion of privacy on the Internet and of the protection of personal data within the legislative framework, with special emphasis on Generation Z in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

1.1 Privacy on the Internet

What underlines various forms of abusing the Internet is the violation of the right to privacy, which is, regardless of the fact whether it is in the online or offline sphere, one of the fundamental human rights. According to Helen Nissenbaum, privacy is not a right to secrecy and control, but a right to an adequate flow of personal data. In this respect, Nissenbaum interpretes privacy as contextual integrity,⁸ which implies that an individual, depending on the situation and context, is entitled to personally decide who they are going to share their information with in the digital sphere and to what extent. This approach to defining the notion of privacy means that every person „is entitled to know how and to what purposes their personal data is used, who protects it and for how long, who has access to it, as well as to ask for it to be erased or amended.“⁹

The complexity of the concept of privacy is further deepened by its definition in legal theory, which reads that the privacy of a person encompasses the following spheres: intimate, private, and private-public.¹⁰ With regard to this classification, the second one points to the intertwining of the notions of privacy and personal data, at the same time pointing to the fact that the two cannot be equalised in a simplified manner, since „not every act of exercising, that is, violating the right to privacy is directly connected with the protection of personal data, in the sense that the latter is not always concerned with the right to privacy as part of the human rights set.“¹¹ As such, the data from this sphere must not be shared with third parties without the consent of the person this data refers to, since it belongs to the special category of personal data. It is this sphere of privacy that is the focus of this survey; to be precise, the private sphere encompassing personal data.

Within the context of the protection of privacy on the Internet, the classification of privacy that identifies spatial, information, and communication types, respectively, proves useful, particularly in terms of the last two,¹² with the latter turning into e-privacy, given the changes to the very nature of communication, which is now technologically mediated and determined to a large extent.¹³ With the emergence of new risks as regards the right to respecting private life, and

⁷ LIVINGSTONE, S.: Children: a special case for privacy? In *Intermedia*, 2018, Vol. 46, No. 2, p. 18. [online]. [2021-02-26]. Available at: <<https://www.iicom.org/wp-content/uploads/COMPRESSED-im-july2018-full-min.pdf>>.

⁸ NISSENBAUM, H.: Privacy as contextual integrity. In *Washington Law Review*, 2004, Vol. 79, No. 1, p. 120. [online]. [2020-12-15]. Available at: <<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/267979739.pdf>>.

⁹ KUZMANOVIĆ, D.: *Zaštita ličnih podataka i privatnosti na internetu*. [online]. [2021-02-13]. Available at: <https://digitalni-vodic.ucpd.rs/zastita-licnih-podataka-i-privatnosti-na-internetu/#t3_subheading-2>.

¹⁰ BOBAN, M.: Pravo na privatnost i pravo na pristup informacijama u suvremenom informacijskom društvu. In *Zbornik radova Pravnog fakulteta u Splitu*, 2012, Vol. 49, No. 3, p. 584. [online]. [2021-01-14]. Available at: <<https://hrcak.srce.hr/86834>>.

¹¹ MURTEZIĆ, A. O.: Konvencija 108: aktuelni značaj i primjena. In MRVIĆ PETROVIĆ, N. (ed.): *Strani pravni život*. Beograd : Institut za uporedno pravo, 2020, p. 100. [online]. [2021-01-29]. Available at: <<http://stranipravnazivot.rs/index.php/SPZ/article/view/784/752>>.

¹² BOBAN, M.: Pravo na privatnost i pravo na pristup informacijama u suvremenom informacijskom društvu. In *Zbornik radova Pravnog fakulteta u Splitu*, 2012, Vol. 49, No. 3, p. 585-586. [online]. [2021-01-14]. Available at: <<https://hrcak.srce.hr/86834>>.

¹³ E-privacy „represents a concept of data protection related to communication by means of electronic networks in any form conceivable“; *Ibid*, p. 587.

in response to the need for introducing specific legislation regulating the area of collecting and using personal data in the information society, a number of legal systems have recognised new privacy concepts termed „information privacy“ and „right to information self-determination“.¹⁴

1.2 Protection of personal data on the Internet

Security on the Internet is significantly determined by the level of protection of personal data.¹⁵ „With regard to that, existing technologies have made it possible both for personal data of users to be collected easily and almost free of charge and for their online activities to be monitored, which represents a fertile land for their abuse.“¹⁶ Given the expansion and popularisation of social media and various software applications on the Internet, the protection of personal data has acquired new dimensions. „There is a large amount of personal data collected and stored on social media and other websites, regardless of the fact of whether this data has been released/posted with a view to being shared or whether it has been designed by the very website of the respective social media.“¹⁷ Consequently, a high level of penetration of social media, along with the continual development of internet applications that do not require excessive engagement on the part of a user and that can easily be accessed from a number of electronic devices, coupled with offering various opportunities as regards satisfying personal needs, have all contributed to emphasising the issues of collecting, storing, sharing, protecting, and abusing personal data in a digital form. In this respect, it is the data left in the respective form of *digital fingerprint* and *digital tattoo* that is of particular importance, since they contribute to the emergence of digital identity.

„Digital identity is comprised of „digital fingerprints,“ traces an Internet user leaves behind themselves, whether consciously or subconsciously or in an active or passive way, while browsing, texting, or, in most cases, while using social media by means of interconnected devices.“¹⁸ By referring to the phrase „digital tattoo“, some authors try to point to the durability of the data left on the Internet, that is, to their consistency in the digital world.¹⁹ Within the context of creating digital identity, as well as shaping a digital tattoo, there is an important division of

¹⁴ Priručnik o evropskom zakonodavstvu o zaštiti podataka. Izdanje iz 2018. [online]. [2021-01-04]. Available at: <<https://fra.europa.eu/hr/publication/2020/prirucnik-o-evropskom-zakonodavstvu-o-zastiti-podataka-izdanje-iz-2018>>.

¹⁵ „Under the term of personal data we understand the data or pieces of information referring to a person, on the basis of which their identity can be established. In this respect, we distinguish between identification data and specific data. The former covers the following: first name and family name, address of residence, date of birth, and personal identification number. The latter refers to the following: race, nationality, ethnic designation, political beliefs or party membership, union membership, religious, philosophical, or similar beliefs, health condition, genetic code, sexual life, criminal record, and biometric data (for example, fingerprints).“ Personal Data Protection Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina. [online]. [2021-01-18]. Available at: <http://azlp.ba/FAQ/Default.aspx?id=281&langTag=bs-BA&template_id=149&pageIndex=1>.

¹⁶ BRAUTOVIĆ, M.: Zaštita privatnosti kod hrvatskih onlajn medija. In *MediAnali: međunarodni znanstveni časopis za pitanja medija, novinarstva, masovnog komuniciranja i odnosa s javnostima*, 2007, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 28. [online]. [2021-02-01]. Available at: <<https://hrcak.srce.hr/41342>>.

¹⁷ MCPEAK, A.: The facebook digital footprint: Paving fair and consistent pathways to Civil discovery of social media data. In *48 Wake Forest L. Rev.* 887, 2013, Vol. 48, p. 103. [online]. [2021-02-10]. Available at: <https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/Data_Integrity_Notice.cfm?abid=2246990>.

¹⁸ *Medijska i informacijska pismenost; Radni listići za aktivnosti u učionici za nastavnike*. [online]. [2021-01-11]. Available at: <<https://www.medijskapismenost.hr/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/clemi-materijali.pdf>>.

¹⁹ Araoz explains the difference between the digital print and the digital tattoo by singling out their characteristics. In this respect, he states that the former is temporary, passively created, reactive, and unintentional and uncontrollable. As for the latter, Araoz says it is permanent, actively created, proactive, and controllable. ARAOZ, L.: *Your Online Presence is a digital Tattoo, Not a Footprint*. [online]. [2021-02-03]. Available at: <<https://thegoldenageofeducation.com/2016/03/12/your-online-behavior-is-a-digital-tattoo-not-a-footprint/>>.

digital fingerprints into active and passive. The former refers to the activities on the Internet directed at providing information on one's own, at sharing personal data, at creating a profile on social media, at posting comments on blogs and similar pages, whereas the latter is left, in majority of cases, without intention, such as disclosing one's own IP address by accessing a website.²⁰ As it is, Internet users, apart from actively participating in the digital sphere, which almost certainly implies storing some sort of data on them, also engage in activities that cannot be labelled as active, but which contribute to a large extent to the complete image of their digital identity as well.²¹

Given all the potential of the Internet as regards the aforementioned treatment of personal data, many of which go largely unnoticed by its users, using mechanisms and settings that can help secure one's own personal data and privacy on the Internet becomes an all too important issue.

What is more, some of these represent resources that are already at the disposal of internet users, and they are as follows: logging off any account before browsing any contents on the Internet, installing anti-virus software on electronic devices used for accessing the Internet, using software for keeping the IP address hidden from other users, disabling the location tracking function on a mobile electronic device, avoiding providing personal data whenever it is possible, checking the settings when downloading application software, downloading files from credible sources etc.²²

1.3 Legislative framework

The protection of privacy and personal data has been regulated by international legal acts, as well as by those introduced at the state level. In accordance with its socio-political design, Bosnia and Herzegovina has introduced the legislation in question at all respective authority levels,²³ respecting the norms of the international law that have been incorporated into it. The regulation of the right to protecting privacy and personal data requires a comprehensive analysis, that is, an analysis of the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, of the Constitution of the Republic of Srpska, and of the Constitution of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, respectively, along with an analysis of the laws concerning the matter at both the state and entity levels. In addition, the analysis, in this respect, extends to the international laws governing the aforementioned that Bosnia and Herzegovina, as a member of the Council of Europe, has ratified.

As one of the fundamental human rights, the right to privacy has been primarily protected by international legal acts, by the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*²⁴ and by the *European*

²⁰ SETYOWATI, L.: Digital life, digital tattoo and the filter bubble: raising the awareness and the cautions on online activities through information literacy education. In MURSYID, M. (ed.): *International Conference on Science Mapping and the Development of Science*. Republik Indonesia : Library and Information Management Graduate School, Gadjah Mada University, 2016, p. 138. [online]. [2021-02-07]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305682940_Digital_Life_Digital_Tattoo_and_The_Filter_Bubble_raising_the_awareness_and_the_cautions_on_online_activities_through_information_literacy_education>.

²¹ See: BÜCHI, M., LUTZ, C., MICHELI, M.: *Life Online: The Digital Footprint Gap*. Paper presented at International scientific conference for the Partnership for Progress on the Digital Divide 2017, San Diego, presented 25th May 2017. [online]. [2021-01-22]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/319943869_Life_Online_The_Digital_Footprint_Gap>.

²² STOILOVA, M., LIVINGSTONE, S., NANDAGIRI, R.: *My data and privacy online: A toolkit for young people*. [online]. [2021-01-20]. Available at: <https://www.lse.ac.uk/myprivacyuk?fbclid=IwAR3BlbpwNsKPJAyBHfjLKG_DzDh1rUm3Tg511zrYWbNcG9mYmrScDsF-2ZU>.

²³ Bosnia and Herzegovina is comprised of two socio-political entities, the Republic of Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Brcko District.

²⁴ „No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.” Article 12. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights . UN General Assembly, 1948/1971.

Convention for Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Liberties.²⁵ The first binding international legal act significant within the context of protecting personal data is the Convention for Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (Convention 108).²⁶ This Convention is unique in relation to other international documents in that it refers to the protection of data exclusively, it is global as regards membership, and it implies an executive mechanism.²⁷ In 2018, Convention 108 was amended and modernised by adopting the Protocol on Amendments to the Convention (ETC 223). Thus, the consolidated text of the Convention that incorporates this Protocol is referred to as Convention 108+ or the Modernised Convention. Although there were no changes made to the basic principles upon which the Convention rests, the document was revised to a large extent in terms of concretising general provisions and adjusting to the newly-created social environment significant for the area of personal data protection. As for Bosnia and Herzegovina, it ratified Convention 108+ in July 2020.

Within the context of personal data protection, an important document, alongside Convention 108+, is the *General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)*, adopted by the European Parliament in 2016 and effective as of 25 May 2018. As a result, the Directive 95/46/EC was abolished,²⁸ with the GDPR empowering the rights of the data bearer and increasing the duties of those that process this data. In addition, the authority of watchdog entities/bodies/organs and the possibilities of competent institutions to impose sanctions in this respect is increased. The GDPR may not be the direct concern of Bosnia and Herzegovina since it is not a member state of the European Union, but the former is still compelled to harmonise its legislation to that of the latter with regard to certain aspects of it.

In addition to the ratified international legal acts, the right to privacy in Bosnia and Herzegovina is protected by means of provisions of the Constitution, both at the state and entity levels.²⁹ With regard to the state level, the most important legal act is the Law on Personal Data Protection from 2006, which laid the foundations for the establishment of the Personal Data Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Furthermore, this area is regulated by the Criminal Code at both the aforementioned levels, with the list of violations expanded to unauthorised use of personal data.

Yet, despite the fact that there is a growing need for more detailed and comprehensive regulation of the issue of privacy and personal data protection, especially in terms of their protection on the Internet, there are no legal acts at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina that regulate this matter in an explicit fashion.

²⁵ „Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.” Article 8. The Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms/ The European Convention on Human Rights. Council of Europe, 1953.

²⁶ The Convention 108 was introduced at the level of Council of Europe on 28 January 1981. This date has been proclaimed The Data Privacy Day at an international level, which points to its significance.

²⁷ MURTEZIĆ, A. O.: Konvencija 108: aktuelni značaj i primjena. In MRVIĆ PETROVIĆ, N. (ed.): *Strani pravni život*. Beograd : Institut za uporedno pravo, 2020, p. 100. [online]. [2021-01-29]. Available at: <<http://stranipravnizivot.rs/index.php/SPZ/article/view/784/>>.

²⁸ The previous Directive was limited in its scope and it represented the minimum of legal standards to be incorporated by member states of the European Union into their respective legislation regulating the area of data protection, with each member state introducing each own law on the matter. The new Directive dealt successfully with this problem, imposing a unique set of standards across the European Union EU. Personal Data Protection. *Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina*. [online]. [2021-01-18]. Available at: <http://azlp.ba/GDPR_Menu/Sta_je_GDPR/default.aspx?id=2373&langTag=bsBA&template_id=149&pageIndex=1>.

²⁹ „The right to private and family life, home, and correspondence” Article 2, paragraph 3f of the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, „Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina,” issue 25/2009 – Amendment 1. The Constitution of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina stipulates exercising the right to privacy. Article 2, paragraph 1g, „Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina,” issue 1/94. „Human dignity, their physical and spiritual integrity, their privacy, and their personal and family life are inviolable.” Article 13, Constitution of the Republic of Srpska, Official Gazette of the Republic of Srpska, issue 21/92.

2. Methodology

The process of collecting data within a survey on privacy on the Internet of Generation Z in Bosnia and Herzegovina was conducted by means of the dependent variable analysis (purpose and manner of Internet usage, notion of privacy on the Internet, awareness of the rights to protecting privacy on the Internet, exposure of personal data on the Internet, and protection and violation of privacy on the Internet) over the period 10-20 January 2021, with a view to determining to what extent the young in Bosnia and Herzegovina, major members of Generation Z, spend their time on the Internet on a daily basis and to what purposes, to what extent they are familiar with the notion of privacy on the Internet and with their rights to protect it, what personal data they leave on the Internet and what mechanisms they use to protect it, as well as whether their privacy on the Internet has ever been violated and in what way. In addition, one of the goals was to analyse this data in relation to the sex and age of examinees.

The data on the dependent variable was gained through an online survey by means of the *Google forms* platform (www.google.com/forms/about/). This was conditioned due to the inability of organising a field survey as a result of the COVID-19 counter-pandemic measures in effect in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the time of the survey. These measures implied reduced hours in secondary schools and bans regarding gatherings of students in the open, with university students attending their classes in reduced numbers or by means of online platforms, which meant that it was difficult to gather a number of examinees at a single point in time in one place.

The sample consisted of 671 examinees, using a combined online/offline technique of sampling, with the examinees having been contacted first and then instructed to visit the website for filling in the questionnaire (Popadic, Pavlovic, and Zezelj, 2018). With regard to establishing contact with the examinees, the „snowball“ technique was used (Milosavljevic and Radosavljevic, 2013), which allowed for an adequate number of examinees over a short period of time. The link for the online survey was delivered to around 1,000 email addresses/accounts of major members of Generation Z from 90 municipalities across Bosnia and Herzegovina, with limitations imposed as regards a single visit to the website per account, in order to avoid multiple participations in the survey. Due to the nature of questions posed (they relate to privacy), the only mandatory ones were those referring to demographics, while the rest were optional. Yet, almost all the examinees answered all the questions, which is elaborated in detail in the results section. No minor member of Generation Z was examined, since it was not possible to legally acquire the consent of either the institutions (school) or parents, due to the online nature of the survey. That way, no one could determine whether a minor filled in the questionnaire with consent granted or not.

The instrument used for conducting the survey is a formalised cloze (standardised) questionnaire with precisely defined questions and offered answer modalities (Milosavljevic and Radosavljevic, 2013), with the number of alternative answers within the 2-17 range.

It consists of six basic sections: introduction to the questionnaire, general data questions, questions related to the purpose and manner of Internet usage, questions related to privacy on the Internet (notion of and right to), questions concerning the exposure of privacy on the Internet, and a set of questions dealing with personal data protection on the Internet. There are 13 questions in total, with the form of the questionnaire adapted for online use and with an optimal number of questions due to the conditions underlying the survey, where it was not possible to control the percentage of examinees.

The method of funnel was used as regards the organisation of sections and distribution of questions (Milosavljevic and Radosavljevic, 2013), which implies the general towards specific direction. Due to the specificity of the target group, clarifications regarding the age of examinees were placed on the home page of the study website (the young aged 18-26 living in Bosnia and Herzegovina). The thematic section of the questionnaire is introduced with a question

concerning the time spent on the Internet and closed with one related to violations of privacy on it. This survey enabled measuring the level of media literacy of Generation Z in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with regard to the segment related to privacy on the Internet, especially those aspects of it dealing with familiarity of the examinees with the right to privacy and personal data protection, as well as with their comparison in terms of their sex and age.

Demographics

One third of the examinees come from the city of Banja Luka, followed by the cities of Istocno Sarajevo, Tuzla, Sarajevo, Doboj, Zenica, Mostar etc., along with the Brcko District. The majority of examinees are female (75,3%) – Table 1, the young aged 18-20 (48,9%) – Table 2, and university students (81,1%) – Table 3.

Sex	Male	Female
f	166	505
%	24,7	75,3

TABLE 1: Sex structure of examinees

Source: own processing, 2021

Age	18-20	21-23	24-26
f	328	244	99
%	48,9	36,4	14,8

TABLE 2: Age structure of examinees

Source: own processing, 2021

Education	f	%
High school student	59	8,8
Graduated high school student	15	2,2
University student	544	81,1
Graduated university student	53	7,9

TABLE 3: Level of education

Source: own processing, 2021

3. Survey results

3.1 Purpose and manner of Internet usage

How much time do you spend using the Internet on a daily basis?	f	%
0-1 hour a day	14	2,1
1-3 hours a day	228	34,1
3-6 hours a day	302	45,1
More than six hours a day	125	18,7

TABLE 4: Time spent on the Internet on a daily basis

Source: own processing, 2021

According to Table 4, 45,1% of examinees use the Internet 3-6 hours a day, 18,7% of them use the Internet more than 6 hours a day, with only 2,1% using it less than 1 hour a day. The results show a high percentage of the Internet usage, which is expected, given that it is one of major features of Generation Z.

For what purposes do you use the Internet the most?	f	%
Access to social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google+, LinkedIn, YouTube, Snapchat, Reddit, Pinterest, TikTok, Tumblr i sl.)	612	91,3
Access to and download of various contents (getting informed, getting educated, getting entertained)	474	70,7
Playing video games	112	16,7
Online shopping	125	18,7
Message exchange software applications (Viber, WhatsApp, Hangouts, email, etc)	480	71,6
Creating and sharing one's own contents	107	16

TABLE 5: *The most common ways of using the Internet*

Source: own processing, 2021

Major members of Generation Z in Bosnia and Herzegovina mostly use the Internet for accessing social media accounts (91,3%), then message exchange software applications (71,6%), followed by accessing to and downloading various contents for the purpose of getting informed, educated, and entertained (70,7%). The lowest percentage is reserved for creating and sharing one's own contents (16%). With regard to expected results, this is yet another feature of generation Z, since most of their communication is done by means of social media or message exchange software applications.

3.2 Privacy on the Internet (notion of and right to)

How familiar are you with the notion of privacy on the Internet?	f	%
In full capacity	143	21,3
Partly	491	73,3
Not familiar	36	5,4

TABLE 6: *Familiarity with the notion of privacy on the Internet*

Source: own processing, 2021

According to Table 6, 73,3% of examinees are partly familiar with the notion of privacy on the Internet, 21,3% of them are fully aware of it, whereas 5,4% are not familiar with it at all. Given the high percentage of the Internet usage, the familiarity with the notion of privacy shows low figures in this respect.

Are you familiar with your rights as regards protection of privacy on the Internet and in what way?	f	%
I am not familiar with this matter	83	12,4
I have little information about it	249	37,1
Yes, I have been informed about that by members of my family	66	9,8
Yes, I have been informed about that at school	102	15,2
Yes, I have been informed about that at university	68	10,1

Yes, I have been informed about that by my friends	96	14,3
Yes, I have been informed about that through the media	171	25,5
Yes, I have been informed about that on the Internet	235	35

TABLE 7: *Familiarity with the right to protecting privacy on the Internet*

Source: own processing, 2021

The results presented in Table 1 show that more than one third of examinees have little knowledge about their rights regarding protection of privacy on the Internet (37,1%), followed by a slightly lower percentage of those who have gained information on the matter on the Internet (35%) or through the media (25,5%). Then, the next figure (15,2%) represents those who have been informed about that at school, while there are 12,4% of them who are not familiar with the issue at all. The reason why this percentage is so low is because one half of examinees has little or no knowledge about protection of privacy on the Internet, and they use it on a daily basis.

3.3 Level of privacy exposure on the Internet

What type of personal data do you leave	f	%
First name and family name	643	95,8
Date of birth	528	78,7
Personal identification number	20	3
Address of residence	125	18,6
Email address	487	72,6
Phone number	274	40,8
Photographs	523	77,9
Video footage	228	34
Location	188	28
Personal interest	181	27
Working skills	69	10,3
Sexual orientation	51	7,6
Religious denomination	62	9,2
Medical record	11	1,6
Attitudes on various issues	125	18,6
Personal experience accounts	152	22,7
None of the above listed	14	2,1

TABLE 8: *Leaving personal data on the Internet*

Source: own processing, 2021

As far as the exposure of personal data on the Internet is concerned (Table 8), the highest percentage of examinees (95,8%) leave their first name and their family name, then their date of birth (78,7%), followed by photographs (77,9%), their email address (72,6%), their phone number (40,8%), video footage (34%), and location (28%). On the contrary, the lowest figures refer to those leaving their personal identification number (3%), their medical record (1,6%), and no trace of personal data on the Internet (2,1%).

The results point to a high percentage of exposure of personal data on the Internet, especially of the type that can be used for advertising purposes, but also abused, with a view to creating false profiles or to engaging in criminal activities.

How often do you think of possible risks and consequences of leaving personal data on the Internet?	f	%
Always	59	8,8
Often	178	26,5
Sometimes	277	41,3
Seldom	133	19,8
I never think about it	24	3,6

TABLE 9: *Thinking about possible risks and consequences of leaving personal data on the Internet*

Source: own processing, 2021

The results show that the greatest number of examinees (41,3%) sometimes think about the risks and consequences of leaving personal data on the Internet, with 26,5% often thinking about it, 19,8% seldom, and 3,6% never. In addition, the overall results show that around 60% sometimes or seldom think of the possible consequences of exposing their own personal data on the Internet, which is rather a high percentage, with only 8,8% giving it a thought while working online (Table 9).

3.4 Protection of personal data on the Internet and violation of privacy on the Internet

How do you protect your privacy on the Internet?	f	%
I log off from any account before browsing internet contents	135	20,2
I have installed anti-virus software on the devices I use to access the Internet	182	27,2
I use software for hiding my IP address from other users	64	9,6
I do not engage the location tracking function on my mobile device	334	49,9
I refrain from leaving any personal data whenever it is possible	472	70,6
I check out the settings when downloading software applications (parameters that can be limited or disengaged)	184	27,5
I delete applications I do not use on a regular basis	335	50,1
I filter the contents on social media	165	24,7
I do not accept cookies, unless it is necessary in terms of accessing some contents	332	49,6
I only download files from trustworthy sources	213	31,8
I shut down my account immediately upon completing an act of shopping	30	4,5
None of the above listed	47	7

TABLE 10: *Methods of protecting privacy on the Internet*

Source: own processing, 2021

More than two thirds of examinees (70,6%) do not leave personal data on the Internet whenever it is possible, with 50,1% deleting software applications on a regular basis, followed by 49,9% not engaging the location tracking function on their mobile devices, 49,6% not accepting

cookies, unless it is necessary in terms of accessing some contents, 31,8% downloading only files from trustworthy sources, and, finally, 7% not using any mechanisms for protection of privacy on the Internet. In most cases, examinees use common methods for protecting privacy on the Internet, reaching out for more sophisticated solutions on rare occasions.

How do you protect your privacy on social media?	f	%
I always lock my profiles	428	64
I share personal information only with close persons	365	54,6
I often change passwords and I combine letters, numbers, and symbols that make sense only to myself when composing them	165	24,7
I do not use the same password for every account and I do not use the username from one account as the password for another one	262	39,2
I clean up my accounts on a regular basis and delete previous logins and posts in order to limit advertisers access to the list of my activities	116	17,3
I use all features of the privacy protection settings on social media	183	27,4
I clean up the friend list on a regular basis and do not accept friend requests from people I do not know	319	47,7
None of the above listed	56	8,4

TABLE 11: *Methods of protecting privacy on social media*

Source: own processing, 2021

According to Table 11, 64% of examinees always lock their profiles on social media, 54,6% of them share personal information only with close persons, 47,7% clean up their friend lists on a regular basis and do not accept friend requests from unknown people, and 39,2% do not use the same password on all of their accounts and do not use the username from one account as the password for another one. On the other hand, 8,4% of examinees do not use any mechanism for protecting privacy on the Internet. Overall, examinees mainly use basic mechanisms for protecting privacy on social media, rarely resorting to more sophisticated solutions.

Has your privacy on the Internet ever been violated?	f	%
Yes, my profile has been hacked	112	16,8
Yes, my personal data has been abused	28	4,2
Yes, some of my photographs / some photographs featuring me as well have been released without my consent	47	7
Yes, video footage featuring me has been released without my consent	12	1,8
Yes, someone has created a false profile of mine on some social media	52	7,8
I have never experienced violation of privacy on the Internet	486	72,8

TABLE 12: *Violation of privacy on the Internet*

Source: own processing, 2021

The majority of examinees claim that their privacy on the Internet has never been violated (72,8%), whereas 16,8% of them have experienced a situation of having their profile hacked, with 7,8% reporting that someone has created a false profile featuring their personal data on an instance of social media. In addition, 7% of examinees say that they have faced a situation in which their photographs have been posted without their consent, while 4,2% of them have been victims of the abuse of their personal data. In total, 28% of examinees have suffered some form of privacy violation, which is quite a high percentage.

3.5 Privacy on the Internet in relation to sex and education

Over the course of the analysis, the independent and the dependent variables are crossed, with only those featuring a statistically significant impact being presented here.

Sex	How familiar are you with the notion of privacy on the Internet? (%)				Overall
	In full capacity	Partly	Not familiar	%	N
Male	30,7	66,3	3,0	100,0	166
Female	18,3	75,6	6,2	100,0	504
Overall (%)	21,3	73,3	5,4	100,0	670

TABLE 13: The extent of familiarity with the notion of privacy concerning the sex of examinees

Source: own processing, 2021

The chi squared test shows that there is a statistically significant difference between male and female examinees as regards the extent of familiarity with the notion of privacy on the Internet (Chi square=12,869; df=2; p=0,002; Cramér's V=0,139). By means of the two-tailed t-test it is determined that male examinees are more familiar with the aforementioned notion (t= -3,576; sig. 0,001), which is visible from the figures in Table 13. Thus, one third of male examinees are familiar with it, whereas this is valid for one sixth of female examinees only. On the other hand, the number of female examinees that are not familiar with the aforementioned notion is double that of the male ones. Interestingly, it seems that the respective variable of age, level of education, and time spent on the Internet have no impact on whether examinees are familiar with it or not.

Education	Are you familiar with the rights concerning protection of privacy on the Internet? (%)				Overall
	Not familiar	Yes, I have a little knowledge about it	Yes, I am familiar	%	N
High school students	10,2	35,6	54,2	100,0	59
High school graduates	40,0	26,7	33,3	100,0	15
University students	12,2	35,4	52,5	100,0	543
University graduates	9,4	26,4	64,2	100,0	53
Overall (%)	12,4	34,5	53,1	100,0	670

TABLE 14: The extent of familiarity with the right to protecting privacy on the Internet concerning the education of examinees

Source: own processing, 2021

Next, the chi squared test shows that the level of education of examinees has an impact on the extent to which examinees are familiar with the rights to protecting privacy on the Internet (Chi square=13,646; df=6; p=0,034; Cramér's V=0,101). By means of multiple comparison and Tukey's test it is determined that university students and graduated university students score the highest in this respect, with high school students showing a higher score in relation to graduated high school students (level of significance – 0,05), which could be explained by the fact that they are still in the process of studying and that they are younger and better informed.

How concerned are you with regard to the possible risks and consequences of leaving personal data on the Internet?							
Sex	Answers					Overall	
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never	%	N
Male	1,4	17,5	39,8	27,1	4,2	100,0	166
Female	7,9	29,5	41,8	17,4	3,4	100,0	505
Overall (%)	8,8	26,5	41,3	19,8	3,6	100,0	671

TABLE 15: Concerns about possible risks and consequences of leaving personal data on the Internet in relation to the sex of examinees

Source: own processing, 2021

In addition, the chi squared test shows that there is a difference in male and female examinees in relation to concerns regarding the possible risks of leaving personal data on the Internet (Chi square=14,873; df=4; p=0,005; Cramér's V=0,149). By means of the t-test it is determined that it is female examinees who are more concerned in this respect (t= 1,901; sig. 0,05).

How concerned are you with regard to the possible risks and consequences of leaving personal data on the Internet?							
Time spent on the Internet	Answers					Overall	
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never	%	N
0-1 hora a day	14,3	21,4	28,6	14,3	21,4	100,0	14
1-3 hours a day	5,3	30,3	45,6	16,2	2,6	100,0	228
3-6 hours a day	11,6	25,2	39,1	21,2	3,0	100,0	302
More than 6 hours a day	7,2	24,0	40,0	24,0	4,8	100,0	125
Overall (%)	8,7	26,6	41,3	19,9	3,6	100,0	669

TABLE 16: Concerns about possible risks and consequences of leaving personal data on the Internet in relation to time spent on the Internet

Source: own processing, 2021

In the end, the chi squared test shows that there are differences in concerns regarding the possible risks of leaving personal data on the Internet depending on the amount of time spent on the Internet (Chi square =27,580; df=12; p=0,006; Cramer's V=0,117). Yet, by means of the variance analysis and Tukey's multiple comparison test it is determined that the aforementioned differences are not statistically significant, but that they are still there. With regard to this, the most concerned are those who spend 1-3 hours and 3-6 hours on the Internet, respectively.

4. Discussion

The underlying premise of this study is that major members of Generation Z in Bosnia and Herzegovina spend much of their free time on the Internet, but that they also engage in other activities (studying, communicating, shopping) in the same way, which implies that they spend several hours a day online. The results of the survey support this premise, which is to be expected due to the fact that Generation Z finds digital surroundings natural, where the Internet is merely a part of everyday life. For this reason, even activities that could be realised in the real world, such as hanging out with their friends, making conversation, having fun etc. are shifted into

the digital world, since they find it their comfort zone. Ultimately, some of them prefer mobile phones to people. Furthermore, the results also corroborate the premise that, in most cases, the young in Bosnia and Herzegovina use the Internet for accessing social media, for message exchange software applications, and for getting informed, educated, and entertained. On the other hand, the percentage of those who use the Internet for the purpose of creating and sharing their own contents is rather low (given the amount of time spent on the Internet), which implies their passivity. In this respect, they are much more consumers than prosumers (both the users and creators of certain contents).

Taking into consideration the development of media and the opportunities it offers in terms of audience creativity, one can come to a conclusion that the young in Bosnia and Herzegovina use the Internet for creative purposes only on rare occasions, thus seldom producing their own contents. They are Internet users, but passive ones to a large extent, and that is one of the main reasons they opt for it (it provides them with all the services they need without any requirements as regards efforts made and creativity expressed on their part).

In addition, the results make visible the fact that few examinees have gained information on their rights concerning the Internet use at school, at university, or in a family circle, with the majority of them learning about it through the media, that is, through the Internet itself, which points to the lack of media education within the formal educational system. Consequently, this points to the lack of media education on the part of their parents as well. With reference to the fact that media education is not part either of the elementary or secondary school curricula in Bosnia and Herzegovina (it is only studied at some university departments of journalism and communication studies) and that there is no such education provided to adults (those who have completed their formal education), it is hard to expect that there is developed awareness of and knowledge about the security on the Internet in the young.

In a similar fashion, a high percentage of exposure of personal data is another consequence of the lack of media education as well, that is, the lack of consciousness concerning various possibilities of this data being manipulated or even abused. With regard to this issue, this is primarily so in the case of the following: date of birth, email address, location, releasing photographs or video footage, and revealing details of personal events, as well as home address.

There are numerous activities realised by means of the Internet, such as accessing social media and various contents, using message exchange software applications, playing video games, doing online shopping and alike, with a view to satisfying communication urges and needs for getting informed, educated, or entertained, that imply storing personal data, which enables *profiling* or *digging out*, which is defined as a process of collecting, isolating, and categorising data. One of the consequences of digital data manipulation is the violation of privacy on the Internet, which implies their abuse in the first place. Hacking a profile, releasing photographs or a video footage without a person's consent, creating a false profile based on another person's personal data, all of this represents some form of violation of the aforementioned, at the core of which is personal data abuse.

Given the fact that more than a half of examinees only sometimes or seldom think about the possible consequences of leaving their personal data on the Internet, with them actually leaving it quite often, one can conclude that their privacy on the Internet is very much exposed and endangered.

The results indicate that the young in Bosnia and Herzegovina do not use complex mechanisms for the protection of privacy on the Internet and social media to a large extent, that is, those that require additional time and actions, as well as the knowledge of digital settings (using software for hiding IP address, checking out setting parameters when downloading a software application, logging off all accounts before browsing contents on the Internet, shutting down an account following an act of online shopping, using all possible forms of privacy protection on social media, changing passwords, „cleaning up“ an account and erasing previous logging on sessions and posts and alike).

As many as 8,4% of examinees do not use any mechanism for the protection of privacy on social media, and it is for this purpose that they use the Internet the most. This piece of information is the most indicative one in terms of the exposure of the young on the Internet and on social media in particular, which provides the best hunting ground for personal data. Furthermore, if the fact that around 28% of examinees have experienced some form of violation of privacy on the Internet, 4,2% of whom have reported that their personal data has been abused, one can claim that Generation Z lacks knowledge about security on the Internet. For this reason, it is necessary to raise awareness in the young on safely using the Internet and on taking action concerning the protection of personal data on a preemptive basis. As a result, this further points to the necessity of introducing the contents of media education (possibly as a separate subject) into the formal educational system, with special emphasis on the challenges presented by growing up in digital surroundings.

With regard to the issue of familiarity with the notion of privacy on the Internet and with the rights to protecting privacy, a higher percentage of knowledge in this respect on the part of the male population may be interpreted in terms of women being more prone to exposing details of their intimacy on the Internet and to finding the presentation of their image in the virtual world (social media in particular) more significant. In this respect, they probably find the contents more important than the context, so they put less effort to learn about their rights on the Internet. Yet, they spend more time thinking of the possible consequences of leaving personal data on the Internet, which is likely due to the fact that they are aware of their not being knowledgeable in the area, so they take the possible negative consequences of risky behaviour on the Internet in a serious manner. In the end, a higher percentage of familiarity with rights concerning the Internet use in more educated examinees confirms that the general education level has an impact on the extent of media literacy, that is, security on the Internet in this particular case.

5. Conclusion

Growing up in the age of the Internet differs in so many ways from growing up in the world without it, both in terms of parents and children. As for the former, they have been assigned a virtual space in which to control their children, aside from a physical one, with the latter being provided with an area that offers possibilities for acting more freely and for developing more cunning methods of avoiding parental attention. Thus, the former perceive it as a yet another challenge, the latter as an opportunity to seize completely. Since Generation Z has no knowledge of the pre-Internet time, the virtual world, in their case, represents the confirmation of their existence, and that fact should not be ignored but accepted, thus using it as a foundation for developing awareness in the young of both the positive and negative aspects of the Internet.

Although it is impossible to avoid exposing one's privacy on the Internet in terms of Generation Z, it is possible to minimise it and prevent negative consequences within the context of personal data abuse and violation of privacy. This process should take into account every relevant context there is: personal, family, social, formal education, and the media. It is through synchronised and timely actions within each of the aforementioned types of context that successful protective mechanisms in the young as regards potentially harmful aspects of the Internet can be built.

This would imply personal development, self-education, parents skilled in media literacy who talk to their children about internet challenges, a society evolving, promoting, and encouraging media literacy among the general population, a formal educational system within which the contents of media literacy are studied at all educational levels, with special emphasis on digital surroundings and the media pointing out the significance of media education, educating the young on the issues that are relevant to them, and helping them obtain information concerning digital security in a fast and easy way.

With regard to the young, the Internet offers them a sense of security and a sense of belonging to a certain community/group. Those who have grown up using social media often say that they feel weird if they fail to share various contents over the Internet or if they fail to exchange messages over it. Often, in order for them to actually think of or feel an emotion they need to share it. This type of sensibility may contribute to creating a false image of ourselves, one based upon the contents we believe others might like instead creating the one genuinely reflecting our personal traits. In addition, interactive media constantly urge us to react, and our brain is at its most productive when there are no such requests, which means that, in terms of productivity, we need personal peace, time without media of any kind, in order to realise our full potential. Within that context, members of Generation Z should be encouraged to organise their time in a quality fashion and make plans for a period of day when they are not using the Internet. Furthermore, it is important for them to develop an awareness of the safe use of the Internet and to become as familiar as possible with procedures and steps of preemptive actions, of protection against, and of dealing with the negative consequences of violations of privacy on the Internet.

In the end, it would be recommendable that social media users exploit to the fullest all the possibilities of privacy settings, bearing in mind that „such settings can be unreliable, with shortcomings as regards privacy policy or technical faults may restrict a user's capacity of controlling the audience for the contents they have released.“ Thus, locking down your profile on social media, sharing personal information only with close people, paying special attention to creating and changing passwords, and filtering the contents on a regular basis are some of the activities that can contribute significantly to protecting identity in the digital world. The aforementioned is within the domain of preemptive activities that restrict any possibility of abusing personal data, as well as the data concerning patterns of online behaviour, which helps creating their digital identity as well.

Bibliography and sources

Agencija za zaštitu ličnih podataka u Bosni i Hercegovini. [online]. [2021-01-18]. Available at: <http://azlp.ba/FAQ/Default.aspx?id=281&langTag=bs-BA&template_id=149&pageIndex=1>.

ARAOZ, L.: *Your Online Presence is a digital Tattoo, Not a Footprint*. [online]. [2021-02-03]. Available at: <<https://thegoldenageofeducation.com/2016/03/12/your-online-behavior-is-a-digital-tattoo-not-a-footprint/>>.

ARTEMOVA, A.: *Engaging Generation Z through social media marketing Case: Hurja Media Oy*. South-Eastern Finland : University of Applied Sciences, 2018. [online]. [2020-11-16]. Available at: <https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/142658/Artemova_Alexandra.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

BOBAN, M.: Pravo na privatnost i pravo na pristup informacijama u suvremenom informacijskom društvu. In *Zbornik radova Pravnog fakulteta u Splitu*, 2012, Vol. 49, No. 3, p. 575-598. ISSN 1847-0459. [online]. [2021-01-14]. Available at: <<https://hrcak.srce.hr/86834>>.

BRAUTOVIĆ, M.: Zaštita privatnosti kod hrvatskih onlajn medija. In *MediAnali: međunarodni znanstveni časopis za pitanja medija, novinarstva, masovnog komuniciranja i odnosa s javnostima*, 2007, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 27-44. ISSN 1849-0719. [online]. [2021-02-01]. Available at: <<https://hrcak.srce.hr/41342>>.

BÜCHI, M., LUTZ, C., MICHELI, M.: *Life Online: The Digital Footprint Gap*. Paper presented at International scientific conference for the Partnership for Progress on the Digital Divide 2017, San Diego, presented 25th May 2017. [online]. [2021-01-22]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/319943869_Life_Online_The_Digital_Footprint_Ga>.

- GÜL ÜNLÜ, D., MORVA, O.: Whose Information Should Be Shared With Whom?: Parents' Awareness Of Children's Digital Privacy In Turkey. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2020, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 109-124. ISSN 2585-9188. [online]. [2021-01-15]. Available at: <https://www.mlar.sk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/8_Unlu_Morva.pdf>.
- KASTELS, M.: *Moć komunikacije*. Beograd : Clio, 2014.
- KUZMANOVIĆ, D.: *Zaštita ličnih podataka i privatnosti na internetu*. [online]. [2021-02-13]. Available at: <https://digitalni-vodic.ucpd.rs/zastita-licnih-podataka-i-privatnosti-na-internetu/#t3_subheading-2>.
- LIVINGSTONE, S.: Children: a special case for privacy? In *Intermedia*, 2018, Vol. 46, No. 2, p. 18-23. ISSN 0309-118X. [online]. [2021-02-26]. Available at: <<https://www.iicom.org/wp-content/uploads/COMPRESSED-im-july2018-full-min.pdf>>.
- MCPEAK, A.: The facebook digital footprint: Paving fair and consistent pathways to Civil discovery of social media data. In *48 Wake Forest Law Review* 887, 2013, Vol. 48, p. 101-156. ISSN 0043-003X. [online]. [2021-02-10]. Available at: <https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/Data_Integrity_Notice.cfm?abid=2246990>.
- Medijska i informacijska pismenost; Radni listići za aktivnosti u učionici za nastavnike*. 2020. [online]. [2021-01-11]. Available at: <<https://www.medijskapismenost.hr/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/clemi-materijali.pdf>>.
- MILOSAVLJEVIĆ, S., RADOSAVLJEVIĆ, I.: *Osnovi metodologije političkih nauka*. Beograd : Službeni glasnik, 2013.
- MURTEZIĆ, A. O.: Konvencija 108: aktuelni značaj i primjena. In MRVIĆ PETROVIĆ, N. (ed.): *Strani pravni život*. Beograd : Institut za uporedno pravo, 2020, p. 99-110. [online]. [2021-01-29]. Available at: <<http://stranipravnizivot.rs/index.php/SPZ/article/view/784/752>>.
- NISSENBAUM, H.: Privacy as contextual integrity. In *Washington Law Review*, 2004, Vol. 79, No. 1, p. 119-157. [online]. [2020-12-15]. Available at: <<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/267979739.pdf>>.
- PARKS, P. J.: *The Digital Divide*. San Diego, CA. : Reference Point Press, 2013.
- POPADIĆ, D., PAVLOVIĆ, Z., ŽEŽELJ, I.: *Alatke istraživača: metodi i tehnike istraživanja u društvenim naukama*. Beograd : Clio, 2018.
- Priručnik o evropskom zakonodavstvu o zaštiti podataka. Izdanje iz 2018*. [online]. [2021-01-04]. Available at: <<https://fra.europa.eu/hr/publication/2020/prirucnik-o-evropskom-zakonodavstvu-o-zastiti-podataka-izdanje-iz-2018>>.
- RAŠEVIĆ, D.: Nove vrijednosti i orijentacije konceptualnog okvira medijske pismenosti. In *Nauka i stvarnost*. Pale : Filozofski fakultet, 2017, p. 381-403.
- SETYOWATI, L.: Digital life, digital tattoo and the filter bubble: raising the awareness and the cautions on online activities through information literacy education. In MURSYID, M. (ed.): *International Conference on Science Mapping and the Development of Science*. Republik Indonesia : Library and Information Management Graduate School, Gadjah Mada University, 2016, p. 137-142. [online]. [2021-02-07]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305682940_Digital_Life_Digital_Tattoo_and_The_Filter_Bubble_raising_the_awareness_and_the_cautions_on_online_activities_through_information_literacy_education>.
- STOILOVA, M., LIVINGSTONE, S., NANDAGIRI, R.: *Children's data and privacy online: Growing up in a digital age*. Research findings. London : London School of Economics and Political Science, 2019. [online]. [2021-01-05]. Available at: <<https://www.lse.ac.uk/my-privacy-uk/Assets/Documents/Childrens-data-and-privacy-online-report-for-web.pdf>>.
- STOILOVA, M., LIVINGSTONE, S., NANDAGIRI, R.: *My data and privacy online: A toolkit for young people*. [online]. [2021-01-20]. Available at: <https://www.lse.ac.uk/my-privacy-uk?fbclid=IwAR3BlbpwNsKPJAyBHfjLKG_DzDh1rUm3Tg511zrYWbNcG9mYmrScDsF-2ZU>.
- TERKL, Š.: *Obnovimo razgovor: moć razgovora u digitalnom dobu*. Beograd : Clio, 2020.
- TRNINIĆ, D.: *Konceptualni okvir medijske pismenosti*. Banja Luka : Udruženje za filozofiju i društvenu misao, 2017.

TVENGI, DŽ.: *Internet generacija: dezorijentisanost dece u digitalnom dobu*. Novi Sad : Psihopolis institut, 2019.

Council of Europe, 1953. The Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms/ The European Convention on Human Rights.

Council of Europe, 1981. Convention for the Protection of individuals with regard to automatic processing of personal data (ETS, No 108), Strasbourg, 28. 1.1981.

European Union, 2016. Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation), OJ L 119/1, 4. 5. 2016, pp. 1–88.

Krivični zakon Bosne i Hercegovine „Službeni glasnik Bosne i Hercegovine“, br. 3/2003, 32/2003, (...), 35/2018.

Krivični zakon Federacije Bosne i Hercegovine „Službene novine Federacije Bosne i Hercegovine“, br. 36/2003, 21/2004, (...), 75/2017.

Krivični zakon Republike Srpske, „Službeni glasnik Republike Srpske“, br. 49/2003, 108/2004, (...), 67/2013.

UN General Assembly, 1948/1971. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Ustav Bosne i Hercegovine, Aneks IV Opšteg okvirnog sporazuma za mir u Bosni i Hercegovini i „Službeni glasnik BiH“ br. 25/2009

Ustav Federacije Bosne i Hercegovine, „Službene novine Bosne i Hercegovine“, br.1/1994, 13/1997, 16/2002, (...), 88/2008.

Ustav Republike Srpske „Službeni glasnik Republike Srpske“ br. 21/1992, 28/1994, (...), 73/2019.

Zakon o zaštiti ličnih podataka Bosne i Hercegovine, „Službeni glasnik Bosne i Hercegovine“, br. 49/2006, 76/2011 i 89/2011.

Authors



Ms Dragana Trninic, PhD.

Study Programme of Journalism and Communication Studies
Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Banja Luka
University campus, 1A Bulevar vojvode Petra Bojovica
78 000 Banja Luka
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
dragana.trninic@fpn.unibl.org

Ms Dragana Trninic, PhD (maiden name: Rasevic) gained her BA degree at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Banja Luka. She finished her graduate studies at the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Banja Luka by producing the master's thesis entitled 'Social determinants of media culture', and she defended her doctoral dissertation on the topic of 'Media literacy in the Republic of Srpska' at the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Belgrade (Republic of Serbia) in 2016. Ms Trninic is focused on media literacy and media education processes and on implementation of media education within the curriculum, in particular on the behaviour of media audiences in the era of network communication. With regard to the first cycle academic studies at the Study Programme of Journalism and Communication Studies, Ms Trninic teaches the subjects of Introduction to Communication Studies and Information, Communication Studies Basics, and Media Literacy, along with the subject of Media Literacy and Media Culture at the third cycles respectively.

Ms Andjela Kupresanin Vukelic, PhD.

Study Programme of Journalism and Communication Studies
Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Banja Luka
University campus, 1A Bulevar vojvode Petra Bojovica
78 000 Banja Luka
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
andjela.kupresanin-vukelic@fpn.unibl.org



Ms Andjela Kupresanin Vukelic, PhD in Social Sciences (Journalism). Ms Kupresanin Vukelic gained her PhD title at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Istočno Sarajevo (Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina), Department of Journalism, in 2018. Since 2008, Ms Kupresanin Vukelic has been engaged as a member of staff at the Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Banja Luka, first as a teaching assistant and then as a professor at the Study Programme of Journalism and Communication Studies. In her academic and professional career, she focuses on contemporary trends in the sphere of journalism and the media, dealing with issues of information literacy, excess information phenomenon, freedom of media and media pluralism, and media regulation and normative standards in online media reports. She has participated at numerous national and international conferences and academic events, and she has been engaged in national and international scholarly and professional projects in the area of information and media literacy.



GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

Media Literacy and Academic Research's Editorial Board offers a possibility of publishing original theoretical or research studies, reviews of monographs or text books and other articles related to the focus of the journal, which have not been publicly published yet. Media Literacy and Academic Research journal consists of the following sections:

- **Studies:** Theoretical articles in the extent of 21,600-54,000 signs (12-30 author pages)
- **News:** News related to media communication and academic research (profiles of scientific events, projects, profiles of scholars, etc.) in the extent of 3,600 signs (1-2 author pages)
- **Reviews:** Reviews of monographs and textbooks from the fields of media studies which are not older than one year, in the extent of 5,400-9,000 signs (3-5 author pages)
- **Interview**

LANGUAGE OF THE SUBMITTED MANUSCRIPTS

- all manuscripts must be written in English language

Text format (unless specific do the wise in brackets below):

- Font type: Times New Roman
- Font size: 12 pt
- Alignment: justified
- Spacing: 1
- All margins: 2,5 cm
- Do not divide words
- Quotations and referenced passages: use numbered footnotes on the relevant page (not at the end of the manuscript)

CONTENT ARRANGEMENT OF THE MANUSCRIPT

- Title of the text in English (16 pt, bold, align centre)
- Name(s) and surname(s) of the author(s) (14 pt, align centre)
- Abstract in English – from 150 to 200 words (10 pt)
- Key words in English (10 pt)
- Titles of individual chapters (14 pt, bold)
- References (in form – KELLNER, D.: Media Spectacle. New York, London : Routledge, 2003.) The citation rules are available at www.mlar.sk/citationrules.
- Contact data: name and surname of the author(s) with full academic degrees, full address of the institution, e-mail, short bio and portrait photo of the author(s).

WE RECOMMEND TO ALL AUTHORS TO APPLY THE FOLLOWING STRUCTURE OF THE MANUSCRIPT:

- Introduction
- Results
- Conclusions
- Methods
- Discussion
- References/Bibliography and sources

Please e-mail your article to: mlar.editor@fmk.sk in the Microsoft Word text editor. We accept most word processing formats, but MS Word is preferred. Please use templates available at mlar.sk/templates-to-download/.

Each received study will undergo a double-blind peer review process and the editorial board will decide whether to accept or reject the text for publication on the basis of the elaborated reviews. The Editorial Board may accept the text conditionally and require correction of the text by author(s) according to the remarks or suggestions of the reviewers.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Media Literacy and Academic Research is a scientific journal focused on the academic reflection of media and information literacy issues, media education, critical thinking, digital media and new trends in related areas of media and communication studies. The journal is devoted to addressing contemporary issues and future developments related to the interdisciplinary academic discussion, the results of empirical research and the mutual interaction of expertise in media and information studies, media education as well as their sociological, psychological, political, linguistic and technological aspects.

Media Literacy and Academic Research is a double-blind peer-reviewed journal published twice a year by the Faculty of Mass Media Communication at the University of SS. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava (FMK UCM). The journal is international and interdisciplinary, inviting contributions from across the globe and from various academic disciplines of social sciences. It focuses on theoretical and empirical studies, research results, as well as papers related to the new trends, practices and other academic a research areas. Also encouraged are literature reviews, innovative initiatives, best practices in online teaching, institutional policies, standards and assessment. The Journal welcomes the submission of manuscripts that meet the general criteria of significance and scientific excellence.

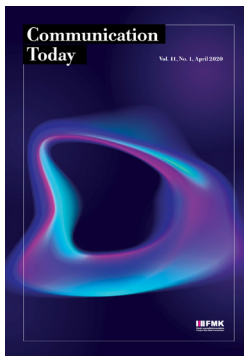
The authors and co-authors publishing their work in Media Literacy and Academic Research are, as a general rule, academics, scholars, researchers and media professionals. The author(s) of the texts – yet unpublished but already approved and prepared for publication in Media Literacy and Academic Research – have the right to present their findings or other related research outcomes by attending domestic, foreign and international scientific conferences and workshops as well as within their pedagogical or artistic activities. The editorial board expects authors to submit the final to-be-published texts with regard to the set formal criteria, i.e. consistent and correct spelling, grammar, stylistics and formalities in accordance with Guidelines for Authors and Citation Rules. It is necessary to use the template available on the journal's website: <https://www.mlar.sk/>.

If a published text (or manuscript intended for publication) violates the ethical principles or, eventually, if the entire texts or their parts are proven to be plagiarisms or consist of texts already published in the past or simultaneously in several other specialised publications, the authors and co-authors take on full responsibility. However, the authors are given opportunity to react to such allegations.

Any fundamental changes to authorship of already submitted final texts (e.g. amendment of co-authors, change in the order of authors, copyright interests in the text) are liable to the prior consent of the editorial board. The author(s) or co-author(s) must ask for a change in the copyright data or modification of their order on the basis of a formal, written request sent to the following e-mail address: mlar.editor@fmk.sk.

The complete version of Media Literacy and Academic Research's Editorial Policy is available online at: <https://www.mlar.sk/editorial-policy/>.

SCIENTIFIC JOURNALS



Communication Today

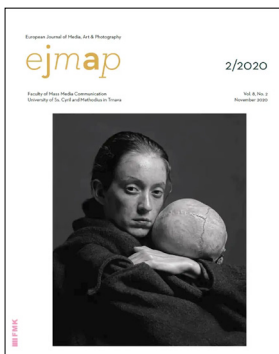
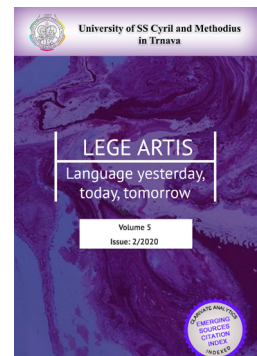
Scientific journal of the Faculty of Mass Media Communication at the University SS. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovakia

Communication Today is a scientific journal from the mass media and marketing communication field. The journal contains professional scientific reflections on the media, media competencies; it also offers academic discourses on the limits of reality, media thinking, new media, marketing and media relations, new trends in marketing including their types and specifics, psychology and sociology of marketing communication, as well as new knowledge about the structure of media contents, marketing strategies and communication sciences. The professional public is offered an interdisciplinary, focused, targeted discussion in these pages. Communication Today is a double-blind peer reviewed journal published twice a year. It focuses on theoretical studies, theoretical and empirical studies, research results and their implementation into practice, as well as professional publication reviews. The members of the journal's editorial board are members of the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA). Communication

Today is indexed in these databases: Cabell's Directories, CEJSH, EBSCO, CEEOL, ProQuest, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, Index Copernicus, ERIH PLUS, SCOPUS and (ESCI) – Web of Science Core Collection.

Lege Artis Language yesterday, today, tomorrow

Journal „Lege artis. Language yesterday, today, tomorrow” is a scholarly journal issued periodically by De Gruyter Open twice a year, in June and December. Contributors are invited to the mainstream linguistic studies and secondary subfields of linguistics included: *Cognitive linguistics, Cognitive poetics, Comparative-historical linguistics, Culture studies, Discourse analysis, Folklore studies, Grammar History of the language, Historical phonology and morphology, Historical semantics, Lexicology, Phonetics/Phonology, Psycholinguistics, Stylistics, Text linguistics and Cognitive semiotics*. „Lege artis. Language yesterday, today, tomorrow” is indexed in these databases: Web of Science, EBSCO, Clarivate Analytics – Emerging Sources Citation Index – Web of Science Core Collection, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory/ulrichsweb.



European Journal of Media, Art & Photography

European Journal of Media, Art & Photography (EJMAP) is an academic journal published biannually by the Faculty of Mass Media Communication at the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava (FMK UCM). The journal is dedicated to publishing photographic collections, works of art and scholarly texts which deal with professional scientific reflection on media, culture, journalism photography, philosophy, literature and theatrical art. European Journal of Media, Art & Photography is indexed in CEEOL and Web of Sciences ESCI.

Acta Ludologica

Acta Ludologica is a scientific journal in the field of digital games. The journal contains professional scientific reflections on digital games; it also offers academic discourses on games, especially media and digital competencies, creation, design, marketing, research, development, psychology, sociology, history and the future of digital games. Acta Ludologica is a double-blind peer reviewed journal published twice a year. It focuses on theoretical studies, theoretical and empirical studies, research results and their implementation into practice, as well as professional publication reviews. The members of the journal's editorial board are members of the Faculty of Mass Media Communication of the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, the only faculty in Central Europe which has registered three scientific journals in Clarivate Analytics (formerly Thomson Reuters) Web of Science.



Media Literacy *and* Academic Research

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

Vol. 4 || No. 1 || April 2021

ISSN: 2585-8726 (print version)

ISSN: 2585-9188 (online version)

 **FMK**
Fakulta masmediálnej komunikácie
Faculty of Mass Media Communication

