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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 and Media Literacy Expert Group.

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Dear readers!

You are holding the second issue of the scientific journal Media Literacy and Academic Research. We are very pleased that the thematic areas with which our journal deals are dynamic and are at the centres of interest of many researchers. Thanks to that in this issue of the scientific journal Media Literacy and Academic Research you will find interesting studies on current affairs in the fields of media, media communication and media literacy. They deal with the issues of new media, social networks, fake news, reality shows or the future of print media.

The study of the future of print media is dedicated to the topic of augmented reality implementation in print journalism, and thus the linking of traditional and new media with the aim of acquiring readers. One study deals with a discussion on social network environments which also examines the motivation of users to engage in discussions and present their opinion. Such discussions are often sharp and controversial, and can also relate to negative phenomena in the media – fake news and hoaxes. This topic is dealt with by another study on post-factual society. Social networks often offer spaces for spreading this phenomenon. The spread of these phenomena is also aided by the fact that audiences believe more in information based on emotional and personal beliefs than on objective facts. An interesting topic is also the issue of reality TV and the use of persuasive and manipulative communication in this TV genre. The study also deals with stereotypes that we (in most cases) consider to be negative media phenomena. The stereotyping presented in the media can support the formation of negative prejudices or their deeper rooting in society's perceptions. However, the problem may also be stereotyping in interpersonal communication which is handled by the author of another study. It focuses more on gender stereotypes and how they can form a barrier in the communication process leading to conflict. In addition to scientific studies in the journal, we have also included an interview with the accredited linguistic professor Zoltán Kövecses. Prof. Kövecses talks about current trends in new media, but also about how current liberalization tendencies can affect language and education. The media and research news in this field are concerned with the current topics of fake news and opportunities for controlling and prevention, media manipulation as well as raising the media literacy level, protecting against negative media pitfalls and strengthening critical thinking skills. Two reviews in this issue of the journal are also focused on media education and critical thinking about media. They are two reviews of current professional publications by authors from the field of media and media literacy.

The goal of Media Literacy and Academic Research editorial office is to provide space for the publication of scientific knowledge, research and theoretical studies in the field of media literacy, media, media communication and related fields. We are pleased with the academic public interest in our academic magazine, and we believe that in this new issue of the academic journal you will find topics in which you are interested

Pleasant reading,

Monika Hossová
Deputy Managing Editor of Media Literacy and Academic Research

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Ladislava Knihová

The Future of Newspapers: a Thrilling Encounter with Augmented Reality

ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to examine and better understand the impact of new technologies on multimedia journalism, mainly from the viewpoint of augmented reality (AR). Then, in the context of literature review, and in view of recent real-world examples of AR experience introduced by Harvard Business Review, the author will explore and critically evaluate the idea of using AR as a tool to help attract customers to newspapers and other print media. Apart from compelling content, newspapers can start offering a thrilling and enjoyable experience thanks to the implementation of innovative technologies. Thus, they can enhance multimedia journalism and take it to a whole new level. The study is complemented by an empirical probe focused on the current preferred ways of reading newspapers by readers in both the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. The survey also reveals the level of the survey respondents' awareness and imagination of 'live images' as an engaging part of media content. Simultaneously, specific examples of AR used in different industries are delineated and associated questions and directions for further research are suggested.

KEY WORDS

Augmented reality. AR. Augmented reality strategy. Mobile technologies. Multimedia journalism. Print media. Smart connected products.

1. Introduction

In view of noticeable changes in readers' media consumption preferences and their shift to digital editions of news, it is logical that newspaper publishers are worried about their print media's declining circulation numbers. They continuously look for new business models, advertising revenues and ways of engaging their readers. For many publishing houses the situation is not optimistic.

Seeing it from a different perspective, AR may represent a new hope for print media. Readers' imagination has always been vivid. Moreover, with good reason, writers sometimes claim that a good metaphor is worth a thousand pictures. However, taking readers 'on a journey' beyond the printed page is a new phenomenon worth exploring. Thanks to AR, people can watch a video/video animation, or any other unexpected content. Unlike virtual reality (VR), AR offers additional content that is usually interesting, informative and enjoyable. It requires only a smartphone with a mobile app to watch this content 'come to life'.

In the business world, AR has been used in product promotion for almost a decade. One of the first and most highly successful companies in this field was the UK-based company Blippar®. It specializes in AR and computer vision, harnessing these technologies in its attempts to bridge the physical and the digital. Among the company's first clients were Heinz Ketchup and Maybelline; Blippar has also prepared solutions in political marketing (for Barack Obama's first presidential campaign) and in the music industry (a campaign for Justin Bieber).¹

In terms of transferring AR's potential into the world of print media, we can consider its use not just on printed pages but also with inserts (leaflets or flyers) or, perhaps, as the most useful part of printed catalogues. In addition, a cover page visual can bring readers a real-life experience and these live images can be successfully used for sales promotion

2. Literature Review and Conceptual Background

Currently, the idea of using AR is somewhat innovative - not merely in, and by, the media. Therefore, it is this study's author's aim to put AR into a broader context and provide the reader with the latest information based on relevant research literature, including recent studies and professional articles. The literature review focuses mainly on authors who are concerned with innovative media channels, mobile video, mobile AR applications and AR used by journalists. Recent global research projects' results complement the conceptual background.

The starting point is undoubtedly the well-known statement by Marshall McLuhan explaining that the form of a message (print, visual, musical, etc.) largely determines the ways in which that message is perceived by the recipient. *"Already in his time, McLuhan argued that modern electronic communications (including radio, television, films, and computers) would have far-reaching sociological, aesthetic, and philosophical consequences, to the point of actually altering the ways in which we experience the world."*²

The traditional media channels have been complemented by a number of new ones, mainly of a digital nature. Many of them are highly innovative, including social media and mobile communication tools. As long ago as 2013, the author J. V. Pavlik, in his research, addressed the question of innovations as the key to the viability of news media in the digital age.³

Taking into account the changes in media consumption preferences, including growing mobile access to the Internet, it is important to point out the increasing popularity of mobile video formats. Written articles are waning in popularity, especially among millennials. Deloitte Global's recent research revealed that, in 2018, some 16% of respondents are so fond of videos that they shoot their own videos at least once a week.⁴

¹ *Augmented Reality & Computer Vision Solutions – Blippar*. [online]. [2018-04-04]. Available at: <<https://www.blippar.com>>.

² *The medium is the message, Define The medium is the message at Dictionary.com*. [online]. [2018-03-20]. Available at: <<http://www.dictionary.com/browse/the-medium-is-the-message>>.

³ PAVLIK, J. V.: *Innovation and the Future of Journalism*. [online]. [2018-03-19] Available at: <<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21670811.2012.756666>>.

⁴ *TMT Predictions 2018: Overview, Technology, Media, and Telecommunications*. [online]. [2018-02-27]. Available at: <www2.deloitte.com/global/en/pages/technology-media-and-telecommunications/articles/tmt-predictions.html>.

In the treatise called “Mobile Augmented Reality Game Engine”, co-authors Jian Gu and Henry B. L. Duh explain: “*The recent fusion of Augmented Reality (AR) and mobile technologies has enabled the creation of novel mobile AR applications. As the image processing algorithms and processing capabilities of mobile hardware continue to improve, mobile AR will become more commonplace.*”⁵

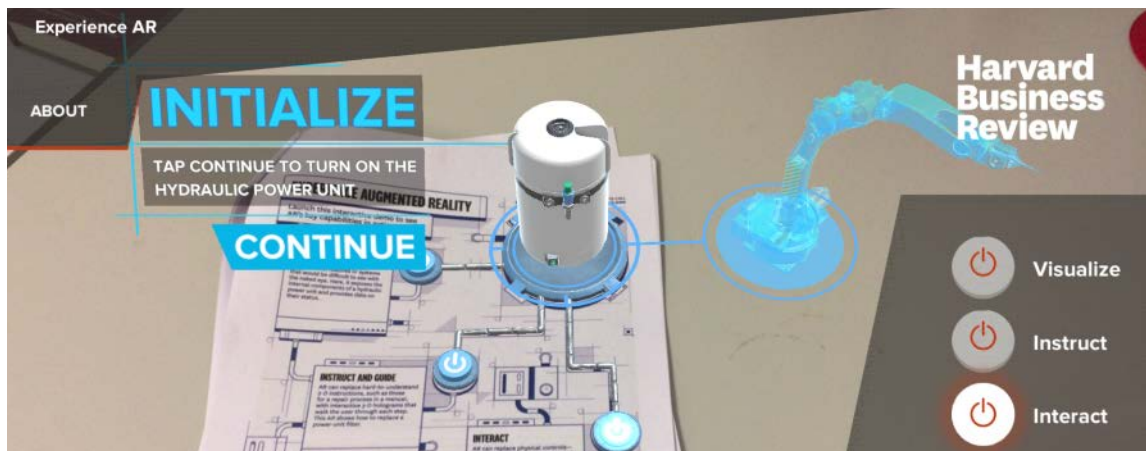
Another question to be addressed is the relative popularity of print compared with digital media channels. Deloitte Global predicts that, “*By the end of 2018, 50 percent of adults in developed countries will have at least two online-only media subscriptions, and by the end of 2020, that average will have doubled to four. The cost of these subscriptions – spanning principally TV, movies, music, news and magazines – will typically be under \$10 per month each in 2018.*”⁶

The convergence of the mobile environment and AR is another threshold to be considered. Its importance for the media world is apparent, although examples of its implementation are still somewhat exceptional. However, its role could be significant in the future, if it is properly understood, appreciated and managed.

3. Augmented reality – a new hope for newspapers?

At the end of 2017 the Harvard Business Review published a collection of articles titled “A Manager’s Guide to Augmented Reality”. The leading article “Why Every Organization Needs an Augmented Reality Strategy”, co-authored by world-acclaimed Michael E. Porter and James E. Heppelmann, is a must-read for anyone interested in augmented reality (AR) and its practical application in the business world.⁷ On March 15, 2018, this was followed by a live video on the Facebook profile of Michael E. Porter in which he explained not only how AR would change business and the way we work but also the term *augmented reality* itself.⁸

The article not only reveals new aspects and applications of AR but is also a piece of AR itself, as the authors lead readers through the process of downloading the HBR AR mobile app from an app store and then watching one of the 2D charts in the article ‘come to life’. This particular AR video-simulation is a real-world example offering a helping hand to solve maintenance issues remotely while increasing productivity and reducing costs. In the above-mentioned live video, Michael E. Porter explains the dynamic shift in productivity that can come from applying AR and speaks about ‘smart connected products’.



PICTURE 1: Experience augmented reality

Source: Author's own elaboration using the mobile app HBR AR and 2D graphics attached to the article “Why Every Organization Needs an Augmented Reality Strategy”.

⁵ FURHT, B.: *Handbook of Augmented Reality*. New York : Springer, 2011, p. 99.

⁶ TMT Predictions 2018: Overview, Technology, Media, and Telecommunications. [online]. [2018-02-27]. Available at: <www2.deloitte.com/global/en/pages/technology-media-and-telecommunications/articles/tmt-predictions.html>.

⁷ A Manager's Guide to Augmented Reality. [online]. [2018-03-19]. Available at: <<https://hbr.org/2017/11/a-managers-guide-to-augmented-reality#why-every-organization-needs-an-augmented-reality-strategy>>.

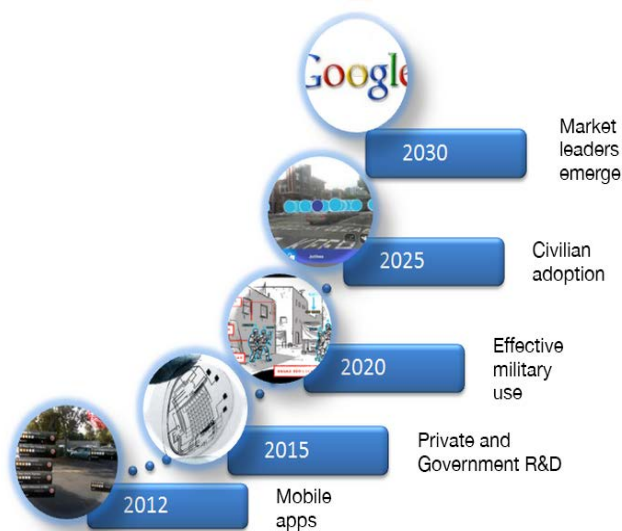
⁸ PORTER, M. E.: *How AR Will Change Business and the Ways You Work*. Broadcast on 15th March 2018. [online]. [2018-03-19]. Available at: <<https://www.facebook.com/HBR/videos/10155898055607787/>>.

In its article, MIT Sloan Management Review further explained: “According to Porter, organizations seeking to leverage AR must think through five key points on the way to developing a strategy, including:

- What implementation areas they should prioritize;
- How to use AR for product differentiation;
- Where AR may be most cost-effective;
- Whether to build capabilities in-house or outsource;
- What role AR can play as a future communications medium.”⁹

These five areas are also of critical importance to the worlds of journalism and media. The gradual permeation of AR into, and its eventual proliferation in, all sectors of the economy will have a dramatic impact on readers’ and viewers’ expectations.

See Picture 2 documenting projected adoption of AR in the coming decades.



PICTURE 2: AR projected adoption in different industries

Source: Augmented reality. [online]. [2018-03-20]. Available at: <<https://augreality.wikispaces.com/Projected+Adoption#Timeline>>.

Despite the fact that AR examples have been known to the media world since 2010, in 2018, AR is still an immature technology. However, the acceleration of the AR adoption process is inevitable. It goes hand-in-hand with technological advancement. “Augmented reality is poised to enter the consumer market with prevalence in many different industries such as education, social media, gaming, medical and home entertainment.”¹⁰

In further chapters, the author will explore and critically evaluate AR as a tool for encouraging customers to return to newspapers, since AR can be seen as a radical new means of engaging with these readers. Simultaneously, AR stimulates the use of higher-order cognitive processes (visual memory, attention, problem-solving, fluid intelligence, etc.). So, a novel way of processing information is being born. Companies will need to approach this new technology with a clear strategy. It is obvious that creativity will be much needed in this process.

⁹ Why Business Leaders Need an Augmented Reality Strategy. [online]. [2018-03-19]. Available at: <<https://sloanreview.mit.edu/sponsors-content/why-business-leaders-need-an-augmented-reality-strategy/>>.

¹⁰ Augmented reality. [online]. [2018-03-20]. Available at: <<https://augreality.wikispaces.com/Projected+Adoption#Timeline>>.

4. Methodology

Apart from undertaking a literature review, to help develop the necessary conceptual background, the author carried out an empirical probe entitled “Do you read newspapers? A digital edition or print version?” The online survey, prepared with the help of the SurveyMonkey online app and distributed through social networks in March 2018, revealed some interesting findings. Although the sample of respondents is far from being representative, altogether 71 responses were collected and analysed (see Chapter 4). The results are enlightening. As for demographic data, the age of the survey respondents ranged from 18 to 65+, irrespective of gender. The respondents were recruited from two geographical areas: the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. The survey was promoted on Facebook with the total budget of 350, -- Czech Crowns for the period of 11 days.

5. Survey results and interpretation

The above-described survey consisted of two multiple-choice questions only.

1. Choose one of the following options:

- I prefer the print version of newspapers.
- I prefer the online edition of newspapers, event, a mobile app.
- I don't read newspapers at all.

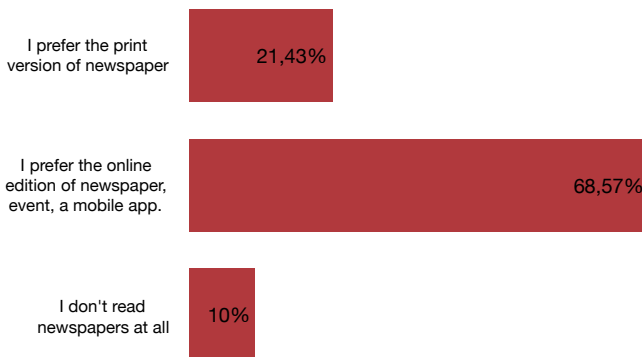


CHART 1: Do you read newspapers? A digital edition or print version?

Source: own processing

There were five respondents' comments. One of them, repeated several times, is:

“Digital editions need electricity. However, they are more up-to-date and you don't need to take care of paper waste. From print versions I read mostly only those free of charge.”

Other interesting comments:

“I prefer an audio version in combination with the print version.”

“There is not always time for reading a newspaper. However, digital editions are available always and everywhere.”

Author's comment:

Considering the reasons for such a high number of respondents preferring digital facsimiles may lead us to a few conclusions: the price of newspapers is rather high; the respondents lack time to read on daily basis and, perhaps, there is an abundance of information available everywhere. Furthermore, media fragmentation makes it extremely difficult for any newspaper publisher to build a long-lasting relationship with a specific audience. Traditional values associated with a newspaper may be an advantage in keeping an existing audience – but not necessarily in attracting a new one. Further research may bring an answer to the question of whether there is, or isn't, a direct relationship between a specific digital edition and the print version of the

same title to which the family used to subscribe. There may be a psychological connection to the original 'physical product', e.g. based on the trustworthiness of a specific newspaper. Allocating time to reading a newspaper (or to reading at all) was a habit passed on from one generation to another. Nowadays, it may be slowly disappearing as more engaging activities, e.g. PC games, take the lead.

2. Can you imagine a newspaper with a picture/diagram that 'comes to life' thanks to augmented reality and an app in your smartphone?

- 87% of the respondents answered this question positively.

Author's comment:

The spread of interesting information on new media, virtual reality VR, AR, robotics, Industry 4.0, and the like is unprecedented. This, together with relatively easy and cheap access to the Internet, influences people's 'knowledgeableness' - since they tend not to miss information which is relevant to them, or that is relevant to their future. Our survey identified a rather surprisingly high number of respondents (87%) who can envisage AR features being a familiar part of newspapers. It is a promising signal that they are at least partly ready to adopt AR without barriers or prejudices. However, further research is needed to investigate if they are ready to pro-actively use a smart mobile app to 'enliven' the AR images. This information will prove useful should a newspaper decide to adopt this strategy and technology.

6. Discussion

To evaluate AR and its potential to become a unique selling point for newspapers, a great deal of information needs to be examined very carefully. Only then can a viable strategy be formulated with more precision.

As a minimum, there are four areas of future research to consider: (1) readiness of the readership to adopt an entirely new type of media format and become pro-active in its use, (2) the resources (money, know-how, and workforce) required, (3) in-house versus outsourced AR solutions, and (4) paid versus free access.

1. *Readership readiness:* An AR strategy could become a unique selling point and a competitive advantage for newspaper publishers. However, the AR content should be carefully considered and in no way should it be just another version of evening TV news. People will seek added value in these 'live images'. High levels of engagement, guidance, counselling, entertainment and education are just a few of the criteria to consider. A systematic approach is needed, as customer relations can be built with the help of this innovative tool at a totally new level.
2. *Resources:* Prior to allocating money to AR and adopting AR as a core strategy, it is advisable to work with available business analytics. If we want a particular newspaper's readership to stay loyal to reading its print version and not to cancel their subscriptions, we need to enhance customer satisfaction as much as possible. In the business world, companies such as Xerox and IKEA managed to increase customer satisfaction after the introduction of AR into their business processes. E.g. Xerox has seen its customer satisfaction rates rise to 95% now that the company is using AR to connect remote technical experts directly with customers.¹¹ Given AR's various uses and its practical benefits, the newspaper publisher may reach the situation where customers' emotional enchantment by, and loyalty to, a brand prevails in their mutual relations. If AR is used in the print version of newspapers, the number of subscribers may increase as a result of customers' deep emotional attachment to their newspaper brand. The AR experience is often very surprising, enchanting and engaging and there is a high probability that readers, themselves, will gladly share their new experience on social media or elsewhere.

¹¹ *A Manager's Guide to Augmented Reality*. [online]. [2018-03-19]. Available at: <<https://hbr.org/2017/11/a-managers-guide-to-augmented-reality#why-every-organization-needs-an-augmented-reality-strategy>>.

3. *In-house versus outsourced AR solutions*: Ideally, the decision to develop AR resources in-house or 'buy-in' these resources (that is, outsourcing them) should be based on a particular publisher's business results, risk profile and strategy. The publisher might start with an outsourced AR solution and monitor its business results for a while. Depending on these results, massive investment into in-house AR solutions could be justifiable - and communication with stakeholders and potential investors made easier.
4. *Paid versus free access*: Many attempts to find the appropriate business model can be seen in the activities of media publishers. Some of them try to increase revenue from advertising. Some of them try to influence their readers to search their hearts and consider donations/contributions to their news supplier, e.g. The Guardian writes on their website: *"Unlike many news organizations, we haven't put up a paywall – we want to keep our journalism as open as we can. The Guardian's independent, investigative journalism takes a lot of time, money and hard work to produce. But the revenue we get from advertising is falling, so we increasingly need our readers to fund us."*¹² Finding a new business model - perhaps a business model based on new technologies - might be costly and time-consuming. However, it is worth having a trial to see if a company can benefit from it. If it succeeds, it's worth its weight in gold.

Kannan and Hongshuang in their research highlight: *"As new digital devices and technologies evolve, future research needs to focus on how firms can use these developments to create sustainable competitive advantage, gain market share, and increase customer equity and brand equity."*¹³ This statement lies at the core of future bold and timely managerial decisions.

7. Conclusion

The objective of this study has been to critically evaluate AR as a tool capable of encouraging customers to return to reading newspapers, since AR can be seen as a radical new means of engaging with readers. Despite the limitations of the survey carried out by the author, that survey's results have provided some evidence that newspaper readership is ready for AR while, at the same time, revealing people's preference for digital editions compared with print media.

In a similar way to what is going on in other industries, print media publishers should start considering implementing an AR strategy, at least at the level of crystalizing their opinions on the possible use of AR in terms of product differentiation and cost-effectiveness. There are also the issues of whether any AR solutions employed should be developed in-house or outsourced. Furthermore, on an over-arching strategic level, media publishers need to consider the role of AR as a viable mass communication medium of the future.

Although, today, we still know so little about the features and capabilities of modern innovative technologies, exploring the available technological solutions and indulging in creative thinking about their implementation in specific industries and lines of business is well worth doing. If we don't, we won't know what we have missed.

¹² *News, sport and opinion from the Guardian's global edition, The Guardian*. [online]. [2018-04-04]. Available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/international>>.

¹³ KANNAN, P.K.; Hongshuang "Alice" LI, 2017. Digital marketing: A framework, review and research agenda. In *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 2017, Vol. 34, No. 1., p. 22-45. [online]. [2018-03-19]. Available at: <<https://linkinghub.elsevier.com/retrieve/pii/S0167811616301550>>.

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facebook

Pavel Pešek

Exchange of Views Presented on Facebook: Discussions and Their Participants

ABSTRACT

Facebook discussion threads are often associated with a controversial exchange of views. This study deals with these threads. In the theoretical part the author aims to look at Facebook as a separate internet medium that requires active interaction from its users. He deals with Marshall McLuhan's and Erving Goffman's theories and aims to work with the evolution of the social network. In the practical part the author focuses on Facebook discussion threads themselves and on their participants. To cope with his research problem, he employs two qualitative methods, discourse analysis of Facebook's discussion threads and semi-structured interviews with debaters. He tries to distinguish whether there are any interaction patterns, discourse terminology used by debaters within discussion threads and he also aims to describe Facebook discussion threads from an overall perspective. In semi-structured interviews with Facebook debaters the main goal is to reveal the motivation to present their opinion online and reflection of the social platform itself.

KEY WORDS

Facebook. New media. Internet discussions. Debaters. Interaction. Social media. Communication.

1. Changing the way we communicate: Facebook as an extension

In his *Understanding Media* published in 1964, Marshall McLuhan defined medium as a message. He works with the idea that individuals have embraced their environment to work in their favor. Every medium consists of information that gives a deeper meaning to the things around us. In McLuhan's theory, the medium works as an extension of the individual.¹

In various concepts, the medium could be characterized as transferring information from one point to another² or simply as a communication tool.³ But it was Joshua Meyrowitz who noticed that electronic media not only provides easier access to information but also creates entirely new situations and types of human behaviour.⁴ Meyrowitz works with the theory of Erving Goffman which examines interactions between individuals through their theatrical performances. Goffman deals with a front region (that he describes as a main stage), an audience, and a back region which is hidden to the audience.⁵ Meyrowitz points out that the electronic media are wiping out these spaces and creating something he calls the "middle region". In the middle region the audience can watch the moves of the actor between the backstage and the stage. The actor is aware of that situation and adapts his behaviour to it.⁶ According to Meyrowitz, the perspective in Goffman's theory is related to a physical location, but the nature of interactions is not defined by the physical environment but by the information flow pattern instead.⁷

Since Facebook was first launched in 2004,⁸ connections between individuals have become more visible. The possibility of 'adding friends' to someone's profile led to competitiveness among some users.⁹ We could state that relationships between people gained a more materialistic value. Over the years Facebook has implemented several features and functions (Groups, Pages, News Feed, Timeline, Reactions etc.) that led to a transformation of the way we communicate online.

However, the biggest milestone was the invention of the News Feed in 2006.¹⁰ It was not just any new feature; it was the whole algorithm that made Facebook unique for all its users. Facebook started to prefer information that was relevant for specific users. As Kirkpatrick, the author of *The Facebook Effect: The Inside Story of the Company That Is Connecting the World*, points out, Facebook has shifted the way information is exchanged.

*"Up until now, when you desired to get information about yourself to someone, you had to initiate a process or "send" them something, as you do when you make a phone call, send a letter or an email, or even conduct a dialogue by instant message. But News Feed reversed this process. Instead of sending someone an alert about yourself, now you simply had to indicate something about yourself on Facebook and Facebook would push the information out to your friends who, according to Facebook's calculations of what was likely to interest them, might be interested in the activity you were recording."*¹¹

Not only has the creation of the News Feed produced a different way of sharing information, it has also opened new possibilities for personalised advertising and has given users a space for an entirely new kind of behaviour.

¹ MCLUHAN, M.: *Jak rozumět médiím: extenze člověka*. Praha : Mladá fronta, 2011, p. 35.

² JIRÁK, J., KÖPPLOVÁ, B.: *Masová média*. Praha : Portál, 2015, p. 23.

³ REIFOVÁ, I. et al.: *Slovník mediální komunikace*. Praha : Portál, 2004, p. 139.

⁴ MEYROWITZ, J.: *Všude a nikde: vliv elektronických médií na sociální chování*. Praha : Karolinum, 2006, p. 50.

⁵ GOFFMAN, E.: *Všichni hrajeme divadlo: sebeprezentace v každodenním životě*. Praha : Nakladatelství Studia Ypsilon, 1999, p. 108-132.

⁶ MEYROWITZ, J.: *Všude a nikde: vliv elektronických médií na sociální chování*. Praha : Karolinum, 2006, p. 50.

⁷ MEYROWITZ, J.: *Všude a nikde: vliv elektronických médií na sociální chování*. Praha : Karolinum, 2006, p. 42.

⁸ BRÜGGER, N.: A brief history of Facebook as a media text: The development of an empty structure. In *First Monday*, 2015, Vol. 20, No. 5. [online]. [2017-12-29]. Available at: <<http://dx.doi.org/10.5210/fm.v20i5.5423>>.

⁹ KIRKPATRICK, D.: *The Facebook Effect: The Inside Story of the Company that is Connecting the World*. New York : Simon & Schuster, 2010, p. 92.

¹⁰ KIRKPATRICK, D.: *The Facebook Effect: The Inside Story of the Company that is Connecting the World*. New York : Simon & Schuster, 2010, p. 180-181.

¹¹ KIRKPATRICK, D.: *The Facebook Effect: The Inside Story of the Company that is Connecting the World*. New York : Simon & Schuster, 2010, p. 193.

Even though Meyrowitz's theory focuses mainly on the television era, Marie Pospíšilová applies it to Facebook. Pospíšilová points out that the interaction regions on Facebook are not always stable and change according to individual users' approach.¹² According to her, the space on Facebook itself is differentiated, users that were participating in her research were communicating both in the front and the back regions and more importantly they considered the main page of Facebook as the "middle region".¹³ However, Pospíšilová points out that the behaviour of users within each region was not automatic but was created through different phases of social networking. Strong links between individuals were created especially in the back region (such as through integrated chat) where users communicated on a more personal level.¹⁴

Marie Pospíšilová also addressed the motivation of individuals to start using Facebook in the first place. According to her, the reasons were heterogenic, but it was especially the curiosity, the urge of their friends or simply the features and benefits that Facebook offered at the time.¹⁵ The experimental phase itself, according to Pospíšilová, was manifested by the fact that users were experimenting more with their own identity. They also experimented with playing games or writing statuses (short updates about their lives). Self-presentation was very crucial at this stage though its larger measure could lead either to user categorisation or subsequent removal from a friend list.¹⁶

Facebook discussions are often associated with a controversial exchange of views. When commenting on Facebook, users enter something that could be called "public space", meaning the audience are not just friends of these users but any person on Facebook that is interested in the same page, group or topic. It is also important to mention that even the commentary section is sorted by Facebook's algorithm. Jiří Homoláč focused on internet discussions more closely. He did a discourse analysis of the comments published online and distinguished several tendencies that were occurring in these comments. He noticed that discussions are available on the internet for a longer period of time, that the debaters do not know who is online at the time (whether the conversation is active or not), that the debaters use nicknames, that vulgarisms may appear, that the discussion is managed by an administrator, and that trolls appear in discussions.¹⁷

On Facebook, users are forced to use their real names,¹⁸ but there are also people who pretend to be someone else. Research conducted on the topic of fake identities in social media showed that users are very likely to add a person they don't know in real life to their friend list if the person is either a woman, or has some friends in common (even though they do not have to know them in real life either).¹⁹ Fake profiles could be used for several reasons. One of them is spreading fake news in the "public space" such as the comments section. Fake news is described as articles that are deliberately false and aim to fool their audience.²⁰

Once a Facebook profile is created, users are tempted to interact with each other. Such pressure is first and foremost manifested by sending friend requests to "People you may know". Facebook is not only a communication tool but goes much further by absorbing multiple functions of the internet itself. It is constantly developing and providing new ways of self-presentation (live, stories, AR, etc.). As Marie Pospíšilová found out, the reason why many people want to use the network is primarily the self-presentation mentioned above. This may lead to the assumption that the main priority is not the shared content but the features that Facebook is providing.

¹² POSPÍŠILOVÁ, M.: *Facebooková (ne)závislost: identita, interakce a uživatelská kariéra na Facebooku*. Praha : Univerzita Karlova, nakladatelství Karolinum, 2016, p. 58.

¹³ POSPÍŠILOVÁ, M.: *Facebooková (ne)závislost: identita, interakce a uživatelská kariéra na Facebooku*. Praha : Univerzita Karlova, nakladatelství Karolinum, 2016, p. 59.

¹⁴ POSPÍŠILOVÁ, M.: *Facebooková (ne)závislost: identita, interakce a uživatelská kariéra na Facebooku*. Praha : Univerzita Karlova, nakladatelství Karolinum, 2016, p. 61, 64.

¹⁵ POSPÍŠILOVÁ, M.: *Facebooková (ne)závislost: identita, interakce a uživatelská kariéra na Facebooku*. Praha : Univerzita Karlova, nakladatelství Karolinum, 2016, p. 81.

¹⁶ POSPÍŠILOVÁ, M.: *Facebooková (ne)závislost: identita, interakce a uživatelská kariéra na Facebooku*. Praha : Univerzita Karlova, nakladatelství Karolinum, 2016, p. 82-83.

¹⁷ HOMOLÁČ, J.: *Internetové diskuse o cikánech a Romech*. Praha : Univerzita Karlova v Praze, Nakladatelství Karolinum, 2009, p. 46-52.

¹⁸ *Terms of Service*. [online]. [2018-02-23]. Available at: <<https://www.facebook.com/legal/terms/update>>.

¹⁹ KROMBOLZ, K. et al.: Fake Identities in Social Media: A Case Study on the Sustainability of the Facebook Business Model. In *Journal of Service Science Research*, 2012, Vol. 4, No. 2, p. 185-199. [online]. [2018-03-16]. Available at: <<https://sba-research.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/krombolzetal2012.pdf>>.

²⁰ ALCOTT, H., GENTZKOW, M.: Social Media and Fake News in the 2016 Election. In *Journal of Economic Perspective*, 2017, Vol. 31, No. 2, p. 213. [online]. [2018-03-16]. Available at: <<https://web.stanford.edu/~gentzkow/research/fakenews.pdf>>.

In our research we focused on public discussion threads on Facebook and the users who participated in such discussions. We intended to look at their interactions and also aimed to explain the reasons why they enter the imaginary public podium shared amongst a broad audience. I consider Facebook to be one of the most popular social networks in the Czech Republic. Based on research conducted by CVVM in April 2018, 70% of respondents that were using internet had a profile on Facebook as well.²¹

2. Methodology

The research consists of two qualitative methods, the first being the discourse analysis of discussion threads shared on Facebook, and the second being semi-structured interviews with the debaters analyzed through grounded theory. The main priority of the research was to find out how users interact with each other on Facebook and to reveal who these users are and why they publicly share their opinions online to discuss topics with other Facebook users.

Research questions

To cope with the research problem, we examined two main research questions. They are linked to several sub-questions that were either based on the main research questions or emerged during the research.

How do the interactions in discussion threads on Facebook look?

How do Facebook users interact in debates with each other? Are there any similarities between interactions that create more general discourse patterns such as the use of terminology, shared assumptions, or ways of responding to other users? Is there a possibility that interactions can be quantified to sort debaters into groups based on their type of interaction? Is it possible that the discussion environment affects the quality of the discussions themselves?

Who are the debaters commenting in discussions on Facebook?

How do Facebook users reflect the Facebook environment? How do they reflect other debaters? What is the main motivation to express their opinion and what is the intention to respond to other users? What do the debaters feel when other users have a different opinion? And how do they react?

Sample

In order to make sure the debaters would exchange opposite views on particular topics, it was necessary to choose three *different* topics that were dividing society at the time. Based on the analysis of daily press that was conducted by Šafr and Špaček, the readers of different titles were also different.²² We supposed that online media readers, as well as online discussion participants, may also differ. To prevent the debate being influenced by the culture of expression of the chosen medium, we also decided to choose three *different* media providers:

Names of Facebook pages in alphabetical order:

ČT24 – A part of Czech Television which is a public service broadcaster in the Czech Republic. The article,²³ which is found on ČT24's Facebook page, is summarizing the last presidential debate that aired on Czech Television the day before the electoral vote. It was one of the first articles to address the presidential debate. In our opinion, the topic is an elevation of the political disunity of Czech society.

We joined the discussion on Facebook on January 26th, 2018. There were 83 Top Comments that contained sub-comments. Shared post had 204 reactions.

²¹ Sociologický ústav (Akademie věd ČR). Centrum pro výzkum veřejného mínění. [online]. [2018-08-13]. Available at: <<https://www.soc.cas.cz/en>>.

²² ŠAFR, J., ŠPAČEK, O.: Volný čas, sport a kulturní vkus: rozdíly podle společenského postavení. In MAŘÍKOVÁ, H., et al. (ed.): *Jaká je naše společnost? Otázky, které si často klademe....* Praha : Sociologické nakladatelství Slon, 2010, p. 94-96.

²³ ČT24: Prezidentští kandidáti o Andreji Babišovi a kauze Čapí hnízdo. Facebook. [online]. [2018-01-26]. Available at: <<https://www.facebook.com/CT24.cz/posts/10156244535679009>>.

iDnes.cz - A news server that belongs to MAFRA, a. s., media group. It is the online version of the daily newspaper Mladá Fronta DNES. Another shared article,²⁴ whose comments I chose to analyze was about a YouTuber who published a video with a dead body found in the “Japanese suicide forest”. The selected topic connects the social networks phenomenon while opening a discourse on the moral values of individuals, as well as the concept of suicide and how social network viewers discuss it.

We joined the discussion on Facebook on January 19th, 2018. There were 190 Top Comments that contained sub-comments. Shared post had 687 reactions.

Týdeník Respekt - The internet version of the weekly magazine that belongs to the publishing company Economia. The article²⁵ We chose deals with the #MeToo. A campaign that highlights sexual harassment of women and which started with the affair of American film producer Harvey Weinstein. The topic is questioning gender inequality, which has become a general problem in recent years, and opens a general discourse on what is considered to be rape.

We joined the discussion on Facebook on January 24th, 2018. There were 27 Top Comments that contained sub-comments. Shared post had 228 reactions.

The Facebook algorithm first displays the “Most relevant” comments but other options could be chosen manually. These other options are “New” and “All comments”. Therefore, in each of the three cases, the “All comments” option had to be chosen in order to get unfiltered content.

All comments are still accessible, meaning Facebook users can still comment, edit or delete them completely. For easier coding performed in the program Atlas.ti, We’ve been forced to save Facebook posts to PDF format. That is the reason why our analysis does not consider changes in content of the individual discussions that took place after the date when the data corpus was used for the analysis. From the ethical point of view, Facebook considers all comments to be public information. Moreover, the public information can be even associated with someone outside the Facebook.²⁶

The process of choosing a sample of respondents for semi-structured interviews was made more difficult by outdated comments posted on Facebook. The original intention was to directly address users that took part in the analyzed discussions. However, by the time the interviews were conducted, discussions were not up to date anymore. Another complication was the social network itself. Facebook sorts messages from “strangers” (i.e. from people who are not friends on Facebook) to a specific and less visible folder. We were therefore forced to re-evaluate the situation and address respondents through connections on our own Facebook profile, while the selection conditions remained the same. Most participants were chosen using a snowball sampling technique. In the spirit of the snowball sampling technique our first respondents suggested other individuals to participate in interviews. Users had to be active in commenting and they had to post comments in a certain way. In total we chose eight respondents. The chosen group consisted of four women and four men aged 25-39 years old. Half of them had tertiary education and the other half had secondary education. In one case, the participant had secondary education without a school-leaving examination. All participants agreed to take part in our research and remained anonymous. We are aware of the small sample, but every participant represented one group that emerged from the discourse analysis. Exchanging views on Facebook turned out to be something I could call a phenomenon - a large proportion of Facebook users are following the comments. Moreover, some of them use the commentary section to help them form their own opinions.

²⁴ iDNES.cz: *Více než 45 tisíc lidí podepsalo petici za úplné smazání účtu youtubera Logan Paula z Youtube.* Facebook. [online]. [2018-01-19]. Available at: <<https://www.facebook.com/iDNES.cz/posts/10155320869471314>>.

²⁵ Týdeník Respekt: *Respekt: Někteří lidé se obávají, že po kampani #MeToo se muži budou bát dvořit ženám....* Facebook. [online]. [2018-01-24]. Available at: <<https://www.facebook.com/tydenikrespekt/posts/10155896640936103>>.

²⁶ *What is public information?* [online]. [2018-02-23]. Available at: <<https://www.facebook.com/help/203805466323736>>.

3. Discourse analysis: Topics dividing society. Who are the debaters and are there any communication patterns?

As a part of the analysis of debates, We have discovered many general discourses and views on each of the topics that were dividing society at the time. However, within this study We only intend to take a deeper look at the resemblance and patterns that have begun to emerge in the discussions. Even though the topics might seem different, the debaters act in a similar way in many cases.

Desire for interaction

All users that participated in the discussions on Facebook showed the same intention to express their opinion or attitude to the presented topic in some way. However, in many cases one common feature emerged. In addition to expressing their opinion, users often targeted their posts to get feedback from other users. In other words, comments that were controversial in some way or contained a question trying to make others interested in expressing themselves occurred more frequently. Such “desire for interaction” raises the question whether users are either looking for interaction with other debaters, or whether they are in need of some support to help strengthen their opinion in order to confirm that they are right, or if the main goal is a desire to publicly be involved in an argument with someone they can possibly intimidate.

Controversies and questions in the main comments produced the most frequently commented-on threads. In general, the more controversial the post was, the more likely other users responded. But Facebook’s algorithm helped it as well. As mentioned above, Facebook selects the most relevant and interesting comments for its users. The comments showed at the top are the comments that received the greatest appreciation from others, whether passively or actively being discussed. Whether it is a reaction with a built-in feature (i.e. Like, Love, Haha, Wow, Sad, Angry) or a number of answers to the main comment. This can result in a false impression that comments on social networking are always “offensive”. But this is not entirely the case. Facebook shows the “most interesting” comments first and the rest stay hidden in the background. Another factor that played a crucial role in the “desire for interaction” was the option to tag someone. Debaters could tag either their friends to share an article or to engage with a specific person within the discussion (they didn’t have to be friends with that person). The users who were most commonly referred to were those who needed reactions to their comment from others. There was an intention to send them a warning and to let them know that another user is interested in their opinion. It especially appeared in the controversial comments mentioned above or in disagreements when there was an offensive encounter with someone else. It should be noted that when users joined the discussion, Facebook sent them an alert right away. This meant there was no need to tag a person to get them notified. “Desire for interaction” appeared within all discussions we analysed. The tagging itself was the most common manifestation of any interactions between users on Facebook.

Comments should be humorous

“Desire for interaction” is only one of the many tendencies that occurred in analysed threads. Then there were humorous comments. Users often aimed to write funny and witty comments in order to entertain other users and gain their positive feedback. In this case, their desire for recognition and appreciation exceeded their desire for interaction, which would have otherwise been indicated using the “tagging” feature. In some cases, the specific humour of the comments could serve as a tool to ridicule other users or to use as a weapon in more heated exchanges. In other cases, users shared humorous videos, memes, stickers (integrated images on Facebook, mostly referring to pop culture or random characters), or gifs. Even a reaction in such a way could cause the desire for interaction among other users.

The opinion creation and its presentation

Not every comment primarily served as entertainment. Some users were more likely to comment on a subject that corresponded with their own point of view and they were greatly concerned about how their comment would appear. In most cases, users expressed their own attitude to the topic or promoted and explained their point of views. Such comments were, in most cases, more extensive than others and they attempted to present the most important arguments or counterarguments that arose on the subject. Despite

its length, the overall impression suggested some kind of “request for empathy”. Users who wrote more detailed comments and cared about the seriousness of their opinions tended to care about validation from other users and their empathy or understanding.

Distrust of the media

Another common aspect that occurred was that the users across the analysed comments showed a certain degree of distrust of the media. Some have questioned the objectivity of the media. Others have shown a general distrust of the media, but have also shown doubt about individual articles, television broadcasters or misleading titles. Distrust and exaggerated media criticism may be related to the fact that some users are unable to accept a different opinion, do not want to believe in shared information or fail to correctly disclose fake news and are sceptical of some media providers.

Conflict with a person that has a different point of view

In the case of interaction between users, they either endorsed each other with similar opinions or disagreed with each other. Such activity can be divided into passive (liking posts, adding integrated responses, images, gifs, etc.) and active categories (when users reacted directly with their comments). We will focus on the active interaction. Disagreeing user behaviour can be interpreted as offensive or defensive. In a case of verbal attack, users were likely to argue with their opinions, use vulgarisms, insult other users or even exaggerate certain opinions. Disagreements also appeared in a defensive form when users attempted to defend their opinions. In many cases, defensive comments occurred in response to an attack when users were looking for arguments to defend their views.

Users trying to act superior

Interactions between users did not take place without manifestations of superiority. Mostly it was a part of offensive disagreements, but in many cases manifestations of superiority also appeared as defensive disagreements. This could have been caused by the fact that users were more likely to respond this way in case of arguing. The manifestations of superiority, unlike previous ways of communication, were split into several ways of interaction. One of the most common manifestations of superiority was the devaluation of another user’s opinion. In essence, users completely discarded any view different from theirs. Some users even consciously attacked hobbies of other users which they either found on their profiles or sourced from the discussion thread. Grammar became another expression of supremacy. In some cases, users corrected the grammatical mistakes of other users. They used proper grammar to manifest their superiority. Discussions also included an aspect of moral condemnation of other commentators. The topic dealt with the idea of “normality”, which worked as a sign of superiority over someone else. As a result, users judged others on the basis of their published opinions.

Who are the debaters

Based on the discourse analysis, We were able to sort users according to the way they interacted publicly on Facebook. Noticing similarities in their comments and reappearing trends, We managed to sort users into 8 categories. Even though these categories appear independently, they should be understood as mere roles individuals play and change according to the current course of an ongoing discussion.

- **Taggers**

The term Tagger refers to the user who intentionally tags friends or users outside of their friendship circle, in order to show them the post or to get feedback. Users that tag other people in their comments are more likely to desire interaction than users in other groups. Such desire can also be related to their self-presentation because if they tag someone from their Facebook friends list, this event will also be shown to other Facebook friends.

- **Comics**

Users who act as Comics try to write funny or witty comments. In most cases they presented their opinion in a way that allowed them to reach and engage with as many people as possible. Such posts will receive more passive feedback from other users. People who belong in this group of Comics

include users who contribute funny pictures to the discussion, or share memes, gifs, or funny videos. Their main goal is to entertain themselves and others.

- **Trolls**

Comics sometimes manifest as Trolls. They tend to write sarcastically, ridicule a topic of discussion, or even mock individual users. Trolls can also post their posts as satire or attack other users. However, they primarily enjoy themselves at the expense of others.

- **Critics**

Critics appeared in every discussion we analysed. Their main goal was to negate the topic or the debate itself. Based on the published content, the criticism lacked a humorous sense. It could be stated that the comments posted by Critics were rather serious. Criticism worked as a way of presenting a dissenting opinion. Critics may not only criticize the topic, but they can also assess the objectivity of the media.

- **Moralists**

Moralists tend to judge the topic, or even other users based on the concept of normality, and most of all, their perception of normality. Unlike Critics, Moralists do not want to negate the topic or opinions of others, but rather morally condemn them. Moralists mostly share their personal experiences and present alternative approaches to the behaviour of the individuals or to the presentation of a subject.

- **Experts**

Experts not only overestimate their knowledge of the commented-on issue, they also genuinely believe they know more than the participants of the discussion. They tend to show their alleged intellectual skills and are more likely than other groups to refuse different points of view.

- **Attackers**

Attackers verbally challenge other debaters in the discussion threads. They are more likely to attack other users when they have no arguments left or when a strong disagreement with the other person occurs. Attackers can even deride the hobbies of other users. For example, they use information obtained from the profile accounts of the other debaters to make their attacks more personal.

- **Fans**

Fans are primarily involved in the debate because the topic reflects their personal beliefs. They usually agree with the article and published opinions which they tend to defend and further discuss in the discussion threads. Fans can therefore act as “defenders” of the topic in case the topic is attacked by an attacker.

4. Grounded Theory: Reflection on the content shared on Facebook. Exchange of views presented on Facebook

Our first intention was to select participants for semi-structured interviews according to the groups that emerged from our analyses. This intention proved wrong since every participant was talking about situations where they held more than just one group characteristic. Groups, therefore, should be perceived as roles that debaters play in a particular moment. Just as in Goffman's concept, it was a form of self-presentation where the roles of individuals shaped their own personality. As a result, it depended on the type of discussion and the mood of users themselves. The debaters could play more than one role, even within the same discussion.

Reflection on the roles that appeared in the discussion threads

Based on semi-structured interviews, *Tagging* was mainly perceived as a means of attracting the attention of others, especially friends of participants. The function itself was mainly considered an effective way of transferring information on the social network. Users were aware that tagging was a form of involving others in the discussion, but it also served as a way to avoid interaction with other users. By tagging a user, it is easier to share the information with your friend or opponent without the risk of involving others. The tagged user is suddenly a part of the discussion (mostly unwillingly). Moreover, the post where the users are tagged is then displayed to all their friends. *Taggers* can also use the feature to support and express their own views or beliefs. However, it is primarily used to attract the attention of other users.

Humorous comments on Facebook can be easily misunderstood and spark another exchange of views, which may then have an impact outside the internet. This is mainly because the internet lacks the context of face-to-face communication. *The Trolls* ridicule others for their own amusement. But they have a lot to do with *Comics* as well because they share comments containing a humorous tone that are mainly aimed to reach a wider audience. “Trolling” can be a form of attack, criticism, ridicule or degradation of a different opinion. It can also be a form of defence of any personal attitude.

Critics and *Moralists* also have much in common. *Critics* tend to belittle different views and opinions of others and they often display their distrust of media. Their views are limited by their own narrow perspective. *Moralists* defend the notion of normality and tend to morally condemn others. The criticism of other users’ comments may be based on impulsiveness or the lack of constructiveness. Some users can condemn other debaters based on the way they present their points or simply because of specific communication ethics. The moral condemnation of users is closely related to the concept of normality, in other words what other users perceive as normal. If the perception differs, it is very easy to condemn others.

When users act as *Experts*, they respond in a distinctive way whereby they present themselves as superior in knowledge about the topic they are debating. They either pretend to know the topic very well or truly understand the issue. They usually comment on current topics and try to form an opinion that they continue to present afterwards. The main characteristic is the desire to comment and spread their views. It is usually the dissemination of information from a source that coincides with the opinion of the individual user.

The Attacker is a role that no one wanted to be identified with because of its negative perception. However, most of the respondents had experience with acting offensively within the discussion threads. In most cases, these attacks were somehow provoked by other Facebook users. Attacks were mainly manifested because of strong emotions within the thread. Conflict with a different view, and possible provocation from the other side, also led to aggressive attacks. John Suler has dealt with the phenomenon of online disinhibition. Individuals behave more openly on the Internet and tend to present themselves in a different way than they would do outside of the internet. Online attacks may not correspond to their real-life behaviour.²⁷ Based on our interviews with otherwise non-conflict users, We believe that the same thing could be assumed about Facebook attacks.

The Fans are mainly interested in the topic because it is close to their own beliefs. Once the topic was questioned, they tended to act as its “defenders”. Users who presented themselves as Fans followed the topics they were interested in and that were close to them. As soon as someone presented a different view on the topic, they were more likely to participate in commenting. The line between The Fans and The Attackers was thus very thin and The Fans could easily resort to attacking other views and opinions.

Perception of Facebook’s environment

All interviewed users have been actively using Facebook since 2009. Their main motivation for joining the network was either the initiative from users that were already using Facebook, or the number of benefits Facebook provided at the time. Users often talked about the declining trend in their Facebook activity. While the first years of use were rather active (i.e. posting statuses several times a day, using most of the features), they now reflected on their activity in rather passive engagement. Mark Zuckerberg also noticed the declining trend in users’ activity and promised to change the platform in his open letter shared in January 2018.²⁸ However, the declining trend in activity does not correlate to declining communication with friends and acquaintances on the integrated chat or Messenger app. Users mainly understood Facebook as a communication tool. Communication and social networking were considered the main reason why they spend most of their time online. Some users stated that they use Facebook constantly. Interaction and easier transfer of information is one of the reasons people are constantly returning to Facebook and why the social network is still a relevant and popular tool despite the decline in user activity. Some users

²⁷ SULER, J.: The Online Disinhibition Effect. In *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 2004, Vol. 7, No. 3, p. 321-326. [online]. [2018-03-20]. Available at: <<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/c70a/ae3be9d370ca1520db5edb2b326e3c2f91b0.pdf>>.

²⁸ ZUCKERBERG, M.: *One of our big focus areas for 2018 is making*. Facebook. [online]. [2018-01-12]. Available at: <<https://www.facebook.com/zuck/posts/10104413015393571>>.

have agreed that they spend most of their day on Facebook, despite knowing that it is time-consuming. Facebook was considered a part of their lives rather than an entertainment platform. Moreover, they did not talk about Facebook as a mere social network but as something that affects their lives. In McLuhan's terminology, they talked about Facebook as an extension of themselves. Users also reflected on the fact that Facebook not only serves as a tool of communication but also as a marketing tool to generate specific content or even profit. Despite knowing some of Facebook's deficiencies, such as time consumption, privacy, or the spread of false information, everyone evaluated Facebook rather positively. In one case there was a negative social assessment of the social network. However, that could have been caused by data leakage since the interview was realized shortly after the 2018 data leakage affair.²⁹

The content on Facebook consists of posts that users share. Moreover, the content is always unique and personalised for all users thanks to the News Feed algorithm. Users usually see posts that are relevant to them. It turned out that the content users said they saw on Facebook's main page also corresponded with their personal interests. Even though users were interested in different topics, some of them had one in common. It was politics. Interestingly, not all users were actively interested in politics, yet political posts on Facebook have come to them. As Facebook users gradually switched to passivity, a similar trend occurred in discussion threads. The active form of commenting was the formation and publishing of the comment itself. The passive form was mainly reflected in the evaluation of the comments based on the built-in reactions on Facebook. Some users were commenting in their groups of interest because the groups had a limited audience (though in some cases, they were open groups to which every Facebook user was able to join). Users have reached a certain paradox. Publishing opinion "publicly" in discussion threads was followed by greater fear than posting opinions in a group. But the group could also be public. We therefore think that users in a certain group feel that they are surrounded by people with similar opinions and find it easier to seek support. Users often reflected on Facebook discussions as a great opportunity to sort out information, find individuals who have similar opinions, and in some cases the discussions had a great impact in forming their own opinion.

Exchange of the views presented on Facebook

Discussions on Facebook caused different feelings in every user. Some reflected on them as a tool to form their opinions, whilst others saw them as a chance to present their attitude or as an instrument to persuade other users. There were also those who tried to avoid discussion threads because they did not understand the meaning, or because they reflected on them as a cause of negative emotions. However, it turned out that even these users, despite their reluctance to join the discussions, had been involved in some cases.

Weight of individual opinions

Everyone agreed that each user has the same right to express their opinion, whether they agree with it or not. However, they did not value every opinion fairly. Users tended to show confirmation bias. Opinions that somehow correlated with their own attitude were more important to them than opinions that were diametrically different.³⁰ On several occasions, users even talked about situations where a different opinion had no value to them. However, more general characteristics of individuals such as education or success influenced the weight of published comments as well.

Active and passive engagement in discussion threads

Users agreed that the main impulse to engage in the discussion, whether in active or passive form, were emotions that the discussion or topic raised. As soon as the discussion elevated attention, they started to seek comments that corresponded to their own beliefs and were more prone to "like" them. The "like" function therefore represented a consenting way of showing their attitude towards the subject. If they disagreed, they were likely to use other Facebook responses or actively participate in the commentary

²⁹ INGRAM, D., HENDERSON, P.: *Trump consultants harvested data from 50 million Facebook users: reports*. Released on 17th March 2018. [online]. [2018-03-20]. Available at: <<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-facebook-cambridge-analytica/trump-consultants-harvested-data-from-50-million-facebook-users-reports-idUSKCN1GT02Y>>.

³⁰ LORD, Ch. et al.: *Biased assimilation and attitude polarization: The effects of prior theories on subsequently considered evidence*. In *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 1979, Vol. 37, No. 11, p. 2098-2109. [online]. [2018-03-24]. Available at: <<https://www.unc.edu/%7Efbaum/teaching/articles/jpsp-1979-Lord-Ross-Lepper.pdf>>.

section. When users were forced to think about the Facebook reactions (i.e. Like, Love, Haha, Wow, Sad, Angry), they reflected their dual meaning. Some users used the “Love” and the “Haha” reaction in both positive and negative ways. The negative impact could then represent an attack or ridicule of another user.

Active engagement in discussion had various motives and reasons. Users wanted either to stand up, convince other debaters to change their opinions, share their own experience, criticize or to ridicule. In most cases it was impulsiveness that played a big part in publishing comments online.

Reflection on conflict with a person that has a different view

When users were exposed to a diametrically different opinion, they usually experienced negative emotions. Negative emotions were the main cause of engagement in the debate. Once users actively debated with a person that had a different view, they were primarily inclined to refute their opinion in some way. Participants stated that they were likely to argue with an opposing opinion once they were active in the discussion. In some cases, despite negative emotions, they tried to ignore the comments because they were aware that the exchange of views does not lead anywhere.

What the participants thought about the discussions and their actors?

When Facebook users were reflecting on what characterises a good and bad discussion, they agreed that good discussion should contain strong arguments, be factual, and be relevant. It should not be based entirely on emotions and impulsiveness. However, not only did users themselves admit that emotions are noticeable in most of the discussion threads, they also stated that emotions are the key factor for joining the discussion. The cause of such emotions could be explained by the fact that when individuals enter public debates, they are more likely to see diametrically different opinions than what they are used to on their own personalised main page. Bad discussions were reflected on as debates where individuals let themselves be carried away by emotions, attack each other, and do not use strong arguments. Participants were also asked to reflect on other debaters. They perceived them as more extrovert types with an inclination to impulsivity. Some respondents also felt that other debaters are not afraid to express their opinions and they assumed that they are more likely to have spare time and tend to have a weak social capital.

5. Conclusion

Users who participated in discussion threads on Facebook showed a “desire for interaction”. In most cases, the desire was caused by sharing controversial posts, questions, or by tagging other users. Their comments were either humorous or on the contrary, they tried to act seriously. In some cases, users showed distrust of the media. Interactions between users could be divided into active or passive behaviour. Active interactions were either affirmative when users were mutually supportive or dissenting, either offensive or defensive. In many cases, users acted superior or ridiculed other users’ interests. However, passive interactions between users may also be affirmative or dissenting but were mainly reflected in the form of liking posts, sharing memes or gifs. The behaviour of debaters within discussion threads showed similarities that led to the division of users into eight groups: *Taggers, Comics, Trolls, Critics, Moralists, Experts, Attackers, and Fans*. Based on semi-structured interviews, groups should be understood as roles that debaters play because participants were mentioning situations where they acted in different roles. They could play more than one role in each debate. They reflected on Facebook as a tool for communication, marketing, and easier access to information. Interviewed debaters reflected on the declining trend in Facebook activity. Similar findings emerged from research conducted by Marie Pospíšilová. She found out that shortly after the creation of a Facebook profile the user activity was most frequent. It was a phase of experiments with features and self-presentation.³¹ Facebook users that participated in discussion threads were either active (commenting) or passive (using built-in Facebook reactions). The weight of other users’ opinions varied according to how it corresponded with their own personal beliefs. The main motivation to join the discussion was caused by emotions. While different opinions elevated negative emotions and efforts to participate in discussions with

³¹ POSPÍŠILOVÁ, M.: *Facebooková (ne)závislost: identita, interakce a uživatelská kariéra na Facebooku*. Praha : Univerzita Karlova, nakladatelství Karolinum, 2016, p. 82-83.

the hope of changing the debater's point of view, emotion-based discussions were characterised negatively. On the other hand, users reflected that good discussions should be based primarily on good arguments, not just on emotions and impulsiveness. Despite some objections, Facebook and its discussions were mostly reflected on positively.

At the beginning of this study we opened the question whether Facebook is changing the way people communicate online. Surprisingly most of the interviewed users understood Facebook as an extension of themselves instead of mere communication tool. The features that Facebook is providing not only happened to be part of their everyday communication, but part of their lives outside the social network as well. Based on both analyses we conducted, we can state that Facebook is helping to transform communication to a higher emotional level. Emotions are not just the main motivation to present opinions online but also the driver for posting any content.

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Monika Hossová

Fake News and Disinformation: Phenomenons of Post-Factual Society

ABSTRACT

The theoretical study deals with fake news, disinformation and hoaxes. These phenomena are a major problem for contemporary society. We call it post-factual society. This expression is explained as falling confidence in objective facts and, on the contrary, increasing confidence in information with an emotional connotation, based on personal belief and conviction. The author in the study discusses the concepts of fake news, misinformation, hoaxes, their types, properties, and analyses several known fake news that appear primarily on the Internet. The author further analyses the current situation and interprets the results of the Media Literacy Index 2018, which deals with the resistance of the countries to the aforementioned negative phenomena. Last, but not least, the author focuses on the possibilities of prevention, education in this field and increasing media literacy. The study presents a theoretical view of the problem that has resonated in recent years in society and requires preventive measures and activities in the field of education and media literacy of the population of countries (not only) of the European Union.

KEY WORDS

Postfactual. Post-truth. Fake news. Hoax. Media literacy. Critical thinking. Media Literacy Index 2018.

1. Fake news, misinformation, hoaxes and post-factual times

According to The Collins English Dictionary the phrase of the year 2017 was fake news. It is information of a sensational nature that can provoke outrage, fear, hatred, or mobilize the audience to a certain activity. However, this information is untrue, fictitious or distorted. The most important issue is that it spreads at great speed and is often perceived as accurate information. False messages and disinformation often generate hoaxes that are fraudulent reports, alarm messages, fictional information, lies, unverifiable information, rumours or chain reports.¹ Although we can clearly define these concepts, it turns out that society often has a significant problem in tackling these negative phenomena.

This problem is mainly related to the state of current post-factual society (post-factual post-truth). The term post-factual refers to a period characterized by the fact that objective facts have less influence on the formation of public opinion than information based on personal conviction, belief, and emotions. The creators and distributors of misinformation, hoax and fake news consciously use emotional pressure on the recipient. In the news, we are talking about required criteria so that it can be included in the news and presented to the public. A. Kačincová Predmerská summarizes the theoretical approaches and defines the following news criteria: *novelty (up-to-date information)*, *proximity*, *continuity (event persistence and development)*, *personalization (identification of the recipient with the particular person shown in the report)*, *surprise (shocking information)*, *entertainment (presentation of curiosities, scandalous information, celebrity, sex)*, *relationship to elite nations (information on events in strong, elite countries - USA, Russia, China, Germany, etc.) important people such as the president, often celebrities*.² The more of these criteria are met, the greater the chance it will be presented to the audience through the media. Even in the case of fake news, misinformation and hoaxes, we can talk about some features or functions that make (mass) spreading and capturing this information in society. The most common pursuit of the originator is the induction of regret, compassion, anger, fear, or even hatred. The endeavour of a person who spreads such information is to cause the recipient to respond, to be dismayed or mobilized to spread it further in their vicinity, penetrating a larger number of recipients. As with hoax, misinformation and fake news, there are several forms of these messages depending on their function. Typical examples are: Chain messages asking for help and sharing requests; alerting global organizations about dangers (e.g. FBI, Microsoft, WHO, etc.); messages spreading leaked secret information or invented petitions.³ In addition, frauds and fake reports are increasingly appearing (fake contests and counterfeit products).

Currently the most common fake news are those that try to get money from the user. Companies or individuals who are behind such reports are often referred to as trusted businesses (business chains, state-owned companies, travel agencies, banks, etc.), most often organizing exclusive prize competitions or offering various discount coupons. In the case of bank entities, it is phishing - password hunting by e-mail or sms. The problem arises when the winner-user wants to claim his prize in the competition and this step is conditional, for example, sms notification, paying an administrative fee and sharing. In the last year, fake news has appeared in connection with well-known companies in Slovakia - Slovak Post, Lidl, Tesco, Tatralandia, Audi or BMW (Picture 1). The danger lies primarily in the fact that the user recognizes and trusts the companies. The maker of such a fraudulent report or competition violates the law, exploits the logos and corporate colours of companies, and unreasonably enriches himself.

¹ *Koncepcia mediálnej výchovy v Slovenskej republike v kontexte celoživotného vzdelávania*. Bratislava : Ministerstvo kultúry SR, 2009, p. 17.

² KAČINCOVÁ PREDMERSKÁ, A.: *Žurnalistické žánre: Spravodajstvo v periodickej tlači*. Trnava : UCM, 2017, p. 44.

³ ĎZUBÁK, J.: *Co je to hoax*. [online]. [2018-10-23]. Available at: <<http://hoax.cz/hoax/co-je-to-hoax>>.



PICTURE 1: Examples of fraudulent misrepresentation of trusted companies

Source: own processing, By: Hoax.sk. [online]. [2018-10-24]. Available at: <<https://hoax.sk/>>.

The main purpose of the above examples of fake news is the enrichment of the creator. Although it is an unfair process and a scam, this type of fake news is not “the worst”. There are also those who offer nutritional supplements or medication. For the credibility of invented products, fraudsters abuse the position and credibility of the medical profession, using photos of physicians from internet-based photos. Again, it is an unjust enrichment of the creator and an unlawful action. This group of fake news can also include conspiracy theories and “recommendations” appearing mainly in alternative media that promote alternative approaches to health care (e.g. spreading fuss about vaccination and autism, the treatment of cancer with disinfectants, etc.) (Picture 2). Web sites that provide this information often offer guides for the production of such household drugs and directly encourage recipients to life-threatening behaviour.⁴

People hazard. They want to treat cancer using disinfectant

Some cancer patients believe that chlorine dioxide which is also used to purify water in pools is more effective than chemotherapy. Both oncologists and medics are outraged.



PICTURE 2: An example of a fake report encouraging the use and production of “alternative drugs” - People gamble. They want to cure cancer with disinfectant.

Source: Ľudia hazardujú. Rakovinu si chcú liečiť dezinfekčným prostriedkom. [online]. [2018-10-24]. Available at: <<https://www.aktuality.sk/clanok/270385/ludia-hazarduju-rakovinu-si-chcu-liecit-dezinfekcnym-prostriedkom/>>.

As we mentioned above, fake news tries to provoke anger, hatred and fear. False reports, which could be partly true, but are usually distorted and out of the context, appear frequently. On the other hand, there are also completely fabricated reports in this category. An example of absolute deception is the report that

⁴ A list of conspiracy websites and sites with dubious and untrustworthy content is available at www.konspiratori.sk.

the Romani community in Slovakia is exempt from paying for medicines and receives them free of charge. This false message or hoax has been repeatedly spread through the Slovak Internet for several years. It is massively shared and raises a great deal of outrage for recipients who trust it. Sharing such messages is then associated with hateful user behaviour. Misinformation and false reports on migrants, on the other hand, cause fear. From the beginning, the migrant crisis has brought a lot of misinformation and fake news about attacks and disruptions of migrants, their financial advantages in Slovakia and abroad. This type of misinformation spreads extremely quickly and raises anger. In the case of false information about attacks, rapes or riots, they even spread fear. Creators of these fake news often use photographs as evidence. However, there are photos of different events, cities, countries or even continents. (Picture 3)



PICTURE 3: An example of a fake report of fear and hatred - A hoax of arriving migrants in Prague by train. People did not notice they shared a video from England

Source: ŠNÍDL, V.: Širil sa hoax, ako migranti vlakom dorazili do Prahy. Ľudia si nevšimli, že zdieľajú video z Anglicka. [online]. [2018-10-24]. Available at: <<https://dennikn.sk/1168189/siril-sa-hoax-ako-migranti-vlakom-dorazili-do-prahy-ludia-si-nevsimli-ze-zdielaju-video-z-anglicka/>>.

Based on the examples and general characteristics of the terms, we can say that current society is fighting fundamental issues such as fake news, misinformation and hoaxes (but also online political propaganda). These, undoubtedly negative, phenomena are often responsible for polarizing society, mistrusting public institutions, spreading hatred and criminality. It is therefore necessary to monitor the state of this issue in individual countries and to implement preventive and corrective measures to improve it.

2. The resistance of countries to fake news and misinformation

If we say that we live in the postfactual era, it means that individuals prefer such information (and trust more) that have an emotional connotation, are mediated by a close person, or are able to identify with their opinions and beliefs. But what is responsible for this state of society? We can talk about the informational overload of today's society as well as about the vast amount of information and data available to an individual, who is often not able to pick relevant information for his own needs and benefits. A great role is also played by the trust of individuals towards society and the media that surround them and thus constitute their primary sources of information. Other key factors may be the level of education in the country in which the individual lives, but also the level of media literacy of the individual, his / her education in the media area or the ability to critically perceive information and the media themselves.

The topic of European countries' resistance to fake news is addressed by the *Media Literacy Index 2018*, which is the result of the work of the *European Policies Initiative (EuPI)* of the *Open Society Institute in Sofia, Bulgaria*. The research report evaluates 35 European countries in terms of their ability to defend against postfacts and their negative impact. The report mainly deals with media literacy factors, which it considers to be key in measuring countries' resistance to post-factual phenomena. Among these weight-bearing factors are the freedom of the press, the results of PISA testing, the share of the population with tertiary education in the country, the confidence of society and the level of use of civic participation tools.

The following European countries were included in the research: *Albania, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Montenegro, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Holland, Croatia, Macedonia, Hungary, Malta, Germany, Poland, Portugal, Austria, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, United Kingdom, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Italy, Turkey*. Based on country-specific media literacy scores (Figure 4) and country-specific indicators of the country's resistance to fake news and post-events, the Nordic countries - Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden and Estonia - are the most resistant to this phenomenon. These countries are characterized by a higher ability to prevent false trafficking in society and a higher level of education. On the contrary, the worst are the South-East European countries, Albania, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, Bulgaria, but also Turkey. The reason for the poor results of these countries is insufficient level of education, controlled or non-free media. As a result, these countries are more vulnerable to false reports.⁵ Slovakia ranks in the second half, among the countries with lower resilience, along with Italy, Malta, Croatia, Cyprus, Hungary, Greece and Romania.⁶ Only the aforementioned Southeast European countries are behind this group in the ranking of the resistance of European countries.

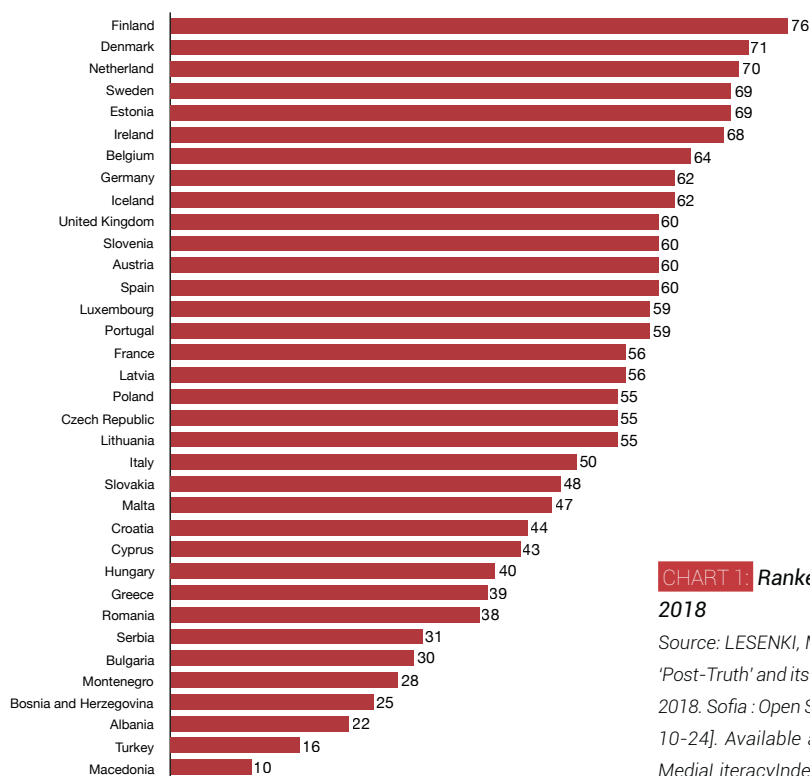


CHART 1: Ranked Countries by Media Literacy Index 2018

Source: LESENKI, M.: *Common Sense Wanted: Resilience to 'Post-Truth' and its Predictors in the New Media Literacy Index 2018*. Sofia : Open Society Institute Sofia, 2018. [online]. [2018-10-24]. Available at: <http://osi.bg/downloads/File/2018/MediaLiteracyIndex2018_publishENG.pdf>.

⁵ LESENKI, M.: *Common Sense Wanted: Resilience to 'Post-Truth' and its Predictors in the New Media Literacy Index 2018*. Sofia : Open Society Institute Sofia, 2018, p. 2. [online]. [2018-10-24]. Available at: <http://osi.bg/downloads/File/2018/MediaLiteracyIndex2018_publishENG.pdf>.

⁶ LESENKI, M.: *Common Sense Wanted: Resilience to 'Post-Truth' and its Predictors in the New Media Literacy Index 2018*. Sofia : Open Society Institute Sofia, 2018, p. 6. [online]. [2018-10-24]. Available at: <http://osi.bg/downloads/File/2018/MediaLiteracyIndex2018_publishENG.pdf>.

This research shows that countries with higher levels of education are more resistant to fake news penetration into their society. This is also confirmed by the *Study on Assessment Criteria for Media Literacy Levels*, which was attended by five major European educational institutions in 2009. The study defines the criteria by which we can measure and assess the level of media literacy in Europe. One of the criteria being evaluated is also a critical analysis of media content that is closely related to the individual's ability to withstand misinformation. This study includes a ranking of individual EU countries according to the level of media literacy. Similarly to the ranks of fake news, and in the context of media literacy, Nordic countries are known to have an innovative approach to education and a long tradition in media education: *Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands, the UK and Ireland*. The worst rankings in the overall rating have, for example, *Romania, Portugal, Bulgaria, Greece or Slovakia*.⁷

3. Fake news prevention

The basic prerequisite of prevention in the fight against fake news and misinformation is the developed competence of critical thinking. This ability makes individuals able to critically approach media and their content. V. Kačínová defines critical media assessment as “critically evaluating the media processed and portrayed reality based on given criteria; verifying media-disseminated information, detecting irregularities, manipulation techniques of media and advertising,...”⁸ The *European Project on Media Education*, conducted in cooperation with the European Commission, shows that the strengths of media education in Europe (mainly Belgium, Bulgaria, Italy, Lithuania, Poland and Romania) are in emphasizing the competence of critical thinking in relation to media and their content.⁹ The development of critical thinking and education focused on critical analysis of media and media content are also very important in the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Cyprus, Slovakia and Slovenia as part of their media education.¹⁰ European countries, even those with a lower level of education, therefore show a clear effort to implement critical thinking in their curricula. They are trying to educate their populations to become aware of media content, which should, of course, also improve the resilience of individual countries to fake news.

In addition to enhancing critical analysis competence, an important role is played by the recipients' instruments of protection against these negative phenomena. These are web portals that collect and publish fake news, hoaxes, misinformation, and conspiracy theories. In addition to specialized websites, Facebook, Google, an association of journalists, or journalists themselves are developing initiatives in this area as well.

Facebook as the most well-known social network 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, the company is aware that various hoaxes, misinformation and false messages are often found on the social network site. Over the past period, the company has spent a lot of money on controlling fake accounts (“trolls”), often serving as propaganda tools in certain countries, or as a means of spreading alarm messages, hoaxes, and misinformation. By May 2018, social network workers have already removed 583 million fake accounts.¹¹ In addition, Facebook offers the ability to mark published posts as fake messages. Inappropriate content reporting also includes the ability to mark a post as “It's a fake news story”. This marked post is authenticated and, if it is really fake news, it is marked with a text to alert you of this fact.¹² Such a measure raises the question of the credibility of users reporting such content. That is why Facebook has begun to evaluate the credibility of individual users. If a regular Facebook user identifies a post as fake, the verifiers will assess its veracity. If the message is really a false message,

⁷ *Study on Assessment Criteria for Media Literacy Levels. Final Report*. Brussels : EAVI, 2009. [online]. [2018-10-26]. Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/culture/library/studies/literacy-criteria-report_en.pdf>.

⁸ KAČINOVÁ, V.: Media Competence as a Cross-Curricular Competence. In *Communication Today*, 2018, Vol. 9, No. 1, p. 47.

⁹ PAROLA, A., RANIERI, M.: The Practice of Media Education: International Research on Six European Countries. In *Journal of Media Literacy Education*, 2011, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 98.

¹⁰ PETRANOVÁ, D., HOSSOVÁ, M., VELICKÝ, P.: Current Development Trends of Media Literacy in European Union Countries. In *Communication Today*, 2017, Vol. 8., No. 1, p. 63.

¹¹ *Facebook Publishes Enforcement Numbers for the First Time*. [online]. [2018-10-28]. Available at: <<https://newsroom.fb.com/news/2018/05/enforcement-numbers/>>.

¹² MOSSERI, A.: *Addressing Hoaxes and Fake News*. [online]. [2018-10-28]. Available at: <<https://newsroom.fb.com/news/2016/12/news-feed-fyi-addressing-hoaxes-and-fake-news/>>.

the user's credibility will be high. But if someone denotes a fake news post that is true, his credibility will drop. In this way, the company wants to fight internet trolls who can deliberately mark true information as fake in pursuit of their goals and spread their own ideology.¹³

An important initiative is also the portal *FactCheck.org*. The *International Fact-Checking Network* at *Poynter* has even declared International Fact-Checking Day on April 2, 2017. The *factcheckingday.com* website offers a series of articles focused on information issues, relevance and truthfulness. For example, tips are available for discovery of so-called urban legends or a website that shares false news. Exercises and lessons are available for teachers in English, Spanish, Polish, Italian, French or Ukrainian.¹⁴

The media themselves play a big role in the fight against fake news. In most cases, journalists themselves record a lot of fake news, trolls and hoaxes in discussions about published social networking reports. Good work in this area is carried out by the Slovak daily newspaper *Denník N*. Due to the increased interest and the visible spread of these negative phenomena, the editorial staff has begun to engage in education and has published several handbooks and publications dealing with media functioning, media manipulation, critical thinking, conspiracy, misinformation, hoax, fake news, and social networks. The first publication of the diary was the guide *Klamstvá a konšpirácie*¹⁵ (Lies and Conspiracies). The initiative continued with the publication of other publications: *Kritické myslenie*¹⁶ (Critical Thinking) *Ako fungujú médiá*¹⁷ (How Media Work) a *Pravda a lož na Facebooku* (The truth and a lie on Facebook). All of these publications are intended for secondary schools and are useful in teaching topics related to this issue or the subject of media education itself.

A similar example is the editorial board of the Slovak daily newspaper *SME*, which created a subcategory of their own web site – *Lovíme hoaxy* (Hunting down hoaxes portal).¹⁸ Journal editorial of *SME* discovers hoaxes and increases awareness of internet users and their readers in this area. In 2017, 37 French media in collaboration with Google launched a similar initiative, creating a *CrossCheck* project, primarily aimed at detecting misinformation, disinformation and verifying information related to the presidential election in the country.¹⁹

4. Conclusion

As we have already mentioned in the introductory section of the study, spreading false messages is faster if these messages are emotional, surprising, or outrageous. According to R. Meyer, this report is spread up to six times faster and affects a larger number of recipients. Attention is particularly attracted by its novelty, its distinctiveness and its negative character.²⁰ Research *Media Literacy Index 2018* analysis also points out that although fake news and misinformation are found mostly on the internet and in particular on social networks, citizens are aware that this medium cannot be considered the most trusted. So-called traditional media are more trusted than social networks: “radio (70 %), television (66 %) and printed newspapers and news magazines (63 %) have more trust than social networks and messaging apps (36 %).”²¹

¹³ HOSSOVÁ, M.: *Facebook bojuje proti fake news, používateľom pridáva skóre dôveryhodnosti*. [online]. [2018-10-28]. Available at: <<https://medialnavychova.sk/facebook-bojuje-proti-fake-news-pouzivatelom-prideluje-skore-doveryhodnosti/>>.

¹⁴ HOSSOVÁ, M.: *Medzinárodný deň overovania faktov 2017: Nenechajte sa oklamať, na faktoch záleží!* [online]. [2018-10-30]. Available at: <<https://medialnavychova.sk/nenechajte-sa-oklamať-na-faktoch-zalezi/>>.

¹⁵ See: *Klamstvá a konšpirácie: Príručka pre stredné školy*. [online]. [2018-10-30]. Available at: <<https://a-static.projektn.sk/2017/04/dennikN-prirucka-konspiracie.pdf>>.

¹⁶ See: *Príručka pre stredné školy: Kritické myslenie*. In *N magazín*, 2017, Vol. 2, No. 1, 32 p. ISSN 2453-9597. [online]. [2018-10-30]. Available at: <<https://a-static.projektn.sk/2017/11/casopis-kriticke-myslenie-low.pdf>>.

¹⁷ See: *Ako fungujú médiá*. In *N magazín*, 2018, Vol. 3., No. 4, 84 p. ISSN 2453-9597. [online]. [2018-10-30]. Available at: <<https://a-static.projektn.sk/2018/04/n-magazin-media.pdf>>.

¹⁸ *Lovíme hoaxy*. [online]. [2018-10-30]. Available at: <<https://hoax.sme.sk/?ref=tlogo-sek>>.

¹⁹ *French newsrooms unite to fight election misinformation with the launch of CrossCheck*. [online]. [2018-10-30]. Available at: <https://firstdraftnews.org/crosscheck-launches/?utm_content=buffer7dcd6&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer>.

²⁰ MEYER, R.: *The Grim Conclusions of the Largest-Ever Study of Fake News*. [online]. [2018-10-24]. Available at: <<https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2018/03/largest-study-ever-fake-news-mit-twitter/555104/>>.

²¹ LESENKI, M.: *Common Sense Wanted: Resilience to 'Post-Truth' and its Predictors in the New Media Literacy Index 2018*. Sofia : Open Society Institute Sofia, 2018, p. 9. [online]. [2018-10-24]. Available at: <http://osi.bg/downloads/File/2018/MediaLiteracyIndex2018_publishENG.pdf>.

These findings suggest that the activities of different projects and initiatives realized in this area form awareness of the risks associated with the internet media and the post-factuality of the current society. It is also important to constantly develop the competence of critical thinking in the context of lifelong learning. According to the study *Why Education Predicts Decreased Belief in Conspiracy Theories*, a higher level of education means higher resilience to the reported negative phenomenon. In general, we can say that educated people have more analytical skills and have a lower tendency to believe in conspiracy theories and related fake news.²²

The key to success is therefore to increase the level of education and education itself. It is also necessary to build and increase the digital literacy of individuals, which is related to searching, processing, sorting and sharing information through new media and ICT. In addition to more specific digital literacy, it is necessary to increase media literacy itself and to improve the social status of media literacy as a set of technical, knowledge, civic and creative capabilities that allow access to and critical perception of the media.

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²² VAN PROOIJEN, J. W.: Why Education Predicts Decreased Belief in Conspiracy Theories. In *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 2017, Vol. 31, No. 1. p. 57. [online]. [2018-10-30]. Available at: < <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/acp.3301> >.

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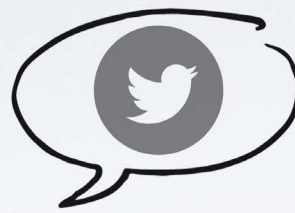


photo: MikeRenpening

Stephen Ogheneruro Okpadah

The Influence of Facebook and Twitter on the Academic Performance of Postgraduate Students of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

This study examines the effect of social networking sites on students. It investigates the influence of Facebook and Twitter on the academic performance of postgraduate students of University of Ibadan. The study employs survey and literary investigative approaches. Chapters in books, scholarly articles in reputable journals, internet sources, and others serve as our critical sources of references and illustrations. Furthermore, this study is foregrounded on Technological Determinism Theory which recognises the positive effect of technology and its wide usage by people with diverse cultures. The theory simply explains how technology does not adulterate cultures but help in reshaping, polishing and fine-tuning them. The study reveals among other findings that postgraduate students of the University of Ibadan spend much time on Facebook and Twitter, and that this has positively affected their academic performance. The study concludes that students and youths should channel the use of Facebook, Twitter among other social networking sites into improving their academic performance, by creating study groups on these media platforms.

KEY WORDS

Media literacy. Social Networking Sites. Facebook. Twitter. Postgraduate Students.

1. Introduction

Postmodernism and globalisation lends credence to the growth and development of social networking. Globalisation is a relatively recent term used to describe the changes in societies and the world economy and results from dramatically increased international trade and cultural exchange.¹ When Marshal McLuhan expatiated on the maxim, the world is a Global Village, what he meant was the convergence in thoughts, messages, popular culture and so on, with the introduction of electronic mass media, the print media, and most recently, social networking sites. Social networking has confirmed McLuhan's prophecy of the world becoming a Global village. Media technologies such as television have been able to bring, connect and interconnect countries and continents into a single unit. This implies that ideologies are being shared by various countries with the media of communication, cultures are being sold and assimilated and traditions and mores are being eroded, discarded and accepted. This is a fusion and an interfusion of cultures.

Communication media have a means of socialisation. People of different races, backgrounds, educational qualifications, gender, ideologies, identity and so on, come together to share and crossbreed ideas and ideologies. In recent times, there has been a convergence of these media of communication. Television, film, radio, the print media-magazines, books and newspapers come together in the same platform to express their different functions of entertainment, information, stimulation and education. The Internet "*has been able to facilitate an intersection between the hot and cool media.*"² Paradigmatically, *Vanguard* and *Punch* Nigerian newspapers, one can easily be assessed (i.e. the news itself), on their website. These online news platforms also incorporate videos and audio to accompany the texts.

Media technologies and convergence have led to an influx in social networking sites. Social networking sites such as *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Youtube*, *Instagram*, *Badoo*, *2go*, *Eskimi*, *LinkedIn* *Snapchat* and so on, have been able to bridge the gap, nay fill the lacuna created by the traditional and broadcast media (television, radio, newspapers etc). Social Networking sites have also facilitated an increase in political participation. They have made almost every human being politically active as Oladitan and Anyanwu aver that.

The digital world has broken down every existing wall between political gladiators and society, creating an avenue for freedom of expression for the citizenry. The emergence of social media has made it easy for people to unanimously express subjective opinions and comments against political gladiators in society without any fear of arrest.

The increase in the number of Social Networking sites and the accessibility of these sites by the old and young, is as a result of the emergence of the internet as a fast communication channel. The villagisation (permit us to use this term-by villagisation, we mean making Social Networking sites and platforms popular among rural dwellers) of Social Networking sites has facilitated an increase in the intercourse of ideas, thoughts and opinions. Without doubt, in Nigeria, Social Networking sites such as *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Eskimi*, *LinkedIn*, *Badoo*, *Instagram*, *2go*, *Snapchat* and others are mostly utilised by youths-especially students. By and large, the proliferation of these social networking sites has led to the dependence of students on them for information, education, communication, entertainment and most importantly, socialisation. The above mentioned Social Networking sites have positive and/or negative effects on their audience-especially students as various media effect theories have appropriated. In fact, Social Networking sites have created a different *modus operandi* in the teaching and learning process in Secondary, Post-secondary and Tertiary institutions in Nigeria. It is against this backdrop that this study examines the influence of Social Networking sites on the Academic performance of Postgraduate students of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, with a focus on Facebook and Twitter.

¹ ODUMU, A., OHIARE, A.: Discourse construction in blogs on South African xenophobic violence. In ODEBUNMI, A. et al. (eds): *Grammar, Applied Linguistics and Society: A festschrift for Wale Osisanwo*. New York : Obafemi Awolowo University Press, 2016, p. 21.

² VIVIAN, J.: *The media of mass communication*. Boston : Pearson Publishers, 1991, p. 234.

2. Historical Discourse on Facebook and Twitter

Facebook, is undoubtedly the most popular and most utilised of all social networking sites. It is one of the few Social Networking sites that are automatically configured on Smart and Android phone devices. It is an audio-visual social networking site. Participants on Facebook share ideas and communicate with pictures, texts, videos and audio. Communities are created on Facebook. These communities are groups that share information, ideas and communicate among themselves about issues that are prevalent in the society. One can only see the information shared or participate in the idea sharing process when one is a member of this group or community. Facebook also allows participant to create a profile, search and receive friend requests. Participants can upload profile pictures, tag pictures and comment on pictures of friends. It also gives participants the opportunity to upload and share information, either public or private.³

Facebook as a software package is a default application in most mobile phone, ipads, and other mobile gadgets. With the high utility of telephone handsets, it is gain saying that users of Facebook in Nigeria, have exceeded the 20 million mark. It was created in February 2004 by a Harvard University undergraduate named Mark Zuckerberg. He co-founded Facebook with his college roommates and fellow computer science students, Eduardo Saverin, Dustin Moskovitz and Chris Hughes. The site was initially created for Harvard Students only. However, between early 2005 and 2006, Facebook expanded firstly to high school networks and eventually to every internet user in general.⁴ The role Facebook plays in the daily lives of Nigerians cannot be overemphasised. It constructs the thought pattern of its users and information is being circulated among friends and communities. Facebook circulates culture. As a medium of communication, it also aids countercultures. By counterculture, we mean actions, situations, attitudes and cultures that are oppositional to traditional and existing culture. For instance, in some traditional African societies, twin birth was seen as an abomination. Hence, twins were killed in these societies. Nevertheless, with the encroachment of Africa by the British, French, German, Dutch and Portuguese Colonial masters, countercultures or counter-traditions were introduced to stop this barbaric practice. Facebook also plays this role as it is used to enlighten the populace on issues that do not align with the norms of the society. This is exemplified in the political tussle in Egypt. Papacharissi and Oliveira aver that the Egyptian protests that led to the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak were organised through a complex network that combined heavy Twitter and Facebook use with other forms of interpersonal communication.⁵

President Hosni Mubarak clearly knew the power of the media, hence, he subjected it to the control of his government. This was to facilitate seclusion from the outside world. Thus, other countries would not be aware of the political imbroglio being caused by his government. He even relegated local and international journalists to the background. However, the democratic media (social media most notably Facebook and Twitter) filled in the gap left by the mainstream or traditional media of mass communication. The success of Facebook in this foray, is not far-fetched from the fact that it is one of the most liberal, if not the cheapest of all Social Networking sites. With a registered email or a telephone number, one can easily join the Facebook community.

On the other hand, Twitter is also one of the most utilised social networking platforms in Nigeria. But unlike Facebook and *Whatsapp*, it is a micro blogging site. The implication of the above statement is that Facebook and Whatsapp has the capacity to send and receive very lengthy characters. In fact, they are macro chat sites. However, on Twitter, the reverse is the case. D'Monte in Salau makes us understand that Twitter is an online social networking and micro blogging service that enables its users to send and read text-based messages of up to 140 characters, known as tweets.⁶ She states further that Twitter was

³ ASEMAH, E., EDEGOH, L.: An appraisal of the social media and insecurity in Nigeria. In WILSON, D. (ed.): *Communication and the New Media in Nigeria: Social Engagements, Political Development and Public Discourse*. Lagos : African Council for Communication Education, 2013, p. 240.

⁴ OZURU, E., EKEANYANWU, N.: Audience assessment of the influence of social media networks on the global news flow controversy. In WILSON, D. (ed.): *Communication and the New Media in Nigeria: Social Engagements, Political Development and Public Discourse*. Lagos : African Council for Communication Education, 2013, p. 105.

⁵ PAPACHARISSI, Z., OLIVEIRA, M.: Affective news and networked publics: A rhythms of news storytelling on Egypt. In *Journal of Communication*, 2012, Vol. 62, No. 2, p. 266.

⁶ SALAU, A.: *Twitter* as sews source to select audiences in Ilorin, Nigeria. In WILSON, D. (ed.): *Communication and the New Media in Nigeria: Social Engagements, Political Development and Public Discourse*. Lagos : African Council for Communication Education, 2013, p. 190.

created in March 2006 by Jack Dorsey and launched that July. The space of Facebook and some other networking sites are wider than that of Twitter. The founder of this blog never intended it to be used for news dissemination. He made it a service for friends, family and co-workers to communicate and stay connected through the exchange of quick, frequent messages in 140 characters or fewer that are posted on one's profile or on one's blog and sent to one's followers.

From the formative stage of Twitter till date, it has grown to become a global social networking site. Access to smart phones and browsing devices, and so on even in Third World nations of the world is a major factor that has facilitated the increase in users of Twitter. As at 2012, the users of this networking site number approximately 500 million and this has increased considerably. The popularity of Twitter in the social networking enterprise further comes to bear in Salau's articulation that new media are rapidly outflanking traditional ones because of their immediacy and proximity.⁷ Messages sent via Twitter are received within seconds and are easily understood in the confines of our privacy. With this, the dissemination of information becomes rapid and response becomes immediate. Traditional mass communication media like radio and television take a longer time to relay information. In Nigeria for instance, a television viewer would have to wait till 9:00pm before he watches the network news on Nigerian Television Authority. But the reverse is the case with social media and networking sites. News and information are relayed as they happen instantly.

Twitter further increases the audience of traditional communication media such as television and radio. Programmes in these media (television and radio) have generated more followership with the incorporation of Twitter messages or Twitter facilitated communication. For instance, during football and other sports related programmes, television and radio broadcasters usually request sports viewers to send in comments with the medium of twitter. It is in the light of the above that Olise and Makka submit that the features of the internet have made it very advantageous in many ways.⁸ One of these numerous advantages is the feature of 'News Groups.' News groups or Chat groups are communities in social media that enable individuals who belong to these groups to communicate and discuss specific issues of their interest and choices. These groups could be categorised into *Love Zones, Relationship Groups, Educational Groups, Religious Groups*, and so on. Although the social media group tradition is particular to almost all social media blogs such as Facebook, Whatsapp, 2go and so on, it is a dominant feature of Twitter. This has greatly enhanced the flow of ideas and knowledge around the globe. Twitter has also created spaces for communication among students and staff in academia. Its use has been extended and embraced by many Nigerian institutions. This is because there is a general belief that the internet would lead institutions to the promise land.⁹

3. Theoretical Framework

We anchor this research upon Technological Determinism Theory. This theory gives users of new technology a rational and discerning face. It is an approach that identifies technological advancements as central to the process of social change which narrowly aligns with McLuhan's views that the dominant technological advancements of the era help to refocus society.¹⁰ Technological Determinism Theory recognises the positive effect of technology and its wide usage by people with diverse cultures. The theory simply explains how technology does not adulterate cultures but helps in reshaping, polishing and fine-tuning them.¹¹ Technological

⁷ SALAU, A.: Twitter as sews source to select audiences in Ilorin, Nigeria. In WILSON, D. (ed.): *Communication and the New Media in Nigeria: Social Engagements, Political Development and Public Discourse*. Lagos : African Council for Communication Education, 2013, p. 191.

⁸ OLISE, F., MAKKA, W.: Communication for development and modern ICTs: Nigeria at a crossroads In MOJAYE, E. et al. (eds.): *Health Communication, Gender Violence and ICTs in Nigeria*. Ibadan : Ibadan University Press, 2003, p. 73.

⁹ OLISE, F., MAKKA, W.: Communication for development and modern ICTs: Nigeria at a crossroads. In MOJAYE, E. et al. (eds.): *Health Communication, Gender Violence and ICTs in Nigeria*. Ibadan : Ibadan University Press, 2003, p. 71.

¹⁰ PRESLY, J.: *Online communities: Designing Usability, Supporting Sociability*. Chichester : John Wiley and Sons, 2000, p. 266.

¹¹ OZURU, E., EKEANYANWU, N.: Audience assessment of the influence of social media networks on the global news flow controversy. In WILSON, D. (ed.): *Communication and the New Media in Nigeria: Social Engagements, Political Development and Public Discourse*. Lagos : African Council for Communication Education, 2013, p. 113.

Determinism Theory holds that changes in communication modes largely determine the course of history.¹² The utility of Social Networking Sites now determines how people behave, do things and even influences their habits. Social Networking sites create new environments. They determine the pace of societal development and enhancement. Social media networks are parts of technological advancement. Although social media networks have their advantages and demerits, this research examines the influence of Facebook and Twitter on postgraduate students of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

4. Methodology and Research Design

This study adopts the survey method. The use of the survey methodology stems from the fact that there is no existing documented evidence or literature that defines the basis of our analysis. This research uses survey as it is the most appropriate method, to reveal and evaluate the implication and influence of Social Networking sites on the academic performance of Postgraduate Students of University of Ibadan. This study further uses survey method to evaluate primary data. The primary data that are evaluated are the questionnaires that are applied. Secondary sources used for the study are information obtained from chapters in books, articles in reputable local and international journals, internet sources and archival materials.

The Questionnaire Instrument of Data Collection

The questionnaire instrument is utilized for various reasons. First and foremost, it is the fastest way of getting the opinions of diverse people about a concept in the shortest time frame. In addition, because respondents could be very busy or shy in the presence of an interviewer, responses from a questionnaire are valid. The questionnaire is structured in two parts. The first section contains questions which are designed to elicit the demographic details of the respondents. The second part contains questions designed to answer basic research questions. The questions are open and close-ended types.

Population of the Study

The population for the study is Nigerian Universities. Although this study is conducted in the University of Ibadan, it is only a microcosm of the larger Nigerian universities. The large size of this population prompted the need for a sample.

Study Sample and Size

Nigerian universities are made up of both public and private universities. The sample for the study is University of Ibadan postgraduate students. It is a conglomeration of postgraduate students that cuts across many faculties and departments. There are thirteen faculties all together in the University of Ibadan. They are, faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Social sciences, Faculty of Law, Faculty of management sciences, Faculty of Arts, Faculty of life sciences, Faculty of Agriculture, Faculty of Pharmacy, Faculty of Education, School of Basic Medical Sciences, School of Medicine and School of Dentistry. Under the aforementioned faculties, are 85 departments. All these departments have their Postgraduate programmes. The majority of postgraduate students are active users of social networking sites.

Sampling Technique and Research Instrument

This study adopts the Proportional Sampling Technique. The research is proportionate since 10 % of Postgraduate students in every departments, irrespective of the population, are sampled. The research instrument for this study is questionnaire. This instrument is used to gather data on the effect of Social Networking Sites on Postgraduate students of University of Ibadan.

¹² ASEMAH, E., EDEGOH, L.: An appraisal of the social media and insecurity in Nigeria. In WILSON, D. (ed.): *Communication and the New Media in Nigeria: Social Engagements, Political Development and Public Discourse*. Lagos : African Council for Communication Education, 2013, p. 237.

Validity and Reliability of the study

The questionnaire instrument is reliable. To strengthen the reliability of the questionnaires, a pilot survey was conducted. Thirty copies of the questionnaire were initially served on a mini community (friends) in Zaria. The positive response obtained from the questionnaire instrument, confirmed its reliability before the questionnaires were administered on the sampled population. The reliability of the questionnaire instrument, coupled with the large response of respondents, shows that the findings are valid.

Method of Data Collection

The method employed for the analysis of data gathered from the questionnaire is the simple percentage method in which the degree of response was computed by dividing the number of respondents by the total number of samples and multiplying it by a hundred as represented below:

$$\text{Degree of response} = \frac{\text{Total number of respondents}}{\text{Total number of sample}} \times 100$$

This paper reveals the research methodology employed for the study.

Presentation and Analysis of Demographic Data of Respondents

Demographic data

A total of 500 questionnaires were administered. However, 400 were retrieved. The balance not retrieved was due to unreturned mails and respondents who promised but didn't show up again. Therefore, this analysis is based on the 400 retrieved questionnaires. Under the Demographic variables, as in Question 1., 120 males completed the questionnaire and the other 280 were females. The table below shows this graphically and the percentage. This would appear that there were more females sampled then males as the table suggests. However, we know that the total number of postgraduate students in the University of Ibadan is not as heavily skewed as the table shows. Therefore it could just be accidental that more females responded. Even then, there are more females than males on the postgraduate programme but certainly, they do not outweigh the males by 100 %.

Gender Distribution of Respondents		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Male	120	30%
Female	280	70%
Total	400	100%

SCHEME 1: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Source: Field Survey, 2018

With regards to the marital status of the respondents, we have the data obtained as follows:

Marital Status of Respondents		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Single	280	70%
Married	100	25%
Divorce	20	5%
Others	0	0%
Total	400	100%

SCHEME 2: Marital Status of Respondents

Source: Field Survey, 2018

This data table shows that there is high preponderance of unmarried people in the postgraduate programme while married people are also present in the programme alongside those who are divorced. The interesting thing about this data is that many young people have found their way into the postgraduate programme. This is perhaps explained by the fact that there are no jobs in the country at the moment and many people are therefore registered for the programme to improve their chances of employability.

Age Distribution of Respondents		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Single	200	50%
Married	140	35%
Divorce	40	10%
Others	20	5%
Total	400	100%

SCHEME 3: Age Distribution of Respondents

Source: Field Survey, 2018

The data in the above table shows that 200 of the respondents constituting 50% of the total sample are within the age bracket of 20-25 years. The table further reveals that 140 (35 %) of the respondents fall within the age of 26-30. Furthermore, 40 (10 %) of the respondents fall between the age of 31-40, and 20 respondents constituting 5 % were 41 years and above. The implication of this data in table 3 is that there is a higher percent of younger people than aged among amongst the sample. This is understandable because postgraduate programmes in Nigeria have been taken over by young people as a result of non-employability. Consequently, this sample size represents the active users of social media especially in relation to academic usage and performance.

Educational Qualification of Respondents		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
PGD	76	19%
Masters	324	81%
Total	400	100%

SCHEME 4: Educational Qualification of Respondents

Source: Field Survey, 2018

The data in table 4 above shows that 76 respondents making up 19 % of the total respondents are PhD students while the remaining 324 respondents (81 %) are Masters students. There is a higher number of masters and PhD students than postgraduate diploma students. The implication is that the higher degree people are likely to be more aggressive in the usage of social networking sites to advance their academic potentials.

Psychographic Data

Whether respondents are postgraduate students of the University of Ibadan?		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	400	100%
No	0	0%
Total	400	100%

SCHEME 5: Whether respondents are postgraduate students of the University of Ibadan?

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 6 reveals that the 400 respondents to the questionnaires distributed which constitute 100 % are all postgraduate students of the University of Ibadan. The table revealed that all the students sampled are postgraduate and therefore, there is no infiltration into the sample size. The consequence of this is that every possible avenue for a purposive sample are realised.

How long have respondents been postgraduate students in the University of Ibadan?		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1 year	236	59%
2 year	120	30%
3 year	44	11%
4 year and above	0	0%
Total	400	100%

SCHEME 6: How long have respondents been postgraduate students in the University of Ibadan?

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 7 investigates the number of years respondents have spent on their postgraduate programme. While 236 students or 59 % have spent one year, 120 students which constitutes 30 % have spent two years. Furthermore, 44 (11 %) respondents have been on the postgraduate programme for three years and none of them have been on it for four years and above. Of the total sample, more freshmen are in the highest category of those registered in the programme. It would appear therefore that students who are registered for postgraduate studies in the University of Ibadan make rapid progress with their work. It could well be that their use of social media sites help them to acquire enough information and easily too-thus helping them to make quick progress.

Whether respondents use social networking sites		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	400	100%
No	0	0%
Sometimes	0	0%
Never	0	0%
Total	400	100%

SCHEME 7: *Whether respondents use social networking sites*

Source: Field Survey, 2018

The question seeks to find out whether the respondents use Social Networking sites. From the table above, all the respondents are agreed that they use Social Networking sites. The implication of this value is that the respondents are sensitive to Social media usage and depend on it for information, and especially that related to their studies.

Benefits derived from using social networking sites		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Full information on Subjects	84	21%
Entertainment	80	20%
To while away time	66	16,5%
For research and education	170	42,5%
Total	400	100%

SCHEME 8: *Benefits derived from using social networking sites*

Source: Field Survey, 2018

This question attempts to find out if there are benefits derived from using social networking sites. 84 respondents which is 21 % are agreed that they use it for seeking and obtaining information on subjects, especially in their areas of discipline. 20 % of the total figure value use social networking sites for entertainment, while 16,5 % use it for leisure. 42,5 % however, use it solely for research and education. The preponderant view therefore is that social networking sites is informative and helps scholarship. If we add the first 21 % to the 42,5 %, it will become obvious that the dominant use of social networking sites is for information and learning. No wonder then that postgraduate students use it frequently.

How often respondents visit social networking sites		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Often	208	52%
Not often	124	31%
Sometimes	68	17%
Not at all	0	0%
Total	400	100%

SCHEME 9: *How often respondents visit social networking sites*

Source: Field Survey, 2018

This part of the study deals with the frequency of use of these social networking sites. 52 % agreed that they use the sites often, while 31 % said “not often” 17 % use the sites sometimes. From this result it is clear that there is a high frequency of the use of these sites. This perhaps explains why many postgraduate students are hooked on the sites.

How many hours respondents spend on social networking sites daily		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
0 - 2 hours	56	14%
3 - 6 hours	224	56%
6 - 12 hours	80	20%
12 - 24 hours	40	10%
Total	400	100%

SCHEME 10: *How many hours respondents spend on social networking sites daily*

Source: Field Survey, 2018

This deals with the amount of time spent on each site daily. From this result, 14 % spend 0-2 hours daily, 56 % spend between 3-6 hours, 20 % spend 6-12 hours daily, while 10 % spend between 12-24 hours. The implication of this result is that a majority of the respondents spend between 3-6 hours daily. This is perhaps accounted for by fact that the sampled population, which is postgraduate students, have several other compelling things to deal with. However, the fact that they spend amount of time shows that they really believe in social networking sites and are obviously serving gains from it. The other categories of respondents obviously must either be using the sites for business or are completely idle. However, we cannot conclude that this is the position unless we verify it further.

Whether respondents agree that one can be addicted to social networking sites		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	316	79%
Disagree	40	10%
Sometimes	40	10%
Never	4	1%
Total	400	100%

SCHEME 11: *Whether respondents agree that one can be addicted to social networking sites*

Source: Field Survey, 2018

This question deals with the possibility of addiction to social networking sites. The result shows that 79 % are in agreement that there is addiction to social networking sites. 10 % are in disagreement on this, another 10 % is unsure while 1 % argue that they can never be addicted. The implication of this, again is that those who use these sites and benefit from it can get addicted. The other values are very negligible.

Whether social networking sites make engaging in intellectual discourse with colleagues easy		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	272	68%
No	88	22%
Sometimes	28	7%
Never	12	3%
Total	400	100%

SCHEME 12: *Whether social networking sites make engaging in intellectual discourse with colleagues easy*

Source: Field Survey, 2018

This question seeks to find out whether social networking sites makes engaging with colleagues easy. The result is that 68 % think so, 22 % are not agreed on this, 7 % agreed that sometimes, this is possible while 3 % said never. The result has shown that many postgraduate students interact easily with contemporaries using this site. The reason is not just because of the conveniences of use, but because, in this information age, so much is available in these sites to create a common meeting point for both scholarly and entertainment.

Do respondents study their books with the aid of sites		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	300	75%
No	20	5%
Sometimes	50	12,5%
Never	30	7,5%
Total	400	100%

SCHEME 13: *Do respondents study their books with the aid of sites*

Source: Field Survey, 2018

The result shows that 75 % believe this happens, 5 % are not agreed on this while 12,5 % say that sometimes they study using the social networking sites. Interestingly, 7,5 % say they never study with the aid of social networking sites. From the above results, it is pretty obvious that the consistency of high values we have received from the use and adoption of social networking sites is informed by the fact that many postgraduate students study side by side using social networking sites. This goes to confirm that postgraduate students are truly dependent on social networking sites because of the associated benefits they derive from it.

Whether social networking sites influence respondent's academic performance		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	288	72%
No	32	8%
Sometimes	80	20%
Never	0	0%
Total	400	100%

SCHEME 14: *Whether social networking sites influence respondent's academic performance*

Source: Field Survey, 2018

This question seeks to find out whether social networking sites influence academic performance. The result showed that 72 % of the respondents are agreed that social networking sites influence academic performance, while 8 % do not share that viewpoint. However, 20 % of respondents believe that social networking sites sometimes influence academic performances. With the above result, it would seem that postgraduate students who engage in the use of social networking sites actually believe that they are helped by using them and conversely, their academic performances too. The fact that a tiny fraction of 8 % disagreeing, seems to even further buttress this dominant position.

Whether it is fun chatting with Facebook and Twitter		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	280	70%
No	20	5%
Sometimes	98	24,5%
Never	2	0,5%
Total	400	100%

SCHEME 15: *Whether it is fun chatting with Facebook and Twitter*

Source: Field Survey, 2018

This seeks to find out whether it is fun chatting on these social networking sites. It's obvious that this question doesn't seem to measure the value of academic relevance or dependence on social media. Rather, it seeks to explore its entertainment value. The result shows that 70 % believe that it is fun chatting on these sites. 5 % do not think so while 24,5 % are not sure. The implication of this is that apart from the academic value of these sites, there is also an entertainment which is reflected in the figures above. Consequently, social networking sites serve multiple purposes for their users -depending on the peculiar need of the user.

Whether respondents are better equipped as postgraduate students to use social networking sites		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	288	72%
No	32	8%
Not Sure	80	20%
Maybe	0	0%
Total	400	100%

SCHEME 16: *Whether respondents are better equipped as postgraduate students to use social networking sites*

Source: Field Survey, 2018

This seeks to find out whether respondents, as Postgraduate Students, are better equipped to use social networking sites. The result presents us with very interesting data. 72 % are agreed that the post graduate students are very well equipped to use these social sites while 20 % are not sure. An insignificant 8 % are convinced that not all postgraduate students are equipped to use these sites. This result shows that from interaction with fellow students, some are not Information compliant and are also timid and uninformed when it comes to deploying New Media tools and scholarship.

Whether exposure to social networking sites has helped respondents academic work		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Very much	288	72%
Not Sure	32	8%
A bit	80	20%
Not at all	0	0%
Total	400	100%

SCHEME 17: *Whether exposure to social networking sites has helped respondents academic work*

Source: Field Survey, 2018

This question probes into the aid that these sites provide for Postgraduate Students. It is obvious from the table presented that these social networking sites have actually helped many Postgraduate Students. 72 % are agreed that these sites are very helpful while 20 % are not agreed and the balance of 8 % are not sure. If we read this result in tandem with previous results, we cannot but arrive at the conclusion that these social networking sites have been quite helpful. However, 20 % is also a significant value and cannot be ignored easily. It could represent the actual value of those who are not technologically savvy to use these sites and perhaps, those who could, but have no access. In all, 72 % is very significant in realising our conclusion that social networking sites aid studies for Postgraduate Students.

Whether respondents think they would have benefited less without social networking sites		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	248	62%
No	132	33%
Not Sure	20	5%
Maybe	0	0%
Total	400	100%

SCHEME 18: Whether respondents think they would have benefited less without social networking sites

Source: Field Survey, 2018

This final question seeks to know whether respondents would have benefited less without social networking sites. 62 % are agreed, 33 % are definite that they would not have benefited less, while 5 % are not sure. This result is as previous values. 62 % is a very significant value arguing that without social networking sites they would not have benefited immensely. Those who argue against this position are perhaps, the lot already accounted for as not being tech savvy and perhaps without access. The balance of 5 % are very much undecided which shows that they too, are perhaps, not adequate or full beneficiaries of this medium. It is safe to conclude then that with Social Networking sites, most postgraduate students have to obtain optimum academic benefits.

5. Discussion of Findings

From the foregoing, it has come to the fore in this study that postgraduate students of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, utilise social networking sites especially Facebook and Twitter. Although Facebook and Twitter are entertainment platforms, postgraduate students study side by side using social networking sites. They are also apt in educating their users. Students spend time on Facebook and Twitter. 56 % of respondents agree that they spend between 3-6 hours on either Facebook or Twitter daily. The educational function of these social networking sites transcends their entertainment functions. This stems from the fact that networking is the encoding and decoding of symbols. These symbols, whether in pictures, characters (words) or videos, are ideas and information. However, addiction to social networking sites ought to be curtailed as this study reveals that up to 316 (79 %) respondents of the 400 people sampled, are addicted to Facebook and Twitter. These social networking sites have positively affected the academic performance of postgraduate students of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. Furthermore, the majority (62 %) of the respondents in the study agree that they would have benefitted less in their academic studies with the absence of social networking sites. In other words, the non-utility of Facebook and Twitter would have had an adverse and negative effect on their academic performance.

6. Conclusion

It is apparent that the utility of social networking sites-especially Facebook and Twitter would help students in their academic studies. Virtual communities are created by students and academic issues discussed in these group chats. Conclusively, with the findings in this study, undergraduate students could also emulate postgraduate students of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, in utilising Facebook and Twitter in their academic works. We also recommend that students in other institutions of higher learning in Nigeria and abroad should channel the use of *Facebook*, *Twitter* among other social networking sites into improving their academic performance, by creating study groups on these social media platforms.

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Veronika Gondeková

Persuasive-Communication and Manipulative-Communication Concepts in Television Programme of the Reality TV Genre

ABSTRACT

The study explores determinants of the nature of communication concepts. A communication concept is a communication access which is used by communicators to reach their goal. In text a communication concept is realised by communication tools. There are three types of communication tools: persuasive techniques, arguments and stereotypes. Communication tools are the main determinants of a communication concept's nature. A communication concept can be persuasive-communication and manipulative-communication. The nature of communication concept as whole is determined by the position of its components on an axis between persuasion and manipulation. The aim of this study is to characterize and theoretically determine components of communication concepts in reality TV programmes of reality TV in Slovakia.

KEY WORDS

Communication concept. Communication tools. Persuasion. Manipulation. Reality TV.

1. Introduction

Television is an everyday companion for many people. It provides not only information about the world, but also a regular dose of entertainment. The entertainment is usually offered by a television series or television shows. Various reality television shows are often very popular as well. The reality television show is observed as a global phenomenon. It has been appearing on TV in various forms throughout the world up to the present time. The study focuses on the language and speech analysis of Slovak television programmes, specifically on the reality television genre. It analyses several episodes of five Slovak reality TV programmes – *112 (112)*, *Sladký život (The Sweet Life)*, *Zámena manželiek (Wife Swap)*, *Farma (The Farm)* and *V siedmom nebi (Seventh Heaven)*. These five television programmes represent five different genre forms of reality TV produced by Slovak television. As the goal of the analysis is to define the particulars of language and speech patterns utilized by Slovak television producers to attract viewers, it can improve the understanding of the Slovak media market and therefore raise awareness of the most widely used strategies. Based on the findings, researchers and viewers can then form their own critical analysis of these media products. The study deals with the determinants of the nature of the communication concept in reality television shows.

2. Reality television as a media genre

Reality television is a global phenomenon that appeared on the Slovak media market relatively late in comparison to other European countries. There are two possible definitions of the term “reality TV”. It can be either reduced to one specific television genre or it can be perceived as a more complex phenomenon of the television development process. By the concept of reality television we understand: relatively undemanding programmes in terms of production with no professional actors, either with or without a script, which display people in real situations with at least a partial aim of entertaining. Programmes like *Big Brother*, *Vyvolení (The Chosen Ones)*, *Zámena manželiek (Wife Swap)*, *Farma (The Farm)*, *112 (The 112)*, *Love Island*, *Hotel Paradise (Paradise Hotel)*, *V siedmom nebi (Seventh Heaven)*, etc. can be classified as reality television. P. Mikuláš distinguishes four genres of reality television – reality magazine, docu-soap, reality game show, and reality series. This study also acknowledges a fifth genre form – charity TV show. *112 (The 112)* can be classified as a reality magazine, *Sladký život (The Sweet Life)* as a docu-soap, and *Farma (The Farm)* as a reality game show. The programme *Zámena manželiek (Wife Swap)* represents a reality series. *V siedmom nebi (Seventh Heaven)* is a distinctive representative of charity TV shows. All reality television genres are expected to provide audiences with the possibility of watching people in extraordinary situations. Reality television is a hybrid genre of a factual-fictional nature.¹ J. Rusnák claims that reality television is often a personification of crossing the borders between a public space and a personal space.² E. Moravčíková also writes about losing the sense of what is public and what is intimate. She points out the increasing popularity of programmes that emphasize misery, mock the imperfections of others, or have a sexual undercurrent.³ In reality television emotional information often dominates the factual aspects.⁴

¹ MIKULÁŠ, P.: *Reality TV*. Bratislava : Vydavateľstvo IRIS, 2011, p. 66.

² RUSNÁK, J.: “Let’s go Pravda.” Hry na realitu v súčasných elektronických médiách. In MAGÁL, S., MISTRÍK, M. (eds.): *Masmediálna komunikácia v interdisciplinárnom výskume*. Trnava : FMK UCM v Trnave, 2006, p. 54.

³ MORAVČÍKOVÁ, E.: *Vybrané megatrendy v súčasnej mediálnej zábave*. Nitra : Univerzita Konštantína Filozofa v Nitre, 2013, p. 56 – 57.

⁴ RUSNÁK, J.: *Homo popularis: homomediális? Popkultúra v elektronických médiách*. Prešov : Filozofická fakulta Prešovskej univerzity v Prešove, 2013, p. 212 – 213.

Reality television genres

A reality magazine genre can be described as a periodically broadcast programme of a journalistic nature. It presents real-life situations and has real-life footage. Typical examples are the programmes *112 (The 112)*, *The Cops*, *Ambulance*. The reality captured in a reality magazine is entirely independent of the medium's existence. The medium does not actively interfere in the programme and plays no part in creating extraordinary, often life-threatening situations, i.e. the medium does not provide any special conditions or give instructions or provides stimuli to the protagonists. The display of serious accidents and rescue missions has the aim of shocking the audience. The reality magazine directly displays reality. P. Mikuláš writes about a direct factual reality reference which is, like every media product, framed into the required media stencils, i.e. 'the law will always prevail', even though its absolute validity does not match the reality. The reality portrayed in reality magazines does not correspond with the reality we live in. The construction of this medial reality is determined by the selection of extraordinary events and in terms of the institutions involved. These focus on displaying the negative aspects of social affairs such as crime, traffic accidents, criminal activities related to drugs, prostitution, and etc. There are two opposites – 'the good' represented by professional rescuers, police officers, and fire fighters, and 'the evil' represented by people living on the fringes of society. These are often portrayed as criminals, drug addicts, or other outlaws. The programme *112 (The 112)* depicts a dramatization of the eternal conflict between good and evil.

The characteristic feature of the docu-soap genre is the exhibition of authentic people in their own, familiar environment, which may be related to localities, institutions, or hobbies. The name of the genre is made up of two words: *docu* – document and *soap* – soap-opera. It is a hybrid of two traditional television genres – a document and a TV series. The documentary part of the genre is represented by the recording of protagonists' everyday lives and just like documentaries, the docu-soap also represents the social reality of the protagonists. The serial nature of the docu-soap refers to a TV series. This genre is primarily focused on the characters of participants, the story line is secondary. In contradistinction to a reality magazine, the docu-soap concentrates on an everyday routine that usually does not include extraordinary situations. The docu-soap genre is defined as a melodrama with real people in real situations instead of actors. It does not produce fictional stories, but rather focuses on real, everyday life. It is the melodrama of everyday life. The tone of the docu-soap genre varies from slightly amusing to lightly informative. Programmes such as *Nora a Braňo (Nora & Braňo)*, *Sladký život (The Sweet Life)*, and *Keeping Up with The Kardashians* belong in the docu-soap genre.

The reality game show can be marked as the most famous and popular genre. It includes programmes such as *Vyvolení (The Chosen Ones)*, *Farma (The Farm)*, *Big Brother*, and *Love Island*. P. Mikuláš sees this genre as a commercially entertaining programming with the possibility of winning the largest amount of prize money in TV history. The reality game show genre includes controversial formats that have caused serious discussions not only about reality television, but about television as such. The primary nature of the genre is competitiveness and it is exposed not only through the knowledge of the contestants, but also through their skills. There is a purpose behind the selection of contestants – they are mostly extroverts, people from a sexual or religious minority, people with different opinions, etc. The contestants often represent various social stereotypes emphasised by their matching nicknames.

The fourth genre is the reality series, e. g. *Záměna manželiek (Wife Swap)*. This genre depicts reality based on the reactions of participants to artificially induced stimuli that create imbalanced situations. The participants are real people usually in a natural, real environment confronted with experimental conditions. *Záměna manželiek (Wife Swap)* is focused on the observation of different social groups, lifestyles, etc. It surveys the coexisting attempts of diametrically different people. It frequently includes very different families, thus ensuring a multitude of conflicts. The conflicts arise from the deliberate pairing of families in every episode. The families have to be as different as possible, e.g. ethnically, religiously, socially divergent, etc. The medium plays an active role in pairing. The only characters displayed in the programme are real, ordinary people in the real homes of the swapped families. The reality series has an episodic nature – there is a new pair of families in each episode.⁵

⁵ MIKULÁŠ, P.: *Reality TV*. Bratislava : Vydavateľstvo, Iris, 2011, p. 72-117.

Programmes such as *Modré z neba* (*The Moon for You*), *Sladký život* (*The Sweet Life*), *V siedmom nebi* (*Seventh Heaven*), and *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* are classified as charity TV shows. These shows arise from real situations portraying reality in the way seen by the participants themselves.⁶ The charity TV shows portray ordinary people in difficult life situations. They often face social, financial, health, or lifestyle issues and somebody has decided to help them by means of the programme. This type of reality television in Slovakia is closely connected to host Viliam Rozboril. In the first place, charity TV shows and host Viliam Rozboril are perceived by the audience as a personification of care for people in need. These programmes arise from real situations, i.e. they portray reality in the way it is seen by the participants themselves. They portray the grave stories of people facing major social, financial, health, or lifestyle issues, or people who have survived extreme situations (tragic traffic accidents, diseases, difficult life stories, etc.).

3. Communication concept as a research subject

A communication concept is a communication approach used by the communicator to attain their goal by means of communication tools (persuasive techniques, arguments, and stereotypes).⁷ The communicators are the television show creators, whose goal is to gain and maintain the visual and auditory attention of the audience, thus meeting the economic target of the media communication creators.⁸ Furthermore, the media communication creators are trying to reach desired viewer ratings. There are two types of communication concepts based on the way individual television shows try to meet their targets: persuasive communication and manipulative communication. Persuasive-communication concepts have a persuasive nature while manipulative-communication concepts have manipulative natures.

The nature of the communication concept is determined by the communication tools implemented in the text via language and media tools. Language and media tools are parts of the communication tools.⁹

There are three types of communication tools – persuasive techniques, arguments, and stereotypes. These are functional tools used to achieve the character of utterance and are considered elements of the communication concept as well as its determining unit. They can be marked as a means used by the communicator to reach their goal.

Persuasive technique

Persuasive technique is a specific method used to persuade people¹⁰. The literature offers various concepts and classification of persuasive techniques (e.g. Beck¹¹, Cialdini¹², Edmüller – Wilhelm¹³, Henčková¹⁴, Shabo¹⁵). When determining the nature of the communication concept, the most significant persuasive techniques are reality-related techniques. There are two types – the persuasive technique of reproducing reality and the persuasive technique of constructing reality. The persuasive technique of reproducing reality has a persuasive nature. The medium does not actively interfere in the creation of

⁶ Remark by the author: In the case of people living in disastrous conditions, the programme shows their environment, e.g. a latrine, no running water, etc. If the people have health issues, the programme focuses on various medical procedures, surgeries, or related photographs.

⁷ ODALOŠ, P.: Teleshoppingová reklama ako manipulačno-komunikačná koncepcia. In AFELTOWICZ, B., PAJEWSKA, E. (eds.): *Dyskurzy trzeciego tysiąclecia III*. Szczecin : Uniwersytet Szczeciński, 2016, p. 229.

⁸ McQUAIL, D.: *Úvod do teorie masové komunikace*. Praha : Portál, 2009, p.83.

⁹ GONDEKOVÁ, V.: Manipulatívnosť a persuazívnosť v televíznych reláciách reality TV. In ODALOŠ, P. (eds.): *Manipulačno-komunikačné a persuazívno-komunikačné koncepcie*. Banská Bystrica : Vydavateľstvo Univerzity Mateja Bela – Belianum, 2017, p. 167.

¹⁰ ODALOŠ, P., ŠEDOVIČOVÁ, S.: Manipulations et persuasion dans les spots publicitaires français et slovaques. In HÖHN, E., POLIAK, P. (eds.): *Cudzie jazyky a kultúry v teórii a praxi. Foreign languages and cultures in theory and cultures*. Banská Bystrica : Univerzita Mateja Bela, 2016, p. 48.

¹¹ BECK, G.: *Zakázaná rétorika. 30 manipulatívnych technik*. Praha : GRADA Publishing, 2007, p. 17-24.

¹² CIALDINI, R. B.: *Vplyv. Psychológia presvedčania*. Bratislava : EASTONE BOOKS, 2014, p. 1-13.

¹³ EDMÜLLER, A., WILHELM, T.: *Velká kniha manipulatívnych technik*. Praha : GRADA Publishing, 2011, p. 123-242.

¹⁴ HENČKOVÁ, E.: *Persuazívne techniky – o jazyku presvedčania*. [online]. [2018-10-24]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2Aptsc9>>.

¹⁵ SHABO, M. E.: *Techniques of propaganda and persuasion*. Clayton : Prestwick House, 2008, p. 13-61.

extraordinary events portrayed by the programme. A montage is used mainly due to objective reasons, e.g. the lack of time.¹⁶ This type of reality-related persuasive technique can be found in the programme 112.

The persuasive technique of constructing reality has a manipulative nature. Through this technique the medium interferes and participates in the creation of extraordinary events portrayed by the programme. The montage is used mainly for the purpose of making the televised material more attractive. The final media product consists only of highly selected material that will attract an audience. It particularly includes conflicts between participants, intimate scenes, etc. Thus the television programme creators come up with a highly edited product, mainly to meet their economic targets. Under certain circumstances, they create a huge number of cuts and a small number of important events. Such a case leads to an intensified editorial presence and makes the final media product more attractive. By using montage and other editing processes, the creators create a medial reality from the television product. The medial reality is not original in comparison to genuine reality and thus can be marked as a secondary concept that should never gain an autonomous status.¹⁷

The media product of reality television shows contains not only reality-related persuasive techniques but also participant-related persuasive techniques. The participant-related persuasive techniques consist of techniques such as plain folks, celebrities, experts, a circle of acquaintances, labelling and beautiful people. Another group of persuasive techniques is directly connected with the way television show creators try to reach their goal. Such techniques are: simple solution, warm & fuzzy, distraction, fear, nostalgia, and populism in parliamentary democracy. Persuasive techniques like humour, repetition, association, and intensity are implemented in reality television shows by means of lexical tools.

Each programme constantly uses only one persuasive technique, namely the reality-related persuasive technique. This technique consequently determines the final shape of the communication concept. Other groups of persuasive techniques as well as individual persuasive techniques can be found in the programmes in diverse manners. Their use is determined by the genre of the individual television shows.

Arguments

Arguments are a communication tool and with persuasive techniques and stereotypes they form the communication concept. There are various types of arguments used in the media. In reality television shows, arguments can be found in the commentaries and in the utterances of participants.

An argument can be defined as a proof given in support of an idea¹⁸ and J. Dolník considers the argument to be a persuasion tool.¹⁹ According to M. Klapetek the basis of an argument is logic and logic together with emotionality constitute the crucial components of persuasion. Emotions, however, cannot be put down on paper. They greatly depend on the recipient and lose their intensity with time.²⁰ The nature of argumentation is to search for causal relations between events and formulate them. Hence it is necessary to distinguish whether the argumentation searches for causal relations or tries to find them and convince the audience of their validity.²¹

The programmes as implementations of individual genres usually contain one dominant type of argument. The type of argument depends on the communication tools used in the programme. Reality-related persuasive techniques significantly contribute to the arguments used.

From the five analysed programmes corresponding to five genres, the programme 112 (*The 112*) is the only one with the domination of ad rem argumentation (*The paramedics use a vacuum mattress for transportation more suitable for manipulation with the afflicted. The ambulance takes the patient to the ICU. The paramedics put the Schantz collar on the man and move him to the stretcher. The extent of injuries will be known after the examination in the hospital.*). The ad rem argumentation or so called factual

¹⁶ MIKULÁŠ, P.: *Television is vertically limited to real, linear time: one broadcasting channel can 'accommodate' no more than 24 hours of a daily broadcast. Television deals with this situation by means of montage. The montage is a partial transformation of the montage used in dramatic performance. Reality TV.* Bratislava : Iris, 2011, p. 59.

¹⁷ MIKULÁŠ, P.: *Realita, mediálna realita a realita reality TV.* In FICHNOVÁ, K. (eds.): *(Ko)médiá. Monografia odborných a vedeckých štúdií.* Nitra : Univerzita Konštantína Filozofa v Nitre, 2007, p. 86 – 88.

¹⁸ BUZÁŠSYOVÁ, K. et al.: *Slovník súčasného slovenského jazyka.* Bratislava : Veda, 2006, p. 160.

¹⁹ DOLNÍK, J.: *Všeobecná jazykoveda. Opis a vysvetľovanie jazyka.* Bratislava : Veda, 2013, p. 322.

²⁰ KLAPETEK, M.: *Komunikace, argumentace, rétorika.* Praha : Grada, 2008, p. 101.

²¹ KRAUS, J.: *Jazyk v proměnách komunikačních médií.* Praha : Karolinum, 2008, p. 151.

argumentation is based on undeniable facts.²² The dominant argumentation fully corresponds with the reality-related persuasive technique, which can be found in 112. The factual argumentation is typical for the reality-related persuasive technique.

The dominant argumentation in *Zámena manželiek (Wife Swap)* is the *secundum quid* argumentation (*I don't like that gypsies live there and that my neighbours are gypsies. And that it's so small there. It doesn't look like a house of gypsies because it smells nice. It looks clean. But gypsy neighbours. Oh, God.*). These arguments are valid only under certain circumstances or at a certain moment and are perceived as absolute. This type of argument is also called an argument by generalisation. The dominant argumentation in the programme *Sladký život (The Sweet Life)* is *petitio principii* (*I'm used to eating. My mom taught me so. I know that there are people who don't do that but then they will die somewhat sooner.*). It is a circular argument with the premise whose truth has not been established yet.

The programme *V siedmom nebi (Seventh Heaven)*, which represents the charity TV shows genre, mainly contains emotional argumentation types, such as: *argumentum ad misericordiam* (*I was so sorry when I heard the story about what had happened to Štefan. And I'm so glad I can help him settle the debt with the health insurance company so that he can apply for a transplant to get a new kidney, which will allow him live his life to the fullest and take care of his daughter. I'll be really glad if he accepts it and that'll be a gift to all of us.*), *ad populum* (*Last time I was dressed as a big shot, now it's time to do something. My father and my grandfather taught me that if there's something to do, I've got to roll up my sleeves and not run around dressed up in a suit like a big shot. This time I could go there in my normal clothes, just like I'm usually dressed.*), and *ad auctoritatem* (*As a gift for your anniversary, for your fiftieth birthday I brought you a picture of the Holy Family because many families who are in a difficult situation can thank you. Such an exemplary social work with families is one of the subjects we have in our curriculum of master's degree study. And this family is a shining example. God bless you.*). All three types of arguments have an effect on the emotions of the audience. The argumentations *ad populum* and *ad misericordiam* appeal to sentiment and mercy while the argumentation *ad auctoritatem* has an intimidating nature. An appeal to the emotions of the audience is one of the characteristic features of the charity TV shows genre.

No dominant argumentation can be found in the reality game show *Farma (The Farm)*. The programme contains arguments such as *ad populum*, *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*, *proton pseudos*, and *petitio principii*. Here is an example of the argument *ad populum*: *A hostile nature conceals many secrets and pitfalls. It does not favour the weak or spare the strong. The fight for survival can begin.* All types of the mentioned argumentation can be found in the commentaries as well as in the utterances of participants. Individual arguments used in the programme *Farma (The Farm)* have a common feature – the argumentation does not respect the chronological or causal order of arguments based on false or unverified statements.²³

Stereotypes

Stereotypes are usually associated with prejudices. However, there is a big difference between these two terms. Prejudice refers to attitudes and opinions which are only negative in relation to others. Stereotypes may include neutral and positive opinions and attitudes. While studying stereotypes and prejudices it is important to remember that even though a person has a prejudice against a 'different' group they do not necessarily discriminate. Prejudices and stereotypes are ideas, opinions, and attitudes of certain groups of people towards other groups (heterostereotypes) or towards themselves (autostereotypes).²⁴ Both types are passed on from generation to generation and are resistant to change. They are long-lasting, stable, hard to remove, and have an emotional nature.

J. Dolník in *Všeobecná jazykoveda* defines stereotypes as standardised judgments of a certain group on things, on themselves, or on others without corresponding or only partially corresponding to the truth. The observed stereotypes often function as support during the judging process on which the persuasion calculates. Even the value system is asserted by means of stereotypes. It can be said that stereotypes are behind the evaluation of perceived communications.²⁵

²² ŠERKOVIN, J.A.: *Psychologické problémy masových informačných systémov*. Praha : Novinář, 1977, p. 152.

²³ KRAUS, J.: *Jazyk v proměnách komunikačních médií*. Praha : Karolinum, 2008, p. 154 - 156.

²⁴ DARULOVÁ, J., KOŠTIALOVÁ, K.: *Multikultúrnosť a multietnicita*. Banská Bystrica : Univerzita Mateja Bela, Ústav vedy a výskumu, 2010, p. 53.

²⁵ DOLNÍK, J.: *Všeobecná jazykoveda. Opis a vysvetľovanie jazyka*. Bratislava : Veda, 2013, p. 323 -324.

Within reality television shows the stereotype is used during the selection of participants into individual formats. This is the way stereotypes are used in the reality series, e.g. *Zámena manželiek* (*Wife Swap*), and reality game show, e.g. *Farma* (*The Farm*) genres. The programme *Zámena manželiek* (*Wife Swap*) usually pairs different families – e.g. they differ in the number of children, in social or financial situation, ethnic origin, religion, etc. These differences are the basis for potential conflicts between the swapped wives and their ‘new’ families.

J. Rusnák sees the tendencies of reality television shows to replace celebrities and characters with participating models. The participants lose their uniqueness and due to dramaturgic interventions they gradually gain more universal features, which represent the hero ideas of the audience.²⁶ The contestants often get nicknames based on their appearance, etc. This is a persuasive technique called labelling and it can result in the stereo-typification of participants in such formats. The choice of contestants is one of the reality game shows features. The programme has an entertaining nature, hence the creators choose such contestants whose confrontations will capture the interest of the audience. The selection is thorough with an emphasis on extroverts, people from a sexual or religious minority, and people with different opinions. Reality game shows use the most stereotypes, mainly in the selection of contestants. The goal of these programmes should be a better understanding and a deconstruction of stereotypes.²⁷ However, the stereotypes are often pictured the way they are perceived by Slovak society.

The representation of participants in *112* (*The 112*) is a typical case of stereotype confirmation according to public notion. The creators use the conflict between good and evil trope. The good is represented by the members of the integrated rescue system while the evil is represented by people living on the fringes of society, e.g. the homeless, drug addicts, or socially deprived groups. The programme almost always portrays these people as outlaws. It confirms the stereotypes within a society instead of deconstructing them.

The attempts to deconstruct stereotypes can be seen in the programme *Zámena manželiek* (*Wife Swap*). The families in each episode are paired based on the vast differences in opinions, values, or financial situation. Matching different families makes the programme more attractive among the audience and at the same time offers the creators room for the deconstruction of social stereotypes. However, they only meet with partial success. The creators manage to deconstruct stereotypes and prejudices against the Roma minority in an episode where a wife from a Roma family in Detva and a wife from a family in Eastern Slovakia are swapped. The success can be deduced from what the participants say, e.g. *I don't like that gypsies live there and that my neighbours are gypsies. And that it's so small there. It doesn't look like a house of gypsies because it smells nice. It looks clean. But the gypsy neighbours. Oh, God. There was fear. I got scared. But after a few days I realized your life is completely different from the life of gypsies.* On the other hand, the programme trivialises and ironically comments on the drinking problem of one of the fathers (*Meanwhile after a neverending day of work Vlado's coming home. Guess what the weather will be like. It looks like swaying with spirit spells. The atmosphere at Víglašský family is more relaxed. Vlado is trying to find out how to open the wine as soon as possible. Next time we suggest using a bottle screw.*). Instead of trying to solve the evident problem of the participant, the commentary exploits the situation to amuse the audience. The stereotype of alcoholism is thus further confirmed.

4. Conclusion

The study described the theoretical definition of the communication concept process in reality television shows and determined the nature of the communication concept as a whole. The communication concept is formed through communication tools (persuasive techniques, arguments, and stereotypes). The major factors that determine whether the communication concept has a persuasive nature (persuasive-communication concept) or a manipulative nature (manipulative-communication concept) are reality-related persuasive techniques, the most represented argument in the media product, and the way of dealing with stereotypes (either a deconstruction or a confirmation of stereotypes).

²⁶ RUSNÁK, J.: Reality show ako karneval postmoderného veku. In *Universitatis : revue Masarykovy univerzity v Brně*, 2006, Vol. 39, No. 3, p. 51.

²⁷ MIKULÁŠ, P.: *Reality TV*. Bratislava : Vydavateľstvo Iris, 2011, p. 100- 107.

The study focused on reality television shows, which were or still are broadcast in Slovakia. The reality television show is a global phenomenon. It has various versions in many countries all around the world. The purchase of the broadcasting licence can be considered a manifestation of globalisation while the creators try to attune the programmes to the audience in the country. Unlike the American programme *The Cops* and the Czech programme *112*, the Slovak version of *112 (The 112)* does not use re-enactments but works with shots from the interventions and sometimes only with the testimonies of eyewitnesses. *Zámena manželiek (Wife Swap)* has a stable structure in all the versions we watched (the Slovak, Czech, American and British versions). The USA also has *Celebrity Wife Swap*, in which well-known women (actresses, singers) are swapped. This negates the characteristic feature of the programme – the portrayal of common, ordinary people²⁸. A specific feature of the Slovak programme *Farma (The Farm)* is a location where the seasons take place. The creators always choose remote places within our country.

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²⁸ MIKULÁŠ, P.: *Reality TV*. Bratislava : Vydavateľstvo Iris, 2011, p. 111.

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Derya Gül Ünlü

Gender-Based Stereotypes in Interpersonal Communication

ABSTRACT

With participation in social life, all the interpersonal and intergroup relations an individual establishes takes places in accordance with his/her gender roles and gender identity attributed by society. In this respect, it can be suggested that all forms of relationships individuals establish with others are shaped in parallel with his/her gender identity. Therefore, it would not be wrong to argue that the gender identity an individual possesses in interpersonal relationships has a significant effect on the formation of the relationship established. One of the most important communication barriers confronted in the interpersonal communication process is stereotypes related to gender identity. Gender identity stereotypes emerge according to gender roles taught to each individual who joins society. The presence of these stereotypes turns into interpersonal communication barriers, which, in many cases, show their effects even before communication starts. In this regard, it is considered that addressing the content of stereotypes about the gender identity of the source and recipient as communication barriers in the communication process, is important. For this purpose, emphasis was laid primarily on the guiding effect of stereotypes in interpersonal processes within the scope of the study. Afterwards gender stereotypes were evaluated based on the findings of research conducted in this field, and with reference to characteristics of gender stereotypes.

KEY WORDS

Interpersonal communication. Gender. Gender Identity. Stereotype. Gender Stereotypes.

1. Introduction

Gender relations are produced within social structure and maintained through the transfer of these stereotypes to each individual, who joins society. As an individual joins this life, which is organized with these gender relations, all the interpersonal and intergroup relations an individual establishes with others, take place in accordance with his/her gender roles and gender identity attributed by society. In this context, it can be suggested that all forms of relationships individuals establish with others are shaped in parallel with his/her gender identity. Therefore, the gender identity an individual possesses in interpersonal relationships has a significant effect on the formation of the relationship established.

Interpersonal communication refers not only to the exchange of messages between the source and recipient, but also the social interaction process established between individuals. In this social interaction process, individuals interact with each other by exchanging various codes. On the other hand, this communication process is not as easy as a mere exchange of various codes or symbols to each other. There are many factors, which shape this process. Interpersonal communication the individual maintains with the other person, is under the influence of many constituents such as cultural background, past experiences, perception or attitudes of the individual. In this context, it can be suggested that, gender identity and stereotypes about this identity also play a significant role in the communication process considering the fact that subjects, both as source and recipient, include their personal characteristics to the communication process.

Gender identity stereotypes are acquired according to a society's view on gender and gender roles. The presence of stereotypes based on individual's gender identity, are confronted as an important interpersonal communication barrier, and in many cases, it may even show its effects before the interpersonal communication process starts. In this regard, it is considered that addressing stereotypes about the gender identity of the source and recipient as communication barriers to the communication process is important. For this purpose, within the scope of the study, emphasis will be laid primarily on the guiding effect of stereotypes in interpersonal processes. Afterwards, basic characteristics of gender identity stereotypes will be addressed and how gender stereotypes turn into communication barriers in the interpersonal communication process will be discussed based on the findings of research conducted in this field.

2. Gender Identity in Interpersonal Communication

The concept of interpersonal communication can be defined as the production and exchange of information/symbols between individuals, who interact with each other.¹ In a more inclusive definition, interpersonal communication is defined as *"as the form of communication, which takes place between two persons spontaneously and in an uninhibited manner in general, and communication between parties in a physical environment alternately"*.²

However, only exchange of information and symbols is not sufficient to consider this type of communication between individuals as interpersonal communication. Three criteria are mentioned for communication between individuals to be defined as interpersonal communication: (1) persons involved in interpersonal communication must be close to each other at a certain level and face each other. (2) not a one-way, but a mutual information exchange must take between the participants. (3) These messages must have a verbal and/or non-verbal quality.³

Gürüz and Eğinli define the concept of interpersonal communication as *"the production and transfer of meaning as a result of the interaction between two persons."*⁴ According to researchers, within the context of this definition, there are three constituents, namely, process, message interaction, and sharing the meaning. Interpersonal communication is a process, that is, it is an endless activity, which changes constantly. When interpersonal communication starts between two persons, a process, the beginning and ending of which cannot be defined or reversed. Another aspect is the exchange of messages. A mutual transfer and reception

¹ DÖKMEN, Ü.: *İletişim Çalışmaları ve Empati*. Ankara : Sistem Publishing, 2006, p. 23.

² MUTLU, E.: *İletişim Sözlüğü*. İstanbul : Bilim ve Sanat Publishing, 1998, p. 208-209.

³ TUBBS, S.L., MOSS, S.: *Human Communication*. London : McGraw-Hill, 2000, p. 250.

⁴ GÜRÜZ, D., EĞİNLİ, A.T.: *Kişilerarası İletişim Bilgiler-Etkiler-Engeller*. İstanbul : Nobel Publishing, 2011, p. 54.

of verbal and non-verbal messages is in question. Both verbal and non-verbal messages interact in a circle and affect those, who maintain communication. However, transfer of messages between persons is not adequate, messages create meaning, and they are shared in a mutual manner. In this process, the presence of good or bad relational experiences between persons, also affects the interpretation of messages.

Based on the definition by Gürüz and Eğinli, given the fact that interpersonal communication is a mutual process of constructing meaning, laying emphasis on the determinant role of gender roles defined by social structure, and social gender stereotypes, which are formed according to these roles, is considered important. Because individuals' tendency to make sense of persons or events they confront, is closely related to the social structure, in which they live. The content of communication an individual establishes with the other person is not independent of the cultural background or the social structure, which the individual is a member of, and social structure's views on gender or its prejudices.

In addition to the determinant role of social structure, the realization and success of the interpersonal communication process depends on how wide the common reference framework of resource and recipient is. In other words, the more similar the past lives, judgements and attitudes of individuals, who are parties of the communication, their psychological characteristics during communication are, the more successful they are in making sense of the messages.⁵ Therefore, it would not be wrong to argue that similarities between recourse and recipient (past experiences, membership to similar social structure, cultural commonality etc.) increase the success of communication established between both parties. Because common values and norms shared by parties, make it easier to construct meanings from the communication process in question. Considered in this context, it can be argued that interpersonal communication, which is established between members of the same social structure, becomes successful based on the common values possessed by the parties of the communication process.

One of the significant aspects, which have a determinant role on the content and structure of communication, is stereotypes. Stereotype means perceiving individuals who are there by their cultural characteristics, life styles and actions, through images which we create by constructing people with the associations these common characteristics induce in our mind. When an individual considers people, who have such common characteristics, as single individuals, his/her judgements in the stereotyping process constitute the basis for all of his/her evaluations. Accordingly, a whole category serves as a filter for this evaluation, regardless of the actual situation of the individual, who is being observed at that specific moment. This filter embodies categories, in which we place individuals who have socially determined characteristics, our value judgements which we form through our experiences about these characteristics, the condition and interests of the individual and ourselves in that circumstance, the quality of action and a whole social structure. These 'norms', which emerge as individuals are perceived, start to serve as determinants, which affect interpersonal relations. Because our personal history, our place in social structure, the same type of characteristics attributed to the objects or individuals we confront, and their positions in relationships, determine the form of a relationship we establish at any moment of our lives. Also, an individual's mental operations for perceiving, also take place in the process of formation of social norms and stereotyping⁶. Therefore, knowing the structure and content of stereotypes in the interpersonal communication process, is important for understanding barriers or conflicts that may be experienced in the interpersonal communication process.

One of the most important communication barriers, which may be confronted in the interpersonal communication process, is stereotypes, which emerge according to the gender identity of the source of recipient. These stereotypes are connected to gender roles, and various obstacles may be confronted in the interpersonal communication process like many other fields, due to an individual's gender identity. Due to stereotypes and prejudices, the communication established between parties turns into a conflict rather than a common process of constructing meanings. Because gender difference and inequality imposed by gender relations, causes reference frameworks of source and recipient to become further away from each other. If the interpersonal communication process takes place between individuals who are not (cannot be) in equal positions, the message conveyed by the source does not (cannot) reach the target, and as a result of this, the desired effect cannot be created and, results different from what was intended for the communication process are obtained.

⁵ GÜRÜZ, D., EĞİNLİ, A.T.: *Kişilerarası İletişim Bilgiler-Etkiler-Engeller*. İstanbul : Nobel Publishing, 2011, p. 52.

⁶ İSEN, G., BATMAZ, V.: *Ben ve Toplum*. İstanbul : Salyangoz Publishing, 2006, p. 214-215.

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Therefore, addressing gender identity problems and stereotypes confronted as a result of this, also in terms of its importance for the interpersonal communication process, is considered important. In this regard, stereotypes resulting from gender identity will be addressed by discussing their determinant role of these stereotypes in the interpersonal communication process.

3. Gender Identity Stereotypes

Gender is an important social category, which attributes various social meanings to individual's social status, and differentiates male and female roles. On the other hand, social groups, to which individuals are included due to their gender, have the characteristics of a closed group. In other words, individual's membership to this group means membership of a fixed group, and it is not possible for any group member to be transferred to another group (unless a medical intervention is required).⁷

Gender is among the basic grouping variants, which have an effect on social perception. However, social mobility between male and female groups, that is, switching from one group to another is not possible. Also, this membership is obtained not through efforts, but through assignment.⁸ Therefore, membership of these groups is not optional, and an individual becomes a member of a social group, which is in accordance with his/her gender, from the moment he/she joins social life. Due to this social category, which an individual finds himself/herself in from birth, and which cannot be changed, it is inevitable for an individual to confront stereotypes and expectations based on these stereotypes in all interpersonal communication processes in which he/she participates. In this context, knowing stereotypes, which are based on the gender identity of an individual, will provide a basis for overcoming an important communication barrier, which is also experienced in the interpersonal communication process.

⁷ SAKALLI, N.: *Sosyal Etkiler: Kim Kimi Nasıl Etkiler?*. Ankara : İmge Books, 2001, p. 178.

⁸ DÖKMEN, Z.: *Toplumsal Cinsiyet Sosyal Psikolojik Açıklamalar*. İstanbul : Remzi Books, 2012, p. 130.

Gender based stereotypes can be quite diverse. In this context, different forms of stereotype related to gender identity can be categorized as follows⁹:

- Gender stereotypes about characteristics, which society expects women and men to show as separate groups,
- Stereotypes about gender roles in roles and activities, which are considered appropriate for men and women.
- Personal features, which are considered to characterise one gender more or less compared to the other gender, are called stereotypes about gender stereotypes.

On the other hand, the fact that gender identity stereotypes differ from other stereotype forms, must be emphasized. Stereotypes about gender identity offer descriptive prescriptions to individuals. A descriptive aspect of these stereotypes is the definitions in the minds of people about what a typical member of the group, to which that stereotype belongs (for instance, attributing emotional, weak, dependent, passive etc. characteristics to women). The prescriptive aspect dictates individuals on what they must do, how they must act (e.g. expecting women to be passive, obedient, and skilful in interpersonal relations). This descriptive aspect, in other words, these requirements, play a very central and significant role in gender identity stereotypes. Because stereotypes about gender identity, restrict the behaviours of both men and women. Failure to comply with these requirements is generally perceived negatively, and causes prejudiced attitudes. After this, individuals confront a strong gender.¹⁰

Gender stereotypes can be defined as certain behaviours and characteristics, which society expects women and men as a group. Therefore, these stereotypes restrict the behaviours of both men and women. It must be emphasized that, although stereotypes related to gender identity generally have similar content across the world, they are not universal. Contents of stereotypes may differ according to the education level, historical background and geographical location or cultural characteristics of that society.

Another feature of gender stereotypes are their highly complicated structure due to close relations with members of the opposite sex. Because women and men share many living experiences together. Experiences shared as wife/husband, father, brother/sister, lover, colleague etc. cause individuals to develop highly complicated expectations about the opposite sex. This interaction sometimes paves the ground for developing sub-categories about the opposite sex, especially women (e.g. female doctor, policewoman etc.). These subcategories emerge when gender stereotypes do not match with the member of that gender. In such cases, it may be concluded that qualities dictated by a stereotype may not be applied to all the members of the group and/or the stereotype is wrong, and the stereotype may be expected to change as a result of this. But this is not the case with gender identity stereotypes, and the essence of stereotypes related to that gender remains the same.¹¹ For instance, when an individual, who is of the opinion that women are too fragile to perform work that requires strength, sees a female taxi driver changing the tires of her vehicle, he/she thinks that this is not the case for all women, but only an example specific to that woman.

A study, which investigates female and male police officers in this context, found that male police officers are against female police officers although they are satisfied with the performance of their partners.¹² Stereotypes of male officers about women's capacity to work as police officers did not change despite the intimate contact established, and even remained the same with police officers, who work with a male partner. Because male police officers' stereotypes about women hasn't established a relationship between being a woman and being a police officer, and their opinions about how women can work as police officers hasn't changed other than exceptions of their own team members.

⁹ ADAÇAY, F.R.: *Toplumsal Cinsiyet ve Kalkınma*. Bursa : Ekin Publishing, 2014, p. 19-20.

¹⁰ DÖKMEN, Z.: *Toplumsal Cinsiyet Sosyal Psikolojik Açıklamalar*. İstanbul : Remzi Books, 2012, p. 105-106.

¹¹ DÖKMEN, Z.: *Toplumsal Cinsiyet Sosyal Psikolojik Açıklamalar*. İstanbul : Remzi Books, 2012, p. 106.

¹² ARONSON, E., WILSON, T., AKERT, R.M.: *Sosyal Psikoloji*. İstanbul : Kaknüs Publishing, 2012, p. 804.

A study was conducted by Broverman et al. for the purpose of determining gender identity stereotypes, and participants were asked to state their opinions about the typical characteristics of women and men.¹³ As a result of the study, it was determined that participants have a consensus about the characteristic features of men and women. Research categorized the characteristics stated by participants and grouped attributes related to women under an intimacy-impressiveness cluster (for instance, a gentle person, who does not use profane language, needs a sense of security about her external appearance, and expresses her emotions) and a cluster which contains attributes related to men was grouped under the name of self-sufficiency (aggressive, independent, non-emotional, dominant, competitive, rational, ambitious, someone who does not attach importance to external appearance, someone who is not offended easily).

Another study conducted by Williams and Best on gender identity stereotypes, is important, in that it indicates how stereotypes may go beyond intercultural differences.¹⁴ In the study, characteristics provided to participants were categorized under three titles, namely, psychological needs, ego states and emotive meanings. Participants were asked to mark characteristics, which they consider as typical of men and women, among 300 different characteristics provided to them. Results obtained in the study are important in that stereotypes about gender roles show similarities despite intercultural differences. Another finding of the study is that, stereotypes about gender differences converge as the development level of the country increases. In addition to this, the research is significant in that not only the characteristics attributed to women and men are different, but also, characteristics attributed to women are more negative compared to characteristics attributed to men. For instance, men are characterised as strong, vigorous, dominant, durable, potent, ambitious, entrepreneur, non-emotional; while women are characterised as emotional, talkative, indecisive, gentle, excitable, whiny, affectionate, obedient etc. Also, it can be inferred from the characteristics obtained in the results of the study that social likeability of characteristics used for women is.¹⁵ In the following years, another study conducted by Williams and Satterwhite in Pakistan and Japan for the purpose of understanding how results of the study conducted by Williams and Best changed over the course time, determined that findings of the previous study are confirmed.¹⁶

On the other hand, it is important to note that, although aspects of gender stereotypes, which do not vary from one culture to the other, are emphasized, it is not possible to consider the conceptualization of gender identity independent of cultural structure. Since gender implies cultural and social meanings attributed to being a man and women, it must vary from one culture to the other to a certain extent. Because meanings attributed to women and men are different in each culture.¹⁷ On the other hand, stereotypes related to individual's gender identity differ according to his/her race, social class he/she is a member of, or other demographic characteristics (e.g. education level, income level etc.). For instance, Browne argues that stereotypes related to gender identity are related to each country's religious structure, urbanization rate and the education opportunities provided to women.¹⁸ According to Browne, in countries, where the education level is low, gender identity stereotypes are generally formed on the basis of more traditional gender roles. Also, religious structure of the country has a determinant role in these stereotypes.

In addition to this, an individual's identity has an integrated structure with numerous qualities and aspects, which interact with each other in a very complicated manner. In other words, an individual, who is subject to stereotypes, prejudices or discriminative behaviours, may also confront stereotypes, prejudices or discriminative behaviours related to his/her social class, age or nationality. Therefore, addressing the problem in the context of a single identity is either oversimplifying it or failing to analyse it.¹⁹ In addition to this, the industrialization and development of capitalism across the world brought along a new and modern

¹³ BROVERMAN, I.K. et. al.: Sex-Role Stereotypes: A Current Appraisal. In *Journal of Social Issues*, 1972, Vol. 28, No. 2, p. 63. [online]. [2017-12-12]. Available at: <goo.gl/xXmEhg>.

¹⁴ See: WILLIAMS, J. E., BEST, D. L.: *Measuring Sex Stereotypes: A Thirty-Nation Study*. California : Sage Publications, 1982.

¹⁵ DÖKMEN, Z.: *Toplumsal Cinsiyet Sosyal Psikolojik Açıklamalar*. İstanbul : Remzi Books, 2012, p. 108.

¹⁶ WILLIAMS, J.E., SATTERWHITE, R.C., BEST, D.L.: Pancultural Gender Stereotypes Revisited: The Five Factor Model. In *Sex Roles*, 1999, Vol. 40, No. 7, p. 513. [online]. [2017-12-12]. Available at: <goo.gl/Rfw5p>.

¹⁷ DÖKMEN, Z.: *Toplumsal Cinsiyet Sosyal Psikolojik Açıklamalar*. İstanbul : Remzi Books, 2012, p. 109.

¹⁸ BROWNE, B.A.: Gender Stereotypes in Advertising on Children's Television in the 1990s: A Cross-National Analysis. In *Journal of Advertising*. 1998, Vol. 27, N. 1, p. 85. [online]. [2017-12-12]. Available at: <goo.gl/K8nhYW>.

¹⁹ CHANCER, L.S., WATKINS, B.X.: *Cinsiyet, İrk ve Sınıf*. İstanbul : Babil Publishing, 2013, p. 23.

order of gender differences. Just as a man, who works and earns a living for the family, is considered superior to an unemployed and single man, a businessman started to be considered as superior to a worker man, urban women superior to countrywoman, white Western men superior to Eastern 'ethnic'.²⁰ Based on this perspective, it is important to take inequality relations, which have a determinant quality on these stereotypes, also into consideration, for determining stereotypes related to gender identity.

Gender identity stereotypes are not only intended for the opposite sex. An individual may have stereotypes for other persons of the same sex with him/her, even have self-stereotypes. For instance, in Turkey, in a study conducted by²¹ on gender identity stereotypes and role differences between men and women, participants were asked to mark status and characteristics related to domestic works, occupation behaviour, appearance and attribute²² to associate them with a specific gender. Participants were given four options, namely, 'woman', 'men', 'suitable for both genders' 'not suitable for either gender' for association. Among the results of the study, while taking care of the child when it becomes ill, preparing meals for children, cooking, washing dishes are attributes which are associated with most participants, business follow-up at public enterprises, doing house repairs, arranging the budget of the house, acting as the head of the family were among the most common domestic activities, associated with masculinity according to the participants. In this context, the study suggests that both genders exhibit a tendency similar to each other in separating occupation - domestic works with an understanding that is shaped on the basis of gender. According to Vatandaş, the similarity between the opinions of male and female participants about feminine and masculine jobs, become meaningful as a remarkable finding since it indicates that gender roles in the relevant fields are accepted for both sides.

Also, social inequality between genders has an effect on the nature of stereotypes. For instance, in a study conducted by Rosenkratz et al., it was determined that men characterise themselves with typical attributes such as independence, objectivity, logic, effectiveness, passion, self-confidence; while women characterise themselves with typical attributes such as compliance, interest in external appearance, need of security.²³ However, when subjects were asked to state which characteristics are more valuable, a majority of both men and women stated that male characteristics are more valuable. On this subject, Bilgin suggests that the effect of stereotypes on social differentiation is not limited to giving individuals, who negate the out-group and dignify the groups of belonging, a sense of difference, but some out-groups, who are subject to discrimination for a long time, also share these characteristics attributed to them.²⁴ Accordingly, these individuals, who are subject to discrimination for a long time, may change their self-image in the direction of these stereotypes, and start to feel that this is a form of discrimination. In other words, those who are targets of stereotype, may exhibit behaviours, which are in accordance with the expectations of others, and social representations as the manifestation of this set of perceptual expectations, in a mechanism, which resembles the Pygmalion effect.²⁵ When this emphasis of Bilgin is considered within the context of the study conducted by Rosenkratz et. al., it would not be wrong to suggest that women adopt stereotypes related to women, which are always reproduced by social structure, and they do not feel discrimination with regard to these stereotypes.

²⁰ SANCAR, S.: Masculinity. In ECEVIT, Y., KARKINER, N. (eds.): *Toplumsal Cinsiyet Çalışmaları*. Eskişehir : Anadolu University Publishing, 2013, p. 170.

²¹ VATANDAŞ, C.: Toplumsal Cinsiyet ve Cinsiyet Rollerinin Algılanışı. In *Sosyoloji Konferansları*, 2007, Vol. 35, p. 44. [online]. [2018-11-21]. Available at: < <https://bit.ly/2KY4IR0> >.

²² The concept of attribute given in the study refers to an individual's acknowledging and adopting value judgements, beliefs and prejudices about the individual himself/herself and the others prevalent in the society. These characteristics, which are called attributes, influence not only the manner in which individual understands and evaluates himself/herself, but also individual's relations with other individuals throughout their lives.

²³ ROSENKRANTZ, P. et al.: Sex-Role Stereotypes and Self-Concepts in College Students. In *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 1968, Vol. 32, No. 3, p. 287. [online]. [2017-12-12]. Available at: <goo.gl/jx1lMe>.

²⁴ BİLGİN, N.: *Sosyal Bilimlerin Kavşağında Kimlik Sorunu*. İzmir : Ege Publishing, 1994, p. 182.

²⁵ For more information see: MERTON, R.K.: The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy. In *The Antioch Review*, 1948, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 193-210.

Deaux & Lewis²⁶ argue that studies conducted on gender stereotypes (e.g. by Rosenkratz et.al.²⁷, Broverman²⁸, Spence et.al.²⁹, Williams and Best³⁰, Williams and Satterwhite and Best³¹) essentially reveal two types of behavioural patterns on the part of women and men. In these studies subjects are of the opinion that women are more intimate and expressive than men, while men act more rationally and competitively than women. Also, it is emphasized that various gender stereotypes are centred upon different personality traits. Therefore, it can be suggested that thinking about gender identity stereotypes implies thinking about references about individual's gender, role behaviours and appearance although understanding of femininity and masculinity.³²

Stereotypes based on gender identity refer to unfounded beliefs about men and women. Also, expectations play a significant role in this process. Since individuals categorize men and women through different qualities, they have different expectations about different genders. When they confront a situation, which is contrary to their expectations, they justify them with different reasons depending on the gender.

For instance, in research conducted by Deaux and Emsweiler with the participation of Purdue University students, subjects listened to different audio records, in which various women and men are performing masculine works associated with men with tools and feminine domestic chores associated with women.³³ After this, subjects were asked to evaluate the performance of the man or woman, who performed the duty, based on various factors, such as skill or luck. Whether it was skill or luck, which effected the performance of *stimulus person*, was analysed according to the answers given by the subjects. According to the research, subjects were of the opinion that the success of men, who performed masculine duties, depended more on skill, while a similar performance in work, which they knew was carried out by a woman, was incidental. Only female subjects estimated that women could perform better in feminine duties. Therefore, it was determined that men are considered more skilful than men. When the performance of different sexes was equal, that is, in completely equal conditions between genders, subjects considered it more appropriate to vote for men rather than women. This study is significant since it indicates how stereotypes about gender differences can affect expectations and causal attributions of individuals. In addition to this, Deaux and Emswiller argued that the manners in which male and female subjects judge stimulus person are quite similar, and gender stereotypes are not specific to a single gender, but men and women share the stereotypes equally.³⁴ In this regard, just as stereotypes about women force female individuals to act in accordance with certain expectations, stereotypes about men create the same pressure for men. Therefore, although it is observed that the content of stereotypes about women is more negative, stereotypes about men also affect individuals equally.

²⁶ DEAUX, K., LEWIS, L.: Structure of Gender Stereotypes: Interrelationships Among Components and Gender Label. In *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1984, Vol. 46, No. 5, p. 992. [online]. [2017-12-12]. Available at: <goo.gl/kkmVbV>.

²⁷ For more information see: ROSENKRANTZ, P., VOGEL, S., BEE, H., BROVERMAN, I., DONALD, M. Sex-Role Stereotypes and Self-Concepts in College Students. In *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 1968, Vol. 32, No. 3, p. 287-295.

²⁸ See: BROVERMAN, I.K. et al.: Sex-Role Stereotypes: A Current Appraisal. In *Journal of Social Issues*, 1972, Vol. 28, No. 2, p. 59-78.

²⁹ See: SPENCE, J.T., HELMREICH, R., STAPP, J.: Ratings of Self and Peers on Sex-Role Attributes and Their Relationship to Self-Esteem and Conceptions of Masculinity and Femininity. In *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1975, Vol. 32, No. 1, p. 29-39.

³⁰ See: WILLIAMS, J. E., BEST, D. L.: *Measuring Sex Stereotypes: A Thirty-Nation Study*. California : Sage Publications, 1982.

³¹ See also: WILLIAMS, J.E., SATTERWHITE, R.C., BEST, D.L.: Pancultural Gender Stereotypes Revisited: The Five Factor Model. In *Sex Roles*, 1999, Vol. 40, No. 7, p. 513-525.

³² DEAUX, K., LEWIS, L.: Structure of Gender Stereotypes: Interrelationships Among Components and Gender Label. In *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1984, Vol. 46, No. 5, p. 992. [online]. [2017-12-12]. Available at: <goo.gl/kkmVbV>.

³³ DEAUX, K., EMSWILLER, T.: Explanations of Successful Performance on Sex-Linked Tasks: What is Skill for the Male is Luck for the Female. In *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1974, Vol. 29, No. 1, p. 81-84. [online]. [2017-12-12]. Available at: <goo.gl/83KmtP>.

³⁴ DEAUX, K., EMSWILLER, T.: Explanations of Successful Performance on Sex-Linked Tasks: What is Skill for the Male is Luck for the Female. In *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1974, Vol. 29, No. 1, p. 84. [online]. [2017-12-12]. Available at: <goo.gl/83KmtP>.

There are other studies, in which participants were asked to evaluate the performance of men and women in different fields. Male and female writers³⁵, male and female artists³⁶, male and female candidates who apply for foreign education programmes³⁷ are among the examples used in this research. In these studies, it is observed that same performances of men and women are not voted equally. For instance, in a study conducted by Deaux and Taynor, students, who applied for a foreign education programme, were asked to vote on the competence and intelligence of a *stimulus person*.³⁸ Results of the study indicate that a male stimulus person received more votes from students although high performance of male and female stimulus persons is equal. On the other hand, women received more than men in low performance categories of stimulus person. In this context, researchers suggest that study results reveal the fact that equal levels of performance by both gender groups, were not voted for by the subjects equally.

On the other hand, differences between stereotypes about men and women, can be addressed within the framework of perceptual differences between internal groups and external groups. According to this, an individual is more inclined to favour an individual, who is a member of an internal group (e.g. a woman's favouring a woman, a man's favouring a man), and exhibit discriminative behaviours to the member of external behaviour (e.g. a men's discriminative behaviours towards women, women's discriminative behaviours towards men). For instance, in a study conducted by Lindeman, it was determined that both women and men perceive their own groups more positively than the other group, but men perceive their own group and themselves more positively compared to women.³⁹ In their study, Maltby and Day determined that femininity in women, masculinity in men, are perceived more positively by members of the relevant sex, and negatively by the members of the opposite sex.⁴⁰ In another study, Graves & Powell analysed in-group bias, and determined that women are more inclined to adopt in-group bias in the evaluation of candidates applying for a job.⁴¹

On the other hand, some researchers (e.g. by Locksley et.al.⁴², Locksley et.al.⁴³) suggest that an individual's knowledge on a specific subject may decrease the effect of gender stereotypes. In this context, in the study conducted by Locksley et. al.⁴⁴, subjects were given basic gender labels, and an explanation for three behaviours, which bear the characteristics of both self-confident and unconfident behaviour. Following this, subjects were asked 'individuals with which characteristics would act similarly in the same situation.' As a result of the research, it was determined that information provided to subjects would help induce the desired judgement, and this can be more effective than various gender labels. According to the study, it was determined that gender stereotypes about an individual decrease as the individual's personal characteristics are known by others more.

³⁵ For more information see: GOLDBERG, P.: Are Women Prejudiced Against Women? In *Trans-Action*, 1968, Vol. 5, No. 5, p. 28-30.

³⁶ DEAUX, K., TAYNOR, J.: Evaluation of Male and Female Ability: Bias Works Two Ways. In *Psychological Reports*, 1973, Vol. 32, No. 1, p. 261. [online]. [2017-12-12]. Available at: <goo.gl/4YM3Ma>.

³⁷ See: PHETERSON, G.I., KEISLER, S.B., GOLBERG, P.A.: Evaluation of the Performance of Women as a Function of Their Sex, Achievement, and Personal History. In *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1971, Vol. 19, No. 1, p. 114-118.

³⁸ DEAUX, K., TAYNOR, J.: Evaluation of Male and Female Ability: Bias Works Two Ways. In *Psychological Reports*, 1973, Vol. 32, No.1, p. 261. [online]. [2017-12-12]. Available at: <goo.gl/4YM3Ma>.

³⁹ LINDEMAN, M.: Ingroup Bias, Self Enhancement and Group Identification. In *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 1997, Vol. 27, No. 3, p. 337. [online]. [2018-11-21]. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2yr0bws>.

⁴⁰ MALTBY, J., DAY, L.: Sex Role Identity, Attitudes Toward the Opposite Sex and Same Sex, and Defense Style. In *The Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 1999, Vol. 160, No.3, p. 381. [online]. [2018-11-21]. Available at: < https://bit.ly/2OAGuwm>.

⁴¹ GRAVES, L.M., POWELL, G.N.: 'The Effect of Sex Similarity on Recruiters' Evaluations of Actual Applicants: A Test of The Similarity Attraction Paradigm. In *Personnel Psychology*, 1995, Vol. 48, No. 1, p. 85. [online]. [2017-12-12]. Available at: < https://bit.ly/2CulZtY>.

⁴² For more information see: LOCKSLEY, A. et al.: Sex Stereotypes and Social Judgment. In *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1980, Vol. 39, No. 5, p. 821-831.

⁴³ See also: LOCKSLEY, A. et al.: On the Effect of Social Stereotypes on Judgments of Individuals: A Comment on Grant and Holme's 'The Integration of Implicit Personality Theory Schemas and Stereotypic Images'. In *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 1982, Vol. 45, No. 4, p. 270-273.

⁴⁴ LOCKSLEY, A. et al.: Sex Stereotypes and Social Judgment. In *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1980, Vol. 39, No. 5, p. 830. [online]. [2017-12-12]. Available at: <goo.gl/8xRjqr>.

In another research, Deaux and Lewis conducted three different experiments to understand the relationship between the various constituents of gender stereotypes and gender labels.⁴⁵ In the first experiment, information about the constituent of a gender stereotype (especially masculine and feminine versions of characteristics such as role behaviour, character, physical appearance and occupation) were provided to male and female university students, and they were asked to make judgements about other gender characteristics of a stimulus person (behaviours related to gender, physical characteristics, occupation, whether the individual is heterosexual or homosexual). The information provided to subjects, was changed sometimes in a manner that it is consistent with the gender of the stimulus person, and sometimes in a manner that it is inconsistent with the gender of the stimulus person. In the third experiment, information about each constituent was provided to subjects from different experiment groups sequentially, and subjects were asked to predict the other constituent of the relevant stereotype. In this way, researchers aimed to evaluate the reciprocal influence of constituents. Research results indicated that information about one stereotype constituent may contain another constituent, information about a constituent may be determinant in the definition of gender, and physical appearance, which plays a dominant role in gender stereotypes, may contain other constituents.

Based on the above-mentioned research results, it can be argued that each of the constituents, which form gender stereotypes, are not of equal strength. Therefore, while certain constituents (such as appearance, physical characteristics) play a more significant role in the formation of gender stereotypes, some constituents (e.g. social status, occupation, sex) may have less effect in the formation of stereotypes. On the other hand, Deaux & Lewis⁴⁶ suggest that the relation between gender stereotype and physical appearance can also be observed in other constituents such as role behaviour or occupation. For instance, in a study conducted by Vatandaş in Turkey, feminine and masculine characteristics associated with domestic role distribution and occupations of women and men were addressed as determinants of gender identity stereotypes.⁴⁷ However, in this research, it was determined that, when information about physical appearance was provided to the subjects, they made use of information on physical appearance while making inferences about other characteristics of the stimulus person. In this respect, researchers underline the fact that the effect of physical appearance constituents cannot be underestimated for understanding gender stereotypes.

Therefore, it can be argued that the impression we form when we first see an individual, is based on the physical appearance constituent. From this point of view, physical and behavioural characteristics of a perceived individual affect the content and usability of stereotypes about the individual. For instance, individuals, who look more feminine or masculine physically, create an expectation about these characteristics. An athletic man may be considered to be a more adventurous, strong and independent person compared to a curvaceous man⁴⁸. Therefore, it can be suggested that an individual's physical appearance is closely related to stereotypes, and especially women's physical appearance, their beauty is brought to the forefront more. Because, the stereotype, which stipulates that women must look well-groomed and pretty, is stronger.⁴⁹

Connell emphasizes the fact that clothes are also determinant in terms of giving an idea about both physical appearance constituents and cultural coding.⁵⁰ According to Connell, women and men, whose physical differences are not at the forefront significantly, are differentiated by means of clothes. Women are categorized with skirts, while men are categorized with trousers. Similarly, Bullough and Bullough also draw attention to the relationship between gender stereotypes and clothing style.⁵¹ According to researchers, clothes are the most fundamental gender identity indicator, which manifests the personal preferences of an

⁴⁵ DEAUX, K., LEWIS, L.: Structure of Gender Stereotypes: Interrelationships Among Components and Gender Label. In *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1984, Vol. 46, No. 5. [online]. [2017-12-12]. Available at: <goo.gl/kkmVbV>.

⁴⁶ DEAUX, K., LEWIS, L.: Structure of Gender Stereotypes: Interrelationships Among Components and Gender Label. In *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1984, Vol. 46, No. 5, p. 1003. [online]. [2017-12-12]. Available at: <goo.gl/kkmVbV>.

⁴⁷ VATANDAŞ, C.: Toplumsal Cinsiyet ve Cinsiyet Rollerinin Algılanışı. In *Sosyoloji Konferansları*, 2007, Vol. 35, p. 29-56. [online]. [2018-11-21]. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2KY4lR0>.

⁴⁸ DÖKMEN, Z.: *Toplumsal Cinsiyet Sosyal Psikolojik Açıklamalar*. İstanbul : Remzi Books, 2012, p. 111.

⁴⁹ DÖKMEN, Z.: *Toplumsal Cinsiyet Sosyal Psikolojik Açıklamalar*. İstanbul : Remzi Books, 2012, p. 112.

⁵⁰ CONNELL, R.W.: *Toplumsal Cinsiyet ve İktidar*. İstanbul : Ayrıntı Publishing, 1998, p. 109.

⁵¹ BULLOUGH, V.L., BULLOUGH, B.: *Cross Dressing, Sex and Gender*. Pennsylvania : University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993, p. 312.

individual immediately. While femininity has been coded with skirts throughout a large part of history, and masculinity with trousers, codes constructed with an individual's style (colours, models preferred, fashion trends followed by the individual), sexual orientation (on which men prefer wearing earrings, whether women use clothes or accessories dictated by society etc.) clothes specific to one's job and occupation (nurse uniform, kitchen apron or overalls) also give hints about conformity to gender identity.

Another aspect, which can be addressed within the framework of physical appearance and behavioural constituent as well as dressing style, is non-verbal behavioural patterns. In this context, it is argued that women and men are also differentiated through non-verbal behaviours and this difference shows similarities in persons of both low and high status. According to this, women's being more sensitive in non-verbal behaviours is the result of their having a lower status in society. Because people of low-status are supposed to be more sensitive to facial expressions of people of high status, and adapt themselves accordingly. Therefore, low-status individuals are more cautious in their behaviours, they have a more tense body posture, they keep physical distance more, touch others less, make eye contact without looking people in the eye, averting their gaze and watching, smile more, express their emotions and open themselves more. It was determined that, compared to men, women behave more like these low-status individuals. As a result, it can be suggested that, in terms of using non-verbal behaviours, men act like high-status individuals, while women act like low-status individuals.⁵²

On the other hand, Deaux and Lewis argue that, results of their research also support Locksley's opinion in a sense, and information about the determinant characteristics of a stimulus person has a significant effect on the judgements of the subjects.⁵³ However, research emphasizes the fact that this does not show the insignificance of stereotypes, various data collected can be gathered under one stereotype umbrella, and this connection must be comprehended in order to understand gender identity stereotypes. Researchers also underline the fact that investigating a single constituent isolated from others, and showing how gender effect increases through this means, can neither neutralize gender nor provide an understanding of stereotype's prevalence and durability. From this perspective, it is important to take the relations between the constituents of gender into account in order to understand the formation of stereotypes and creating solutions.

4. Conclusion

The behaviours and appearance of each individual, who is involved in the network of relationships, represent an individual's gender identity in an integrated structure, components of which complement each other. Societies, which attach importance to this, pay attention to preventing any process, which causes confusing individuals' behaviours and appearances according to specific gender, through various control mechanisms. Thus, gender characteristics manifest themselves with common aspects across the world. Although, the strict manner of categorizing behaviours and appearance of an individual according to gender has softened in today's world.⁵⁴ Differentiating men and women from each other by certain behavioural and appearance patterns, and role expectations, which develop accordingly, constitute the basis for gender identity stereotypes. These stereotypes are formed from the moment an individual is first seen, and directly affect the interpersonal communication process. Therefore, the stereotypes in question may turn into barriers for the interpersonal communication process and lead to conflicts in the communication process. In this case, reciprocal production of meaning, which is the basis of the interpersonal communication process, becomes impossible.

Many studies, which are mentioned above, are of great importance, since they indicate the fact that existing gender inequality does not change although the content of stereotypes may vary from one culture to another. The main reason for this situation is the existence of gender inequalities in all social structures

⁵² DÖKMEN, Z.: *Toplumsal Cinsiyet Sosyal Psikolojik Açıklamalar*. İstanbul : Remzi Books, 2012, p. 165.

⁵³ DEaux, K., LEWIS, L.: Structure of Gender Stereotypes: Interrelationships Among Components and Gender Label. In *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1984, Vol. 46, No. 5, p. 1002. [online]. [2017-12-12]. Available at: <goo.gl/kkmVbV>.

⁵⁴ VATANDAŞ, C.: Toplumsal Cinsiyet ve Cinsiyet Rollerinin Algılanışı. In *Sosyoloji Konferansları*, 2007, Vol. 35, p. 44. [online]. [2018-11-21]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2KY4lRO>>.

and the fact that these inequalities are learned by all members of the society regardless of their sex. Therefore, it can be argued that, women and men have gender identity related stereotypes that manifest gender inequality although contents of these stereotypes vary.

On the other hand, research conducted suggests that women have more stereotypes about women, men have more positive stereotypes about men, and the reason of behaviour is justified based on the individual characteristics of the in-group. In addition to this, it can be argued that information about the individual has a significant effect on the stereotype. According to this, as the information about the individual and the level of contact established with the individual increases, commitment to gender identity stereotypes decreases. Because as characteristics specific to the individual are known, stereotypes become specific to that individual only. Also, each constituent, which construct gender stereotypes, determine stereotypes at different levels. Some of these constituents (e.g. physical appearance) may be more determined on the formation of stereotypes.

When all the features of gender identity stereotypes are taken into account, it is observed that stereotypes in the interpersonal communication process have a multi-dimensional structure. For this reason, how stereotypes, which starts with the beginning of the first encounter and directly affects the communication process, play a determinant role according to the gender of the individual is manifested clearly. Factors such as increasing the level of knowledge about the individual or incident, who/which is subject to stereotype, neutralizing the determinant constituent, which causes the stereotype, individual's in-group bias and distance to out-group are of great importance for decreasing the effect of these stereotypes on the communication process.

Finally, it must be emphasized that trying to understand gender identity stereotypes in the interpersonal communication process through roles, which are based on gender differences, could lead to a one-dimensional evaluation. These stereotypes, which are confronted in the interpersonal communication process, are under the influence of several factors such as the social class which the individual is a member of, society's view on differences, historical background, religious and economic structure. Also, the way an individual communicates with others (manner of speaking and listening, body language etc.) affects the interpersonal communication process as well as all these factors. Therefore, all of these factors must be addressed in an integrated manner in order to be able to evaluate the determinant effect of gender identity stereotypes in the interpersonal communication process.

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Report of HLEG on Fake News and Online Disinformation

ABSTRACT

This report refers about the policy initiatives to counter fake news and disinformation spread online and the techniques of the European Commission to prevent this issue. The HLEG, a high-level group of experts created by the European Commission in 2018, prepared a report with best practices and suitable responses to disinformation. The main responses were divided into five pillars as transparency, media and information literacy, empowering users and journalists, safeguard of the diversity of the European news media ecosystem and continued research.

KEY WORDS

Fake news. Disinformation. HLEG. European commission. Report. Media literacy.

In the current media situation that is connected with loads of information, opinions and news it is really important to decode fake news, hoaxes and online disinformation. The world should take care about the flow of information coming to people who are not able to recognize the truth from illusion, the good and bad sides of issues. One of the most important topics is to define Fake News and Online Disinformation and what they stand for. Both terms have a shared understanding of disinformation as a phenomenon that goes well beyond the term fake news. Disinformation can include all forms of false, inaccurate, or misleading information designed, presented and promoted to intentionally cause public harm or for profit. These terms overcome each other. Fake news and Online Disinformation are the main topics of a high-level group of experts (the HLEG) that was set up in January 2018 by the European Commission. There are 39 members of the High Level Expert Group focused on fake news chaired by Professor Madeleine De Cock Buning. Their mission is to advise on policy initiatives to counter fake news and disinformation spread online. The outcome of the HLEG is a report with practices and principles how to suitably respond to Fake news and Online disinformation. The report is divided into several chapters.

Defining a problem

Media and the freedom of speech are tightly connected and they are part of the democratic system in various countries. That means that human beings can get various information from social networks, media, or public opinions. All this information sometimes leads to disinformation. However, disinformation represents risks and threats that we have to bear and collectively confront to support full democratic, societal and economical or technological progress while respecting and accepting freedom of speech. Current debates about fake news should be discussed in a way, which includes all forms and a spectrum of information types. First of all, we can mention low-risk forms starting with honest mistakes by reporters, partisan political discourse

ending with bait headlines. Secondly, high-risk forms include the instance of foreign states or domestic groups that would undermine the political process in the EU using malicious fabrications, infiltration of grassroots groups etc. The risk of harm is serious following threats to democratic political processes, such as health, education, finance and other sectors. HLEG reports avoid the term fake news for two reasons: the term cannot cover the whole complex problem of disinformation because usually the content is not fully fake but used for astroturfing, manipulation, trolling, targeted advertising and much more. It can involve an array of digital behaviour that is about circulation of disinformation like spanning, posting, commenting, sharing etc. Moreover, the term fake news is according to the report also misleading by politicians and their supporters, who use it to dismiss coverage that they find disagreeable. If we are talking about the term disinformation, this term includes forms of speech that fall outside already illegal forms of speech such as hate speech, incitement to violence or defamation but can nonetheless be harmful. These are current problems with wider political, social, civic and media issues in Europe. Many of them are slightly moving to digital media and have these four aspects: the evolving nature of disinformation, dissemination patterns and techniques requiring a regularly updated and evidence-based understanding of the scale, scope and impact of the problem in order to calibrate appropriate responses.

Measures already taken by stakeholders

As we described earlier, digital disinformation is a multifaceted problem that is trying to be solved. It is related to many sections like platforms, news publishers, broadcasters, fact-checkers and civil society. Good practices tend to fall into three major categories: transparency, trust-enhancement, and media and information literacy.

The first category that is the most frequent type of intervention tends to challenge disinformation by producing initiatives which helps to create resilience among citizens and empower the various actors impacted. For example, online platforms try to identify and remove illegitimate accounts, integrate signals for credibility and trustworthiness in ranking algorithms and include recommendations of alternative content. Then, they attempt to de-monetize for-profit fabrication of false information and collaborate with independent source and also fact-checking organisations.

The second category – trust-enhancing practices and algorithm changes include various types of measures that leverage artificial intelligence and machine learning to tackle specific facets of the disinformation phenomenon. In this case, for example press organisations are looking into other measures, such as credibility indexes. Print press organisations and broadcasters are making an effort to enforce certain trust-enhancing practices such as pointing to good public sources in the digital environment. Journalism guidelines are issued by individual news media, international organisations such as the Federation of Journalists. The content is devoted to deontological codes, ethics and standards to guarantee quality in the methods in which news is produced.

The purpose of the third category Media and information literacy is to bolster prevention and to reduce the appeal of disinformation and conspiracy theories. In this area civil society organisations are really active. In particular, they develop media literacy actions and programmes including experimental collaborations with other stakeholders. The aim is to help the younger generations to become conscious consumers of news within the new digital ecosystems.

Key principles and general, short and long-term objectives

One of the key principles is the freedom of expression, it is guaranteed by several documents not only in the European Union but also in constitutions, international pacts and it is the fundamental right of human beings. Both the Charter and the Convention affirm Europe's particular constitutional commitment to freedom of expression and the right to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. In terms of general objectives the aim of responses should be to increase the long-term resilience of EU citizens, communities, news organisations and to help them proactively recognize various forms of disinformation. Secondly, to ensure responses to disinformation, which require constant monitoring of the evolving nature of the problems at hand and evaluate their efficiency. The HLEG believes that the collaboration of stakeholders will help to create the best responses, minimize legal regulatory interventions and will avoid politically dictated privatization.

How to respond and react?

The HLEG has decided to be focused on five intervention areas by distinguishing between actions designed around five pillars:

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

If we are talking about the key element in the response to digital disinformation, HLEG considers to be transparency. As a cross-cutting issue that concerns the whole digital media value chain and aims at making news production is transparency opaque with a view to supporting users' ability to recognize between journalistic quality content and various kinds of disinformation. It may strengthen the impact of media literacy actions by providing users and also help to provide more information about factual claims. According to that, users can better evaluate the veracity of the news they access online. Overall, the European Commission with Member States, should support cooperation between media organisations, academic researchers, advertising industry and civil society. Such cooperation should in particular focus on transparency of source funding, then online news sources and journalistic processes and fact-checking, source-checking with verification practices.

Media Information Literacy (MIL) has in this digital age of media acquired a strategic importance for digital citizenship such as basic educational competencies. It is a starting point for developing critical thinking, personal practices for discourse online and also offline world. MIL includes an active responsible participation in the online public sphere. The speed of change is huge and that is the reason why nowadays the information age requires life-long learning. HLEG reports state it is a preventive, rather than a reactive solution. For media and information literacy to be effective, it must be implemented on a massive scale in school curricula and in teacher training curricula, with clear methods of evaluation and cross-country comparison. These key competences are expected to serve as a long-standing reference for all future educational and curricula reforms in the EU and Member State levels. According to HLEG in an area of Media and Information Literacy should be effectively working and educating in the fields on regional, international and cross-country level to cause awareness. HLEG also underlines the importance of regular reporting about this issue from Member States and all relevant stakeholders in order to foster evaluation.

Empowering users of platforms' services, both citizens and media professionals, is a key element to increase the resilience of society to various forms of disinformation. To fulfill this goal it is necessary to develop and make available tools that will show quality signals for example identity labels, content labels, source transparency indicators etc. Increasing the users' control over the content they can search online through the online filtering system aimed at facilitating the display of the widest possible range of relevant news and information. HLEG tries to build an effective fast-checking system with tools that provides users relevant information in real time about possibly false information online, its sources and other relevant elements of trending and viral spread. Tools should look like a platform (e. g. applications, plug-ins etc.), or trainings for journalists in order to reduce risks of disinformation making its way into their reporting activities. HLEG considers to be an effective tool also innovative media projects funded by the private sector. Projects should be oriented to empower journalists and extend them into other Member States. Another way to deal with disinformation are artificial intelligence, augmented newsrooms, conversation journalism, language technologies and big data for media.

Diversity and sustainability of the news media ecosystem is also an important part of achieving the common goal, that can be hopefully achieved without direct or indirect censorship. It presupposes a critical, engaged and well-informed readership. This is an area which requires a commitment by public authorities to defend fundamental principles, freedom of expression, free press and media pluralism. Public authorities should commit to provide an enabling environment for substantial media pluralism through a combination of the basic right to free expression and diverse information and also support of the private sector of media. Press freedom should be set as a journalistic standard. Diversity and sustainability of the news media ecosystem is also important part of achieving the common goal. The EU needs to step up its role in terms of media innovation, one of the projects can be The Horizon 2020 programme that should include more specific media-related calls in general and for innovations dealing with disinformation. HLEG also says that at the national level it is not appropriate to have the governmental control of digital media and digital disinformation. Independence of media is imperative for Europe's democratic foundations.

Mentioning process and evaluation, the HLEG commission believes that, as a first step, the best responses are likely to be those driven by multi-stakeholders and their collaboration. European Commission is considered to be the one that can promote a general, European-wide Code of Practices reflecting the perspective roles and responsibilities, especially online platforms, media organisations, fact-checking and research organisations. In the Code of Practices should be established such a multi-stakeholder approach as: clearly identify the target stakeholders and aim for the widest possible uptake across the EU, set out clear rules and provide a periodical review in the light of the progress and efficiency, establish a mechanism for an independent and permanent evaluation of the measures taken by the parties to ensure its implementation, ensure coordination with EU Centres for research on disinformation, take stock of what exists already across all stakeholders, identify gaps and fill them with a particular view on platforms, not replace existing self-regulatory systems, consider existing mechanisms of implementation, for example regarding trust and transparency indicators, and synchronize with them. These key principles were agreed by HLEG as a starting point for defining specific rules for the proposed Code of Practice. The principles are attached to platforms. They are referring to adapting their advertising policies whilst preventing incentives that leads to disinformation. Platforms should also ensure the transparency and public accountability of users's data for advertising and also realise that sponsored content is distinguished from other content. They should take the necessary measures to enable privacy-compliant access to data for fact-checking and research activities and make available their users advanced settings controls to empower them to customise their online experience. Important is also cooperation with public and private European news outlets, where together they take effective measures to improve the visibility of trustworthy news and where it is appropriate, trending news items should be accompanied by related news suggestions. Platforms should provide user-friendly tools to enable users to link up with trusted fact-checking sources and allow users to exercise the right to reply. Those platforms that apply flagging and trust systems that rely on users should design safeguards against abuse by users and all should cooperate by providing relevant data on the functioning of their services including data for independent investigation in order to find a common approach to address the amplification of disinformation.

The HLEG advises the Commission, in the report, against simplistic solutions. They should avoid any kind of censorship. The HLEG's recommendations aim instead to provide short-term responses to the most pressing problems, longer-term responses to increase societal resilience to disinformation, and a framework for ensuring that the effectiveness of these responses is continuously evaluated, while new evidence-based responses are developed.

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Google is Introducing a New Feature for Fact Checking

ABSTRACT

The article reviews the recent introduction of Google's Fact Check Tool available in the Google News section. The tool is focused on the examination of articles that claim to be correct by checking the facts stated in the articles, based on an algorithmic process in cooperation with review systems. The Fact Check Tool is currently in beta version, accessible on certain websites in the United States and the United Kingdom. The algorithmic process is not yet final and requires improvements in order to state an objective approach towards the reviewing of articles without human affecting the checking.

KEY WORDS

Google. Fact-checking. Tools. Data+. Search.

Claims of false information spread within social media are on the rise, as citizen journalism and media sharing, of videos in particular, is within reach of the general population and not limited to large organisations, often with special interests as they once were. Some online portals eager to generate traffic and translate that into revenue often publish articles without checking the facts, therefore their articles likely incline to misinform their readers.

Google, the largest search engine on the Internet, has launched a new tool that purports to check the reliability and truthful accuracy of online articles. The "Fact Check Tool" is added to the Google News section in a form of a tag, which marks the trustworthiness of the information in the article.

The review of the articles is based on an algorithmic process cooperating with schema.org, ClaimReview Markup, or Share the Fact widget developed by the Duke University Reporters Lab and Jigsaw. The Duke students Lucas Fagan, Ethan Holland, Caroline Wang with mentoring by Professor Jun Yang participated in the Data+ research project aimed at finding a data-driven solution for fact-checking with a focus on creating automated fact-checking.

The research targets the video record of Trump's 2018 State of the Union speech collected from 10 television channels, including CNN, BBC, Fox and MSNBC. To transcribe the audio, the research lab selected the Google Cloud Speech-to-Text API, examining the transcribed sentences. Sentences with less than 0.9% of reliability are unused in the further research study. In the total of 395 sentences transcribed, the transcription quality of 370 sentences is marked as near perfect to perfect. The collected information is sequentially filtered with the Claim Buster API based on their check-worthy factual claims. The following step is to match the 199 check-worthy facts in the Share the Fact database and consequently, the system finds 30 matches, marking them as fact-checked.



PICTURE 1: Data Pipeline, with State of the Union as example

Source: Data Pipeline, with State of the Union as example. [online]. [2018-10-17]. Available at: <https://bigdata.duke.edu/sites/bigdata.duke.edu/files/site-images/Group_12_Exec_Summary_1.pdf>

The purpose of the project is to give an outline of the principle in order to fact-check an audio record and its interpretation in online news portals. The study shows the reliability of the selected sources that are allegedly credible.

The Fact Check tool is not a complete invention. A similar markup has been used for 7 years, mainly to tag the character of articles. The Fact Check tool is currently in beta version and the only way to grant access is to be a fact checker, journalist or researcher.

According to Cong Yu, the goal is to decrease the time consumable locating work done on a specific topic by fact-checkers. Based on Reporters Lab, there are 156 active fact checking organisations worldwide that actively check reports in the domestic language. The Slovak active non-profit organisation is Demagog, funded by Vysehrad Fund, located in Bratislava and its affiliated non-profit organisation with a team of three professional journalists, assisted by students, is located in Prague, and focuses on political discussions marking them as true or false.

Fact checks are currently available only in the United States and the United Kingdom, used by the most recognisable news portals including PolitiFact and Snopes. The question of the public arises about who decides on the truth of the fact or otherwise, public opinion is persuaded by multiple approaches and the judgement of the journalist is likely to be influenced by their subjective attitude to a specific subject. The Fact Check tool requires improvement to acquire general admission from the public, otherwise, the society may mark the tool as purposive and subjective, based on the publisher and its owners, an argument that gains traction when taking in consideration Google's own bias and even analysis of PolitiFact on how they gather and ultimately present their data to favour or hinder an individual's credibility at their discretion.

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Alexandra Alföldiová



The Media Manipulation Initiative: It is Helpful to Clearly Differentiate Between Fake News Intended to Be Satire from Hyper-Partisan News Sites

ABSTRACT

Most of us meet mass media almost every day. We search for information, accept and share them daily. In post-factual time, it is more difficult to focus on and choose from lot of available information, especially when there are various forms of fake news, which some of them are produced strategically and systemically. The *Media Manipulation Initiative* comes with research focused on the definition of fake news, categorization and strategies of intervention.

KEY WORDS

Alternative media. Fake news. Mainstream media. Media manipulation.

The research institute based in New York City called *Data & Society*, which is focused on social and cultural issues arising from data-centric and automated technologies, came up with the *Media Manipulation Initiative*.

In *The Media Manipulation Initiative* researchers are concerned with a phenomenon that is closely related to post-factual time, with fake news. They claim, that fake news has been the subject of newspaper headlines, the special topic of academic journals and the subject of arguing at both ends of the political spectrum since 2016. That is related to the presidential election in U.S. in November of the same year.

Caplan, Hanson and Donovan, authors of this research, based this report on a year of field-based research using stakeholder mapping, discourse and policy analysis, as well as ethnographic and qualitative research of industry groups working to solve issues associated with the phenomenon of fake news.

This report shows, that no single definition of fake news will suffice. Moreover, it attempts to identify different types of fake news. They explore two main uses of the phrase fake news. First of all, fake news as a critique of mainstream media, which is an extension of existing critiques of the media industry made by conservative leaders. And second, fake news as problematic content, which researchers consider as a position advocated by scholars and media-oriented civil society organizations that seek to differentiate fake news from real news and classify different types of fake news.

In the last case, there are three categories of identifying fake news. Firstly, is identifying fake news by intent. That contains two forms of fake news - misinformation and disinformation. While misinformation is spreading false information without intent, disinformation is intentional.

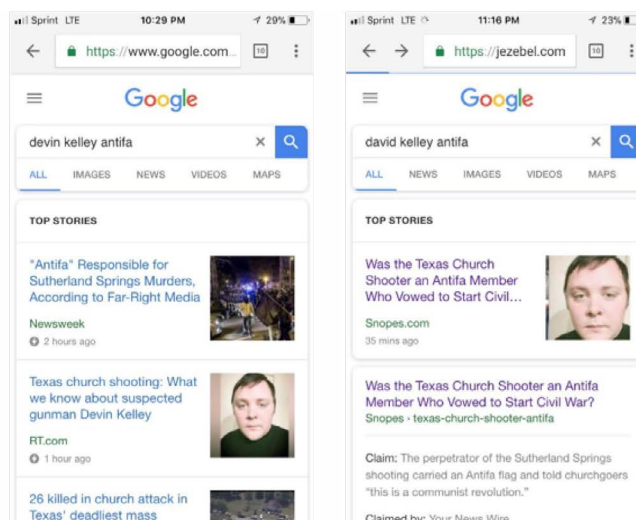
Classifying fake news by type is kind of problematic, considering troubles with sorting content into clear categories. These approaches rightly argue that moderators and censors must respond differently to different types of fake news. In the *Dead Reckoning: Navigating Content Moderation After "Fake News"* we find fake news typology by Mark Verstraete, Derek Bambauer, and Jane R. Bambauer (2017). That contains three types of fake news (hoaxes, propaganda, and trolling), which are intended to deceive, and two types (satire and humor), which are intended as cultural commentary. To establish clear categories of fake news is being complicated, by emerging information about the role of Russian propaganda. As researchers said, it is still helpful, however, to clearly differentiate between fake news, intended to be satire, from hyper-partisan news sites that may spread false content. Last but not least, there are features of fake news that needs to be identified.

The second part of the report includes strategies of intervention, which consists of four emerging strategies: trust and verification/fact-checking, demonetization, de-prioritization, and regulatory approaches.

Trust and verification often rely on defining fake news by intent and/or type. There are also three types of solutions: debunking and fact-checking, coalitions of trusted content brokers, and expanding content moderation programs and policies. Each of them provides a verification of the facts of stories, which may be questionable.

The main strategy for intervention in economic areas is the cutting off advertising, which online is often provided by automatic systems. These systems are based not on which outlet or news brand it will appear in, but of how many clicks or views it will receive.

The main thing in de-prioritizing is "marking" that content, which presents fake news and deprioritizing it from appearing it in news feed or recommendations. Also banning fake accounts, which spread such news. That includes identifying both fake news sources as well as accounts that work to amplify content on their network.



PICTURE 1: Representative search results following Texas shooting

Source: CAPLAN. R., HANSON. L., DONOVAN. J.: *Dead Reckoning: Navigating Content Moderation After "Fake News"*. [online]. [2018-10-17]. Available at: <https://datasociety.net/pubs/oh/DataAndSociety_Dead_Reckoning_2018.pdf>.

Researchers also claim, that many of the disinformation efforts associated with fake news are tied to state-sponsored actions by the Russian government. They also say, that no definition of fake news can cover the enormous fissure in U.S. legal regimes pitting free speech values against invading international cyber-armies or domestic trolls.

The authors of the research acknowledge that market-based solutions cannot mitigate these threats. They think that governments around the world have to and some of them have already been taking steps to address fake news and hate speech online through legislation, hearings, or establishing centers dedicated to the problem of fake news.

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Miroslav Kapec



ABSTRACT

Nowadays initiatives in the fields of media literacy such as youth participation, teacher training and curricular resources, parental support, policy initiatives, and evidence base construction - are very successful in growing the level of the critical thinking of the participants. However, there are still a few areas which need to be guided. Authors Monica Bulger and Patrick Davison make five recommendations for the development of the future of media literacy programming for educators, legislators, technologists, and philanthropists. On the other hand the report also warns against the contemporary treatment of media literacy as a panacea - in the way of how to deal with fake news.

KEY WORDS

Media Literacy. Media Messages. Fake News. Media Manipulation. Media Perspective.

Current research has demonstrated positive outcomes of media literacy initiatives like teacher and parental support, lecturer training, youth participation, policy or curricular resources mainly in the way of linking critical thinking and behavioral change for youth. But on the other hand the authors ask the question: Is media literacy about instilling confidence, about prompting behavior change, or about creating new practices of media creation?

In general, there is not enough evaluated data of media literacy efforts, which we can rely on when we are thinking about future development of the field, but there are a few challenges and expectations we should face, e.g. to discern accuracy, to evaluate bias, engage with information productively, to be an informed voter etc. Outcomes have an impact on measures which impact results. These challenges and expectations were a foundation for Monica Bulger and Patrick Davison who have made five recommendations for the future of media literacy work:

- **Develop a coherent understanding of the media environment.** With new technologies, existing programs should be updated. Responsibility for accessing high-quality and reliable information does not depend on an individual, but on whole institutions and technology platforms. Getting to know the media environment is a basic step to a deeper insight into how education can be leveraged to improve responsible media engagement.
- **Improve cross-disciplinary collaboration.** Understanding media literacy is often connected with narrow, pedagogical theory. But also other fields like social psychology, political science, sociology are producing new research and findings that could enrich media literacy training. Much research dealing with critical thinking or digital literacy etc. are realized outside of the media literacy field. The authors say about the necessity of a proactive attitude in educational activities. Taken together, the report develops a holistic understanding of the structure of the media environment and how individuals navigate it. These findings can then enrich current media literacy education initiatives by identifying how training can impact practice.
- **Leverage the current media crisis to consolidate stakeholders.** According to the authors the new attention on fake news could be one of the reasons for the current media crisis in the US. On the other hand this phenomenon offers a new focus to the field. There is an opportunity to build cross-disciplinary collaboration, but also identifying what is known and what is unknown in the field, and where is the space for innovation. It might help to identify the situation when media literacy might fail, and what the surrounding environment contributes to successful media literate practice. A huge challenge is to find out the suitable form of evaluation of media literacy education and to attract future resources and political support.
- **Prioritize the creation of a national media literacy evidence base.** The authors emphasize the importance of having a centralized and stable base of evaluation data. There are many initiatives and potential political challenges to create such an evidence base, but they all have to face the decentralized nature of schooling and media literacy research in the US. Currently, the UK, Canada and Australia are leaders in media literacy education, policy, and evidence gathering. The alternative, how to reach these standards also in the US according to Bulger and Davison could be a collaborative effort from those major foundations already involved in media literacy and research.
- **Develop curricula for addressing action in addition to interpretation.** Contemporary media literacy efforts are focusing on the ability to address user behavior in addition to interpretation. With an increase in usage of social media a new form of user engagement appeared and new questions about responsibility and control started to arise. Fake news, violent content and hate speech are becoming more and more popular and looking for the right way to interpret such content is more difficult every single day.

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Non-Consensual Sharing of Sexts

ABSTRACT

Nowadays it is very simple to abuse someone's sext or improper photography. The main goal of the research is to reflect behavior of Canadian youth and their reasons for sharing other's sexts. The study focuses on the issue of non-consensual sharing of sexts.

KEY WORDS

Sexting. Sexts. Canadian youth. Non-consensual sharing of sexts.

Canadian youth sharing other's sexts

In February 2018, by the research of the Canadian nonprofit center for digital and media literacy MediaSmarts, in collaboration with the University of Toronto's Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work and Telus Wise Center which provides free workshops on digital technologies and online safety, attention to the issue of erotic photography sharing ("**sexts, sexting**") was drawn.

A survey sample consisted of 800 young people aged from 16 to 20.

The research results show that "**sexts**" are more received than sent by youth. The most widespread form of coming into contact with sexting is that the sext was shown to the concerned by someone else in person. The least common way is to publish sexts in public areas. Up to 42 percent of young Canadians have experienced that images showing their nude bodies (sexts) were spread without their consent. ("**non-consensual sharing of sexts**"). The results of the survey further indicate that 41% of youth have already sent one or more sexts, with boys and girls sending these photos roughly to the same extent. However, sexts were more shared by boys than girls.

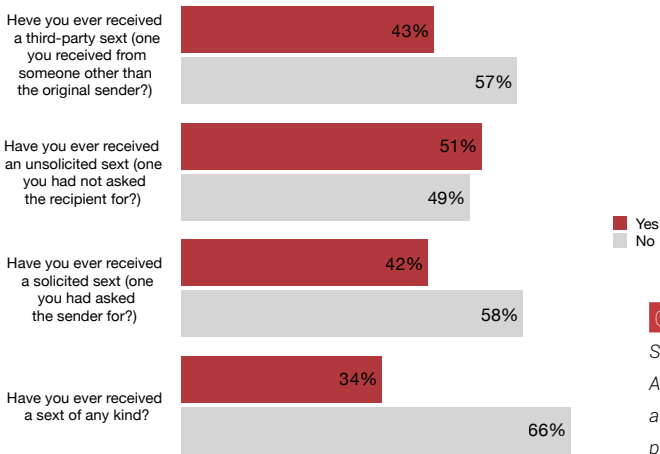


CHART 1: Receiving Sexes

Source: Non-Consensual Sharing of Sexes: Behaviours and Attitudes of Canadian Youth. [online]. [2018-10-18]. Available at: <<https://mediasmarts.ca/sites/mediasmarts/files/publication-report/full/sharing-of-sexes.pdf>>.

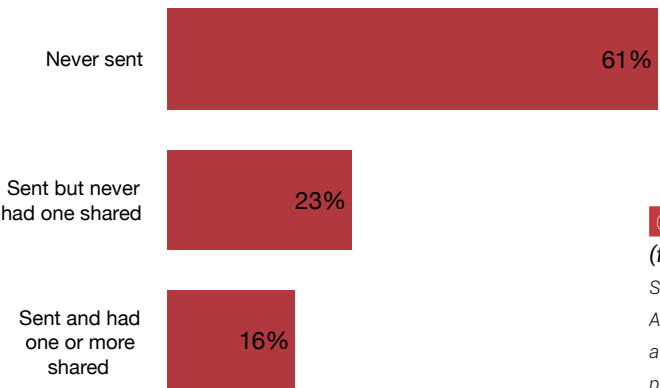


CHART 2: Experiences with having sexts shared (full sample)

Source: Non-Consensual Sharing of Sexes: Behaviours and Attitudes of Canadian Youth. [online]. [2018-10-18]. Available at: <<https://mediasmarts.ca/sites/mediasmarts/files/publication-report/full/sharing-of-sexes.pdf>>.

Based on the survey, the study reflects 3 fundamental factors that affect “non-consensual sharing behavior”. These includes “Gender stereotypes”, “Moral disengagement” and “A culture of sharing”. “Gender roles” and attitudes towards them play an important role in differentiating individuals. Young individuals who have agreed with statements as: “Men should be more interested in sex than women” and “Woman can not be really happy unless she is not in a relationship” were much more likely to share sexts. “Moral disengagement” is a well-known factor in cyberbullying, sexual harassment and attitudes that promote rape. The research has found that men ignore the consequences of sexting from the moral point of view. “It seems probable therefore that those youths who share sexts non-consensually may be engaging in moral disengagement to absolve themselves of responsibility.” In the research there occurred young individuals who agreed with such statements as: Sharing sexts is common, no one is dealing with anymore” or “If a boy receives an erotic photo and shares it with his ten friends who share it next, it is not a mistake of that first boy”. These individuals are more associated with sharing sexts (sexting). Gender stereotypes and moral disengagement contribute to a culture of sharing. Approximately one third of young people consider non-consensual sharing to be normal, common or even slightly positive.

It is also alarming for parents and teachers to find that current strategies to prevent and stop the spreading of erotic photos of other persons without their consent are inefficient. Young people are inadequately informed about criminal laws and educational programs at schools or in home education are also failing. According to MediaSmarts it is necessary to focus on preventing non-consensual sharing by boys. According to the research, the abstinence approach was more focused on girls that led to insufficient prevention of the illegal spreading of erotic photos.

Since most children do not have experience with learning, lectures or workshops on the topic of sexting, it is necessary to spread awareness about this issue more effectively. Telus Wise, in collaboration with MediaSmarts, has decided to create new tools for parents, teachers and teens to help all Canadian families provide the resources needed to prevent this type of behavior.

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Veronika Moravčíková



photo: alpalight1

ABSTRACT

In the digitalization period projects to support the development of critical thinking are needed to maintain political and societal balance. Rapid changes in technology and information leave a space wherein can form many harmful groups or individuals to influence their respondents with false messages and hoaxes. It is necessary to develop the critical thinking of people from a young age, so the project Trust Me has been created. The aim of the project is to support the education of pupils of primary and secondary schools in the field of media literacy and critical thinking. Through two specialized curriculums students can understand the ways of manipulation with information and learn how to distinguish trustworthy contents on the Internet.

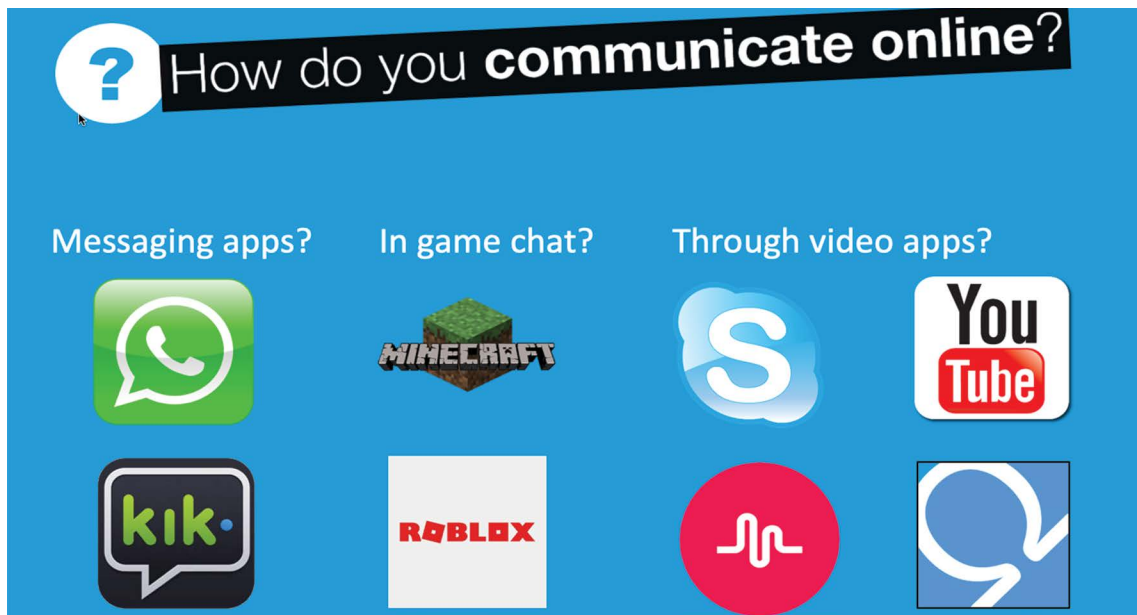
KEY WORDS

Digital age. The Internet. Critical Thinking. Media Literacy. Trust Me.

Project Trust Me

In the current digital age, use of the Internet is part of the everyday life of society. Its “endless” content and broad, almost global coverage provide a wealth of space for self-reflection on individuals and various interests groups. Because the Internet space and behaving there is not yet fully anchored in law, it offers a free way to a negative or deceptive way of giving information, advertising, opinions and so on. Spreading of disinformation and propaganda is much easier than in the past. Spreading of false news raises hate in society and can divide it into opposite opinion groups.

The need for critical thinking in society is rising with the freedom of speech and the democratic approach. Its goal is the ability to recognize relevant information from hoaxes, fake news and propaganda, that is, the effort to create a polarization of the society. While education systems support and teach media education, it is very difficult to keep up in the fast digital era, so new research and projects to promote media literacy and the development of critical thinking in society are welcome.



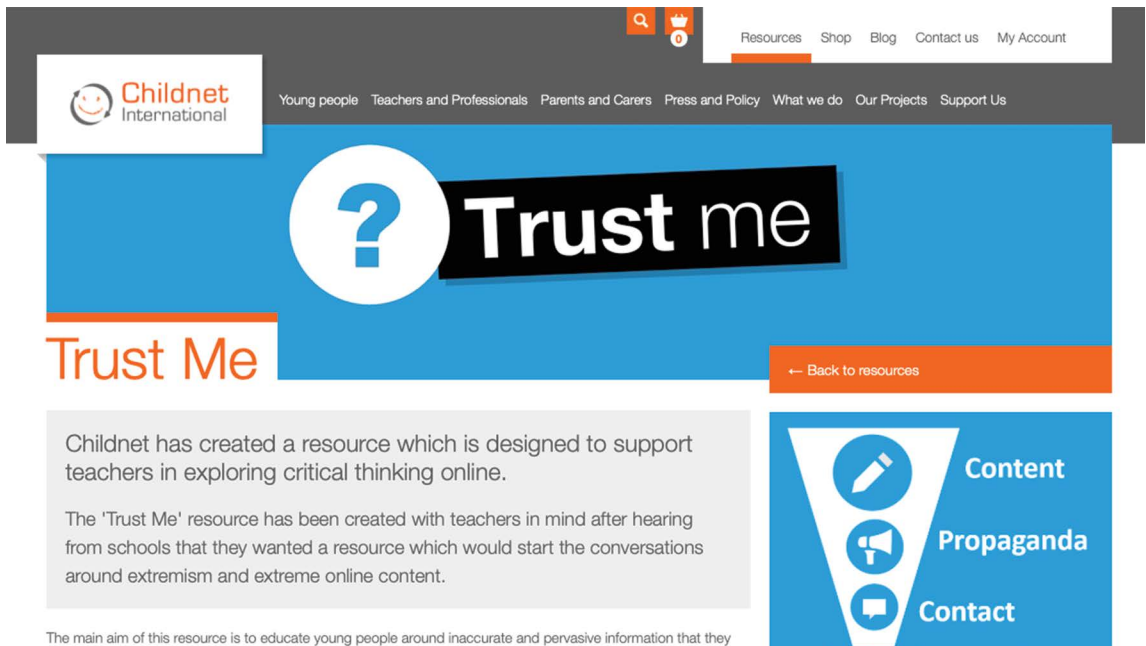
PICTURE 1: Representative search results following Texas shooting

Source: CAPLAN. R., HANSON. L., DONOVAN. J.: *Dead Reckoning: Navigating Content Moderation After “Fake News”*. [online]. [2018-10-17]. Available at: <https://datasociety.net/pubs/oh/DataAndSociety_Dead_Reckoning_2018.pdf>.

The ChildNet Trust Me project was created to support primary and secondary school teachers in developing the online critical thinking of their students. The PSHE Association in collaboration with London Grid for Learning brings two teaching plans, firstly for primary and secondly for secondary schools. The plans are built on practical learning on the Internet. In the first session, based on the content and contact, students will learn that not everything on the Internet is trustworthy, they will be able to recognize influence from third parties and decide correctly what to believe. In the second session (for secondary schools), students will learn through the exploration of content dedicated to “for all” to “just for me” to recognize the differences between fact and online opinion, develop their ability to analyse trustworthy content, develop their ability to perceive propaganda techniques and their use on the Internet as well as recognize the motives of these acts.¹

¹ Trust Me. [online]. [2018-10-18]. Available at: <<https://www.childnet.com/ufiles/Trust-Me-info-flyer.pdf>>.

On the project website www.childnet.com, both teaching plans (Trust Me Primary Pack and Trust Me Secondary Pack) are available in English for free downloading. They contain textual and pictorial materials necessary for teachers to learn critical thinking, examples, tasks and web links for wider understanding.²



PICTURE 2: Webpage Trust Me

Source: www.childnet.com

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Juliána Odziomková

² *Trust Me Primary Pack*. [online]. [2018-10-18]. Available at: <<https://www.childnet.com/ufiles/Trust-Me-Primary-Pack.zip>>.



We Are not to Judge How People Should Speak

*Interview with professor
Zoltán Kövecses*

ABSTRACT

The interview was conducted during the Megatrends and Media 2018 – Reality and Media Bubbles conference organised by the Faculty of Mass Media Communication at the University of SS. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava in April 2018 as the professor was one of the main plenary speakers at the conference. The interview focuses on the language of new media, and the Internet in particular, and the use of technologies from the professor's point of view. It deals with ongoing simplification and liberalisation trends in society and language as well as with the development within linguistics characterised by the shift from prescriptivism to descriptivism and their possible reflection in the new media and in education. It introduces the tendencies of intertextuality and informalisation that are typical for the language of the media today.

KEY WORDS

Language. Language development. Linguistics. Simplification. The Internet.



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František Rigo (F. R.): What is the language of the media like? How do you perceive it? Is it possible to generalize it somehow at all?

Zoltán Kövecses: At first, that's a book-length question. I have never specifically worked on the language of the media, although for many of my books and papers the data came from media language, especially British and American newspapers and magazines. I have a special interest in metaphor and my primary dealing with media language was to do research on metaphor in media language. On that basis, of course, I also had another non-professional interest as a citizen of a country, in this respect it doesn't really matter which country, but it happens to be Hungary and I am interested in the issue of how much you can rely on the media and media language, which is much broader than reading particular newspapers, it includes many other things, as people involved in media studies know much better than I do. The major general point about media language, as I look at it both from professional and non-professional perspectives, is that there is no media language without a large amount of framing, that is, looking at whatever you are looking at from a particular perspective. Everybody, all journalists, all reporters handle whatever they are working on from a particular perspective because our conceptual system doesn't allow for anything else.

F. R.: I ask about what the language of media is like in connection with the rise of the Internet as a medium. Based on the rise of the power of the Internet one might have the impression that the language of the media, especially the language used on the Internet, is moving away from properly structured journalistic language, which has got some rules. It seems that the language of the media, at least as far as the Internet is concerned, is getting closer to the language of Internet users.

Zoltán Kövecses: I think it is a perfectly good observation and from what I have seen from my students, that seems to be correct because very often they use the conventional signs, which are probably international or almost universal, in their daily interactions and that is unthinkable for me personally because other than writing emails and other than sometimes sending SMS messages I am not really involved in or with that kind of media language. I am not on Facebook or any other social network, I think it is too time consuming. Sometimes I find that my doing research and thus making so much use of the computer is already very time consuming. I even reject doing my bills on the internet, I don't know about here, but in Hungary you keep getting mail from the bank and the electricity company that if you do your bills or if you want to handle your account electronically, you get the bonus and things like that. I reject all of those right away because I do

not want to learn another code and to open up to institutions, organisations, people that I do not know, there is an inborn rejection in me. Moreover, there would be an information overload. For example, I used to know maximum of ten phone numbers, let's say, forty years ago, you know, the most important phone numbers like my closest family members and some of my girlfriends, but I am not willing to learn all these codes that the new communication technologies require.

F. R.: You mentioned that nowadays students or young people do use some signs which may be identical for all different languages and people and nationalities so how do you, as a linguist who specializes in metaphor and symbols, perceive this new kind of communication via all the emoticons and emojis that is becoming more and more common among young people?

Zoltán Kövecses: To be honest I do not know much about them because the only one that I myself use is the colon parenthesis, which I think is "I am happy" or something like that, but I do not even know whether it is an emoji or an emoticon. Aren't they the same at all?

F. R.: Even though you do not devote your time to this kind of communication or to studies within this field of communication, I have read about you that you participated in the preparation of Hungarian – English and English – Hungarian dictionaries. Do you think that the way the communication is being affected by the Internet and digital media is anyhow affecting the richness of the language?

Zoltán Kövecses: Again, to be honest, the Internet breakthrough, as we can call it, came after my active participation in dictionary making. I did major Hungarian – English/English – Hungarian dictionary in about the mid-1990s, very shortly after the political changes, and I do not think that Internet language was felt to be as powerful as it is today. So, if you ask me about how politics influenced dictionary making, I will say that it influenced it a lot and that is why they asked me to do the new dictionaries because the Hungarian language had to be re-thought and re-shaped as a result of the changes, like getting rid of Marxist terminology and things like that. However, I am working on some slang projects, I have done some slang dictionaries and in slang the influence of the Internet is much more noticeable and, obviously, I had to pay attention to that and I included that. I also noticed that when I am getting emails or any other piece of communication from people who are younger, twenty-thirty years younger than I am, their style is very different from what I would use. So, it is there, but probably this is common knowledge.

F. R.: And what about the language of those people who are younger than you that you communicate with? What is it like from the stylistic and grammar point of you? I am asking this question because when reading texts produced by students one might observe that many of them do struggle with stylistics, they do struggle with grammar, with using commas and inflections, the things which maybe the generation before them did not struggle so much with. Could this be the result of the fact that communication is becoming more visual and that people, in general, do not read as much as they used to, maybe they do not write as much as they used to and communication is getting more and more brief?

Zoltán Kövecses: It seems to me that this is much more general phenomenon that cannot be specifically limited to the effect or the influence of the Internet. As I say, this is a part of a more general tendency in language use and I can see two more general issues that can also account for what is happening is a result of the Internet influence. I am primarily an English linguist, I mean my specialisation is the English language, and within that I have been working a lot on American English, that was one of my main areas of research. I had books on that and from the perspective of that kind of research and that kind of work, what is going on today is no big surprise. Namely, for example, Shakespeare's English of Elizabethan times and is unbelievably more complex and richer than it was four hundred years later. And then, there was the separation, or the slow development of American English in the course of development of English in general and American English became noticeably simpler in many ways than British English. Now, is this because people did not want to read the British classics? I do not think so. The circumstances of the language changed and so it began to develop in a way which reflected the new worldview of the people. I devoted a complete book to this issue but the bottom line is that American English became simpler. My point is that there is this simplification procedure as a natural tendency in language and it is a response to certain changes

in worldviews and mentality. The real issue, as far as I am concerned, is to be able to put your finger on what those changes are specifically. I try to do that for American English but I did not try to do that for the Internet, that is I did not try to answer the question what makes the Internet so attractive to young people and what is the worldview that underlies the simplified Internet language. I would not be surprised to see that some of the things that account for the simplification of American English are the same that account for the simplification of the Internet language, but that is a large issue in itself. So that is one thing, I can only see this as a more complex issue. Another idea that I think is important is the development of the language sciences. The language sciences became, as so many other things in our world, a lot more liberal than they used to be. What we call prescriptivism in language and in linguistics and in teaching language was replaced by descriptivism. Thus, the point is not to prescribe what to say, how to say, what stylistic properties should be followed and so on. Linguistics became much more liberal as the kind of science in itself, especially in the humanities and in the social sciences. One of the consequences of this was that, as a result, linguists say that we do not have the right and we do not have the competence and we do not have the authority to prescribe how people should speak. Basically, it is the laissez-faire kind of situation, anything goes and anyone can say whatever they want to say and whichever way they want to say it. What was regarded as absolutely ungrammatical in English fifty years ago with the work of certain sociolinguists and linguists in the US and also in Hungary and probably also in Slovakia is now not ungrammatical but it is accepted and they say this is acceptable because, for whatever reason, we are not to judge how people should speak. And I think it is almost implicitly or tacitly encouraging people not to worry about how they speak. We are doing this not only with language but also in the way we dress, in the way behave and now we are constantly told that it doesn't really matter what kind of tie you wear, it doesn't really matter what kind of socks you wear and anything goes.

F. R.: Bearing in mind everything you have just said and that you have lectured at many universities in the world, do you think this trend of simplification or this movement from prescriptivism to descriptivism is reflected in the way young people are educated these days?

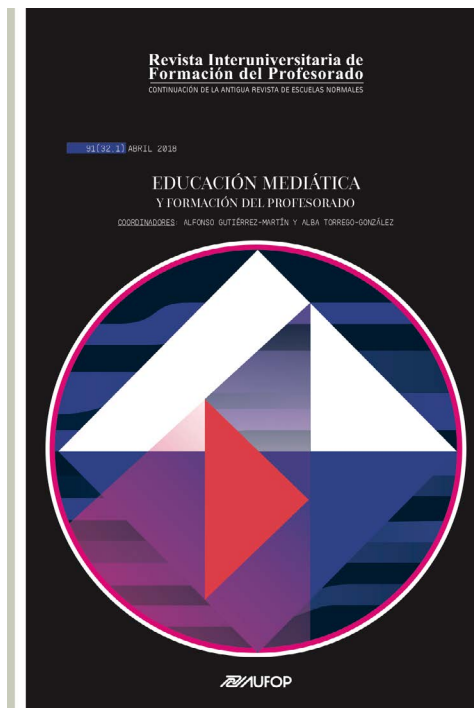
Zoltán Kövecses: I think yes, because what I noticed was that students in America paid a lot less attention to the way they write English than in other English-speaking countries, let alone non-English speaking countries. But where English is the language of university education, like in Germany, for example, where I have taught in English departments, students were far more precise, far more rule following than the Americans were, because they had learned all the prescriptive rules about the language but Americans did not really care about many of those same things, such as whether you use abbreviations or not.

F. R.: As you are a specialist in metaphors, do you think there are any metaphors that today's media use with higher frequency than other metaphors? And if there are, what message is being communicated via those?

Zoltán Kövecses: Again, this is a question that can only be answered with any precision by doing several years of research. But I can see some outline of this kind of research for the future and, again, I can see two tendencies that are characteristic of media metaphors. One is something that I talked about in today's lecture. I didn't go into too many details as I only had about two minutes on them but they are what I call cases of intertextuality when one author borrows a phrase or a sentence or an expression or popular words from another and everybody is using them. Now everyone is talking about the "tsunami" of information instead of many other possibilities that could be used. There is a great deal of following each other. Anything that sounds catchy is taken up in the media world and it is used. Another tendency is that, and I am saying this especially on the basis of Hungarian media language, somehow the language of the media is becoming more and more informal. I remember that there are some cases in my slang dictionaries that I did, let's say, thirty years ago, that were marked slang and today they are happily using them in the news. At first, I was surprised but now I am getting used to it. There is this overall informalisation of media language that is happening.

Prepared by **František Rigo**

REVIEW



EDUCACIÓN MEDIÁTICA Y FORMACIÓN DEL PROFESORADO (MEDIA EDUCATION AND TEACHER TRAINING)

PESCADOR, J. E. P. (ed.): Educación mediática y formación del profesorado. In Revista Interuniversitaria de Formación del Profesorado (RIFOP), 2018, No. 91. [online]. [2018-11-10]. Available at: <https://aufop.com/aufop/uploaded_files/revistas/15337165305.pdf#page=158>.

The monographic number of the scientific journal Revista Interuniversitaria de Formación del Profesorado (RIFOP), indexed in the Web of Science [Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI)] of the Asociación Universitaria de Formación del Profesorado (AUFOP) and the Faculty of Education of the University of Zaragoza is focused on the current issue of media education of pedagogues. It provides the basis for the effective integration of media as objects of study and reflection into the school curriculum. It consists of 8 expert contributions to the topic, the authors of which are experts from selected universities in Spain, France, Portugal and Italy. We will focus on them in our review. At the same time there is 1 student article and 1 review.

The publication that has been created in the context of the Spanish educational system has its meaning beyond that territory. Preference is given to the need of development of curricular models in the field of media (with a focus also on digital media) and media education itself within the content of school education, as well as systematic programs of initial and permanent teacher training in this field. Their presence despite many guidelines of institutions such as UNESCO, the European Commission, the Council of Europe in the European educational systems is still not obvious, as Spain's example shows. The asset of the publication is also an emphasis on the concept of integrative curricular models of media education for students and teachers, which should take into account the need of analytical and reflective-assessment study of media or new information and communication technologies (ICT) more than their technical-instrumental aspect.

The editorial of the publication, Teacher Training in Media Education, draws attention to the current problem of reductionism in basic curriculum programming as well as educational programs for ICT and media educators, which prioritize their technological aspects at the expense of critical reflection. It is possible to agree that emphasis on competences is more about "know" and "know how to do" than about "know how to be" and the development of aptitudes and values remains in the limelight. At the centre of initial teacher training are thus rather educational technologies such as media education (p.12). At the same time, the issue of the prevalence of technocratic models above critical concerns the area of media education itself, on which the magazine's number is focused.

The publication responds to the given situation and thus, through selected contributions proposes the theoretical concepts or models of media education "educación mediática", respectively the wider understanding of the Spanish concept of so-called "educación mediática" (educación) and its didactics in initial and permanent teacher training. Their intention is to enrich the concept of teacher education in Spain, which, like in other European countries, is based more on technical and didactic thinking about the media and ICT. It means that it is aimed at developing the ability of the teaching profession's adepts to apply them as technical and didactic tools, less than the objects of critical study in the teaching process. Suggested proposals that strive for "greater balance" (p.12) between these media concepts in teaching and educating pedagogues can therefore also be inspirational outside the territorial framework to which they are preferentially applied.

The specific concept of Media Education Teaching is offered in the first contribution called Media Education Teaching and Learning. A Proposal for Teacher Training in ICT and Media by Alfonso Gutiérrez Martín and Alba Torrego Gonzáles (Faculty of Education of Segovia, University of Valladolid), who are also the coordinators of the publication launching. This is a major study of the issue in terms of the fulfilment of the above-mentioned intentions of the work. The authors present a complex and widely conceived concept of media education didactics, which is proposed in the context of the preparation of university professionals working in the field of media education, educommunication, digital literacy or any subject focused on ICT and media. It is intended for university educators forming future professionals – educators in the field of media, but also digital technology teachers. Its specific determination defines the proposed content, which is a meaningful integration of important and up-to-date aspects related to media and ICT as learning objects as well as means (largely reflecting their positive educational and didactic potential). The next contribution called Media Education and Teacher Training. Educommunication beyond Media Literacy by Sara Osuna Acedo (Faculty of Education, National University of Distance Education, Madrid), Divina Frau Meigs (Département Monde Anglophone, University of Paris III: Sorbonne Nouvelle) and Carmen Marta Lazo (Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, University of Zaragoza) enriches the view of the mission of the media education process, respectively “Educommunication”. This paper is adequately suited to the broader context of today’s participative digital culture (Jenkins, 2008) created through information and communication technologies with a typical relational factor. (Tecnologías de la Relación, la Información y la Comunicación (TRIC). Taking into account the nature of the culture in the process of media education, the development of the individual’s ability to analyse and form media content to strengthen the critical and responsible attitude in their daily activities in the participatory process through the given “relational factor” with others, to leave their cultural and creative footprint.

The contribution Media Awareness, City Transformations: a Participatory Teacher-Training Project by Donatello Donato (Faculty of Education, Free University of Bozen- Bolzano) and Ángel San Martín (Faculty of Philosophy and Education Sciences, Universitat de València) is of a more specific nature. It represents the results of an innovative pedagogical project - a case study focused on the formation of members of the public center of elementary education in a state primary school located in a suburban neighbourhood in Valencia in visual literacy (alfabetización visual) in the context of their living space with the active participation of educators. Through the project they were also shaped in the study.

In an interesting contribution Building Global Citizenship in a Neoliberal Age: Convergences between Media Education and Digital Literacy by Aquilina Fueyo Gutiérrez (Department of Education Sciences, University of Oviedo), Carlos Rodríguez-Hoyos (University of Cantabria, Department of Education) and Michael Hoechsmann (Faculty of Education, Lakehead University, Orillia) the authors put media education, respectively digital literacy in front of the priority role namely forming digital citizenship as a precondition for the full participation of an individual in a globalized cross-company. In the context of a description of the current socio-economic phenomena in connection with new technologies such as socio-economic inequalities or digital divide and others, the key concept of digital citizenship is critical thinking (the same as by their precursors), which allows the individual to face the phenomenon, to move in the digital environment and, among other things, to “exercise his rights and freedoms in a broad and comprehensive sense” (p.59). The need of forming an active and critical citizen in the context of the virtual space is also the central idea of their own design of the competency model as the outcome of the process of digital literacy and media education. (p.64 – 65). At the same time, the authors consider the need of re- professionalization of teachers in this field.

The contribution called Media Narratives in the Initial Training of Educators: An Analysis of a Media Education Proposal through the Use of Technobiographies by José Miguel Gutiérrez Pequeño (Faculty of Education of Palencia), Eduardo García Zamora (Faculty of Education of Soria, University Campus Duques de Soria) and Inés Ruiz Requies (Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Valladolid) has the application character. The authors, through the analysis of biographical narrative research, provide a good guide for using this attractive method effectively in the Initial Training of Educators in media education, understood as learning ecology. (p.69, also Cobo and Moravec, 2011).

An overview of the current situation and way of preparing teachers in the field of media education in Portugal is presented in the contributions by Manuel Pinto and Sary Pereira (University of Minho, Campus of Gualtar, Braga) called Experiences, Perceptions and Expectations of Teacher Training in Media Education

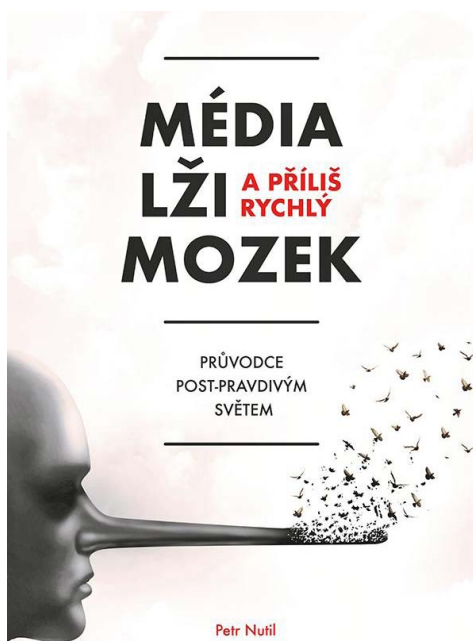
in Portugal. In particular, the analysis and discussion of their own experiences and results (in the form of developed participants' competences) from 4 courses of media education of 130 teachers in the form of b-learning courses and its detected limits is valuable.

In the contribution called A Holistic Model of Teaching Competence for the Digital World the authors Francesc Esteve (Department of Education, Jaume I University, Castelló de la Plana), Linda Castañeda (Faculty of Education, University of Murcia) and Jordi Adell (Department of Education, Jaume I University, Castelló de la Plana) is presented a holistic model for the development of the digital competence of a pedagogue, especially in primary education. The authors have managed to develop a quality concept that, according to their intent, this model surpasses the definition of digital teacher competence that does not respond to the model of an integral teacher, nor to a situated and holistic concept of competence, but to an instrumental vision of technologies. (p.104)

The contribution by Juan de Pablos Pons (Faculty of Education Sciences, University of Sevilla) and Javier Ballesta Pagán (Faculty of Education, University of Murcia) called Media Education in our Environment: Realities and Possible Improvements has a summarizing character and concludes the central issue of the monographic magazine number. In the context of European perspectives (framed within a European perspective) the authors outline the policy of developing the basic pillars on which an effective and functional system of media education, respectively digital literacy implemented in the Spanish educational system is to be built. In particular, it is necessary to highlight their demand for greater integration of digital competence aspects into higher education curricula that prepare professionals in the field of teaching, but especially communication. In particular, the field of communication in line with the perception of the topic is primarily disadvantaged as an educational one. Like authors, we consider it important to evaluate the teaching practice of higher education educators preparing future communication professionals. "It is necessary to detect among the educators in the field of communication if there is awareness that all communication has, for better or for worse, educational implications." (p. 129). In this way, it will be possible to implement the need for dialogue between educators and media professionals in the future, and to ensure greater participation of the media industry in media literacy processes more effectively.

Acknowledgement: This review 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 center at FMK UCM".

Viera Kačínová



LŽI A PŘÍLIŠ RYCHLÝ MOZEK (MEDIA, LIES AND THE SUPER-FAST BRAIN)

NUTIL, P.: Média, *lži a příliš rychlý mozek*. Praha : Grada, 2018. 189 p. ISBN 978-80-271-0716-2.

The media represent a huge role in today's world. It is difficult to discern and filter the information we need, or to assess whether it is true and comes from a trusted source. However, media interpretations are not always simple and straightforward. Understanding of the provided information requires some education and the ability to create your own opinions and your own perception of the environment. It is obvious that the media have the power to influence the behaviour of individuals, their lifestyle, their political orientation, but also to change the public opinion of the whole of society. Nevertheless, how far we get manipulated depends on each of us individually.

The book *Média, lži a příliš rychlý mozek* (Media, lies and the super-fast brain) should give us the answers. At the same time, it should assist us to understand the basic principles

of media and to help us know the terms that are very important and well described in this area. The book will help readers comprehend why the media manipulate us and why we sometimes comply. Peter Nutil, the author of this publication is an independent journalist, who has been dealing with manipulation in the media for a long time. He is also the founder and editor of the publishing site Manipulátoři.cz, which is devoted to the discovery of hoaxes, media manipulation, propaganda and all topics related to this area. He also examines the traces of psychological phenomena that silences reason in man, encourages evil and irrationality.

The author has focused on important issues such as: how we are manipulated and the misunderstanding of hoaxes, whether the media show the world what it really is, what is media literacy, and so on. A simpler understanding of these complicated terms provided by the author to the reader through answers to these pressing and important questions explains the different concepts and situations of the media we meet every day. The book is divided into two parts. The first part is entitled About us and the second part Not only about the media.

In the first part, the author focuses on human behaviour and decision making. He presents a theoretical insight into the issue, explains why we first feel, then after we think. Why our desires affect our future, how our irrationality affects us, why we are subject to group stupidity and many other interesting questions about human psychics. The second part of the book focuses more on current themes and is more practical than theoretical. The author reveals the backdrop to the media industry, explains how the media manipulate and how they get attention. In this part is included information about media literacy, media manipulation, or critical thinking. These chapters are complemented by clear and illustrative charts depicting how the media can misinterpret information and manipulate it. The other chapters are practical and deal with hoax, propaganda and hybrid threats. In conclusion, the author sets out how we can verify the different types of information on the Internet and navigate competently in an increasingly complicated information area. As the author himself states in the introduction: "The reader should be aware that this book is not a scientific study nor does it impose such ambitions. It is a popularization text in which I tried to write as intelligently as possible, regarding the readers' expectations of the text. It is a kind of an introduction and sketch of the discussed topics." The media can be considered as a kind of social institution which, in addition to the distribution of information, is also conscious of public opinion and the development of an "information society". They do not work independently, but are the result of an interaction between individual social relationships and opinions, so it is not possible to say that the media is the source of information. Media are means of communication that spread information and encourage the creation of new ones.

The book *Médiá, lži a příliš rychlý mozek* (Media, lies and the super-fast brain) is well-managed, has a logical structure, information is very carefully duplicated, which gives the reader certainty and allows him to dive deeper into the topic. Peter Nutil writes in a very comprehensible and human style, and he writes the text as if he were speaking directly to the reader. His style of writing is not overly personal and does not force his opinions. By understanding the author's comprehensible explanations, readers see how the media can manipulate them. The book helps us to find ways how to prevent media manipulation and how to protect ourselves against fake news.

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Marija Hekelj

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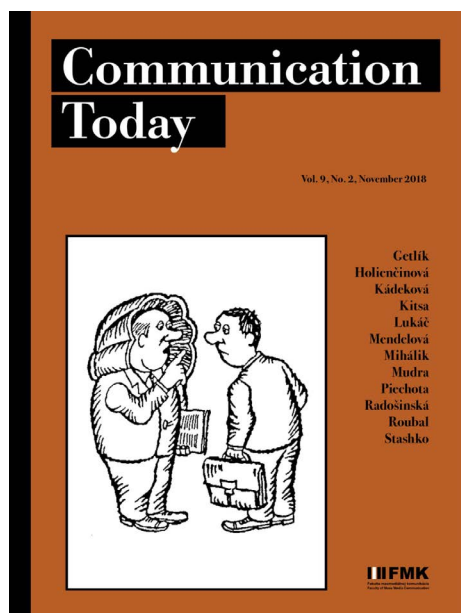
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SCIENTIFIC JOURNALS



Communication Today

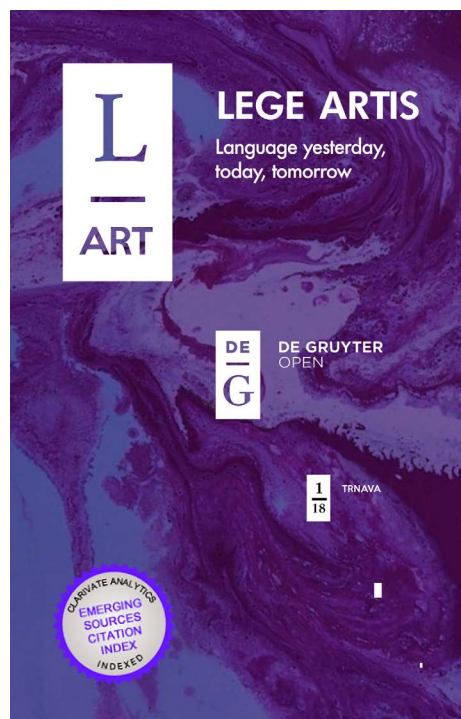
Scientific journal of the Faculty of Mass Media Communication at the University SS. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovakia

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 and others.



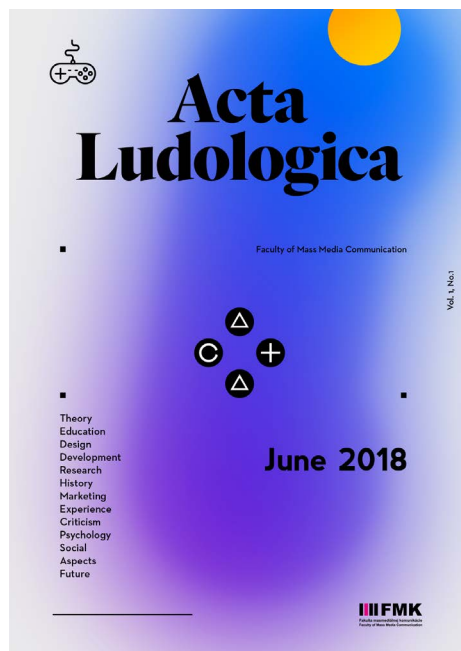


European Journal of Media, Art & Photography

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.



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