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Post-Lockdown Metamorphoses Of Television Culture

ABSTRACT

The first twenty years of the 21st century have been marked by intense internalization and digitization, which have significantly influenced the communication processes throughout society and work in many professions. Communication has accelerated significantly, the amount of information we need to perceive, select and process has increased several times, and its credibility has become questionable. These and other technological changes, as well as other factors associated with political or social processes, have also marked the culture of society. Journalists are required to have much more skills and an immediate ability to deal dynamically and flexibly with the demands of these times. The set processes of media production and stereotypes of its perception were significantly changed by another relevant milestone of the 21st century, the Covid-19 pandemic. It closed people in their households, prevented direct contacts, restricted work and changed communication processes. It also significantly marked the work of television creators, their media outlets, as well as the entire television culture. In this paper, the authors analyse the situation that the creators of the main news programs had to deal with during the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic, formulate what changes in their work have occurred due to the pandemic, how the media content has changed and, finally, define how it all has affected the methods of media creation and the media product that we see on TV screens today.

KEY WORDS

Covid-19 pandemic. Media production methods. Television. Television culture. Television news..

1. Instead of an Introduction: The Transformation of Television Culture in the Parallels of Socio-culture

The socio-cultural practices in the last two decades point to their continuity with the development and state from the second half of the twentieth century. Within this period, M. Petrušek situates the creation of a new logic of the action of various social and cultural factors influencing the development of the mentality of societies in the Euro-Atlantic civilization. He coins a term for the new situation and individual cultures sharing common values or lifestyles – late-modern societies.¹ It is a fact that scientists in social sciences and humanities have tried to characterize the social and cultural changes in the last seventy years as concisely as possible.² According to M. Petrušek, late-modern societies have some significant features. These are the emergence of new life forms and lifestyle pluralism, the development of new patterns of social behavior as a result of the emergence of a prosperous society, the influence of the media world, on the basis of which one perceives two worlds. It is, on the one hand, the world of everyday life and, on the other, the world simulated by the mass media. As a result, direct repression by the government is being pushed out, but it is effectively being replaced by the methods of media seduction that stabilize social everyday life. Late-modern societies are also characterized by a significant change in their value patterns indicating a low level of compliance with ethical standards, strengthening acculturation processes and their conflicting perceptions, rapid growth of globalization processes, including accompanying global risks, such as new forms of social differentiation, new stratification of society, new social movements, individualism, non-recognition of authorities, etc.³

The mental setting of late-modern societies defined by M. Petrušek can also be reflected in the field of television production and the media reality mediated by it. It is a fact that discursive practices in television production have, since the beginning of its existence, reflected not only socio-cultural realities and its mental setting, but also the technical and technological development of audiovisual production. Also from this aspect, it can be argued that television culture was born and created against a background of socio-cultural influences. It has influenced and is still influencing not only the approaches and practices of television creative components, such as authors of themes, screenwriters, cameramen, sound engineers, editors, animators, directors, etc., but also the recipients themselves. The viewers' attention depended on the fascination degree of a screen, as well as on the dynamics and engagingness of the stories depicted. The world of the audiovisual reality of television culture is attractively arranged in a magnificent scenery of diverse simulations, visual images that effectively evoke diverse fascinations, emotions, ideas, experiences and pleasures in the recipients.

The claim that the world of television culture reflects the mental setting of a real socio-culture can also be defended on the basis of understanding the human situation of late-modern societies' people. They have their own ideas about the ranking of preferred values. They

¹ M. Petrušek prefers the term late-modern society to the term postmodern society. It should be emphasized that the term postmodern society is not rejected, but according to him, the term late modern society characterizes much more broadly the attributes of fragmented societies and globalization processes, including their representative cultural complexes. These are typical of societies in the second half of the 20th century and the first two decades of the new millennium (PETRUSEK, M.: *Společnosti pozdní doby*. Praha : SLON, 2006, p. 25-34).

² There are researchers who name the changed social and cultural situation in such a way as to capture their dominant attributes as much as possible. (See: J. F. Lyotard, 1993; W. Welsh, 1993). The concepts of information society (Y. Masuda, 1996; M. Castells, 1996), fluid modernity (Bauman, 2002), experiential society (G. Schultze, 1992), hypermodern society (Lipovetsky, 2013), etc. – are also frequented in scientific studies. We note that different designations do not mean major differences in the characteristics of societies, they only describe their dominant characteristics.

³ PETRUSEK, M.: *Společnosti pozdní doby*. Praha : SLON, 2006, p. 33-34.

adhere to hyperconsumption,⁴ seek entertainment, emotional experiences,⁵ they prefer television programs corresponding to their unfulfilled dreams, aspirations, but also fears and even phobias of loss of life security, illness and death. Their desire is a carefree, pleasurable, experiential life, and that is why they are afraid of everything that would disrupt their ideas of a good, hyper-consumptive life, secured by high deposits in banks. That is why, according to D. C. Hallin and P. Mancini, the priority of media since the 1980s is no longer the dissemination of ideas and the formation of social consensus, but the production of entertainment and information that is sold to the consumer public.⁶ A prosperous consumer life represents the peak of happiness achieved in a man's life in late modern society. The range of programs on television offers them the opportunity to approach this goal, at least seemingly, to forget about the harsh reality. B. Malík claims that contemporary television is *"the most effective anesthetic"*. New media myths are created in accordance with the needs of a person raised by hyper-consumer and television culture. Thanks to this synergy, a media mythology of prosperity, love and leisure was born. But the cult of film stars was also born, which contributed to the recipients' inspiration for independence and individualism.⁸ However, the revolt of postmodern individualism is practiced "upside down". L. Baran reminds that an individual manifests themselves transparently in the fictional media world. Smetana's *The Bartered Bride* becomes a girl for sale, Alexander the Great a homosexual. Heroes turn into antiheroes and vice versa.⁹ According to I. Ramonet, television programs, including television news, are prone to necrophilia because they feed *"mainly on blood, violence and death"*.¹⁰ P. Bourdieu thinks that, while in the second half of the 20th century television had the ambition to cultivate viewers, since the 1990s it has been trying to reach the widest possible audience. Therefore, it has adapted to the generally low audience taste producing primitive products, soulless talk shows, reality shows, individual exhibitions and so on.¹¹

It is a fact that the uncomfortable competitive environment in the media market forces television creators to invent new impressive ways of presentation, to offer viewers an engaging show. It is important to get to know the audience, their needs, ambitions, aspirations, taste, preferred topics, etc. That is why, according to L. Čábyová, the basis for the success of the media in competition is the right market segmentation, its targeting and the subsequent creation of a certain position in the eyes of potential customers.¹² The same is true for competition in news and journalistic television genres. Regardless of the legal and ownership form, television stations prefer news and current affairs programs that conform to the mental setting of their contemporaries and are subject to the imperative of a competitive struggle for their favor. The contributions are shortened, dynamized, not analyzed, stated, the viewer's eye is exposed

⁴ Hyperconsumer society as a higher stage of consumer society according to G. Lipovetsky exceeded all areas of social practice (See: LIPOVETSKY, G.: *Paradoxní štěstí. Esej o hyperkonzumní společnosti*. Praha : Prostor, 2007).

⁵ Referring to G. Schulze, by experience we mean the ambition of a person to experience something unusual, adventurous. Experiencing "something" is an effective way of making everyday stereotypes and routines marked by mundaneness more attractive. (Compare: SCHULZE, G.: *Die Erlebnisgesellschaft*. Frankfurt am Main : Campus-Verlag, 1992.).

⁶ HALLIN, C. D., MANCHINI, P.: *Systém médií v postmoderním světě. Tři modely médií a politiky*. Praha : Portál, 2008, p. 300.

⁷ MALÍK, B.: *Mediomorfóza sveta*. Bratislava : Iris, 2008, p. 59.

⁸ LIPOVETSKY, G.: *Říše pomíjivosti. Móda a její úděl v moderních společnostech*. Praha : Prostor, 2010, p. 328-329.

⁹ BARAN, L.: *Estetika jako otevřený systém*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2002, p. 46.

¹⁰ RAMONET, I.: *Tyranie médií*. Praha : Mladá fronta, 2003, p. 148.

¹¹ P. Bourdieu sees the development of television from an elitist point of view because he speaks nostalgically about the times when television programs had to meet high cultural and aesthetic demands. It was not only adaptations of classic literary works, debates about culture, etc., but also documentaries (See: BOURDIEU, P.: *O televizi*. Praha : Doplěk, 2002.).

¹² See: ČÁBYOVÁ, L.: *Mediální marketing*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2010, p. 5-7.

to a stream of diverse images, scenes flickering in a linear flow, but, as N. Postman states, “*in the band of unrelated events*”.¹³ Through the periscope of the screen,¹⁴ the viewer forms an idea of what is happening in the real world and identifies with the logic of the medium. For example, if we compare the pathos of mentoring typical of newscasters and reporters in front of television cameras from the beginnings of television journalism to the 1980s with the current speech, we find huge differences. We are currently witnessing a jovial, relaxed speech of newscasters and reporters to the audience, whose affection they are trying to gain. Of course, this way of acting also requires an adequate, attractive appearance. The personalization of the presented information must have its aesthetic, fashionable and personality parameters. In this context, G. Lipovetsky states that “*information is subject to the same laws as goods and advertising: fashionable form, the imperative of personalization and seduction are everywhere*”.¹⁵ Like other feature television genres, television news and journalism have their celebrities, established narrative practices, dramatic construction of both news items, and their ordering in scripts. In news and journalistic stories, the main protagonist, playing their role of a searcher, entertainer and informant is a television journalist, who acknowledge and present only their authority. This approach is in line with the contemporary mental setting, its individualism and the preference of one’s own ambitions, aspirations and desires over social and collective goals.

However, the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus pandemic in Wuhan, China, in December 2019, its worldwide spread and subsequent quarantine measures taken by governments, are proving to change not only the living standards and mental settings of post-lockdown companies, but also approaches to television journalism. The economic slowdown, rising inflation, unemployment, thinning of the state budget, rising national debt, fear for life, nightmares of loss of social security, a feeling of general danger and isolation, have increased people’s dependence on information. This situation, together with several other factors, caused the increase in viewers’ interest in television news. However, it is questionable to what extent the isolation, freezing of social life, economy, etc., have contributed to the change in the methods of creating television news. We also sought an answer to this question through our research. We watched the nationwide public television RTVS, TV Markíza, TV JOJ and TA3 during the first and second waves of the corona crisis. Over the course of one year, we focused mainly on news, news-journalistic and special programs devoted to the corona crisis. We analysed the content of a session as a whole, as well as its individual contributions, the method of their processing in terms of information benefits for the recipient, the method of presentation and form and the method of visual representation.

2. Lockdown Methods of Creating Television News

Television broadcasting in news and journalism is based mainly on displaying/showing a topic, problem, situation through real images from the place of action. E. Chudinová states that “*television communication can be understood as the process of transferring various creative contents from the communicator to the auditorium, through audio-visual-technical implementation. It is an acoustic-optical representation of current sections of the current world, a presentation of opinions, stimuli and insights in relation to the present and the past*”.¹⁶

¹³ POSTMAN, N.: *Ubavit se k smrti*. Praha : Mladá Fronta, 2010, p. 92.

¹⁴ V. Flusser refers to the television as a window or periscope, meaning the technical means by which the recipient receives images and sounds as if they were realistic images. The television creates the illusion “as if images of the world were pouring out of the box, it did not care at all whether the world was actual or imperative.” (FLUSSER, V.: *Komunikológia*. Bratislava : Media Institute, 2002, p. 140.)

¹⁵ LIPOVETSKY, G.: *Říše pomíjivosti. Móda a její úděl v moderních společnostech*. Praha : Prostor, 2010, p. 343.

¹⁶ CHUDINOVÁ, E.: *Televízna tvorba*. In TUŠER, A. a kol.: *Praktikum mediálnej tvorby*. Bratislava : Eurokódex, 2010, p. 191.

Thus, visual communication is significantly used in television communication, which includes everything that is relevant and can be shown, and that the communicator tries to mediate and bring to the viewers. According to G. Burton and J. Jiráček, *“the pictures are iconic, which means, they resemble what they represent. In this way, they significantly support the impression of media authenticity – they rely on the ancient cliché that what we see must be true”*.¹⁷ G. Burton and J. Jiráček emphasize that the *“effort to strengthen the authority of the news and the media” is reflected in the choice of topics, the preferences for news values, the editing of reports, the emphasis on the authenticity of reports and the presentation of experts*.¹⁸

In order to increase authenticity and persuasiveness, it is beneficial if the media content is based not only on showing, but also on the statements of the actors of the topic/situation, not only on the narration of the editor. These two ways of television communication – to show and support the direct comments of the involved participants – are a basic condition for quality authentic television media content, as well as a basic building block of many classic television journalistic genres. As J. Višňovský also confirms, *“the form manifests the content of the text and its internal organization, through which the functions of the content are realized”*.¹⁹ This is also evidenced by a multi-year research on television news and journalism. In the broadcasting of television news, the most frequent ones were a visual news item, a reportage, and an interview within them or separately. Journalism was dominated by reportage and interviews.

The Covid-19 pandemic has also brought changes to television life. The ever-changing rules associated with lockdown, meaning significant restrictions on travel and contact with other people, caused the creators to have very little opportunities to go out into the field and thus, they could not directly meet the respondents. Even their communication to the viewer was limited because they covered half of their faces with a facemask. This reduced articulatory intelligibility and, in part, the non-verbal form of expression – so the recipient’s attention was focused mainly on the communicator’s eyes. The production of several programs on television was stopped, or it was carried out in special conditions – with a small number of actors and production staff and under strict safety hygiene requirements (testing, intensive disinfection). The topics of news and several journalistic programs also changed significantly – dominated by press conferences, information on those affected and the situation in hospitals, the situation in neighbouring countries and the world, and especially on the measures taken by the government and individual ministries and the rules to be followed by the citizens. Press conferences and interviews with experts accounted for about 75% of the news coverage. During the critical period, special journalistic programs were prepared – discussions with experts and responsible government representatives (Facts and Impulses (RTVS)), Coronacrisis: a special program (TV Markíza), Newspaper special (TV JOJ).²⁰ This exceptional situation brought a significant reduction in the classic way of producing media content and caused the need for a creative approach so that the basic laws of information could be fulfilled through media communication – objectivity, attractiveness, meaningfulness, comprehensibility, credibility. Under the influence of all the changes in television production, there has also been a change in the stereotypes in the perception of media content. The viewer had to adapt to what they saw and what was offered to them, they learned to read the necessary information and messages offered by television news and journalism.

¹⁷ BURTON, G., JIRÁK, J.: *Úvod do studia médií*. Praha : Barrister&Principal, 2001, p. 250.

¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 249.

¹⁹ VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: *Problematika štruktúry a kompozície v novinárstve*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2012, p. 81.

²⁰ HUDÍKOVÁ, Z.: Whipping Up Emotions by Media During : Coronavirus Pandemics. In KVETANOVÁ, Z., SOLÍK, M. (eds.): *Megatrends and Media: On the Edge*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2020, p. 556.

Over the last year (March 2020 – March 2021), the biggest change occurred in the extent to which the broadcast focused on interviews.²¹ During the corona crisis, the information was conveyed mainly through longer interviews, a smaller number of respondents were used, the form of the respondent's shooting and the content of the illustrations changed. This was primarily reflected in news programs and journalism. The content began to be tolerated even when only one respondent answered several topics from a given area in a larger time range, meaning respondents did not change so much, it was not necessary for each part of the topic to be presented by another expert. The main content of the interview was to describe the state/situation, explain the causes, predict the consequences and predict the further development. The respondent's statements also included subjective opinions, evaluations, experience or predictions of future development, as well as emotions in the form of feelings and experiences. The purely news level of the interview disappeared. Mostly, it was in the form of an analytical journalistic interview. The viewer therefore had to get used to extensive press discussions, listening to a number of facts and opinions, as well as answers to questions from the reporters. From the beginning, these facts and the opinions of the competent persons, associated with the amount of information, were presented by the performers without more thoughtful graphics, gradually, however, their informative value and clarity increased.

The broadcasting comprised mainly of interviews with the people in charge or with experts who explained the fundamentals of the problem, estimated the development, formulated recommendations. Statements pronounced only by experts carried recommendations to deliver weight/credibility, to mitigate fears and worries or negative mood and to help increase the effectiveness of taken measures. It was not possible to travel to the respondents, reporters mostly processed new items in the editorial, using recurring illustrative shots from hospitals and the scenes of antigen test examinations. If the reporters were in the press conference rooms, they usually spent the whole day there and reported from there or they conducted additional interviews with those in charge. Very often, interviews were conducted directly by the presenters in the studio – either with the reporters or experts. News items contributions (on the situation in individual regions and its development, the situation of entrepreneurs or workers affected by the restrictions due to the corona crisis) were mostly based on the reporter's statements and interviews conducted via a mobile phone or PC communication platforms. The reporters were looking for ways to show the respondent to the viewer, as the image is very important for audio-visual formats. While previously the statements of the respondents were presented via mobile phone only in an auditory form, in a changed situation they searched for and found ways to bring an image. The cameraman started filming the screen of the mobile phone, which also contained the face of the talking respondent (video call). The editor held it in their hand, turning it towards them so that the positions formed the composition of a dialogue. Due to the fact that the lockdown lasted a very long time, many conversations were conducted via Internet computer communication platforms, such as Skype, Zoom, Google Meet, Teams and more.

The viewer gradually had to get used to the various images of faces, which were contrary to the principles of television shooting. The respondent was no longer standing in front of the cameraman, who focused and framed their face professionally, but was usually at home, with the computer on their desk and the camera was shooting them completely or, depending on whether they had the camera at the bottom or top of the screen. Such shooting significantly distorted

²¹ This form of communication is currently very popular and attractive. The reason is that dialogue is a familiar and natural way of communication for the recipient, they most often communicate this way in everyday life. At the same time, the questions heard automatically arouse curiosity and maintain attention in the human brain. Furthermore, the alternation of persons (asking – answering) brings dynamism to communication. The recipient who listens to the conversation remembers more from it than they would if they listened to just one person explaining something to them.

the face, the expressions of which are very important for communication in critical situations.²² The deformation of the face was even more pronounced when the respondent was very close to the screen, or when they leaned too much towards it in an effort to communicate better with the reporter. The viewer then noticed the details they do not normally follow in media, and often not even in direct interpersonal communication – a more pronounced nose, a look into the nostrils, visuals and deformations of the skin, etc. They disturbed the concentration on the content.²³ The mentioned automation is also associated with another – the most serious visual problem – non-compliance of eye contact with the camera. An interview with a respondent with a direct view of the camera is a simulation of interpersonal communication. The information provided in this way is perceived by the recipient as more credible and convincing. In standard situations, the reporters try to stand the interviewee in such position that will allow the cameraman to shoot the face of the respondent anface through the shoulders of the reporter, once they have communicated the introduction to the news item. This creates a situation of interpersonal communication between the reporter and the respondent. The viewer feels as if the respondent is speaking directly to them. If the respondent was looking at a laptop screen, where they saw the face of the reporter with whom they were communicating, their view was naturally slightly lower/higher than the camera, and therefore the view was not direct. This disrupted the feeling of interpersonal media communication and partially weakened the recipient's attention. The second disturbing element related to the communication partners' eye contact in the conversation was the fact that some people, when formulating ideas, do not look directly into the partner's eyes, but outside – up, sideways or downwards.²⁴ Therefore, if the respondent's look was directed away from the camera, the recipient's eyes also tried to “look” there. However, he could not do so, which, again, disturbed the concentration on the contents. Another disruptive element in the interviews was a situation in which the respondent was writing some text. In the broadcast, it looked like they were looking at the screen, and their eyes and intonation showed that they were reading the answer. Reading the prepared text in such a way that the performer looks at the camera, presents the text continuously and the viewer perceives it as a free expression of the presenter speaking, is already used by default in media communication. To look natural, the camera must be “behind the text” and the text must move smoothly according to the pace of the presenter's speech, which is not yet possible at home.

The last deficiency of communication via communication PC platforms was the delay. This had been the case with telecoms before and is audible even today, the viewer is already used to it. The presenter in the studio asks the reporter or the respondent a question, which they receive with a slight delay and then answer smoothly. However, when transmitting a signal via a PC, there were sometimes connection failures, so the speakers had to slow down their utterances slightly in order for their devices to catch and transmit speech. Occasionally, there was an error synchronizing speech and image. The consequence of such various disturbances of concentration and minor, but more frequent, distractions from the content is that the recipient does not perceive the content carefully, may not capture some information or may capture it in

²² Authors' note: A stressed person is very sensitive to the expressions of the speaker, the small micro-movements and the tone of the facial muscles and they subconsciously read and interpret the experience of emotions (fear, anxiety) from these signals. This in turn evokes feelings in the recipient, based on which they perceive the situation as dangerous and threatening.

²³ Authors' note: For the processing of stimuli, as soon as there is something unusual in our environment that goes beyond the stereotype, our mind immediately registers it and begins to process and evaluate whether it is not threatening to us. This instinctive mental mechanism is a defense tool that our brains have developed over the millennia as a mechanism for ensuring survival. As a result, it draws attention to the threatening elements of communication.

²⁴ Authors' note: In interpersonal communication, our eyes follow the speaker's gaze, we have control over where they are looking, we can evaluate whether what the respondent is looking at threatens us or not. In media communication, we see only what the camera offers us, in this case the head and face of the respondent.

a distorted way. At the same time, intermittent concentration is tiring for the psyche as well,²⁵ which, with poor mental condition and a negative atmosphere in society, can further increase individual nervousness and feelings of tension. The above analysis shows that during the last year, long-term stereotypes of the perception of media content in news and journalism – in content and form – have been disrupted. These most common mistakes appeared mainly at the beginning of the pandemic situation. Gradually, the respondents learned to speak “to the computer”, video calling became part of everyday life, and therefore the recipient got used to this way of communication in the media faster.

If we look at the technical side, we can observe changes in several areas within the scope of our interest related to the pandemic and lockdown:

1. The need to master software applications used to transfer multimedia content.

In this area, we include online applications that enable communication between two or more respondents. These include the above-mentioned applications from world leaders in the field of IT technologies, such as Google, Microsoft, Cisco and others, who themselves tried to design applications in the simplest possible form with a minimum of controls and settings for more intuitive work. Over time and with the increasing demands of users for their functionality, these applications are also evolving and becoming more robust. Problems can occur when switching from one application to another. Although the main controls are basically identical and use similar pictograms, such a transition requires some time for the user to “get used to the application”. The reporter needs to be automated with the functionality, they need to understand it better than just a regular user to be able to use it quickly in the creation and transmission of media content, or to be able to advise their respondent and ensure a better form of communication output. Universities educating future journalists could also be helpful in this area, either by placing even greater emphasis on practical skills and acquiring technical knowledge related to the future professions of their students, or by providing further lifelong learning in this area.

2. Technical and aesthetic quality.

Each television broadcast has given technical parameters, which it must meet, whether it is the resolution currently standardly used by televisions not only in Slovakia, 1920x1080 pixels with a frame rate of 25 images, or the quality of the transmitted sound. This is where the shift we have encountered in the recent period lies. And here is the shift in the last period. The overall technical quality of the broadcast is not declining, on the contrary, but the individual contributions, especially in the news, for the obvious reasons mentioned above, cannot always be considered technically eligible for television broadcasting. The content of the statements of individual respondents became more important than the technical level of records. There are several explanations for this phenomenon. In most cases, the low technical quality of the transmitted communication of the respondent is due to the speed of their internet connection. Not all areas of Slovakia are covered by high-speed internet. And even if they were, the broadcaster cannot influence the specific connection of the respondent if, for example, they have purchased a low-speed connection or are in a problematic place. Another problem is that most respondents use built-in technical means for communication – a camera and a microphone, which are part of laptops or tablets. Their parameters are incomparable with professional equipment, although they declare that some of them are the same. This causes poor quality of the captured image and sound. We consider the above facts to be an objective cause, but there are also subjective circumstances that affect the quality of transmission. These include the level of technical skills of the respondent, whether they can set up the application and other controls of the computer correctly so that the transmission of multimedia content is optimal. It is understandable

²⁵ At the same time, it is important to note that the recipient is not aware of these disturbances and the need for higher energy expenditure in the perception of such media content.

and tolerable that e.g., a virology specialist does not have detailed knowledge of the IT field or of audio and editing programs and, thus, the form of their transmitted statement will be of lower quality. But it is less understandable, even striking, if we see such shortcomings in a contribution provided by a spokesperson for an institution, a professional. Even today, we can sometimes hear in television news that, for example, their sound statement is of low quality. This is affected by low data rate or recording in a poorly acoustically modified room. These are lacks that can be remedied very easily and will contribute to more cultivated reporting even during non-standard situations, such as the recent period. Other subjective areas that the respondent can influence are aesthetic aspects. We do not mean the very look and appearance of them, but how they are shown in the camera section. Extreme camera angles, whether ceiling or aerial, should be avoided. The basic rules can include the distance from the camera, which should not be less than 50-60 cm, the outstretched arm distance. This will prevent deformation of the face or other unwanted defects, such as distortion. Equally important is what is in the scanned environment and how the characters themselves are composed. The figure should be framed with enough space above the head as well as on the sides. It is advisable to avoid disturbing elements in the background, which can distract attention from the scanned figure. Lighting is a big problem, which is one of the main attributes of a high-quality image of the respondent. It follows from the written that the communicator can adjust many things before recording the answer or conversation. Appropriately arranged space, quality lighting conditions, correct setting of PC parameters, or additional devices can significantly add up to the quality of the contribution itself.

3. Significant use of infographics and data visualization (not only for news).

The use of infographics in news is not a new issue, but it has been gaining ground in recent times. This is causing an enormous increase in the data and messages associated with the covid situation. Especially in the news, we are confronted with the fact that we simply want to convey as much relevant information as possible, while maintaining clarity. This excess of information that affects us is also called *information overload*.²⁶ The chaotic presentation of information can be successfully prevented through the effective use of infographics. M. Smiciklas²⁷ defines it as a type of pictorial message that fuses design and data while helping individuals and groups to communicate concisely and clearly with the audience. However, an infographic itself may not be understood correctly if it is not placed in the right context. This shows the importance of a close link with the verbal side of the content provided and unambiguous statements supporting the visual side of the information provided.

3. Instead of the Conclusion: Post-lockdown Metamorphoses of Television Culture

Today we can state that new elements and forms have entered television communication. We can also agree with E. Klinenberg, who argues that digital technologies have changed journalistic editorial work, but it is debatable how they affected the quality of journalistic output. In relation to this issue, it is stated that when conglomerates entered the journalistic business, they imported their own management techniques into newsrooms and developed new strategies to ensure increased productivity, efficiency and profitability of the industry. Many journalists and media critics have pointed out that convergence “undermines” journalism, in particular

²⁶ PRONER, J.: Vizualizácia dát a infografika. In BUČKOVÁ, Z. et al. (eds.): *Megatrendy a médiá 2018*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2018, p. 175.

²⁷ SMICIKLAS, M.: *The Power of Infographic: A Data Visualization Guide for Business Professionals*. New Jersey : Wiley, 2015, p. 9.

by reducing the time spent gathering information, creating and evaluating social events.²⁸ Likewise, the use of the potential of multimedia, interactive television and strong internalisation hide behind the essence of the convergence process that we are currently witnessing and which also represents one of the most current trends in the production and reception of media content.²⁹ This is reflected, among other things, in the hybridization of journalistic practices, which results in the hybridization of journalistic genres. The movement of media professionals in the various types of editorial media offices is also characteristic for the present time. Press journalists work in radio and television, and television and radio reporters have returned to print and online media, and they all automatically convey stereotypes of media production methods used in the media in which they previously worked.³⁰ The Covid period accelerated all these processes even more and in a relatively short time presented us with new challenges that did not bypass the field of television broadcasting. The procedures used, not only in the news, had to be modified and adapted to the new realities of the dynamically evolving period. This has resulted in several changes, manifested in the methods of journalism, as well as in the content and form of the media products themselves. In news programs, especially the main ones, the newscasters lead many more interviews than before the pandemic period. They have become part of their work. In presenting pairs, they sometimes spread questions among themselves and do it together. Dialogic communication has become more dominant, there are several interviews from the studio during one report, they are of different lengths and depths. The newscasters are no longer just presenters, but have become guides and unify the thematic blocks, as well as the entire content of the news program. The enormous increase in information and the effort to keep it as up-to-date as possible have brought to broadcast the use of a larger number of infographics, new technological procedures (more frequent communication via a virtual screen), as well as online applications. Visual rendering of data is an ideal way to convey a large volume of data, which in many cases are too abstract for the recipient to process, but very important for understanding the situation and context.³¹ If in the past the newsacasters just sat during the news, today they go to the space much more often and comment on the information on the virtual screen or have a conversation during it. Respondents in interviews are on-site reporters or experts. If the experts talk to the presenter, they provide them with an interview in the field or via a computer from the space of their workplace or apartment. They are usually shot in the field by a professional camera. But unlike in the past, it is no longer the reporter who would do the interview, but only the cameraman who frames it and the respondent conducts the interview directly with the newsacster in the studio. The recipient has gradually become accustomed to the fact that not all shots are perfect. More informality gets into the media content and form. The pandemic situation, limitations and measures have taught people to tolerate improvisation and to adapt more flexibly to change, which has also been reflected in a shift in perceptual stereotypes and changes in the creation of media content in news and journalism. In this context, however, it is necessary to maintain the quality not only of the content side, but also to pay attention to the technical requirements associated with television broadcasting. We can already state today that some intelligence procedures tested during the pandemic have become an integral part of it and have contributed to greater flexibility in journalistic practice.

²⁸ KLINENBERG, E.: Convergence: News Production in a Digital Age. In DUFFY, B. E., TUROW, J. (eds.): *Key Readings in Media Today. Mass Communication in Contexts*. New York, London : Routledge, 2009, p. 156.

²⁹ MINÁRIKOVÁ, J., BLAHÚT, D., VIŠNOVSKÝ, J.: Hi-Tech And Eye-Catching Alike: Information in the Multiplatform Era. In *European Journal of Media, Art and Photography*, 2020, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 121.

³⁰ HUDÍKOVÁ, Z., PRAVDOVÁ, H., GAŽICOVÁ, A.: The Pragmatism of Hybridisation Logic of Television News in Slovakia. In *Communication Today*, 2020, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 97.

³¹ VRABEC, N.: Data Journalism as a Tool to Increase Media Literacy Among Media Professionals. In MATÚŠ, J., PETRANOVÁ, D. (eds.): *Marketing Identity: Digital Life – part II*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2015, p. 544-552.

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